

KATHARINE EMMA MALTWOOD
ARTIST
1878-1961

Rosemary Alicia Brown

Monograph from an Exhibition at
The Maltwood Art Museum and Gallery, University of Victoria

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Katharine Maltwood at work on *Magna Mater* (M964.1.365), c1910

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Biographical Sketch

A poet and philosopher in sculpture and a prophet in antiquarian research were the roles Katharine Emma Maltwood adopted in her career as an artist, collector and scholar. Born on April 17, 1878, she was brought up in her parents' large Italianate home, "Higham Lodge", in Woodford Green, London, England. Her father, George S. Sapsworth, was a wealthy leather merchant and sometime local mayor who ran a strict Victorian household. She was one of four children, having two older sisters and a brother, all of whom acquired some interest in the arts.

In the early 1890's Katharine Sapsworth was sent to school at Moira House, a recently established, private school for girls in Eastbourne, Sussex. Little is known of her early youth except that she acquired a great interest in poetry and the graphic arts. Later, she turned to sculpture and attended the Slade School of Art, University College, London from 1896-97, where she studied formally under Sir George Frampton, R.A. Her training continued with studies in Italy and Paris in the late 1890's.

On April 2, 1901 she married John Maltwood, an advertising manager, whose considerable fortune enabled her to devote her entire life to travel, collecting, sculpture and writing. From 1911 to 1930 her sculptural works were exhibited regularly at the London Salon, the Royal Academy and various other London galleries where they met with some success. After John Maltwood's retirement from business in 1921, she and her husband made extensive tours of the Middle East, India, China, Korea, Japan and both North and South America. As a result, the diverse range of the Maltwood Collection began to develop. John Maltwood shared his wife's love of art and, as well as being a devout admirer of the latter's work, he was particularly interested in Persian rugs, antique furniture and Oriental art.

The last thirty years of Katharine Maltwood's life were almost totally occupied with her antiquarian interests. These involved archaeological and literary research concerning the Glastonbury Zodiac which she claimed to have discovered while living in Somerset in 1925. Following extensive research into the sources of Arthurian legends she became convinced that the "Kingdom of Logres" was actually Somerset and the adventures of the knights are

recorded in the form of a huge system of earthworks spread out some ten miles in diameter in the neighbourhood of Glastonbury Tor. This "Zodiac", she claimed, formed part of a ritual complex, one of many similar monuments found the world over, which witnessed the existence of a universal mystery cult in the third and second millenniums before Christ. She published several books explaining her theories and continually sought to win support for her ideas. Research on the Glastonbury Zodiac has been continued by others in recent years.

In 1938 the Maltwoods decided to leave England and settle in Victoria, British Columbia. They purchased a house at Royal Oak, formerly a restaurant, which they named "The Thatch" and transformed it into a combination studio and country home. Here the couple arranged their sizable collection, including Katharine Maltwood's own sculpture, and many items associated with her antiquarian interests.

During their last twenty years in Victoria the Maltwoods continued to add to their collection. They patronized local artists such as Emily Carr, W. P. Weston, C.J. Collings, Ina D.D. Uthoff and Stella Langdale. Katharine Maltwood commissioned a series of botanical paintings recording local flora and fauna through the seasons. These were executed by Elizabeth Duer, her artist-cousin, trained in Japan. The English sculptress never gave up her own artistic pursuits and produced several small sculptural pieces. In addition she noted her impressions of the local scenery in a pastel-sketch series she called "Tree-tops".

In recognition of her work both as a sculptress and antiquarian, Katharine Maltwood was made a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in 1940. She died in 1961, bequeathing "The Thatch", her collection and an endowment to the University of Victoria. John Maltwood died in 1967.

Footnotes

- ¹ Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement* (London, Studio Vista, 1971), p. 12.
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- ³ Maltwood Museum and Gallery, *The Maltwood Collection opening exhibition*, Introduction by Martin Segger (University of Victoria, Maltwood Museum and Gallery, 1978), p. 5.
- ⁴ Katharine Maltwood's copy of William Morris, *The Earthly Paradise* (London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1907), is now in the Maltwood Collection.
- ⁵ A detailed discussion of Peladan and his activities is given by Robert Pincus-Witten, *Occult Symbolism in France* (New York, Garland Publishing Inc., 1976).
- ⁶ Chris Mullen, *G.F. Watts: A Nineteenth Century Phenomenon* (London, The Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1974) Illus. 41.
- ⁷ Harold Begbie, "Master Workers: George Frederick Watts, O.M.," *Pall Mall Magazine*, Feb. 1904, pp. 165-71.
- ⁸ Gillian Naylor, p. 117.
- ⁹ Walter Crane, "On revival of design and handicraft with notes of the work of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society," *Arts and Crafts Essays* (London, Garland Publishing Inc., 1977), p. 12.
- ¹⁰ *The Maltwood Arts and Crafts collection*, catalogue for an exhibition (University of Victoria, 1978), p. 4.
- ¹¹ Alphonse Legros was Slade Professor of drawing at University College, London, 1876-92. Jules Dalou was teacher of modelling at South Kensington School of Art, 1877-80.
- ¹² Edmond Gosse, "The New Sculpture, 1879-1894," *Art Journal*, 1894, p. 138ff.
- ¹³ Charles B. Ingham, *Education in Accordance with Natural Law* (London and New York, Novello and Co. 1902), p. x.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- ¹⁶ Gertrude A. Ingham, *Spiritual Law and Human Response* (London, John M. Watkins, 1953).
- ¹⁷ D.J. Foxon, *History of Moira House, a Progressive School* (Sidney, Webb College), p. 10.
- ¹⁸ *The Shuttle, Centenary Number 1875-1975* (Eastbourne, Moira House, Spring 1975), p. 11.
- ¹⁹ Stuart Macdonald, *History and Philosophy of Art Education* (London, University of London Press, 1970), p. 269.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 270.
- ²¹ Auguste Rodin, *Art by Auguste Rodin*, Trans. Romilly Feddon (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1912), p. 47. Katharine Maltwood's annotated edition is now in the Maltwood Collection as is her copy of Camille Maclair's popular book on Rodin of 1905.
- ²² The Maltwood Papers, Letter from John Maltwood to Jannette Jackson, Aug. 12, 1962.
- ²³ Critical reviews of Mrs. Maltwood's sculpture are among the clippings in the Maltwood Papers which are housed in the Special Collections Section, McPherson Library, University of Victoria.
- ²⁴ Freeman Champney, *Art and Glory: the Study of Elbert Hubbard* (New York, Garland Publishers, 1968), p. 153.
- ²⁵ *The Maltwood Papers*.
- ²⁶ *The Maltwood Papers*, Letter from John Maltwood to Mary Caine, 26 June, 1962.
- ²⁷ Richard Buckle, *Jacob Epstein: Sculptor* (London, Faber and Faber Ltd., 1963), p. 63.
- ²⁸ Eric Gill, *Eric Gill: Autobiography* (New York, Biblo and Tanner, 1968), p. 262.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 179.
- ³⁰ Katharine Maltwood owned a copy of H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* (Los Angeles, The Theosophical Co., 1925).
- ³¹ The annotated edition in the Maltwood Collection is Edward Schuré, *The Great Initiates; Sketch of the Secret History of Religions*, Trans. by Fred Rothwell (London, Rider, 1912).
- ³² Among the numerous books are:
Sir Rabindranath Tagore, *Fruit-Gathering* (London, MacMillan, 1916).
Lewis Spence, *An Encyclopaedia of Occultism; A compendium of information on the Occult Sciences, Occult Personalities, Psychic Science, Magic, Demonology, Spiritualism and Mysticism* (London, G. Routledge, 1920).
William W. Atkinson, *A series of Lessons in Raja Yoga by Yogi Ramacharada* (London, L. N. Fowler, 1917).
Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *The Philosophy of the Upanisads* (London, Allen and Unwin, 1924).
Margaret E. Noble, *Myths of Hindus and Buddhists* (London, Harrap, 1913).
The periodicals include:
The Modern Mystic and Monthly Science Review; The Occult Review; Theosophia; The Theosophical Forum; The Theosophical Movement; Buddhism in England.
- ³³ Philippe Jullian, *Dreamers of Decadence* (London, Pall Mall Press Ltd., 1971), p. 30.
- ³⁴ Harold Speed, *The Practice and Science of Drawing* (London, Seeley, Service & Co., Ltd., 1913), p. 22.
- ³⁵ Sir William M. F. Petrie, *The Arts and Crafts of Ancient Egypt* (London, T. N. Foulis Ltd., 1923), p. 8.
- ³⁶ H. Fehcheimer, *Die Plastik der Agypter* (Berlin, Bruno Cassier Verlag, 1920), rear cover.
- ³⁷ Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (London, Luzac & Co., 1927), p. 110.
- ³⁸ Lily Adams Beck, *The House of Fulfilment* (London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1927), pp. 41-42.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 58.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 81.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 110.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 110.
- ⁴⁵ The Maltwood Collection contains copies of all the Lily Adams Beck novels.
- ⁴⁶ W. M. Fawcett, "Who's Who in Canadian Literature: Mrs. L. Adams Beck," *Canadian Bookman*, IX, 12 (December 1929), pp. 276-77. J. Kunitz and H. Haycroft, eds. *Twentieth Century Authors: A Bibliographical Dictionary of Modern Literature* (New York, H. W. Wilson Co., 1942), p. 27.
- ⁴⁷ George Doran, *Chronicles of Barabbas* (New York, Harcourt, Bruce & Co., 1935), pp. 314-15.
- ⁴⁸ Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *The Idylls of the King, The Holy Grail*, 1870.
- ⁴⁹ David Cecil, *Visionary and Dreamer. Two Poetic Painters: Samuel Palmer and Edward Burne-Jones* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 109.

- 50 Katharine Maltwood, *The Enchantments of Britain or King Arthur's Round Table of the Stars* (Victoria, Victoria Printing and Publishing Co., 1944), p. 81.
- 51 Katharine Maltwood, "The Discovery of a prehistoric zodiac in England." *The Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada* (Sept. 1943), p. 272.
- 52 There are almost one hundred ordinance survey and other maps remaining in the Maltwood collection along with illustrations of the Dendarah zodiac from Egypt, the Javanese zodiac and several other ancient and modern astrological charts.
- 53 Katharine Maltwood, "The Discovery of a Prehistoric Zodiac in England.", pp. 273-274.
- 54 Harwood Steele, "The Somerset Giants." *Country Life* (Jan 11, 1946), p. 67.
- 55 In Freemasonry it is believed that God vouchsafed their Grand Master and Archangel, King Solomon, with a knowledge of forms in their original perfection, so that his Temple was the Temple of God. It resembled more the work of the supreme architect of the universe than the labour of mankind.
- 56 Katharine Maltwood, *King Arthur's Round Table of the Zodiac* (Victoria, Victoria Printing and Publishing Co., 1946), p. 34.
- 57 Katharine Maltwood, *The Enchantments of Britain or King Arthur's Round Table of the Stars*, p. 96.
- 58 In addition to those already cited Mrs. Maltwood produced the following books:
A guide to Glastonbury's temple of the stars: their giant effigies described from air views, maps, and from "The High History of the Holy Grail" (London, The Women's Printing Society Ltd, 1934).
 A revised edition of the above was published by Victoria Printing and Publishing Co. in 1950. It was also published posthumously in 1964 by James Clarke and Co. Ltd., London.
Air view Supplement to a guide to Glastonbury's temple of the Stars (London, John M. Watkins, 1937).
Itinerary of "The Somerset Giants" abridged from King Arthur's Round Table of the Zodiac (Victoria, Victoria Printing and Publishing Co., updated).
- 59 For instance, she tried in vain to enlist the support of members of The National Trust, The Royal Astronomical Association and The Royal Society of Arts.
- 60 See for instance:
 Anthony Roberts, ed. *Glastonbury, Ancient Avalon, New Jerusalem* (London, Rider & Co., 1978). This book contains twelve articles by various authors. Colin Wilson in the "Afterward" writes: "As the reader will have discovered, the majority of contributors to this book accept Mrs. Maltwood's ideas."
 Oliver Reiser, *This Holyest Erthe* (London, Perennial Books, 1974). Reiser discusses Mrs. Maltwood's theories and feels they require further investigation and substantiation but that for the present she has "lifted the mantle of invisibility."
 John Michell, *The View over Atlantis* (London, Sphere Books Ltd., 1973). Michell believes that for many people the Glastonbury zodiac is "aesthetically correct" but that for the time being it must be accepted as "a poetic rather than a scientific truth."
 Mary Caine, *The Glastonbury Zodiac, Key to the Mysteries of Britain* (Devon, Torquay, Graef Communications, 1978). Mrs. Caine follows Mrs. Maltwood's ideas closely and adds several elaborations and refinements of her own.
- 61 Among the books on Freemasonry consulted by Mrs. Maltwood are:
 Douglas Knoop, *The Genesis of Freemasonry* (Manchester, University Press, 1947).
 Manly Palmer Hall, *The Lost Keys of Freemasonry* (New York, Macoy Pub. and Masonic Supply Co., 1924).
 George E. Robuck, *An introduction to Royal Arch Masonry* (London, Rider & Co., 1931).
 John S.M. Ward, *An Outline History of Freemasonry* (London, Baskerville Press, 1974).
 Periodicals include: *Freemasonry Universal* and *The Speculative Mason*.
- 62 William Stradling, *A Description of The Priory of Chilton-Super-Polden and its Contents* (Bridgewater, Geo. Awbrey, 1839), p. 1.
- 63 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- 64 *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
- 65 Mary Caine, *The Glastonbury Zodiac, Key to the Mysteries of Britain* (Devon, Torquay, Graef Communications, 1978), p.5.
- 66 The portrait appeared in *Studio Magazine*, Vol. 39 (1907), p. 157.
- 67 *The Maltwood Papers*, Letter from John Maltwood to Mary Caine, June 26, 1962.
- 68 *Ibid.*
- 69 For instance among her book on furniture she referred to: George O. Wheeler, *Old English Furniture from the 16th to the 19th Centuries: A Guide for the Collector* (London, L. U. Gill, 1909).
 Percy Macquoid, *A History of English Furniture* (London, Collins, 1919).
 John Gloag, *British Furniture Makers* (London, Collins, 1946).
The Maltwood Collection Opening Exhibition, p. 13.
- 71 *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- 72 "The Thatch was a dream," *The Daily Colonist*, July 4, 1965, p. 3.
- 73 Katharine Maltwood was great friend of Diana's father, Bob Drabble and his sister and frequently visited them at their family home in Derbyshire. When Bob married and moved to British Columbia Katharine became a god-mother to his daughter, Diana.
- 74 Many of the stones Katharine Maltwood used in her Victoria works were acquired for her by Diana's husband, Stuart S. Holland, Chief geologist for the Department of Mines, Victoria.
- 75 *The Maltwood Collection Opening Exhibition*, p. 11.
- 76 "Emily Carr", *Coasts, the Sea and Canadian Art* (The Gallery Stratford, 1978), n. pag.
- 77 Ian M. Thom, *W. P. Weston* (Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, 1980), p. 12.
- 78 *The Maltwood Collection Opening Exhibition*, p. 9.
- 79 Ian M. Thom, op. cit., p. 12.
- 80 *Ibid.*, p. 14.
- 81 P.G. Konody, "C.J. Collings," *Apollo* Vol. I (June 1925), p. 345-49.
- 82 M. Tippett and D. Cole, *From Desolation to Splendour* (Toronto, Clarke Irwin, 1977), p. 74.
- 83 *The Maltwood Collection Opening Exhibition*, p. 11.
- 84 Here, aside from traditional painting and drawing courses, a wide variety of subjects were offered including clay modeling, pottery, design, illustration and nature form.
- 85 She took on many of the burdens of operation in the early days of the Little Centre and the Arts Centre. Later with the gift of the Spencer Mansion in 1951 and the establishment of the present gallery she helped, with Hildegard Wyllie, by serving on the board of directors and as a member of the accessions committee.
- 86 Colin D. Graham, *Ina D. D. Uthoff* (Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, 1972).
- 87 *The Maltwood Collection Opening Exhibition*, p. 12.
- 88 "Hildegard Wyllie of Victoria Art Centre would interest Victorians in Gallery," *Victoria Times*, May 12, 1951.
- 89 Mrs. Wyllie later donated these works to the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.
- 90 *The Maltwood Papers*, Letter from Hildegard Wyllie to Katharine Maltwood, July 16, 1950.

- ⁹¹ “Witch at Wheel Performs White Magic with her touch,” *Vancouver Sun*, July 18, 1953, p. 19.
- ⁹² “Paints Island wild flowers in Oriental style.” *Victoria Times*, March 27, 1943, p. 5, mag. sec.
- ⁹³ “Woman Paints Wild Life from jungle to Arctic Wastes”, *Vancouver Sun*, April 11, 1947, p. 16.
- ⁹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁹⁵ “Personality of the Week”, *The Daily Colonist*, Feb. 11, 1951, p. 15.
- ⁹⁶ K. E. Maltwood, “An Appreciation”, Show of Stella Langdale’s work at The Little Centre, Victoria, Nov. 19-Dec. 1, 1946.
- ⁹⁷ “Pure Lyricism Features Stella Langdale”, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Clippings File, April 1951.
- ⁹⁸ Kineton Parkes, “The Aquatints of Stella Langdale”, *Drawing and Design*, No. 31 (November 1922), pp. 227-229.
- ⁹⁹ “Studio-talk”, *Studio Magazine*, Vol. 65 (Sept. 1918), p. 95.
- ¹⁰⁰ “Artist comes to stay”, *The Daily Colonist*, Jan. 28, 1940, p. 3.
- ¹⁰¹ *The Maltwood Papers*, Letter from Stella Langdale to Katharine Maltwood, undated.
- ¹⁰² *The Maltwood Papers*, Letter from John Maltwood to Janette Jackson, Aug. 12, 1962.

Photo Credits

- p.13 *The Wedding of St. George and Princess Sabra* by D.G. Rossetti, The Tate Gallery, London.
- p.18 *Guinevere’s Redeeming* by W.R. Reynolds-Stevens. Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston.
Mysteriarch by G. Frampton, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.
- p.28 *Wind Figure* by Eric Gill, London Transport Authority.
Night by Jacob Epstein, London Transport Authority.
Caryatid or *Angel* by Ivan Mestrovic, Musée National de Belgrade.

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