LEARNING RESOURCE

The Restoration of Dora House:
Conserving, Inventing & Making

With thanks to the UCL PGCE Art Student Daniella who designed this activity.

Our 360° Virtual Tour of Dora House allows you to explore our historic home digitally and to learn more about the recent restorations carried out to preserve and protect our building and its heritage.

But who decides what we conserve and restore and what we change and rebuild? What is lost through this process?

This resource asks you to imagine your own version of Dora House. What elements would you like to keep and what things would you change and update? Would you build and create any new ideas or concepts?
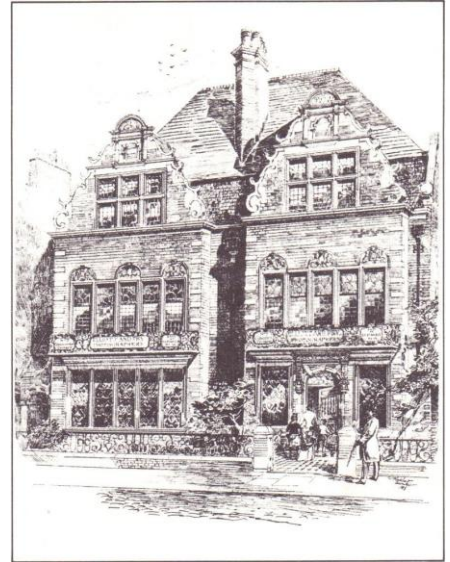
Use mixed-media collaging to sketch, redesign & combine your favourite architectural features of Dora House to make a whole new building. Experiment with drawing implements, textures and materials, combining and layering elements to reflect the building's layers of history and potential future forms.

You could complete this project on your own or work together with family, friends or classmates, to design a collaged building together.

What will I need for this project?:
-   Laptop/ computer to explore the virtual tour. You can use a smartphone and VR headset if you have access to one.
-   Mixed-media collaging materials (e.g. coloured paper, tissue paper, tracing paper, pipe cleaners, buttons, stickers, fabric etc.)
-   Scissors and glue
-   A variety of drawing implements (coloured pens, marker pens, pencils etc.)

Step 1:

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Watch this video to find out more about the restoration of Dora House and how specialist craftspeople conserved the building's unique features. Then visit the 360° Virtual Tour of Dora House by following the link or scanning the QR code.

SAVING DORA HOUSE VIDEO
LINK:
https://vimeo.com/779560432

QR CODE:

DORA HOUSE 360 VR TOUR
LINK:
https://sculptors.org.uk/visit/dora-house-360deg

QR CODE:

Take screenshots, notes and sketches to record your 2-3 of your favourite architectural features of the house. These could be tiny details like window patterns or large constructions like a chimney.

Can you find a feature that you don't like? Sketch it while making changes and adjustments to improve its character.

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Can you find a feature that existed in the house but is no longer there? Sketch a version of this based on the information in the tour and your own imagination.

Can you think of something that you can't see in Dora House, but you think should be part of the building in the future? Sketch it!
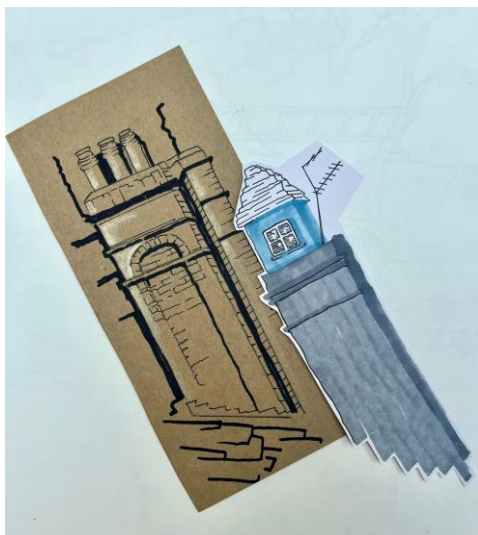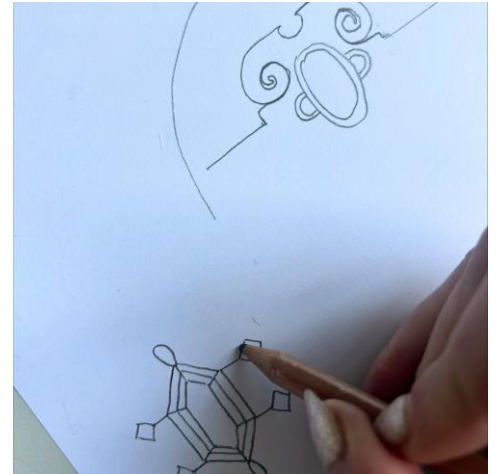
*These are quick sketches for recording and planning. Don't worry about making them perfect!

Step 2

Now you will need to transfer your sketches from Step 1 onto the various different materials and paper types you have collected for your project.

Try out different drawing implements, materials and textures to create your designs. Tracing paper is great for layering images, while pieces of thick cardboard and tissue paper can be used to create three dimensional elements.

Print out your screenshots- you could even try printing them onto different types of paper or editing them with colour tints and filters before printing!

Step 3

Once you have created your designs on your various materials, use a pair of scissors to carefully cut them out. You could cut them out in a variety of different shapes, experimenting with unexpected edges and patterns.

Step 4

Now it is time to create your very own building. Experiment with different ways of combining, layering and arranging your designs to create a new fantastical structure. You don't have to use every architectural feature you have drawn, and you are welcome to add extra details or elements to your existing designs to create your final piece.

If you decide to create a two-dimensional collage, you can glue the designs to your paper when you are happy. If creating a three-dimensional collage, you will need to carefully attach your elements using glue or Sellotape.

*Working with a partner or in a group? How about combining your architectural cut outs together to make an even bigger building?

Questions for Reflection
What parts of your building collage are based on Dora House and which parts are new inventions?

How did you decide what elements to include in the collage, and which ones to leave out?
How do you think these decisions are made when we restore old buildings?

If you worked with someone else, did they connect with a part of the building that you did not notice at first? If you worked alone, why do you think some parts of the building stood out to you more than others?

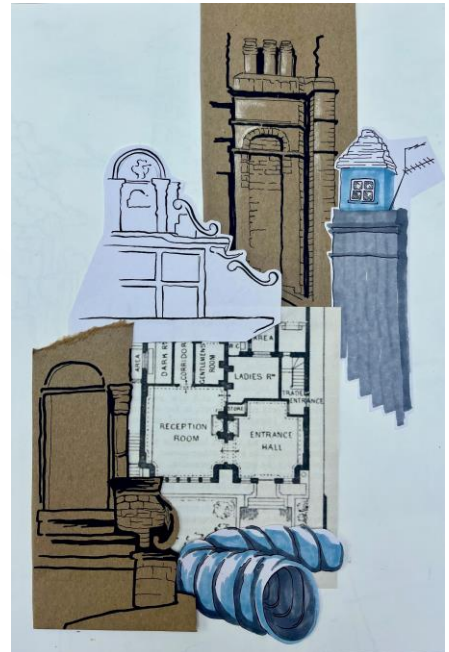How does your final work conserve the past? How does it introduce concepts for the future?

Ideas to Develop Further

If completing this activity in the classroom, students could work individually, then in pairs/ small groups, then as a whole class to build a giant collage construction including a selection of all their designs.

This resource could be developed into a longer scheme of work which also covers architectural terminology, features, styles and drawings

Further Resources

360 Virtual Tour of Dora House

Videos on the Restoration of Dora House

Saving Dora House (https://sculptors.org.uk/blog/2021/11/saving-dora-house)

All About Bricks (https://sculptors.org.uk/blog/2022/02/all-about-bricks)

All About Metal (https://sculptors.org.uk/blog/2022/03/all-about-metal)

All About Stone (https://sculptors.org.uk/blog/2022/05/all-about-stone)

All About Wood (https://sculptors.org.uk/blog/2022/09/all-about-wood)

Glossary of Architectural Terms: (https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/society/architectural-terms.php)

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Illustration of Dora House (2022)

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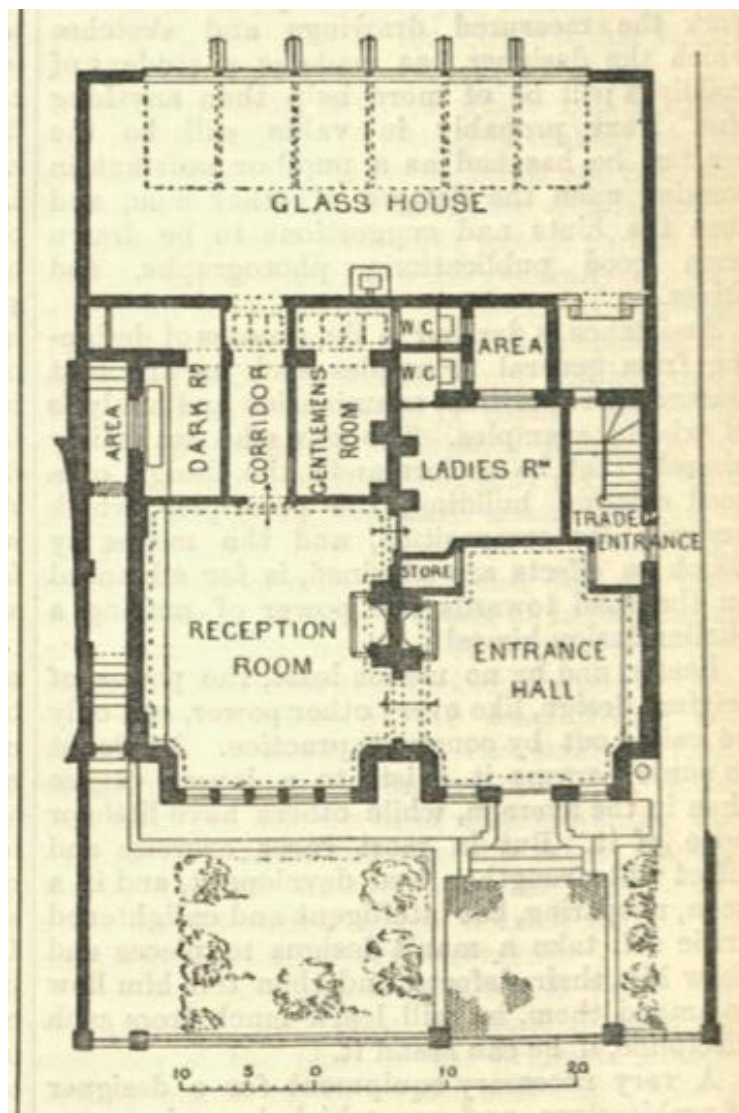020 7373 8615 | learning@sculptors.org.uk
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<u>Floorplan of Dora House from 1886 during Elliot & Fry's time in the building.</u>
Elliot & Fry were Victorian Court photographers who had their studio at Dora House and built the impressive façade that we can admire today.

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Floorplan of Dora House today (2023)- only showing areas open to public

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