Implications of Inaccurate Restoration: Charles R. Mackintosh’s Willow Tea-Rooms on Sauchiehall Street

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Introduction

• Tea-room movement gained popularity in the 1880s and 1890s.
• Tea drinking became an alternative to daytime drinking.
• Mackintosh soon partnered with Miss. Cranston.
• Willow Tea-rooms soon became the most complete tea rooms in Europe.
Introduction

• Among most successful designs.

• Expressed the ideology of the early twentieth century modern movement.

• Necessitates accuracy in restoration and portrayal.
## Argument

Three historical events caused significant damage to C. R. Mackintosh’s Willow Tea Room design, resulting in irreversible loss of original fabric and reduced ability for today’s viewers to understand the architect’s design concept:

1) Transformation of the Room de Luxe into Daly’s Department store.

2) Restoring the Room de Luxe into a tea room.

3) Modifying the ground floor and exterior façade for Henderson’s Jewelry Store.
Methodology

Content Analysis

Scholarly journal articles
Magazine articles
Books
Organizations
Publications

Photographic Analysis

Hunterian Art Gallery – Mackintosh Online Catalogue
Daly’s Department Store renovation

Original Room de Luxe

Room de Luxe after Daly’s Department Store Bridal shop renovation
The re-opening of the Willow tea-rooms

Original Willow tea-room

Renovation Willow tea-room
The re-opening of the Willow tea-rooms

Original Willow tea-room

Renovation Willow tea-room
Henderson’s Jewelry Store renovation

Original exterior façade of the Willow tea-rooms

Present day exterior façade of the Willow tea-rooms
Conclusion

• Mackintosh’s Willow tea-rooms were among most successfully designed interiors.
• The original form and materials have not been preserved.
• This impedes accuracy in understanding.
• Integrity of the tea-rooms needs to be restored.