

Architecture & Design Club - Session 2021-22

Collective Action and Architecture

17th March 2022

Jude Barber, a Director of Collective Architecture in Glasgow talked on the subject Collective Action and Architecture and with particular emphasis on Women in architecture. Jude was in the team who won the competition to redevelop the old Bridgeton Library into the Glasgow Women's Library and she now sits on their Board.

In parallel with her studio practice, Jude has undertaken a number of close collaborations with local organisations, activists, artists and writers. She was co-director of the award-winning Empire Café with writer Louise Welsh during the 2014 Commonwealth Games, undertook a Crafts residency at Cove Park in 2015 and exhibited 'The Better Days' solo exhibition at the Briggait Gallery Spaces, Glasgow during the 2016 Archi-Fringe programme. She is now involved in "Voices of Experience" a collaborative project, along with Suzanne Ewing and Nicola Mclachlan, which has constructed a series of conversations between a highly experienced architect or maker of the built environment, and an architect or other professional at the outset of their career.

She talked about the influence of Margaret Brodie, who in the early years of the 20th Century became one of the most influential woman architects in Scotland and at only 30 she was appointed to serve as site architect for the Glasgow Empire Exhibition at Bellahouston Park. She supervised the construction on site of the infrastructure for around 150 different buildings, including the contributions of many of the most distinguished architects of the period, at a time when the vast majority of architects were still men.







(Photo Credit to Collective Architecture)

“..... and Glasgow belongs to me!”

10th February 2022

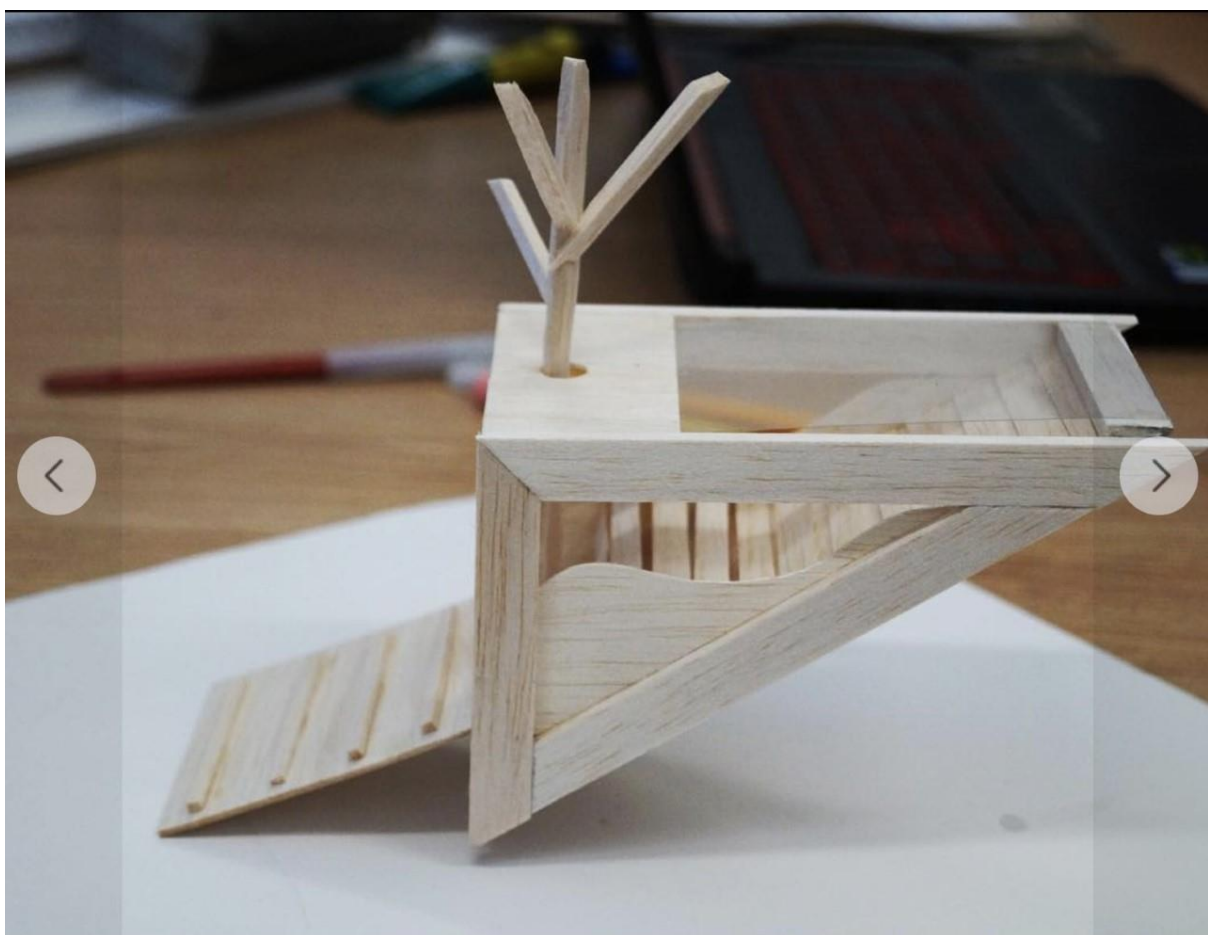
Michael Angus subject which was part of the well-known song “..... and Glasgow Belongs to Me” focused on 3 buildings that held a great meaning to him. His childhood house in Clarkston, the Toledo Cinema at Muirend where he spent many happy hours in his youth and Glasgow School of Art where his love of architecture was nurtured. He then told us how the death of his son Christopher, at the age of nearly 7 turned his life upside down and had a great effect on his mental health. He took up trekking as a means for raising funds for charity (specifically the Glasgow Children’s Hospital Charity) and has completed a number of challenge treks around the world, including the Great Wall of China, the Canadian Rockies, the Arctic and the Grand Canyon. Back at Strathclyde University he got involved with ImPACT, an organisation run by architecture students. The organisation was established in 2017 as part of the ‘Health and the City’ Year 4 option class and focuses on mental health in

Glasgow. Their plan involved the introduction of Sanctuaries, which would accommodate all the necessary facilities, and act as the headquarters – each one dedicated to a specific mental health issue e.g. anxiety, dementia, depression etc.

The green spaces in the city i.e. parks, would each have an Angel Station and they would be responsible for a district (similar to police and fire stations). An angel station can provide emergency and non-emergency care for people suffering with mental health. In each Angel Station district there would also be a number of Nests – small structures that can occupy up to two people. The Nests would offer a temporary/short term sanctuary.







“My adventures in Glasgow’s Buildings at Risk”

13th January 2022

Niall Murphy gave a talk on the work of Glasgow City Heritage Trust (GCHT) and their efforts to support the maintenance of the historic built environment of our city. There are currently over 130 buildings on the HES Buildings At Risk Register and the GCHT gives out

almost £1million in funding each year and work with community councils, owners and interested parties in an effort to help protect, repair, and promote the city's historic buildings and places. GCHT is an independent charity, supported by Glasgow City Council and Historic Environment Scotland. Some of the difficulty with the problem buildings relate to multiple ownership including offshore companies. This is believed to be the case with the Lion Chambers in Hope Street and many other buildings around Glasgow that have been left in a perilous state. The Egyptian Halls in Union St has been lying vacant now for many years and is not a very welcoming sight for visitors when exiting from Centre Station. Niall is currently very much involved in the transformation of Govanhill Baths which have become a bit of a cause célèbre.







20years of The Doolan Prize – The Best Buildings in Scotland?

9th December 2021

In December, Professor Robin Webster, Past President of the RIAS gave a talk on “The Doolan Prize” and raised the question, are these The Best Buildings in Scotland? The prize was established in 2002 with its objective to find and celebrate the best new building and over the years a great variety of buildings have won from the Dance Base in Edinburgh through to the redevelopment of the recently opened Aberdeen Art Gallery. Over the last 20 years a number of buildings in Glasgow have won the prize, namely, St Aloysius College Clavius Building in Hill Street, the refurbishment of Castlemilk Stables Block, the Vet school Small Animal Hospital in Bearsden, the conversion and extension to the former Co-operative Halls for Shettleston Housing Association, Maggie’s Centre at Gartnavel, WASPS South Block studios in Osborne Street and the new Saunders Centre for Glasgow Academy. Three years ago, we were very fortunate to have a guided tour by Richard Murphy, a previous winner of the prize for Carnegie Library in Dunfermline.







Architectural Monuments – to Conserve or Restore?

11th November 2021

Ranald McInnes of Historic Environment Scotland (HES) spoke about the whole range of options used when considering how to maintain our monuments and buildings. Preservation: – keeping a building’s features from destruction; Conservation: – seeking to maintain and increase the value of buildings by keeping their original form and elements and Restoration: – making repairs to a building while retaining materials from the most significant time in a property’s history.

Some of the terms used are “curated decay” “invisible mending” and the creation of a “safe ruin”. Some examples that were looked at were Tintern Abbey, St Andrews Cathedral and the Great Hall at Stirling Castle.

The debate still goes on as to whether it is better to preserve with minimal repairs, conserve in its original form but with the use of modern techniques or materials or restore and one of the issues of restoration is to avoid what can be considered “Disneyfication”







“The Kelpies and other stories”

14th October 2021

Our first meeting of the new session saw a transatlantic Zoom meeting when Andy Scott joined us from Philadelphia to talk about all the interesting and varied sculptures that he has produced.

Andy graduated from Glasgow School of Art in 1986 and for many years worked from a studio in Maryhill before relocating his studio workshop to Philadelphia about 4 years ago, where he works internationally. He creates prominent sculpture works for private, corporate, and civic clients, and his output now numbers more than eighty projects worldwide.

His most prominent project, The Kelpies, have become iconic landmarks and have even been appropriated by VisitBritain and displayed in far off places such as Shanghai.

The majority of his works are in galvanised steel however his most poignant work is a baby elephant cast in bronze which he produced when he was asked to design a memorial to the “Baby Ashes Scandal” in Edinburgh.



A number of his recent works have been for private clients who have commissioned works for their own homes such as the massive sculptures of this Stag and Bobcat.



A new housing development was being built in Glasgow and Andy was asked to produce a large piece of art to sit at an important point on the site. This became a seated bronze sculpture of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, which now sits at the junction of St Vincent Street and Elliot Street in Finnieston.



Whilst he is based in Philadelphia, it does not mean that he has stopped producing work for Britain and some of his recent work was for Manchester City Football Club who commissioned him to produce sculptures of some of their famous players, namely Vincent Kompany, David Silva and currently in progress, Sergio Aguero.

