

COLLECTION PATRIMOINE

NANCY
ART NOUVEAU

Nancy,

ART NOUVEAU OR THE ÉCOLE DE NANCY BACKGROUND

▲ Art Nouveau first appeared at the end of the 19th century in several European cities and ended with World War I. Unlike other art movements where painting holds a dominant place, Art Nouveau is characterised by its use in decorative arts and architecture. Also referred to as “Modernisme”, “Jugendstil”, “Liberty” and “Secession” in different cities, the movement covered various forms. However, what all these variants had in common was that they drew their inspiration from nature, modes of production (from

a single object to industrial series), and the desire for modernisation by relying on innovative techniques and materials, offering greater freedom in the shapes.

In Nancy, a transition occurred after the Annexation of Alsace and the Moselle. The population of Nancy grew from 50,000 in 1870 to 120,000 in 1914. Among the new arrivals were artists, industrialists, investors and skilled labour. The city transformed, with rampant urbanisation and structures. This effervescent

background was where an unprecedented artistic centre emerged.

In 1901, Émile Gallé gave a status to the movement by creating the *Alliance Provinciale des Industries d'Art* and named it the École de Nancy. Several artists were part of it: Gallé, as well as Louis Majorelle, Antonin Daum, Victor Prouvé, Jacques Gruber, Eugène Vallin, and many others too. They worked their talents on the most varied of materials to transform day-to-day settings into works of art. Shops, banks,

buildings or private villas, as well as works of art and furniture in the city museums, all bear witness even today to this rich and free artistic period. This proliferation contributed to making Nancy a capital of Art Nouveau in Europe.

In the middle of the 19th century, after 200 years of isolation, Japan opened its borders to the outside world. The discovery of new aesthetics triggered a veritable culture shock. Fascinated Western artists took inspiration from them to

1871

ANNEXATION OF ALSACE-MOSELLE, ARRIVAL OF THE OPTANTS IN NANCY

1894

FIRST EXHIBITION OF LORRAINE DECORATIVE ARTS AT THE POIREL GALLERY

1900

PARIS WORLD'S FAIR

1901

CREATION OF THE ASSOCIATION “ÉCOLE DE NANCY, ALLIANCE PROVINCIALE DES INDUSTRIES D'ART”



Camille Martin, *Le Soir (Le Paon)*, 1896 © Ville de Nancy/P. Buren

make their own creations. Sent on a mission to Europe by the Ministry of Agriculture, painter and botanist Hokkai Takashima visited Nancy between 1885 and 1888. During these years, he forged close bonds of friendship with the artistic community of Nancy, which, through his work, opened itself to the influence of the Far East.

1904

DEATH OF
ÉMILE GALLÉ

1909

INTERNATIONAL FAIR
OF THE EAST OF FRANCE

1914

WORLD WAR I

1999

EVENT DEDICATED
TO THE ÉCOLE
DE NANCY YEAR

THE ÉCOLE DE NANCY AND HORTICULTURE



Émile Gallé, Coupe Rose de France, 1901 © MEN/P. Caron

▲ While nature is one of the most important sources of inspiration of Art Nouveau, this is even truer in the case of the École de Nancy. At the end of the 19th century, several horticulturists such as Félix Crousse and Victor Lemoine settled in Nancy, creating new plant species through hybridisation, such as peonies, hydrangeas, clematis, lilacs, etc.

Greenhouses and nurseries sprang up all over the city, sometimes even right alongside factories. That of Victor Lemoine is located close to the Gallé factory, which already had large lawns in front of the workshops, aiding the workers in creating their works.

In 1877, the Société Centrale d'Horticulture de Nancy (SCHN) was

founded. Artists of the École de Nancy were members of it. Emile Gallé was the secretary. The society became known across Europe and beyond for its Nancy-based research into horticulture.

The links between artists and horticulturists were formalised by works adorned by these new plants and sometimes dedicated to their breeder. For example, the *Coupe Rose de France* or *Coupe Simon* was created by Émile Gallé and offered to Léon Simon, president of the SCHN, by the members of the society. There was also the *Coupe Primavera*, dedicated to Victor Lemoine, who was the breeder of a primrose species that he named *Mrs Émile Gallé*.



Émile Gallé, Vase Passiflore © MEN/P. Caron

THE REVIVAL OF DECORATIVE ARTS AND FABRIC OF LIFE ARTS



Émile Gallé, *Lit Aube et Crépuscule* ©MEN/ C. Philippot

▲ Decorative arts experienced a significant revival at the end of the 19th century. This interest can be explained by a long tradition and plenty of know-how in Lorraine, in the field of glass and earthenware as well as wood. The illustrations of the creations show a strong technical influence, along with original decors

and shapes, as showcased by the glass creations of Daum, Gruber, Gallé, and the furniture of Vallin or Majorelle. Other less common domains such as leather and textile were also tackled with this same desire to modernise, resulting in the decorative art (the precursors of design) in Nancy being far more

renowned than its architecture. Art Nouveau, applied to all objects, both decorative and functional (staircases, chimneys, doors, etc.), radically transforming the living environment. A veritable collaboration was born between architects and artists-designers to create a unity between architecture and interior design. Painters, cabinetmakers, ceramists, master glassmakers, blacksmiths and designers made common cause

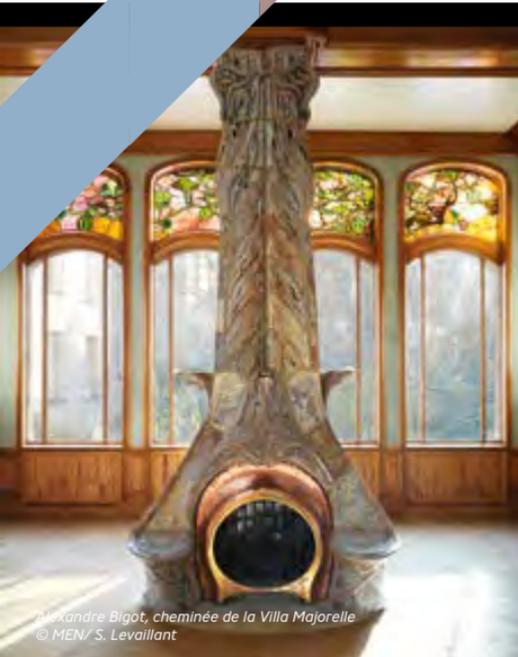
to make the living environment as harmonious as possible and participated in embellishing the everyday decor.

The collections of the Musée de l'École de Nancy testify to this diversity of shapes and showcase objects produced in series alongside unique pieces, demonstrating the desire to produce an "art for all". The Daum collection of the Musée des Beaux-Arts also illustrates the vitality of the glass production at Nancy.



Eugène Vallin, *bureau Kronberg* © MEN/P. Caron

VILLA MAJORELLE



Alexandre Bigot, cheminée de la Villa Majorelle
© MEN/ S. Levaillant

▲ In 1898, Louis Majorelle tasked Henri Sauvage, barely 26 years old at the time, to make his plans for a personal mansion a reality at Nancy and entrusted Lucien Weissenburger with supervising the project. Villa Majorelle - or Villa Jika, after the initials of Louis Majorelle's wife, Jeanne Kretz - was built in 1901-1902.

Villa Majorelle occupies a special

place in the history of Nancy architecture. The first fully 'Art Nouveau' house at Nancy, it was designed as a whole with each component of its structure and decor being designed to be closely interdependent with the rest of the edifice. The fluidity of shapes and decorative patterns and the continuous play of coordination between outdoors and indoors have

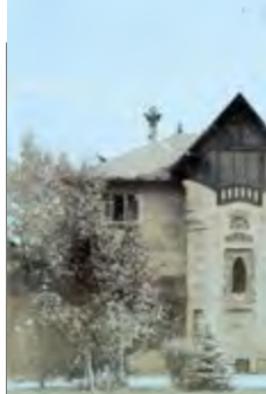
made Villa Majorelle a prime example of the concept of unity of art espoused by numerous artists of the time.

The ensemble plays with repeated contrasts: the austere nudity of Euville stone opposite the polychromy of bricks, sandstone, woodwork and ironwork; the asserted verticality of the stairwell tower facing the basket-handle arch of the terrace; the medieval inspiration of the flying buttress (now gone) facing the Japanese-inspired carpentry of a balcony, etc.

Indoors, the decoration was entrusted to several artists, with Louis Majorelle playing a major role. Ceramist Alexandre Bigot and painter Francis Jourdain, respectively created the indoor and outdoor flamed sandstone and the

decorative paintings in the dining room. The stained glass of the main rooms is the work of master glassmaker Jacques Gruber (stairwell, dining room and living room, the Majorelle bedroom). The furniture designed by Louis Majorelle was made by his workshops. The furniture of the dining room and living room is shown in the Majorelle sales catalogues, and except for that of the bedroom, is a unique set with light hues inlaid with mother-of-pearl and brass. The decor of the entrance hall - front door, stencils, coat rack - all in the theme of the lunaria annua, bear witness to the savoir-faire of Louis Majorelle and his collaborators.

Granted to the State after Louis Majorelle disappeared in 1926, the villa was classified as a historical monument in 1996 and became the property of the City



Henri Sauvage, Villa Majorelle in Nancy, France, September 1911 © MEN



Album de photographies de Jacques

of Nancy in 2003. A major restoration project launched in 2015 offers the public the change to rediscover the minute details of the original nature of this home, designed to be one comprehensive work of art, which has made it worthy to now bear the national label of “Maison des Illustres”.



Lucien Weissenberger, Aquarium du parc Corbin
© Ville de Nancy



Vue de l'espace Daum, musée des Beaux-Arts de Nancy
© MEN/ S.Levallant

THE ART NOUVEAU NETWORK

Created in 1999, the Art Nouveau network seeks to study, protect and promote the heritage of Art Nouveau in Europe. Made up of different European partners including the City of Nancy, the Network has developed several initiatives targeting the general public, from experts to the youth.

artnouveau-net.eu

▲ PRACTICAL INFO ◊



VISITS

- Guided thematic tours are offered by Destination Nancy – Tourism office.
nancytourisme.fr
03.83.35.80.10
- Benefit from the European Heritage Days to visit the main monuments.

NANCY-MUSEUMS

Information and bookings: tours, workshops, etc.

Public museums department of Nancy

03 83 85 30 01
resa.nancymusees@mairie-nancy.fr

Musée des Beaux-Arts

3 place Stanislas
Wednesday to Monday | 10 am to 6 pm
musee-des-beaux-arts.nancy.fr

Musée de l'École de Nancy

36-38 rue du Sergent-Blandan
Wednesday to Sunday | 10 am to 6 pm
musee-ecole-de-nancy.nancy.fr

Villa Majorelle

1 rue Louis-Majorelle
Wednesday to Sunday | 9 am to 12 noon
for groups
2 pm to 6 pm for individuals
musee-ecole-de-nancy.nancy.fr

VIRTUAL DISCOVERIES

Discover the park of the Musée de l'École de Nancy at street-viewing.fr/nancy and take the opportunity to visit other jewels of Nancy heritage at Google Street View (Hôtel de Ville, Opera, Governmental Palace, Bon-secours church, Stanislas library, Saint-Epvre basilica, Salle Poirel)

MAJOR EVENTS

do not miss:

- Art Nouveau day (June)
- Place Stanislas rendezvous (mid-June – mid-September)
- Le Livre sur la place (early-September)
- Éphémère Garden (October)
- Feast of Saint Nicholas (December)

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Villa Majorelle

villaMajorelleNancy

École de Nancy

@menancy54

Musée des Beaux-arts

@mbaNancy

@beauxarts_nancy



Placettes Stanislas, de la Carrée et d'Alliance à Nancy
- inscrites sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en 1983



Nancy,