

CURTAINS AND DRAPERIES

First Place



Judy Soccio,
WFCP Associate,
SR Design

When Judy Soccio was brought in on a unique and highly specified design project, these simple curtains were one of the eventual outcomes. The simplicity of the curtains belies the truth behind them—they are really the result

of an obsession with historical accuracy, relentless detective work, modern technology, design artistry, and workroom skill. The client wanted to remodel her kitchen in the style of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, a Scottish architect from the early 1900s. Specifically, the client wanted to recreate a room Mackintosh built at Hill House, the home of Walter Blackie, a prominent Glasgow publisher of the time.

Soccio was originally brought into the project to create the stained glass inserts in the cabinet doors, and was then referred to the client for window treatments and other soft furnishings. She happened to be well acquainted with Mackintosh from previous study and knew that many of the textiles he used in his designs were actually designed and created by his wife, Margaret Macdonald, an artist in multiple media. The curtains at the Hill House were probably a linen material; the designs stenciled. Because these kitchen curtains would get a lot of use, Soccio suggested using cotton twill for the face fabric, with black polyester banding to resist fading.

The fabric design was the result of a collaboration between the client, a collection of photo essays on the Hill House, and Soccio. She and the client pored over photos with magnifying glasses, trying to discern what was in those pink boxes, how wide the black lines were, what design was made by the horizontal lines at the top, and the shape and quantity of the leaves. All the photos they had were of the curtains open, so they were never quite sure what the design was.

The client specified that the boxes be a solid pink (on the Hill House curtains, the boxes were actually stylized roses), and that the leaves have “holes” of white in the green to approximate the checkerboard flower drawings Mackintosh was known for. Adaptive Textiles was contacted to print the custom-designed fabric. Soccio sent them drawings and possible color choices for the leaves and the boxes. After a vigorous back and forth of samples, redesigns, and modifications, a finished custom fabric was delivered.

Finally, Soccio cut yards of bias tape from black polyester to bind the edges of each fabric panel. She sewed brass rings onto the café curtains, and all of the curtains were mounted on historically appropriate brass rods. The client was delighted with the outcome, and her home has since been featured locally and nationally for her attention to historic detail.

Credits

Workroom/Designer/Photographer: Judy Soccio, SR Design, Monongahela, PA. Installer: Juan Rodriguez, SR Design, Monongahela, PA.

Sources

Custom curtain fabric: Adaptive Textiles. Bench cushion fabric: Toray Ultrasuede, Milano collection. Decorative pillow fabric: Charles Rupert Designs, “Rose and Teardrop” chenille.

