

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH 2026

# AMAZING WOMEN

## of Arts & Crafts

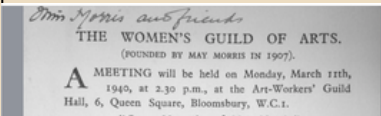


Be inspired



<https://www.vam.ac.uk/shop/books/va-pubs/women-pioneers-of-the-arts-crafts-movement-169110.html>

## WOMEN'S GUILD OF ARTS



Founded in. 1907



KEY ORGANISATION

The Arts and crafts movement was an influential design reform movement which emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was generally based on a criticism of industrialisation and a celebration of traditional craftwork.



However women were not allowed to join the main professional body the Art Workers Guild



In 1907 artists May Morris and Mary Elizabeth Turner created the Women's Guild of Arts to offer an alternative

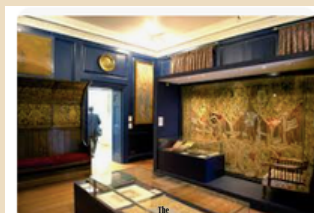


The Guild Furnished a lady's Bedroom for 1916 Arts and Crafts Exhibition.

<https://bifmo.furniturehistorysociety.org/research/aces/exhibit/97252text>



The William Morris Gallery has the archive



<https://williammorrisociety.org/our-museum/archive/>

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Valuable texts are by Zoe Thomas

<https://pure.royalholloway.ac.uk/en/publications/the-womens-guild-of-arts-gender-space-and-professional-identity-i/body-text>

MAY MORRIS



SOCIALIST FEMINIST AND EMBROIDERER



Managed the  
Morris & Co  
embroidery dept  
and contributed  
to Arts and crafts  
exhibitions in the  
1880s

1888 CATALOGUE

68 *Of Embroidery.*

VI. OF EMBROIDERY.

The technicalities of Embroidery are very simple and its tools few—practically consisting of a needle, and nothing else. The work can be wrought loose in the hand, or stretched in a frame, which latter mode is often advisable, always when smooth and minute work is aimed at. There are no mysteries of method beyond a few elementary rules that can be quickly learnt; no way to perfection except that of care and patience and love of

<https://archive.org/details/ACESEhib02AA/D19801798>



It is the want of thorough  
training that hampers  
women in all the arts



Decorative Needlework', in  
Countess of Aberdeen, ed.,  
Women in Professions being  
the Professional Section of  
the International Congress  
of Women, London, July  
1899 (London: T. Fisher  
Unwin, 1900), pp. 191-194.

[https://librarysearch.lse.ac.uk/permalink/44LSE\\_INST/ojr560/alma99149242505402021t](https://librarysearch.lse.ac.uk/permalink/44LSE_INST/ojr560/alma99149242505402021t)

Influenced by Islamic art



<https://www.wmgallery.org.uk/learn/young-people/william-morris-art-from-the-islamic-world-interpretations/>

FIND OUT MORE



VA Collections  
<https://www.vam.ac.uk/blog/caring-for-our-collections/unsung-artists-may-morris-1862-1938>



<https://maymorrisarchive.wordpress.com/writings/>



**KATHERINE ADAMS**



**BOOKBINDER**



Katharine Adams (1862–1952) was among the most accomplished English book binders of the early twentieth century.



**WOMEN'S WORK AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY W**

By E. M. TAIT.

Whereas in France women artists have always been accorded a position equal to that of men, their work being judged on its merits, quite irrespective of any sex consideration, in England the deep-rooted prejudice, of the Royal Academy especially, against women artists is only now, and very slowly, yielding to the pressure of public opinion. It is true that every year during the last two decades the number of pictures by women artists exhibited at Burlington House has steadily increased, while at the recent annual competitions in the R.A. Schools, all the prizes but one were carried off by girl students; but, on the other hand, the only woman so far elected as A.R.A. is Mrs. Swynnerton, and that honour was so belated that it contravened the rule as to "age limit," and suggestions were actually made that it should therefore be recalled! However, as true artists, men or women, consider it far more important that their work should be exhibited for the public to see and judge, rather than that they themselves should receive formal honour, the fact that women artists are so remarkably well represented in the present Exhibition of Decorative Art at the Royal Academy is one for congratulation. Not only are they signally successful in sculpture, frescoes, wood carving, stained glass designs, as well as in the more ordinary forms of applied art—book binding and illuminating, embroidery, jewellery, and so on—but several exhibit

**She contributed to the Royal Academy winter exhibition 1923**

The Vote. Jan 19 1923

<https://digital.library.lse.ac.uk/Documents/Detail/the-vote.-jan-19-1923/169335>



**Important commissions included Queen Mary's psalter**

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/1080356/queen-marys-psalter>

**She became the second president of the Women's Guild of Art, and in 1938 a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.**

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<https://bridwell.omeka.net/exhibits/show/fiftywomen/modernbinders/adams>

AGNES & RHODA GARRET



INTERIOR DECORATORS



[https://librarysearch.lse.ac.uk/permalink/44LSE\\_INST/1n1upld/alma99141466910302021t](https://librarysearch.lse.ac.uk/permalink/44LSE_INST/1n1upld/alma99141466910302021t)



Cousins Rhoda and Agnes Garrett were suffragists and professional interior designers. They published a book called *Suggestion for House Decoration* in 1876.



for middle class homes 'wishing to live in an atmosphere of refinement and culture'. According to the Introduction



<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1389784/cabinet-rhoda-garrett/ext>

CHRISTMAS SALE

December 1896.

AND AGNES GARRETT intend to  
Special Sale of the furniture in their wa

<https://digital.library.lse.ac.uk/Documents/Detail/sale-of-furniture-notice-c.1896/141835>



LSE Digital library has suffrage newspapers with adverts  
<https://digital.library.lse.ac.uk/>

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Elizabeth Crawford  
<https://womanandhersphere.com>

[https://librarysearch.lse.ac.uk/permalink/44LSE\\_INST/1f110cn/alma99142483510302021](https://librarysearch.lse.ac.uk/permalink/44LSE_INST/1f110cn/alma99142483510302021)



MARY SARGANT FLORENCE



ARTIST AND SUFFRAGETTE



<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/florence-children-at-chess-n05960>



An artist who painted in tempera. the image is of her children playing chess.

<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp88280/mary-sargent-florence>



She was a member of the the Women's Tax Resistance League This was was part of the suffrage movement. League members felt it unfair to pay tax on their income when they could not vote Mary designed the banner.



<https://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/online/object/91861.html>

The suffrage banner was designed by Mary Sargent Florence for the Women's Tax Resistance League and executed by the Suffrage Atelier. It was first carried on a procession organised by the Women's Social and Political Union on 18 June 1910.



LSE Digital Library has articles. The Common Cause. Apr 17, 1914

FIND OUT MORE



<https://www.att.org.uk/technical/news/no-vote-no-tax-womens-tax-resistance-league>  
<https://womanandhersphere.com/tag/mary-sargent-florence/>



ERNESTINE MILLS



SILVER AND ENAMELLING



<https://map.mappingwomensuffrage.org.uk/items/show/339>

She produced and sold enamelled jewellery to raise funds for the WSPU.



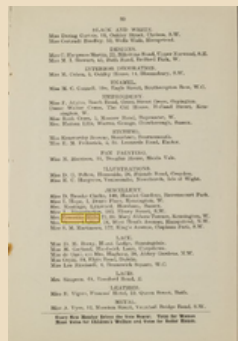
Angel of Hope pendant.  
Made in 1909 for Louise Eates secretary of Kensington WSPU after she had served a prison sentence for campaigning

<https://artjewelryforum.org/articles/ernestine-mills-angel-of-hope/>



<https://www.londonmuseum.org.uk/collections/v/object-453947/the-anti-suffragist/>

She designed the Anti-suffrage postcard complete with a poem!



LSE Digital Library has details of her exhibits at women's exhibition 1909  
Women's Suffrage Pamphlets, Vol 3, Part 2 of 2

FIND OUT MORE

<https://map.mappingwomensuffrage.org.uk/items/show/339>



KATE FAULKNER



ARTIST AND DESIGNER



<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O251464/bramble-wallpaper-faulkner-kate/>



One of the Founders of Morris and Co. She produced wallpaper for them including Bramble



She also painted furniture . The example is in gold gesso.

<https://collections.artsmia.org/art/138135/settle-philip-webb>



<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O77913/plate-faulkner-kate/>

She painted this plate . It is the only dish known to be designed by her .



Printed cotton carnation design

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<https://artsandculture.google.com/incognito/partner/william-morris-gallery>



