

HISTORY

The Queen's Gallery at the Palace of Holyroodhouse has been made out of a former redundant school and church at the foot of Edinburgh's Canongate and opposite Scotland's new Parliament.

This area was once part of the Abbey, and indeed some evidence of this was uncovered during the recent works. Later the area was built up with tenements and breweries, alongside a narrow wynd called Watergate.

Funds for rebuilding what had become a very overcrowded area came from the Countess of Huntly, who had been brought up in the area as a girl. 1846 a school for boys and girls was built to the south and the Holyrood Free Church to the north was built four years later. Both the buildings were intended to be a single building but the original architect, Archibald Simpson of Aberdeen (1790-1847) died midway. The unfinished stonework on the stair walls shows the Church being the second phase. The church was by John Henderson (1804-1862), built with less funds than originally intended, leading to this awkward connection and a change in scale. He decided to emphasize the entrance gable of the church with a large bell-cote.

Before the nineteenth century the congregation merged with another and moved out. When the original functions lapsed, the palace bought the buildings for converting into chauffeurs' accommodation and a wide range of ancillary uses. Externally these alterations had minor impact overall, although windows and doorways have been slapped uncomfortably through and the arcade had been filled in to form the Shop for Holyrood Palace.

After a limited competition for The Queen's Gallery, Benjamin Tindall Architects were appointed in October 1999 and the work was completed in August 2002.

Silke Schneider, November 2009

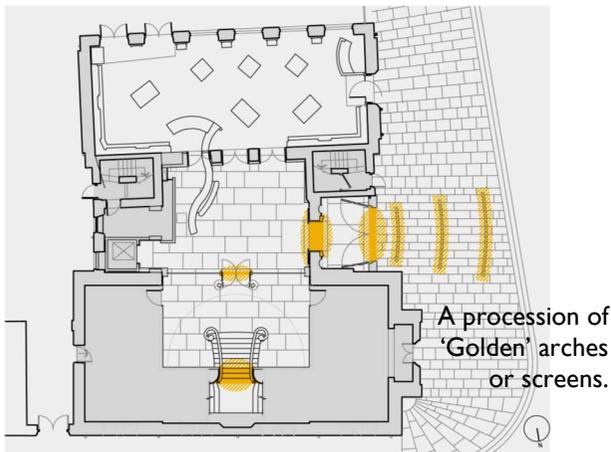
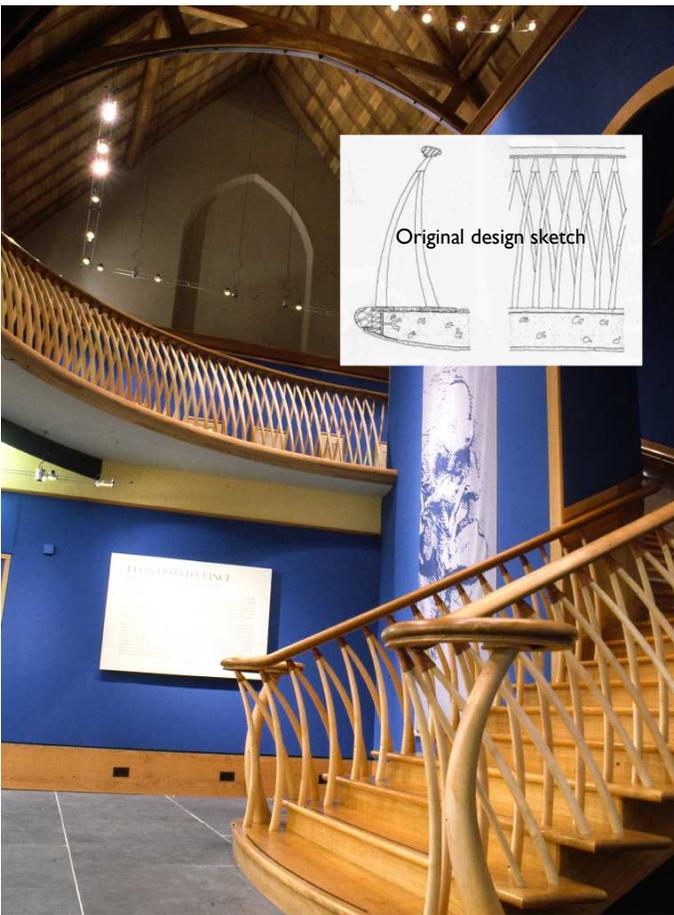
BENJAMIN TINDALL
ARCHITECTS

www.benjamin-tindall-architects.co.uk

THE QUEEN'S GALLERY THE PALACE OF HOLYROODHOUSE ROYAL MILE, EDINBURGH



Brief notes on the design and construction.



DESIGN

The Queen's Gallery was designed to exhibit drawings and other treasures from the Royal Collection and was built to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee 2002.

CELEBRATION

The stone arched entrance screen welcomes visitors from afar with a display of the best contemporary traditional design and craftsmanship, with Scotland's carved heraldic lion, unique silhouetted lettering and sculpted and gilded bronze hinges on the oak doors, leading into a 'golden courtyard'. The celebration continues through a sequence of archways and screens, giving a sense of anticipation of the exhibition space to come and hinting at the riches on show.

COMFORT

The Gallery is designed to be a comfortable place for art as well as people. The beautiful neutral and quiet space with the walls covered in blue cloth, a high oak skirting and a cornice that serves as a picture rail, giving a pleasing background for the exhibits. The oak floor and high ceiling add to the calm.

CIRCULATION

For easy access and good general circulation, the design gave special attention to the needs of less-abled and elderly, as well as parents with young children. This was achieved by a level access off the street, tonal and colour contrast of wall, floor and features, and textural and tonal changes in the floors. A lift is accessible off the Reception.

The stair, arch and balustrade are the central features of the space. The proportions of the steps are classically inspired. The unique balustrade is very strong; baskets, bones and many other suggestions have been proposed for inspiration. The design was developed with models and prototyped sections before being made in Dalkeith. The oak is from France and the sycamore from England. The arch contains removable screens sometimes used in the back Gallery, and also gives access to the specially designed 'chandelier' above.

TECHNOLOGY

A new form of lighting was designed to give a good colour balance at the low light levels needed to minimise damage to exhibits. Coming in from the external daylight, the reduction in light levels is introduced imperceptibly.

Very high standards of environmental control and stability are required to show art of the quality and value of the Royal Collection. The environmental system was designed with the help of computer modelling and is constantly monitored to maintain even conditions of humidity and temperature in a silent manner at all times of the day and year. Ducts are threaded through and under the building to provide and extract the quantities of air-conditioned air necessary, recycling as much as possible and using minimum energy. None of these interventions are visible to the visitor.

CLIENT

The Royal Collection Trust

Patron: HRH Duke of Rothesay.
Director: Sir Hugh Roberts KCVO
Superintendent: Col. David Anderson LVO
Project Manager: Gardiner Theobald Management, Colin McKillop

DESIGN TEAM

Architect: Benjamin Tindall Architects.
Benjamin Tindall, Mark Thomasson, Bern Balfe
Quantity Surveyor: Gardiner Theobald, Richard Avey, Tom Lean
Structural Engineer: Waterman HDC, John Addison
M&E Engineer: Irons Foulner Consulting Engineers
Dr Stuart McPherson
Lighting Design: KSDL, Kevan Shaw
Acoustics: Robin Mackenzie
Disability Access: Tom Lister

CONTRACTOR

Hall and Tawse Limited, now known as Mansell,
Colin Sutherland & Michael Levack
Foreman: Willie Hamilton

CRAFTSMEN & SUPPLIERS

Stair & Balustrade: Charles Taylor Woodwork
Alan Dawson: Gates & Banners
Hamid Von Koten: Reception Desk
McEwen Decorators: Paint Graining

ARTISTS



Graciela Ainsworth:
Modelling & Gilding



John Neilson:
Stonecarving & Gilding



Keiko Mukaide:
Glass Lighting



In-



grid Phillips:

Jacqui Poncelet:
Glass Lamps



Glass Etching



Chris Shaw:
Stained Glass

