

## HIDDEN GEMS AND FORGOTTEN PEOPLE



### WILHELMINA GEDDES (1887 – 1955)

Wilhemina Geddes was born in Drumreilly, County Leitrim, on 25 May 1877 and was educated at Methodist College, Belfast, the Belfast School of Art and the Metropolitan School of Art, Dublin. Her work was included in the 1914 Exposition des Arts Decoratifs in the Louvres. Rosamund Praeger recognised her talent and took some of her watercolours to an exhibition in Dublin, where they were brought to the attention of Sarah Purser. She became a member of Sarah Purser's Studio of Ecclesiastical Art, An Tur Gloine.

As well as being one of the first of the Dublin stained glass artists, she designed book-jackets, book plates, stamps, posters, as well as illustrating books. She was also a needle worker and worked on lino prints. She exhibited at the Society of Scottish Arts, the Ulster Academy, and at the British Empire exhibition at Wembley. The Royal Hibernian Academy held exhibitions of her work in 1913, 1914, 1916 and 1930. She designed a window at St Anne's Church, Dawson Street, Dublin, one at Monea Church, Enniskillen, three at All Saints' Church, Dun Laoghaire, one at St John's Church, Malone Road, Belfast, and two windows at Inver Church, Larne.

Her windows in Wellington, New Zealand and Bartholomew's Church in Ottawa, Canada, established her international reputation. In 1929 she completed an eight-panelled window on the theme of the *Children of Lir* for the Ulster Museum and in 1938 she installed the *Great Rose Window* in the Cathedral of Ypres in memory of King Albert of the Belgians. Her work is represented in many places, including the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and more than thirty of her designs for stained glass windows are in the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin.

She died at University College Hospital, St Pancras, London, on 10 August 1955 and is buried at Carnmoney, co. Antrim.

In March 2010, NASA named a crater on the planet Mercury, 'Geddes', in commemoration of her revisionist approach to stained glass.

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