

St Marnock Square Mural

Explanation of the artist's inspiration for the mural design.

My priorities for this artwork proposal were that, firstly the piece should have a strong link to a story about the town that some people may not be aware of, and secondly that the idea is produced as a very contemporary piece of street art in the town.

I was keen to make sure my idea was also sympathetic to the local culture and environment, so when walking around the site and looking into the history of the place I was delighted to discover the full story of the Earl Of Kilmarnock and his wife, The Countess. The location of this wall is between the St Marnock Street car park and the Howard Park - this places it between the foundations of Kilmarnock House where the Earl and Countess lived, and its Gardens. I have lived in Kilmarnock all my life, brought up a stone's throw away from the Howard Park, and I am embarrassed to say I was unaware of the fascinating story behind the Lady's Walk that lies within it.

The history behind this area and the involvement of the Earl of Kilmarnock in the Jacobite rebellions of the 18th Century were unknown to me. During the 2nd Jacobite Rebellion in 1745, the Earl supported the Jacobite's cause. As Colonel in the Horse Grenadiers, he fought at the battle of Falkirk while his wife detained the opposition General at lunch and made him late to the battle to ensure victory! The Earl went on to fight in the Battle of Culloden, where he was captured. For collusion with the Jacobite cause he was sentenced to be hung, drawn and quartered in London in 1746, although this was later commuted to beheading. He was also attainted, meaning his titles were not inherited by his descendants. The Lady's Walk in the Howard Park commemorates the grief-stricken walks taken by the widow, who died of heartbreak a year after his execution.

The artwork I am developing for the wall would be a representation of this fascinating story. It is in the perfect place for a visual tribute or representation of the Countess of Kilmarnock, who would regularly take walks in the grounds of Kilmarnock House mourning her husband.

The subject matter and mood of the piece also works really well with the style and figurative representations I am familiar with. I go for strong clean outlines and striking colours, which probably comes from an artistic background heavily influenced by graffiti and graphic art. I would also hope that the viewer sees something in the image that they can relate to in a personal way. I like the simplicity of one or two colours and lines to hopefully create a simple but emotionally and visually bold effect.

The Countess of Kilmarnock, Lady Anne (Livingston) Boyd - walking from Kilmarnock House to the Howard Park to spend time mourning her executed husband, William Boyd. A depiction of an actual event that happened right here.

