

Art Deco

My dearest watercolourists,

I hope you are well. Happy New Year and wishing you all the best for this New Year. Let's just take it one step at a time and cultivate positivity and optimism wherever we can as much as well can! Also, a little escapism never hurts, therefore, let's jump back in history about 100 years and look at some art!

Last time we talked about Art Nouveau with its curved spiralled lines, its exuberant designs, and its fascination for nature. We looked at where this movement stemmed from and how it manifested across various practices, incorporating what some called crafts as well as the fine arts. The art movement was prevalent in the Victorian era, the end of the nineteenth century, beginning of the twentieth and it spread across the world, manifesting slightly different in various European countries, in accordance with local folk and traditions.

Some of you asked about Art Deco and whether art deco and art nouveau are names for the same movement. The short answer is not. The two movements are representative for different decades, with Art Nouveau (1890s-1910s) chronologically predating Art Deco(1910s-1920s). There is no art movement that ever appears in a perfect sterile environment, therefore there will always be similarities or aspects borrowed from one time period to the other. Largely, the visual difference between the two movements is the line aspect. Art nouveau favours curved lines while art deco prefers geometric straight lines with clear cut edges.



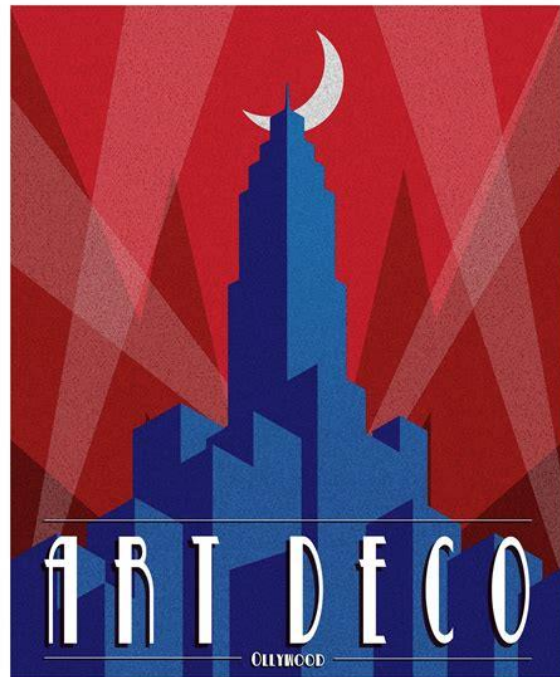
Art Nouveau Chair



Art Deco Chair



Art Nouveau Poster by A.Mucha



Art Deco Poster by Ollywood

One similarity between the two movements is their manifestation across different practices such as the visual arts, architecture, fashion, textiles, jewellery and design.

While Art Nouveau has been traced back to William Morris's Arts and Crafts movement, Art Deco is considered to stem from pre-World War I France, inspired by Cubism and Fauvism. The name of the movement, Art Deco comes from the French 'Arts Décoratifs'. Art Deco intertwined modern and simpler styles with rich materials, emphasising luxury and technological progress.



Art Nouveau Jewellery



Art Deco Jewellery



Art Nouveau Architecture – Paris building in the 15th arrondissement near Félix Faure station

The Chrysler Building and other skyscrapers of New York City built during the 1920s and 1930s are monuments of the Art Deco style.



Art Deco Architecture: Chrysler Building



Art Deco Architecture: Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, by Auguste Perret, 15 avenue Montaigne, Paris, France (1910–13). Reinforced concrete gave architects the ability to create new forms and bigger spaces.

Least but not last, in the visual arts, art nouveau :



Gustav Klimt, Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I, 1907, Oil, silver and gold on canvas 138 cm × 138 cm (54 in × 54 in)

Art Deco:



Reginald Marsh, Workers sorting the mail, a mural in the U.S. Customs House, 1936, New York City

In the years after the war, during the Great Depression, Art Deco changed, becoming more subdued, and employing cheaper more accessible materials, chrome plating, stainless steel, and plastic. In design and architecture smooth, polished surfaces and clean lines were used. Art Deco slowly went out of fashion at the beginning of World War II, which saw the rise of strictly functional styles and designs.

Well, my dearest watercolourists, what do you think? Which style do you prefer: Art Nouveau or Art Deco?

Also, what do you think may happen to the arts after this corona virus experience? Do you think it will change people's taste in arts and design? Has it already done so? Let me now hear your thoughts.

Kindest,

Ioana