

## MX.09 Manchester Library and Art Gallery

### Introduction

This design was submitted in the major architectural competition for a combined municipal library and art gallery on the site of Manchester's former Infirmary. It was short-listed, but did not win. The winning design did not go ahead, and the project was abandoned.

**Authorship:** The design was produced by Andrew Graham Henderson, who was an assistant in Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh's office at the time, and John R. Hacking, who had worked there between 1905 and 1908. There is no evidence that Mackintosh was involved.

**Status:** Unbuilt

### Chronology

#### 1911

6. January: Competition announced. <sup>1</sup>

31 March: Closing date, as originally reported. <sup>2</sup>

1 May: Actual closing date. 223 entries submitted. <sup>3</sup>

23 June Results of first round reported: Andrew Graham Henderson and John R. Hacking's entry is one of ten selected to go through to second round. <sup>4</sup>

July: Death of Hacking. <sup>5</sup>

15 December: Designs published, including Henderson and Hacking's. <sup>6</sup>

### Description

In September 1910, Manchester City Council resolved to erect a combined library and art gallery on the site of the city's recently demolished Infirmary. <sup>1</sup> The municipal art collection had outgrown its home in Charles Barry's Royal Institution building in Moseley Street, and the library was inadequately housed in the early 19th-century former town hall in King Street. The new building would bring both institutions together under one roof, providing them with greatly enlarged and improved accommodation. The extremely prominent island site – close to the London Road railway terminus and bounded by some of the city's principal commercial streets – represented a major architectural opportunity.

Conditions for a two-stage architectural competition were published in January 1911, with Reginald Blomfield named as assessor. <sup>2</sup> In the first round, architects were required to submit rough sketch designs in pencil for a building covering 5,500 square yards (4599 sq m) and costing not more than £250,000. Submissions received numbered 223, from which ten firms were selected for the second round. <sup>3</sup> The final designs of these ten, including the eventual winners Crouch, Butler & Savage of Birmingham, were extensively discussed and illustrated in the *Builder*. <sup>4</sup> It has been said that Mackintosh submitted one of the premiated designs, but this is not the case. <sup>5</sup> Rather, a junior member of Honeyman, Keppie & Mackintosh's office, Andrew Graham Henderson, and a former member, John R. Hacking, jointly submitted a design in their own names, which was among the ten successful ones. Hacking died in July 1911, before the final result of the competition was announced. <sup>6</sup>

The library and art gallery scheme was almost immediately abandoned (the site ultimately became Piccadilly Gardens, a public open space). The competition is nevertheless interesting for what it reveals about the context in which Mackintosh was working by this date. All ten of the successful entries were monumental classical designs, reflecting not only Blomfield's personal preference for this type of classicism but the whole trend of public architecture at the time, under French and, increasingly, American influence. Hacking's and Henderson's success demonstrates the younger men's ability (and competition-winning potential) in the favoured style of the day, while Mackintosh, whose own work was individualistic and rooted in vernacular traditions, found himself marginalised by these developments.

### People

#### Other:

- John R. Hacking

- Andrew Graham Henderson

## 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 MX.09 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 MX.09 has been extracted from the job books:

## Documents

## Images

## Bibliography

### Published

- *Builder*, 99, 24 September 1910, p. 331
- *Builder*, 100, 20 January 1911, pp. 73–4; 23 June 1911, p. 780; 101, 15 December 1911, pp. 706–20

### Notes:

- 1: *Builder*, 100, 6 January 1911, p. 13.
- 2: *Builder*, 100, 20 January 1911, pp. 73–4.
- 3: *Builder*, 100, 5 May 1911, p. 540; 16 June 1911, p. 750.
- 4: *Builder*, 100, 23 June 1911, p. 780.
- 5: *Dictionary of Scottish Architects*, [www.scottisharchitects.org.uk](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk) [accessed 17 March 2013].
- 6: *Builder*, 101, 15 December 1911, pp. 706–20.
- 7: *Builder*, 99, 24 September 1910, p. 331.
- 8: *Builder*, 100, 6 January 1911, p. 13; 20 January 1911, pp. 73–4.
- 9: *Builder*, 100, 5 May 1911, p. 540; 23 June 1911, p. 780.
- 10: *Builder*, 101, 15 December 1911, pp. 706–20. The ten successful architects were: H. Percy Adams and Charles Holden (London); Robert Atkinson (London); Bradshaw & Gass and A. J. Hope (Bolton); Cooper & Slater (Blackburn); Crouch, Butler & Savage (Birmingham); R. Fielding Farrar (Leeds); A. Graham Henderson and J. R. Hacking (Glasgow); Frank W. Simon (Liverpool); Warwick & Hall (London); and T. Worthington & Son (Manchester).
- 11: *Dictionary of Scottish Architects*, [www.scottisharchitects.org.uk](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk) [accessed 17 March 2013].
- 12: *Dictionary of Scottish Architects*, [www.scottisharchitects.org.uk](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk) [accessed 17 March 2013].

## Mackintosh Architecture: Context, Making and Meaning

Led by The Hunterian, University of Glasgow, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council; with additional support from The Monument Trust, The Pilgrim Trust, and the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art; and collaborative input from Historic Scotland and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.



[© copyright 2014](#)

[Contact us](#)