

# ART DECO

Name comes from 1925 "Exposition Internationale des-Arts Decorative et Industriels Moderne" in Paris. Understandably shortened, simply to ART DECO

Origins in the more forward-thinking, 'new' attitudes to design won by Arts Nouveau designers, but also, importantly growing out of the aftermath of the Great War 1914-1918

World War I claimed the lives of some 10 million men, women and children. Alarming, its devastating effects were felt well after peace was declared in 1918 – Why?

An estimated further 11 million people died of 'Spanish Flu' in poor conditions across Europe immediately after the war ended.



In this environment, the heavy, opulent ornamentation and rich materials of the Nouveau design period looked somewhat gaudy and vulgar – disrespectful even – Why?

A generation were understandably keen to look forward now and embrace a brighter future. War had advanced technologies that could now be harnessed for positive peace time means – particularly travel. Air and sea travel became more efficient and thus, a bit cheaper and widely available to middle as well as upper classes.

**Designers became caught up in this spirit of optimism and set about creating a brighter, cleaner, simpler future.**

1919 – Russian 'Ballet Russe' led by Sergei Diaghilev, visits Paris bringing a display of colour and movement so bold it caught the creative capital's imagination.

Suddenly, design had the bold inspiration it had been seeking in Diaghilev's costumes and stage sets

