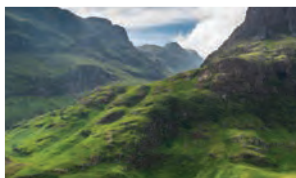




EARLY BEGINNINGS



A chance remark questioning why it was that in Spain, Italy and France you could buy quality design-led products based on indigenous notable designs or designers, yet in Scotland the equivalent did not happen - this gave us food for thought. The work of Miro, Gaudi, Frank Lloyd Wright and many other Masters was evident and available on everything - from silk scarves to silver jewellery, fabrics, homeware and artworks. In Scotland, somehow our own notable architect and designer, Charles Rennie Mackintosh seemed to have been overlooked - all that was available were replicas, most not very good and many falling into the 'Mockintosh' category, becoming poor parodies of the Masters work.



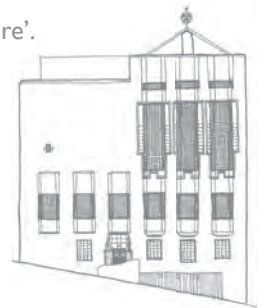
And so, the first seeds were sown. Could we, as ex-graduates from Glasgow's School of Art's textile department take up the challenge of producing something to be proud of and test the market accordingly - more importantly, where would we begin?



We knew we did not want to merely copy - we needed to dig deeper and find a source that would give us a truly inspirational starting point which we could

develop into an original concept. We also knew we did not want to go anywhere near many of his design elements such as the rose or stencil motifs as they had already been 'Mockintoshed' by many imitations. We wanted something simple, honest and recognisable that would give us the potential for development as a distinctive 'signature'.

In our years studying in the Art School's famous Mackintosh building we were surrounded by the detail which is part of the very fabric of the building - from the dark forest of wooden pillars of the library to the grey arches and portcullis details drawn from Scottish castles. These dark elements would contrast with the light filled white studios and the glazed 'hen run' perched high on the building commanding amazing views over the city.



What eventually emerged from our research and stuck with us were the inlaid square tiles decorating the landings on the stark grey staircases. Each motif differed in the placement of the squares within the simple design - a pattern found throughout Mackintosh's work from his furniture design to his decorative details and stencil work. This device was to form the starting point of our journey.





FIRST CONCEPTS

Our first designs, produced in 2008, were based on this simple motif, taking the colourways from



Mackintosh's signature palette of mauves, greys, black and white. We laid these down as our 'signature' range and complemented it with a tartan design which translated beautifully into Harris Tweed and which we 'tucked away' for future use.

Johnston's of Elgin took these first designs into both merino wool wraps and scarves while Glasgow's School of Art Advanced Textile Department extended the products with silks and chiffons. Our initial items ranged from silver cufflinks to deerskin bags - all of which were launched at Glasgow's Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum as a 'capsule' Collection.



Merino - Loch Lomond

All this allowed us to test the versatility of our designs and how we had interpreted them applied to a variety of products, at the same time giving us the gestation period to consider our next steps.

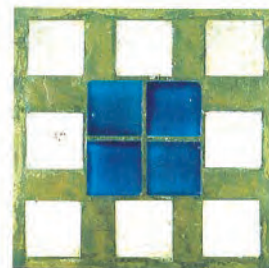


GETTING SERIOUS

We knew from our first forays that our 'TOSHIE MACKINTOSH' brand was unique. No-one had developed Charles Rennie Mackintosh's inspirational designs as a serious commercial offering.

We were also clear that the Mackintosh dimension was a great story to tell and knew that it would have 'added value'. However, we recognised from the outset that you did not need to know anything about the Mackintosh provenance to appreciate the geometric designs. We also acknowledged the importance of being able to protect our designs and a range of intellectual property protection was carefully put in place.

It became evident that the Toshie designs offered a huge scope with their interpretation into different colourways, different



scales and different materials adding an exciting range of possibilities. This became even clearer





Silk Chiffon - Manhattan

when the basic design was developed into three formats - tile, fret and check, each offering a distinctive personality.

THE SPECIFIER'S DREAM?

The opportunities the designs presented were far-reaching. Our development work meant that the design could scale up from tiny squares to almost any size required. We were able to repeat it across any chosen colourways, engrave it on glass, accessorise it and extend it into curtains, wallpaper, rugs, cushions, throws and lace. All of that before we took it into metallic and silk slub wallpaper under the new 'Luxe' extension.



Of course, there have been challenges - nothing is quite that simple and the team have recognised the need for careful brand development and management as they begin the process of taking it to different markets. Feedback has driven the 'Luxe' developments as they are a direct response to markets looking for higher spec finishes.



From an architect or specifier's point of view the TOSHIE MACKINTOSH Collection of wallpaper and fabrics offers an exciting choice of interior options and with the bespoke range, the opportunity to create dedicated solutions across a wide range of applications





THE MAN

Mackintosh was born in 1868 in Glasgow. He worked as an architect and was influenced by traditional Scottish architecture, decorative floral motifs and the simplicity of Japanese art. He ended his troubled career in Suffolk, England before retiring to Port Vendres in the South of France. He died in 1928. His Glasgow School of Art is cited by critics as one of the finest and most inspirational buildings in Europe. Now recognised worldwide, Mackintosh sits alongside America's Frank Lloyd Wright in terms of world recognition.



THE FUTURE

As we head towards Mackintosh's Anniversary in 2018 it seems that our timing is fortuitous. His famous library, tragically reduced to cinders in the 2014 fire will re-emerge in 2020 and Mackintosh's interior for Miss Cranston's Tearoom will be the centrepiece of the new V+A Dundee's Scottish Design Gallery in 2018.

As a design business with its roots in Glasgow and staffed by graduates from the City's Art School, we have a certain satisfaction in taking Mackintosh out to the world. It is sad that his genius was not recognised during his lifetime but that seems to be a familiar story with many of the world's 'greats'. However, his story is embedded in our designs and we hope to have done him justice.



Our Launch Pack brings together and illustrates all of the current wallpapers and fabrics



t: +44 (0)141 221 7432

E: info@toshiemackintosh.com

www.toshiemackintosh.com

Toshie Mackintosh • Gordon Chambers • 90 Mitchell Street • Glasgow G1 3NQ • United Kingdom

Tile designs, Nine Square Motif, Toshie graphic, Toshie Mackintosh name and Toshie Mackintosh tartan, Registered Designs
©/Trademarks © Toshie Mackintosh 2017

