

# Discovering MacDonald Gill: Architect, Artist and Mapmaker



MacDonald Gill, younger brother of sculptor Eric Gill, was an innovative and popular graphic artist of his time, best known for his decorative maps and alphabet for the standard British military headstone. A series of acclaimed exhibitions in recent years has brought a resurgence of interest in this neglected artist.

*A lecture by his great-niece Caroline Walker*

### About the Talk



MacDonald 'Max' Gill, younger brother of the sculptor and typographer Eric Gill, was an architect, illustrator, graphic designer and letterer, best known for his eye-catching, sometimes humorous, pictorial map posters for London Underground and the Empire Marketing Board. He worked with many eminent architects including Sir Edwin Lutyens, creating beautiful painted map panels for buildings such as Lindisfarne Castle and magnificent murals for churches and Cunard liners. His most enduring legacy is the alphabet and regimental badges he designed for the Imperial War Graves Commission used on all British military headstones since the First World War.

My illustrated talk presents a colourful overview of this versatile artist's personal life and artistic achievements. Max's work can be found in many localities around Britain and I include local connections wherever possible

### About the Speaker

I became fascinated in the life and work of my great-uncle 'Max' in 2006. At that time I knew almost nothing about him and there was little information in the public domain. My quest has uncovered not only a body of work remarkable for its quality, quantity and diversity but also personal documents, diaries and other memorabilia, enabling me to piece together a detailed picture of his life, now told in my book *MacDonald Gill: Charting a Life*.



I've co-curated a series of exhibitions of Max's work including *Out of the Shadows: MacDonald Gill* at the University of Brighton (2011) and more recently *Max Gill: Wonderground Man* at Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft (2018/19). I've written articles for a range of publications including *The Arts Society* magazine, *Country Life* and the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. An accredited speaker for The Arts Society since 2016, I've lectured for many other societies and institutions including the Art Workers' Guild, U3A and Christie's. Based in West London, I'm also a freelance English tutor and run the MacDonald Gill website.

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