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Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses Frieze* (1906): Lines and Liminality in the Waerndorfer Music Salon in Vienna

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1. Introduction

In 1902, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh (1864–1933) and her spouse, Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868–1928)¹ embarked on a journey from Glasgow to Vienna to begin work on a commission for a music salon in Fritz Waerndorfer's villa in the city's Cottage Viertel in the eighteenth district. Among the items commissioned were a full architectural renovation of the space as well as furnishings created collaboratively by Macdonald and Mackintosh including Macdonald's gesso frieze, *The Seven Princesses*. The frieze, inspired by a one-act play from Belgian playwright Maurice Maeterlinck, *Les sept princesses* (1891), employed a compositional scheme that was strongly regulated by line and the implementation of abstracted female forms with symbolic and allegorical aspects relating to Maeterlinck's literary source.

In its completed form, the Waerndorfer music salon existed as place of pilgrimage for artists and admirers of modern art and design in Vienna and beyond. The popularity of the salon, however, was fleeting. By 1916, the Waerndorfer villa had been sold. Shortly after, the new owners opted to renovate the villa, at which time the complete contents of the salon, including the frieze, were either sold or otherwise dispersed. The whereabouts of the frieze after 1916 was completely unknown, though many suspected that the work had been lost or destroyed until, the frieze was rediscovered in the basement depot of the Museum angewandter Kunst Wien (MAK) (Museum of Applied Arts Vienna) during a series of renovations in 1990. The over seventy-year disappearance of *The Seven Princesses* frieze imposed significant limitations on any research surrounding the work, a problem that was exacerbated by the lack of extant photographs of the frieze, therein rendering an analysis of the work's stylistic, compositional, and symbolic content completely impossible before its rediscovery.

1.1. State of Research

Upon Macdonald's death in 1933, brief notices were published in two Glasgow periodicals. Despite little coverage of her death, the preservation of her esteem as an artist, in the form of a "Mackintosh Memorial Exhibition" featuring her works alongside Mackintosh's at the Maclellan Galleries in Sauchiehall Street in May of the same year, seemed promising.²

¹ For clarity, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh will henceforth be referred to as Macdonald, and her spouse, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, as Mackintosh.

² Reekie 1983, p. 5–6.

Unfortunately the regard for her work was not to last, and her decline into obscurity continued for over half a century.

For over five decades, the state of research regarding Macdonald's oeuvre, was approached tangentially to the work of Mackintosh, a trend that most notably began with Thomas Howarth's publication, *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Modern Movement* in 1952. The extent to which Howarth neglected the works of Macdonald demonstrated a point of view in which he denigrated her and her work as a hindrance that "was responsible for limiting her husband's vision."³ Although Howarth mentions the Waerndorfer music salon in some detail, the frieze would have still been presumed lost during this time, a matter to which Howarth refers to "relatively unimportant."⁴ Howarth's attitudes toward Macdonald as an artist demonstrate a mindset which could have influenced the quality of the sections in the text pertaining to her works. Consequently, the accuracy of the research in said sections is likely questionable and therefore should be approached critically.

By the early 1980's, interest in Macdonald's work began to gain momentum. In 1983, the Hunterian Gallery in Glasgow staged the first ever solo exhibition of Macdonald's work. Although this appeared to be a milestone as far as the recognition of her work is concerned, the damage to the state of research surrounding her oeuvre was apparent. After contacting the Hunterian Gallery in Glasgow for permission to obtain a copy of the catalog, penned by Pamela Robertson (née Reekie), which had been out of print since the 1980's, they graciously sent a scanned copy of the text, albeit with the disclaimer that most of the information contained within was now known to have been rife with inaccuracies and was in desperate need of revisions.⁵

The rediscovery of *The Seven Princesses* frieze in 1990 reignited general interest in Macdonald's work, beginning in 1990 with Jude Burkhauser's *Glasgow Girls: Women in Art and Design; 1880–1920*, with texts from Janice Helland, Timothy Neat, and Pamela Robertson. As the text was published the same year as *The Seven Princesses* frieze was rediscovered, most of the texts on Macdonald only made mere mention of the frieze, and it is uncertain if anyone

³ Ibid. p. 145.

⁴ Howarth 1952, p. 157.

⁵ The photograph on the title page, for example, is of Margaret's sister, Frances Macdonald: "Obviously, our knowledge of Macdonald and her career has developed since 1983, and you may find occasional inaccuracies in this pioneering study. The photograph reproduced on the title page, for instance, is now thought to be a portrait of Frances Macdonald rather than Margaret." Joseph Sharples, Curator of Mackintosh Collections & Applied Art, Hunterian Gallery, Glasgow, E-Mail to the author, 20.10.2023.

involved had seen the work in person. Throughout the 1990's, a few dissertations on Macdonald's work from Helland (1991), Billy Wickre (1993), and Sharran Parkinson (1994) were published, but in each case, it was difficult to decipher whether their assertions were based on their own observations of the frieze, or from previous literature.⁶ Despite the renewed interest in Macdonald's work, only vague attempts elaborating upon the frieze's stylistic, allegorical, and symbolic content have been made since the frieze's rediscovery. Most of what has been written about the frieze shows the tendency of the authors to focus on the rather shallow interpretations of the work as fairytale-like depiction of what could best be described as true love, that was likely initiated on the basis of the work's original title, *Die sieben Prinzessinnen. Fries nach einem Märchen von Maurice Maeterlinck für den Musiksalon des Hauses Wärndorfer* (*The Seven Princesses. A Frieze Inspired by a Fairytale from Maurice Maeterlinck for the Music Salon in the Villa Waerndorfer*).

As far as the Waerndorfer Music Salon is concerned, the research has been somewhat well-represented in texts from Elana Shapira (2006, 2010, 2016), Peter Vergo (1977, 1981, 1983, 2000), Roger Billcliffe (1977, 1991), and Pamela Robertson (1990, 2000), but do not seem to be concerned *The Seven Princesses* frieze specifically. Billcliffe and Vergo, for example, tend more toward the interests centering primarily around Mackintosh, and Fritz Waerndorfer and his relation to the Viennese art scene around 1900. Robertson and Shapira make passive attempts at analyzing the frieze. However, their respective research does not function in the interests of exploring Macdonald's symbolism and linear structure, with Robertson focusing on the music salon and Macdonald's total body of work and Shapira approaching the music salon from a social art historical perspective relevant to Waerndorfer's role as patron art collector. In each case, none of the authors mentioned have been able to come to a consensus as to the location of the frieze in the salon or the installation date.

In 2000, the first work dedicated to the Waerndorfer Music Salon, *Ein moderner Nachmittag, A Thoroughly Modern Afternoon: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh und der Salon Waerndorfer in Wien*, was published by the MAK. The text itself offers an excellent overview of the salon and the frieze, with invaluable amounts of information dedicated to the restoration process. However, the bulk of the text is based on an obvious repurposing of older research

⁶ A portion of Parkinson's research from the dissertation was published in an article from 1997 in *Journal of Interior Design*. The dissertation on which the article is based, however, was not accessible from Ohio University, therefore only the 1997 article has been referenced in this research.

from Robertson and Vergo, some of which was merely reworded to suit the purposes of the new text.

1.2. Research Questions and Theses

In beginning to construct a new body of research on *The Seven Princesses* frieze, it becomes apparent that much of Macdonald's symbolic program, and her implementation of linear structure, was somewhat self-referential, in that much of what is depicted in the composition is identifiable in works from 1900–1902, both those that she executed singly and those that she completed collaboratively with Mackintosh. On this basis, the information in the first two chapters proposes that the following projects and commissions from 1900–1902 functioned as prototypes for the Waerndorfer music Salon: 1) the couple's Mains Street Flat and the commissions for Miss Cranston's Ingraham Street Tea Rooms in Glasgow; 2) the "Scottish Room" at the VIII. Exhibition of the Vienna Secession in late 1900; and 3) the "Rose Boudoir" at the I. International Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art, Turin in 1902. Within the context of the aforementioned projects and commissions, the interiors as indicative of the culmination of a stylistic evolution that influenced manner in which *The Seven Princesses* frieze would eventually take shape will be demonstrated.

Chapters three and four elaborate on the commissioning and completion of the Waerndorfer music salon, as well as the reception history of the salon from 1904 until 1912. Within these two chapters, several previously open-ended questions regarding the salon will be addressed.

1. When referencing extant photographs of the salon, paired with contemporary texts relevant to the reception history of the music salon, the furnishings and their arrangement and layout within the salon would suggest *The Seven Princesses* frieze as the centerpiece of the music salon.
2. Extant photographs and the reception history of the salon provide evidence supporting the frieze's installation date as occurring in 1907 and its location on the south-facing wall of the music salon, above the piano.

After elaborating on the projects and commissions that served as prototypes for the Waerndorfer music salon and *The Seven Princesses* frieze and establishing arguments in support of the proposed installation date and location of the frieze, chapters five through seven will center around *The Seven Princesses* frieze in the pursuance of the following proposals:

1. Macdonald's interpretation of the Maeterlinck play can be understood as a transliteration of the literary source into a visual language through implementation of a complex linear structure, unconventional pictorial organization and symbolism, in which a conflation of temporal events relating to the play are depicted.
2. Macdonald's transliteration of the Maeterlinck play is reliant on the strong emphasis of the linear composition as the driving force behind the work's efficacy, which enables therein an intersubjective understanding as indicative of ritual and sacrality, but also of the concepts of liminality, relating to the individual and to spatial constructs.

The goal of these chapters will be to expand interpretations of the frieze beyond the basis of its previous analyses relating to its fairytale depictions, to a context which is far more complex and suitable for Macdonald's multifaceted compositional components as well as her implementation of symbolism. The final chapter of the paper will contain a brief return to the historical context of the salon, with a short explanation on the sale of the Waerndorfer villa, with a few considerations regarding the disappearance of the frieze, before continuing to the conclusion.

2. Early Career and Commissions from 1899–1902

Little documentation of Macdonald's artistic output exists before 1890, when she and her sister, Frances, having relocated with their family to Glasgow from Chesterton in south central England, enrolled as day students in the Glasgow School of Art.⁷ Before enrolling in the GSA, Macdonald had studied art, as well as French, and German at Miss Orme's Girls School in North Staffordshire. The GSA would have offered an opportunity to study art that was not afforded to women elsewhere in Great Britain, thanks to Francis "Fra" Newberry's progressive attitudes towards education. After taking over as director in 1885, Newberry altered the curriculum to enable what Helland notes as "the fertile ground needed for the emergence of an innovative and distinctive art."⁸ The changes made to the curriculum were heavily influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement and featured the inclusion of contemporary texts on art

⁷ Until 1892, women were denied access to universities in Scotland. The Glasgow School of Art would have been one of the only institutions of higher learning in the city that admitted female students at the time Margaret and Frances enrolled. Burkhauser 1990, p. 63.

⁸ Helland 1993, p. 16., Helland 1996, p. 22.

theory. Although the curriculum was regimented, Newberry encouraged experimentation and individualism and emphasized beauty and function in his students' works.⁹

A few years into their studies at the GSA in 1893, Frances and Margaret took part in the Glasgow School of Art Club Exhibition, where they met students from the evening classes, Charles Rennie Mackintosh and James Herbert MacNair.¹⁰ After the GSA Club Exhibition, the four students began collaborating as what would later be known as "The Glasgow Four," or quite simply, "The Four."¹¹ Reception of the GSA exhibition was mixed. On the one hand, The Four's contributions were considered remarkable on the basis of their eccentricity. On the other hand, most of the described eccentricity of the works was met with derision. The Four's depictions of stylized human forms, ornamental plant and floral motifs, and immaterial themes such as time, birth and death extended beyond the depictions of *femme fatale*, or the pure virginal depictions of women portrayed in the Pre-Raphaelite movement to new and somewhat paradoxical depictions of femininity featuring elongated and abstracted human forms positioned in indefinite spaces, as seen in three watercolors from this period, Margaret's *Summer* (Fig. 2) from 1894, Frances's *Ill Omen* (Fig. 3) from 1893, and Mackintosh's *Harvest Moon* (Fig. 4) from 1892. The group's unconventional portrayals of the human form were awarded the dubious accolade of "weirdly new,"¹² which eventually gave way to the designation of the newly formed group as being referred to rather disdainfully by critics as the "Spook School,"¹³ on the basis of the perception of the ghoulish forms portrayed in their works.¹⁴

After the GSA exhibition, the group's singular works as well as their collaborative output received press coverage, both in England, Scotland, and in continental Europe. At the 1896 Arts and Crafts Exhibition in London, the Four's work was met once more with mixed reviews. One review in particular published in *The Magazine of Art* contained overall dismissal of the

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Robertson 1993, pp. 109–110.

¹¹ Helland 1993, pp. 13–17., Burkhauser 1993, p. 20–23.

¹² The designation of the Macdonald sisters' work as "weirdly new" could have been a reference to the phenomenon of what was referred to the "New Woman," which corresponded with a women's suffrage movement, demanding equal educational opportunities and open universities, equal employment, and the reform movements in women's fashion that sought the disposal of the corset. Burkhauser remarks that in Glasgow, the movement was taken a step further than in other parts of Europe, with numerous women challenging the male-dominated art scene. Robertson 1993, pp. 109–110., Burkhauser 1993, p. 45.

¹³ The label, "Spook School" would have eventually given way to the more neutral moniker of "The Four," although it has been suggested that the latter was first applied after the dissolution of the group to accentuate their influence in forming the Scotto-Continental Art Nouveau movement that eventually became known as the Glasgow Style. Helland 1993, pp. 13–17., Burkhauser 1993, pp. 20–23.

¹⁴ Helland 1993, pp. 15–17., Burkhauser 1993, p. 45.

Four's works as representing "juvenile enthusiasm, of passion for originality-at-any-price which is willing to sacrifice all claim to beauty and revel in absolute ugliness."^{15,16} In response, Gleeson White, editor of *The Studio*, published a rebuttal, citing the critics' condemnations of the style as "an over-hasty dismissal"¹⁷ of the group's work. Later that year, White traveled to Glasgow and published a subsequent article in *The Studio*, featuring the work of The Four, which strengthened the group's initial international attention.¹⁸

In October of 1899, *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* featured a review of the group's submissions to a recent exhibition in Munich: a beaten brass clockface by Frances and Margaret Macdonald and a chair from Mackintosh. The author stated that although the works are interesting with many constructive advantages, the Glaswegians' artistic achievements were somewhat "unsurpassed in their puritanical and unattractive sobriety."¹⁹ Regardless of the author's opinions on the works submitted to the exhibition, the article can be considered as the first inclusion of Macdonald's work in a continental publication and furthermore the group's first inclusion in an international exhibition.²⁰

Notwithstanding the mixed reviews of the work of the Four in London and Munich, their stylistic contributions had certainly not gone unnoticed. The momentum from the critical reception they received afforded Frances and Margaret measurable success, which enabled them to open their own private studio at 128 Hope Street in Glasgow in 1896, where the two collaborated intensely over the next few years.²¹ Despite the intense collaboration between the Macdonald sisters, each of the artists had begun to settle into their own stylistic habits by this point in time, and their collective works became fewer.²² As far as Macdonald's works were concerned, the decline of the Four was demonstrated in her forms becoming gradually less severe and angular, although they continued to challenge the conventional representations

¹⁵ Zimmern 1897, pp. 32–33., Robertson 1993, pp. 109–110., Burkhauser 1993, p. 45., Helland 1993, pp. 15–17.

¹⁶ Burkhauser 1993, p. 45–47., Robertson 1993, pp. 100–110.

¹⁷ White 1897, pp. 189–204.

¹⁸ White 1897, pp. 81–100.

¹⁹ "Interessant sind einige Arbeiten der Schule von Glasgow, so eine Standuhr mit Zifferblatt aus getriebenen Messing von Margarethe und Franziska Macdonald, ein geschnitzter Eichenstuhl und ein 'Rauch-Zimmer-Stuhl' von Mackintosh. An puritanischer, reizlosester Nüchternheit überbieten diese pruden Schotten alle anderen, wenn man ihnen auch mancherlei konstruktive Vorzüge zuerkennen mag." Koch 1899, p. 23. (*Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by the author.)

²⁰ Robertson 1993, p. 109–110.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 108–110.

²² Ibid., p. 112.

of the human and female form, while also introducing numerous cases of abstraction of forms, as well as an increase in the works using gesso by 1900.²³

2.1. Glasgow: The Mains Street Flat and Miss Cranston's Tea and Luncheon Rooms

By 1899, the collaborative work of the Glasgow Four had met its official end. Frances married Herbert MacNair, and the couple moved to Liverpool to further pursue MacNair's career in architecture. The following year, Macdonald and Mackintosh were married in Glasgow and embarked on a decade-long period of intense individual and collaborative artistic productivity. A few projects and commissions during the first few years of their partnership in particular serve as a prototype for the Waerndorfer music salon and *The Seven Princesses*, specifically the design and furnishings for the interiors of their rented flat at 120 Mains Street and for Catherine Cranston's Ladies' Luncheon Room in Glasgow, as well the interiors designed as part of their participation in international exhibitions in of the VIII. Exhibition of the Vienna Secession in late 1900 and the I. International Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art and Design in Turin in 1902.

2.1.1. The Mains Street Flat

After Macdonald and Mackintosh married in 1900, the couple moved into a flat at 120 Mains Street in Glasgow, the interiors of which had been recently renovated according to the couple's own design plans. The drawing room (Figs. 5–7), in particular, demonstrates numerous architectural and design similarities that would become trademark to interiors designed by Macdonald and Mackintosh in the coming years, several of which would later be applied to the Waerndorfer music salon. The interior featured a tidy grey and white color scheme, with cool accent tones of lilac and lavender, dark red, rose-pink, and pale moss green. Geometrical accents controlled the space and proportions of the room to a dramatic effect, which was most noticeably reinforced by the horizontal picture rail the height of the door which spanned the walls of the sitting room, interrupted only by the openings in the walls for the windows, and by the vertical wall straps.²⁴

The furnishings were sparse compared to other interiors of the time, with half a dozen chairs of mixed designs with tones of black and lighter ivory, a rectilinear card table in tones of ivory and white, a darker toned writing desk with inlaid panels from Macdonald, a white fireplace

²³ Robertson 1993, p. 112.

²⁴ Ibid.

with curvilinear woodwork, and a glazed vitrine with inlaid glass panels. Though designed as a private domestic space for the couple, the interior Mains Street Flat caught the interest of critics with articles having been published in *The Studio* in 1900, and *Modern British Architecture and Decoration* in 1901, both of which were in circulation throughout Europe by this time.²⁵ The critical attention and coverage in these two periodicals would then suggest that by this time, the stylistic developments of Macdonald and Mackintosh, both collectively and individually, had reached a turning point.

2.1.2. Miss Cranston's Tea and Luncheon Rooms

The first commissions for Miss Cranston's Tea and Luncheon Rooms in Glasgow began around 1896 and could be considered to contain some of the most well-known works from Mackintosh and Macdonald overall.²⁶ The designs for Miss Cranston's Ladies' Luncheon Room on Ingram Street, in particular, show distinct similarities to the Mains Street Flat with a cool-toned white and silver-gray color palette with dark and white furniture, a conspicuous horizontal picture rail and contrasting wall straps with one notable addition, the installation of a pair of gesso panels, *The May Queen* (Fig. 9–10) and *The Wassail* (Fig. 11–12) in the upper third of the wall.²⁷

The similarities found in the two facing friezes suggest that could have been created as companion pieces to emphasize the collaborative efforts of Macdonald and Mackintosh, as well as to highlight their own individual stylistic tendencies. Each of the works featured a three-panel assemblage of identical dimensions, each measuring one and a half meters wide and four and a half meters long, which were positioned in the picture rail in the space in the upper third of the wall (Fig. 10, 12). The subject matter of each of the friezes displays a cohesive design

²⁵ Holme 1901, pp. 110–15., Howarth 1952, pp. 43–45., Roberston 2000, pp. 44–45.

²⁶ The professional relationship with Cranston, which lasted the greater part of twenty years, featured not only large-scale architectural and interior designs and corresponding large art works, but also smaller items such as furniture, cutlery and menu cards (Fig. 8). Roberston 2000, p. 44–45., Howarth 1952, p. 121–125. Howarth notes that Cranston, like Macdonald, “contrived to be original in everything.” Whether this is meant as a compliment or critique is unclear on the part of Howarth, although it is notable that Cranston's professional career, like Macdonald's would have been viewed as unconventional. After her marriage in 1894, she kept her maiden name of Cranston, as well as the designation of Miss instead of Misses (Kinchin). In the next two years, she perfected her business model, acquiring three new properties on Ingram Street, Argyle Street, and Buchanan Street. Howarth 1952, pp. 122–123.

²⁷ In a letter from to Hermann Muthesius about the commissions for *The Wassail* and the *May Queen* Mackintosh describes the commission: “Just now we are working on two large panels for the frieze...Miss Margaret Macdonald is doing one and I am doing the other. We are working them together and that makes the work very pleasant. We have set ourselves a large task as we are slightly modelling and then colouring and setting the jewels of different colors.” Mackintosh to Muthesius 12 July 1900. Hermann Muthesius Nachlass, Werkbund Archive, Berlin., Robertson 2000, p. 46.

program, each containing representations of abstracted chestnut-haired female forms with subtle stylistic deviations and a corresponding color palette of ivory, dark red, rose-pink, lavender, and moss-green tones. Whereas Mackintosh's *The Wassail* features six angular female forms that mirror each other, shown in profile in groupings of two, Macdonald's figures in the *May Queen* are comprised of rounded and more abstracted forms, shown in profile in groupings of two on the left and right panels, with a central female form shown facing frontwards.²⁸

Robertson notes that the panels for Miss Cranston's Ingram Street Tea Room would have been Macdonald's and Mackintosh's first official commission featuring the medium of gesso and that neither artist had previously been known to have produced any works in this medium. It is accurate that no other gesso works from either artist before 1900 is known to exist, however it is likely that in order to execute a work on the scale of what was produced for Miss Cranston that Macdonald or Mackintosh may have had some training in plaster-based media at the Glasgow School of Art, especially since the technique had been experiencing a revival in the English Arts and Crafts movement, having been featured and promoted in periodicals of the time, including *The Studio*.²⁹ Regardless of how the two became familiar with the medium, the gesso panels created for Miss Cranston were significant, mostly in the fact that their medium, their unusual placement in the upper third of the wall above the picture rail, as well as the implementation of rounded abstracted female forms initiated a stylistic development on the part of Macdonald that would be further elaborated upon in the Waerndorfer music salon a few years later.

2.2. Macdonald and Mackintosh's Introduction to Fritz Waerndorfer

In comparison with Macdonald and Mackintosh's collaborative works with the Four, their collaboration on the Mains Street Flat and Miss Cranston's tea and luncheon rooms commissions received positive receptions, both in Glasgow and abroad, which increased the couple's exposure in continental Europe substantially. Whereas previous coverage of the work of the Four in German-language publications like *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* would have certainly made its way to Viennese readers, issues of English-language art journals, such as *The Studio*, were known to have been in circulation in select coffee houses and cafes in Vienna around 1900. The availability of such publications would have undoubtedly fostered the

²⁸ Robertson 2000, pp. 45–46.

²⁹ Crane 1893, pp. 44–49., Webb 1894, pp. 153–159., Robertson 2000, pp. 45–46.

Viennese audience's acquaintance with the art scene in the British Isles, which is likely how patrons such as Fritz Waerndorfer, and his peers in Vienna first became acquainted with the Glasgow Style.³⁰

Fritz Waerndorfer was born, Friedrich Wärndorfer,³¹ into a wealthy Jewish industrialist family in Vienna in 1868. Before assuming his role in the family's cotton-spinning factory, Wärndorfer-Benedict-Mautner, in 1895, he spent several years in England, having been sent by his father to observe the textile trade.³² During his stay, much of his attention, however, was not directed upon training for his role in the family business, but in admiring artworks, which began with spending an inordinate amount of time in London's South Kensington Museum and resulted in bidding on artworks at auction throughout the country. Upon his return to Vienna, Waerndorfer was known to have returned with a considerable collection of modern art, including works of artists like Aubrey Beardsley.³³

By the late 1890's, Waerndorfer had been amassed a considerable amount of personal wealth after being made partner in Wärndorfer-Benedict-Mautner and had also assumed an active role as a patron of modern art in Vienna.³⁴ In 1898, Waerndorfer cancelled his membership in Vienna's Künstlerhaus, in favor of tendering support for the nascent Viennese Secession. In doing so, he made a decisive step, becoming one of the leading supporters and patrons of modern art and culture in the city, both assisting in organizing exhibitions and providing financial backing for business ventures like the Wiener Werkstätte and Kabarett Fledermaus, as well as for young artists such as Oskar Kokoschka and Egon Schiele. It was likely that around this time, Waerndorfer was introduced, probably by Hermann Bahr, to Josef Hoffmann, although the circumstances under which the two met are not well-documented. Nonetheless,

³⁰Sekler notes that Josef Hoffmann in particular may have seen the group's work for the first time in *The Studio* in 1897. Sekler 1982, p. 39., Several sources indicated that *The Studio* would have been in circulation in Vienna beginning as early as 1898. Vergo notes Café Piccola in Casa Piccola on Mariahilferstraße as furnishing English-language publications such as *The Studio* and *Vanity Fair* for their patrons in 1900. Vergo 2000, p. 25., Katalog zur 66. Sonderausstellung des historischen Museums der Stadt Wien 1980, pp. 74, 90.,

³¹ Sometime after his return from London, Waerndorfer changed the spelling of his name, likely as a reflection of what Vergo notes as, the family's "affection for all things English," which was not simply limited to art and design. Lili (née Hellmann) and Fritz Waerndorfer (married 1896) were known to speak English exclusively with their children and to each other in their home. Vergo 1983, p. 403.

³² Wärndorfer-Benedict-Mautner was, at this point in time, one of the largest textile producers in the Austro-Hungarian empire, with factories in Nachod in Bohemia and in Günselsdorf in Lower Austria. Vergo p. 33., Vergo 1983, p. 403., Shapira 2006, pp. 53–54.

³³ Vergo 2000, p. 33., Vergo 1983, p. 403., Shapira 2010, pp. 73–74., Sekler 1982, p. 62.

³⁴ Vergo 1983, pp. 403–404.

the two formed a quick comradeship which centered around their interests for modern international art and design.³⁵

Beginning in June 1900, Waerndorfer traveled to Paris with Hoffmann and Kolo Moser for the Exposition Universelle.³⁶ After parting ways with Moser and Hoffman, he continued to London, and eventually Glasgow, where he would have encountered the works of Macdonald and Mackintosh. Back in Vienna, preparations for the VIII. Exhibition of the Viennese Secession were well underway, with Hoffmann as taking the lead as organizer. Although in retrospect, it would seem reasonable that the second leg of Waerndorfer's trip would have been directly related to procuring participants for the upcoming exhibition, particularly given his command of the English language, the exact purpose Waerndorfer's travels to Glasgow are unclear. It has been suggested that he planned the journey under the guise of a business trip, with the ulterior motive of pursuing the interests of his art patronage and collecting.³⁷ This suspicion is strengthened by the numerous correspondences with Hoffmann³⁸ regarding an upcoming exhibition at the Viennese Secession that was to take place later that year, meaning Waerndorfer may have been sent to Glasgow with the specific intention of meeting Macdonald and Mackintosh.³⁹

The previous international exposure received as part of their Glasgow interiors, as well as their single works in the aforementioned international publications suggest that Waerndorfer could have had some previous knowledge of their work, at least from photographs. The exact turn of events under which he met Macdonald and Mackintosh in Glasgow, however, is not specifically documented. At the time of Waerndorfer's arrival in Glasgow, the commission for Miss Cranston's Buchanan Street Tea Room, completed by Mackintosh in 1896 with its stenciled wall décor, the depictions of large-scaled stylized and abstracted female forms with

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 402–403.

³⁶ The 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris and its focus on contemporary design trends across Europe was a catalyst for the VIII. Exhibition of the Vienna Secession. Josef Hoffmann, Kolo Moser, Carl Moll and other members of the Viennese Secession were known to have been in attendance, where they were encouraged by Hermann Bahr and Julius Meier-Graefe to stage their own exhibition in Vienna centering on other design trends across Europe. Shapira 2010, p. 73.

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 402–403., Shapira 2016, p. 122.

³⁸ Sekler asserts that due to his previous familiarities with Great Britain, Waerndorfer must have been sent to Glasgow as a middle man specifically to become acquainted with the Glasgow scene in the hopes of procuring artists for the upcoming VIII. Exhibition of the Vienna Secession. Sekler 1982, p. 39.

³⁹ Correspondence from 1902 between Waerndorfer and Hoffmann, makes mention of Waerndorfer having been “sent” to Glasgow. If this was the case, the purpose of Waerndorfer's visit could have been to view the works of Macdonald and Mackintosh first-hand, as well as to satisfy his and Hoffmann's curiosities about what was happening in Glasgow at this time. Vergo 2000, p. 28., Vergo 1983, p. 403.

symbolic details, would have been on display (Fig. 13).⁴⁰ In this case, it is possible that he could have viewed their work, even before establishing contact with Macdonald and Mackintosh.

Much of the previous research surrounding the topic of Waerndorfer's intentions in travelling to Glasgow favor a somewhat romanticized, rosy depiction of Waerndorfer's urgent need to find the two in Glasgow, the evidence confirming or debunking this is simply insufficient. Regardless of how the exact sequence of events unfolded, it appears that Waerndorfer, Macdonald, and Mackintosh had become rather well-acquainted in a short period of time, even making excursions to the lake districts around Scotland. By the end of the month, Waerndorfer sent a telegraph to Hoffmann, stating his excitement upon discovering Mackintosh's work, saying that he had already spoken with Henry van de Velde in Paris, Robert Ashbee in London, and Mackintosh in Glasgow, and that they had all agreed to take part in the upcoming exhibition of the Viennese Secession that was to take place in November.⁴¹

2.3. VIII. Exhibition of the Vienna Secession, 3 November–27 December 1900

By the end of Waerndorfer's trip to Glasgow, arrangements were made for Macdonald and Mackintosh to show their work at the upcoming exhibition in Vienna.⁴² In July of 1900 Mackintosh corresponded with Hermann Muthesius reporting that he and Macdonald had been invited to send their works to Vienna for their inclusion in the VIII. Exhibition of the Vienna Secession and that an all-expense paid trip was to follow in October.⁴³ Articles in Viennese periodicals support the evidence that they arrived in the city in time for the opening of the exhibition and stayed for about six weeks.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Robertson 2000 p. 48.

⁴¹ Vergo 2000, p. 28. Vergo 1983, p. 403., Howarth 1952, p. 155., Shapira 2010, p. 73–74.

⁴² Although it is certain that Waerndorfer made contact with the couple in the spring 1900, oddly no letters between Hoffman and the couple are known to have been exchanged until late December of 1900. The purpose of this letter was to thank Hoffmann for the couple's warm reception in the city: "We feel very much indebted to you for this and for other honours you and your colleagues have offered us, and we will always remember with pleasure your kindness to us when we were in Vienna. I know well the artistic achievement of your exhibition. I hope it is receiving public recognition and support it deserves." Sekler 1973, pp. 138–139.

⁴³ Hermann Muthesius Estate, Brief von Charles Rennie Mackintosh an Hermann Muthesius, 12. Juli 1900, URL: <https://sammlung.museumderdinge.de/objekte?keys=mackintosh>, [03.05.2024].

⁴⁴ Robertson 2000, p. 47., During the seven weeks in which the exhibition took place, 24,455 visitors crossed the threshold of the Vienna Secession to view the newest trends in modern pan-European design. In total 241 pieces were sold, earning 57,200 Kronen in revenue. Vergo 1983 p. 403., When speaking to 'a visitor' from Vienna years later, Mackintosh is said to have regarded the six weeks spent in Vienna in 1900 as the "high point of his life." Sekler 1982, p. 39.

The exhibition catalog lists room ten as “Saal X: Collection von Chas. R. Mackintosh und Margaret Macdonald-Mackintosh,”⁴⁵ although the room contained several works from Frances, and her spouse J.H. MacNair.⁴⁶ The majority of the listings of the artworks in the catalog are extremely vague, with general designations for the items and artworks such as *Aquarelle (Watercolor)*, *Sessel (Chair)*, *Rauchschränk (Smoker’s Cabinet)*, *Panel*, *Uhr (Clock)*, although it does mention the *May Queen (Die Maikönigin für Miss Cranstons Kaffeehaus in Glasgow)*⁴⁷ (Figs. 15 and 16) and *The Wassail (Frühlingsfest für Miss Cranstons Kaffeehaus in Glasgow)* (Fig. 17) by name, but neglects to provide information on the format or media.⁴⁸ Extant photographs of the room (Figs. 15–17) provide more insight into some of the pieces displayed, and, most importantly, clearly show the gesso panels, mounted facing each other in the upper third of the wall, between the picture rail and the ceiling, which corresponds exactly how they were to be installed upon their return to Glasgow in early 1901.⁴⁹

The staging and design of the Scottish Room, with its sparse furnishings and white walls initiated a departure from the Viennese Secession’s previous exhibitions, presenting, as one review in a 1901 issue of *Innendekoration* stated, a “completely white room, which one could say was wallpapered with boards.”⁵⁰ This observation is undoubtedly a reference to the woodwork panels on the walls, which would have been nearly identical to those in the Mains Street Flat in Glasgow. Photographs from the IX. Exhibition of the Vienna Secession in 1901 demonstrate that the overall appearance of the Scottish Room could have also influenced the way in which future exhibitions were staged at the Vienna Secession. When comparing photographs from an exhibition in 1898 (Fig. 18) and the IX. Exhibition in 1901 (Fig. 19), the layout of the space clearly demonstrates how the densely furnished, jumbled appearance with heavy pleated textiles, ornate plant accents, and dark furnishings in the photograph were

⁴⁵ Of the thirty-two works submitted for the Scottish Room (Catalog nos. 528–560), nine are attributed to Macdonald, and fifteen pieces are attributed to Mackintosh, three of which contain panels from Macdonald. Vereinigung bildender Kunst Österreichs Secession 1900, pp. 35–36.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 35–36., The room would have been positioned just to the side of the entrance hall (Fig. 14). Ibid. p. 1., Though not specifically mentioned in the catalog listing, photographs from the exhibition designate the room as “The Scottish Room ” or “The Mackintosh Room.” Fred 1901, p. 36., Vergo and Billcliffe note that some of the designations of which work belonged to whom in the catalog is likely inaccurate. Billcliffe/Vergo 1977, pp. 739–743.

⁴⁷ Vereinigung bildender Kunst Österreichs Secession 1900, p. 36.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 1900, pp. 35–36., Vergo 1983, p. 403.

⁴⁹ Billcliffe/Vergo 1977, 739–40, Vereinigung bildender Kunst Österreichs Secession pp. 35–36., Vergo 2000, p. 29., Robertson 2000, p. 47., Frances and MacNair had relocated to Liverpool by this time and were not present at the exhibition. Helland 1991, p. 182.

⁵⁰ “Der Raum ist ganz weiss, man könnte sagen mit Brettern tapeziert (Sic!).“ Fred 1901, p. 35.

abandoned in favor of a white interior with comparatively sparse décor with clean lines just one year after the Scottish Room had been unveiled.⁵¹

In terms of later exhibitions at the Vienna Secession, the Scottish Room indicated a decisive departure from stylistic qualities of the Franco-Belgian Art Nouveau, and instead began to demonstrate a marked increase in similarities with its Glaswegian counterpart.⁵² Likewise, the dual-facing gesso panels, *The Wassail* and *The May Queen*, with regard to their mixed media technique, abstracted human forms, and placement on the upper third of the wall also demonstrate distinct similarities to Gustav Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze* (Fig. 20), which was first exhibited at the XIV. Exhibition of the Vienna Secession in the summer of 1902.⁵³ Billcliffe and Vergo propose that the "curious positioning"⁵⁴ of the two friezes shown at the 1900 exhibition must have served as inspiration for Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze* two years later, citing the lack of believable space of the friezes as inspiration for Klimt's choice of *mise en scène*.⁵⁵ Aside from the works' most obvious commonalities, namely gesso as the medium and their placement on the upper-third of the wall in the basement of the Secession, the "Floating Genii" (Fig. 21) in the first panel of Klimt's frieze, for example, demonstrate the artist's implementation of flattened, two-dimensional forms that occupy an undefined space. Additionally, the implementation of line as well as the emphasis on ornament, specifically of mother-of-pearl and metallic tones show that Macdonald and Mackintosh's panels from the 1900 exhibition may have had some influence on Klimt's final product, as seen in the central panel of the *Beethoven Frieze* (Fig. 22).⁵⁶

⁵¹ The similarities would have been most evident in the contrast between the white walls and the darker tonalities of the furnishings, but also in the spatial positionings found within the rooms, with the central areas of the room being left mostly empty. Plakholm-Forsthuber 1986, p. 115–116., Billcliffe/Vergo 1977, pp. 740., Vergo 1983, pp. 403–404.

⁵² As Plakholm-Forsthuber maintains, recognizing this shift is not intended to suggest that the Glasgow style would have been singly responsible for such changes, rather that it was indicative of the result of a development that had been emerging for some time, which was perhaps implemented in the stylistic qualities of the Scottish Room, but does not present a complete causal relationship. This would have been perhaps most recognizable in the implementation of rectilinear and geometric forms paired with curvilinear motifs. Plakholm-Forsthuber 1986, p. 116.

⁵³ The elongated oval-shaped and rounded forms found in *The May Queen* and *The Wassail* would have likely influenced the work of Kolo Moser, especially between 1904 and 1904. Plakholm-Forsthuber 1986, p. 16.

⁵⁴ Billcliffe/Vergo 1977, pp. 740.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Crawford 2002, p. 79.

2.3.1. Reception of the Scottish Room

Though the entire Scottish Room demonstrated a departure from what had been seen previously during the first six exhibitions of the Vienna Secession, the gesso friezes from Macdonald and Mackintosh seemed to receive the lion's share of attention. Coverage of their submissions in *Dekorative Kunst* from early 1901 noted that "the(ir) stringent, almost rigid linear structure led us into a far-off, seemingly phantasmal world, that, once we have accustomed ourselves to the strangeness of the local surroundings, is imbued with sufficient fantastic, poetic, and spiritually expressive qualities which exert a highly artistic impression on us."⁵⁷ The February 1901 issue of *Innendekoration* featured a review of the exhibition, in which the author described Macdonald's frieze in particular as "depicting ghost-like, slim, stylized women whose homeland, in addition to the shadowy realm of ghosts, is also Japan"⁵⁸ with "an impulse of originality that borders on cartoonish."⁵⁹ In the same passage, the author attempts to identify the unconventional media in which the friezes were carried out as having been "ingeniously glued to the wall with glazier's putty with all other sorts of materials—coal beads, string, tin-plates, et cetera."⁶⁰

Waerndorfer's reaction to the works of Macdonald and Mackintosh at the 1900 exhibition is not known to have been documented and his purchases were surprisingly few—a silver brooch, a drawing, and two prints from Macdonald.⁶¹ Waerndorfer's commissioning of a cutlery set from Hoffmann completed in 1904 can be traced back to the oval, "eye-shaped"⁶² headrest of the high-backed chair under Macdonald's frieze (Fig. 23) in the Scottish Room, which is seen most prominently in the serving spoons (Fig. 24).⁶³ The purchases from the exhibition and the commissioning of a cutlery set inspired by one of Mackintosh's chairs from the Scottish Room indicate that the couple's submissions to the exhibition seemed to resonate with Waerndorfer,

⁵⁷ „Ihre strenge, beinahe starre Linienführung führt uns in eine fern abliegende, fast geisterhaft anmutende Welt, die, wenn, wir erst das Fremdartige der dortigen Umgebung überwunden haben, genug des Märchenhaften, Poetischen und seelische Ausdrucksvollen hat, um eine hohe künstlerische Wirkung auf uns auszuüben.“ Scheffler 1901, p. 181.

⁵⁸ “Die Frieze sind gebildet und gespensterhaft schlank stilisierten Frauen, deren Heimath ausser dem Schattenreich der Gespenster auch Japan ist. Diese Figurinen sind in Glaserkitt und allerhand anderem Material—Jetperlen, Spagatschüren, Blechplättchen usw.—recht geistreich an die Wand geklebt. [...] Sie sind das Werk von Frau Margaret Mackintosh und weisen, wie alles in diesem Raume, einen ans Karrikaturistische (Sic!) grenzenden Trieb zum Originellen auf.“ Fred 1901, p. 38.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Sekler 1973, pp. 139–140.

⁶² Billcliffe/Vergo 1977, p. 740., Shapira 2010, p. 77.

⁶³ The set was later reproduced and sold in the Wiener Werkstätte, with limited success. Shapira 2010 p. 77., Hevesi also remarks on the unusual shape and proportions of the spoons in “Haus Wärndorfer” in *Alt Kunst-Neu Kunst*, claiming that they could function as a topic for a lecture on logic: “Eine Saucelöffel könnte als Thema für einen Vortrag über Logik dienen.” Hevesi 1905, p. 222.

which begs the question of whether he would have purchased the *May Queen* and *The Wassail* had they not already been spoken for.

2.4. The I. International Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art, Turin, 1902

In 1902, Macdonald and Mackintosh were invited to participate in the I. International Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art in Turin. The exhibition featured an intercontinental lineup of artists from Europe and the Americas, with an entire section dedicated to works from Scottish artists, which were selected under the supervision of Francis “Fra” Newbery.⁶⁴ Of the three rooms included in the “Scottish Section”⁶⁵ of the exhibition, Macdonald and Mackintosh were allotted the entire first room, which they titled the “A Rose Boudoir” (Fig. 25–27).⁶⁶ The allotment of a dedicated space in which to stage a conceptualized interior presented a significant opportunity for the two to demonstrate an ongoing stylistic progression as a synthesis of architectural design, ornamentation, and pictorial composition, therein creating the basis on which the Waerndorfer music salon would be conceived.

The layout of the room corresponded with the Mains Street Flat and the Scottish Room with contrasting curvilinear and rectilinear whitewashed panels, with silver, green, lavender, and rose accents and sparse furnishings, creating what one reviewer noted as a “feeling of quiet repose, of coolness and of freshness.”⁶⁷ The furniture shows some distinct similarities with the Mains Street Flat, with large armchairs with high backs featuring stenciled floral designs on the back and headrests and low, trapezoidal seats (Fig. 28) positioned around a low table (Fig. 29),⁶⁸ and a dark wood secretary desk (Fig. 30).⁶⁹ In comparison to the Scottish Room from 1900, the room included the staging of light fixtures designed by Macdonald and Mackintosh

⁶⁴ Robertson 2000, pp. 48–49., In Vol. 12 of *The Studio*, 1902, the article credits Mackintosh with the architectural design of the “Scottish Section” of the exhibition. *The Studio* 1902, p. 93.

⁶⁵ *The Studio* 1902, p. 91.

⁶⁶ “the first room on entering is occupied with the work of the architect [Mackintosh] of and his wife, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh. Short screens projecting into the room at right angles to the walls, indicate a division into two parts, and one of these parts has been treated as, and is called, “A Rose Boudoir.” *The Studio* 1902, p. 95

⁶⁷ “The first room is white, silver and rose; the second toned white and grey gold, enlivened on one wall by a frieze of pink and green; while the other largest room is golden purple and white. All wall spaces above the window-sill line and all the ceilings, have been whitewashed and the woodwork throughout painted white. A feeling of quiet repose, of coolness and of freshness, pervades the room, and the work there is a reserve which recalls the temperament of the nation to which the architect belongs.” *The Studio* 1902, p. 94.

⁶⁸ Robertson describes the table as an “an extraterrestrial insect that has temporarily come to rest.” Robertson 2000, p. 56.

⁶⁹ A review from *The Studio* confirms the layout and characteristics of the furniture: “Set out on the floor are various articles of furniture, notably a black wood writing cabinet by Charles R. Mackintosh, with panels of painted gesso and silver by Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh; and chairs and a table of white wood inlaid with ivory, and a chair in black and purple.” *The Studio* 1902, p. 95.

suspended from the ceiling that ran the length of room, creating, according to a review from *The Studio*, the “effect of falling streams as of a white rain, while the little lamps, hanging bare and without reflectors, look like drops of water.”⁷⁰

2.4.1. *The White Rose and The Red Rose and The Heart of the Rose*

Like the Scottish Room, the Rose Boudoir featured a pair of gesso panels with abstracted female forms, *The White Rose and The Red Rose* (Fig. 31) and *The Heart of the Rose* (Fig. 32), albeit with a more complex linear structure and the inclusion of distinctive elements of symbolism, two fundamental aspects which would be carried over into the Waerndorfer music salon and *The Seven Princesses* frieze. Unlike the frieze panels from the Scottish Room, the gessos were presented in comparatively smaller quadrilinear format, each measuring approximately one hundred centimeters square, that were positioned at central points in the wall at each end of the room.⁷¹

Whereas the *May Queen* featured a sense of vertical symmetry, with two mirror-image groupings of identical standing figures flanking the central figure contained within an equally symmetrical rectilinear construction, Macdonald seems to have abandoned this motif partially. Instead, she opted for a repetition of curvilinear constructs, which are most prominent in the highly abstracted forms that make up the two figures’ bodies as well as in the repetition of the concentric circular forms of the rose motif. Also, the way in which she has chosen to represent the more “realistic” qualities of the figures, as seen in their heads, demonstrates a distinct example of a stylistic evolution. In the *May Queen*, uniformly implemented hairstyles—unbound, in a natural chestnut-brown hue and adorned with an indistinguishable floral ornamentation, drape down below the bare shoulders of each figure. In *The White Rose and The Red Rose*, the location of the faces provides the single proof that the ovoid curvilinear structures are intended to represent an abstract depiction of the bodies of the non-identical figures with cropped hairstyles adorned with the concentric rose motif, which appear to dissolve into the repetitive curves and lines that comprise the figures to which they belong.

The figures in the Turin gessos seem to amalgamate into the linear composition of the panels, whereas those in the *May Queen* are clearly delineated from the background. This dissolution of figures into the linear structure of the composition featured in the Turin panels would emerge as one of the most prominent traits of *The Seven Princesses* frieze. According to Robertson,

⁷⁰ “each on its cord of flexible wire, they give the effect of falling streams as of a white rain, while the little lamps, hanging bare and without reflectors, look like drops of water.” Ibid., pp. 94–95.

⁷¹ *The Studio* 1902, p. 95.

interpretations of *The White Rose and The Red Rose* are informed by the understanding of the work as a representation of themes of passive (slumbering) and active (awakened) love,⁷² which marked the beginning of the evolution of Macdonald's formal and symbolic program that would come to dominate her later works, beginning with her next major undertaking, *The Seven Princesses* frieze. Robertson's overall interpretation of *The White Rose and The Red Rose*, in this case seem slightly plausible, but as will be demonstrated in the following chapters, seem to lend their way to a massive oversimplification of Macdonald's symbolic program overall, especially as relating to *The Seven Princesses*.⁷³

2.4.2. The "Mackintosh Rose"

The Rose Boudoir also initiated the inclusion of a new design motif, what would come to be known as the "Mackintosh Rose," that permeated multiple aspects of the space, stenciled and inlaid on fabrics and furniture in varying shades of light red, pink, lavender, and ivory. The reimagined rose motif would have previously been known as the Cabbage-Rose, which was symbolic of decadence and was also used by Beardsley, which the Glasgow artists employed as a functional aspect of their designs as "a punctuation point in the eye's progress"⁷⁴ across a composition.⁷⁵

With the later implementation of the rose motif in mind, it should be noted that, while the motif was introduced as a component of a collaborative interior from Macdonald and Mackintosh, it is not entirely accurate to refer to Macdonald's rose motif, as it was seen in the gesso panels at the Turin exhibition and thereafter, as the "Mackintosh Rose."⁷⁶ In this sense, the term applies more accurately to the stenciled ornamental motif as seen on furniture created for various interiors, including the Waerndorfer music salon. As the gesso panels for the Rose Boudoir demonstrate, Macdonald's representation of this motif is more complex, performing in this case a symbolic function representative of a life force and an oppositional duality—virginity and fertility, rather than a purely decorative purpose, as seen in the stencils on the chairs.⁷⁷ When applying this premise on the rose motif's symbolic function to the forms represented in the *Heart of the Rose*, this certainly seems plausible. In this work, the figures are surrounded

⁷²Furthermore, Robertson notes that the figures are intended to evoke imagery of an awakened figure (with a white rose) and a sleeping figure (with a red rose). Robertson 2000, pp. 48–51.

⁷³ Robertson 2000, pp. 50–51.

⁷⁴ White 1989, p. 14

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Robertson and Crawford particularly favor this designation. Robertson 2000, pp. 48–49., Crawford 2002, p. 95.

⁷⁷ Crawford 2002, p. 95.

by white and pale colored roses, while the single red rose in the composition is seen cradling a baby, which could represent fertility, the womb, or other aspects of birth or reproduction.⁷⁸

2.4.3. Reception of the Rose Boudoir

The Rose Boudoir was featured in international publications from continental Europe, Great Britain, and the Americas. In a review in *The Architectural Record*, a critic mentioned the Rose Boudoir as the “boldest note”⁷⁹ of the entire exhibition, stating that “extraordinary images of so personal a character that the general public and some timid artists lose their bearings the moment they set eyes on them.”⁸⁰ From the review it is difficult to decipher if the phrasing “of so personal a character”⁸¹ is intended as laudatory or not, although it would seem to suggest that one may have found the space as a personal retreat, which seems to correspond somewhat with the “feeling of repose”⁸² noted in *The Studio*’s review.

Nonetheless, the reception of the Scottish Section appears to have been broadly positive. In comparison to the reception of the Scottish Room at the 1900 exhibition, reviews of the Rose Boudoir make specific mention of the design and layout of the room, beyond terminology relating to its otherworldliness. Instead, certain reviews mention the room as a composed entity in addition to mentioning the prominent linear structure found in the woodwork, the lighting, as well as in Macdonald’s panels, which in turn may suggest the importance of line in the viewer’s perception of the room. Such descriptions were chiefly evident in the German-language edition of the exhibition catalog published by Alexander Koch, the editor for *Deutsche Kunst in Dekoration*,⁸³ with text contributions from George Fuchs and Fra Newberry. In the section entitled, “Mackintosh und die Schule von Glasgow in Turin,” Fuchs expressed his delight in the Rose Boudoir’s layout and décor:

“And so, in these Glasgow forms we suddenly have an almost excessive amount of character, an architectural style that seems almost oppressive. The straight line, especially the vertical line, has become a principle and stretches out so high that it seems almost ghostly. Wherever a curve appears, it is so timid that it dares to venture out very little. Every attack of softness is whipped out of the field by an uncanny multiplication of verticals. Rigidly and almost spookily, the extremities stretch into a bony angularity.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Melani 1902, p. 740.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., *The Studio* 1902, p. 94.

⁸³ The exhibition was also reviewed in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, Vol. 10, in 1902.

An extreme architectural regularity is pursued through the increase in the repetitions of similar extremities—As far as the masculine framework of this art is concerned, it also has a feminine side, that is equally as soft as the masculine side is hard.[...] We encounter it in the content, which mostly consists of decorative line compositions and especially in the rigid architectural frame, creating an impressive contrasting effect through its dynamic softness. The undulating line so dominates and overgrows every other point of view that this line becomes the end goal in itself and even almost defeats the objective. The human figure seems to be just an excuse to delight in its depiction of sweet lines; it is elongated as required or changed to the impossible; in any case, it is merely decorative.”⁸⁴

Here Fuchs’s articulation of the interplay between angularity and curvilinear forms demonstrates a perceptible contrast presented in the interior as a whole. Furthermore, his assertion of the representations of the human figure as an excuse to expand the linear aspects of the interior beyond purely decorative terms, suggests that Macdonald and Mackintosh’s interiors had achieved a level of transcendence, therein forming a carefully composed whole, whose overall impact on the viewer represented far more than the sum of its parts.

In the closing sentences of the catalog entry for the Scottish Section, Fuchs mentions the room in a literary context: “It is quite strange how much one feels to be in the company of poets when one spends time in the Mackintosh room or is in the presence of their dreamy folios.”⁸⁵ He follows this statement by suggesting that the ethereal nature the surroundings would be a suitable space in which to stage plays by Maeterlinck,⁸⁶ which would seem to presage

⁸⁴ „Und so haben wir auch in diesen Glasgower Formenwelt plötzlich fast ein Übermaß von Charakter, eine fast drückend wirkende Architektonik. Die Gerade, besonders die Senkrechte, ist zum Prinzip erhoben und reckt sich so hoch heraus, dass sie fast geisterhaft wirkt. Wo eine Kurve auftritt, ist ihr eine solche Furchtsamkeit eigen, dass sie sich nur wenig herauswagt. Jeder Anfall von Weichheit wird durch eine unheimliche Vervielfachung von Senkrechten aus dem Felde gepeitscht. Starr und fast spukhaft recken sich die Glieder in knochiger Eckigkeit. Eine äusserste architektonische Gesetzmässigkeit wird durch fast übertriebene Steigerung der Wiederholung gleicher Glieder angestrebt—Soweit das Gerippe dieser Kunst, ihre männliche Seite. Sie hat aber auch eine weibliche, die fast ebenso sehr weiblich-weich ist, wie die andere männlichhart.[...] Wir begegnen ihr in den Füllungen, welche zumeist aus dekorativen Linien-Kompositionen bestehen und gerade in dem starr-architektonischen Rahmen durch ihre schwungvolle Weichheit eine eindrucksvolle Gegensatz-Wirkung erzeugen. In ihnen überwiegt und überwuchert die wogende Linie so sehr jeden andern Gesichtspunkt, dass diese Linie für sich zum Endzweck wird und sogar das Gegenständliche fast ertötet. Die menschliche Figur scheint nur ein Vorwand zu sein, um sich bei ihrer Darstellung in süßem Linien-Gewoge zu ergötzen, sie wird nach Bedarf in die Länge gezogen oder ins Unmögliche verändert, jedenfalls ist sie lediglich dekorativ.“ Fuchs 1902, pp. 61–62.

⁸⁵ „Es ist ganz seltsam, wie sehr man sich bei Poeten glaubt, wenn man in Gemächern der Mackintosh’s verweilt, oder ihre träumerischen Blätter besieht.“ Fuchs 1902, p. 63.

⁸⁶ “Man möchte Stücke von Maeterlinck in diesen Stuben spielen: und so gut man sich die verhängnisvollen Feen dieses Dichters denken kann, wie sie gleichgültig auf diesen hochlehnigen Stühlen sitzen wie Geschwister der verschwimmenden Gestalten auf den Teppichen und Geräten, so sehr zweifelt man zuweilen daran, dass

Macdonald's next commission for Waerndorfer's music salon,⁸⁷ but could also suggest that Fuchs's mention of Maeterlinck in his review of the exhibition could have influenced the decision to choose *The Seven Princesses* as a leitmotif of the music salon, upon which Macdonald chose to elaborate with her own brand of symbolism.⁸⁸

3. The Waerndorfer Music Salon

In 1902, Waerndorfer met Macdonald and Mackintosh again at the Turin exhibition, where he purchased *The White Rose and the Red Rose*, and *The Heart of the Rose*, as well as a writing desk from Mackintosh with inlaid gesso panels by Macdonald (Fig. 30).⁸⁹ Waerndorfer's attendance at the Turin exhibition would seem to indicate that he may have traveled there with the intention of acquiring further works from the couple, as well as to possibly discuss the commission of the music salon in his villa in Vienna. However, exactly how the series of events leading up to the commission for the music salon took shape remains unclear. The sole piece of surviving correspondence with any correlation to the commission from early 1901⁹⁰ until exhibition in Turin April of 1902, exists in the form of a letter from Waerndorfer to Hoffmann dated 29 April 1902, in which he asks for Hoffmann's assistance in deciphering a set of architectural plans he had recently received from Mackintosh.⁹¹ On the basis of this letter, it is likely that Waerndorfer had indeed had correspondence with Mackintosh between late 1900 and early 1902, although no letters between Mackintosh and Waerndorfer relating to the commission have survived.

Menschen aus Fleisch und Blut darinnen arbeiten und ruhen, schmausen und lachen und Kinder erziehen könnte.“ Fuchs 1902, p. 63.

⁸⁷ Robertson 2000, p. 51

⁸⁸ Shapira 2006, p. 71.

⁸⁹ A bill of sale, dated from the 24. November 1902 (Fig. 33),⁸⁹ found in the Hunterian Gallery archives can confirm the purchase of the two gesso panels, although the purchase can also be confirmed from *The Studio's* reviews of the Scottish Section, with the captions for each photograph reading, “by permission of Fritz Wärndorfer, Esq.” According to an inventory slip (Fig. 34) from the exhibition, in Mackintosh's handwriting, the gesso panels were only available for purchase as duplicates, which suggests that Waerndorfer could have arranged the purchase of the panels before the start of the exhibition. Joseph Sharples, The Hunterian Blog, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh: The White Rose and the Red Rose, 05.09.2023, URL: <https://hunterian.blog/margaret-macdonald-mackintosh-gesso-panel/>, [04.09.2024]., *The Studio* 1902, p. 95–97.

The writing desk was donated to the MAK in 1938, but the two gesso panels, *The White Rose and the Red Rose* and *The Heart of the Rose* could have remained in the Waerndorfer family for a time after the sale of the villa. MAK Sammlung Online, Schreibschrank, präsentiert auf der Internationalen Ausstellung für moderne dekorative Kunst in Turin 1902, URL: https://sammlung.mak.at/de/collect/schreibschrank-praesentiert-auf-derinternationalen-ausstellung-fuer-modernedekorative-kunst-in-turin-1902_185015, [28.08.2024].

⁹⁰ Lili Waerndorfer sent a picture postcard commemorating the VIII. Exhibition of the Vienna Secession to the couple in Glasgow in early 1901 (Fig. 35).

⁹¹ Universität für angewandte Kunst Wien, Kunstsammlung und Archiv: Brief von Fritz Waerndorfer an Josef Hoffmann, 29 April 1902, Inv. Nr. 3997, URL: <https://www.architektenlexikon.at/de/351.htm#Werke>, [07.02.2024], Sekler 1973, p. 139–140., Sekler confirms that Hoffmann assisted in interpreting the architectural plans for the music salon. Sekler 1982, p. 62.

3.1. Architectural Renovations

Since the space for the music salon would have measured five by six meters, commissioning a music salon in a home that only afforded him a modest amount of space for gathering and entertainment may seem like a curious choice on the part of the patron. This choice was likely not influenced by Waerndorfer's love of music necessarily, but rather by the fact that a music room would have been a considered fashionable component of a modern "artistic" home. The various seating arrangements, including the inglenook and the seating areas in the main part of the room, would have reflected Waerndorfer's interest in relaxing formal social codes of behavior relating to entertaining in order to facilitate various social occasions. In doing so, the interests of the guests' need to withdraw into private conversations as well as to mingle with larger groups during their visit to the salon could be respected.⁹²

General renovations for the Waerndorfer villa in Karl-Ludwig-Straße 45 in the Cottage Viertel⁹³ had been underway since Waerndorfer purchased the property in 1896.⁹⁴ The approval for the architectural renovations for the music salon and the adjoining dining room,⁹⁵ designed by Hoffmann is dated 21 June of 1902 (Fig. 36).⁹⁶ By the end of the summer of 1902,

⁹² The Waerndorfer music salon, like many other salons of its time throughout Vienna and Europe featured a carefully constructed design program in which the inhabitants of the home and their visitors would interact amongst conceptualized surroundings—that is to say, the salon was a room for reception and entertaining as well as a space in which one could experience more intimate, aesthetically pleasing surroundings. Waerndorfer was not known specifically to be interested in music (his other interests such as art or literature were often discussed at length), although his associations with dancers from the Kabarett Fledermaus and elsewhere suggest a marked interest in modern dance. To support Waerndorfer's relative lack of interest in music, a note to Hoffmann stating that the Waerndorfers chose not to use their tickets for a performance of the *Götterdämmerung* at the Vienna Opera House in the interest of arranging a new sideboard in the dining room which they had recently received from Hoffmann was cited by Vergo and Shapira. Unfortunately, the location of this letter was not able to be identified with absolute certainty. Vergo 2000, p. 35., Shapira 2010, pp. 72–73.

⁹³ The house was originally built by Franz Ržiha, who received permission from the city to begin building in 1882. The house was designed and built by the firm, Laske-Fiala, who built numerous homes in the "English-style" in Vienna's Cottage Viertel in the eighteenth district after the neighborhood began development in the mid-1870's. Architekturzentrum Wien, Oskar Laske sen., Architektenlexikon 1770–1945, <https://www.architektenlexikon.at/de/351.htm#Werke>, [18.02.2024].

⁹⁴ The current address of the villa is Weimarer Straße 45, in Vienna's eighteenth district (corner of Weimarer Straße and Colloredo-Gasse). Karl-Ludwig-Straße was changed to Weimarer Straße in 1919. Vergo 2000, p. 29–33., Vergo 1983, p. 403., Property records from the city of Vienna in 1928 list the year of construction ("erbaut") as 1880, likely reference when the parcel of land was originally purchased. Salzberg 1928, p. 42.

⁹⁵ Hoffmann's dining room and the music salon were likely commissioned at the same time, although the construction of the music salon slightly predates that of the dining room. In the spring of 1902, Hoffmann would have been responsible for the "Beethoven Exhibition" at the Vienna Secession, so it is highly likely that work in the dining room would have begun in the mid-summer of 1902. Vergo 1983, p. 404.

⁹⁶ Fig. 36 shows the surviving architectural drawings for the Mackintosh's proposal for Waerndorfer music salon, dated 21. June 1902, although it is not in his hand. On the bottom right of the sheet, is the signature of the construction company, Laske-Fiala next to Waerndorfer's name and address. In this case the plans must have been redrawn after Waerndorfer asked for Hoffmann's assistance. Universität für angewandte Kunst Wien, Kunstsammlung und Archiv: Brief von Fritz Waerndorfer an Josef Hoffmann, 29 April 1902, Inv. Nr. 3997, URL: <https://www.architektenlexikon.at/de/351.htm#Werke>, [07.02.2024]. Vergo 2000, pp. 32–33.,

the commission for the music salon was already in progress, consisting of two main structural alterations: 1) the creation of a large bay with a large window facing Colloredogasse, opposite the doorway to the adjacent dining room, providing a flood of natural light into the room during the daytime,⁹⁷ and 2) a structural break through the north-facing wall to create an inglenook seating area that increased the available floor space of the room, as well as offering a cozy retreat for guests. Within the inglenook, a new fireplace with a short chimney, a shallow bay with upholstered banquettes on the east and west-facing sides, and a small window above the fireplace were installed.⁹⁸

3.2. Furnishings and Their Arrangement

For Macdonald and Mackintosh, the commission of the music salon would have afforded them an extraordinary opportunity to work with a like-minded patron, with full creative control. As per their agreement, little to no changes to Macdonald and Mackintosh's initial plans were known to have been made. As for the financial aspects of executing the commission, Waerndorfer was determined to carry out the commission at any cost, sparing no expense in materials or labor, and procuring the finest materials and engaging the most qualified craftsmen.⁹⁹ By year's end, the architectural renovations in the music salon were complete. Much of the furniture would have also been in place by this time, awaiting only the arrival of the piano and the gesso panels for *The Seven Princesses*.¹⁰⁰

The furnishings and architectural details are indicative of the culmination of the stylistic evolution of Macdonald and Mackintosh, both collectively and individually. This is especially apparent when comparing the stylistic similarities between the drawing room of the Mains Street Flat, the Scottish Room, and the Rose Boudoir with the music salon. General stylistic similarities borrowed from the flat and two exhibitions were found in the walls, painted in a

⁹⁷ The large window, which is partially visible in the photograph of the piano (Fig. 39), appears to be made up of two parts, an upper area with a rectilinear framing and a tear-drop shaped lower area. With this arrangement in mind, it is also possible that the positioning and size of these large windows may have made the interior of the salon somewhat visible from Colloredogasse (or vice-versa—the street could have been visible from inside), although this assumption is difficult to prove with any certainty, since the window on the east side appears to have been reduced in size at some point after the house was sold in 1916, as the bricks are of different tones.

⁹⁸ The small extension on the north façade of the villa is still visible from Colloredogasse today (Fig. 37)., Robertson 2000, p. 54., Vergo 2000, p. 33., Vergo 1983, p. 403.

⁹⁹ Robertson 2000, p. 55., In a letter from Mackintosh to Muthesius from September of 1902, Mackintosh expresses his pleasure and appreciation for the quality of the craftsman and materials: "Herr Waerndorfer is having all the workmanship and material of the very best, the designs are being carried out with the greatest care." Hermann Muthesius Nachlass 2023, letter from Charles Rennie Mackintosh to Hermann Muthesius, September 1902.

¹⁰⁰ Vergo notes a letter Waerndorfer to Hoffmann dated 23 December, Vergo 1983, p. 404

uniform shade of pure white with stenciled details in pale red, rose-pink, lavender, and moss-green¹⁰¹ with curvilinear wood inlays, and vertical butted wall panels to create variations of light and shadow by both natural and artificial light.¹⁰² Similar to the Glasgow interiors and Scottish Room, a horizontal picture rail assisted in unifying the interior as a whole, but also performed a function in dividing the space between the lower area in which the furnishings were staged, and the upper, ethereal realm that would eventually be inhabited by the abstracted forms in the respective friezes of each room.¹⁰³

In contrast to the aforementioned interiors in Vienna and Turin, however, the built-in inglenook with banquette, the glass-front vitrines, and fireplace would have demonstrated a deviation.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, the dense groupings of seating areas throughout the space would have differed from the relatively sparsely furnished interiors that preceded the salon, which may confirm that the space was intended, contrary to its designation as a music room or reception space, as a retreat from the outside world in which small groups of people could sit intimately, yet comfortably, with soft, electric lighting in the evening and a similarly pleasant light-filled ambiance during the day.¹⁰⁵

Surviving photos of the Waerndorfer music salon dated from 1903–1904 (Fig. 38 and 39) offer some valuable evidence about how the furnishings were arranged. Fig. 38 shows the north-facing side of the room, with the inglenook that was created during the renovations in 1902. The inglenook is framed by a pair of glass-fronted cabinets or vitrines (Fig. 38), the contents of which cannot be exactly deciphered from the extant photographs. However, the photographs do demonstrate that the leaded glass panels contain a geometric arrangement which is similar to the decorative glass panels installed in the “Salon De-Luxe” in the Willow Tea Room in Sauchiehall Street in Glasgow (Fig. 40).

The same photograph of the salon shows a high-backed chair on the left side of the inglenook in white with an oval inset on the headrest and low trapezoidal seat. The frame of the chair in

¹⁰¹ The color palette of the room is confirmed by accounts from A.S. Levetus and Helga Malmberg. Levetus 1912, p. 72., Malmberg 1961, p. 104.

¹⁰² “Mackintosh-Macdonald’s modernist setting presented a masculine wood paneling of stripes highlighted at the top of every second strip with a dark-colored flame, softened by the feminine pastel color scheme lavender, and white of the room.” Shapira’s designation of the dark/light, masculine/feminine recalls Fuchs’s review in the catalog. Shapira 2006, p. 72.

¹⁰³ Shapira 2006, p. 90., Robertson characterizes this feature of the Scottish Room and the salon as “A horizontal frieze-rail [that] unified the interior and at the same time divided the room between the lower area of human activity and an upper sphere” Robertson 2000, p. 55.

¹⁰⁴ Robertson 2000, p. 56.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

the salon is nearly identical to a chair from the Rose Boudoir (Fig. 41), with subtle differences in the ornamentation. The chair in the Waerndorfer salon featured the same stencilling on the top segment of the headrest but omitted the stencilling on the backrest in favor a matching upholstery to the seat cushion, which was likely lavender.¹⁰⁶ Other furnishings from the Rose Boudoir, such as the rectilinear tables and groupings of high-backed chairs¹⁰⁷ (Fig. 28) and low tables, seem to have served as prototypes for those found later in the salon.¹⁰⁸

In the inglenook, the pair of chairs on the left are only partially visible, although they appear to be the same chairs shown on the left in the foreground of Fig. 39. Like the chair to the left of the inglenook, these chairs are also duplicates of those positioned around the table in the Rose Boudoir, likely with the stencilling on the backrest substituted by an upholstered panel. The oval table in Fig. 38 between the chairs and banquette seating bears some similarities to the table from the Rose Boudoir, although it is not identical.¹⁰⁹ The choice to execute the furnishings in lighter tonalities would have been consistent with the layout of the Rose Boudoir and the Glasgow interiors to an extent. However, the choice could have been made in order to offer a brighter and more airy contrast to the furniture that Hoffmann designed for the adjacent dining room (Fig. 42).

3.2.1. Lighting and Light Fixtures

In considering the light-filled spaces shown in the extant photographs of the salon (Fig. 38 and 39), it is easy to assess that light must have played an important role in the salon. In addition to natural light, electric lighting, a relative newcomer to interior design, would have also been considered when designing the salon. From the photographs, it is possible to determine that there would have been at least three electric lighting fixtures in the salon. Two of these fixtures appear in the middle of the room and are shown in Fig. 38 framing the inglenook on either side. Fig. 39 shows a nearly identical fixture over the piano. Each lighting fixture is suspended from an oval-shaped fitting, recalling the shape of the table in the inglenook. From each fitting, two sets of circular-shaped colored glass pendants, four of which were electric lights, as seen by the filaments contained within, hang, surrounded by colored glass baubles. This arrangement

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p. 56. Jessie M. King's watercolor depiction of the room (Fig. 27) also shows the cushions in a shade of purple or lavender.

¹⁰⁷ The six high-backed chairs are a variation on those found in the Rose Boudoir (fig.31) with a plain upholstered backrest without the variation on the "Mackintosh Rose" motif stenciled on them. Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ When purchasing the gesso panel and secretary desk in Turin in 1902, Waerndorfer also placed an order for a set of the six high-backed chairs and four armchairs from the "Rose Boudoir" for his villa in Vienna. Shapira 2006, p. 72.

¹⁰⁹ Robertson 2000, p. 56.

would have been very similar to the lighting found in the Salon De Luxe (Fig. 43). Robertson refers to the light fixtures as possessing “refrained simplicity”¹¹⁰ and attests that the lighting fixtures must have generated a similar effect to those in the Salon De Luxe, therein creating varying tonalities of what was described in a 1905 article in *Dekorative Kunst* about the “artfully crafted glass”¹¹¹ of the electric lamps in the Salon De Luxe as “full and powerful, yet mild”¹¹²

3.3. *The Opera of the Wind and The Opera of the Sea*

According to the photographs from 1903–1904 (Fig. 38 and 39), the piano designed by Mackintosh, with two inlaid gesso panels (not visible in the photographs)¹¹³ from Macdonald entitled, *The Opera of the Wind* and *The Opera of the Sea* (Figs. 44 and 45), would have arrived a considerable amount of time before *The Seven Princesses* frieze.¹¹⁴ The shape and sheer proportions of the piano, encased in a white rectangular cabinet-like wooden structure, measuring about two meters long, with carvings and stylized ornament that mirrored the architectural details of the salon along the sides, would have presented a distinct contrast to the more delicate and curvilinear furnishings in the rest of the salon. Likewise, the two gesso panels by Macdonald positioned above the keyboard,¹¹⁵ *The Opera of the Wind* and *The Opera of the Sea*, each measuring twenty-centimeter square, with a dark background and metallic and pearly details comprising the composition would have provided a contrast to the white piano, and to the otherwise soft and restrained color palette of the rest of the salon.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ „Beim ersten Anblick denkt man an venezianische Kronleuchter, aber währen diese Wunderwerke aus schimmerndem Glas bestimmt sind, Räume von majestätischer Pracht mit ihrem vornehmen Kerzenlicht zu erhellen, lacht der einem halb puritanisches Teehaus weit besser angepasste Beleuchtungsträger Mackintosh in lustiger Einfachheit. Er will im Tageslicht verschwinden, während er nachts besser als jedes kunstvoll bearbeitete Glas die scharfen Strahlen der elektrischen Lampen als allgemeines Licht sammelt und verbreitet: voll und kräftige und doch milde.“ Agnololetti 1905, p. 267.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ The Hunterian Gallery’s lists the archival photograph of *The Opera of the Sea* (Fig. 45) as belonging to the piano. Sharples 2023. Robertson notes that on the back of one of the photographs showing the piano (Fig. 38), there is a note explaining that the gesso panels for *The Opera of the Wind* and *The Opera of the Sea* would have been installed side by side above the keyboard, although like *The Seven Princesses* frieze, no photographs of the piano gessos in situ are known to exist. She notes further that the terminology “opera” could have been used as a reference to the panels’ placement on a musical instrument in a music salon. However, it is worth noting, that the term had another meaning in the vernacular of this time, both in reference to a craftsmanship of fine quality and *also* a musical work. Robertson 2000, p. 68.

¹¹⁴ Here it is worthwhile to note that in Figs. 37–38, the panels on the upper portion of the wall are empty.

¹¹⁵ Robertson notes a photograph of a lost design of the piano by Mackintosh, in which one can determine how the gesso panels, *The Opera of the Wind* and *The Opera of the Sea*, could have eventually been arranged (Fig. 46). Robertson 2000, p. 69.

¹¹⁶ Robertson 2000, p. 68.

Waerndorfer's wish to include a piano with such prominent features may have demonstrated his desire to abandon the previous conceptions of the music salon as it would have been known during nineteenth century, which could have been indicative of a trend in modern design as a tendency to stage the piano "opposite the fireplace as a rare art object."¹¹⁷ In a 1905 text on modern architecture and interior design, *Die moderne Wohnung und ihre Ausstattung*, Joseph Lux provides commentary on the shift in the design tendencies in the modern home. The text contains an entire chapter dedicated to the modern music room, in which specific mention of the "Mackintosh Group's"¹¹⁸ influence on modern interior design is made. In this section of the text, Lux notes that Mackintosh had recently designed a music salon for a friend with "a measurable amount of finesse and sophisticated artistry."¹¹⁹ In relation to the piano, he stated that any other, less adept designer would stand utterly speechless before this "colossus"¹²⁰ of a piano, and in attempting to design one himself would only achieve a result that was monstrously cumbersome.¹²¹

In the following segment of the text, he begins to describe the Waerndorfer music salon in general as "a wonderous resonance of line that repeats throughout the entire furnishings—in the crimping of the woodwork, on the fireplace, in the high-backed chairs, at the windows, and on the piano,"¹²² functioning as a visual manifestation of music in which a symbolic depiction

¹¹⁷ Shapira 2006, p. 72., Lux also makes a commentary on the changes that the concept of a music salon underwent in the previous years: "Es ist ein Altwiener Bürgersalon, großväterischer Hausrat steht umher, Gastlichkeit und Gemütlichkeit, der genius loci winkt aus allen Winkeln hervor, ein Klavier steht in die Mitte des Zimmers herein, eines jener spinettartigen Instrumente, zierlich und schlank, im wohlthuenden Gegensatz zu den Monstren unserer heutigen Klaviere, Schubert davor und ein Kreis von Kunstsinnigen um ihn herum, die Schwestern Fröhlich, selbstverständlich auch Grillparzer, dann der gefeierte Opernsänger Vogel und alles, was damals zur geistigen Elite gehörte." Lux 1905, p. 112.

¹¹⁸ Within the text „die Mackintosh Gruppe“ is mentioned specifically by name no less than two times, firstly as akin to new generation of artists in Vienna, and secondly with specific relevance to the Waerndorfer Music Salon: „Immer mehr richten sich die Blicke auf Wien. Dort ist ein neues Künstlergeschlecht, das zum größtenteils aus der Wagnerschule hervorgegangen ist, aufgestanden und hat mit selten gesehener Eintracht und Geschlossenheit die moderne Raumkunst geschaffen. Künstlerisch und wahlverwandtschaftlich steht es der Gruppe Mackintosh am nächsten. Es hat den Vorzug der größten Frische und Natürlichkeit. Bei aller strengen künstlerischen Konsequenz geht ein liebenswürdiger Wienerzug durch das ganze Schaffen dieser Künstler, die zur Sezession gehören oder sich zu ihren Anschauungen bekennen.“ Ibid., p. 15, p. 117–119.

¹¹⁹ „Der schottische Künstler Mackintosh hatte einem Kunstfreunde ein Musikzimmer eingerichtet und es mit allen Finessen einer raffinierten Künstlerschaft ausgestattet.“ Ibid., p. 117–118.

¹²⁰ „Vor dem Koloß eines Klavieres heutiger Konstruktion steht auch der genialste Entwurfskünstler in Verlegenheit da, er weiß sich nichts anzufangen. Baut er ein Gehäuse, das der einfachen strengen Linienführung des heutigen Möbels entspricht, so sieht es womöglich noch sperriger und ungeheuerlicher aus.“ Ibid., p. 117

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 117

¹²² „Als dekoratives Motiv dieses ganz in Weiß gehaltenen Raumes war eine symbolische Darstellung »der sieben Prinzessinnen«, aus Maeterlincks mystischem Märchenspiel verwendet. In einem wundersamen Linienklang kehrt dieses Motiv an allen Teilen wieder als Paneele, als Verkröpfung an den Holzteilen, am Kamin, an den hohen Stühlen, am Fenster, am Klavier. Alles ist Musik, sichtbare Musik.“ Ibid., pp. 117–118.

of *The Seven Princesses* by Maeterlinck as its decorative theme has been implemented.¹²³ At first, it would seem that the discovery of the text is groundbreaking in deciphering when the frieze would have first been seen by visitors to the villa. However, the publishing date of this text, 1905, presents one obvious problem, as it does not correspond with the signature and 1906 dating of *The Seven Princesses* frieze.

How could Lux have seen a work of art before it had been signed by the artist and transported to Vienna from Glasgow? The answer to this question is not so puzzling—either Lux had heard about the work in progress and was writing about it as if he had seen it in person, or he was referencing the gesso panels for the piano. The latter seems like the most probable explanation, especially when considering that the similarities between the piano gessos and *The Seven Princesses* frieze are not extremely subtle. Like *The Seven Princesses* frieze, the gesso panels for the piano display a composition that is organized primarily through its linear structure with repetitions of line and symbolic forms, as well as featuring the addition of pearlescent inlays. The inclusion of the number seven is also found in the gesso panels for the piano, as well as other symbolic references found in *The Seven Princesses* frieze relating to death and mourning. In the portions of the panels facing toward the center, seven faces, one with closed eyes, could be assumed to depict the princesses. The faces with open eyes in the left panel, could suggest the princesses after they have awoken, with the unrevivable Ursula in the center. In the right panel, the four faces are shown with vertical lines emanating from their eyes, which is reminiscent of tears and could be intended to represent the princesses' reaction to discovering the fate of their sister.¹²⁴

The maritime motif in *The Opera of the Wind* and *The Opera of the Sea* are not represented in name only. On either end of each panel, next to their respective groupings of faces, sail-like structures can be identified (Figs. 44 and 45), a symbolic motif which was repeated in *The Seven Princesses* frieze, albeit with more subtlety. In addition to such symbolic depictions, themes of liminal states of being, which are represented in the piano gessos as a woman's face and child in the top right of the right panel could mirror the representations of liminal states in terms of rebirth through death or more aptly, death as the doorway to a new state of being, as

¹²³ „Als dekoratives Motiv dieses ganz in Weiß gehaltenen Raumes war eine symbolische Darstellung » der sieben Prinzessinnen«, aus Maeterlincks mystischem Märchenspiel verwendet.“ Ibid., p. 118.

¹²⁴ Marcellus may also be portrayed in the piano gessos as many as three times. In the upper corner of the arrangement of the seven faces in each of the panels, a grouping of figures joined in a kiss are visible which could represent Marcellus's taking leave of Ursula for the last time. The third representation of Marcellus is found in the upper right of the left panel. Here the three faces could be intended to represent Marcellus and the King and Queen as they peer into the windows of the marble hall before the princesses have awoken.

will be discussed in chapter seven.¹²⁵ This connection with the frieze strongly indicates that the piano gessos and the frieze could have been intended to function as companion pieces.

3.4. Proposed Location of *The Seven Princesses* Frieze

In light of the total lack of photographic evidence of *The Seven Princesses* frieze in situ, previous research has not been able to offer any convincing arguments in favor of the frieze's exact location in the salon. Roberston, Vergo, Parkinson, and Billcliffe all note that, due to architectural details that interrupt the east and west-facing walls, the presence of the six empty panels on the north or south-facing walls would indicate that Macdonald's frieze must have been installed on the north or south-facing walls, which is supported when consulting the architectural plans (Fig. 36).¹²⁶

Extant photographs from 1903–1904 (Figs. 38 and 39) show a total of six empty panels, in groupings of three, in the upper third of the wall, on the north and south-facing walls, each containing the appropriate proportions to accommodate the three gesso panels that would eventually make up Macdonald's frieze. However, the presence of the six panels alone does not seem to offer any insight in determining whether the frieze was installed on the north or

¹²⁵The motif of the female face and the baby could have been a motif taken from the panels for the *Rose Boudoir*. Additionally, the baby appears to be seated on the edge of something, although its legs are not fully visible, suggesting they could be submerged in water hanging over the edge of a ship. Roberston's interpretation of the piano gessos provides a rather articulate understanding of the symbolic maritime motifs depicted in the play, as well as supporting that the piano gessos were likely inspired by the same literary source as the frieze: "The wind and sea brought Marcellus back. The sea is an agent of destiny which brings and takes away. Wind is the breath of life. The leaves could be stylised willows. Tears, salty like the sea, fall from the four 'Princesses' faces in 'The Opera of the Sea'- [...] The imagery of the panels conjures up themes of love, death, loss, and mourning, the possibility of rebirth through death—all themes of Maeterlinck's play. Robertson 2000, p. 69.

¹²⁶ Robertson 2000, p. 60., Vergo 2000, pp. 35–39., Parkinson 1997 pp. 55–56., Billcliffe 1991, pp. 335–336., With the exception of Parkinson, the assertions made by the aforementioned authors about the location of the frieze in the salon, were not pursued further. In an article for the *Journal of Interior Design* in 1997, Parkinson made a rather stilted attempt at determining the location of the frieze in the salon. The article, which argued in favor of the frieze's location above the inglenook on the north-facing wall of the music salon, was full of inaccuracies and insufficiencies that were ultimately dictated in the interest of creating a computer-generated enhancement of the photograph from Fig. 38. In order to support her claim that the frieze must have been installed on the north-facing wall, she completely fails to mention contemporary accounts from Hevesi, although she does mention an article from a certain "Levins (1912), a Vienna correspondent for *The Studio*," who one may assume is intended to represent A.S. Levetus, to whom the quote cited in the article actually belongs. Aside from dismissing the frieze as "consciously ornamental and designed specifically to complement the interior" of the salon, her argument appears ultimately only suited to the purpose of implementing the most convenient (and complete) photograph depicting all three empty wall panels above the picture rail on the north-facing wall, that is the only extant photograph of the salon in which a computer-generated photograph with the correct dimensions to accommodate a photograph of the frieze *could* have been inserted in any case. Furthermore, she makes absolutely no mention of the adjacent dining room or the piano gessos. Parkinson 1997, pp. 48–59.

south-facing wall.¹²⁷ As outlined in the previous chapter, the photographs do, however, enable a coarse reconstruction of how the furnishings of the room would have been arranged. This, in combination with the arguments and examples outlined in the following paragraphs, based on the architectural plans, extant photographs, and contemporary texts, make possible an understanding of the most probable location for the frieze in the salon on the south-facing wall.

Although it cannot be seen directly, the source of light flooding in the right and left side of Figs. 38 and 39, respectively, must have been coming from the large window installed on the east-facing wall during the renovation in 1902. In comparing Fig. 38 with Fig 39, one can determine the chair on the left side of Fig. 39 is the same chair that is in the partially visible on the right side of Fig. 38. Likewise, the photo of the piano shows a portion of the square table and portions of two high-backed chairs. When placing the two photos side by side, it's easily comprehensible that the photo containing the piano could function as a continuation of the photo showing the inglenook on the north-facing wall and that the central seating area with the square table and high-backed chairs (Fig. 38). In this case, the natural light source observable in Fig. 38 would have to be the window shown in Fig. 39 with the piano.

The surviving photographs, in addition to facilitating reconstruction of the space demonstrate that the seating areas in the salon, with the exception of one or two of the high-backed chairs, would have been oriented towards the south-facing wall. As Fig. 38 shows, the seating in the inglenook would have provided an unimpeded view of the south wall of the salon. Likewise, the high-backed chairs positioned around the square table, on either side of the inglenook, and to the left of the doorway into the dining room (Fig. 47), would have been oriented with a southwards-facing view, providing direct sightlines to the panels above the piano, on the south-facing wall.

The presence of a doorway on the west-facing side of the room are confirmed by a photograph dated around 1902 (Fig. 47), displaying an opening framed by a rectilinear doorway with curved woodwork comprised of two large, eyelet-shaped details over the center of the top of the door jamb.¹²⁸ The curtains, designed by Macdonald's sister, Frances, presented the possibility to join the space with the dining room on specific occasions, or to close it off when

¹²⁷ The presence of six panels indicates that a frieze from Mackintosh would have been taken into account during the initial construction of the salon but does not seem to be of any further assistance in determining the location of *The Seven Princesses* in the salon.

¹²⁸ The architectural plans (Fig. 36) confirm that the opening to the dining room would have been opposite the large window on the west-facing wall.

a more intimate atmosphere was desired.¹²⁹ The separation of the spaces enabled the salon to be used as a performance space when guests were seated in the dining room, allowing a partial view of the south wall of the salon, but not the north wall, when one was seated at the table.¹³⁰ The placement of the frieze above the piano on the south-facing wall would also support the south-facing side of the salon as a space in which musical entertainment could have occasionally taken place. In Ludwig Hevesi's 1909 text, "Ein moderner Nachmittag", he describes observing dancer Miss Macara's ten naked toes dancing across the carpet from the dining room.¹³¹ In this sense the location of the frieze on the south-facing wall could have been intended to function dually, as an artwork in itself and as a sort of theatrical backdrop for performances.

With the aforementioned spatial arrangements of the salon in mind; the visibility of the south-facing wall from the seating areas in the dining room, the southward-oriented seating arrangement in the salon, and the notion of the south side of the salon as an entertainment space would suggest that the frieze would have been perceived with the utmost impact on the south-facing wall of the salon. Consequently, and in addition to the otherwise careful attention of detail in the rest of the furnishings and their staging within the salon, along with Hevesi's 1909 description, provides sufficient evidence to support that the frieze must have been installed on the south-facing wall.

3.5. Proposed Installation Date

After proposing the frieze's location on the south-facing wall in the salon, the question of the installation date remains unanswered. Like the location of the frieze in the salon, the installation date has been approached as a somewhat trivial aspect of the study of the work, which is likely because it is nearly impossible to determine the exact timeframe in which it would have

¹²⁹ The curtains were actually dual-sided, with Frances's design on the salon facing side and a geometric design by Hoffmann on the side facing the dining room. Frances's curtains are made up of four panels, with two depicting a female couple embracing and two depicting single figures enveloped in a swirling pattern with roses. The applique panels seem to correlate with the works of Macdonald in the music salon and bear a striking resemblance to the panels from the writing desk purchased by Waerndorfer in Turin from the Rose Boudoir, which strengthens the argument that room may have served a prototype for the Waerndorfer commission. The inclusion of Frances's curtains marked the only occasion in which Macdonald and Mackintosh were known to have included another artist's work in their commissioned interiors. Vergo 1983, p. 404. Vergo 1981, p. 35., Robertson 2000, pp. 56, 70.

¹³⁰ Robertson refers to the salon as a "minstrel's gallery", in which music could be performed for the guests in the dining room, as the curtains of the large doorway between the two spaces could have been drawn back to expose the salon. Robertson 2000, p. 56, 70.

¹³¹ „Musik. Auf dem mattbunten Teppich tanzen zehn nackte...Zehen. Schwarzer Faltenwurf zuckt hin und wieder..." Hevesi 1909, p. 41. Miss Macara would have performed at Kabarett Fledermaus, a club in Kärntnerstraße, in the first district, of which Waerndorfer was part owner. Vergo 1981, p. 35.

occurred. Texts from Robertson, Wickre, and Vergo all concur with the installation date taking place between 1907 and 1912.¹³² Howarth's estimations, which do not seem to be based on anything other than his own assumptions claim that the work "might well have been installed in 1905, 1906 or 1907,"¹³³ but that the panels are "but in any case are relatively unimportant."¹³⁴

One pivotal piece of evidence assists in debunking a 1905 installation date: a photograph from the Photography Atelier of Henry Bedford-Lemere in Glasgow dated 1906 (Fig. 48).¹³⁵ The photograph, which has never been used in conjunction with determining the installation date of the frieze, was published as an illustration for Vergo's text, "Fritz Waerndorfer as Collector" in 1981.¹³⁶ Curiously, Robertson, Helland, and Howarth¹³⁷ seemed to have neglected the single piece of photographic documentation of the frieze until its rediscovery in 1990. Nonetheless, the Bedford-Lemere photograph seems to be the missing link in answering the questions surrounding the date and location of completion, confirming that the work would have been completed in Glasgow in 1906.¹³⁸ Based on the date of the photograph in ledgers of Bedford-Lemere, the work could not have left Glasgow for before sometime at the end of 1906, where, due to the transport time, it could have been installed in Vienna in early 1907. With this in mind, there is reason to believe, that since the frieze was completed nearly four years after the salon, it would have been installed immediately, in early 1907.

¹³² Robertson 2000, p. 60., Wickre 1993, p. 393., Vergo 2000, p. 38.

¹³³ Howarth 1955, p. 157.

¹³⁴ Ibid., In attempting to examine Howarth's assertions and whether he cited either of the aforementioned texts, no evidence to support his consultation of the texts could be deciphered, which suggests once more that his questionable dating of 1905 ultimately supports the argument that he regarded *The Seven Princesses* frieze as a tangential aspect of Mackintosh's work, in which he provides little to no citations to support his claims. Although it is not mentioned specifically in any of Howarth's research, his assertion of an installation date in 1905 could possibly have been informed by the texts from Lux and Hevesi from 1905.

¹³⁵ Bedford-Lemere was contracted by architectural firm Honeyman, Keppie and Mackintosh in Glasgow. The firm had previously photographed numerous examples of Mackintosh's architectural commissions in the city. It is likely that the ledgers that date the photograph as 1906 would have not been available for viewing at the time the texts from Vergo, Robertson, et. al, were written and have instead become available in recent years due to digitization of the company archives. University of Glasgow. Mackintosh Architecture: M208 Music Salon for Fritz Waerndorfer, Vienna, [16.09.2024] URL: <https://www.mackintosh-architecture.gla.ac.uk/catalogue/freetext/display/?rs=3&xml=chr&q=willow%20tea%20rooms#s405chron08-back>, Historic England Database. The Bedford Lemere Collection [16.08.2024], URL: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/collection/HBL01>.

¹³⁶ Vergo 1981, p. 35.

¹³⁷ In a doctoral dissertation published in 1993, but likely written before the rediscovery of the frieze, Wickre mentions the photograph, but does not indicate the date of 1906 as a possible date of installation, rather suggesting 1909 or 1912 as possible dates. Wickre 1993, p. 391.

¹³⁸ Further evidence to support the completion of the frieze in Glasgow can also be linked to Macdonald's working habits. An account from Desmond Mountjoy from a visit between 1902 and 1905 demonstrates her preference working alone in her Glasgow studio: "...far away in that mist-circled, grim city of the north...we find a little white home, full of quaint and beautiful things, with a big white studio empty of everything but the Artist's Jesso (Sic!) panels....I do not think anyone, except perhaps her husband, has ever seen the artist at work; she will not discuss her work, and she very seldom enters her studio in the company of another person." Mountjoy 1910, p. 5.

The most compelling evidence to support the 1907 installation date can be found in two texts from Hevesi: “Haus Wärndorfer” (1905), and “Ein moderner Nachmittag” (1909). The earlier of these two texts indicates that in 1905 *The Seven Princesses* frieze had not yet been installed, remarking that the upper surfaces of the walls await the installation of their pictures, which is erroneously described as coming from the *Six Princesses*.¹³⁹ The text was published once more in 1908 in a pamphlet for the *Wiener Kunstwanderung*, and again in *Alt Kunst–Neukunst* in 1909. Both of the reprintings of the text include a footnote stating that the panels had since been installed in the salon.¹⁴⁰ In the second text from Hevesi, “Ein moderner Nachmittag,” he remarks that the frieze had arrived “only two years ago.”¹⁴¹ When considering that Hevesi saw to it that the 1905 text was amended in later publications, it would seem that he was intent on accurately documenting when the frieze would have arrived, which is furthermore indicative of the value of his texts as eye-witness accounts of the salon in lieu of extant photographs of the salon.

3.5.1. Two Friezes?

While Hevesi’s accounts provide much needed insight into the installation date of the frieze, his wording is somewhat puzzling. In the footnote in the 1908 reprint of “Haus Wärndorfer,” he uses the plural “*sind*” when referring to an artwork.¹⁴² Here it is unclear if his usage of the plural form relates to the three panels comprising Macdonald’s frieze or if a second frieze from Mackintosh would have been planned and possibly installed opposite Macdonald’s in the salon. Letters from Mackintosh to Hermann Muthesius in late summer and early autumn of 1902 seem to indicate that Macdonald and Mackintosh were present in Vienna at this time.¹⁴³ The first, dated 6 August, states that the two “are busy just now doing two large panels for Vienna of Maeterlinck’s ‘Seven Princesses’, a most delightful and fascinating subject”¹⁴⁴ and the second, dated sometime in September, states that work on the project had been delayed due to

¹³⁹ Curiously, Hevesi remarks that he expects that the panels were to be “woven, or maybe embroidered.” Unfortunately, the source of his claim could not be deciphered. It’s possible he could have seen the curtains from Frances and assumes that the wall panels would be made of similar materials: “Die oberen Wandflächen warten noch auf ihren Bilder, aus der Geschichte der sechs Prinzessinnen. Gewebte, vielleicht oder gestickt.” Hevesi 1905, p. 222.

¹⁴⁰ „Sind seither eingetroffen.“ Hevesi 1905, p. 222.

¹⁴¹ „Nur der breite Fries kam erst vor zwei Jahren nach.“ Hevesi 1909, p. 45.

¹⁴² See footnote 139.

¹⁴³ Hermann Muthesius Nachlass 2023, letter from Charles Rennie Mackintosh to Hermann Muthesius, 6 August 1902, URL: <https://sammlung.museumderdinge.de/objekte?keys=mackintosh> [19.11.2023].

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

Waerndorfer's absence from Vienna, but that it was expected to be back on track within the coming weeks.¹⁴⁵

The letters from 1902 and the Mackintosh sketch provide some insight into the early phases of the Waerndorfer music salon's completion, however they do not seem to clarify with any certainty whether two friezes were originally planned.¹⁴⁶ While the two letters from August and September do confirm that both Macdonald and Mackintosh were present in Vienna during this time and were actively working on the salon, they do not correspond with the 1906 dating of Macdonald's frieze, which suggests that Mackintosh was referencing the designs for the piano gessos (although the piano gessos measure only twenty centimeters square), which would have been completed in 1903, or that the original plans for the salon included two friezes.

The possibility of a second frieze in the salon has been debated by Mackintosh scholars for decades, an arrangement which would have been consistent with previous commissions, most notably *The Wassail* and *The May Queen*.¹⁴⁷ A sketch in the Hunterian Gallery's collection, entitled *The Return of Prince Marcellus* (Fig. 49), shows some vague similarities to Macdonald's depiction of *The Seven Princesses*, albeit with a more literal interpretation of the series of events in the play. The sketch features seven reclined female figures being watched over by a male head, with the central female shown in shadow. Two figures on the far right are likely intended to be the King and Queen and the central free-standing object in the middle right could have been a reference to a lamp mentioned in the play.¹⁴⁸

According to the Hunterian Gallery's database, the sketch was completed sometime between 1902 and 1906. Although the sketch was previously thought to have been from Macdonald, the sketch stops abruptly at the right edge and shows signs that it was cut, so if it contained a signature at some point, it can no longer be deciphered.¹⁴⁹ However, the angularity of the figures suggest that the sketch must have been from Mackintosh, as the figures and

¹⁴⁵ Hermann Muthesius Nachlass 2023, letter from Charles Rennie Mackintosh to Hermann Muthesius, September 1902, URL: <https://sammlung.museumderdinge.de/objekte?keys=mackintosh> [19.11.2023].

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Robertson 2000, p. 60.

¹⁴⁸ Their records also indicate that if a frieze was ever completed based on these sketches, it has not survived. Another piece of evidence suggests that the designs were never carried out—the provenance section notes that the sketch was donated to the gallery in 1947 by Sylvan MacNair, the son of Frances and Herbert MacNair and the nephew of Mackintosh by marriage. In this case it is probable that the sketch remained in possession of the family and had been bequeathed to Sylvan, upon Mackintosh's death, or more likely, after Macdonald's death in 1933. University of Glasgow Online Collections, GLAHA:41960, URL: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/collections/#/details?irn=51576&catType=C&referrer=/results&q=return+of+prince+marcellus>, [07.06.2024]., Robertson 2000, p. 60–62.

¹⁴⁹ Roberston p. 68

compositional style do not seem to correspond to Macdonald's work during this period. Instead, they bear more similarities to Mackintosh's angular forms, a comparison that can be most readily observed between *The Wassail* and *The May Queen*. Lastly, the sketches do not appear to correspond with Macdonald's working habits in general, as she is not known to have often worked from sketches.¹⁵⁰

Despite the existence of the sketch in the Hunterian Gallery, there is sufficient evidence to support that, as of 1909, no gesso panels from Mackintosh for the music salon had been carried out to completion. In a article on the salon by Levetus in *The Glasgow Herald* in late May of 1909, she notes that in the salon some of the wall panels remain empty and that the arrival of Mackintosh's contributions are eagerly anticipated.¹⁵¹ In support of Levetus's account, Sekler notes that after 1908, Mackintosh's correspondence with Vienna had ceased completely, which he supports by citing a letter written by Eduard Wimmer-Wisgrill to Hoffmann during a visit to Glasgow in which he states that he had been unable to establish contact with Mackintosh regarding a commission.¹⁵² In this case, it is likely that if a second frieze had been installed it would have preceded Mackintosh's loss of contact with Waerndorfer by 1908, and although the possibility of a second frieze by Mackintosh remains a possibility, the accounts from Hevesi, Levetus, and Wimmer would seem to suggest otherwise.

¹⁵⁰ Vergo 2000, p. 38., After her death in 1933, Macdonald left behind precious few sketchbooks, none of which included sketches for *The Seven Princesses* frieze. Robertson 2000, pp. 62–63.

¹⁵¹ "Two spaces remain empty and we are early looking forward to the time when Mr. Mackintosh—these are yet to emanate from him—will find the necessary leisure for thought to create them." Levetus 1909, p. 11. In this case Levetus is likely referencing the empty spaces opposite *The Seven Princesses* on the north-facing wall above the fireplace. It is unclear why she makes reference to two empty spaces. The doorway on the west-facing wall renders the space inadequate for the installation of panels large enough to accommodate the frieze. Likewise, the addition of the large window on the east-facing wall would not have facilitated panels of a corresponding size to those on the north and south-facing walls. Additionally, the installation of an additional frieze on the east-facing wall would not have been consistent with the arrangement of gessos for Miss Cranston, and Mackintosh's mention of two frieze's mentioned in Mackintosh's letter to Muthesius on 6 August (see footnotes 128 and 129).

¹⁵² Sekler 1982, pp. 65–66.

4. Reception: The Waerndorfer Music Salon as *Sehenswürdigkeit*

In choosing Macdonald and Mackintosh for the commissioning of the music salon, Waerndorfer transformed his villa into what Vergo notes as a “mecca of the modern movement.”¹⁵³ As early as 1904, the Waerndorfer villa had attracted attention from as far as Berlin,¹⁵⁴ becoming a rendezvous point for artists, writers, and admirers of modern art and design.¹⁵⁵ In “Haus Wärndorfer,” Hevesi to the music salon referred to as “an artistic curiosity of the highest order, and simultaneously a place of intellectual enjoyment”¹⁵⁶ that was awaited by the Viennese audience with “bated breath.”¹⁵⁷

The popularity of the salon grew in the years following, as was indicated by the inclusion of the Waerndorfer Music Salon in the 1908 *Wiener Kunstwanderung*.¹⁵⁸ In 1909, Levetus, the included the salon in an article concerning Macdonald and Mackintosh’s participation at the “Kunstschau Group”¹⁵⁹ exhibition in Vienna in 1909.¹⁶⁰ Coupled with the reviews of the exhibition, she mentions having visited the Waerndorfer Villa, describing the music salon as

¹⁵³ Vergo 1983, p. 403., Shapira mentions in two texts specifically that Waerndorfer was known to discuss his interests in art passionately. Shapira 2006, p. 52., Shapira 2016, pp. 116, 124–125., In this case, the completion of the music salon and the dining room would have afforded him the opportunity to discuss the interiors at length, which could have occurred as the information contained in the texts relating to the reception history were being gathered by their respective authors. This is especially relevant with regard to the texts written before the frieze would have been installed. Of course, it is not possible to prove one way or another whether Waerndorfer’s opinions could have influenced how the authors perceived the salon or if he had somehow described the frieze to the authors before it was installed, but it is worth taking into consideration, nonetheless.

¹⁵⁴ Vergo 1983, p. 409.

¹⁵⁵ Hevesi notes those in attendance at a gathering in 1909 as: “Große Gesellschaft darin: Berühmte alte Herren, auch vom Burgtheater; witzige Köpfe von; Meistern der äußersten Kunst. Elegante junge Damen; jung und schlank, etliche von Klimt gemalt....“ Hevesi 1909, p. 40.

¹⁵⁶ “Das Ehepaar kam und blieb sechs Wochen. Daraus entstand der Mackintosh-Salon im Haus Wärndorfer. Ein artistisches Kuriosum ersten Ranges, aber zugleich eine Stätte geistigen Genusses.“ Hevesi 1905, p. 222. Here the six weeks to which Hevesi refers would have most likely indicated Macdonald and Mackintosh’s presence in Vienna during the renovations.

¹⁵⁷ “Als er entstand, hing unsere Wiener Himmel voll Geigen.” Hevesi 1909, p. 45.

¹⁵⁸ The *Wiener Kunstwanderung* existed in various forms beginning around 1900 and would take place in irregular intervals. In 1903 a new format was conceived, which focused creating tours of the homes of art in irregular intervals as a sightseeing activity in the city. From late February until early May 1908, the Waerndorfer villa was included in the latest version of the open house-style sightseeing event in which private palaces interiors, art collections, and artists’ studios were open to the public. The admission price for a single ticket would have cost a hefty sum of 20 Kronen at the time. In the advertisement in *Erdegeist*, the inclusion of the Waerndorfer villa was specifically mentioned as being part of the latest tour: “An Interieure sind neu das moderne Haus Wärndorfer im Cottage und das Biedermeierhaus der Familie Mauthner in Pötzleinsdorf.” *Erdegeist* illustrierte Wochenschrift 1908, p. 132., Kaiser 2020, p. 70.

¹⁵⁹ Levetus 1909 p. 11.

¹⁶⁰ In the article she mentions some new works by Macdonald, most notably *June Roses* (Fig. 50), which she notes has just been purchased for the “Modern Gallery.” Here Levetus is undoubtedly referencing the acquisition of the watercolor by the Moderne Galerie in Wien, now the home to the Belvedere Museum in Vienna. The work remains in the Belvedere’s collection until today, but Levetus was likely mistaken about when the work would have been acquired by the museum, as the watercolor was purchased by the gallery in 1903 and, in this case, could have been on loan for the Kunstschau exhibition.

“the delight of every connoisseur, and which serves as a place of pilgrimage for lovers of art and for strangers coming to the city. This is perhaps their greatest work, for they were allowed perfectly free scope. The frieze is by Mrs. Mackintosh and represents scenes from Maeterlinck’s story of the seven princesses awaiting the coming of the prince, who arrives only to find a dead bride.”¹⁶¹

She goes on to further elaborate upon Macdonald’s frieze, calling it “a work of ethereal beauty, and at the same time an earnest work of art. Such art is indeed a revelation.”¹⁶²

Levetus reviewed the Waerndorfer music salon again for *The Studio* in late 1912. The review contained a few repetitions from the 1909 review for the *Glasgow Herald*. In the article she contended that it was a little-known fact that some of the couple’s best work was to be found in Vienna, not Glasgow,¹⁶³ designating Macdonald’s frieze in the salon as the “the chief motif in the decorative scheme. The composition forms an organic whole, each part fitting into the rest with the same concord as do the passages of a great symphony; each thought resolves itself as do the chords in music, till the orchestration is perfect, the effect of repose filling the soul.”¹⁶⁴

4.1. Ludwig Hevesi’s “Ein moderner Nachmittag”

Four years after publishing “Haus Wärndorfer“ from 1905, Hevesi published, “Ein moderner Nachmittag” as part of a series of short musings and essays in *Flagranti und andere Heiterkeiten*. The text begins as Hevesi recounts a social engagement that occurred at the Waerndorfer Villa, mentioning that this get-together took place on an ordinary day, suggesting

Levetus 1912, p.11., Stefanie Auer, Linien- und Schattengeschöpfe. Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh und die Wiener Secession, Belvedere Sammlung Online, <https://sammlung.belvedere.at/objects/6306/junirosen#fn1>, [22.12.2023].

¹⁶¹ This quote was taken from Levetus’s coverage of the Kunstschau in Vienna in 1909, in which Macdonald and Mackintosh took part. Levetus p. 11. Here it also worth noting that Levetus mentions only one frieze by “Mrs. Mackintosh,” further demonstrating that if a frieze from Mackintosh did exist, it had not been carried out by 1909.

¹⁶² Levetus 1912, p. 71., As is the case with the 1909 article from Levetus, if a frieze by Mackintosh had been installed by this time, it would have certainly mentioned.

¹⁶³ Levetus 1912, p. 71.

¹⁶⁴ “It is not generally known that some of Mr. Charles Mackintosh’s best work is to be seen in Vienna. Among other examples a music-room which the eminent architect and artist designed for Herr Wärndorfer some years ago has till now never been reproduced. The design came as an inspiration, a fitting setting to Maeterlinck’s “Dead Princess”, whose story is told in the exquisite friezes [...] which adorn the room and form the chief motive in the decorative scheme. The composition forms an organic whole, each part fitting into the rest with the same concord as do the passages of a great symphony; each thought resolves itself as do the chords in music, till the orchestration is perfect, the effect of repose filling the soul. The colour-scheme is red, lavender and white. Each object in the room has its due place. The accentuation always comes on the right note, and each note has been expanded to its right artistic compass. Mr. and Mrs. Mackintosh themselves came to Vienna at Mr. Wärndorfer’s invitation and spent six weeks in the city. They were given unfettered discretion, and thus their imagination was allowed full scope. Many pilgrimages have been made to this room, for connoisseurs find great pleasure and delight in it.” Ibid., pp. 71–72.

that these types of events were commonplace at this time in the villa.¹⁶⁵ The social gathering he describes begins in Hoffmann's dining room, and eventually moves into the music salon. The dining room and its accompanying glistening effect afforded by an abundance of light-catching surfaces¹⁶⁶ is described in some detail, mostly in its resemblance to a train car on the Nice-Express passing through Genoa, bound for the French Riviera.¹⁶⁷ As he recounts moving from the dining room to the music salon, however, he seems to discard his dreamy affections from the "Pullman-Hoffmann Salon,"¹⁶⁸ by stating it "is merely a dining room"¹⁶⁹ and instead turns his attention to the adjacent music salon.

Upon entering the adjacent music salon, he expresses an initial sense of bewilderment¹⁷⁰ at the mere existence of what he calls "the masterpiece of the Mackintosh Group within the walls of an ultra-modern Viennese home, claiming instead that it could just as easily be installed in a museum."¹⁷¹ After providing the reader with a brief summary of the events leading up to the salon's creation, Hevesi begins with his description of the frieze as a depiction of a "Maeterlinck scene of seven princesses who await the arrival of the prince, who arrives to find his bride is dead,"¹⁷² noting that it was made out of what the English call gesso and that it had

¹⁶⁵ „Ich glaube es war letzten Sonntag. Oder an einem anderen Wochentag. Es hing nämlich kein Wandkalender in der Stube. Es hätte nicht recht hingepasst.“ Hevesi 1909, p. 39.

¹⁶⁶ „Rauhputz [Sic!], über und über versilbert; lichtfangend, lichterzstäubend.“

¹⁶⁷ „Gurten unten an den Scheiben, um sie herunterzulassen oder hinaufzuziehen, wie in einem Salonwagen des Nizza-Expreß. Wir sitzen in diesem Salon in einem weißmarmornen Pullman, der unhörbar rollt. Wir sind gar nicht in der Karl-Ludwig-Straße Nr. 45, sondern Genua vorbei.“ Ibid. p. 40.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 44.

¹⁶⁹ „Allgemein ist er bloß Speisezimmer“ Ibid. p. 44.

¹⁷⁰ „Der anstoßende Salon ist...Ja, was ist dieser Salon im hochwohlmodernen Neu Wien? In London kaufte die Öffentlichkeit [Sic!] das Haus Mr. Jonides, diesen neu-antiken, antik-modernen Jugendtraum Voyseys. Und für das Kensington-Museum wurde das kunst- und streitberühmte Pfauenzimmer erworben im Hause des Schiffreeders Leyland, für den es Whistler geschaffen. In jenes Museum käme dort auch dieser Salon im Haus Wärndorfer, denn er ist ein Haupt- und Meisterwerk der Gruppe Mackintosh in Glasgow.“ Ibid. P. 44., Here at least one of the other salons mentioned, "Das Pfauenzimmer" (Original title: *Harmony in Gold and Blue: The Peacock Room*, designed by James McNeil Whistler and Thomas Jekyll in 1877), is still intact and in original condition, residing since 1920 in the Freer Gallery in Washington D.C. The comparison is noteworthy, not on the basis of the similarities in its decorative motifs, but that room centers around a painting from Whistler, *Princess from the Land of Porcelain*, whose title could have initiated the comparison. Catalog Freer Gallery of Art of the Smithsonian Institution 2024, p. 1–20.

¹⁷¹ In the following passage, he briefly recounts Macdonald and Mackintosh's introduction to Vienna in 1900, remarking that "In those beautiful days of our Secession, as the buds were opening, Mackintosh exhibited that certain Salon," and that their submissions as part of the Scottish Room "proved that there is indeed something new under the sun." ("In jenen schönen Tagen, als in unserer Secession alle Knospen knallend sprangen, da stellten Mackintoshs jenen gewissen Salon aus. [...] Als beweis, dass es doch mitunter etwas Neues unter der Sonne gibt.") Hevesi 1909, p. 45.

¹⁷² „Maeterlinck-Szene. Sieben Prinzessinnen, die den Prinz erwarten. Der kommt und findet die Braut tot.“ Ibid., pp. 45–46.

been installed two years earlier,¹⁷³ in 1907. Hevesi's passages concerning the frieze: will be further elaborated upon in the next chapter, with specific relevance to Macdonald's symbolic depictions and linear structure, particularly the ritualistic aspects of the scene surrounding Ursula's death. However, since the text as a whole is useful on the basis of determining how the salon and the frieze, in their original format and locations, would have been received by a contemporary audience, a few additional significant passages should be considered before moving on.

After delving into a short analysis of the symbolic and linear structure of the work, Hevesi reemerges from the depths of the solemn depictions found in the frieze into the social gathering taking place within the salon. Back in the material surroundings of the salon, Hevesi describes:

“the ladies that are seated in the high-backed chairs as appear like princesses (the living ones of course) and that the others seated in the cozy seating nooks huddle together, with feathered hats the size of wagon wheels, as is they were painted or woven—as beings from far away, known only by their Christian names, who grow younger and slimmer—and lithier and smoother and *more mackintosh* from day-to-day. Why not? Must every day be the *everyday*?”¹⁷⁴

This passage indicates that the women within the salon have begun to take on the appearance similar to that of the depictions of the female forms in the frieze, suggesting the impact the room and its furnishing may have had on its temporary inhabitants. This phenomenon prompts Hevesi to envision that:

“A great problem has been solved in the Mackintosh salon, in which the unusual is made cozy and comfortable, the new made homey. It lures one into trusting, yet one knows not how. The eye follows every bend of the line, every barely noticeable gradation of surfaces, because it perceives the feelings of another within. Everything comes from feeling, that was meditated upon, dreamed about, and thought about. The materials have been completely humanized; a soul affixed within.”¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ „Damals ging Herr Wärndorfer nach Glasgow und Mackintoshs kamen nach Wien, und daraus wurde alsbald dieser Salon. Mit allem Um und Auf an Einrichtung und Aufmachung. Nur der breite Fries kam erst vor zwei Jahren nach.“ Ibid. P. 45.

¹⁷⁴ „[...] in diesem Tränensalon sitzen die Damen auf ganz niedrigen, hochlehnigen Stühlen und kommen sich wie Prinzessinnen vor, wie die lebengebliebenen natürlich. Und in den lauschigen Sitznischen, den *cosy corners*, stecken sie die wagenradgroßen Federhüte zusammen, wie gemalt oder (47)gestickt. Wie Wesen von anderswoher, die nur Taufnamen haben und von Tag zu Tag jünger und schlanker werden, und biege- und schmiegsamer und mackintosher. Warum nicht? Muß denn alle Tage Alltag sein?“ Ibid p. 47.

¹⁷⁵ In diesem Mackintoshzimmer ist ein großes Problem gelöst. Das Ungewöhnliche behaglich gemacht, das Neue anheimelnd. Es zieht einen ins Vertrauen, man weißt nicht wie. Das Auge folgt von selbst jeder leisen

Hevesi's poetic assessment of the Waerndorfer music salon comes to a close with the assertion that "this art makes people more human, stronger, healthier, and self-contained,"¹⁷⁶ remarking that "it is allowed once more to imagine, to live in harmony. We are once again an attuned humanity that wants life to be beautiful again. And there are afternoons here and there, on which such things can be achieved."¹⁷⁷

In addition, elaborating on the atmosphere of the salon as it would have been experienced in its original form, Hevesi's text provides, in lieu of extant photographs of the frieze, perhaps the most valuable account of the frieze and how the work functioned within the salon, albeit with significant, yet not unjustified lyrical embellishment. In asserting that the interior affords the viewer the possibility to "perceive the feelings of another within,"¹⁷⁸ he also indicates that aspects of intersubjectivity were enabled within the salon, which as will be proposed in chapter six, could have been partially enabled by Macdonald's linear structure and symbolic program in the frieze. Furthermore, he demonstrates the most articulate contemporary account of the frieze, and perhaps the best overall visual analysis to date, elaborating both on the concepts of death and ritual, but also on themes of waiting and expectation.

5. Macdonald's Visual Transliteration of Maurice Maeterlinck's *Les sept princesses* (1891)

Although the regard for Maeterlinck's works waned throughout the second half of the twentieth century, his works would have been immensely popular at the time in which Macdonald completed *The Seven Princesses* frieze.¹⁷⁹ It is noteworthy that Lux, Levetus, and Hevesi all identified the frieze's literary source in their texts and articles. While Lux and Levetus acknowledge that the frieze is meant to depict incidents from the Maeterlinck play, Hevesi takes his own understanding of the play and its connection to the frieze to new heights, which would suggest that the frieze as an interpretation of a literary source would have been readily perceptible by Waerndorfer's peers, and similarly, by a like-minded contemporary audience.

Biegung der Linie, jeder kaum merken die Neigung der Flächen, denn es fühlt darin das Gefühl eines anderen Menschen. Alles kommt aus dem Empfinden, bei allem alles gesonnen, geträumt, gedacht worden. Der Stoff ist ganz durchmenschlicht, eine Seele ist hineingelegt." Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁷⁶ „Diese Kunst macht Menschen menschlicher, stärker, gesünder, in sich abgeschlossener." Ibid. p. 47.

¹⁷⁷ Es ist wieder erlaubt, Phantasie zu haben, in Stimmung zu leben. Wir sind wieder eine gestimmte Menschheit, das Leben will wieder schön werden. Und es kommen schon stellenweise Nachmittage vor, an denen es ihm gelingt." Ibid. p. 48.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁷⁹ Robertson 2000, pp. 60–61., Thomas 1911, pp. 33–39.

The appreciation of Maeterlinck's works, along with other Belgian symbolist authors and artists would have been indicative of an artistic and intellectual rebirth in Belgium around 1900. At the VIII. Exhibition of the Vienna Secession, an entire room was dedicated to the works of Georges Minne.¹⁸⁰ Other Belgian artists would have also been in attendance, including Henry van de Velde,¹⁸¹ Ferdinand Khnopff, and Léon Frédéric.¹⁸² At the Turin exhibition in 1902, *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* included a special section on the Belgian artists of the exhibition with a lengthy article from George Fuchs on the Belgian artists represented at the exhibition that provides a direct comparison between the Belgian symbolist artists and Maeterlinck.¹⁸³

Comprehending Maeterlinck's popularity and the so-called intellectual rebirth that took place in Belgium during this time provides an important context as to the esteem with which artists, like Macdonald, patrons, like Waerndorfer, and critics like Levetus, Lux and Hevesi held for his work.¹⁸⁴ However, it is uncertain whether the choice to depict the one-act play rested with Macdonald or Waerndorfer. On the one hand, the common interests between the artists and patron were numerous and were not limited to preferences for art and design, but also represented their preferences for literature, meaning depictions of a Maeterlinck work would have appealed to Waerndorfer, not only on the basis of his own tastes in literature, but also on the basis its popularity.¹⁸⁵ On the other hand, as previously mentioned by Levetus, Macdonald and Mackintosh had nearly total freedom of choice when selecting subject matter and motifs, which would suggest that Macdonald could have been solely responsible for choosing the play as inspiration for the frieze.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁰ Vereinigung der bildender Künstler Österreichs Secession 1900, p. 3., Waerndorfer's relationship as friend and patron with Minne may have provided his initial introduction to the work of Maeterlinck, as Minne illustrated numerous works of Maeterlinck's works including the *Princess Maleine* in 1899. Robertson 2000, p. 60–62.

¹⁸¹ In Saal II, "Collection: La Maison moderne in Paris," Van de Velde exhibited an impressive amount domestic furnishings and small accessories. Vereinigung bildender Kunst Österreichs Secession 1900, pp. 20–24.

¹⁸² Ibid., pp.20–24, 29–35.

¹⁸³ „Meunier, Khnopff und Minne, Verhaeren...und im höchsten Maße wohl Maurice Maeterlinck, dessen Name geradezu das nicht immer im besten Sinne 'populär' zu nennende Symbol für diese wundersame Kultur-Stimmung des 'Zwielfichts' im neuzeitlichen Belgien geworden ist." Fuchs 1902, p. 244.

¹⁸⁴ Robertson 2000, pp. 60–61., Here it is also worth noting that Maeterlinck had also been mentioned in connection with the Rose Boudoir in Fuchs's review of the exhibition. See footnote 83., Fuchs 1902, p. 63.

¹⁸⁵ Waerndorfer's literary interests were comprised of "typical turn-of-the-century fashions, such as his enthusiasm for Schopenhauer, Maeterlinck and Edgar Allan Poe." Vergo 2000, p. 33. Robertson 2000, pp. 60–61., Vergo 2000, p. 35.

¹⁸⁶ Levetus 1912, p. 11., Robertson 2000, pp. 71–72., By 1902, Maeterlinck's plays were being performed regularly in England and Scotland and his popularity influence in the English-speaking realm was quite well-

Macdonald's portrayal of the one-act play would have been indicative of her admiration for Maeterlinck's work, but would have also indicated the extent to which her oeuvre was influenced by a heightened regard for the relationship between art and literature. Previous commissions, such as the gesso panel, *O, Ye that Walk in Willowwood* (Fig. 51), completed for the Salon De Luxe also borrows its title from a work of contemporary literature, Dante Gabriel Rossetti's "A Walk in Willowwood." Likewise, friends and colleagues in Glasgow could have shared a similar proclivity for combining art and literature in their works. Jessie M. King illustrated no less than five works by Maeterlinck, including one for *The Seven Princesses*.¹⁸⁷

5.1. Maeterlinck's *Les sept princesses* (1891)

The first edition of *The Seven Princesses* (*Les sept princesses*) was published as a one-act play in 1891,¹⁸⁸ as the fourth in the series of the author's early plays, which all feature a repetition of similar themes of fever-like slumber, death, and helplessness.¹⁸⁹ The play opens with the description of a vast marble hall which overlooks a ship's arrival:

"A spacious hall of marble, with laurel, lavender, and lilies in porcelain vases. A flight of seven white marble steps divides the whole hall lengthwise, and seven princesses, in white gowns and with bare arms, lay sleeping on these steps, which are furnished with cushions of pale silk. A silver lamp shines on their sleep. At the back of the hall, a door with powerful bolts. To the right and left of the door large windows whose panes reach down to the level of the tiles. Behind these windows, a terrace. The sun is just setting, through the panes, a dark marshy country is seen, with pools and forests of oaks and pines. Vertically, with one of the windows, between huge willows, a gloomy canal without a bend, on the horizon of which a large man-of-war approaches. The old

established, having been cited by Oscar Wilde and W.B. Yeats. Robertson 2000, pp. 60–61., Thomas 1911, pp. 33–39., In addition to naming to Maeterlinck as "the fourth participant" in the creation of the Waerndorfer music salon, Robertson draws several parallels between Macdonald in Maeterlinck, claiming that "Maeterlinck was aiming to achieve in words what Macdonald had sought to achieve in her watercolours, illustrations, and gessos." To support this claim, she notes that the sitting room of Macdonald and Mackintosh's Mains Street flat was known to have been "strewn with novels by Maeterlinck." Robertson 2000, pp. 60–61.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. p. 60–62. See also Colin White, *The Enchanted World of Jessie M. King*, Edinburgh, 1989.

¹⁸⁸ The play would have been available in English in 1897 in *The Pageant*, a short-lived publication that combined literature and art. However, Macdonald, as part of her formal education in London, was fluent in French and could have read the original text even before was translated. Robertson 2000, p. 60.

¹⁸⁹ *La Princesse Maleine* (1889), *Les Aveugles* (1890), *L'Intruse* (1890). Moses 1911 pp. 90–103, Thomas 1911, pp. 38–39., Halls notes that each of plays provoked "tempestuous outbursts" from critics, resulting in Maeterlinck's dry-witted retort that *Les sept Princesses* was to be climax to his previous "little trilogy of death." Halls 1960, pp. 30–31.

King, the old Queen and the messenger come forward upon the terrace and watch the approach of the man-of-war.”¹⁹⁰

As the ship comes closer, the King and Queen identify the ship as belonging to Prince Marcellus, who has been away for the last seven years. His ship is met by three swans as its sails and oars graze the branches of the willow trees on either side of the canal.¹⁹¹ As Marcellus approaches, the Queen asks, “Are they still asleep?”¹⁹² as she and the King direct their gazes through the windows of the entrance hall and into the marble hall. The King replies that the princesses must be awakened, “I told you so a long while ago; they must be wakened....”¹⁹³ The Queen replies that it is too late and that they should wait to wake them until Marcellus has arrived, saying that they are too ill to be roused at this point in time and that the doctor has forbidden it.¹⁹⁴

As Marcellus climbs the stair to the castle and is reunited with the King and Queen, it becomes apparent that they are actually his grandparents and that he has returned to wed Ursula, one of the seven princesses, who have resided in the castle awaiting his return. Marcellus remarks on how the King and Queen have aged, to which the King replies, “We are poor little old people; our turn is coming.”¹⁹⁵ Marcellus begins to question why the Queen has greeted him with tears in her eyes and she replies “No, no it is not tears my child....It is not the same thing as tears...Nothing has happened....Nothing has happened.”¹⁹⁶ Upon receiving such an answer, Marcellus inquires as to the whereabouts of the princesses. The Queen hastily replies, “Here, here; listen...do not speak too loud; they sleep still; we must not speak of those who sleep...,”¹⁹⁷ prompting Marcellus to ask if they are still alive. The Queen answers that they are indeed still alive, but that they have been sleeping for some time. The King and Queen show Marcellus to a large glass door behind which the princesses are sleeping.¹⁹⁸

At this point in the play Marcellus’s uneasiness begins to build. He begins to question as to the purpose of the single lamp in the hall, and the Queen replies that the princesses are afraid of the dark and had lit the lamp before going to sleep. He tries once more to look through the

¹⁹⁰ Maeterlinck 1908, p. 121.

¹⁹¹ The queen refers to the rowing of the oars as a represented a thousand legs. Ibid. p. 122.

¹⁹² Ibid. p. 122.

¹⁹³ Ibid. P. 123

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 124.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. p. 126.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid. p. 126–128.

panes of glass into the marble hall, but they have become foggy.¹⁹⁹ As he attempts to wipe the misty panes with his hand, the Queen reacts with a start: “No, no! do not touch the window! They would wake with a start!—It is on the inside; it is on the other side; it is the heat of the hall....”²⁰⁰ Despite the difficulty in seeing through the panes into the marble mall, he remarks that he can see six of the princesses very well, but that the one in the middle seems to be covered by a shadow. The Queen replies without hesitation that he knows well who the figure in the shadow is: “Why yes; why yes; why yes! You know well it is Ursula! It is Ursula! It is Ursula, who has waited for you for seven years! all night long! all night long! all day long! all day long!...Do you not recognize her?...”²⁰¹ Marcellus then begins to bolt from window to window, trying to see Ursula’s face, which the queen remarks is “almost invisible.”²⁰² Marcellus agrees saying that he sees the body, but that the face is “entirely turned heavenward.”²⁰³ At this the Queen becomes impatient with Marcellus, asking why he is not concerned with the other six sleeping princesses, since they too had anticipated his return, waiting and watching every day from the windows overlooking the canal.

In response Marcellus asks once more if he can wake them, but the Queen remarks they he will only frighten them and that they are too ill. The conversation between Marcellus and his grandparents is interrupted by a distant, monotone refrain of the sailors turning Marcellus’s ship back toward the ocean, as they chant “The Atlantic! The Atlantic!”²⁰⁴ and “We shall return no more! We shall return no more!”²⁰⁵ Upon refocusing their gazes into the vast marble hall, the Queen notice something has changed—the princesses have let go of Ursula’s hand.²⁰⁶

With the ominous chant still ringing in her ears, the Queen enters a state of panic and begins beating on the windows and doors to wake the princesses. Marcellus attempts to open the large glass door, but it is bolted from within. At this point, the King explains that there is a subterranean passage through the family crypt with a trap door at the end that opens directly under the floor of the vast marble hall. As Marcellus descends into the crypt, cries of joy erupt from the departing ship that is lit up in the distance.²⁰⁷

¹⁹⁹ Macdonald could have intended the three faces in *The Opera of the Wind* (Fig. 44) to represent this incident. Three faces in the top right of the panel are seen peering through an aperture.

²⁰⁰ Ibid. p. 132.

²⁰¹ Ibid. p. 134.

²⁰² Ibid. p. 135.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid. p. 139.

²⁰⁵ Ibid. p. 140.

²⁰⁶ Ibid. pp. 140–142.

²⁰⁷ Ibid. pp. 148–158.

After reaching the trap door on the other side of the crypt, Marcellus climbs out carefully, as not to startle the sleeping princesses, but as he emerges a hinge on the door squeaks which awakens six of the princesses with a start. All except Ursula rise simultaneously. Marcellus kneels beside Ursula, touches her pale arm and stares terrified at her sisters, who surround him like tall reeds. At this point the King and Queen are beating furiously on the door, as a black curtain falls, signifying the end of the play.²⁰⁸

6. *The Seven Princesses Frieze*

In the play, Maeterlinck uses repetition to convey meaning, both verbally and non-verbally. The repetition of the phrases uttered by the King and Queen and by Marcellus (who are preoccupied with the circumstances surrounding the princesses' fever-like slumber), and by the sailors (who are preparing to return to sea) crescendo into a tone of near hysteria representing urgency to attend to an as yet incomplete task. Conversely, the princesses have no speaking roles in the play. Instead, Maeterlinck constructs a narrative in which the princesses are arranged in recurring physical groupings, first in alluding to the princesses awaiting the return of Marcellus day after day, then as they lay sleeping on the stairs, each one occupying a single step and finally as they awake simultaneously.

Macdonald's interpretation of the play can be best understood as a temporal conflation of the major incidents relating to the play which is reliant on repetition of non-representational linear forms, contrasted with representational forms, and motifs.²⁰⁹ Macdonald draws upon Maeterlinck's use of repetition, not to set tones of uneasiness, urgency, or impending tragedy, but rather to create and maintain balance in the composition to shift the focus of the verbal reiteration to that of a visual repetition of forms and motifs both vertically as seen in the groupings of standing figures and in an arc formation as found in the central grouping of heads around Ursula's body (Fig. 1). In doing so, she accentuates the princesses' absence of individuality, depicting them as nearly identical forms through the implementation of line and ornamentation.

²⁰⁸ Ibid. pp. 160–165.

²⁰⁹ Bauer, Robertson, and Wickre also use the term, "conflation," to Macdonald's interpretation of the play, although none of the authors elaborate very much on the point. In each case, it is merely meant as a short commentary on the work. Bauer 2004, p. 34., Robertson 2000, pp. 60–63., Wickre 1993, p. 399.

6.1. Contemporary Influences

Deciphering Macdonald's artistic intentions leave many questions unanswered. Not only is she not known to have expressed such views in diaries or correspondences, but precious few sketchbooks were left behind after her death. However, it can be presumed when considering her time at the GSA, her formal education must have contained a modicum of artistic theory. In this case, it is highly likely that at a portion of her personal artistic philosophies must have been informed by popular texts in England and Scotland at the time.²¹⁰

Here, the introduction of Owen Jones's *The Grammar of Ornament* provides some insight into Macdonald's implementation of line specifically. The text, which served as a twenty-chapter primer on the principles of ornamentation and design, complete with color plate examples of diverse geographical and historical sources would have been published in an attempt to "awaken a higher ambition"²¹¹ in the state of art education in Great Britain. In each section, Jones elaborates upon the stylistic elements of the respective periods of art history to which they belonged. Each of the stylistic distinctions were not only exemplified by nature of the color plates within their respective sections, but were also supplemented with a broad social and historical context, which were applied to the eras which were described in an effort to enable a contextual understanding of the time and places from which such stylistic developments emerged.²¹²

In the preface of the text, Jones establishes a list of twenty-two "General Principles in the Arrangement of Form and Colour, in Architecture and the Decorative Arts,"²¹³ some of which seem to correspond very well with Macdonald's implementation of line. Propositions six and twelve specifically, contain specific relevance to Macdonald's methodology. Proposition six states: "Beauty is a form produced by lines growing out from one and other in gradual undulations: there are no excrescences; nothing could be removed and leave the design equally

²¹⁰ Neat supports the ambiguity of Macdonald's artistic philosophies mentioning that in Mackintosh's writings on art and aesthetics are known, Macdonald was never known for her ability to express her artistic intentions in writing. "Her symbolism is at once personal and universal. She attached supreme importance to the ethical content of any work of art, but knew its expression must be individual and contemporary". Neat 1994, p. 117., Robertson 2000, pp. 60–61.

²¹¹ Jones p. 2.

²¹² "To attempt to build up theories of art, or to form a style, independently of the past, would be an act of supreme folly. It would be at once to reject the experiences and accumulated knowledge of thousands of years. On the contrary, we should regard as our inheritance all the successful labours of the past, not blindly following them, but employing them simply as guides to find the true path." Jones 1856, p. 2., Sonia Ashmore, Owen Jones and the V&A Collections, V&A Online Journal, Issue No. 1 Autumn, <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/journals/research-journal/issue-01/owen-jones-and-the-v-and-a-collections/>, [04.04.2024].

²¹³ Jones 1856, p. 4.

good or better.”²¹⁴ In the context of *The Seven Princesses* frieze, this principle could be applied to nearly the entire composition, although it is perhaps most noticeable in the undulating lines of the central panel, namely those originating from singular sources, some of which continue into the neighboring panels.

Proposition twelve states: “All junctions of curved lines with curved or of curved lines with straight should be tangential to each other.”²¹⁵ This proposition can be applied with equal relevance directly to Macdonald’s frieze, especially in the areas of the composition comprising the area in front of which the six princesses are portrayed as standing figures. The implementation of the contrast of line as relating to Jones’s proposition in this case could be traced directly back to Fuchs’s review of the *Rose Boudoir* in 1902 in which he states that softness of the curving lines portrayed in the interior “is whipped out of the field by an uncanny multiplication of verticals.”²¹⁶

It is unclear whether Macdonald would have been familiar with Jones’s text. Nevertheless, due to the aforementioned similarities in Macdonald’s application of ornamentation and linear structure dating back to the early 1890’s, and to the popularity of *The Grammar of Ornament* within arts institutions in Great Britain, it is likely that it would have been included in the curriculum during her studies in England or at the GSA. Apart from her formal education, influences from her contemporaries would have impacted her stylistic evolution. Undoubtedly, the topic of abstract linear configurations representing stylized human forms contained within indeterminate spaces would not have been a phenomenon unique to Macdonald’s work, but would have rather been indicative of the point in time in which the frieze was created. Robertson cites the works of Aubrey Beardsley, and Jan Toorop’s *The Three Brides* (1893) as possible influences for Macdonald’s work which manifest themselves in *The Seven Princesses* frieze,²¹⁷ an assertion that she claims is based on the fact that each artist’s work would have been published in *The Studio* as early as 1893.

The over-sized and abstracted billowing forms that make up Beardsley’s figures, as seen in *The Peacock Skirt* (Fig. 52), allow for numerous comparisons with Macdonald’s figures, primarily those in the *May Queen*, *The White Rose and the Red Rose*, and later in *The Seven Princesses*. In this work, like in many other Beardsley works, the forms themselves seem to

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Full citation can be found in footnote 88. Fuchs 1902, p. 63.

²¹⁷ Robertson 1993, p. 112.

meld into the linear composition, and dominate the center of the composition, with a secondary emphasis on the anatomical aspects such as faces. As seen in the figure on the left in *The Peacock Skirt*, for example, the hands of the figure are completely absent, with the face among a nest of hair acting as the only indication that the flowing ornamental pattern in this area of the composition is indeed intended to represent the robe of a figure. This comparison is also identifiable in the gessos presented in Turin in 1902, with the faces acting as the single point of reference confirming that the abstracted round linear constructs are intended to represent the bodies of the depicted forms.

Even though Macdonald's linear structure is more elaborate than the spatiality demonstrated in *The Peacock Skirt*, some similarities between the two are identifiable. This is especially relevant insofar as the figures in each work are observable within an undefined space, which lacks the formal components of the foreground, middle ground, and background. In this case the emphasis is intended to remain on the figures themselves and not the spaces in which they inhabit.

Although marked similarities between Macdonald and Beardsley's figures are distinguishable, apart from a few exceptions, Beardsley's depictions are usually found in single or coupled individualized portrayals of figures, which Macdonald certainly would have favored previous to *The Seven Princesses*, as seen in *Summer* from 1894 (Fig. 2). However, her fully developed style, featuring groupings of identical figures in *The Seven Princesses* and *May Queen*, *The Opera of the Wind* and *The Opera of the Sea*, contradict Beardsley's usual focus on the ornate depictions and individualized forms, regardless of whether said forms were depicted singly or in groupings.

In this case, Toorop's abstracted and swirling non-individualized female forms in *The Three Brides* (Fig. 53) provides a more coherent example relating the application of repetition in the frieze, most notably in the central shrouded feminine form surrounded by a shower of white roses that seem to be suspended in mid-air. Here, the similarities between Toorop's allegory of matrimony, the rose motif which surrounds the central figure, the depictions of nearly identical stylized and abstracted female forms, as well as the figures and motifs arranged in a seemingly floating spatial arrangement with a monochromatic color palette provide convincing parallels with Macdonald's frieze. However, the comparison with Toorop is not fully conclusive to that extent that the composition in *The Three Brides* demonstrates a discernible spatial depth, and clearly delineated outlines of the figures.

Without delving too far into the art historical canon, one further noteworthy comparison recalls the illuminated manuscripts of William Blake. Such comparisons are especially applicable as relating to the symbolic depictions of identical, almost archetypal forms, which are distinguishable as human forms, but lack the specific attributes of individuality, as seen in *The Ascension* (Fig. 54). The creation of the identical or archetypal forms, however, is not the only comparison that can be made with Blake, especially when one considers Macdonald's implementation of a restrained, nearly monochromatic color palette and the composition as an allotment of spatial units lacking a sense of conventional perspective. In turn, this creates an indeterminate space that speaks more to a spiritual realm than a material state of being.²¹⁸

6.1.1. In Context of Line Theory Around 1900

The linear characteristics found in the compositions of artists like Beardsley, Toorop, and Macdonald were certainly indicative of a large portion of the artistic output in Europe around 1900. However, a formal study of the role and importance of the line, both in terms of ornamental and abstract linear configurations was relatively underrepresented in connection with theoretical considerations to modern art until it was approached in a series of lectures from 1901–1910 by Henry van de Velde which was later published as a complete text entitled, *Die Linie*.²¹⁹

The manifestation of line in the visual arts, he proposes, comprises two main categories; *die mitteilende Linie*, or the communicative line and *die Gemütslinie*, or the expressive line. The former, he states is the oldest, representing the will to accurately recreate depictions of what one sees in the natural world, therein indicating an intrinsic force born out of primitive humans' need for self-expression through pictorial representation, i.e., linear representation. This intrinsic force, he notes, began with primitive humans drawing with sticks and blades of grass in the sand and continued to evolve into more realistic depictions of the world around them.²²⁰

The *expressive line*, on the other hand, is a comparatively recent development relating to humans utilizing more complex means of expression. Whereas the communicative line

²¹⁸ Gerhardus/Gerhardus 1979, p. 21, pp. 34–35.

²¹⁹ *Die Linie* was published in multiple editions that were based on his lectures in Germany during 1901–1910, first in two editions in 1902 as „Prinzipielle Erklärungen“ in *Kunstgewerbliche Laienpredigten* and „Die Linie“ in *Die Zukunft*. In 1908 the essay was published in four different versions under the titles; „Die Linie: Vortrag von Prof. van de Velde“, „Die Linie“ in *Hohe Warte*, „Über die Linie“ in *Die Werkkunst*, and „Die Linie“ in *Die neue Rundschau*. Van de Velde 2022, pp. 279–283.

²²⁰ Van de Velde 2022, p. 278–279.

functions toward a mimetic purpose, the expressive line conveys a “transferred gesture”²²¹ that demonstrates “psychic forces guided by the hand.”²²² This gesture or force, he proposes, transcends the need to replicate one’s surroundings by means of pure imitation,²²³ and instead manifests a spontaneous gesture akin to music or dance,²²⁴ or an impulse to express “rhythm.”²²⁵ The properties of the expressive line, he discusses, had experienced “rebirth”²²⁶ in the latter half of the nineteenth century, beginning with Impressionism and Post-Impressionism and had continued to manifest itself in the visual arts after the turn of the century.²²⁷

For the purpose of this study, *Die Linie* offers significantly relevant insight into Macdonald’s implementation of linear structure within her composition, both on the basis of the text having been informed largely by the observation of the artistic output of its time, but also because the series of lectures appear almost simultaneously with the commission of the music salon and with the culmination of Macdonald’s stylistic evolution. In *The Seven Princesses* frieze, the compositional and linear structure demonstrates van de Velde’s proposal of the ostensible reliance of the visual and tactile components upon the less tangible symbolic and allegorical aspects of the line. Nevertheless, Macdonald’s implementation of line in the frieze presents a rather unique problem, which is not wholly addressed by van de Velde, insofar as the distinction between the *communicative line* and *expressive line* in the frieze is ambiguous at times, rendering it difficult to assess whether Macdonald constructed the linear aspects of the work to act symbolically, or to merely support the ornamental aspects of the composition.

The response to questions surrounding whether the potential of the allegorical line serving a mutually communicative and expressive purpose is perhaps most succinctly and comprehensively addressed in Sabine Mainberger’s elaboration upon van de Velde’s *Die Linie*, as presented in *Experiment Linie* (2010). The text offers a wealth of considerations on the qualities of line in the visual arts around 1900, including an exceedingly articulate elaboration

²²¹ “übertragende Gebärde” Curjel/van de Velde 1955 p. 185.

²²² Van de Velde 2022, p. 282.

²²³ Ibid. pp. 252–273, Ibid., pp. 279–299, Curjel/van de Velde 1955, pp. 181–195.

²²⁴ Curjel/van de Velde 1955, p. 185, van de Velde 2022, pp. 282–283.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 283.

²²⁶ Ibid., p. 279.

²²⁷ Ibid., pp. 279–283.

extensively on the potential “dynamic and energetic”²²⁸ qualities of line.²²⁹ According to Mainberger, van de Velde’s designation of the *expressive line* promotes the creation of subjective, and consequently intersubjective representations in visual art through the implementation of what she designates “transliterated meanings and encoded symbols.”²³⁰

In specifying the potential of the expressive line as a means of expression and a catalyst for intersubjectivity,²³¹ Mainberger offers an interpretation of van de Velde’s original hypotheses that can in turn be applied directly to Macdonald’s linear composition in the frieze. If one chooses to ignore the possible allegorical or symbolic aspects of Macdonald’s linear construction in *The Seven Princesses* frieze, and regards the linear construction as purely ornamental, the work is rendered far less complex. This motif is identifiable in *The May Queen*, in which the continuity and repetition of the linear forms are intended to maintain and create balance and harmony in the composition from a purely decorative or ornamental standpoint. However, unlike the comparatively more ornamental properties portrayed in *The May Queen*, the allegorical and symbolic function in *The Seven Princesses* frieze cannot be easily ignored. This statement especially significant when put into context of the Maeterlinck play and the gesso panels created for the piano in the salon, as it enables therein the recognition of a complex symbolic program. Furthermore, and as demonstrated in the accounts presented in the reception history, Macdonald’s implementation of line in the frieze, albeit with abstracted lines and forms, was able to be recognized and appreciated by her peers and those who understood the cultural and literary references, therein enabling a certain interpersonal or intersubjective understanding of the work.

In an attempt to reconcile the information introduced in the texts from Jones, van de Velde and Mainberger, the following analysis will outline the manner in which Macdonald’s linear structure in the *Seven Princesses* serves both a compositional and ornamental functions, as well as allegorical and symbolic functions. Such functions are dependent upon a strong emphasis on Macdonald’s applications of the repetition of “transliterated meanings and encoded

²²⁸ „Die dynamische energiegeladenen Linie der Zeit um 1900 ist nicht nur ein Markenzeichen von Art Nouveau und Jugendstil, sondern weit über Aufstieg und Fall, Hochkonjunktur und Diskreditierung dieser Richtung hinaus ein Syndrom.“ In addition to citing such properties as trademark to the style, she notes their contribution to the eventual fall and discrediting of the movement. Mainberger 2010, p. 21.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ „Begriffen, Kult, Zeremonie, usw. befindet sich man jedenfalls unbestreitbar auf der Ebene von kodierten Bedeutungen, Symbolen, menschlicher Kultur...“ Ibid. p. 274., Ibid. pp. 267–283.

²³¹ For an example of how the term intersubjectivity can be applied in the context of the frieze, one can relate back to Hevesi’s assertion in “Ein moderner Nachmittag,” in which he describes the contents of the salon as allowing one to “perceive the feelings of another within.” Hevesi 1909, p. 47. See footnote 175 for full quote.

symbols,”²³² which, in this case should be understood as Macdonald’s transliteration of Maeterlinck’s verbal repetition and verbal descriptions of specific motifs and occurrences into a visual language that are perceptible within the context of the play. The aforementioned consideration is vital, as it enables an intersubjective understanding of Macdonald’s symbolic program on the part of the viewer.

When considering Macdonald’s proposed transliteration in the frieze, it is important to recognize that the goal of the chapter is not to list the components of the composition as isolated parts of the work. Accordingly, demonstrating a plausible interpretation and analysis of the composition as contingent in recognizing the inseparable and self-referential visual and non-visual components found within will be elaborated upon. This inseparable bond can be considered as occupying multiple realms: 1) Macdonald’s interpretation of the Maeterlinck play as a temporal conflation of events manifested in the form of a complex symbolic program; 2) references to Macdonald’s own stylistic repertoire; 3) and the compositional structure of the frieze, which although united by Macdonald’s visual language, encompasses numerous subcategories.

6.2. Considerations on Previous Analyses of *The Seven Princesses* Frieze

Although aided by the suppositions pertaining to Macdonald’s stylistic philosophy and the introduction of elements of linear theory around 1900, producing a visual analysis of *The Seven Princesses* presents a challenge insofar as previous attempts at such have generally neglected to approach the work from the standpoint of its linear structure. Instead, analyses including those from the most prominent researchers of Macdonald’s works such as Burkhauser, Helland and Robertson, have seemed to favor the “fairytale” interpretation of the frieze’s content. It is difficult to assert if these previous analyses have simply overlooked approaching the work in the context of its linear structure as a conduit for Macdonald’s symbolic program, or if other, perhaps more obvious interpretations simply impeded this point of view. As previously suggested, the origin of this mindset that may be directly related to the work’s original title, or may be symptomatic of its disappearance between 1916 and 1990, in which time the frieze’s absence facilitated a general lack of interest that was likely initiated by the work’s unavailability during this time, both physically and photographically.

²³² Mainberger 2010, pp. 267–283.

Robertson, for example, interprets the symbolic and compositional devices portrayed in the frieze as intending to depict the play's "quest for ideal love/knowledge, a quest which involves the passage through death, symbolized by the Prince's passage through the family crypt to reach Ursula, and into a different state of being presented by the marble chamber where the Princesses pass their days. When Ursula, a symbol for ideal love/knowledge is approached by her worldly Prince, the inevitable result is death and the permanent separation of the two."²³³ Such interpretations of Macdonald's frieze are not generally flawed, as the archetype of the sleeping princess is indeed recognizable, but do come across as insufficient. In overlooking the other representational components at work in the frieze an unjustifiably simplistic interpretation of the complex compositional and symbolic mechanisms employed in Macdonald's transliteration of the Maeterlinck play is unduly rendered.

6.3. *The Seven Princesses* Frieze: Media and Image Composition

Before continuing, a final element relating to the historical context of the frieze is necessary, namely Macdonald's previous experience with gesso, which will be followed by a short explanation of the methods and materials employed in creating *The Seven Princesses* frieze. As mentioned in chapter two, *The May Queen* can be considered as Macdonald's first known work using gesso in 1900, but it is uncertain where and when she learned the process. In this case it would seem that she had some experience with gesso at the GSA, although no works from this timeframe are known to exist. Some sources indicate that the medium would have been included in the curriculum catalog, however, the fact that her first gesso panels were completed over half a decade after completion of her studies suggests that she received further instruction after leaving the GSA, or that she was self-taught.²³⁴ Regardless, it would appear that her talents were well-suited to the medium, especially considering that one-third of her production between 1900 and 1910 is now known to comprise no less than ten gesso works, *The May Queen*, (1900) (Fig. 9), *The White Rose and The Red Rose* and *The Heart of The Rose* in 1902 (Figs. 30–31), *O, Ye That Walk in Willowwood* (1903) (Fig. 51), *The Opera of the Winds* and *The Opera of the Sea* (1903) (Fig. 43 and 44), *Summer* (1904) (Fig. 55), *The Seven*

²³³ "The play however has a deeper theme: the quest for ideal love/knowledge, a quest which involves the passage through death, symbolized by the Prince's passage through the family crypt to reach Ursula, and into a different state of being presented by the marble chamber where the Princesses pass their days. When Ursula, a symbol for ideal love/knowledge is approached by her worldly Prince, the inevitable result is death and the permanent separation of the two." Robertson 2000, p. 60–61.

²³⁴ Robertson 2000, p. 60–62., pp. 70–72., Parkinson 1997 p. 51.

Princesses (1906), *The Sleeping Princesses* (1908–1909) (Fig. 56) and *The Four Queens* (1909) (Fig. 57).²³⁵

The sheer number of works using gesso completed by Macdonald during this short span of time is impressive, as the preparation and execution of the gesso would have been immensely time-consuming. In the case of *The Seven Princesses* frieze, the meticulous process with which her gesso panels would have been created and the types and variations of materials that were used only became evident after the restoration of the work during 1994–1995. The picture supports of the frieze were composed of three single panels of the same size that were made from coarse jute strips that were soaked in plaster before being applied to the wooden framing in layers. The three panels were comprised of up to eleven layers of plaster, measuring up to three to four millimeters thick in some areas, which were then worked using various techniques. The heads and shoulders of the figures, for example, were polished to a porcelain-like finish, which created a smooth surface in the faces, especially in comparison to the other areas of the composition (Fig. 58). The details of the heads and faces were then drawn in in pencil with singular color details in pale pink for the lips (Figs. 58 and 59).²³⁶

In order to support the weight of the thicker layers of gesso and the inlays, such as those found behind the standing princesses and the central grouping of heads, some areas were reinforced with individually applied slatted frames using wood and wire. This construction, although time-intensive, produced a deceptively lightweight set of panels, but also allowed the panels to withstand fluctuations in temperature and humidity that would normally cause shrinkage in the surface, and eventually leading to cracking. This method of construction would have been advantageous during the shipping from Glasgow to Vienna, but also may stand as testimony for the seemingly good condition in which the frieze was found after being packed up in a subterranean depot for over seventy years.²³⁷

Over the layers of the plaster base, Macdonald implemented a sculptural technique using multiple layers of pastiglia, a technique that would have been known in Glasgow at the time as “gesso work.”²³⁸ The sculptural properties of the pastiglia comprise the decorative aspects of

²³⁵ *The Four Queens* was originally a series of four gesso panels. Fig. 57 shows *The Queen of Hearts*, which is currently on view at the Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, Virginia.

²³⁶ Ibid., p. 62, Trummer 2000, pp. 79–80.

²³⁷ Trummer 2000, p. 79.

²³⁸ Crane 1893, pp. 44–45., Gesso experienced a second rebirth in late 1800’s in England and Scotland during the Arts and Craft Movement, which was likely assisted by several articles by that appeared in *The Studio* in the

the frieze, as well as forming some of its linear composition.²³⁹ The surface lines in various tones of red, pale pink, lilac, lavender, dark blue, and moss green were created using a mixture of materials including twine, a piping bag technique, or by heating and by molding the gesso mixture. The rose motif (Fig. 60), for example, would appear to be applied using pigmented gesso that was piped onto the surface, while other forms may have been modeled by hand before being pressed into the wet surface. In the case of the hand-molded gesso, some brushstrokes are still visible (Fig. 61),²⁴⁰ which may suggest the color was applied after the forms were pressed into the wet surface.²⁴¹

The surface textures were applied in uneven layers, especially in comparison to the faces, creating a rough, light refracting texture. Colored fragments of glass, colored glass beads (Fig. 62), iridescent and reflective semi-precious stones (Fig. 63)²⁴² in varying shades of red, green and dark blue (Figs. 58 and 63), and mother-of-pearl were applied to the wet surface. The last step in the process would have consisted of sealing the surface of the composition with multiple coats varnish.²⁴³

6.4. Spatiality and Pictorial Configuration

Macdonald's emphasis on the repetition of forms and motifs, suggests that she was able to transliterate Maeterlinck's written language, into that which could be portrayed in terms of a visual language. In doing so, Macdonald created a work that challenges the viewing habits of the observer, in that the composition contains details that are not arranged in a typical manner, especially with regard to a conventional implementation of perspective. Consequently, the arrangement is at odds with the more passive manner in which the viewer perceives the world surrounding them, therein creating a visual response that is not immediately obtainable, as would be the case with a landscape, still-life, or a realistic grouping of figures portrayed in a

1890's. Two articles are still accessible today in *The Studio* archives include those from Walter Crane, "Notes on Gesso Work" from 1893 and from Matthew Webb, "On Gesso and Some Designs in a Competition for a Finger-Plate" from 1894. Crane 1893, pp. 44–45., Webb 1894, pp. 153–159.

²³⁹ Pastiglia as an artistic medium date back to ancient Egyptian sarcophagi and mummification processes. The medium was used continually throughout the Hellenistic period for funerary preparations and underwent its first revival during the Renaissance in Europe, when it was used as a decorative technique in furniture, but also in portraiture, often applied to the periphery of the composition or even on the frame itself. During the restoration, some of the traditional components of pastiglia such as chalk and a glue binder from animal skins, linseed oil, and resin were able to be deciphered using chemical analyses, although the exact ratios in which they were mixed were not able to be confirmed. Trummer 2000, pp. 88–89.

²⁴⁰ After the cleaning and restoration, some of the brushstrokes, likely carried out in the final sealing process, can still be seen on Marcellus's face (Fig. 61).

²⁴¹ Trummer 2000, pp. 88–89.

²⁴² Hevesi identifies them as chalcedony and labradorite. During the restoration they were only listed as semi-precious stones. Hevesi 1909, p. 46., Trummer 2000, pp. 80–82.

²⁴³ Ibid. pp. 80–84.

believable space. Instead, the viewer must attempt to reconstruct a narrative which is not imminently present, in a space that is not clearly delineated or recognizable, thereby piecing together parts of the composition to form the whole.²⁴⁴

This does not suggest, however, that Macdonald's unconventional compositional methods degrade the viewer's ability to organize the aspects of the composition entirely. On the contrary, the compositional methods which emphasize the ornamental and non-representational expressive qualities of line, as well as the implementation of tactile and plastic formations built upon the gesso base, enable an unconventional understanding of depth and spatial hierarchy on the part of the viewer, in which a narrative structure in the work is recognizable by virtue of the ordered distinction of figures.

This proposed ordered distinction of figures can be separated into three spaces within the composition. Instead of representing spatial depth in terms of traditional methods of perspective, Macdonald opts to separate the three areas of the composition by layering aspects of spatiality creating therein the necessary components to arrange the spaces of composition. To best explain the proposed layering of spatial components in the frieze, the main areas of the composition create a spatial and structural division within the composition comprising: 1) initial focal point in the central panel featuring Ursula and Marcellus (Fig. 64); 2) the heads of the six princesses in the mirror-image arc formation (Fig. 64); and 3) the six standing princesses in two incongruent groupings (Figs. 65 and 66). Although these three spatial constructs do not correspond with the ways in which depth is traditionally depicted—as the foreground (the initial focal point), middle ground (the arc formations), and background (the standing princesses), recognizing them in this context, as isolated parts of the narrative that are intended to exist within their own spatial realm, facilitates an understanding of the work beyond the terms of pure ornamentality and enable the spatial dissolution of the figures to be organized according to spatial hierarchy.

This assertion is validated in terms of the repetitions of ornamental and abstracted linear arrangements that comprise the contours of the figures as well as the surface lines that interlace and unify the entire pictorial configuration. In attempting to arrange the spatial construction of the composition, a series of linear repetitions become identifiable: 1) horizontal arc formations, as seen in the horizontally-oriented swooping construct in the central panel (Fig. 67); 2) circular forms as found in the applied rose motif and the heads within the arc formation in the

²⁴⁴ Gerhardus/Gerhardus 1979, pp. 17–24.

central panel (Figs. 65 and 66); 3) elliptical and teardrop formations throughout the composition, mostly vertically oriented, although a few examples of horizontal orientations exist (Fig. 69.); and 4) straight vertical linear formations, most of which occur in what could be understood as the background (Figs. 69 and 70).

6.5. The Central Panel

By nature of the frieze's spatial organization, arrangement of figures in the central panel functions as the initial focal point, in which the viewer begins organizing the composition and the corresponding narrative structure. This area is comprised mostly of a swooping horizontal arc formation, creating a construct that spans the lower two-thirds of the central panel and about one-fourth of the inner portions of the left and right panels (Fig. 67). Within this formation, four types of representational components found can be found: 1) six identical female heads shown in profile with downcast gazes and bound hair (Figs. 67 and 68); 2) Marcellus, depicted as a singular head, shown in frontal view with a white rose applique covering the area where the chin would be found (Figs. 61 and 64); 3) a horizontally oriented cocoon-like structure suggesting Ursula's body (Figs. 71 and 72); and 4) three black swans in the lower left of the section (Fig. 73).²⁴⁵

The head of Marcellus over the body of Ursula functions as a central point, around which all other compositional components are oriented.²⁴⁶ The standing figures in the left and right panels frame this area, which is enhanced by the orientation of their robes, drifting inward, to the right in the left panel and to the left in the right panel (Figs. 65 and 66). The arrangement of the representational forms in the central panel communicates a rather straightforward interpretation the mourning of Ursula's death after Marcellus emerges from the crypt and discovers her lifeless body. This incident, however, does not actually occur in the play, although it could have briefly taken place on stage as part of Maeterlinck's stage direction before the curtain fell.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵ The white rose is recognizable as the being the same as the others strewn about the composition, but instead of being shown in frontal view, as a flat sort of applique, the rose is shown in three-quarter view which is oriented toward Ursula's face.

²⁴⁶ Robertson interprets the face in the center as a spiritual entity observing the scene, although it is more likely that this figure is meant to represent Marcellus, especially since he is found nowhere else in the composition, positioned in unity with Ursula. Robertson 2000, p. 66.

²⁴⁷ Shapira and Robertson support the notion of a brief scene of mourning occurring in the stage direction. Shapira 2006, p. 73., Robertson attempts to complete the scene by describing the figures as "leaned over their sister in one single movement, lifted her up, and carried her in utter silence - her body already stiff, her hair disheveled, her head rigid—and laid her on the topmost of the seven marble steps." Robertson 2000, p. 63.

In opting to represent an incident that does not occur in the play, Macdonald's transliteration of the plot indicative of a conflation of events inspired by, but not necessarily intended as an exact depiction of Maeterlinck's storyline becomes increasingly understandable, enabling the components of Macdonald's complex symbolic program to fall into place. The repetition of the six heads in the arc formation establish a singular identity that, in lieu of focusing on the figures individually, opts to create associations indicative of scene ritualistic mourning. The central head of Marcellus, which is framed by the identical heads in the arc formation, exists as the singular depiction of him in the composition, which asserts his individuality and identity. This point is reinforced by the frontal view, providing a contrast to the heads in the arc formation, who are all shown in profile.

The centrality and proximity with which Marcellus resides in relation to the heads in the arc formation, however, is not the only indication of his place within the group. Six groupings of horizontal lines shown diffusing from his face and head join his presence with that of the six princesses, intersecting each of their heads at varying locations (Fig. 74). The groupings of the lines intersecting their heads at eye-level could be understood as tears, especially since the lines intersecting with the upper two heads on each side radiate directly from Marcellus's eyes, further suggesting that each of the figures is party to the same state of mourning.

A second series of linear constructions reinforce the tear motif in the form of concentric circular forms found in the areas around Ursula and Marcellus's heads (Figs. 57 and 64). The upper circular construction form frames Marcellus's head, while the lower radiates from his eyes. Like the face of Marcellus, Ursula's face is only shown once in the entire composition framed by a series of concentric circles, a few of which radiate from her eyes. The concentric circular structure around Ursula's face spirals in to create a dense area of lines, which meld with the cocoon-shaped formation. The cocoon-like structure comprising her body, too could be understood as having been wrapped in a funerary shroud, creating a floating, boat-like structure that could suggest a burial scene taking place on water. Here, Macdonald's intention could have been to introduce a symbolic representation of water, insofar as the radiations of "tears" take on the form of concentric circles like ripples on the surface of a still body of water.²⁴⁸

In addition to corresponding with the symbolism relating to water and sea travel introduced in the piano gessos (Figs. 44 and 45), the proposed symbolic linear construction relating to water

²⁴⁸ The notion of the teardrops recalling ripples on the surface of water could also be understood as thematic of repetition.

is reinforced by the presence of the three swans in the left corner of the swooping linear construct. The presence of the three swans would have been a rather direct motif interpretation of the literary source. Here the swans can be understood as the same three swans which accompany Marcellus's ship as he approaches the castle through a "gloomy canal without a bend."²⁴⁹ Macdonald accentuates the water theme by positioning the swans to appear as though they were gliding upon the surface of a body of water, with their heads directed to the central grouping of figures, as to denote forward momentum, and their wings tucked into their sides. The bottom portion of their bodies assumes a flat appearance and is devoid of legs or feet, further suggesting a state of movement along water.

Though Maeterlinck makes no designation as to the color of the swans, Macdonald's singular application of black to an otherwise pale-colored and monochromatic color palette draws attention to the swans, but could, as Robertson suggests, also be indicative of the tragic turn of events that await the prince after his arrival.²⁵⁰ The swans as harbingers of tragedy is emphasized by the directional momentum of the of their forms, introducing the eye to a series of piped gesso rose appliques in white, lavender, and pink that lead the eye outside of the central panel that form a diagonal linear construction that join Ursula's body with the left side of the composition, spanning from her chest in an upward trajectory that spans to an empty space in the composition in the far left of the left panel.²⁵¹

When considered in the context of tragedy, the implementation of the rose motif could be dual in meaning, both as a stylistic trademark relating to the stenciled rose motif found in the Waerndorfer salon, and to the Rose Boudoir intended to serve an allegorical function as a funerary garland leading to the empty space in the composition where Ursula would have stood. In this sense, the garland joining Ursula's body with the empty space in the upper left of the left panel (Fig. 65) could not only be intended to represent Ursula's journey between life and death, but also her absence among the living that mourn her loss in the central panel.²⁵²

²⁴⁹ As Marcellus's ship comes to anchor, the queen observes that he is being greeted by three swans as he alights from the ship: "Just look at the swans...They are going to meet him...They are going to see what it is..." Maeterlinck 1908, p. 122.

²⁵⁰ Robertson 2000, p. 65.

²⁵¹ Macdonald may have chosen to express this by the inclusion of lavender in the color palette. Maeterlinck makes no mention of roses, although he does mention numerous arrangements of lilies, laurel, and lavender blooms strewn throughout the marble hall are oriented towards Ursula, perhaps foreshadowing her eventual fate. Maeterlinck 1908, p. 121., Robertson 2000 p. 63–65.

²⁵² Wickre also contends that the empty space in the left panel could represent a symbolic absence of Ursula among the living. Wickre 1993, p. 401.

6.6. Hevesi's *Tränensalon*: An Intersubjective Understanding of Ritualistic Mourning

In understanding the central panel as a scene of mourning, the depicted incidents become increasingly reliant upon Macdonald's transliteration of the Maeterlinck play into a visual language, therein enabling a specific intersubjectivity, which enables an understanding of the work relevant to course of events in the literary source by a contemporary audience, which is perceived through her implementation of symbolism. Though Hevesi eventually comes around to recognizing the central panel as a scene of mourning, he makes one inference about the linear structure of the central panel that links the linear structure in the frieze with the furnishings of the salon. When describing the six heads within the arc formation, he interprets their positioning as: "bending like reeds in the wind, with their lines rushing into an affected and stylized rigor"²⁵³ that "spin out ornamentally into sweeping curves and tightly drawn wires...true to the style of an electric world that is crisscrossed by wires. Powerlines for God knows what—omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence drawn onto wire."²⁵⁴

In mentioning "an electric world that is crisscrossed by wires,"²⁵⁵ Hevesi could have been making an allegorical comparison between the six groupings of lines radiating from Marcellus (and perhaps the swooping construct in the central panel as a whole) and the electric lighting fixtures in the salon. The arrangement of the lighting in the salon could have created an effect similar to that described in *The Studio* that mentioned the wires for the lighting in the Rose Boudoir as giving "the effect of falling rain,"²⁵⁶ and the lamps, although less ornate in comparison to the salon as reminiscent of "little drops of water."²⁵⁷ It is certainly comprehensible that the electric lighting installed in the salon (Fig. 38) and the wires from which baubles and pendants hung would have displayed a marked linear arrangement, that although mostly vertical, would have been indicative of a modern world connected by a seemingly mystical radiance—in this case electricity, which had only recently been attainable in a domestic capacity. In this sense, Hevesi may have somehow allegorically linked his

²⁵³ „Und die trauernden Gestalten neigen sich, wie Rohr im Winde, und ihre Linien hasten in stilisierte Starre wie appliziert.“ Hevesi 1909, p. 46.

²⁵⁴ „Und spinnen sich ornamental aus, in jenen weit geschwungenen Kurven und straff gezogenen Drähten ... wahrhaftig, in einem Drahtstil einer elektronischen Welt, die kreuz und quer von Drähten umspinnen und durchzogen ist. Stromleitungen für Gott weiß was, auf Draht gezogene Allwissenheit, Allmacht, Allgegenwart.“ Ibid., p. 46.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 46.

²⁵⁶ each on its cord of flexible wire, they give the effect of falling streams as of a white rain, while the little lamps, hanging bare and without reflectors, look like drops of water.” *The Studio* 1902, pp. 94–95.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

perception of the world connected by electricity with some sort of omnipotent presence, and applied that further to the lines connecting the figural depictions in the central panel.

Although Hevesi rather eloquently expressed a possible connection between lighting in the salon with the linear structure of the frieze, it is difficult to say with any certainty whether his association represented a conscience effort on Macdonald's part. Nonetheless, since electric lighting would have been a relatively recent phenomenon, the wires from the electric lighting installed during the construction of the salon would have certainly been noticeable and the corresponding linear structure in Macdonald's frieze is unlikely to have escaped the notice of any visitor. In this sense the linear construction in the central panel surpassed mere ornamentality as a reflection of the salon's furnishings, regardless of whether or not Macdonald had originally intended it to do so.

In addition to drawing parallels between the frieze's linear structure and the electric fittings in the salon within this passage, Hevesi's text provides a further example of Macdonald's transliteration of Maeterlinck's play into an intersubjective scene of ritualistic mourning:

“Over the dead maiden they all weep, the prince and the six princesses. Fantastically they weep, in a certain grey harmony, a wan, mouse-grey, swimming, overlapping tone sequence. Peaceful like a prayer carpet from the orient, on which a thousand years of prayers have taken place, kneeled upon with knees, with palms, with foreheads.”²⁵⁸

On the following page, this acknowledgment is reinforced, referring to "the stylized teardrop as the leitmotif of every operative point of the entire décor,"²⁵⁹ therein creating what he terms as a "stalactite Grotto"²⁶⁰ in which "a teatime would be unimaginable."²⁶¹ He carries the stylized teardrop as the leitmotif a step further by referring to the salon simply as a "Tränensalon" or "salon of tears."²⁶² In this case, it is comprehensible that since other lighting

²⁵⁸ „Über die Tote gebeugt, weinen sie alle, der Prinz und sechs Prinzessinnen. Märchenhaft weinen sie, in einer unbestimmt graulichen Harmonie, einer mausgrau-fahlweißlich schwimmenden, durcheinander spielenden Tonfolge. Ruhig wie ein alter Gebetteppich aus Morgenland, auf dem tausend Jahrelang gebetet worden, kniend mit Knien, mit Handflächen und mit Stirnen." Ibid., p. 45. By asserting that the six figures weep like figures in a fairytale, Hevesi could be referencing to the works' original title, *Die sieben Prinzessinnen. Fries nach einem Märchen von Maurice Maeterlinck für den Musiksalon des Hauses Wärndorfer*. Ibid., p. 45.

²⁵⁹ „Die stilisierte Träne als Leitmotiv der ganzen Ausschmückung; jeder springende Punkt im Ornament dieser Träne." Ibid., p. 46.

²⁶⁰ „In diesem Tropfsteingrotto ist kein Fünfuhr denkbar." Ibid. p. 46.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² „[...]in diesem Tränensalon sitzen die Damen auf ganz niedrigen, hochlehnigen Stühlen und kommen sich wie Prinzessinnen vor, wie die lebengebliebenen natürlich." Ibid. p. 46.

fixtures had previously been compared with droplets of water, an understanding of Hevesi's perception of tears in an intersubjective context would have been rather apt.

In relation to the intersubjectivity portrayed in Hevesi's expressive articulation of the teardrop as leitmotif of the interior, Lux's description of the salon in 1905 recalls somewhat similar instances of an intersubjective understanding of the linear structure. Although it is extremely unlikely that Lux's account of the salon was informed by his having seen the frieze, his impressions of the salon do provide some insight into Hevesi's designation, insofar as the teardrop as leitmotif could have been partially informed by Lux's 1905 text, in which he states that "everything in the strange room shines in a dull, ivory white,"²⁶³ and that the linear structure and inlays of color recall "fairytale eyes"²⁶⁴ that "awaken mysterious life"²⁶⁵ in the otherwise dead materials. Lux's "fairytale eyes" could in this case, possibly be referencing the faces in *The Opera of the Wind* and *The Opera of the Sea*. The faces in *The Opera of the Sea*, specifically, recall Hevesi's tear as leitmotif, with the four faces depicted with vertical lines emanating from their eyes.²⁶⁶

6.7. The Standing Princesses

When considering the linear structure, Wickre asserts that within the frieze "there is a complex linear pattern of entwined lines that sweep in front of the stable background grid, creating a feeling of slow but rhythmic motion. The repetition of lines, shapes and motifs establishes a feeling of ritual that parallels the mood of the play and makes visible the repetitive lines and rich iconography of Maeterlinck's work."²⁶⁷ In mentioning that the salon would have been an

²⁶³ Lux 1905, p. 119.

²⁶⁴ „Alles ist Musik, sichtbare Musik in dem eigenartigen Raum, der in mattem Elfenbeinweiß strahlt, darin da und dort farbige Stücke eingesetzt sind, die in ihrer dekorativen Linienfassung wie seltsame Märchenaugen aussehen und in dem toten, starren Material ein geheimnisvolles Leben erwecken, als ob draußen der leibhafte Prinz stünde und mit bangen, sehnlichen Blicken durch die Scheiben ins Gemach sähe, wo wie bleiche schöne Schatten die Prinzessinnen schlafen.“ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ In this sense, Lux's recognition of the vertical linear structure emanating from eyes of the faces could also have been, like Hevesi's mention of the electrical wires, intended to form a connection between the vertical linear structure in the panel and the lighting fixtures, which would also attest for his perception of a mysterious life or energy being awakened. In addition to displaying similarities with Hevesi's *Tränensalon*, Lux's the eyes awakening life in the otherwise lifeless materials of the salon could be comparable to Hevesi's description of the materials of the salon as having been "humanized," with a "soul affixed within" mentioned previously in 4.1 (footnote 175). Lux 1905, p. 119., Hevesi 1909, p. 46., In the same passage he makes a remarkable connection to the play, referring to the prince looking longingly through the panes of glass where the princesses sleep like beautiful shadows. In this case he undoubtedly referencing one of the three sets of eyes peering through the aperture in the left panel. Lux 1905, p. 119.

²⁶⁷ In this text it is worth noting that, although the text was published in 1993, the portion of the text describing the frieze must have been written before 1990, as Wickre remarks that the only evidence of the frieze's existence wrests in the aforementioned Bedford-Lemere photograph from 1906. However, if Wickre's only

unsuitable venue for teatime, Hevesi acknowledges that the scenes portrayed in the frieze would have promoted the salon outside of the realm of the profane rituality of afternoon tea into a space worthy of veneration, which in turn demonstrates a degree of intersubjectivity that reconciles the more mundane aspects of the linear structure as it relates the furnishings.

Shapira supports Wickre and Hevesi's reactions to the aspects of rituality portrayed in the frieze, claiming that the entire composition depicts a certain sense of "sacral monumentality through an iconic depiction of silent protagonists,"²⁶⁸ which she contends can be compared to the mosaic of the Empress Theodora (Fig. 75) in the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna. Although not explicitly stated in the text, Shapira's comparison must have been referencing the hierarchical distinction of figures in the frieze, primarily as it relates to the strong verticality in Macdonald's standing figures. Here easy association between the material qualities of the mosaic with Macdonald's implementation of inlays of semi-precious stones and the grouping of figures in the mosaic and the frieze are recognizable. Likewise, the imposing stature of the vertically oriented forms in each of the works organized the respective compositions can be deciphered.

For the purpose of this research, Shapira's recognition of the "sacral monumentality"²⁶⁹ in Macdonald's frieze is particularly profound, as it introduces a second series of interpretations that the standing figures are connected with, but not necessarily contingent upon the central grouping of figures. In considering Macdonald's previous gesso panels, the arrangement of vertically oriented identical female forms such as *May Queen* and *The White Rose and the Red Rose*, she depicts abstracted female forms using a mixed-media technique of inlays of twine, semi-precious stones, and glass beads in undefined spatial surroundings. However, there are marked differences that suggest that a major stylistic development occurred between 1900 and 1902, respectively, and 1906. These differences are perhaps most pronounced in Macdonald opting against a symmetrical arrangement of standing figures in the frieze, which demonstrates a departure from the more ornamental aspects of her previous compositions in favor of serving a more symbolic purpose. In the *May Queen*, for example, the five standing figures are shown adorned with various floral details ringing a central figure, presumably the May Queen. The panels' function, as a part of the décor for a Glasgow tearoom and the depicted ritual of a

experience with the frieze was through the 1906 photograph, then her observations are indeed impressive. Wickre 1993, pp. 397–401.

²⁶⁸ "Macdonald's frieze is an attempt to grant Maeterlinck's play, intended for the real stage, a sacral monumentality through an iconic depiction of its protagonists." Shapira 2006, p. 74.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 73.

Mayfest would have been understood by any viewer, whether from Glasgow or Vienna, by the very nature of the cultural traditions depicted within the panels. In contrast, the symbolism portrayed within *The May Queen* plays a supporting role to more dominant ornamental aspects of the frieze. In other words, the floral motifs and the figures surrounding a central figure could have been portraying perhaps any ritualistic observance like a wedding or any other sort of celebration. In this circumstance, the title of *The May Queen* delivers the viewer with a sufficient amount of information with which they could understand the scene as a Mayfest.

If Macdonald's choice to abandon symmetry in the standing figures in *The Seven Princesses* was informed by the need to communicate Ursula's absence among the living or to demonstrate her journey between life and death, a profound stylistic development on the part of Macdonald had been achieved, one which would not have been so conspicuous in the panels for Miss Cranston in Glasgow or those in the Rose Boudoir in Turin. In addition to the identical representations of the heads in the arc formation in the central panel of the frieze, Macdonald opted to remain consistent with Maeterlinck's description of the princesses as being non-individualized when depicting the standing figures. When representing the standing figures, Macdonald has chosen to omit nearly all of the anatomical details, with bodies portrayed as wafting linear formations crowned by a comparatively anatomically accurate, though identical, representation of a female face with half-opened eyes and full, pale rose-colored lips (Fig. 76). In the standing figures, Macdonald's interpretation of Maeterlinck's identical characters, each with a singular white rose affixed to the right shoulder of their robes, is manifested in a pattern of spectral visions, or as Maeterlinck describes, as "white shadows,"²⁷⁰ with each one functioning as a mirror image of the other which seem to amalgamate within the linear composition. The sole means of individualization of the figures wrests in the inlays applied to their unbound hair (Figs. 77 and 78).²⁷¹

6.7.1. The Standing Princesses: a Duality of Represented Forms

Undoubtedly, Macdonald's depiction of the six standing figures can be understood as an attempt in representing one of the final incidents in the play, as Marcellus enters the marble hall, and the six princesses awake simultaneously. In interpreting the standing figures as the awoken princesses, an immediate and reasonable association between the play and the frieze

²⁷⁰ Upon first peering through the windows into the marble hall, Marcellus questions the whereabouts of his seven cousins, to which the queen replies "They are all seven there on the steps....Do you see them? Do you see them?" Marcellus replies: "I see only some white shadows." Maeterlinck 1908, p. 127.

²⁷¹ In the Maeterlinck play, the princesses are only identifiable by the jewels in their necklaces, which Macdonald interprets in the inlays in their unbound hair. Ibid., p. 127–128.

can be made. Shapira and Robertson agree, with the former citing the latter in her analysis, that the standing figures in Macdonald's frieze are intended to depict the awakening of the six princesses.²⁷² However, just as the implementation of the rose motif can be understood as dual in function, the presence of the standing princesses could also represent something more than is immediately apparent.

A second possible interpretation suggests that Macdonald may have intended to represent an event that is mentioned in the play which does not actually take place in the text, much like she chose to depict the mourning figures in the central panel. In this case, the standing princesses could be understood not only as a depiction of the figures after they have awoken from their seven-year-long slumber but *also* as representative of the princesses' seven-year-long vigil awaiting Marcellus's return. The latter suggests that the princesses are depicted before they fall into their long slumber, portrayed standing as beacons or sentinels before the massive glass windows overlooking the canal in anticipation of Marcellus's return and his marriage to Ursula.

Devoid of any possible allegorical or symbolic meanings, the straight vertical formations that comprise the structural framework of the composition consist of standing figures that reside in six respective spaces, two in the middle of the left panel, one on the far right of the central panel, and two in the middle section of the right panel. Behind the standing princesses, sections or niches of tightly spaced thin vertical lines with various geometric accents create a pattern in the gesso surface with stone and shell inlays (Figs. 78 and 79). These niches span from the top of the panel before disappearing behind the robes of the standing princesses. At first glance, it would seem that the niche-sections of tightly composed linear structures and inlays are intended to function as an ornamental concept, perhaps to enhance the depth or the spatiality of the composition, or as a backdrop relating to a tapestry or some sort of wall décor.²⁷³ When realized within the context of the Maeterlinck play and Macdonald's symbolic program, however, this seemingly ornamental element of the composition may serve as a device to depict the standing figures as if they were positioned before the large windows mentioned by Maeterlinck in the marble hall, one over each of the seven steps, overlooking the canal on which Marcellus's ship arrives.

²⁷² Robertson 2000, pp. 59–64., Shapira 2006, p. 73.

²⁷³ The vertical formations, with the tight linear structure are interrupted by a horizontal band spanning from the middle of the eye to approximately the bottom of the chin of each standing princess. Although it is a conspicuous part of the linear workings of the composition, it appears not to have an allegorical function and may have served to act as a guideline for the application of the faces or perhaps to conceal the support of the panel.

Apart from mentioning their size, Maeterlinck makes no further indication of appearance of the windows. In Macdonald's depiction, the implementation of the tightly composed linear structure within the niches seems to indicate a vaulted window, or perhaps windows with stained-glass patterns.²⁷⁴ Like the repurposing of the rose motif as a funerary garland, the "window" motif presents a subtle adaptation of an ornamental motif from previous projects, which within the frieze, has transcended its original decorative function to become a symbolic and narrative function in the work. Not only do the linear constructions recall the glass panels in the doors of the vitrines in the Waerndorfer music salon, they are remarkably similar to the windows created for the Salon De Luxe (Figs. 80–82).²⁷⁵ Furthermore, the "window" thematic is also echoed in one of the gesso panels for the piano, *The Opera of the Wind* (Fig. 44), from which three faces (likely the King, the Queen, and Marcellus) peer through an aperture at the top right of the left panel.²⁷⁶

The supposition that the linear formations behind the standing figures are intended to depict the windows overlooking the canal on which Marcellus arrives also serves to reinforce the water motif indicated by the concentric tear-drop formations and swans in the central portion of the composition. Further comparisons with water, especially as it relates to sea travel, are seen in the vertically oriented elliptical and teardrop formations that comprise the robes of the standing princesses. Here Macdonald employs a symbolic and allegorical function for this elliptical formation in order to evoke imagery reminiscent of the sails of a ship, each wafting in the direction of the central grouping with Ursula. In this sense, the elliptical formations could be understood as an abstract attempt to depict Marcellus's seven years at sea, with their respective orientations representing his intention to return to Ursula.

The standing figures lack of anatomical structure, a motif that is consistent throughout Macdonald's oeuvre, visibly reinforces Maeterlinck's description of the princesses as "white

²⁷⁴ Here it is worth noting that the tactile aspects of the linear structure comprising the "windows" is best observed when seeing the work in-person. In comparison to photographs, the comparison of the linear structure behind the standing princesses with a vaulted or stained-glass window is much more comprehensible. This is especially true with regard to the frieze's placement on the wall in the MAK, on the upper portion of the wall.

²⁷⁵ The concept of the standing princesses as being positioned before window-like structures is also reinforced by the almond-shaped inlays, which are reminiscent of the pendant lamps found in the Waerndorfer Music Salon (Figs. 37 and 38).

²⁷⁶ Aside from the obvious water thematic associated with the titles of the piano gessos, *The Opera of the Wind* and *The Opera of the Sea* (Figs. 44 and 45), other details suggest a nautical theme. In each of the panels, a triangular linear construction on outside edge of the facing creates a reference to the sail of a ship. This is most prominent in the right panel, *The Opera of the Sea*, where a stylized body of a ship is visible below the four weeping figures.

shadows,”²⁷⁷ in which the material qualities of the depicted forms favor the emphasis of the ornamental elements over the figurative and representational. This, in turn, awards a greater importance to the interrelation of abstracted non-individualized forms within the linear composition over that of a depiction of realistic anatomical forms within a believable space. In turn the figures, although enabling an understanding of Macdonald’s interpretation of the Maeterlinck play, are reduced to archetypal or symbolic forms that lack any semblance of individualized attributes.²⁷⁸

As a counterpoint to the types of analyses of *The Seven Princesses* presented by Robertson and others, the concepts and arguments outlined in the preceding chapter have been presented to initiate a dialog focusing on the manner in which Macdonald was able to transliterate the literary language of the Maeterlinck play into that of a visual language. In doing so, she demonstrates a capacity to create a work reconciling a dependency on ornamentation and linear structure with symbolism. Macdonald thereby enabled an intersubjective understanding of various states of existence from the more abstract and ambiguous ritualistic and sacral to more concrete human emotions of loss, longing, and the subtleties of in-betweenness.

7. Liminality in *The Seven Princesses*

In Robertson’s quote which is cited in chapter 6.2 she briefly mentions Marcellus’s passage through the family crypt “into a different state of being presented by the marble chamber,”²⁷⁹ suggesting that she was certainly able to recognize the states of transition and in-betweenness in the Maeterlinck play but failed to reconcile them further within the context of Macdonald’s depiction. This disconnect, which is ultimately indicative of the insufficiencies in previous analyses of the work, presents the opportunity, however, for the establishment of a new discourse regarding *The Seven Princesses* frieze: the introduction of concepts of liminality in the work.

Macdonald’s linear structure and symbolic depictions outlined in the previous chapter represent not only her ability to transliterate Maeterlinck’s literary language into an intersubjective visual language, but also corresponds to varying perceptions of liminality, both relating to the individual and to spatial concepts. However, since terminologies relating to liminality are extremely wide-reaching, it should be noted that the purpose of this section is not to explain

²⁷⁷ Maeterlinck 1908, p. 127.

²⁷⁸ Gerhardus mentions this in context with Beardsley’s figures as “lacking the attributes of the individual,” which can also be applied to Macdonald’s repetition of forms. Gerhardus/Gerhardus 1979, p. 34.

²⁷⁹ Robertson 2000, p. 60.

methods and theories of what generally defines liminality, but rather to expound upon the ways in which aspects of liminality can be directly applied to Macdonald's implementation of compositional, stylistic, and symbolic components referenced in the previous chapter. That being said, it is perhaps worthwhile to clarify the context in which the terminologies relating to the liminal and liminality will be referenced in the following chapter before continuing.

The term, liminality, which stems from the Latin *limen*, or a piece of wood marking a border or threshold, was first implemented by anthropologist Arnold van Gennep in 1908 in *The Rites of Passage*. Van Gennep's introduction of the terminology attempted to reconcile commonalities in the ritual processes of various indigenous communities around the world, a concept that was further developed by Victor Turner in *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* in 1969.²⁸⁰ Though van Gennep and Turner's theories on liminality were originally constructed within the framework of anthropological studies, mostly focused on ritual, ceremony, and rites of passage observable in indigenous populations, many of the constructs recognized within their observations present similarities that are not isolated to anthropological studies alone.

Categorically, such constructs of ritual, ceremony, and rites of passage are identifiable across cultural boundaries and, furthermore, applicable to modern societies.²⁸¹ In the following subchapters, the concepts of liminality as it relates aspects of the frieze's depictions of identical forms within the context of ritual will be discussed initially. The section following will approach the themes of liminality outside of ritual in attempt to merge more modern studies of spatial constructs of liminality to Macdonald's compositional elements and symbolism which contain specific relevance to the Maeterlinck play. A final consideration will propose the individuality with which Marcellus is depicted in the frieze as indicative of his status as the liminal protagonist.

7.1. The Ritual and the Individual: Depictions of the Liminal Personae in *The Seven Princesses*

In initiating a coherent discourse connecting Macdonald's linear structure and symbolic program with regard to concepts of liminality, it would be most reasonable to begin with the material representations relating to the individual and ritual, which are manifested in

²⁸⁰ Van Gennep 1960, pp. 15–23, Turner 1969, pp. 97–108.

²⁸¹ Thomassen proposes liminality as “a universal concept: cultures and human lives cannot exist without moments of transition, and those brief and important spaces where we live through the in-between. Such transitions mark us, they stamp our personalities, and that is the way it will always be.” Thomassen 2016, p. 4.

Macdonald's repetition of non-individualized forms. As proposed in the previous chapter, Macdonald's implementation of repetition of identical and non-individualized forms exists within the framework of a symbolic depiction relating to ritual and sacrality. The placement and function of the identical figures realized within the context of rituality is enabled by Macdonald's symbolic program, in which the repetition of identical forms assumes a singular identity, or what Turner designates as "threshold people,"²⁸² or the *liminal personae*, which he describes as follows:

"The attributes of liminality or of liminal *personae* ("threshold people") are necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space. Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial."²⁸³

According to Turner, "necessarily ambiguous"²⁸⁴ qualities applied to the individual within the construct of rituality dictate that such groupings of non-individualized persons lead a temporary isolated existence whose positions lie "betwixt and between[...]neither here nor there"²⁸⁵ "secluded from the spheres of everyday life."²⁸⁶

The aspects of in-betweenness can be understood as representative of the physical positions or locations, but can be further representative of other ambiguities on the precipice of a transformation or transition from one phase to another, such as emotional or corporeal ambiguity. In addition to occupying ambiguous positions within the liminal process, Turner proposes that the liminal personae are often "disguised in pigments or masks, or rendered inaudible."²⁸⁷ Turner's proposal of the assumption of a uniform identity is assisted by the implementation of masks or rules of imposed silence is furthermore representative of the two-fold "structural invisibility of novices undergoing life-crisis rituals,"²⁸⁸ in which the individual is considered as "neither living nor dead from one aspect, and both living and dead from another."²⁸⁹ In this context, the designation of neither living nor dead suggests that the

²⁸² Turner 1969, p. 97.

²⁸³ Ibid., p. 102.

²⁸⁴ Turner proposes the "structural invisibility of novices undergoing life-crisis rituals" as representative of a two-fold existence, in which the individual is considered as "neither living nor dead from one aspect, and both living and dead from another," "secluded from the spheres of everyday life, [...]disguised in pigments or masks, or rendered inaudible by rules of silence." Turner 1982, pp. 96–97., Turner 1969, p. 169.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 97.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 95.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 169.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Turner 1982, pp. 96–97.

individual is temporarily barred from the physical world during said life crisis rituals, which can be understood as certain rites of passage, specifically those that assist in creation of a new identity upon the conclusion of said ritual.²⁹⁰

Within Macdonald's symbolic depictions of ritual, the figures in the central panel, as well as the six standing figures, correspond to the context of Turner's liminal personae, insofar as Macdonald's identical representations of the mask-like visages of the princesses, as well as their identically rendered clothing and hairstyles support the assumption of their non-identity. The faces of the princesses within the composition, with smooth, porcelain skin and pale rose-colored lips assume the form of a mask, with each being identical to the next, which corresponds to Turner's proposal of the liminal personae taking on a disguise or costume.

The identically styled locks of each of the princesses further support the notion of the figures existing as a uniform depiction. Within the central panel, each of the heads is shown with the exact same coiffure, with the circular forms suggesting a cropped or bound hairstyle. In the standing princesses, their locks are slightly individualized by nature of the colors and types of inlays applied to the gesso base.²⁹¹ However, this slight individualization is negated when recognizing that the predominance of the ornamentation in their hair is placed in regular intervals along their identically styled unbound locks, with the ornamentation oriented toward the central panel, much like the wafting of their identical robes, which assume the qualities of a costume or disguise that would have been consistent with their mask-like facial appearances. Macdonald's implementation of the identical coiffures of the princesses, could then in this case, be understood as a wig or any other sort of headwear worn during a ritual process.

The stylistic motif of the repetition of facial types and hairstyles would have been recognizable in other gesso panels, such as *May Queen* or in the piano gessos, but the special care taken in modeling the faces of the princesses to a glossy, porcelain-like finish in the frieze enhances the mask-like qualities of their representations (Figs. 76 and 77). The smooth finish which was applied to these areas of the composition offer a stark textural contrast to the otherwise rougher surface areas, comprised of inlays, pastiglia, and otherwise roughly applied gesso, but also offer a contrast to the comparatively monochromatic color palette.

²⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 169.

²⁹¹ This arrangement creates parallels with Maeterlinck's descriptions of the princesses only being identifiable by the jewels in their necklaces. Maeterlinck 1908, p. 135.

Although the figures depicted in the frieze are intended to represent the same characters from the play, Macdonald's implementation of a temporal conflation of events, allows for the understanding of the groupings of figures as representative of Maeterlinck's characters within the context of various liminal states. Beginning in the central panel this is portrayed in the figures as representative of the mourning of Ursula's death. The princesses in the arc formation exist in a state of lamentation, in which they are indistinguishable from each other in a space that cannot be structurally defined. Their proximity to Ursula's body and their downcast gazes suggests they are in a state of mourning with Ursula's body the center point. The ritual state of mourning represented in the central panel does not merely represent a singular liminal state, however. In accordance with the principles of duality presented in the analysis section, the interpretation of the rose motif as a funerary garland, leading from Ursula's lifeless body to an empty space in the upper left of the composition, references not only where she would have existed during the princesses seven-year-long vigil awaiting Marcellus's return before the windows of the marble hall, but also indicates the transition between life and death, or more concretely, her empty place among the living.

By nature of the standing princesses comparatively larger and more complete formations, aspects of their identity can be more effectively observed than in the arc formation. Like the liminal concepts of rituality and death portrayed in the central panel, the standing pictures also depict a dual representation of liminal states. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the most straightforward interpretation of the standing princesses' identically rendered forms suggests the passage from sleeping to waking, representing the shift from a fever-like slumber to the restoration of physical wellness that began as Marcellus enters the marble hall. In addition to this interpretation, the princesses' seven-year-long vigil before the windows of the marble hall, as they anticipated Marcellus's return and the eventual marital union between he and Ursula is recognizable through the implementation of the window motif and water motifs. In this sense, an understanding of the princesses' transition from one liminal state, the anticipation of Marcellus's return which eventually morphed into a seemingly unending vigil before the windows of the marble hall, to a subsequent liminal state, their fever-like slumber on the stairs in the marble hall is enabled.

7.1.1. Inaudibility

According to Turner, in assuming a uniformity of identity, the liminal personae are ruled over by an enforced silence, "rendered inaudible by rules of silence."²⁹² Aspects of the inaudibility

²⁹² Turner 1969, p. 98–115.

imposed on the princesses are echoed in Maeterlinck's script, in which the none of princesses utter any audible sound during sequences of events in the play.²⁹³ On the basis of Maeterlinck's designation, the princesses exist within the plot as silent characters, both in a verbal and emotional sense. In accordance with the princesses' imposed silence and lack of individual attributes, their emotional states would have only been ascertainable through the repetition of phrases by the King and Queen and Marcellus, which assist in building up levels of anxiety to a mood of near panic as Marcellus emerges from the crypt. Within this context, their silence and lack of emotion could represent their own lack of agency within the constraints of various liminal processes during their seven-year-long sojourn in the marble hall. In *Liminality and the Modern: Living Through the In-Between* (2016), Bjørn Thomassen interprets the emotions of helplessness, fear, anxiety, and doubt as "quintessential liminal sentiments."²⁹⁴ In relation to the play, Maeterlinck chose to articulate such sentiments by means of a repetition of phrases spoken by Marcellus and the King and Queen. However, due to the total sense of inaudibility imposed on the princesses, their expressions of such sentiments would have been imperceptible, suggesting that their inaudibility surpassed mere verballity, possibly to the point where they succumbed to the fever-like sleep that had plagued them for an indeterminate period of time.²⁹⁵

In the frieze, the princesses' inaudibility is established in the central panel by virtue of Macdonald's implementation of the identical, downcast gazes of the six heads in the arc formation indicating a uniform despondency. However, the expression of sadness through the emanation of the linear constructions representing the radiation of tears, as found in the representations of Marcellus and Ursula (Figs. 58 and 61) are absent. Instead, the linear structures merely intersect their heads and varying positions, none of which emanate from their eyes directly, as seen in Fig. 64. Here the proposed aspects of inaudibility could be enhanced by the inability of the six heads in the arc formation to express their emotions through the production of tears, a concept which is echoed in the emotionless, mask-like faces of the standing princesses.

²⁹³ For Robertson, Maeterlinck's concern was not to portray the real world, but to approach the occurrences in the reality with language, symbolic, content and "the power of silence," the latter of which she maintains was directly approached in his 1895 essay "Le Silence." Robertson 2000, p. 62.

²⁹⁴ Thomassen 2016, p. 14.

²⁹⁵ Since the princesses exist within the plot as silent characters, their emotional states would have only been ascertainable through the repetition of phrases by the King and Queen and Marcellus that assist in building up levels of anxiety to a mood of near hysteria as Marcellus emerges from the crypt.

A further consideration relating to the inaudibility imposed on the six princesses can be traced back to Shapira's designation of the six princesses "silent protagonists"²⁹⁶ mentioned in the previous chapter. When realized within the context of the inaudibility imposed on the liminal personae as represented in Macdonald's frieze, however, it may be more accurate to describe Marcellus and Ursula as the (tragic) protagonists of the play, whereas the six princesses would be more aptly described as belonging to a chorus. Although the princesses' inaudibility namely, the lack of dialog, in the Maeterlinck play would seem to lack the intrinsic trait one often associates with a chorus, Maeterlinck's imposition of silence on the characters and Macdonald's depictions of groupings of identical forms could have been indicative of an overall passivity and lack of agency assigned to their characters. In this sense, they function as a metaphorical chorus, as witnesses to the tragic set of circumstances imposed upon the protagonists.

7.1.2. Structural Invisibility

Macdonald's allocation of aspects of anonymity and uniformity upon each of the princesses reinforces Turner's supposition of those undergoing "life crisis rituals"²⁹⁷ as indicative of the alpha and omega (i.e. birth and death), but also rites of passage during the course of one's lifetime such as marriage and other coming-of-age ceremonies. In each circumstance, Turner proposes that the liminal personae experience a certain "structural invisibility,"²⁹⁸ within which aspects of individuality enter into a state of dissolution.

In the Maeterlinck play, the Queen mentions several times that the seven princesses had fallen ill sometime during Marcellus's seven-year long absence.²⁹⁹ After entering the entrance hall and inquiring as to the whereabouts of Ursula, the Queen directs him toward the glass doors looking into the marble hall. Upon peering into the marble hall, Marcellus remarks that he cannot identify Ursula among the seven identical sleeping figures. Instead of indicating Ursula

²⁹⁶ Shapira 2006, p. 74. With this in mind, Robertson's suggestion of the Maeterlinck's six princesses as indicative of a "tableaux of carefully composed groups of static actors," which Macdonald chose to depict in the spatial arrangement of figures in the composition, would perhaps be a more fitting terminology. Robertson 2000, p. 61.

²⁹⁷ Turner 1969, p. 169.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ In the play the queen remarks that the princesses had been waiting every day in the vast marble hall for a period of seven years for Marcellus's return and had only recently fallen into an intense and on-going slumber. This suggests that the lives of the seven princesses have undergone significant changes during Marcellus's absence, which appear to be to their own detriment. Mention is made of the princesses being from a "warm country" and that they had been sent from their homeland to the cold and damp coastal abode of their grandparents to await Marcellus's arrival. Maeterlinck 1908, p. 128.

specifically, the Queen begins by referring to the identities of the other six princesses by listing their names singly:

“Do you recognize them?—There is Geneviève—Helen,—Cristabel...an on the other side there is Magdalen,—Clara,—and Claribel with the emeralds....—Just see; I believe they are holding each other, all seven by the hand...They fell asleep taking hold of hands....You would say they were afraid of losing each other in their sleep...”³⁰⁰

The Queen’s referring to Claribel as the sleeping figure with the emeralds suggests that by the time the princesses had entered into their long slumber, their identities could have only been ascertained by means of the jewels in their necklaces. This may suggest that at some point during their seven-year-long vigil awaiting Marcellus’s return, the seven had begun to take on a singular identity.

In adorning their necklaces with distinctive jewels, Maeterlinck could have meant to convey a sense of apprehension or anxiety relating to the princesses’ loss of individual attributes before commencing their vigil in front of the windows in the marble hall. Likewise, in clasping hands before falling asleep, the princesses may have been expressing a sense of distress in entering into the liminal fever-sleep state in which Marcellus eventually finds them. In losing each other in their sleep, the Queen could have been referring to the fear of a possible death during the fever-sleep, or the princesses’ relative invisibility, or to the total loss of identity within the succession of liminal states.

Within the framework of Maeterlinck’s imposed structural invisibility as indicated by Marcellus’s designation of “white shadows,”³⁰¹ Macdonald’s depiction of the figures in the central panel and in the standing princesses favors the emphasis of ornamentality in the depicted forms over precise figural and anatomical qualities of the depicted figures. In this case, the princesses’ loss of identity assumes of a sense of structural invisibility in Macdonald’s dissolution of the material forms. In depicting Maeterlinck’s white shadows, Macdonald’s figures amalgamate with the linear structure, therein awarding greater importance to their place within the linear composition than to the material aspects of their own individuality. The amalgamation of the figures into the linear composition can, in this case, be applied to Turner’s proposed structural invisibility, but is more broadly indicative of how the princesses’ previous identities had morphed into a singular, ambiguous type of form.

³⁰⁰ Maeterlinck 1908, p. 135.

³⁰¹ Ibid., p. 127.

In the context of the princesses as white shadows, the color palette of the frieze also supports the chromatic indiscernibility mentioned in the Maeterlinck play. Macdonald's implementation of color correspondingly reinforces the aspects of the princesses' structural invisibility to the extent that, aside from their mask-like faces and ornamentation in their hair, their physical forms, which are only discoverable by virtue of the linear structure comprising their robes, is rendered in the same monochromatic, grey-toned color palette as the rest of the frieze. Here the aspects of the princesses' structural invisibility coalesce into a repetitive ornamental form, which offers a contrast to the individualized depictions of Marcellus and Ursula, albeit with a degree of analogous monochromacy. Hevesi's description of the princesses as "weeping fantastically in a certain grey harmony"³⁰² would have indicated his possible recognition of the identity of the depictions of the six princesses within a ritual process, which also supports the aspects of structural invisibility in the context of Macdonald's implementation of color.

7.2. Spatial Liminality in *The Seven Princesses*

Much of what is represented in the frieze can be directly tied to an understanding of ritual or sacrality, by nature of the complex symbolic program and elaborate linear structure, but also as Shapira noted, by virtue of the imposing stature of the panels.³⁰³ However, other concepts relating to the individual's experience outside the realm of ritual and sacrality are also present, creating a further instance of duality in Macdonald's portrayal of the Maeterlinck play.

In approaches to liminality outside of rituality, sacrality and rites of passage, modern concepts have been applied to the individual's experiences in the mundane realities and profane spatial constructs, some of which the individual inhabits on a daily basis.³⁰⁴ Thomassen contends that liminality is "very essentially a spatial concept" relating to any number of transitional zones in which the individual may find themselves, existing in specific locations such as doorways,

³⁰² Hevesi 1909, p. 45.

³⁰³ Shapira 2006, pp. 73–76.

³⁰⁴ Bjørn Thomassen broadens Turner's definition of liminality: "At its broadest, liminality refers to any 'betwixt and between' situation or object, any in-between place or moment, a state of suspense, a moment of freedom between two structured world-views or institutional arrangements. It relates to change in a single personality as well as social change and transition in large-scale settings; it therefore also, and perhaps more directly so than any other concept we have, ties together the micro and the macro, operating from the 'middle'. Liminality opens the door to a world of contingency where events and meanings – indeed 'reality' itself – can be moulded and carried in different directions. Liminality explains nothing. Liminality *is*. It happens. It takes place. And human beings react to liminal experiences in different ways. Those ways cannot be easily predicted. But they can be analysed and compared, and at the formal level they share important properties." Thomassen 2016, p. 7.

hallways and passages, and staircases but also in transit zones within broader areas or along borderlines and waterways.³⁰⁵

As the term liminality is applied to the incidents in Maeterlinck's play and Macdonald's frieze, retroactively, that is, within a modern context, it is difficult to say if or to which degree the individual was able to actively perceive concepts of liminality around 1900. Modern theories regarding the perceptions of liminal concepts at the fin-de-siecle have suggested that the incorporation of themes of mysticism and spirituality (a link from the physical and spiritual world), and of helplessness, anxiety, insecurity, and irony, as seen in Maeterlinck and Macdonald's works could have been indicative of the modern individual's response to the transformation of their environment in an increasingly modern and mechanized world. From 1880 until 1940, western culture underwent what has been proposed as "the long turn of the century"³⁰⁶ during which economic changes as well as scientific advances, increased mechanization, urbanization, and insecurities revolving around an ever-changing world were perceivable in nearly every form of creative output. Technological advances, such as the introduction of intercontinental sea journeys and rail travel abolished a once sedentary existence for new segments of the population. This new sense of freedom of movement, which in the previous centuries had only been attainable by the very wealthy, initiated a sense of spatial transience in which more and more individuals found themselves.³⁰⁷

In the context of the Maeterlinck play, the instances of spatial liminality are recognizable beginning with Marcellus's arrival along the canal leading to the castle. Here the canal assumes the role of a liminal space, not only as an indefinite geographical location of a waterway, but also as that of a threshold marking the end of his seven years at sea. In approaching the castle and climbing the stairs to meet his grandparents, he has crossed the divide from being in transit to being present in a single location, which despite having a fixed geographical location, contains numerous liminal spaces within its walls.

³⁰⁵ Van Gennep refers to these areas as *Schwellen* ("thresholds" or "barriers"). Ibid., p. 89–91.

³⁰⁶ Knaller/Moebius/Scholger 2022., p. 1–2.

³⁰⁷ The notion of the liminal/liminality in the context of "the long turn of the century" terminology, has a particular relevance in this case, especially considering Macdonald's (and Maeterlinck's) entire creative output occurs within this time frame. Nonetheless, aspects of liminality in spatial constructs would have been perceivable for nearly everyone, especially those who lived in cities and witnessed the newest developments in architecture and infrastructure, as would have certainly been the case in Glasgow and Vienna at this time, as each city experienced massive changes. Glasgow became one of the centers of industry in Europe and Vienna experienced the demolition of the old city walls and glacis and the construction of the Ringstraße and its imposing architectural denizens. Knaller/Moebius/Scholger 2022., p. 9–36., Glasgow Indicators Project, Understanding Glasgow, 2024, <https://www.understandingglasgow.com/glasgow-indicators/population/population-estimates>, [13.09.2024]., Beghetto 2022, p. 9–14., Thomassen 2016, pp.1–5.

The entrance hall in which Marcellus greets his grandparents represents a threshold that leads him into his family's ancestral castle. Upon asking as to the whereabouts of the princesses, he intends to leave this space to join them only to find that they are confined within an additional liminal space, the marble hall. Within the marble hall, the stairs on which the princesses sleep present a clear example of spatial liminality, as a staircase, usually a transitory zone in its own right, would not usually be a place in which one remains (or sleeps, for that matter) for any length of time. In choosing the hall as their place of slumber and in placing the pale cushions on each of the seven stairs, the princesses have remained in the same liminal space in which they have spent their days awaiting Marcellus's return.

In abstaining from the usual portrayals of depth and spatiality Macdonald enabled the dissolution of traditional methods of perspective, thereby enabling the abstraction of linear details relating to spatial properties and anatomical forms that employ their own style of in-betweenness. When relating Macdonald's interpretation of Maeterlinck's play into a spatial context, two liminal spaces mentioned in the play are represented. The less complex, although more abstract of the two locations begins in her depiction of the three swans. As mentioned in the previous chapter, their inclusion would have possibly been intended as a depiction of impending tragedy. From a standpoint of spatial liminality, however, the swans can be understood as a representation of water, likely the canal Marcellus's ship traveled to reach the castle.

The second of the liminal spaces, is likely the less abstract, but far more complex of the two. In the Maeterlinck play, the marble hall can be regarded as a nexus of the liminal zones. In this sense, the marble hall would have functioned as Marcellus's eventual destination, but also as the space in which the princesses transitioned through a succession of liminal states. As proposed in the previous chapter, the standing figures function as a dual representation symbolizing the anticipation of Marcellus's arrival as the figures standing before the window-like linear constructs in the frieze, and the point in which they are roused from their fever-like slumber. In turn Macdonald's temporal conflation of events becomes indicative of an inseparable multi-fold depiction of liminality, representing both the transition from anticipation to resolution and the transition between sleep and waking and illness and recovery.

In the case of the figures in the central panel, it could be presumed that the mourning of Ursula's death would have also taken place within the marble hall. However, since this incident does not actually take place in Maeterlinck's script, it is unclear where the funerary ritual would have taken place. Whereas the standing princesses are positioned before details suggesting an

element of architectural spatiality, the window-like niches, the heads in the arc formation lack such distinctions. This arrangement would concur with Turner's distinction of "neither here nor there,"³⁰⁸ could also be tied back to the three swans. In this context, Macdonald could have been intended to depict Ursula's burial along the canal on which Marcellus's boat arrived, which is also supported by the proposal of the rose motif as a funerary garland.

7.3. Marcellus as the Liminal Protagonist

After attempting to gain access to the hall through the large, vaulted door, Marcellus realizes that he is unable to cross the threshold into the marble hall, which in turn precipitates his journey through the family crypt. In this case it would seem that the crypt, a usual resting place and terminus for the mortal remains of the individual, is made into a transitory zone, to that extent that it becomes a passageway from one liminal zone—the entrance hall, to the next—the vast marble hall, simultaneously foreshadowing Ursula's eventual demise. In this sense it is noteworthy that Marcellus is the only character in the play who is able to cross the thresholds between the liminal spaces, from the canal to the entrance hall of the castle, into the crypt, and finally into the marble chamber.³⁰⁹ In doing so, he is able to transcend the liminal spaces and the circumstances surrounding them, for better or worse. Neither the King, the Queen, nor the seven princesses are successful in transiting out of their respective liminal spaces.

Marcellus's singular individualized depiction in the frieze could provide further proof that he was the only figure that was able to transition through the liminal states and zones with which he was faced. This proposal is made even more relevant, when comparing the depiction of the three sets of eyes peering through the aperture in the upper section of the panel in *The Opera of Wind*. In this depiction, Marcellus is confined to the entrance hall with the King and Queen, signifying his inability to reach the marble chamber, therein establishing the aforementioned "quintessential liminal sentiments"³¹⁰ that build throughout the play. The identity with which his likeness is portrayed, as a simple pair of eyes peering through an aperture, could be representative of such sentiments. His presence above Ursula's body in the frieze, on the other hand, is individualized, perhaps suggesting he was able to transition through the spaces, thereby achieving a sense of resolution.

³⁰⁸ Turner 1969, p. 169.

³⁰⁹ Thomassen proposes that "to cross the threshold is to unite oneself with another world. As simple as it may sound, meaningful human experience of social environments is simply not possible without such discernment. Boundaries are necessary for the framing of human experience and for thought itself." Thomassen 2016, p. 13.

³¹⁰ Ibid., p. 14.

8. The Fate of *The Seven Princesses Frieze*

In opting to renovate his villa, Waerndorfer intentionally expressed his preference for international modern design. In commissioning separate rooms, designed by Hoffmann, Moser, and Macdonald and Mackintosh, he challenged the idea of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* entirely, leaning instead towards commissioning smaller-scale architectural interiors, that were intended to function as smaller components of a well-composed whole.³¹¹ However, creating an entire house of conceptualized interiors did not come without a hefty price. Although it is difficult to assess the exact sequence of events, by as early as 1907, Waerndorfer's business ventures in the Wiener Werkstätte and Kabarett Fledermaus, as well as his formidable art collection had become a substantial burden, eventually stretching his finances beyond the point of recuperation. In response, he liquidated his share in the Wärendorfer-Benedict-Mautner cotton spinning plant in Nachod, Bohemia to almost no avail.³¹² Two years later in 1909, a foreclosure at the Wiener Werkstätte resulted in a compulsory repayment of 300,000 Kronen on Waerndorfer's part and by 1913, production at the Wiener Werkstätte had come to a halt, with an accumulated debt of around 500,000 Kronen. By 1914, Waerndorfer had liquidated all of his business ventures in Vienna, declared bankruptcy, and opted to emigrate to America. According to municipal records, Waerndorfer left Vienna to meet a ship bound for Savannah, Georgia on 7 May 1914.³¹³

As suggested by Hevesi's 1909 text and the inclusion of the Waerndorfer villa in the *Wiener Kunstwanderung* in 1908, it seemed that, at least initially, Waerndorfer's financial troubles would not have affected his art collection. The last known account of the frieze before its nearly eight-decade-long disappearance would have been printed *The Studio* in 1912, confirming that the salon was still fully intact at this point in time.³¹⁴ By 1913, however, the villa and Waerndorfer's art collection had been deeded to his wife Lili, who remained in the home until September 1915, when she moved into her mother's home in Stadiongasse, in Vienna's first district. At this time, she is said to have enlisted the help of architect Friedrich Schön to assist in selling the salon.³¹⁵ A photograph (Fig. 83) in the MAK archive shows an

³¹¹ Shapira notes the cultural significance of the Waerndorfer Villa in Vienna: "Waerndorfer was enthusiastic about the idea of renewal through cultural discourse, and it would be in his own house that he would succeed in offering a space for Western European cultural discourse." Shapira 2006, p. 52., Shapira 2016, pp. 116, 124–125.

³¹² Vergo 1983, p. 409–410., Vergo 2000, p. 38.

³¹³ Vergo 1983, pp. 409–410., Vergo 2000, p. 38., Sekler 1982, p. 62.

³¹⁴ Levetus 1912, pp. 71–72.

³¹⁵ Vergo 1983, pp. 409–410, Vergo 2000, pp. 38–40.

advertisement for the “Mackintosh-Salon,” which was being sold as part of a moving sale. The advertisement indicates that the salon would have been available to be viewed at any point in time, and that interested parties should contact the Schön’s architecture firm at Türkenschanzstraße 44, a few blocks from the Waerndorfer villa.³¹⁶ With the exception of one letter, dated from August 1916, between Schön and Eduard Leisching, the then director of the K. u. K. Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie (today, the Museum of Applied Arts in Vienna, MAK), no documentation pertaining to the number of inquiries for the salon are known to exist.³¹⁷

In 1916, the villa was sold to Wilhelm and Martha Freud, and a renovation of the music salon including the dismantling of the interiors designed by Macdonald and Mackintosh followed soon after.³¹⁸ It is unknown if or when the Freunds made any further attempts to sell the contents of salon after they purchased the villa, although evidence suggests that after the demolition of the salon, *The Seven Princesses* frieze eventually wound up in the possession of Eduard Wimmer-Wisgrill for a period of time. Some sources note that he intended to include the frieze as part of an exhibition at the MAK, although no evidence in the museum’s archives support that an exhibition including the frieze ever took place.³¹⁹

With this in mind, it is entirely possible that the frieze could have been included in plans for an exhibition that never materialized, which could explain how the panels somehow made their way into the subterranean depot of the museum in a meticulously packed wooden crate. In this case, it is possible that the work never officially made it into the inventory of the museum and was simply misplaced and forgotten. This assertion, however, is pure conjecture on the part of the author, leaving many open questions surrounding how exactly the frieze was acquired by the museum. According to the current wall label found beside the frieze in the MAK (Fig. 84), *The Seven Princesses* frieze was acquired as a purchase from the Waerndorfer family in 1920.³²⁰ As such information regarding the sale or acquisition of the work does not exist in any previous research, the author opted to contact the museum to inquire about the existence of a

³¹⁶ “Mackintosh-Salon: eine besondere Sehenswürdigkeit, sowie Werke von Professor Hoffman, Moser, Olbrich sind im XVIII. Bezirk, Karl-Ludwig-Straße Nr. 45, wegen Uebersiedlung, zu verkaufen. Jederzeit zu besichtigen. Auskünfte: Atelier Architekt Friedrich Schön, XVIII., Türkenschanzstraße Nr. 44, Telefon 20644 zwischen 8 u. 4 Uhr an Wochentagen. MAK-Blog, Museum angewandter Kunst Wien, 2017, <https://blog.mak.at/der-waerndorfer-fries-im-mak/>, [08.12.2023].

³¹⁷ Vergo 1983, pp. 409–410., Vergo 2000, p. 38.

³¹⁸ Vergo 1983, pp. 409–410., Vergo 2000, p. 38., Property records confirm the purchase of the villa by the Freunds in 1916. Salzberg 1928, p. 42.

³¹⁹ Vergo 2000, p. 44., Vergo 2000, p. 38., Howarth p. 156., Robertson 2000, p. 51.

³²⁰ It is worth noting that by 1920, the frieze would have actually belonged to the new owners of the villa, Wilhelm and Martha Freund.

bill of sale stating the details of the acquisition. The inquiry was kindly attended to by a staff member at the museum, who explained that the information on the wall label contained slight inaccuracies and that a bill of sale would not have been customary at the time of the frieze's supposed purchase.³²¹ Despite the somewhat unsatisfactory reply, pursuing the matter further seemed inconsequential, especially as the wall label was ultimately acknowledged by the museum to be somewhat incorrect. The matter of whether a bill of sale would have been customary at the time, however, is questionable with relation to Waerndorfer's collection, as the bills of sale (Figs. 33 and 34) for the items purchased from the Rose Boudoir (one of which currently resides in the MAK's collection, Fig. 32) are still accessible.

In a text from 1983, Vergo deemed "the destruction of the Waerndorfer interiors must rank with the burning of Klimt's paintings at Schloss Immendorf as one of the most serious acts of vandalism perpetrated in our century."³²² In the same text, he notes that as of this point in time none of the furnishings of the Waerndorfer music salon were known to have survived. In 1991 gesso panels for piano, *The Opera of the Wind* and *The Opera of the Sea* came up for auction at Sotheby's in New York. The auction records state that the panels had been acquired "by descent" in 1940, presumably after Fritz Waerndorfer's death in 1939 in Pennsylvania, which may suggest he brought the panels with him when he emigrated.³²³

³²¹ "der Hinweis auf dem Schild ist nicht ganz richtig, denn der Fries kam über die nächsten Eigentümer der Villa Waerndorfer, Herrn und Frau Wilhelm und Marta Freund (als Vermittler diente damals deren Architekt Friedrich Schön), 1916 an das Museum. Einen Kaufvertrag dazu gibt es nicht, das war damals leider noch nicht allgemein üblich." ("The information on the wall label isn't exactly correct, because the frieze was acquired by the museum from the next owner of the Waerndorfer villa, Mr. and Mrs. Wilhelm and Martha Freund in 1916 (their architect Friedrich Schön would have acted as the broker). There is no bill of sale, as that was unfortunately not always customary back then.") MAK Bibliothek, E-Mail to the author on 23 May 2024.

³²² "One can well imagine that the new occupants of the house in the Carl-Ludwigstrasse (Sic!) found the decor hideous, and simply removed it. If this was indeed the case, the destruction of the Waerndorfer interiors must rank with the burning of Klimt's paintings at Schloss Immendorf as one of the most serious acts of vandalism perpetrated in our century." Vergo 1983, p. 410.

³²³ In 2002, the panels came up at auction at Christie's with a realized price of £336,650. The whereabouts of most of the other furnishings, with the exception of a few of the high-backed chairs, have not been recovered. Christie's Online, Lot Essay: Live Auctions, "Designed by Architects," Lot 8, 6. November 2002, <https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-3984267>, [21.09.2024]., In 2008, *The White and the Red Rose*, originally purchased by Waerndorfer at the 1902 exhibition in Turin was purchased at a subsequent auction at Christie's for £1,700,500. Vergo 1983, p. 409–410., Christie's Online, Lot Essay: Live Auctions, "Designed by Architects," Lot 8, 6. November 2002, <https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-3984267>, [21.09.2024], Christie's, Online, Lot Essay: Live Auction 7578, Lot 21, 30. April 2008, URL: <https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-5066453>, [22.06.2024].

9. Conclusion: Research Outcomes and Discussion

In the interest of expanding the scope of the research on Macdonald's *The Seven Princesses* frieze several proposals and questions were presented within the context of exploring the work beyond the terms of previous research. After careful consideration, the research was effectively divided between two primary parts, the first of which sought to approach the work from an art historical context and the second which sought to approach analyses of the work from a new perspective that transcended the previous fairytale interpretations of Macdonald's composition.

However, since *The Seven Princesses* frieze would have existed as part of conceptualized interior, a body of research to expand considerations on the topic would have been incomplete without the determining how the work would have been observed in its original environment. In the preliminary stages of the research, the influences of the collaborative interiors from Macdonald and Mackintosh from 1900–1902, which served as prototypes for the salon, were identified as part of a stylistic evolution that would eventually culminate with the Waerndorfer music salon and therefore influence how the frieze would eventually take shape. The stylistic evolution in the collaborative interiors from Macdonald and Mackintosh during this time is discernible almost step by step leading up to the creation of the salon, and moreover *The Seven Princesses* frieze, beginning in Glasgow with the completion of Macdonald and Mackintosh's Mains Street Flat and the commissions for the Miss Cranston's Ingham Street Tea Rooms. The introduction to Fritz Waerndorfer in Glasgow in 1900 precipitated the next interior, "The Scottish Room," which was conceptualized as part of Macdonald and Mackintosh's contribution to the VIII. Exhibition of the Vienna Secession in late 1900. The final step in this proposed stylistic evolution took place the same year that the Waerndorfer music salon was commissioned, with the "Rose Boudoir" at the I. International Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art, Turin in 1902.

In terms of determining specifically which design concepts and motifs would have been eventually implemented in the salon, numerous examples emerged to confirm the aforementioned interiors as prototypes for the Waerndorfer music salon. In each example, the interiors featured a white room with correspondingly white paneled walls with contrasting curvilinear and rectilinear details in the woodwork and stenciled vegetal and geometric accents in varying tonalities of white, silver-grey, rose-pink, light red, lavender, and moss green, which were also found on the furnishings. The furnishings in each example produced similar comparisons to the furnishings of the music salon, each including high-backed chairs with low,

rectilinear seats, and silk upholstery on the seating and backrest on to which corresponding floral motifs were applied.

In realizing the interiors from 1900–1902 as prototypes for the Waerndorfer music salon, adequate research was collected to support that the stylistic elements employed in the Waerndorfer music salon and *The Seven Princesses* frieze were indicative of a stylistic evolution which culminated with a complex implementation of line and symbolism in the Rose Boudoir.³²⁴ With the exception of the Rose Boudoir, all examples mentioned featured the inclusion of a picture rail located on the upper third of the wall that spanned the entire room, creating a unique spatial arrangement on opposing walls. In the Scottish Room, this spatial arrangement was eventually utilized to showcase the gesso panels, *The Wassail* from Mackintosh, and *The May Queen* from Macdonald, which were loaned by Cranston for the Scottish Room before being installed in Glasgow.

Although the Rose Boudoir did not include the picture rail found in the preceding interiors, there was much evidence to support the interior as the direct prototype of the Waerndorfer music salon, insofar as the copies of furnishings included in the room were ordered by Waerndorfer for the commission. The inclusion of the smaller quadrilinear gesso panels in the Rose Boudoir, *The White Rose and the Red Rose* and *The Heart of the Rose*, provided a contrast to the large-scale gesso panels found in the previous commissions, but demonstrated a significant stylistic development on Macdonald's part. Despite the smaller dimensions of the panels created for the 1902 exhibition, the synthesis of line paired with symbolism surpassed mere ornamentality. When compared to *The May Queen*, produced using the same media just two years earlier, Macdonald's introduction of a linear structure that served to support aspects

³²⁴ In determining the significance of the Rose Boudoir as the final prototype for the music salon, one unexpected research outcome arose. When referencing previous texts mentioning the Turin exhibition in the context of the Waerndorfer music salon, the amount of disparate information was surprising, and somewhat confusing to be honest. For example, when attempting to cross-reference the contemporary accounts featured in texts from Vergo and others, it appeared as if the page numbers (and in numerous cases even the volume numbers and years) of the periodicals referenced were incorrect in the majority of cases. Understandably, the texts in question would have been written in a time before digitization, which could account for some of the accuracies and insufficiencies. Thanks to digital archives these oversights were ultimately amendable. After obtaining a scanned copy of the German-language edition of the exhibition catalog, a wealth of information (and high-quality photographs) became available that had not been specifically mentioned in previous research, most notably the text from Georg Fuchs in its entirety, in which a distinctive mention of the impressive linear structure of the Rose Boudoir was elaborated upon. When compared to the reviews of the Scottish Room, reviews of the Rose Boudoir signified that the linear components in the space enabled an experience on the part of the viewer, which Fuchs noted would have been a suitable venue in which to stage plays by Maeterlinck. Whether Fuchs's commentary had anything to do Macdonald or Waerndorfer's choices in choosing a Maeterlinck play as centerpiece of the music salon is unknown.

of symbolism demonstrated direct similarities to the manner in which the compositional elements of *The Seven Princesses* frieze would come to fruition.

After discussing the interiors that functioned as prototypes for the salon, the following proposals concerning the salon were discussed in chapter three: 1) *The Seven Princesses* frieze functioned as the centerpiece of the Waerndorfer music salon; and 2) the frieze was installed in 1907 on the south-facing wall of the salon. As no additional photographs of the music salon were recovered during the course of this research, the arguments in favor *The Seven Princesses* frieze as centerpiece of the Waerndorfer music salon centered around a reconstruction of the layout and furnishings of the salon, which were based on extant photographs. Within the context of the furnishings, the interplay of the linear structure and ornamentation of the architectural details with the frieze were also discussed. The reception history discussed in chapter four was also used in support of the frieze as the centerpiece of the salon. The texts from Lux, Levetus, and especially Hevesi demonstrated that in each case, the frieze's presence in the room surpassed the aspects of pure ornamentality, and even influenced the way the furnishings were perceived. Furthermore, the inclusion of the Waerndorfer Music Salon in the *Wiener Kunstwanderung* in 1908, demonstrated that the installation of *The Seven Princesses* frieze heightened perceptions of the salon beyond design terms into a conceptualized representation of modernism in which *The Seven Princesses* frieze functioned as its centerpiece.

Somewhat unexpectedly, the proposal of the frieze as the centerpiece of the salon ultimately became inseparably linked with part of the second proposal regarding the frieze's location on the south-facing wall. When comparing the extant photographs of the salon with architectural plans, the possibility of the frieze on the east or west-facing walls was effectively ruled out, due to the installation of a window and a doorway to the dining room, respectively. However, the question of whether the frieze would have then been installed on the north or south-facing wall remained, as each wall contained inlaid wood panels above the picture rail of the proper dimensions which could accommodate the panels.

In response to whether the frieze would have been installed on the north or south-facing wall, the furnishings' southward orientations were confirmed using the extant photographs, suggesting that the frieze would have been visible on the south wall from the inglenook and the other seating areas in the salon, which of course would not have been the case if it had been installed on the north-facing wall. The southward orientation of the spatial arrangements were

supported by Hevesi's recounting of a social engagement at the Waerndorfer villa, which suggests the piano would have been visible from the dining room. In this case, the frieze would have functioned as a theatrical backdrop during musical performances, or in the case of Hevesi's account, during dance routines.

A further piece of evidence supports the location of the frieze on the south wall, as well as serving to support the frieze as the centerpiece of the salon. As described in 3.3, the piano gessos were likely based on the same literary source as the frieze. Although this initially led to some confusion with regard to Lux's mention of the panels in 1905, the resemblances in the piano gessos and the frieze demonstrated that the literary references paired with the linear construction and similarities in media and implementation of symbolic themes were intended to function as companion pieces, which in turn suggests that the frieze resides above the piano on the south-facing wall. In summation, the southward-facing orientation of the furnishings, paired with Hevesi's account, and the piano gessos as companion pieces support the frieze as the centerpiece of the salon. With these considerations in mind, there is much evidence to support the location of the frieze on the south-facing wall, although no photographic or written evidence can prove this claim with absolute certainty. Therefore, the proposal of the frieze on the south-facing wall must meanwhile remain merely an assertion, albeit with strong evidence to suggest its veracity, but unfortunately not a fact per se.

The argument supporting the proposal of the 1907 installation date followed a path similar to determining the frieze's location in the salon. Previous research suggested that the frieze, despite a date and signature of 1906, would have been installed as early as 1904–1905 and late as 1912. The research carried out for this purpose was able to rule out the earliest and latest of the proposed installation dates, by referencing Hevesi's "Haus Wärndorfer" published in 1905, which indicates the frieze had not yet been installed. This was confirmed further when considering the reprinting of the text for the *Wiener Kunstwanderung* in 1908, in which a footnote stating that the work had since been installed had been inserted in the text. In a second text from Hevesi, "Ein moderner Nachmittag," published in 1909, it was clearly stated that it had been installed two years earlier, which from a standpoint of the reception history functions in lieu of photographic evidence supports the installation date of 1907.

In the course of researching the proposed installation date, one piece of evidence was found which had not previously been used in conjunction with the installation date, a photograph from Glasgow Photography Atelier of Henry Bedford-Lemere. The photograph itself had been

presented previously as an illustration in a text by Vergo. Until recently, the dating of the photograph itself was not decipherable, until the day ledgers of the photography atelier of Henry Bedford-Lamere were published in a database in Great Britain, confirming that the photograph was taken in late 1906 in Glasgow. This finding in conjunction with Hevesi's text support an installation date of early 1907, but like the location of the frieze, the installation date was unable to be confirmed completely.

Chapters five through seven marked the end of the discussion of the historical context of the Waerndorfer music salon and segued to the analytical aspects relating to the frieze. As such aspects of *The Seven Princesses* frieze have been studied relatively little in comparison to the salon, a broad range of topics relating the frieze's compositional, symbolic, and allegorical components could have been approached, which was slightly overwhelming. After studying the work intensely for a time, two proposals were eventually conceived: 1) in referencing the literary source, Macdonald's interpretation of the Maeterlinck can be most accurately described as a transliteration of Maeterlinck's literary language into a visual language through the implementation of a complex linear structure, unconventional pictorial organization and symbolism, in which a conflation of temporal events relating to the play are depicted; and 2) Macdonald's proposed transliteration is contingent on the pronounced linear structure of the work, thereby enabling an intersubjective understanding of the symbolic program relevant to rituality and sacrality, but also of liminal states relating to the individual and to spatial concepts.

Aspects of Macdonald's transliteration was first conceived after referencing texts on line theory around 1900, most particularly in context with van de Velde's designation of the communicative and expressive qualities of line, which Mainberger later expounded on as possessing qualities relating to transliteration and intersubjectivity. The research on line theory, however, was not adequate in unlocking the compositional components of the frieze and its symbolic program, that is until the aspects of Macdonald's temporal conflation of events relating to the Maeterlinck play were taken into account. On this basis, a brief explanation of the literary source was necessary.

Within this multi-faceted context, the elements of the composition and their respective meanings began to fall into place. In this case the composition, which lacks traditional methods of perspective, was able to be understood as possessing layered division of the compositional, structural, and spatial components, which allows the viewer to organize the otherwise flat space into what can be understood best as a foreground, as seen in Marcellus and Ursula; a middle

ground, as observable in the arc formation in the central panel; and a background, which is recognizable in the standing figures. Contained within the three compositional zones, multiple incidents relating to, but not necessarily occurring in, the play were represented, each one being conditional to aspects of rituality in varying forms. The figures in the arc formation in the single panel, for example, represented a straightforward interpretation of a scene of ritualistic mourning. The sections containing Ursula and Marcellus, and the standing princesses, however, posed dual representations of the rituality. The body of Ursula with its cocoon-like form is suggestive of a burial shroud, which is supported by the presence of three black swans, positioned as if on a water's surface and the line of rose formations leading from her body to the upper left of the left panel. Here duality is understood in her portrayal as corpse prepared in the context of a burial ritual, but also by the funerary garland which leads directly to an empty space in the left panel, symbolizing her departure from the other standing princesses and the earthly realm.

Macdonald's subtle implementation of symbolism by nature of motifs relating to ritual in the areas of the composition which were discussed created an intersubjective understanding of the work as a representation of incidents relating to the literary source that were perceptible by a contemporary audience, as demonstrated by Hevesi's analysis of the work. Modern interpretations of the frieze, can however stand as testament to the efficacy of Macdonald's endeavors, as represented in Shapira's understanding of the sacral components at play in the frieze. The standing princesses, for instance, represent a corresponding sense of duality, indicative of the moment in which they awake after Marcellus emerges from the crypt, but also as a portrayal of the princesses' seven-year long vigil awaiting Marcellus's return. The latter is realized not only by the dense linear constructions behind the heads of the standing princesses that represent the glass windows in the marble hall, but also by their identically styled robes, which take on the form of sails of a ship.

The proposals relating to symbolic depictions of sacrality and rituality in the frieze initiated a new pattern of thought in which aspects of liminality relating to the individual and to spatial concepts could be realized within the context of the frieze. In addressing the princesses as depictions of the liminal personae, aspects of the princesses' identity were first approached. Within the context of their identity, elements of liminal personae relating to the assumption of a singular identity through the wearing of masks and headwear were proposed as part of the aforementioned ritual processes relating to ritualistic mourning, but also of the seven-year vigil

performed by the standing princesses, which culminates in the eventual liminal fever-sleep in which Marcellus finds them. In congruence with aspects of the liminal personae, aspects of inaudibility were also confirmed by virtue of the imposition of silence on the princesses, both in a verbal and emotional sense as displayed in their mask-like visages. Structural invisibility, as a component of liminal personae, was also supported in the princesses' designations of white shadows in the play, which Macdonald portrayed with the monochromatic color palette as well as the dissolution of their forms into the linear structure.

In terms of spatial liminality, Macdonald's dissolution of the conventional methods of perspective enabled an understanding of liminal spaces, which were intended as depictions of the liminal spaces mentioned in the Maeterlinck play. Among the liminal space proposed were the canal on which Marcellus's ship arrived and the marble hall in which the princesses were confined. When considering the liminal spaces within the play, it became apparent that Marcellus was the only character in the play who transited through liminal spaces, instead of being confined to them. This suggests that Marcellus was exempt from the guise of the liminal persona, which can be understood in Macdonald's individualized depiction of him in the frieze.

With the aforementioned outcomes of the multi-faceted pictorial, compositional, and symbolic analysis of the frieze, the goals of transcending the previous fairytale interpretations of the work have been achieved. Correspondingly, a new dialog surrounding *The Seven Princesses* frieze and the works of Macdonald in general has been initiated. In constructing a broader and more complex understanding of the frieze, the work can be approached from many divergent standpoints. With the aspects of Macdonald's conflation of events relating to the literary source taken into consideration for example, a body of research comparing *The Seven Princesses* frieze with other depictions of the Maeterlinck's *Les sept princesses* is certainly possible. Likewise, as so many instances of liminality can be found within the Maeterlinck play, an entire body of research could focus primarily on the aspects of liminality portrayed in the frieze, that could presumably reach far beyond rituality and spatiality.

As far as determining the installation date and location of the frieze in the Waerndorfer music salon, it is reasonable to assume that, barring any future discoveries of previously unseen photographs of the salon or the rediscovery of lost correspondences, these aspects of the work's history will, at least for now, remain mysterious. However, one must admit that it seems extremely unlikely that the frieze would not have been photographed in situ, especially before Waerndorfer vacated the villa. In other words, it seems unlikely that the only photographs of

the salon would have been those published in the texts referenced in previous research, suggesting that there must have been private photos that possibly remained in the family. This rendered more applicable especially since auction records from the last few decades suggest that Waerndorfer could have brought smaller works, like the gesso panels for the piano with him when he emigrated. In this case it is quite possible that the proof needed to determine these aspects of the work's history could have befallen the same fate that the frieze once experienced and have simply been misplaced and eventually forgotten. Perhaps these pieces of crucial evidence await their reemergence from a not so dissimilar set of concealed surroundings from which the frieze was once reawakened.

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Fig. 36: Peter Vergo, The Vanished Frieze, In: In: Hanna Egger, Peter Noever (Ed.), Ein moderner Nachmittag (A Thoroughly Modern Afternoon): Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh und der Salon Waerndorfer in Wien, 2000, p. 31.

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11. Illustrations



Fig. 1: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses* (Original Title: *Die sieben Prinzessinnen*. Fries nach einem Märchen von Maurice Maeterlinck für den Musiksalon des Hauses Wärndorfer, gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.

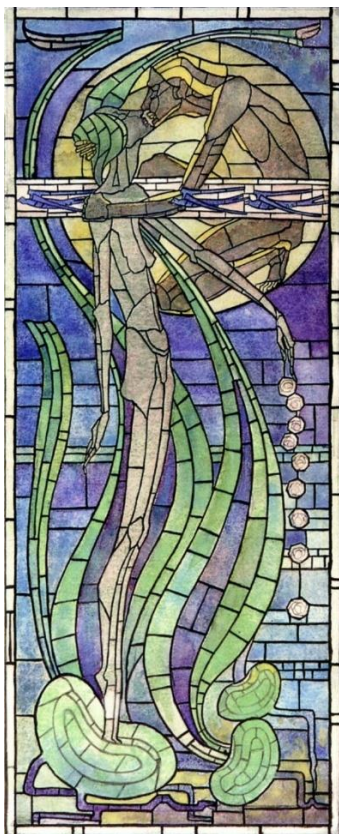


Fig. 2: Margaret Macdonald, *Summer*, 1894, watercolor, pen, and ink on paper, 51.7 x 21.8 cm, Hunterian Gallery, University of Glasgow.



Fig. 3: Frances Macdonald, *Ill Omen*, 1893, pencil watercolor on paper, 52 x 43cm, Hunterian Gallery, University of Glasgow.



Fig. 4: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, *Harvest Moon*, 1892, watercolor on paper, 71.4 x 53.7 cm, Glasgow School of Art, Archives and Collections,



Fig. 5: Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, Drawing Room at 121 Mains Street, Glasgow, ca, 1900.



Fig. 6: Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, Drawing Room at 121 Mains Street, Glasgow, 1901.



Fig. 7: Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, Drawing Room at 121 Mains Street, Glasgow, 1901.

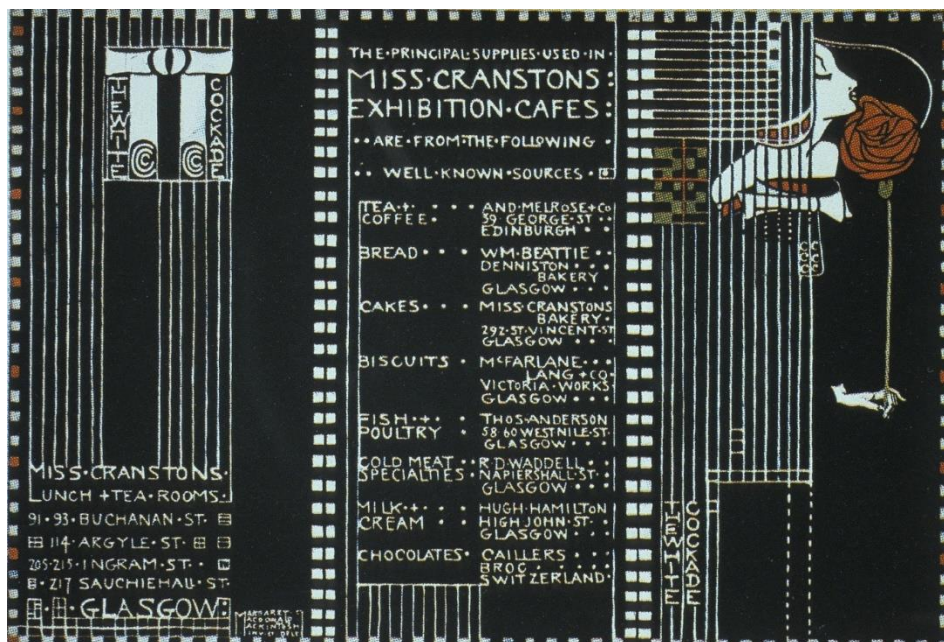


Fig. 8: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *Design for Card for Miss Cranston's 'White Cockade' Restaurant*, 1911, gouache and watercolor with black, red, and green ink on white paper, 21.5 x 31.4 cm.

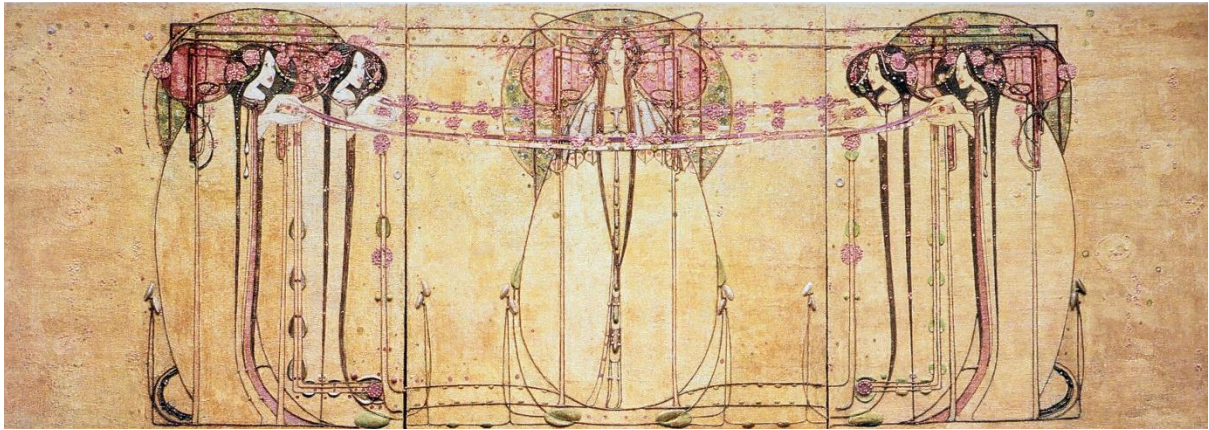


Fig. 9: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The May Queen*, 1900, gesso, hessian, scrim, twine, glass beads, mother-of-pearl, tin leaf 158.7 x 467.0 cm, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow.

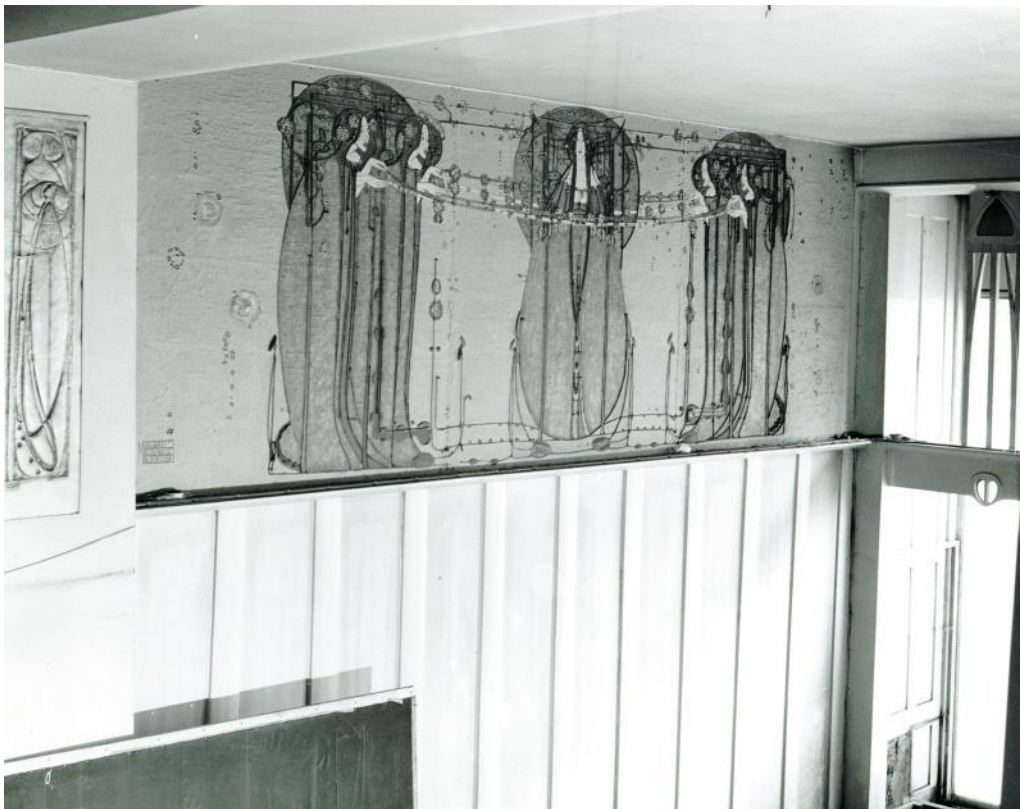


Fig. 10: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The May Queen*, 1900, Ladies' Luncheon Room, Miss Cranston's Ingraham Street Tea Rooms in Glasgow, photograph ca. 1971.

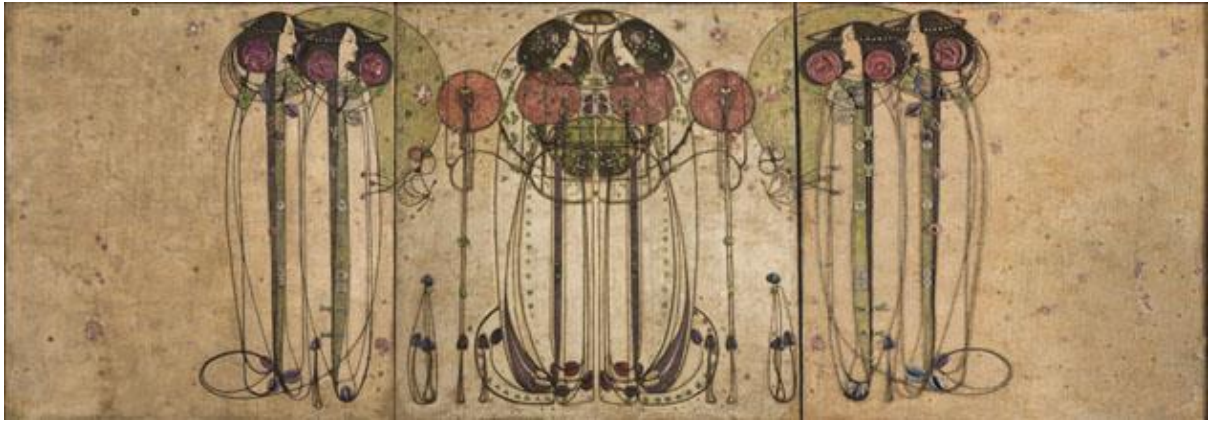


Fig. 11: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, *The Wassail*, 1900, gesso, hessian, scrim, twine, glass beads, thread, mother-of-pearl, tin leaf, 158.2 x 462.0 cm, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow.

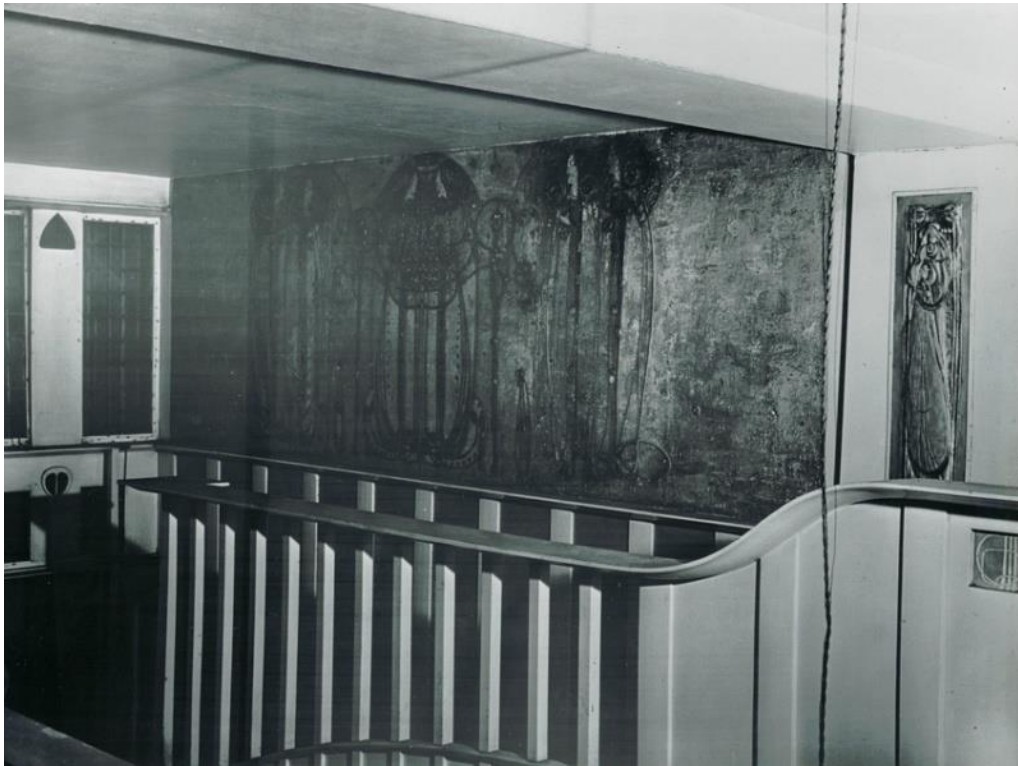


Fig. 12: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, *The Wassail*, 1900, Ladies' Luncheon Room, Miss Cranston's Ingraham Street Tea Rooms in Glasgow, photograph ca. 1940.



Fig. 13: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Stenciled Figures for The Ladies' Luncheon Room, Miss Cranston's Buchanan Street Tea Rooms, ca 1896.



Fig. 14: Floorplan of the Eighth Exhibition of the Viennese Secession, 1900. Saal X, "The Scottish Room," is outlined in red.

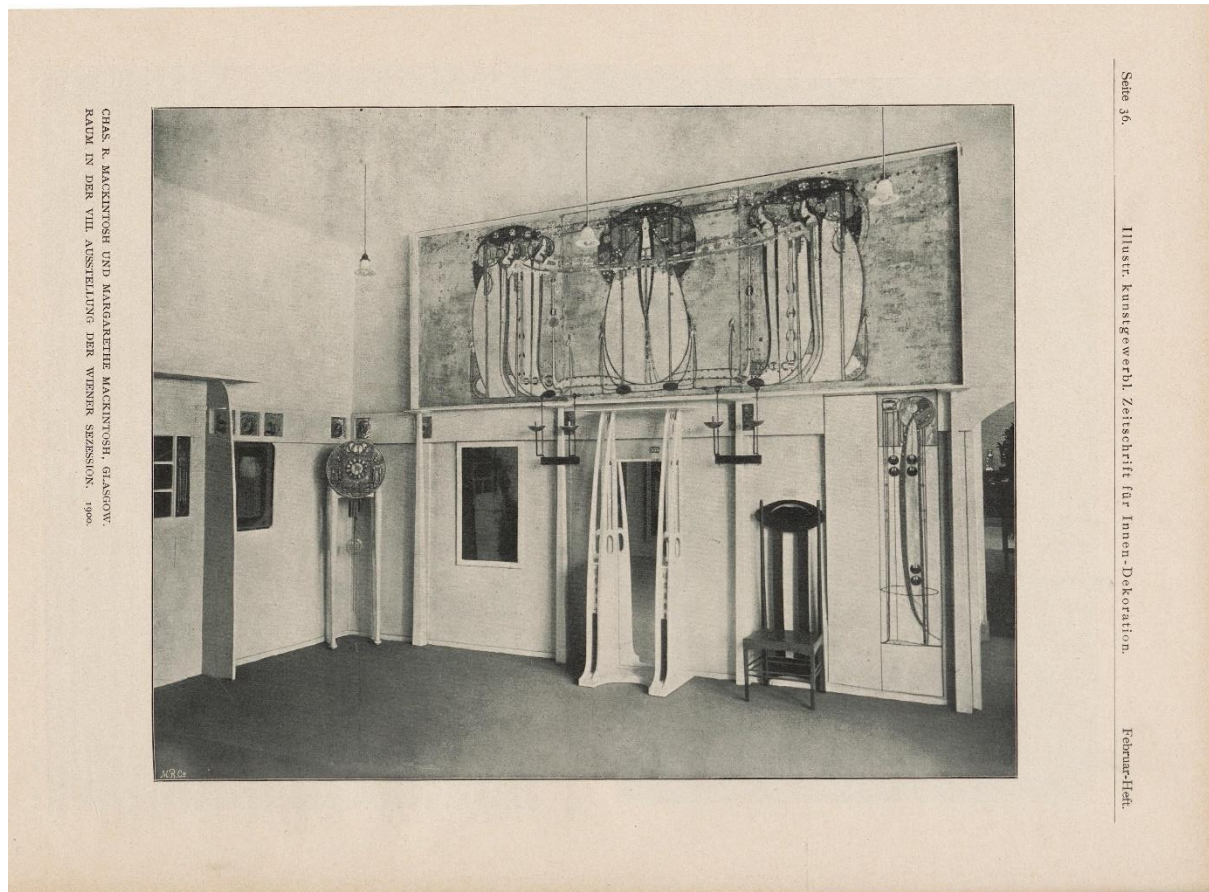


Fig. 15: *The May Queen*, Photograph from the Eighth Exhibition of the Viennese Secession, 1900.

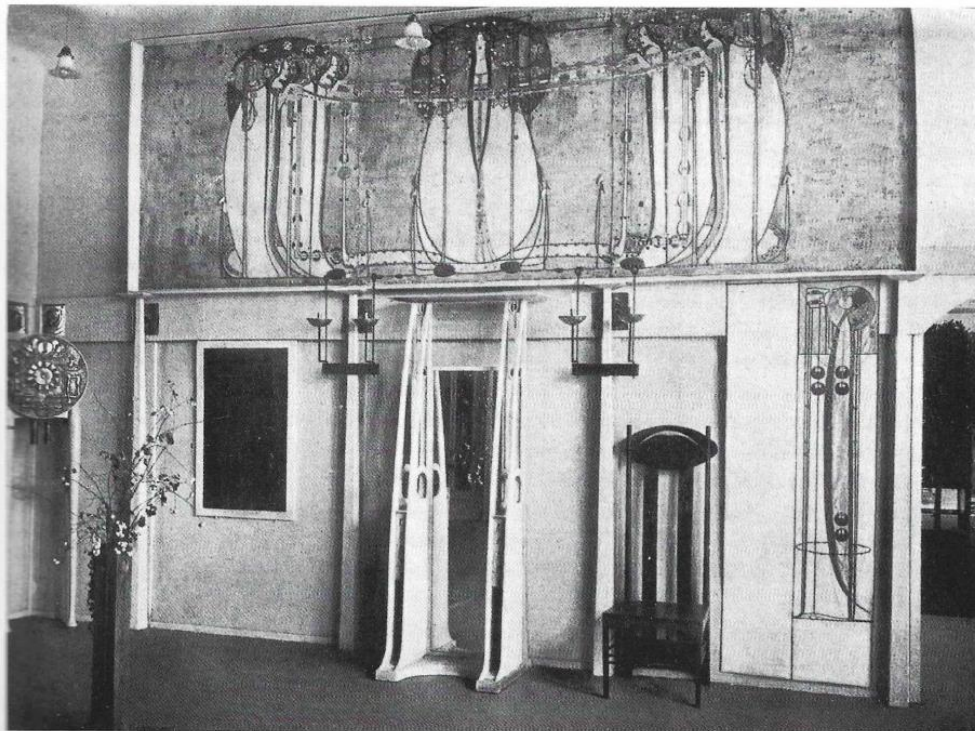


Fig. 16: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The May Queen*, from "The Scottish Room" at the VIII. Ausstellung der Vereinigung der bildenden Künstler Österreichs Secession, 1900.

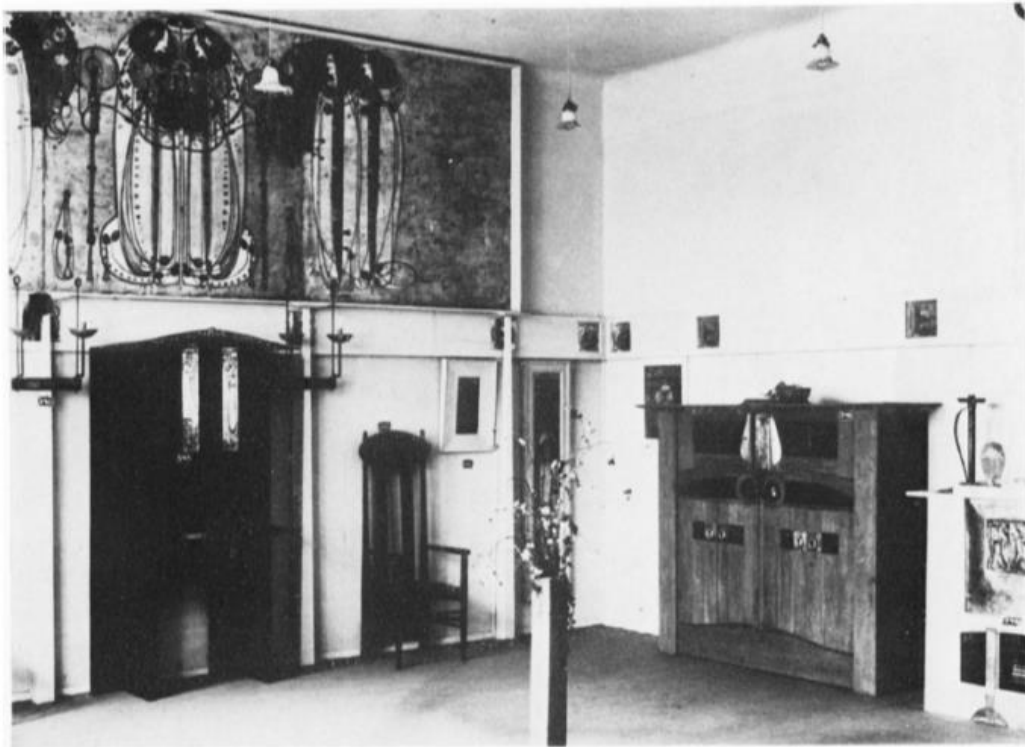
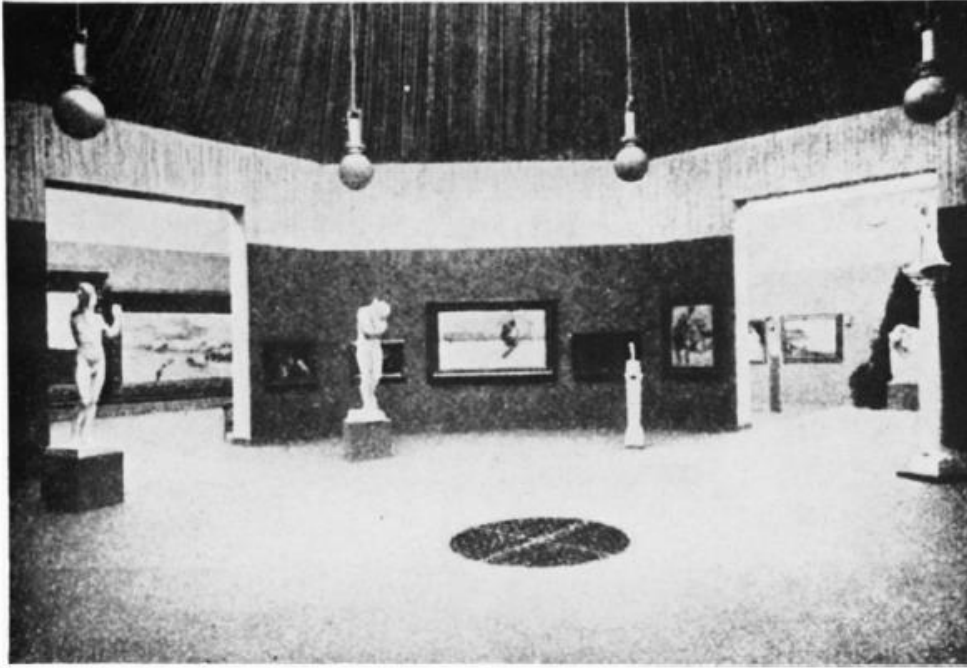


Fig. 17: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, *The Wassail*, from “The Scottish Room” at the VIII. Ausstellung der Vereinigung der bildenden Künstler Österreichs Secession, 1900.



Fig. 18: The Second Exhibition of the Viennese Secession, 1898.



15. Part of the ninth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1901.

Fig. 19: Photograph of the Ninth Exhibition of the Viennese Secession, 1901.

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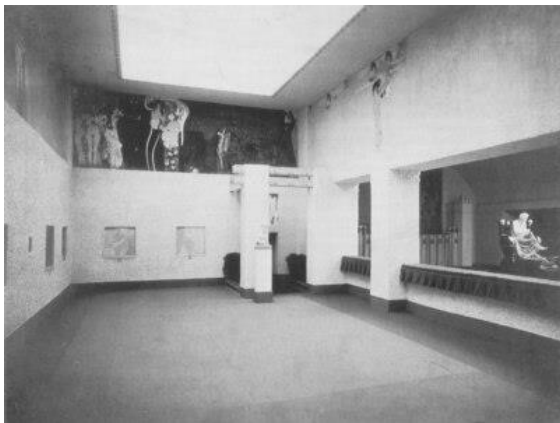


Fig. 20: Photo of the XIV. Exhibition of the Viennese Secession with Gustav Klimt's Beethoven Frieze, 1902.



Fig. 21: Gustav Klimt, *Beethoven Frieze* (detail, left panel), 1902.



Fig. 22: “The Hostile Forces,” *Beethoven Frieze* (central panel), 1902.

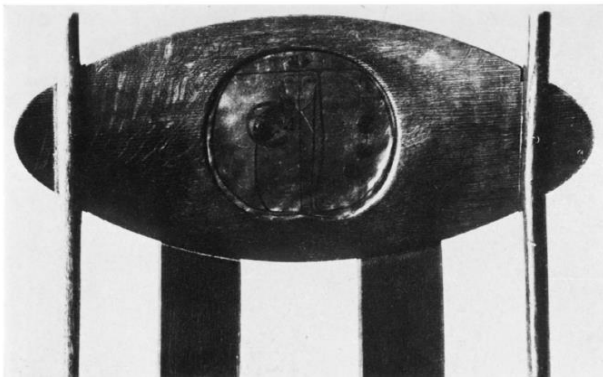


Fig. 23: Oak chair designed by Mackintosh for the 1900 exhibition.



Fig. 24: Josef Hoffmann, Sauce Spoon, from the “Flat Model” series, originally designed for Lili and Fritz Waerndorfer, 1904, engraved silver, MAK.



Fig. 25: Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, "The Rose Boudoir," I. Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art, Turin, 1902.

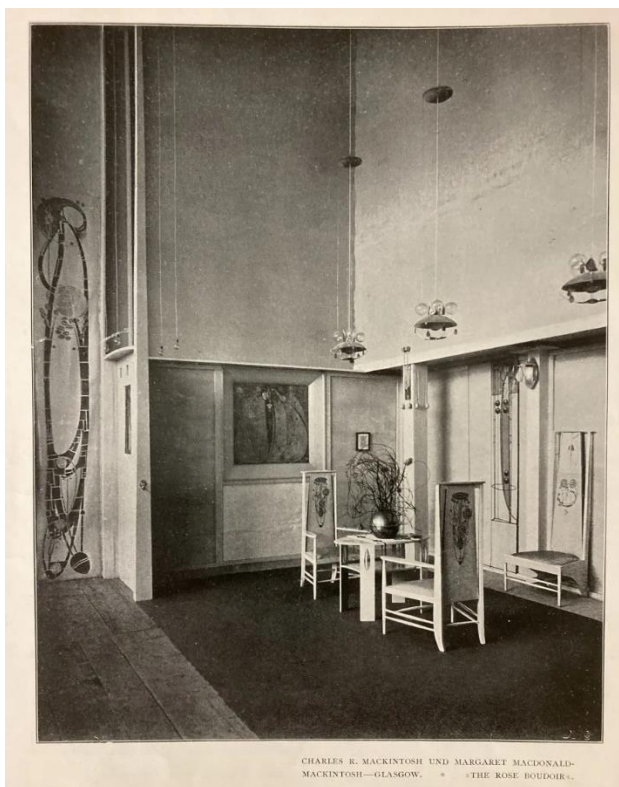


Fig. 26: Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, "The Rose Boudoir," I. Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art, Turin, 1902.

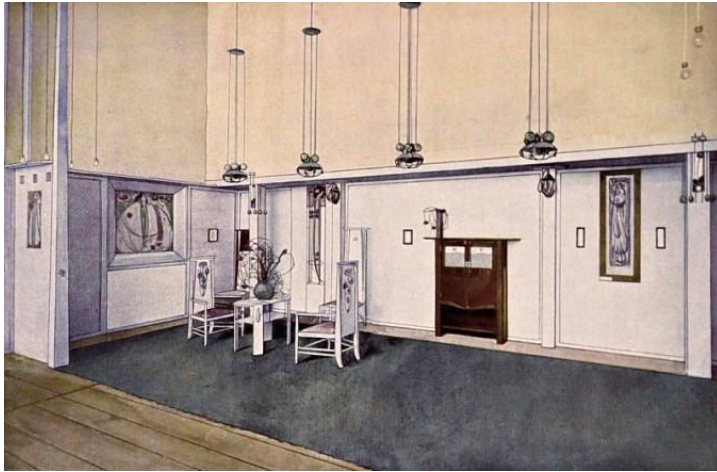


Fig. 27: Jessie M. King, *The Rose Boudoir*, watercolor on paper, 1902, dimensions unknown.



Fig. 28: Chairs from the "Rose Boudoir" featured in *The Studio*, 1902.



Fig. 29: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, duplicate version of a table for the “Rose Boudoir,” 1902, painted and white wood and clear and opaque leaded-glass insets, 61 × 92 × 50.2 cm, Art Institute of Chicago.



Fig. 30: Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, Oak Writing Desk, with gesso inlays and silver, 1901, 148 x 124 x 30cm, presented at the I. International Exhibition for Decorative Arts, Turin 1902, Museum angewandter Kunst Wien.



Fig. 31: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The White Rose and the Red Rose*, 1902, painted gesso, glass and mother-of-pearl, 100 x 98cm, Hunterian Gallery, Glasgow.



Fig. 32: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Heart of the Rose*, painted gesso over hessian, 97.8 cm. x 100.3 cm, Hunterian Gallery, Glasgow.

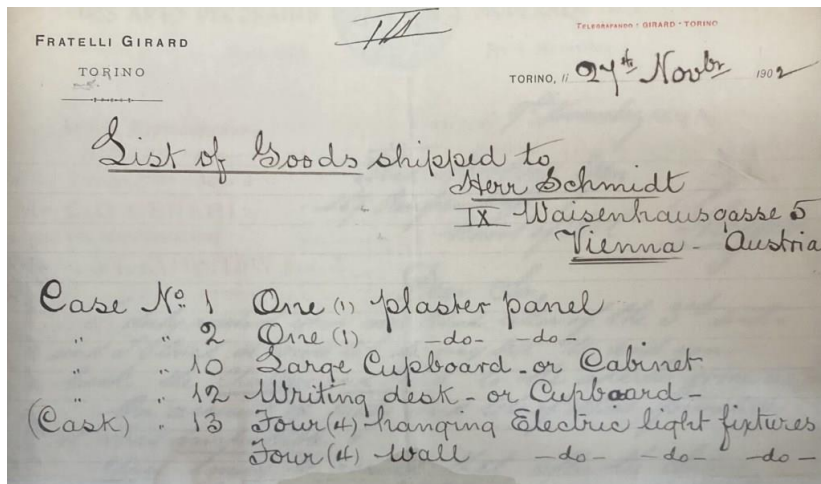


Fig. 33: Bill of sale for items purchased by Waerndorfer at the 1902 I. International Exhibition for Decorative Arts.

10	Design for Plaster Panel "The May Queen"	10 . 10 . 0
11	Glass Window "The Secret of the Rose"	
	Charles Rennie Mackintosh	5 . 5 . 0
12	Plaster Panel "The White Rose & the Red Rose"	
	Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh ^{only} Duplicates 36	15 . 0
13	34 Libris (original) Charles Rennie Mackintosh	
	Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh	
14	High Back Chair Charles Rennie Mackintosh	£ 8 . 8 . 0

Fig. 34: Sales list for items available for purchase by Macdonald and Mackintosh for the I. International Exhibition for Decorative Arts, 1902.



Fig. 35: New Years postcard sent from Lili Waerndorfer to Macdonald and Mackintosh following the 1900 exhibition in Vienna, likely in January of 1901.

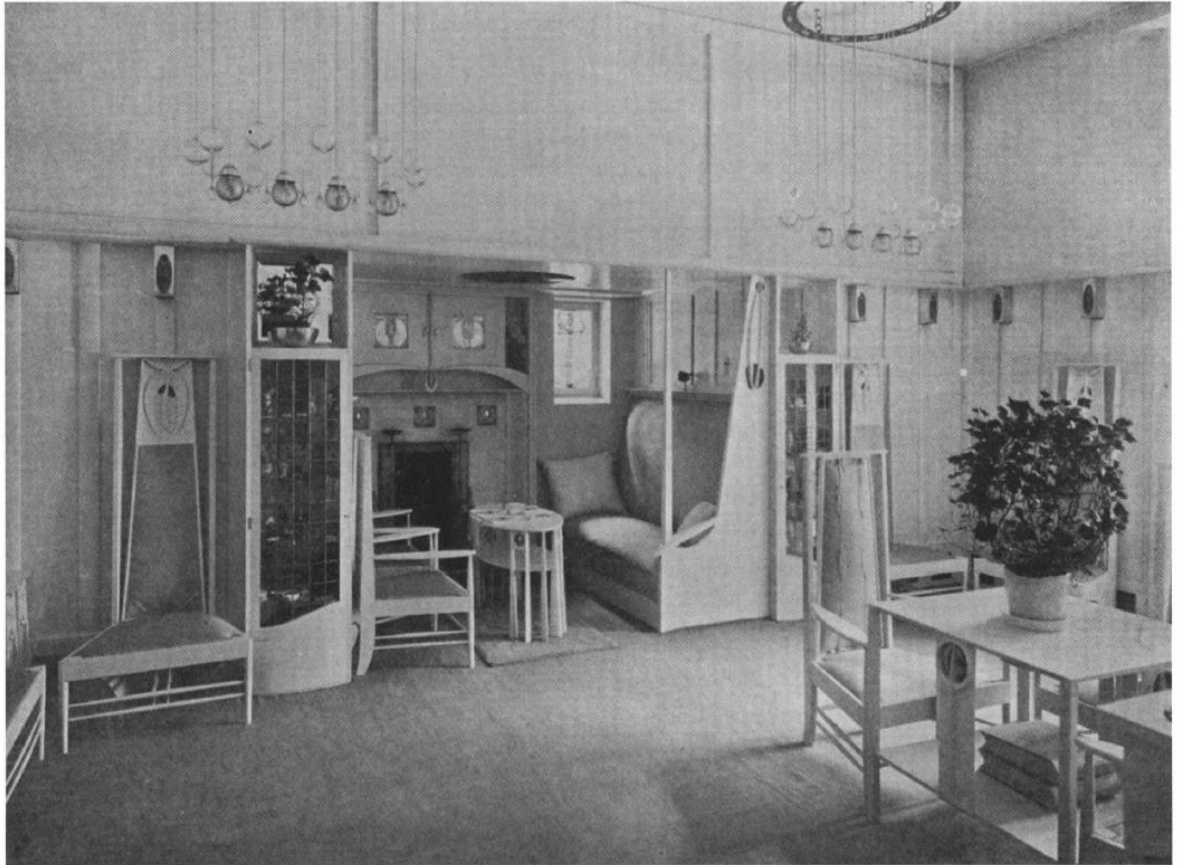


Fig. 38: The Waerndorfer Music Salon, north-facing wall, 1902–1904.

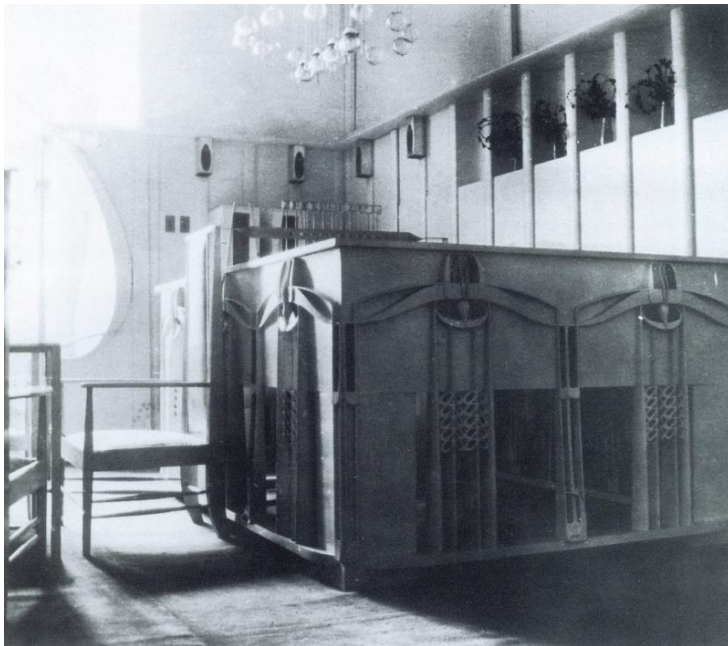


Fig. 39: The Waerndorfer Music Salon, southeast corner, ca. 1904–1906.



Fig. 40: The “Salon De Luxe”, west wall, Willow-Tea-Rooms, Glasgow, ca. 1903.



Fig. 41: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, High-Backed Chair from the “Rose Boudoir”, 1902, Oak, painted white, with stenciled linen back, silk, 152.5 x 68 x 65.2 cm.



Fig. 42: Josef Hoffmann, Dining Room for the Waerndorfer Villa, ca. 1902–1903.



Fig. 43: Chandelier from “The Willow Tea Room” Salon De Luxe, ca. 1903–1905.

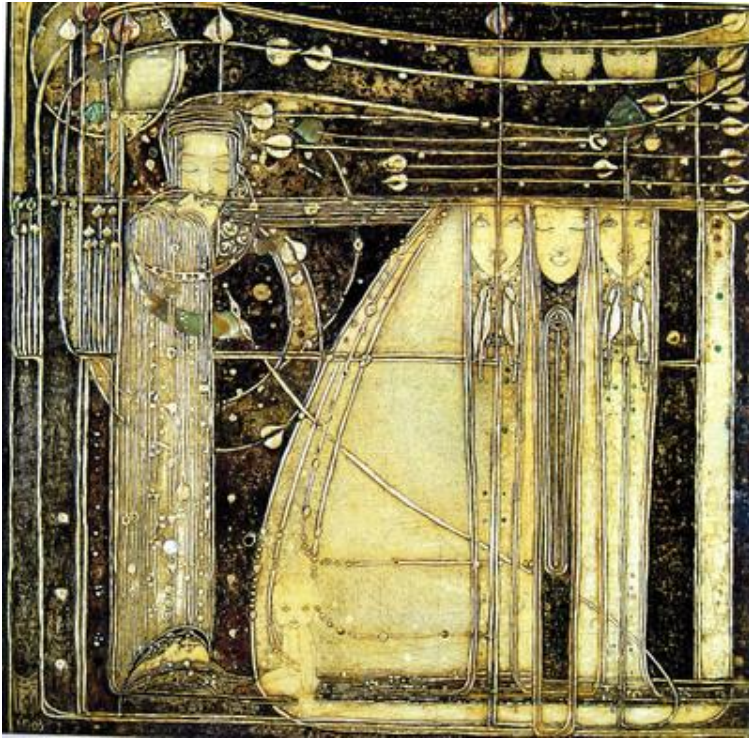


Fig. 44: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Opera of the Wind*, 1903, gesso on panel, inlaid with abalone, set with string and glass beads, 20 x 20cm, Private Collection.

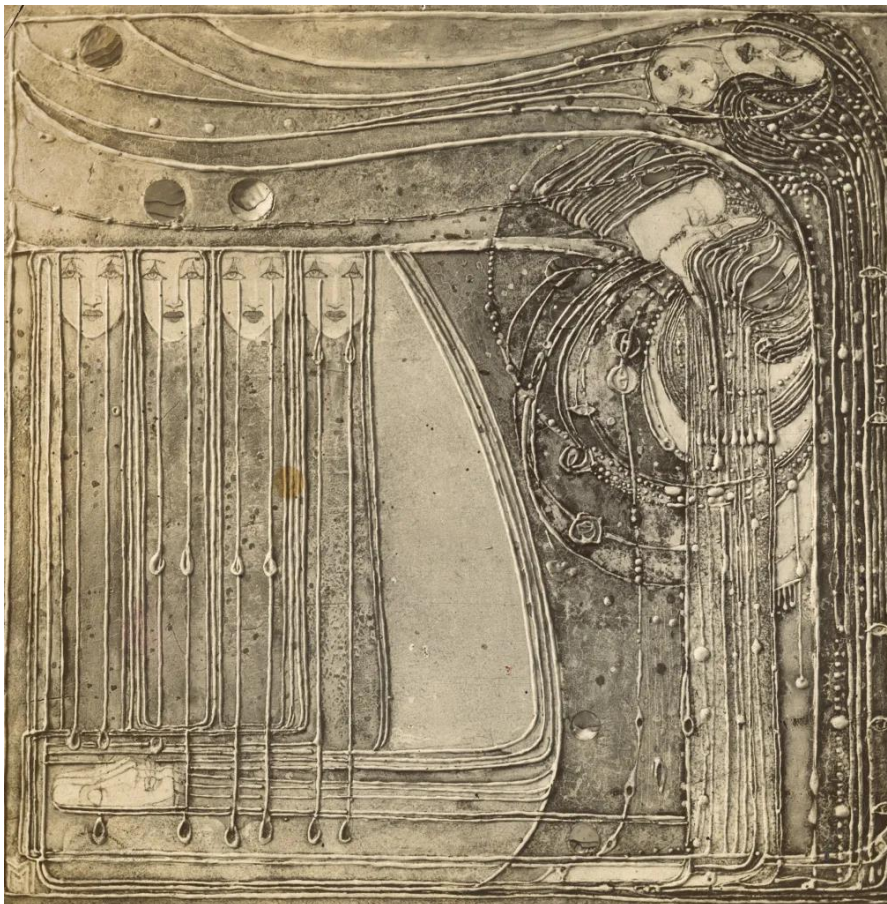


Fig. 45: Archival Photograph, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Opera of the Sea*, ca. 1903, GLAHA 52934, Hunterian Gallery, Glasgow.

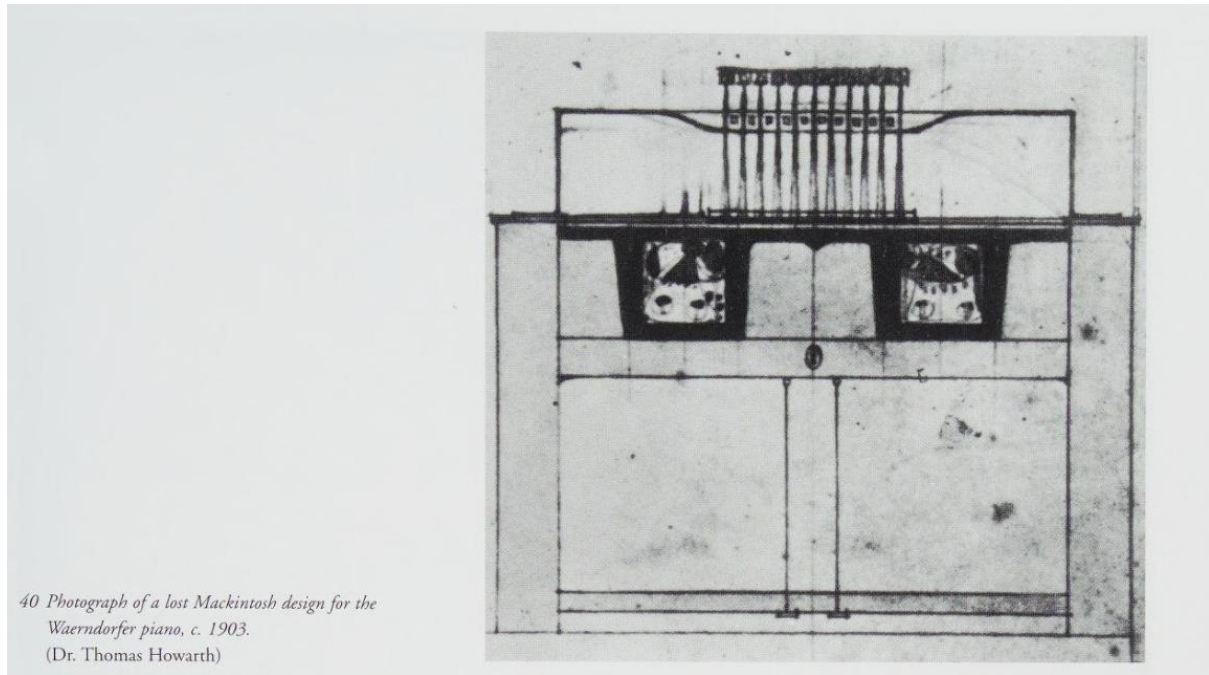


Fig. 46: Photograph showing a design of the piano for the Waerndorfer music salon, ca. 1903.

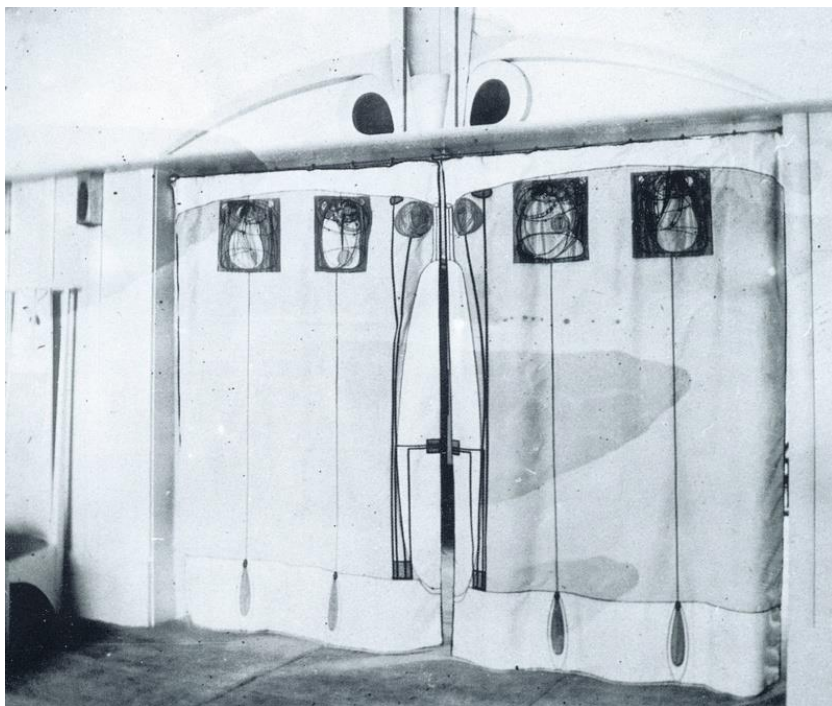


Fig. 47: Waerndorfer Music Salon, Curtains with embroidered panels by Frances Macdonald MacNair, ca. 1902–1904.



Fig. 48: Photograph of *The Seven Princesses* frieze from the Photography of Henry Bedford-Lemere, 1906.



Fig. 49: Illustration: Design by Mackintosh for "The Return of Prince Marcellus", ca. 1906, pencil and watercolor on brown tracing paper, wood, 28,8 x 83,5cm, Hunterian Gallery, University of Glasgow.



Fig. 50: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *June Roses*, 1898, pencil and watercolor on paper, 103 x 45 cm, Österreichische Galerie Belvedere.



Fig. 51: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *O, Ye That Walk in Willowwood*, 1903, pencil and oil painted gesso on board, glass and enameled glass beads, 1645 mm x 585 mm.



Fig. 52: Aubrey Beardsley, *The Peacock Skirt (from Salome)*, 1893, pen and ink, 17.8 x 12.7 cm, Victoria and Albert Museum.



Fig. 53: Jan Toorop, *The Three Brides*, 1893, pencil, chalk, paint, grease crayon, cardboard, 78 x 98 cm, Kröller-Müller Museum.



Fig. 54: William Blake, *The Ascension*, c. 1803-05, pencil, ink and watercolor on paper, 42.5 x 31.9 cm, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.



Fig. 55: *Summer*, 1904, gesso, pigment, glass beads, white wood frame, 77 x 43 cm, National Museums Scotland.



Fig. 56: *Sleeping Princess*, 1908, oil & gesso on panel, 54.2 x 105 cm, National Museums Scotland.



Fig. 57: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Queen of Hearts*, 1909, wood, paint, gesso, 58 × 40 cm, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond.

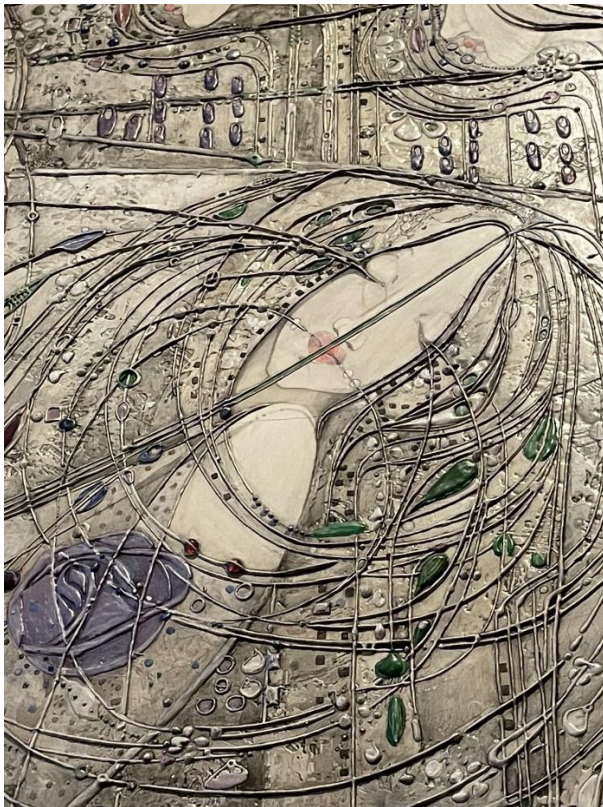


Fig. 58: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses* (Detail, central panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 59: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, right panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 60: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, central panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 61: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, central panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 62: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, central panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 63: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, right panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 64: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, central panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.

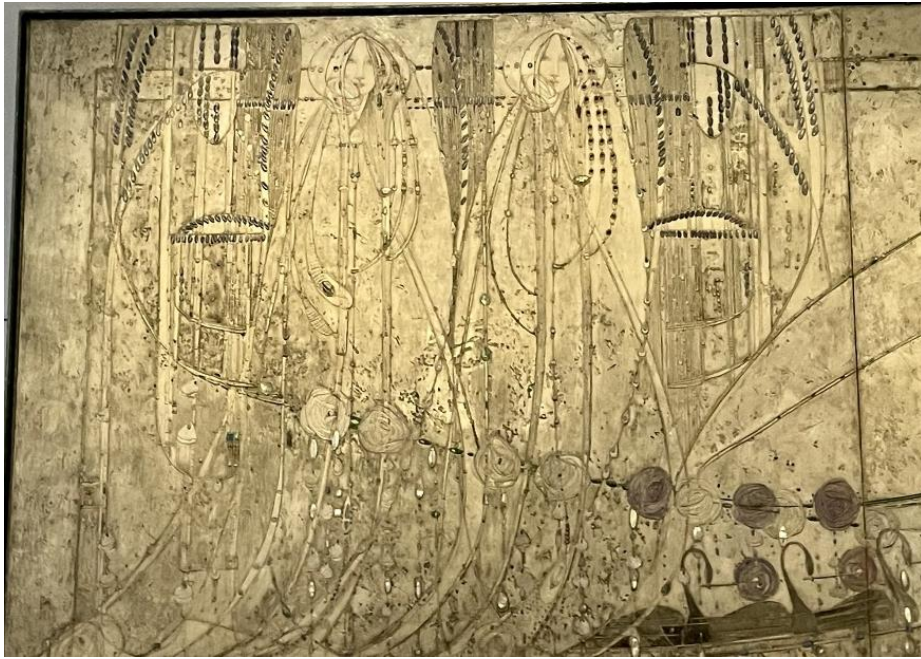


Fig. 65: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, left panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 66: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, right panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.

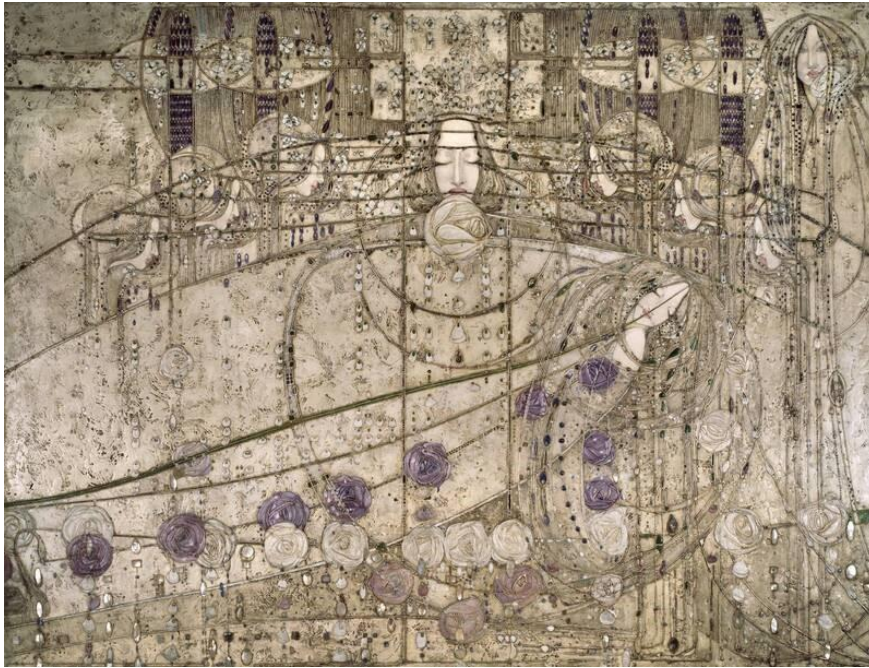


Fig. 67: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, (Detail, central panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 68: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, central panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 69: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, right panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 70: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, right panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 71: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 72: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.

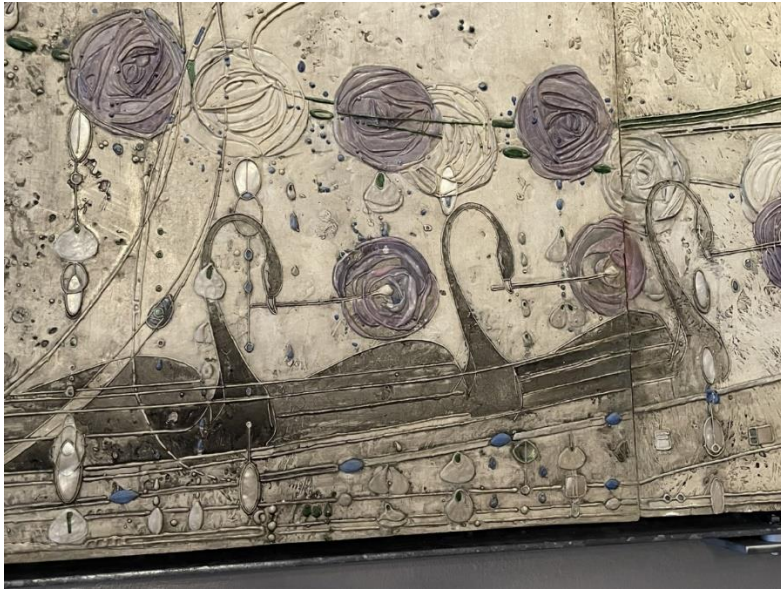


Fig. 73: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, left panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 74: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, central panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 75: *Mosaic of Empress Theodora*, 546–548, mosaic, Basilica of St. Vitale, Ravenna.



Fig. 76: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, left panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 77: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, left panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 78: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, right panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.



Fig. 79: Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Seven Princesses*, (Detail, right panel), gesso, hessian, glass paste, mother-of-pearl, twine, string, semi-precious stones, 1906, 154 x 594 cm, Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst (MAK), Vienna.

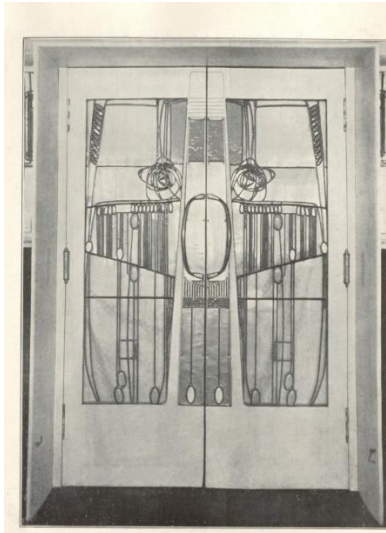


Fig. 80: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, Door from the “Salon De-Luxe,” Willow Teas Rooms, Glasgow, ca. 1903.

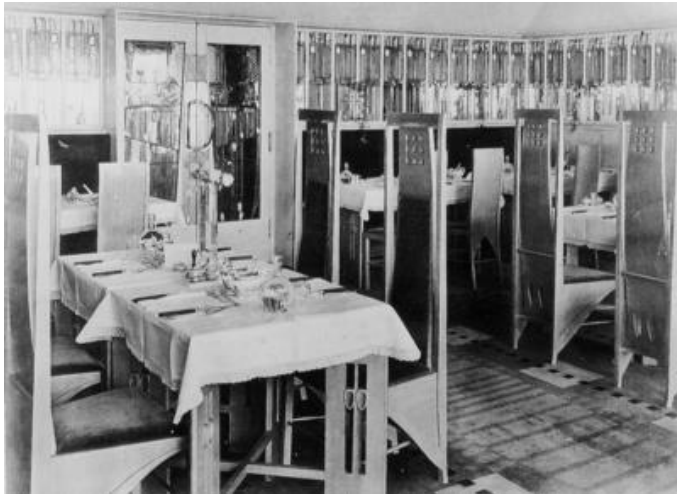


Fig. 81: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, “Salon De-Luxe,” Willow Teas Rooms, Glasgow, ca. 1903–1905.



Fig. 82: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, Door from the “Salon De-Luxe,” Willow Teas Rooms, Glasgow, unknown date.



Fig. 83: Advertisement for the sale of the “Mackintosh-Salon,” 1916.

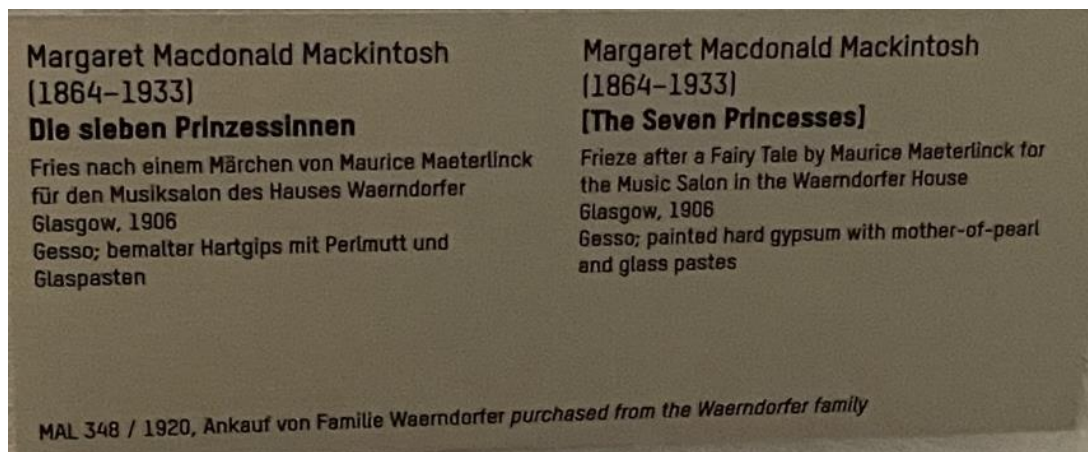


Fig. 84: Wall Label for *The Seven Princesses* frieze, 2024.

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13. Abstract

Die vorliegende Masterarbeit konzentriert sich auf Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh's *Der sieben Prinzessesinnen* (1906), einen Hartgipsfries, dem Maurice Maeterlinck's Einakter, *Les sept princesses* (1891), als literarische Vorlage zugrunde liegt. Der Fries wurde ursprünglich als Teil einer von Macdonald und ihrem Ehepartner, Charles Rennie Mackintosh für den Musiksalon Fritz Waerndorfers in Wien entworfenen Innenraumgestaltung fertiggestellt. Der aktuelle Forschungsstand weist zahlreiche Forschungslücken auf, die durch die Verschollenheit des Werks zwischen 1916 und 1990, sowie die bislang fehlenden Fotos von dem Fries in situ noch verschärft werden. Um solche Forschungslücken zu schließen, wurde das Werk in seinem kunsthistorischen Kontext untersucht, insbesondere im Hinblick auf die gemeinsam entworfenen Innenräume von Macdonald und Mackintosh in den Jahren 1900–1902. Zusätzlich beinhaltet sind neue Vorschläge zum Installationsdatum des Frieses und zu seinem Anbringungsort im Musiksalon. Neben dem kunsthistorischen Kontext wurde das Werk aus einer analytischen Perspektive betrachtet, um über frühere Interpretationen hinauszugehen und sich auf Macdonalds Umsetzung einer ausgeprägten linearen Struktur im Werk zu fokussieren. Es wurde die These aufgestellt, dass die ausgeprägte lineare Struktur es der Künstlerin ermöglichte, Maeterlinck's Stück im Hinblick auf Rituale und bestimmte Zustände von Liminalität zu interpretieren. Insgesamt wurde es versucht, ein breiteres und aufschlussreiches Verständnis des Frieses zu ermöglichen und damit einen neuen Diskurs über Macdonalds gesamtes Oeuvre anzustoßen.

This master's thesis concentrates on Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh's *The Seven Princesses* (1906), a gesso frieze based on Maurice Maeterlinck's one-act play, *Les sept princesses* (1891). The work was originally completed as part of a conceptualized interior designed by Macdonald and her spouse, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, for Fritz Waerndorfer's music salon in Vienna. The current state of research regarding the frieze contains numerous insufficiencies, a matter which has been intensified by the frieze's disappearance from 1916–1990, as well as the complete lack of extant photographs of the work in situ. In order to address such insufficiencies, the work has been examined in an art historical context, particularly with regard to the collaboratively designed interiors designed by Macdonald and Mackintosh from 1900–1902. In the discussion of the art historical context additional proposals regarding the installation date of the frieze and its location within the music salon were addressed. In addition to the historical context, the work was examined from an

analytical perspective in an effort to transcend previous interpretations and focus on Macdonald's implementation of a distinctive linear structure in the work. According to the proposals put forth, the distinctive linear structure enabled the artist to interpret Maeterlinck's one-act play in terms of rituality and various liminal states. Overall, this thesis attempts to create a broader and more comprehensive understanding of *The Seven Princesses* frieze, therein initiating a new discourse relating to Macdonald's oeuvre in general.