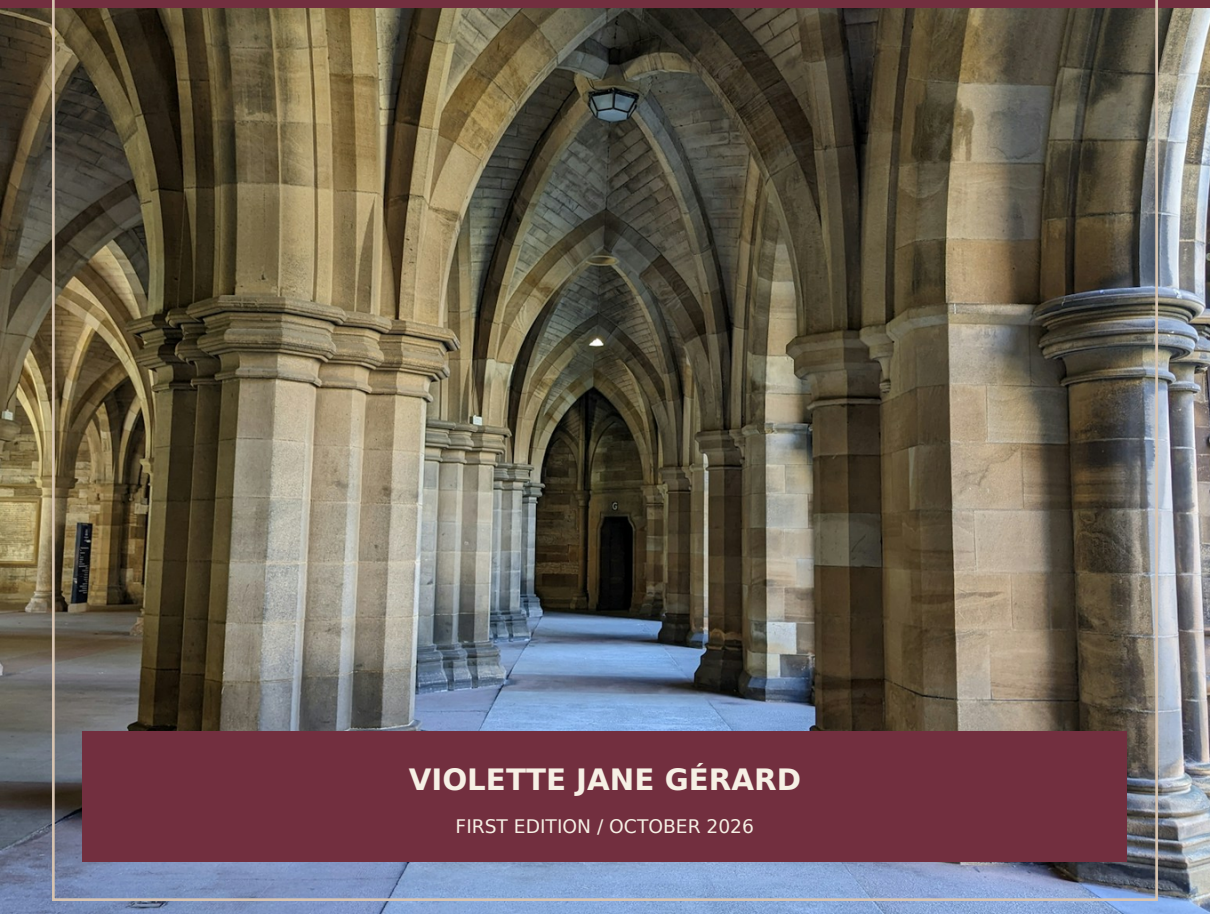


THE WILD & WONDERFUL / NO. 01

Glasgow for the Curious

THREE WALKS & A WORLD OF DETAILS



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A palace for plants

Glasgow Botanic Gardens and the Kibble Palace.



The Kibble Palace began as a private conservatory at Coulport on Loch Long. It was dismantled, brought to Glasgow and enlarged; its new life in the Botanic Gardens began in 1873. The structure underwent another major dismantling and restoration in the 2000s, reopening in 2006. Its apparent lightness has required considerable work to preserve. [4, 5]

Inside, look at two kinds of structure together: the glasshouse frame and the forms of the plants. An iron rib follows one curve; a frond makes another. The building shelters growth while giving it a carefully composed setting. Stand still long enough for the engineering to become as visible as the greenery.

Try choosing one leaf rather than photographing the whole room. Notice its edge, how it turns towards the light, and the space between it and the next plant. Botanical looking becomes much more absorbing when everything is no longer simply 'green'.

PLAN THE STOP

Great Western Road. Allow 30 to 60 minutes as a suggested visit. Check the gardens' and glasshouses' current opening information separately; their hours need not match. [Official visitor information](#)

[Open location in Google Maps](#)

The joke outside the mansion



GoMA and the Duke of Wellington.

Outside the Gallery of Modern Art, the Duke of Wellington sits on horseback. Carlo Marochetti's statue was erected in 1844; its recurrent traffic-cone headwear has become an unofficial Glasgow emblem. The cone is a changing intervention, not an object the guide can promise will be present in a particular form. [15]

Behind the joke is a second, more difficult story. The gallery building began as William Cunninghame's mansion, and Glasgow Museums describes the links between his wealth, tobacco, sugar and enslaved labour. A display on the building's history offers context for what might otherwise be treated simply as a grand setting for contemporary art. [1, 14]

Read the two together without forcing them into a single moral. Public irreverence can unsettle an official image; it does not by itself undo the social arrangements behind the stone. A joke and a historical account do different work.

For a photograph, try including enough of the gallery to retain that relationship. Then go inside and look at the interpretation. The rewarding visit is the one that begins with the familiar image and discovers that the image was only the entrance.

AT STREET LEVEL

Royal Exchange Square / Queen Street. Allow 15 minutes outside, more for the gallery. View the statue from the ground and keep crossings clear. [Read the building history](#)

[Open location in Google Maps](#)

Come home with a book



Three different ways to browse.

Voltaire & Rousseau, 12-14 Otago Lane. Second-hand and antiquarian books in the West End. Pair it with the university or make a shorter Kelvinbridge visit. Ask a bookseller for a Glasgow-related title if you would like the afternoon to continue after you return home. [11]

Category Is Books, 34 Allison Street. An independent LGBTQIA+ bookshop in the Southside. Its stated interests include queer books, history, art, activism and storytelling. Go with time to browse beyond the familiar names; a specialist selection can make a shelf into a conversation. [37]

Caledonia Books, 483 Great Western Road. A second-hand and antiquarian bookshop listed by Visit Glasgow. It offers another West End browsing stop, rather than requiring a separate cross-city expedition. Check the shop's current arrangements before making a special trip. [38]

Give each shop a different question. In the first, ask for a book connected to a place you have visited. In the second, choose an unfamiliar voice. In the third, open something whose title tells you almost nothing. You do not have to turn browsing into a task, but a small change of habit can interrupt your usual selections.

An address is not a promise of an opening time. Independent businesses change hours, take breaks and move. Use the linked sources, and contact the shop if your whole day depends on the visit.

OPEN THE SHOP INFORMATION

[Voltaire & Rousseau](#) | [Category Is Books](#)
[Visit Glasgow bookshop directory](#)