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COVER IMAGE PERIOD POTTERY ON A STICKLEY SIDEBORD. PHOTO: WILLIAM WRIGHT  
GATEFOLD COVER IMAGE 1900 FOLIAGE DESIGN WALLPAPER BY JOHN HENRY DEARLE  
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An annual focus edition from Old-House Interiors





# A stunning revival of DECORATION

by Brian Coleman  
photographs by William Wright

MOTIFS AND A COLOR palette inspired by the Scots designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh bring out the best in this Craftsman-era Bungalow in Portland, Oregon. The house owned by artist C.J. Hurley and his wife Barbara is an enchanted place, embellished with stylized roses, abstracted designs, and the haunting hues favored by Mackintosh: midnight black highlighted with silver, bronze, and pink, with glowing whites and somber greys. C.J. Hurley specializes in painted friezes, gesso panels, and watercolors inspired by avant-garde Arts and Crafts designers. His talents are making his own residence in The Rose City into a special place.

When Barbara and C.J. moved to Portland in 2001,



The owner-artist calls this his White Rose dining room in honor of Portland's famous rose gardens. His handpainted frieze with stylized raindrops recalls Portland's weather; the complex grey on the walls simulate the city's overcast skies. The tabletop's paint-decoration was inspired by Viennese artist Gustav Klimt. ABOVE: C.J. Hurley in his studio.







The simple architecture of an American Arts and Crafts Bungalow welcomes stylized, geometric forms relieved by sinuous curves. Elements of related movements or styles—**Craftsman, Prairie, Art Nouveau**—can be combined to produce artistic, personal interiors in palettes from earthy to startling.



## INSPIRED

Number 78 Deragate in Northampton, recently restored, is the only Mackintosh-designed private residence in England open to the public. A smallish brick terrace house built ca. 1815–20, it was remodeled on commission by Mackintosh into something “more modern” in 1917. The architect–artist dramatically painted the walls, woodwork, and ceiling of the entry hall and lounge black, with jewel-like, geometric stencils on the walls. Silver checkerboard stripes run from floor to ceiling and are repeated in the carpet. A staircase screen in the form of a grid adds to the angularity; in it, geometric stained-glass panels of opaque glass are backlit. Still breathtaking, the effect is of a harsh yet beautiful night forest of silver and black, punctuated with glowing gold, red, and green beacons. Who ever said Arts and Crafts interiors are latte- and honey-colored?



they looked for an old house with character, a fitting canvas for C.J.'s work. For months the search was fruitless—houses needed too much work, or were in the wrong neighborhood, or didn't have space for an art studio. Then the agent called with a Craftsman-style home in one of Portland's best-preserved neighborhoods. Laurelhurst began as a “City Beautiful” neighborhood in the early 1900s and remains much the same today, its winding and tree-lined streets (designed by the Olmsted Brothers firm) lined with a pleasing mix of Craftsman cottages, Portland Foursquares, and historical-revival houses in English, Spanish, and French modes.

This comfortable, two-story house, built in 1913, has four large bedrooms and enough space for both a studio for C.J. and an office for Barbara, who markets his art. The parlor's once-handsome corner fireplace had been painted and its hearth modernized with flashy gold mosaic tiles. The exterior was an unattractive blue. But generous, light-filled rooms hadn't been significantly altered. Features such as large walk-in closets, a built-in buffet, and a sleeping porch in back were intact.

For the front parlor, C.J. commissioned a local tile maker to create crackled, majolica-green subway tiles—

**ABOVE:** The dining room's Arts and Crafts-era wainscot has been painted in layers of shimmering golden browns. Notice the “spirits of the white rose”: sprites and fairies dancing in the wainscot. C.J.

Hurley made the abstracted stained-glass panels that enhance the doors of the built-in buffet.

**BELOW LEFT:** The sinuous curves of a 1920s Art Nouveau lamp are echoed in living room's frieze.

**OPPOSITE:** The main parlor has been painted an earthy yellow-gold. The unusual overhead chandelier has its original glass shades, ca. 1925.





based on recollections of the originals by the previous owner's son, who helped guide restoration. White walls and woodwork were repainted an earthy yellow-gold inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright. C.J. hand-painted a graceful Art Nouveau frieze in metallic gold, deep violet, and Egyptian green, based on Moorish-arch motifs and stylized tulip heads evident on the front porch's trim. The furniture is a mix, including a Limbert golden-oak armchair found in Kentucky and a Victorian parlor set that was a gift from C.J.'s parents. Polychromed green, red, and bronze wall sconces date to the 1920s.

**LEFT:** Blues and greens as well as brown-golds are used throughout the house. C.J. designed the hanging planter and made its leather and metal straps. His handpainted golden iris frieze coordinates with the blue-green Art Nouveau paper from Sweden, with its stylized pink irises.

**ABOVE:** The guest bedroom boasts a large walk-in closet. C.J.'s painting "Model Textile Block" is based on the designs of Frank Lloyd Wright.

Symbolism is a central feature in C.J.'s art. He chose the white rose as the dining room's motif, as Portland, The Rose City, is famous for its public rose gardens. Rain is a recurring feature, too, so C.J. painted walls a deep winter grey to recall the sky and included stylized rain-

drops in the frieze. (The frieze is painted on canvas.) The wainscot and trim have been painted in soft golden browns in a layering technique often called a "Tiffany finish." A floating, half-timbered ceiling was added with hand-hammered *répoussé* medallions at beam intersections. C.J. built wall sconces to replace missing originals, incorporating pewter roses into the design. Gustav Klimt, the Viennese

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artist of the early-20th century, was the inspiration for the top of the dining-room table, painted in a Secessionist pattern.

For the master bedroom, the couple decided on an Art Nouveau paper from Sweden, with a green-blue ground, stylized pink irises, and yellow cartouches. Then C.J. painted a corresponding frieze of stylized irises. Furniture includes the Art Deco vanity dresser set that Barbara's grandmother bought in 1941 with her first teaching paycheck. The guest bedroom was furnished with vintage iron beds from Bar-

The guest bedroom is filled with the family's textile treasures and C.J.'s art, including his gesso and jeweled panel representing Sir Gawain. Barbara Hurley admits to a weakness for hatboxes.

bara's aunt, along with the couple's grandmothers' quilts and fabrics, which had been carefully preserved in attic steamer trunks. C.J.'s gesso and jeweled panel "Sir Gawain" is based on the Arthurian legend.

Their future plans include murals and friezes for the hallways and a period kitchen. The goal is to create a comforting, beautiful home in true Arts and Crafts tradition, integrating motifs inspired by the Laurelhurst neighborhood, by Portland, and by the surrounding Willamette Valley. What an impressive start! •