The Lighthouse

The Lighthouse, despite its name, is not a lighthouse at all but a building in the midst of Glasgow with a beautiful view of the city. When I first heard about it from a University of Strathclyde student I was excited because I thought it was an actual lighthouse, but hearing more about it I became just as excited to visit one of Machintosh’s buildings and to see the city from a different perspective.

The building was originally built as the Mitchell Street Building in 1895 and designed by the famous Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Machintosh was a Scottish architect, designer, and artist. He was a designer in the post impressionist movement with great influence in European design. At the time he was a young draughtsman working for Honeyman and Keppie. The building was designed as a warehouse at the back of Glasgow Herald’s printing office and the iconic tower was meant to contain an 8000 gallon water tank to protect the building from fire.

Today the building is home to Scotland’s Center for Architecture, Design and the City. It was renovated and launched in 1999 after 15 years of abandonment. It is a visitor center, exhibition space, and event venue. The most iconic part is the spiral staircase up the former water tower to a view of the city. There is also a permanent Mackintosh Interpretation Center that commemorates Mackintosh’s greatest works including the Glasgow School of Art, the Hill House, the Willow Tearoom, and Derngate. They provide a broad spectrum of Mackintosh’s achievements through his career.

The Lighthouse is a perfect place to visit to get a taste of Scottish architecture and to see an amazing view of the city of Glasgow. The view was well worth the 135 stair climb to the top.