



M224 Bedroom for the Dresden 'Heirat und Hausrat' exhibition

Introduction

Mackintosh designed a bedroom interior with furniture and decoration for the exhibition *Heirat und Hausrat* (Marriage and Household Goods) organised by the Dresdener Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst (Dresden Handicraft Workshops). Margaret Macdonald contributed textiles to the room.

Authorship: Five drawings by Mackintosh for the bedroom were in his possession at the time of his death. Photographs of the exhibited room were published under his name in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* and *Innendekoration*.¹

Status: Temporary

Chronology

1900

19 December: Mackintosh writes to Hermann Muthesius that he and Margaret Macdonald will try to make a whole room for Dresden, but that the expense is a problem. He asks for further particulars of the exhibition.¹

1902

21 August: Arrangements for a large exhibition of work by the Dresdener Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst are under way. Founder and proprietor Karl Schmidt writes to the mayor of Dresden requesting the use of halls in the Ausstellungspalast (exhibition palace) and gives details of his plans, potential participants and projected expenditure.²

1903

13 May: Muthesius writes to Mackintosh that he is sending a group of Germans to Glasgow to view his work. The group includes Karl Schmidt.³

27 May: Mackintosh reports to Muthesius on the Germans' visit. Schmidt has asked Mackintosh to design a bedroom for his exhibition in Dresden.⁴

14 October: Schmidt signs the contract with the city authorities detailing the conditions of operation of the exhibition.⁵

14 November: Exhibition opens.⁶

1904

10 January: Exhibition closes.⁷

Description

Background

In the second half of 1903 Mackintosh designed a bedroom for the exhibition *Heirat und Hausrat* (Marriage and Household Goods) organised by the Dresdener Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst (Dresden Handicraft Workshops) and financed personally by Werkstätten founder and owner, Karl Schmidt. Its purpose was to showcase recent achievements in high-quality applied art produced by the Werkstätten and other craft and manufacturing companies in Dresden and Saxony. Mackintosh was one of the few non-Saxon participants, along with Peter Behrens, Joseph Maria Olbrich, and Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott.¹

Hermann Muthesius had an involvement in the Mackintoshes' participation. As early as December 1900 Mackintosh wrote to Muthesius that he and Margaret would 'try to make a whole room for Dresden'.² However, this may refer to an earlier exhibition in Dresden in which they did not ultimately participate.³

In May 1903, Muthesius instigated a meeting which led to Mackintosh's participation in the 1903–4 exhibition. On 13 May he wrote, in English:

I am sending you those Germans next week, one of them is Mr K. Schmidt, who has the Dresdener Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst and is an extremely nice man and of very great artistic influence in Germany. The others are architects. I have induced them to go to Glasgow only to see your work and they are doing so. They only spend one day there and you must not trouble for them except showing them your [rooms], the Miss Cranston's Tearooms they can see for themselves. I think it may prove useful for K. Schmidt, and perhaps also for you to be together, and if you do not care for that, so then I take it as a duty of mine to do my best to convince people of the merit of your work. So please pardon me to send you these people. I do not yet know when they will arrive in Glasgow. Berlin, Werkbundarchiv, Museum der Dinge; Hermann Muthesius Estate, Muthesius letter book II, copy of letter from Muthesius to Mackintosh, 13

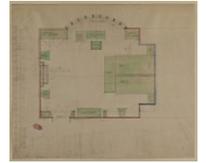
May 1903.

Meeting the Mackintoshes and viewing their work at first hand was evidently enough to convince Schmidt to invite them to participate, for following the visit Mackintosh reported to Muthesius, that 'I had the pleasure of showing them round. They are very nice people and we enjoyed seeing them. He wants me to do a bedroom for his Dresden Exhibition. He will pay me 10% on all sales. He thinks that is the best arrangement. He thinks he will be able to sell a good many if the price is not too high.' ⁵

Design

The exhibition was held in a wing of Dresden's municipal Ausstellungspalast (exhibition palace). ⁶ 43 companies were represented and 34 rooms were created by architects and designers, 10 by Richard Riemerschmid, chief Dresdener Werkstätten designer. ⁷

There are five surviving drawings for Mackintosh's bedroom. These include a plan, which suggests Mackintosh was involved in determining the dimensions and shape of the room. It was to be square, with projections for a bow window and barrel-vaulted shallow bed alcove. Two published photographs show that the completed room differed from the drawings: the window was moved from the left side of the bed to the right, and changed from a bow to a bay, and the barrel-vaulted ceiling was omitted. ⁸



The design and colour scheme of white-painted furniture and light grey walls follows earlier bedrooms designs, notably the master bedroom at The Hill House. The bed, high-backed chairs, and the decoration of the washstand splash-back and fitted cupboards are closely based on the Blackies' Helensburgh bedroom while the mirror is related to the Mackintoshes' own at 120 Mains Street, Glasgow. Unlike earlier bedroom schemes, however, except in the embroidered panels over the bed, Mackintosh moved away from botanically-derived decorative details. Here the square is the dominant motif. ⁹ Annotations on Mackintosh's drawings referring to the embroidered panels are in Macdonald's hand, suggesting these are her work. ¹⁰

Mackintosh did not travel to Dresden and it is not clear who supervised the assembly of the room. It is also unclear whether the furniture was made in Glasgow by one of Mackintosh's regular collaborators, or whether working drawings were sent to Dresden to be followed by the Werkstätten. What became of Mackintosh's room following the exhibition is not known.

A 1904–5 book of Werkstätten furniture designs contains tracings or copies of Mackintosh's plan and four elevations for the room. The eleven pieces of furniture are each labelled with a four-digit number, apparently a model number which could be used to order items from a Werkstätten product catalogue. ¹¹ Some sources describe Mackintosh as a designer for the Dresdener Werkstätten in the years 1900–10. ¹²

Reception

When Alfred Lehmann visited the exhibition for *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, the bedroom was 'unfortunately not yet complete'. ¹³ A photograph of the unfinished room accompanied his article.



The incomplete state of the bedroom is probably the reason for its omission from reviews in *Die Kunst / Dekorative Kunst* and the *Studio*, where Mackintosh was simply named among the exhibition participants. ¹⁴

By the time E. Beutinger reviewed the exhibition for *Innendekoration*, Mackintosh's room was complete – evidenced by a photograph accompanying the article – and was reported on favourably. Beutinger commented that 'above all others in the exhibition, the rooms by Mackintosh and Baillie Scott, England's and Scotland's most outstanding artists, best embody the artistic expression of their people and that once again they blaze their own trails.' He continued, 'Mackintosh's bedroom with its light colours and unadorned furniture gives a thoroughly calming effect like an antidote for our hectic, nerve-shattering times. What sets Mackintosh favourably apart from so many other modern interior designers is, that like Riemerschmid, he remains true to his elementary forms. He does not seek motifs and he does not wish to appear deliberately modern. He is Mackintosh and is always new.' ¹⁵



People

Clients:

- Dresdener Werkstätte für Handwerkskunst

Job Book

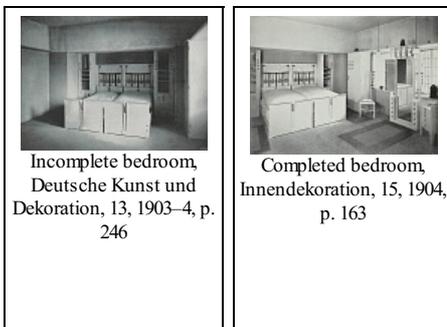
The job books of Honeyman & Keppie (later Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh) are now held by The Hunterian, University of Glasgow and include four volumes related to the Mackintosh period. The books were used by the firm to keep a project-by-project, day-by-day record of contractors, suppliers and expenditure. The name of a project and/or client is usually at the top of the left-hand page, followed by information about tradesmen who tendered. The name of the measurer (quantity surveyor) is usually at the top of the right-hand page, followed by information about payments to contractors and suppliers. All of the data for M224 is entered in the tables below.

Page numbering is not consistent in the job books. Sometimes a single number refers to a double-page spread and sometimes each page is individually numbered. Here, each image of a double-page spread is identified by the number given at the top of the left-hand page. (Images of all of the pages from the four job books can be found at [Browse Job Books, Visit Book and Cash Book.](#))

The following information about M224 has been extracted from the job books:

Documents

Images



Bibliography

Published

- Klaus Peter Arnold, *Vom Sofakissen zum Städtebau: Die Geschichte der Deutschen Werkstätten und der Gartenstadt Hellerau*, Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1990
- Roger Billcliffe, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh: The Complete Furniture, Furniture Drawings and Interior Designs*, Moffat, Dumfriesshire: Cameron & Hollis, 4th edn, 2009, pp. 180–3
- Alan Crawford, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1995, p. 211
- Thomas Howarth, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Modern Movement*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2nd edn, 1977, p. 154
- E. Beutinger, 'Die Dresdner Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst', *Innendekoration*, 15, 1904, pp. 159–6
- Erich Haenel, 'Ausstellung der Dresdener Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst', *Die Kunst / Dekorative Kunst*, 7, 1904, pp. 146–67
- Alfred Lehmann, 'Heirat und Hausrat', *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, 13, 1903–4, pp. 211–22, 246
- Hans W. Singer, 'Arts and Crafts at Dresden', *Studio*, 31, 1904, pp. 54–8
- *Berliner Architekturwelt*, 7, 1904, p. 251

Unpublished

- Hiroaki Kimura, 'Charles Rennie Mackintosh: Architectural Drawings Catalogue and Design Analytical Catalogue', University of Glasgow: unpublished PhD thesis, 1982, pp. 47, 190–2
- Berlin, Werkbundarchiv, Museum der Dinge: Hermann Muthesius Estate, letters from Mackintosh to Muthesius, 19 December 1900, 27 May 1903
- Berlin, Werkbundarchiv, Museum der Dinge: Hermann Muthesius Estate, Muthesius letter book II, copy of letter from Muthesius to Mackintosh, 13 May 1903; copy of letter from Muthesius to Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, 17 May 1903

Notes:

1: Alfred Lehmann, 'Heirat und Hausrat', *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, 13, 1903–4, p. 246; 'Ausstellung der Dresdener Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst', *Innendekoration*, 15, 1904, p. 163.

2: Berlin, Werkbundarchiv, Museum der Dinge: Hermann Muthesius Estate, letter from Mackintosh to Muthesius, 19 December 1900. It is not clear whether this refers to the 1903–4 exhibition for which Mackintosh designed the bedroom, or an earlier exhibition such as the Dresden international art exhibition of 1901.

- 3: Stadtarchiv Dresden, 9.1.15, Ausstellungsamt, Nr. 67, pp. 1a–2b, letter from Schmidt to Oberbürgermeister Beutler, 21 August 1902.
- 4: Berlin, Werkbundarchiv, Museum der Dinge: Hermann Muthesius Estate, Muthesius letter book II, copy of letter from Muthesius to Mackintosh, 13 May 1903. On 17 May 1903 Muthesius writes to Macdonald, mentioning the forthcoming one-day visit of the Germans to Glasgow. Berlin, Werkbundarchiv, Museum der Dinge: Hermann Muthesius Estate, Muthesius letter book II, copy of letter from Muthesius to Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, 17 May 1903.
- 5: Berlin, Werkbundarchiv, Museum der Dinge: Hermann Muthesius Estate, letter from Mackintosh to Muthesius, 27 May 1903.
- 6: Stadtarchiv Dresden, 9.1.15, Ausstellungsamt, Nr. 67, pp. 35a–37b, contract between 'the council of Dresden, administrator of the exhibition site, and Mr Karl Kamillo Schmidt, proprietor of the Dresdener Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst Schmidt & Müller', signed on 14 October 1903.
- 7: Stadtarchiv Dresden, 9.1.15, Ausstellungsamt, Nr. 67, p. 36a contract between 'the council of Dresden, administrator of the exhibition site, and Mr Karl Kamillo Schmidt, proprietor of the Dresdener Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst Schmidt & Müller', signed on 14 October 1903.
- 8: Stadtarchiv Dresden, 9.1.15, Ausstellungsamt, Nr. 67, p. 36a, contract between 'the council of Dresden, administrator of the exhibition site, and Mr Karl Kamillo Schmidt, proprietor of the Dresdener Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst Schmidt & Müller', signed on 14 October 1903.
- 9: Klaus Peter Arnold, *Vom Sofakissen zum Städtebau: Die Geschichte der Deutschen Werkstätten und der Gartenstadt Hellerau*, Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1990, p. 55.
- 10: Berlin, Werkbundarchiv, Museum der Dinge: Hermann Muthesius Estate, letter from Mackintosh to Muthesius, 19 December 1900.
- 11: The Dresden international art exhibition of 1901 included a substantial applied arts section. It was reviewed in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* and elsewhere. See for example, Paul Schumann, 'Das Kunstgewerbe auf der internationalen Kunst-Ausstellung zu Dresden, Mai – Oktober 1901', *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, 8, 1901, pp. 405–27.
- 12: Berlin, Werkbundarchiv, Museum der Dinge: Hermann Muthesius Estate, Muthesius letter book II, copy of letter from Muthesius to Mackintosh, 13 May 1903.
- 13: Berlin, Werkbundarchiv, Museum der Dinge: Hermann Muthesius Estate, letter from Mackintosh to Muthesius, 27 May 1903.
- 14: The Neo-Renaissance-style building was constructed at the corner of Lennéstrasse and Stübelallee at the edge of the extensive city park, the Großer Garten, and opened in 1885. It suffered considerable bomb and fire damage in 1944–5 and was demolished.
- 15: Klaus Peter Arnold, *Vom Sofakissen zum Städtebau: Die Geschichte der Deutschen Werkstätten und der Gartenstadt Hellerau*, Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 1990, p. 55.
- 16: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: GLAHA 41082 (M224-001); Alfred Lehmann, 'Heirat und Hausrat', *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, 13, 1903–4, p. 246; 'Ausstellung der Dresdener Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst', *Innendekoration*, 15, 1904, p. 163.
- 17: For the furniture and decorative scheme, see Roger Billcliffe, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh: The Complete Furniture, Furniture Drawings and Interior Designs*, Moffat, Dumfriesshire: Cameron & Hollis, 4th edn, 2009, pp. 180–3.
- 18: The Hunterian, University of Glasgow: GLAHA 41119 (M224-005).
- 19: Dresden, Hauptstaatsarchiv: holdings no. 11764, archive of the Deutsche Werkstätten Hellerau, file no. 4219, Pausbuch Nr. 4, 1904–5, pp. 36–9, microfilmed for conservation reasons, film F 17100. A product catalogue featuring Mackintosh's furniture has not been located.
- 20: Klaus Peter Arnold's research for his history of the Werkstätten and the associated garden suburb, Hellerau to the north of Dresden, made extensive use of its archive. The book includes short biographies of all designers associated with the Werkstätten, including Mackintosh. *Vom Sofakissen zum Städtebau: Die Geschichte der Deutschen Werkstätten und der Gartenstadt Hellerau Dresden*: Verlag der Kunst, 1990, p. 423.
- 21: Alfred Lehmann, 'Heirat und Hausrat', *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, 13, 1903–4, pp. 222, 246
- 22: Erich Haenel, 'Ausstellung der Dresdener Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst', *Die Kunst / Dekorative Kunst*, 7, 1904, pp. 146–67; Hans W. Singer, 'Arts and Crafts at Dresden', *Studio*, 31, 1904, pp. 54–8.
- 23: E. Beuttinger, 'Die Dresdner Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst', *Innendekoration*, 15, 1904, p. 166.

Mackintosh Architecture: Context, Making and Meaning

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