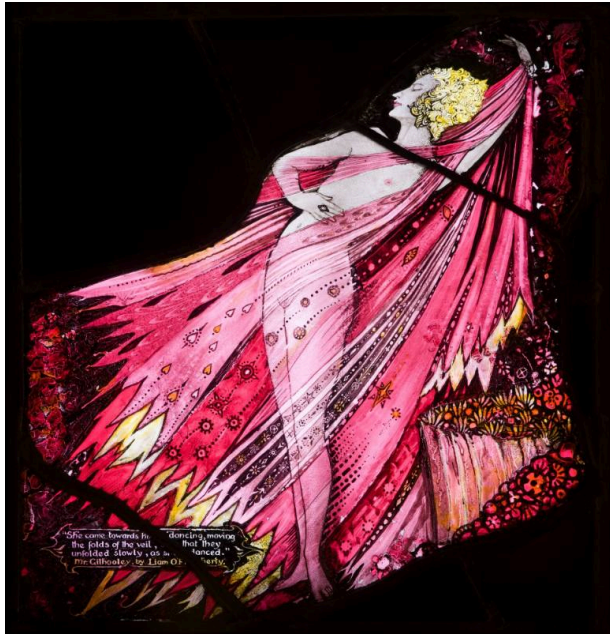


Basic Detail Report



'Mr Gilhooley by Liam O'Flaherty' for the Geneva Window, 1929

Date

1929

Primary Maker

Harry Clarke

Medium

Clear, coloured and flashed glass, acid etched, stained and with painted details

Dimensions

30 x 29 cm

Description

This stained glass was the original section of the panel depicting O'Flaherty's Mr Gilhooley from The Geneva Window commission. During its final firing a hairline crack developed in the glass and a section was remade. The Geneva Window was commissioned by the Irish Department of Industry and Commerce in 1925 as a gift to the International Labour Office of the League of Nations, Geneva. Thrilled by the opportunity to produce a work which would reach such international audiences, this piece is the culmination of Clarke's unique, lifelong experimentation with design and colour in glass making. Clarke excelled in the employment of flashed glass, plating and acid etching to manipulate light and colour, here creating a fantastic range of red hues. However, it is his skill as a glass painter that proves so effective here. The window was intended to be seen close up in order that the exceptionally fine detail, including painted highlights in yellow, could be admired. Of the subject matter, Clarke stated: 'It should give opportunities for phantasy rather than be of mythological or classical interest.' * Radically he settled on the representation of a number of Irish authors' works including Shaw, Yeats, Gregory, Synge, Joyce, Padraic Colum, Seamus O'Sullivan, James Stephens, O'Casey, George Fitzmaurice, Lennox Robinson, Liam O'Flaherty and Seamus O'Kelly. This cast list, however, was problematic, not least because two of the authors' writings, Joyce and Liam O'Flaherty, had been censored, while half the authors were Protestants, and none committed Catholics. Its censorship was almost inevitable: the piece was rejected for fear of the 'grave offense' it might cause. The scene depicted in this panel was specifically marked out for criticism. The completed work now belongs to the Wolfsonian Museum, Florida. * Quoted by Michael Laurence Clarke in The Stained Glass of Harry Clarke 1889-1931, exh. cat. The Fine Art Society, London, 1988 Harry Clarke is very close to my heart as he illustrated with extraordinary skill and sympathy my favourite book Tales of Mystery and Imagination by Edgar Allan Poe. No author wields his pen with such depths of the Gothic

macabre. It is as if Poe and Clarke were twins; such a similar spirit of the sinister grotesque in different mediums. And such a sad commission – Dr Gilhooley's veiled and naked dancer was just too much!' The John Scott Collection