

## Oration for Janice Kirkpatrick

Chancellor, by the authority of the Senate , I present to you this person on whom the Senate desires you to confer the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

### Janice Kirkpatrick

The post-industrial renaissance of Glasgow since the early 1980s has run parallel to the professional life of Janice Kirkpatrick. Since she graduated from The Glasgow School of Art in 1984 and 1985, she has been a consistent thread in the city's cultural and creative rebirth, a contributor to Glasgow's economic transformation and one of the city's most vocal supporters, and critic, not afraid to challenge and cause disruption when necessary.

Janice Kirkpatrick first graduated from Glasgow School of Art in 1984 winning the Newberry Medal. In 1985, while studying for a Masters of Design in Film Animation at the GSA, she co-founded the design business, Graven Images, with Adele Patrick and Ross Hunter as an alternative to an industrial placement, required by the masters' programme.

Graven Images, with its name inspired by a biblical quote – Exodus chapter 20 verse 4 "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing that is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth", Kirkpatrick, Patrick and Hunter gave themselves 3 years to prove that you could establish a European model of design agency in Scotland. Graven Images would be inter-disciplinary; it would be international in focus, with an international client list and be based in Glasgow. The 3 years they gave themselves to prove the point is now 30 years. The principle remains; the point that you could establish a European-style agency in Glasgow was made a long time ago and keeps being made! With a blue chip client list, projects in some of the world's most glamorous places, Graven, as it is now called, is internationally recognised as industry-leading experts – and it is still based in Glasgow – not London – and that is one of Graven's points of difference in a global design world.

It is difficult to disconnect Janice Kirkpatrick the person from Graven, the company – the two are synonymous - but alongside the company's growth, Janice has been a tour de force in

her own right, contributing to Glasgow's City of Culture, its successful bid to be City of Architecture and Design – ensuring that design was an equal part of the City's bid, and as a broadcaster, curator, writer and lecturer on topics including design, creativity, business, culture, identity and place – Janice Kirkpatrick has become known as much for what she has designed individually and in collaboration with others, as for what she thinks.

For that very reason she was chosen by Sir Terrance Conran in 1996 to be a *Conran Foundation Archive Collector*, and given £30,000 to select the "things you'd like to live with". Her selection of, amongst other things, a Ducati 916SP motorcycle, Marks and Spencers Tactel knickers and vest, a Squire coat, Boddington's Export bottled 4 pack, Radion Micro Active washing detergent, a Tattoo by Terry's Tattoo Parlour on Trongate and a Wallace Land O'Cakes paper bag, reflected as much her sense of humour and belief in good design being accessible and egalitarian, as it did her fundamental understanding of the role of designers, often unconsciously, in kicking down the barriers between creative disciplines - something which is evident in her work and that of Graven, with its focus on collaboration, of working with others, of building networks and working across discipline boundaries.

It is in this context that she was referred to by the Glasgow Herald as the "eloquent but unofficial Scottish Minister for Design". In this unofficial capacity she has championed design as a discipline, as a driver for social, cultural and economic change and its role in contemporary society. Her sphere of influence has ranged from being a Trustee of NESTA, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, where she was chair of the £20m Investment and Innovation seed fund, membership of the Creative Industries Advisory Committees for both Westminster and Scottish governments and the British Council's Creative Industries Advisory Group, as Chair of The Lighthouse – Scotland's International Centre for Architecture, Design and the City and Deputy Chair of The Glasgow School of Art.

In 2000 she wrote and presented, *Designing Our Lives*, a six-part series for BBC2 which explored how design innovations affect daily life, a programme which reinforced her interdisciplinary credentials spanning science and engineering as well as design. And her book, *New Package Design*, modestly fails to include the innovative packaging Graven designed for IBM in Greenock, long before Apple made the packaging of technology as well designed as the technology itself.

It is perhaps this modesty, the groundedness that being rooted in the West of Scotland brings to working with an international client list ranging from British Airways to Missoni, which underpins her continued success. Or perhaps it is her belief that if unfettered creativity is encouraged, it develops the opportunity and skills that give you the confidence to do anything. We would say it is the product of a Glasgow School of Art education. But, we recognise that it is much more than that – we are only part of the foundations of our students' success.

And with a career nearly 30 years, it is for her achievements, her contribution and commitment to Glasgow and leadership within the creative industries that I invite you Chancellor, to confer the degree of Doctor of Letters, on Janice Kirkpatrick.