

# SAINTS, SKULLS & CHERUBS...

## ST MUNGO'S SCULPTURE

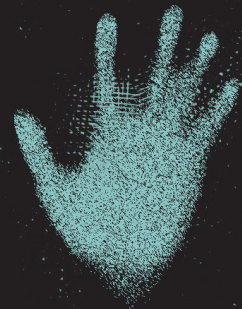
On the west-facing wall of the Tron Steeple is a sculpture of St Mungo, the patron saint of Glasgow. It was designed and constructed by Sharmanka in 2001, a local company who specialise in kinetic sculpture design. The sculpture is activated on the hour when the steeple bell tolls. A small bird pecks, a fish spins and St Mungo raises his staff. The bell, bird and fish are all emblems of Glasgow and feature on its coat of arms.

## CHERUB & SKULL

Cherub/Skull is a pair of bronze sculptures installed on the exterior of the Tron Theatre. The Cherub stands prominently on Trongate above the Burnet Wall. Skull is on the opposite corner of the building tucked away in a niche on the second floor wall on Parnie Street. Designed by Kenny Hunter and installed in 1997, Cherub/Skull was commissioned as a unified sculptural statement to represent the Tron Theatre building as both a place of worship and as a theatre.



# THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT...



**Since the arrival of the Glasgow Theatre Club, several paranormal groups have conducted investigations in the building. Many spooky tales and ghostly sightings have also been reported...**

In 1899 during the construction of a new underground line, builders uncovered corpses buried in the old Tron Church graveyard. The Tron also acted as a holding building for condemned men who were taken by an underground tunnel that still exists beneath the building, to be hung at Glasgow Cross. Many men died of heart attacks before they reached the Cross.

On several occasions a hooded figure has been seen walking at the back of the Victorian Bar. A previous member of bar staff experienced something that defies explanation:

*"I was leaning against the bar when I heard a faint hiss coming from behind my head. The sound became louder and louder and started to sound like the word 'No'. This carried on for a few minutes. I moved around the bar to see if it was where I was standing, but the sound followed me everywhere and seemed to be only inches away from my ear. Then all of a sudden the noise stopped, something hit me across the back of my knees... and it was gone."*

There have been numerous sightings of a small girl, Lily, staring out of the window on the east stairwell. According to witnesses, the sightings are preceded by a strong smell of leather. If accounts from paranormal investigators are to be believed, Lily was fatally wounded by a horse-drawn cart on the Trongate and taken into the church, where she passed away.

# ONCE UPON A TRON...

500 years of our  
building's history



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tronteatre

Tron Theatre Ltd is a Scottish Registered Charity No: SC012081



Design by [thisisjamhot.com](http://thisisjamhot.com)  
Photography: John Johnston

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## WHY 'TRON'?

Prior to the 17th century, the area around St Enoch Square was known as St Tennoch's Gate. It was the hub of Glasgow's trade and a vital meeting point for merchants. Ships would dock along the Clyde and their goods would be transported to the area around Glasgow Cross to be weighed. A 'trone' was a large beam for weighing goods entering Glasgow's city walls. Over time the necessity of the trone declined until it was removed completely but the area retained the name Trongate.

## ADAM'S GALLERY

There was originally a balcony in the main nave of the 1795 Tron Church named after the architect James Adam. During the conversion of the Main Auditorium in the 1980's this was removed and donated to the People's Palace in Glasgow.

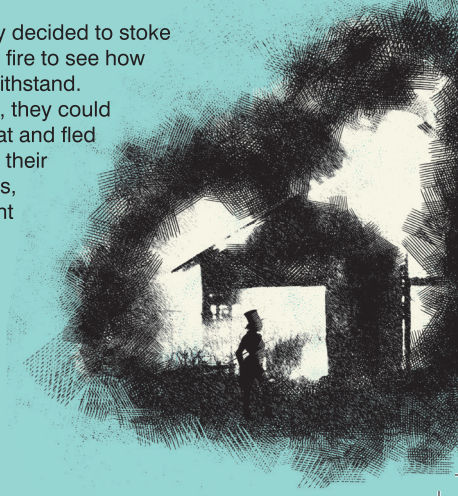
## MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL

The Tron Mirror hanging in the Victorian Bar today was the only specially commissioned piece to celebrate the opening of the Victorian Bar in 1981. The Glasgow Theatre Club relied on donations of fixtures and fittings to fill the space, including the gantry behind the bar, which was rescued from a pub in Govan. The gantry is what gives the bar its name, but it is unclear whether this is because of the style it is made in, or the name of the bar it was rescued from.

## HELL HATH NO FURY

On 15th February 1793 a notorious group known as the Hell Fire Club set fire to the old Tron Kirk. These were men of high standing who could perform immoral acts in the city. Their motto was "Fay ce que voudras" or "Do what thou wilt".

After much bravado, they decided to stoke up the night watchmen's fire to see how much heat each could withstand. After creating a huge fire, they could no longer endure the heat and fled from the church. Despite their intentions being harmless, the building was set alight and destroyed, with only the Steeple surviving... Unfortunately all records for the church were held within its grounds; no evidence remains of its design.





# THE STORY SO FAR...

The site of the present day Tron Theatre has played a central role in the life of Glasgow for nearly five centuries, during which time it has been a Christian place of worship (both Catholic and Protestant), a meeting hall, a market, a store house, a police station and a theatre.



**1525**

Collegiate Church of St Mary of Loretto & St Anne established by James Houston (Sub Dean of Glasgow).



**1560**

Catholicism outlawed in Scotland.

**1592**

Town Council order the site to become a protestant Church, the Laigh Kirk (New Kirk), with John Bell appointed first protestant minister.



**1593**

Steeple built.

**1636**

Spire added to Steeple to make building look more like a protestant church.

“...IN THE MOST BEST AND COMMODIOUS FORME THAT CAN BE DEVISIT BY THE BEST CRAFTSMEN...”

**1793**

Notorious Hell Fire Club burn down original church building.



**1795**

James Adam designs and builds the new Tron Church. (Steeple only original feature to survive the fire).

**1800**

Glasgow's first police force use the Tron's session house as a meeting place.



**1821**

Tron Steeple clock is the first in Britain to be illuminated with gas reflectors, the invention of a Glasgow pastry baker John Hart.

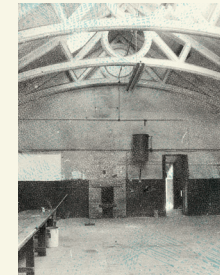
**1855**

Arches added under Steeple to allow for increased pedestrian traffic on the pavement (designed by Glasgow's first appointed City Architect, John Carrick).



**1899 - 1900**

A railway ventilation shaft is built with a curtain wall on the corner of Chisholm Street and Trongate, now known as the Burnet Wall.

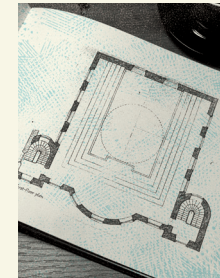


**1946**

Tron Church ceases to be a place of worship.

**1949 - 1978**

Tron Church falls in to disrepair through misuse as a workshop.



**1978**

Glasgow Theatre Club formed in April.

**1979**

Glasgow Theatre Club leases the Tron Kirk.

“...TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL WRITERS AND ACTORS, TO WIDEN THE CHOICE FOR THEATRE-GOERS, AND TO MAKE THE TRON THE MOST ACCESSIBLE AND WELCOMING VENUE IN GLASGOW...”

**1980**

Glasgow Theatre Club move into Tron on 1st January.



**1981**

First performances take place in the Victorian Bar.

**1982**

The Main Auditorium is completed and opened.

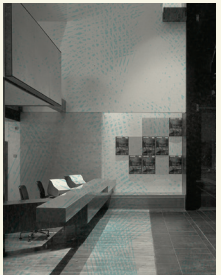


**1990**

Tron becomes a public building and not exclusive to Theatre Club members.

**1992**

Adam's Gallery from Church donated to People's Palace and Dome in Main Auditorium uncovered.



**1996**

A £5 million refurbishment begins.

**1997**

A new, custom designed Box Office building is opened. Kenny Hunter commissioned to create sculptures Cherub/Skull for building exterior.



**1998**

Admin Office opened in July.

**1999**

The fully refurbished Tron Theatre re-opens.

**2008**

Box Office moved to current location.

**2011**

The Tron theatre celebrates 30 years of performances.

