

Art Nouveau

1880 – 1920

The title is from Paris shop of same name run by German émigré Samuel Bing
French term meaning “New Art”, referring to the popular, modern style of late 19th Century
With the massive changes that industrialisation had brought to the Western world, the style and design of everyday objects had not kept up.
The new age had kept recycling old, traditional styles – Gothic (Arts and Crafts), Classical, Renaissance, Louis XV etc,

Art Nouveau earned its name by not having its roots in European history as so many other before it had.

First emerging in England, it spread rapidly through Europe in the 1890's, each major city lending its own interpretation : Paris; Nancy; Munich; Berlin; Brussels; Barcelona; Glasgow; Vienna; New York and Chicago soon picked up on this, making Art Nouveau a truly international movement.

Situated on the Rue de Provence in Paris, opened in December 1895, the Maison de l'Art Nouveau, with windows by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Louis Comfort Tiffany.



Line

is the very essence of this style. *A sinuous, extended whiplash curve of a line* can be found in every example, every discipline in the Nouveau style. The straight-line and the right angle were rejected in favour of a natural, organic flow which grew and evolved across everything creating rich, decorative patterns as it went. Ideas of mass, height or solidity were lost, giving everything a feeling of light, airy grace and freedom.

Natural, Organic Form was the basis that Art Nouveau grew from :

Flowers and plants

Insects and Birds (esp. Dragonflies and Peacocks)

Animals of grace (snakes / greyhounds)

The female body and hair

ALL CURVING IN FORM

As

The style came to prominence at the *International Exhibition in Paris in 1900* and Turin, 1902. By 1905 its importance as a new movement began to wane, but the style remained dominant and influential well into the 1920's.

The letter "B" from an Art Nouveau Alphabet.