Making It Modern
European Ceramics from the Martin Eidelberg Collection

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THE MET

Director's Note

It is often said that The Met is a collection of collections, and this *Bulletin* and exhibition celebrate one such collection that was a generous gift to the Museum in the years 2022–24. Martin Eidelberg is an extraordinary collector and a prolific scholar whose knowledge of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century continental European ceramics has informed his careful acquisitions over the course of a distinguished academic career. The selection of truly outstanding objects is not comprehensive, but rather a personal expression of individual, well-informed taste with a particular appreciation for nature as a primary source of inspiration in European ceramics of this period. This is the subject of Professor Eidelberg's essay, which is posed in dialogue with an essay by the exhibition's curators on the nascent expressions of modernism in the ceramic art of this time.

The exhibition was organized by guest curator Jeffrey Munger, with Sarah E. Lawrence, Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Curator in Charge of the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts. Munger was formerly the Curator of Ceramics in the Department from 2000 to 2017. Together Munger and Lawrence have selected fifty-two works from Eidelberg's gift of European art pottery that date from 1886 to 1910, produced by artists from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia.

This project brings into focus a moment at which ceramics were central to the exploration of what modernism could be across Europe and America and across the fine and decorative arts. Rejecting the decorative formulas of historical precedent, ceramic artists drew on two different, overlapping influences, one found in nature and the other in Asian — specifically Japanese — ceramics. The inclination to look backward as a means of moving forward is fundamental to innovation. No less compelling is the desire to embrace the essential qualities of human creativity across cultures. These interwoven aspirations to manifest a shared global language of modernism, one that links the past to a vibrant future, have continuing resonance today.

We deeply appreciate this exceptional gift from Martin Eidelberg, whose collection will engage in ongoing conversations with other artworks in our galleries. The program of rotating exhibitions featured in the Wrightsman Exhibition Gallery is made possible by Jayne Wrightsman's generous endowment in support of collection-based displays of European sculpture and decorative arts. The quarterly *Bulletin* program is made possible, in part, by the Lila Acheson Wallace Fund for The Metropolitan Museum of Art, established by the cofounder of *Reader's Digest*.

Max Hollein
Marina Kellen French Director and CEO
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Making It Modern

Sarah E. Lawrence and Jeffrey Munger

Implicit in the title *Making It Modern* is the recognition that there are multiple ways of doing so. This *Bulletin* and the accompanying exhibition explore the aesthetic, conceptual, and technical experiments of late nineteenth-century and twentieth-century European ceramic artists who intentionally sought distinctive modes of making their art modern.

The term "modern" derives from the Latin *modernus*, meaning the contemporary present: "just now." Italian Renaissance authors defined the art of their present as an improvement on the art of the medieval period and in emulation of the art of antiquity.[1] In contrast, in the late nineteenth century there was an aspiration across Europe to make art relevant to modern life. Identifying as modern was no longer determined simply by the fact of existing in the present, in the "just now." Rather, there was a self-conscious participation in establishing what was modern through creative practice.

Earlier in the nineteenth century, historical styles proliferated, with revivals of Classical, Gothic, Renaissance, and Rococo decorative motifs producing an eclectic historicism. One salient example is a pair of Neo-Gothic vases produced by the Sèvres manufactory in the mid-nineteenth century (fig. 1).

These densely ornamented vases combine a classical shape and elaborate Gothic tracery framing figure groups with a surface treatment reminiscent of Renaissance Limoges enamel. By the end of the century, these historical styles fell strongly out of favor, and the decorative arts led the pursuit of a new means of expression. Ceramic artists in particular gave free rein to their creativity, conceiving of their works not "merely" as functional or decorative, but as artistic sculptural objects. This led to a multifaceted exploration of novel form, linked to experimentation in material, shape, technique, and glaze.

Many of these ceramics, produced in Europe from approximately 1890 to 1910, are loosely grouped under the stylistic heading of Art Nouveau, a reference to a new mode of decoration that affected all the arts of this period. Art Nouveau is commonly described as being rooted in nature and distinguished by sinuous, curvilinear designs that place a premium on elegance of line, but there were many interpretations of Art Nouveau and many schools within its designation. The movement was as much a shift in attitude as it was a coherence of stylistic elements, with an embrace of new forms and modes of decoration and a rejection of previous historical styles as a common thread. Indeed, the very name "Art Nouveau," meaning "New Art," speaks to the desire to find innovative and modern means of artistic expression. The recognition that modernity was not going to evolve in a single direction or be grounded within a particular national tradition proved to be a stimulus to a broad range of technical and aesthetic experimentation.

Another formative element of this new style was the inspiration taken from Asian ceramics, most notably Japanese stoneware. The European fascination with the arts of Asia was itself nothing new, but this interest had a new focus: the artisanal experimentation that prioritized the sculptural form of the vessel, enhanced by the happenstance application of glazes. Vessels such as this tea caddy from the Edo period epitomized an aesthetic of imperfection that was a revelation to European audiences at the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1889 (fig. 2).

The rich innovation in the ceramics of this time happened in small independent potteries as well as studio workshops within established manufactories such as Sèvres in France and Royal Copenhagen in Denmark. Some pieces were the work of individual ceramists and others

1. Alexandre Evariste Fragonard (1780–1850; designer), Jacob Meyer-Heine (1805–1879; decorator); Sèvres factory, France. Pair of vases, manufactured 1832, decorated 1844. Hard-paste porcelain; gilt bronze, H. 14 5/16 in. (36.4 cm). Wrightsman Fund, 1992 (1992.23.1, .2)

2. Tea jar, 18th century. Japan. Stoneware (Satsuma ware), H. 4 ⅛ in. (10.5 cm). Edward C. Moore Collection, Bequest of Edward C. Moore, 1891 (91.1.146)

3. Edward Colonna (1862–1948; designer); Gérard, Dufraisseix, and Abbot factory, France. Vase, ca. 1902. Porcelain, H. 11 $^{11}/_{16}$ in. (29.7 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2024 (2024.450.2); Georges de Feure (1868–1943; designer); Gérard, Dufraisseix, and Abbot factory, France. Covered bowl, ca. 1901. Porcelain, H. 5 ½ in. (14 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2024 (2024.450.3a, b); Edward Colonna (1862–1948; designer); Gérard, Dufraisseix, and Abbot factory, France. Vase, 1901–2. Porcelain, H. 12 $^{1}/_{16}$ in. (30.6 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2024 (2024.450.1)

collaborations between the potter who formed the body of the vessel and the artist who created, applied, and fired the glazes. What follows are a series of profiles of important people, workshops, and artworks that together tell the story of the formation of early modernism in the medium of ceramics.

The term Art Nouveau derives from the name of the gallery L'Art Nouveau, which multitalented entrepreneur Siegfried Bing opened in Paris in 1895. There, Bing displayed decorative arts, furniture, and complete interior environments designed and crafted by artists from across Europe. He was emphatic that, despite the name of the gallery, his selection of works was not to be understood as positing a distinct style, writing, "No definitive style was prescribed. . . . It was simply the name of an establishment opened as a meeting ground for all ardent young spirits anxious to manifest the modernness of their tendencies."[2] His early installations were criticized for this lack of formal or stylistic coherence and disregard for distinctive French national culture. Instead, he espoused an appreciation for the diverse innovative output of individual artisans, whether Belgian, Dutch, French, German, or Scandinavian. Bing was also a champion of Japanese works of art, and his active promotion of this material significantly furthered the popularity of Japonisme, the term given to the fashion for all things Japanese that prevailed at the end of the nineteenth century.

One of Bing's ambitions was to encourage excellence in the decorative arts, and this desire was likely the impetus for commissioning Edward Colonna and Georges de Feure, highly talented designers working in a variety of media, to produce designs for porcelain that would be executed by the Limoges firm of Gérard, Dufraisseix, and Abbot (GDA) and sold in the gallery (fig. 3). The resulting designs have a general stylistic similarity, indicating an in-house style presumably determined by Bing. They employ characteristic Art Nouveau motifs derived from the natural world that are depicted in an elegant, stylized manner. Linear motifs, both symmetrical and asymmetrical, are integrated with the form of the object with particular skill, and there is a harmonious balance between decorated and undecorated surfaces, with the cool white Limoges porcelain given prominence. The palette is limited and usually features dark pink and a range of greens. These porcelains were produced within a short period of time, starting in 1901 when the relationship with GDA began and concluding in 1904 with the closure of Bing's gallery.

In the late nineteenth century, stoneware rather than porcelain increasingly became the medium of choice for French art potters exploring new modes of expression and types of decoration. The 1878 Exposition Universelle in Paris included numerous examples of Japanese stoneware. Their distinctive aesthetic celebrated both the texture of the stoneware body — as opposed to the uniform smoothness of porcelain — and the irregularities of glaze color and thickness. The dense stoneware body could be fired at much higher temperatures than the less durable and porous earthenware, and these firing temperatures permitted the use of a much wider range of glazes.

4. Edmond Lachenal (1855–1948; maker). Vase, ca. 1900. Stoneware, H. 18 7/16 in. (46.8 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.21); Edmond Lachenal (1855–1948; maker), Émile Decoeur (1876–1953; maker). Vase with vines, ca. 1901–3. Stoneware, H. 10 ¾ in. (27.3 cm). Purchase, The Charles E. Sampson Memorial Fund, 2001 (2001.92); Émile Decoeur (1876–1953; maker), Edmond Lachenal (1855–1948; maker). Vase, ca. 1901–3. Stoneware, H. 15 5/16 in. (38.9 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.20)

5. Pierre-Adrien Dalpayrat (1844–1910; maker). Gourd-shaped bottle, ca. 1900. Stoneware; wood stopper, H. 7 1/16 in. (17.9 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.4a, b)

This enormous variety of glaze effects — sometimes controlled but often random, determined by the vagaries of kiln firings — was a defining factor in creating a new aesthetic. European ceramics produced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were traditionally decorated with representational scenes surrounded by some sort of framing device, all set against a uniformly colored background. Secondary decoration might include intricate patterns executed in gold. Other modes of decoration included revivals of past historical styles that were often reinterpreted in an exaggerated ornamental manner. With the increasing use of stoneware, the glazes themselves became the primary decorative element. Japanese stoneware was also decorated with matte glazes that enhanced the visibility of the mottled glaze effects and the slight textural variations in both the glaze and the ceramic body itself, in contrast to the clear, shiny, reflective glazes commonly applied by European potters prior to this time.

French ceramist Edmond Lachenal began as an apprentice to influential artist-potter Theodore Deck, but after nine years he left and began to develop his individual style in the stoneware medium. Lachenal became one of numerous potters who focused both on developing new glazes and on creating different effects with these glazes. In addition to an appreciation of deeply saturated glaze colors, he had a preference for matte glazes, but whereas most potters achieved this type of glaze through the composition of the glaze or the firing process, Lachenal used hydrofluoric acid.[3] The use of acid allowed Lachenal to achieve variations in the texture of his glazes and to create velvety surfaces (*email velouté*), a stylistic effect that won him widespread acclaim.

Many of Lachenal's best works were produced in collaboration with his most talented and important apprentice, Émile Decoeur, who entered Lachenal's studio at age fourteen. It is likely that Decoeur played an increasingly significant role during his apprenticeship, not only providing designs but also expanding the types of glazes that Lachenal employed.[4] However, it was only after 1900, around a decade later, that Decoeur was allowed to add his own mark to works produced in the studio. The ceramics bearing this mark are often relatively simple in form, allowing the glazes to serve as the primary decoration. Decoeur's mark appears on two of the three vases illustrated in figure 4, of which the sculptural elements are restricted to minimal handles and/or simple organically inspired motifs decorating the bases and the openings. The variations and color of the glazes reflect the high value placed by artist-potters on irregularities of color and texture and strong, saturated colors.

Many French ceramists were particularly drawn to a style of glazing known as *flammé* or *flambé*, which evoked the flames of a fire. *Flammé* glazes were achieved by deliberately limiting the amount of oxygen inside the kiln, a technique known as reduction firing. This reduction or elimination of oxygen during the firing caused the metallic oxides in the different colors to revert to their metallic state, which produced more intense glaze colors. A *flammé* glaze can be seen on Pierre-Adrien Dalpayrat's gourd-shaped bottle from around 1900 (fig. 5). One of the master

6. Hector Guimard (1867–1942; designer); Sèvres factory, France. Vase (*Vase Cerny*), ca. 1901. Stoneware, H. 10 13/16 in. (27.5 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2024 (2024.450.10); Atelier de Glatigny, France. Ribbed vase, ca. 1898. Porcelain, H. 7 5/16 in. (18.6 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.16); Sèvres factory, France. Bottle-shaped vase, 1907. Porcelain, H. 11 in. (27.9 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2024 (2024.450.9)

glazers working in France around the turn of the century, Dalpayrat started his career in faience (tin-glazed earthenware) factories. He established his own studio in 1889 and began working largely in stoneware, allowing him to explore the wide range of glaze effects that the high-temperature ceramic body permitted.

On this bottle, the copper oxides of the glaze have been transformed by reduction firing to produce the deep greens and reds that are set off against an off-white ground, providing the decoration for the striking work. The strong red-colored glaze, known in France as *sang de boeuf* (oxblood), was one of the most esteemed of all high-fire glazes, and technically one of the most difficult to achieve. It was inspired by the deep red glazes on Chinese ceramics that were developed during the Ming dynasty in the early fifteenth century and revived during the Qing dynasty in the early eighteenth. Dalpayrat was among the small handful of French potters who mastered *sang de boeuf* glazes at the end of the nineteenth century; the particular red that he achieved was sufficiently distinctive and esteemed as to become known as *rouge Dalpayrat*. He employed his red glaze both as the dominant color and in combination with others, as seen in the gourd-shaped bottle.

The three vases in figure 6 also illustrate the use of relatively simple forms to serve as vehicles for striking glaze effects achieved in the firing process. The central vase bears the mark of the French atelier Glatigny, a ceramics workshop established in 1897 that produced work by a number of potters who chose to remain anonymous in order for the work of art to be the focus rather than the individual maker. Before ceasing operation in 1902, the atelier produced a range of works that prioritized glaze experimentation, much of it in porcelain,

although some of the potters also worked in stoneware. The vase pictured here is made of the former, and the organically inspired design allowed for the pooling of the glaze in the recessed areas.

The two other vases were produced at the Sèvres factory, a formerly French royal enterprise established in the mid-eighteenth century that remains in operation to this day. Both Sèvres vases are decorated with crystalline glazes, the result of adding elements such as titanium dioxide to the glaze, which produced crystals as they cooled. This technique is evident on the darker leaf-shaped panels on the porcelain vase on the right and is especially apparent with the larger crystals on the stoneware vase on the left, demonstrating that crystalline glazes could be achieved in both porcelain and stoneware. The stoneware vase is the design of celebrated Art Nouveau architect and designer Hector Guimard. Commissioned by the Sèvres factory for the 1900 Exposition Universelle, this model was known as the *Vase Cerny*. Its design is more restrained than many of Guimard's works, allowing the glaze to be the dominant feature, although Guimard's characteristic Art

7. Pierre Roche (1855–1922; designer), Alexandre Bigot (1862–1927; maker). Plaque with salamander, ca. 1895–97. Stoneware, diam. 9 ⅛ in. (23.2 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.2)

8. Auguste Delaherche (1857–1940; maker). Plaque with irises, 1894–1904. Stoneware, diam. 12 ⅜ in. (31.4 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.9); Perhaps Henri Laurent-Desrousseaux (1862–1906), working under the name Robalbhen. Vase with leaves and seed pods, ca. 1896–1900. Earthenware, H. 5 11⁄16 in. (14.5 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2024 (2024.450.6)

Nouveau curvilinear motifs are found in the curling tendril-like forms that animate the top.

Glazing was also used to enhance the visual impact of representational motifs when they were employed. The salamander on this small circular plaque is depicted crawling out of a shallow pool suggested by the thick pooling of the striking deep blue glaze, which despite the realistic subject matter remains the visual focus (fig. 7). The absence of the blue glaze on the back and arms of the salamander indicates that it is emerging from the water, lending a sense of both naturalism and dynamism to the composition. The plaque is the work of Pierre Roche and Alexandre Bigot, with Roche (whose real name was Pierre Henry Fernand Massignon[5]) creating the original model and Bigot producing and glazing the various examples. It was not uncommon for potters to collaborate with this same division of labor at this time, though it is not always clear what role was played by which, an indication of the range of skills mastered by these artists.

French artist-potters of the time also emphasized texture and textural contrasts in their glazes. Both the circular plaque and the small vase illustrated in figure 8 employ variations of smooth and rough glaze surfaces to distinguish the primary decoration, the floral motifs, which are executed with a textured glaze to emphasize their visual importance. The plaque is by Auguste Delaherche, who, like Dalpayrat, was renowned as a master of glazing. Delaherche constantly experimented with different styles of decoration, but the common denominator was his desire to expand the expressive

9. Alfred Finot (1876–1947; designer); Mougin Frères, France. *La Source (The Source)*, ca. 1900–1904. Stoneware, H. 7½ in. (19 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.24); François-Rupert Carabin (1862–1932; designer). Covered jar, ca. 1894–96. Stoneware, H. 5 5⁄16 in. (13.5 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.3a, b); Jean Coulon (1853–1923; designer), Pierre-Adrien Dalpayrat (1844–1910; maker). *La Nuit (The Night)*, ca. 1894. Stoneware, H. 10 13⁄16 in. (27.5 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.5)

possibilities of glaze techniques. The small vase is inscribed "Robalbhen Paris" on the underside, although the identity of the ceramist remains unknown. The name has been interpreted as a pseudonym of the potter Henri Laurent-Desrousseaux, but it has also been suggested that Robalbhen is a fictitious name used by a small group of anonymous potters, of which Laurent-Desrousseaux was one.[6] The works produced under the name Robalbhen are distinguished by their originality and variety, and this vase employs unique contrasting glaze textures and an openwork design at the rim.

While many of the ceramics produced in France during this period relied solely on form and decorative glazes to distinguish themselves, a small but distinct category incorporated the female form in low relief (fig. 9). The sculptural depiction of females, usually naked, was inspired in part by the Symbolist Movement, but the thinly veiled erotic nature of the depictions clearly enhanced the appreciation of this mode of decoration. The green-glazed lidded stoneware jar in the center was designed by sculptor François-Rupert Carabin. On it, a naked woman appears to be caressing a large gourd-like form, her pose suggesting both physical intimacy and tenderness.

The small vase on the left depicts a crouching naked female who cups her hands to catch the water that flows above her. This model of vase, designed by Alfred Finot, was known as both *La Source (The Source)* and *Le Soif (The Thirst)*, and evidently enjoyed considerable popularity based on the number of surviving examples. Both Carabin and Finot were sculptors and designers who collaborated with various potters to execute their designs. Finot worked frequently with the firm of Mougin Frères, whose mark appears with his own on the base of the pot.

On the pitcher to the right, the three females depicted in low relief appear to be sleeping, and the inclusion of a nocturnal owl reinforces this theme. The model is known as *La Nuit (The Night)*, and it reflects one of the best-known collaborations between a sculptor and an artist-potter. Dalpayrat began working with sculptor Jean Coulon, the pitcher's designer, after the death of his earlier collaborator Alphonse Voisin-Delacroix in 1893. The streaky, highly mottled glaze is typical of Dalpayrat's work, but the figures have

been simply glazed in off-white in order to enhance their prominence.

One of the major shifts that occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century in France was a new appreciation of the role of the potter, who was increasingly valued as an artist working independently of large commercial operations and involved in most if not all aspects of ceramic production. While numerous potters collaborated with one another, the majority worked either on their own or with a small number of assistants in their studio. There was a new reverence for the hand of the artist and for the individual character of each work, even if it was only a different decorative approach to the same model. While most potters aspired to produce unique works of art, it was financially preferable to make numerous examples of a certain model. An artist-potter could nevertheless impart a distinctive character to each through different styles of glazing and a varied palette.

10. Studio of Taxile Doat (1851–1938; maker). Decorative plate, 1905. Porcelain, diam. 9 3/16 in. (23.3 cm). Gift of Robert L. Isaacson, 1988 (1988.121); Taxile Doat (1851–1938; maker). Vase with masks, ca. 1901. Porcelain, H. 6 3/8 in. (16.2 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.13); Taxile Doat (1851–1938; maker). Vase, ca. 1901. Porcelain, H. 9 7/16 in. (24 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.11)

Ironically, one of the most idiosyncratic artist-potters in France at this time, Taxile Doat, spent most of his career at the Sèvres factory, the most storied and hierarchical ceramic institution in the country. His area of expertise was a decorative technique known as pâte-sur-pâte, which involved using white slip (semiliquid clay) to create low-relief designs. The process required building up layers of slip to achieve the necessary height, with meticulous application of each layer only after the previous had dried. Motifs made with pâte-sur-pâte usually reflected a strong classical influence, but Doat frequently applied the technique to forms that were either highly organic in nature or decorated in a very different manner, a combination that resulted in a truly individual style that was modern despite its reference to the past. The plate on the left of figure 10 reflects Doat's mastery of the technique to depict a female head in profile in a highly classicizing style, while the encircling band of pearls punctuated by pink hearts and the heavily mottled glaze reflect an artistic sensibility far removed from classical norms.

In 1892, after fifteen years at Sèvres, Doat was provided with his own kiln, presumably in recognition of his desire to not only work in a less conventional style but also be involved in all stages of production. It has been suggested that his visit to the Exposition Universelle of 1900 inspired his production of the gourd-like vases for which he is now renowned and his experimentation with drip glazes, both of which reflect the influence of Japanese ceramics.[7] The vase in the center of figure 10 illustrates the potter's inventiveness with glazes as well as his idiosyncratic style at its most pronounced: the squat form with its short, flattened rim is decorated with three small applied

11. Georges Hoentschel (1855–1915; designer), probably Émile Grittel (1870–1953; maker). Bottle, ca. 1900. Stoneware, 17 ⅜ in. (44.1 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.18)

12. Georges Hoentschel (1855–1915; designer), probably Émile Grittel (1870–1953; maker). Basket, ca. 1900. Stoneware, H. 19 ½ in. (49.5 cm). Robert A. Ellison Jr. Collection, Purchase, Acquisitions Fund; Louis V. Bell, Harris Brisbane Dick, Fletcher, and Rogers Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; and 2011 Benefit Fund, 2013 (2013.491)

masks, each of which depicts a different contorted face from which descend green pearls.

The intention to break from historical styles is evident in many of the works designed by Georges Hoentschel, a successful Parisian decorator and designer as well as a voracious collector for whom the arts of eighteenth-century France held special allure. Hoentschel's active support of the artist-potter Jean Carriès placed Hoentschel at the forefront of the latest developments in French art pottery. Carriès's embrace of stoneware as a ceramic medium and his preoccupation with the effects of glazes influenced an entire generation of ceramists, not just in France but throughout Europe. In addition, his interest in Japanese ceramics further enhanced the popularity of these imported wares that were so influential for French potters.

Hoentschel also impacted the evolution of art pottery through his design of a prominent pavilion on behalf of the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs for the 1900 Exposition Universelle. He aimed to showcase the finest in French design, and ceramics, especially stoneware, were featured prominently on both the exterior and interior of the pavilion. The extensive use of stoneware for both architectural and decorative elements was significant, signaling the elevation of a ceramic body that until recently had been associated with far humbler works of art.[8]

Hoentschel's exact role in the execution of the ceramics that bear his mark remains unclear, but it is probable that some if not all were designed by him but produced by others. The artist-potter Émile Grittel worked closely with Hoentschel, and it is likely that these two works (figs. 11, 12) can be attributed to Grittel's hand. Hoentschel employed stoneware for the startlingly original bottle and basket, and he designed each with no intended function but to highlight the sculptural potential of the stoneware body. The subtle organic qualities of the vessels are reinforced by the mottled glaze, which varies in color and texture throughout.

While in France the vast majority of ceramics loosely termed Art Nouveau were produced by potters working either alone or in small workshops, in Scandinavia it was the large, established factories that pioneered works that aimed to reflect modern taste. In Sweden, the Rörstrand factory produced some of the most innovative and distinctive ceramics in all of Europe, and its commitment to quality made it one of the continent's most acclaimed ceramic factories in the years around 1900. In contrast to the preeminence of stoneware in France at this time, porcelain was the medium in which Rörstrand developed a new style to cater to contemporary taste. The factory was established near Stockholm in 1726 to

make faience and did not start producing porcelain until about 1880. In 1895, the artist and designer Alf Wallander was hired and, working closely with the technical director Robert Almström, charted a new course for the factory. Artists were brought in to both improve the quality of production and initiate new styles that would broaden the appeal of the factory's production and reflect a more modern sensibility.[9]

Porcelain allowed for crisp, detailed low-relief modeling of the motifs from the natural world commonly found on Rörstrand works, as seen in the two vases in figure 13. The taller vase depicts three-dimensional calla lily blooms emerging from sinuously curving stems, while the smaller vase features an emerging flower bud at the top rim and curling leaves at the base. In both, the subtle interplay between two- and three-dimensional motifs reflects the considerable skill of the factory's workers.

Both vases are decorated in the factory's characteristic muted palette, which typically featured pale greens, gray-greens, gray-blues, and a soft rose color as well as expanses of undecorated white porcelain body. It has been suggested that the cool, restrained palette used at Rörstrand and other Scandinavian factories was influenced by the quality of the light in northern Europe, an observation that may be equal parts poetic and factual; it is certainly true that this range of colors distinguishes Rörstrand's porcelains and is uncommon outside of Scandinavia. The colors were achieved through underglazes, which were applied before the work was first fired in the kiln. A clear glaze was applied afterward, and the work was fired a second time at a lower temperature. Rörstrand's reputation was greatly enhanced by the factory's submission to the 1900 Exposition Universelle as well as by Bing's decision to sell the factory's products at his Parisian gallery.

The so-called artist-designed porcelains produced at Rörstrand constituted only five percent of its total production at the turn of the twentieth century.[10] Most items were produced in a more conservative style that was more certain to meet with commercial success, reflecting one of the conflicts inherent in ceramic production at this time. The writings of William Morris and the birth of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain in the late nineteenth century inspired artists and designers throughout Europe to produce well-designed and well-made functional objects that would improve the quality of life of the average consumer, who increasingly only had access to poorly designed and mass-produced objects. The financial reality for Scandinavian factories, however, was that the use of expensive materials such as porcelain and the large-scale employment of artists in the production process kept these works out of reach of the wider public. Rörstrand attempted to address this issue by producing both unique works, many of which were signed by the primary artists, and serially produced works that were marked with the factory stamp; nevertheless, most of their products remained inaccessible to a broad market.[11]

Unlike Rörstrand, the Royal Copenhagen factory began producing porcelain soon after its founding in 1776. Among the factory's earliest products

13. Nils Emil Lundström (1865–1960; decorator); Rörstrand factory, Sweden. Vase with calla lilies, ca. 1900–1903. Porcelain, H. 13 ⅞ in. (35.2 cm). Purchase, Friends of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts Gifts, 1994 (1994.447); Karl G. E. Lindström (1865–1936; decorator); Rörstrand factory, Sweden. Vase with flowering plant, ca. 1900–1910, Porcelain, H. 10 ½ in. (26.7 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.37)

14. Royal Copenhagen, Denmark. Vase with mushrooms, ca. 1900. Porcelain, H. 8 ¼ in. (21 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.42); Royal Copenhagen, Denmark. Vase with snails, ca. 1900. Porcelain, H. 4 ½ in. (11.5 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.43); Royal Copenhagen, Denmark. Vase with snakes, ca. 1900–1910. Porcelain, H. 5 13⁄16 in. (14.8 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.40)

were tablewares for the Danish royal family, and it soon became an official royal enterprise in 1779, before it was again privatized in 1868. By then, its artistic ambitions had faded and much of its production was in revival styles rooted in earlier Rococo or neoclassical traditions. However, it changed course decisively when Philip Schou became the owner in 1882. New facilities were constructed and quality control standards were initiated, but it was the arrival of a young architect, Arnold Krog, that transformed the factory's output. Schou and Krog traveled together on the Continent to observe the latest artistic developments, and like many of his peers, Krog was strongly influenced by Japanese art, which he would have seen, among other places, in Bing's gallery.

Under Krog's artistic direction, underglaze colors in addition to the typical blue were developed, and these new colors won acclaim for the factory at the 1889 Exposition Universelle. A shop was opened in Paris the following year, and by the time of that year's exposition, Royal Copenhagen had firmly established its reputation as an innovative, artistically advanced enterprise. Similar to Rörstrand, the palette developed at Royal Copenhagen was restricted primarily to cool tonalities. The three vases illustrated in figure 14 reflect the factory's aesthetic approach in the use of flora and fauna as primary motifs, the restrained palette employed for decoration, and, with the two larger vases, the expanses of white porcelain. The skill of the modelers is evident in the sinuous, twisting forms of both the mushrooms and the snakes — a reflection of the Art Nouveau focus on the primacy of line — as well as in the modeling of the three snails that protrude from their shells to perform what looks almost to be a dance.

The main Danish competitor of the Royal Copenhagen factory at the end of the nineteenth century was the firm of Bing & Grøndahl, which was established on the outskirts of Copenhagen in 1853 by Frederik Grøndahl, who had worked at Royal Copenhagen for two decades, in collaboration with two art dealers, brothers Meyer and Jacob Bing. The new factory initially focused on biscuit porcelain figures derived from the work of Bertel Thorvaldsen, a prominent Danish neoclassical sculptor who remained popular long after his death in 1844. While the factory enjoyed commercial success, its trajectory changed considerably in 1885 with the hiring of Pietro Krohn as artistic director. Krohn was a painter and illustrator with no ceramics experience, which may have proven to be beneficial, as he requested a variety of works that required the development of new technical solutions to produce.[12] Like Krog at Royal Copenhagen, Krohn was influenced by the principles of Japanese art, and he too avidly pursued the development of underglaze colors. By about 1900, the factory was approximately the same size as Royal Copenhagen, with each employing about two hundred people.

The arrival in 1897 of a new artistic director, J. F. Willumsen, shifted some of the factory's focus to the production of works with elaborate carved and openwork

decoration. Willumsen was proficient in a number of fields, including painting, engraving, and sculpture, and his interest in three-dimensional works of art must have provided the inspiration for this labor-intensive mode of decoration, which became a distinctive style for Bing & Grøndahl. Many of their most successful works in this vein were by Effie Hegermann-Lindencrone, whose low-relief and openwork decoration became one of the hallmarks of the factory's production for two decades starting at the turn of the twentieth century. Her mark is found on both the nasturtium and maple seed pod vases on the right and center of figure 15.

In the vase on the right, low-relief nasturtium flowers are supported by long stems; on the upper half, the spaces between the stems have been cut out to create a subtle but visually important contrast between positive and negative space. The same use of intricate openwork decoration is found on the small vase in the center, which depicts overlapping maple seed pods, and on the taller vase with the white-petaled flowers on the left. Much of the low-relief decoration on all three was created using a mold, but the openwork sections had to be cut away by hand, a task that required enormous skill. Presumably, the porcelain vase was initially formed from a mold and then allowed to partially dry to what is called the leather-hard state. If the clay was not dried to the right level of pliability, it could either collapse or shatter in the removal process.

In the Netherlands, the most original and artistically advanced ceramics produced in the late nineteenth century were made at the Rozenburg earthenware factory and designed by T. A. C. Colenbrander. The factory was established in The Hague in 1883 by Wilhelm Wolff Freiherr von Gudenberg, and its initial goal was to produce blue and white Delftware (tin-glazed earthenware), which had been enormously popular in the Netherlands since the mid-seventeenth century. However, the year after the factory's founding, von Gudenberg recruited Colenbrander, who had trained as an architect rather than as a potter, and whose arrival at Rozenburg radically altered the artistic course of the factory.[13] As artistic director, Colenbrander introduced new forms and types of decoration far removed from the Dutch Delftware tradition, and his work is so different from all that preceded it that ceramic historians still struggle to define his style and inspirations.

Like many of his peers, Colenbrander was drawn to motifs from the natural world, but his reinterpretations of them,

15. Bing & Grøndahl, Denmark. Vase, ca. 1900. Porcelain, H. 9⅝ in. (24.4 cm). Robert A. Ellison Jr. Collection, Gift of Robert A. Ellison Jr., 2013 (2013.245.12); Effie Hegermann-Lindencrone (1860–1945; designer); Bing & Grøndahl, Denmark. Vase with maple seed pods, ca. 1900. Porcelain, H. 4½ in. (11.5 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.36); Effie Hegermann-Lindencrone (1860–1945; designer); Bing & Grøndahl, Denmark. Vase with nasturtiums, ca. 1900. Porcelain, H. 9 in. (22.8 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.35)

16. T. A. C. Colenbrander (1841–1930; designer); Rozenburg Plateelfabriek (factory), The Netherlands. Covered vase, ca. 1886–92. Earthenware, H. 11 7/16 in. (29 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.55a, b)

which varied from somewhat legible to entirely abstract, were unique. Floral motifs were elongated, twisted, simplified, and flattened, and his typical palette of strong colors was unrelated to whatever was being depicted.[14] The abstract designs were painted directly on the fired but unglazed earthenware body, a technique that could produce unusually vivid colors but required enormous skill on the part of the decorators. The earthenware body remained porous after the first firing, meaning that glaze colors were absorbed when applied and that any corrections would be extremely difficult to make.

The covered vase is decorated with highly stylized flowers and other vegetal motifs rendered primarily in a deep, rich blue and mustard yellow, and abstract motifs encircle the base, the neck below the rim, and the cover (fig. 16). It was almost certainly part of a garniture, or a decorative grouping, of three or five vases, of which numerous were produced under Colenbrander's direction. Such sets had a long history in Dutch interior decoration, starting as an emulation of imported Chinese porcelains, meaning Colenbrander's vases are simultaneously rooted in Dutch history and radically original in design.

Colenbrander left Rozenburg in 1889, the year in which the plate shown in figure 17 was produced. The plate is evidence of the increasingly abstract nature of the artist's designs during his short tenure as well as the fact that his work did not always employ vivid colors, with its limited, muted palette depicting what appears to be reeds growing in water. Many of Colenbrander's designs depended on the interplay between positive and negative space; in this example, the large expanse of "background" and the spareness of the painted decoration reflect a radical notion of design that was well ahead of its time. After Colenbrander departed, his style lingered to some degree at the factory and was imitated elsewhere, but as he did not work with apprentices, his influence on ceramic design was not as profound or long lasting as it might have been. However, the ceramics produced during his tenure are still among the most striking and innovative of any made in Europe at the time.

One object that bears some of the hallmarks of Colenbrander's legacy is this large circular plaque, made with two holes on the back so that it could be hung on the wall (fig. 18). While the marks on the back indicate that it was made in 1898–99, there is no painter's mark to identify the decorator. It is likely that it was the work of either Sam Schellink or W. P. Hartgring, two of the most talented painters at Rozenburg at the time. It is one of the most remarkable objects produced by the factory during its thirty-four-year history,

17. T. A. C. Colenbrander (1841–1930; designer); Rozenburg Plateelfabriek (factory), The Netherlands. Plate with reeds, 1889. Earthenware, diam. ⅞ in. (2.2 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.54)

18. Possibly decorated by Sam Schellink (1876–1947) or W. P. Hartgring (1874–1943); Rozenburg Plateelfabriek (factory), The Netherlands. Plaque with seahorses and snake, 1898–99. Earthenware, diam. 23 in. (58.4 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.56)

a masterpiece of decoration on earthenware with an exceptionally sophisticated design. Two seahorses and a snake are the primary motifs, but the creatures are so skillfully interwoven into the dense, swirling mass of abstract patterns and motifs derived from the natural world that some effort is required to locate them. This overall complexity might have resulted in visual chaos in the hands of a less-skilled artist, but the decorator demonstrated remarkable control over the motifs.

It is possible to see Colenbrander's influence in the use of both abstract motifs and those derived from nature, the latter being mostly distorted or flattened, making them only partially legible. However, the composition is executed with a precision and level of detail as well as an emphasis on sinuous lines and scrolling forms that give it a sense of movement, all of which are not typically found in Colenbrander's work. The focus on the curvilinear and use of asymmetry links the plaque to the Art Nouveau movement, despite the fact that the works produced at Rozenburg at this time were entirely distinct from those originating from France, which was the epicenter of the style.

By the early years of the twentieth century, new approaches to the decorative arts were being established. Two artists instrumental in this shift were Belgian architect and designer Henry van de Velde and Peter Behrens, an architect and designer from Germany (fig. 19). Van de Velde began his career as a painter but switched his focus to interior design and the decorative arts in 1892. By 1895, he was successful enough to be designing the interior of three rooms as well as furniture for the opening of Bing's L'Art Nouveau, and four years later to be providing furniture for Julius Meier-Graefe's La Maison Moderne, two of the most progressive art and design galleries in Paris at the time. In 1901 van de Velde became the artistic adviser to the Grand Duke Wilhelm Ernst von Sachsen-Weimar und Eisenach in Berlin. He continued to undertake a wide range of architecture, interior design, and decorative arts projects, including a commission from the Ministry of Trade to help modernize the stoneware industry in Westerwald, an area in western Germany with a long history of producing salt-glazed stoneware with simple cobalt blue decoration. The Westerwald stonewares made in this historicizing style were not well received at the Exposition Universelle of 1900, and it became clear that the industry needed to radically change in order to remain competitive. Van de Velde's designs for the Westerwald factories were his first foray into the medium of ceramics, and even when they made reference to the old blue and gray stoneware tradition, the new shapes and the modes of decoration that he employed clearly announced the embrace of a modern aesthetic. The most radical of his proposals was to use *sang de boeuf* glazes to decorate the stoneware body, reflective of the most advanced taste in France at the time. He collaborated with the firm of Reinhold Hanke, whose son Auguste had been influenced by the *sang de boeuf* glazes of Delaherche and Dalpayrat that he had seen in Paris. Van de Velde's vase on the left of figure 19 demonstrates the factory's mastery of this challenging glaze, and its clean, simplified lines and prominent horizontal handles reflect a deliberate break with historical precedents. Indeed, the model of vase illustrated here along with others designed by van de Velde were displayed in a 1902 Düsseldorf exhibition in a room that the artist himself titled "A contribution to the new style."[15]

At the same moment that van de Velde was creating his first ceramic designs, Behrens was beginning his immersion in

19. Henry van de Velde (1863–1957; designer); Reinhold Hanke factory, Germany. Vase, ca. 1902. Stoneware, H. 9 ¼ in. (23.5 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2024 (2024.550.2); Peter Behrens (1868–1940; designer); Franz Anton Mehlem factory, Germany. Vase with three handles, ca. 1901. Earthenware, H. 8 ⅜ in. (21.3 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.425.3); Peter Behrens (1868–1940; designer); Reinhold Hanke factory, Germany. Vase, ca. 1902. Stoneware, H. 7 ⅞ in. (20 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.425.1)

architecture and interior design, focusing on the construction of his own house and its interior furnishings. Upon completion, this project formed part of an exhibition held in the artists' colony in Darmstadt in 1901, an exhibition that proved to be enormously influential for German design. The vases on the right and center of figure 19 were part of Behrens's project. The one on the right reveals his exploration of pared-down forms and high-fire glazes in a manner similar to van de Velde, and the bold design of a flattened, bulbous lower section, elongated neck, and prominent flaring handles of the vase in the center indicate the artist's desire to break with traditional forms, with its brilliant orange glaze reinforcing its modernity. While Behrens's work was widely acclaimed, it appears that a limited number of vases of this model were actually produced, as few survive today.[16] Behrens went on to become one of the founding members in 1907 of the Deutscher Werkbund, an association of German artists intent on promoting modern architecture and industrial design. Through both his architectural projects and his teaching, he ultimately became one of the most influential designers of the first half of the twentieth century.

As seen in this array of intersecting styles, schools, and traditions, this period was a remarkable moment in the history of ceramics in which the decorative arts were central to the formation of early modernism.

The Cult of Nature

European Ceramics around 1900

Martin Eidelberg

At the dawn of the twentieth century, Europeans felt an intense need to create a new language of design. The debate had begun a half century earlier, with English and French theorists and designers writing passionately and persuasively about the importance of design. These beginnings coincided with the 1851 world's fair in London, and the emphasis on modern design was also spurred by the growing importance of world's fairs and industrial expositions, events that not only displayed new wares but also encouraged their development. The appearance of magazines devoted to the decorative arts, the creation of museums and schools focusing on the applied arts — these and many more factors likewise contributed to the flowering of a new philosophy of design. Much of both the theoretical writings and actual practice reflected a belief that a modern style could and should be inspired by plants. This could be termed a Cult of Nature.

Before the turn to the natural world, much nineteenth- and early twentieth-century design focused on the veneration of historical styles. A vast repertoire was available to choose from: European styles such as Greek and Roman, Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque, as well as non-European styles such as Egyptian, Islamic, Chinese, and Indian. This barrage of modes was aided by publications, essentially pictorial albums, whose colored plates offered hundreds of examples.

Some critics argued that while they ensured historically correct detail, these publications stifled designers' creativity. Nonetheless, they were immensely popular and useful. A leader in the field was Owen Jones's *Grammar of Ornament*, which first appeared in 1856 and then was republished many times over, well into the first decades of the twentieth century. Another was Auguste Racinet's lavish series *L'ornement polychrome,* first published in 1869 (fig. 20). Actual objects were also on view in museums, at exhibitions and world's fairs, and in the marketplace, allowing designers to study firsthand the art of the past. Like cabinetmakers and silversmiths, ceramists availed themselves of this rich repertoire of possible models.

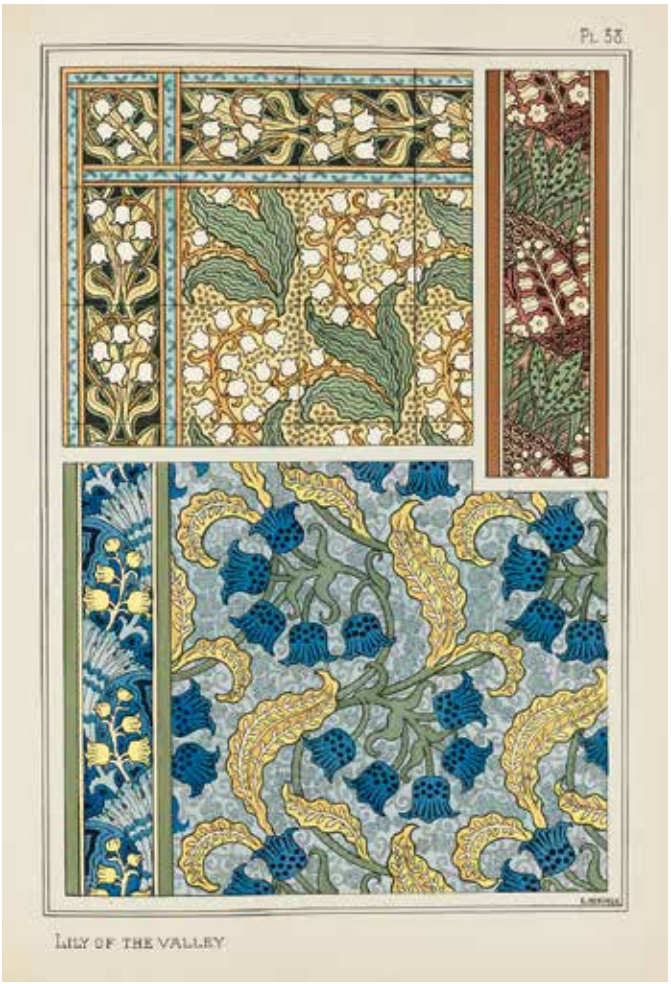
At the same time, there were voices calling for a newer, more modern style. Reviewing the French ceramics shown at the 1878 Exposition Universelle in Paris, the collector and critic Alfred de Liesville wrote:

> In short, ceramics that are very brilliant, greatly varied, but above all imitative: these are French ceramics! Japan, Persian and Muslim art give it its most beautiful accents. . . . But as to decoration, we have not found anything French, anything European, anything decisive since the eighteenth century. The formula of a European decor corresponding to our needs, to our habits, to the normal objects of our existence, remains still to be discovered.[1]

A quarter of a century later, at the time of the 1900 Exposition Universelle, historicism's hold had waned and design had shifted its emphasis under the influence of the Cult of Nature. At the time, Alexandre Sandier, one of the artistic directors at the Sèvres manufactory, echoed de Liesville's sentiments, but now with a new positivism: "In summary, [across] all the Louis XV, Louis XVI, Empire, Louis Philippe porcelains, . . . we can observe the success achieved, especially by the ones that, in not demanding help from scholarship and the art from former times, found forms and decors by turning only to taste, to reason, to nature."[2]

The late nineteenth-century search for a modern style through the study of nature did not require a complete break with prevailing practice. Nature studies could be achieved within the guise of historical traditions. As shown in Joseph B. Robinson's book *Architectural Foliage Adapted from Nature* (1868), plant forms could be put to good use when designing the crockets and spires of neo-Gothic furniture and buildings. Victor-Marie-Charles Ruprich-Robert's publication of 1876, *Flore ornementale*, organized studies of plants and animals into formal Beaux Arts friezes, moldings, and capitals — arrangements one might expect from a distinguished faculty member of the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris.

20. Albert-Charles-Auguste Racinet (1825–1893). Arab pattern from *L'ornement polychrome*, 1869. Color lithograph. Gift of Victor Koechl, 1995 (1995.318.1)



21. Auguste Delaherche (1857–1940; maker). Vase, ca. 1890. Stoneware, H. 7 3/16 in. (18.3 cm). Robert A. Ellison Jr. Collection, Gift of Robert A. Ellison Jr., 2013 (2013.239.16)

22. Plate with lily of the valley, from Eugène Grasset, *La plante et ses applications ornementales*, 1896

The emphasis on using plants as the basis for a modern style became increasingly widespread and is one of the chief characteristics of French ceramics at the turn of the century. Jeweler Lucien Falize and celebrated ceramist and glassmaker Émile Gallé wrote an important series of essays stressing that plants were a valuable source of inspiration for modern designers, for both new vessel forms and new decoration. Using the pages of the *Revue des arts décoratifs* as their platform, Falize and Gallé proposed that the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs in Paris stage an exhibition devoted to the theme of plants and decorative arts, with examples from the past and present, and, not least, live plants.[3] Among the contemporary ceramics that were discussed and illustrated were several stoneware vases by Auguste Delaherche adorned with overlapping, petal-like leaves based on the artichoke (fig. 21).[4] The idea for such an exhibition was approved by the Union Centrale but never materialized.

French designer Eugène Grasset and his pupils at the École Guérin also promoted the use of plants in this way, issuing *La plante et ses applications ornementales* in 1896.[5] Each species had two or more plates devoted to it, showing different proposed treatments of the motif. In the sequence focused on the lily of the valley, for example, E. Hervegh illustrated how the flower could be arranged for a frieze or as an allover pattern (fig. 22). The following year, Grasset's pupil Maurice Verneuil issued a comparable album devoted to the decorative treatment of animals. These manuals, like those of Jones and Racinet a half century earlier, became standard references. They were like pattern books, and as indicated by their trilingual captions (in French, English, and German), they were intended for an international audience.

This turn to nature, especially plant life, was also shaped through the lens of Japanese art. French Japonisme enthusiasts freely admitted that whereas they had previously copied Japanese designs, now they sought the source of Japanese inspiration: nature itself. Falize offered a forceful (albeit sexist) confession:

> And now my love [for Japanese art] is not extinguished but it is calmer, as what happens when the fever of possession is calmed and one looks in broad daylight at their mistress of the night before: she is still beautiful,

23. Fernand Rumèbe (1874–1952; maker). Plaque with flowering mimosa, ca. 1904–10. Stoneware, diam. 9 ⅜ in. (23.8 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.23)

24. Henry Nocq (1868–1942; designer), Alexandre Bigot (1862–1927; maker). Inkwell, 1897–98. Stoneware, W. 14 ⅝ in. (37.1 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.1a, b)

> smiling, and graceful, but you hesitate to take her for a wife. . . . And us, what are we to do? To copy still? No, but to be inspired by this art and, like it, return to healthy doctrines, to simple means, and to the study of nature. . . . Do you know what you are doing, do you know why the artisan of Kyoto shaped his vase like a gourd or bulbous root? Have you examined the symbol of a white deer? . . . You write Japanese characters the way you have copied everyone's religious symbols, without understanding them.[6]

Edmond Lachenal's vase with chrysanthemums and Rumèbe's plaque with flowering mimosa (fig. 23) show a close observation of their plants, while their choice of just a single branch and their carefully considered asymmetrical arrangements recall Far Eastern paintings and prints where the subject is poetically balanced against a void. Taking their cues from Japanese art, the French also became fascinated by the marvels of marine life. Henry Nocq's inkwell fashioned to resemble a crab sitting alongside a tidal pool of sparkling crystalline glaze (fig. 24) and Albert-Louis Dammouse's large dish with a lobster in a frothy sea of bubbling glaze (fig. 25) speak as much of Japan as of France's meadows and coast.

A Japoniste view of nature also took hold in Scandinavia, at the Danish factories of Royal Copenhagen and Bing & Grøndahl and at the Swedish firm of Rörstrand. Arnold Krog, artistic director of Royal Copenhagen, was a leader in this effort (fig. 14). He was a frequent visitor to Paris, where he met with Falize and French ceramists, and was also directly inspired by examples of Japanese art. Promotional materials issued by Royal Copenhagen spoke of the inspiration that its artists derived from the fields and open

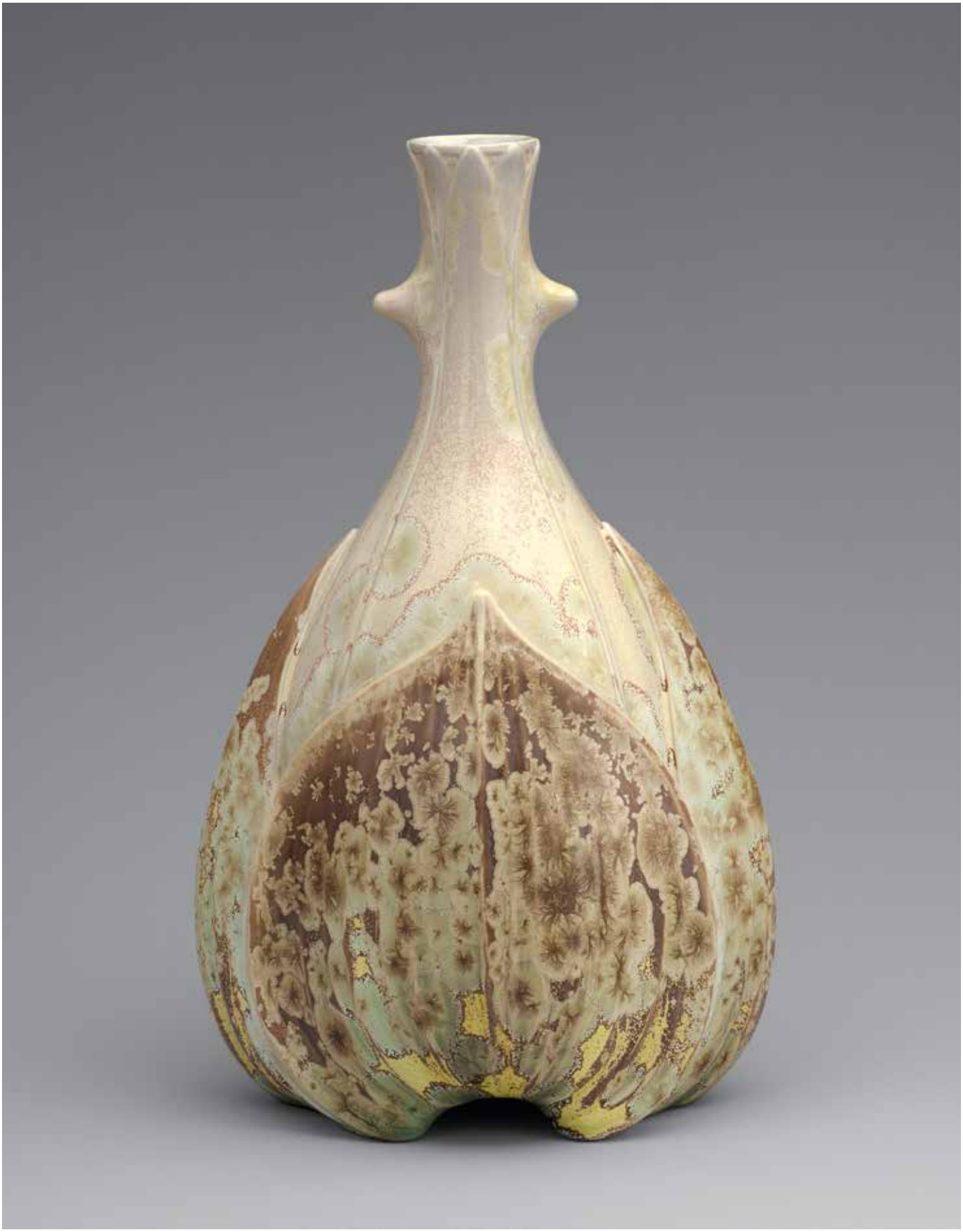
25. Albert-Louis Dammouse (1848–1926; maker). Large dish with lobster and seaweed, ca. 1895–1905. Stoneware, diam. 16 15/16 in. (43 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.6)

26. Lucien Jules Clément d'Eaubonne (b. 1870; designer); Sèvres factory, France. Vase with iris, 1903–4. Stoneware, H. 14 11/16 in. (37.3 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2024 (2024.450.7)

waters of Denmark, but their vision of nature was also refracted through their experience of Japanese art.

The Cult of Nature was a new direction not only in terms of subject matter but also in its revolutionizing of ceramic shapes. While many French potters imitated the newly discovered gourd and long-necked vases of Japan, others explored still more novel ideas. For example, while most of the Sèvres manufactory's work still relied on symmetrical shapes — often inspired by Eastern models — some daring new designs established a rapport between the floral decoration and the form of the vessel itself. A vase with an iris plant represents a transitional moment (fig. 26). The unmodulated cone is like the upright thrust of the plant itself, and the pierced, sculpted blossoms at the top create an organic silhouette. Still more daring is a series of abstract shapes instituted around the turn of the century. One wonderfully graceful vase — akin to Chinese carved stone — is suggestive of a petaled blossom, and the effect is enhanced by matte and crystalline glazes (fig. 27). Taxile Doat, who was employed by Sèvres but also maintained a private atelier in the same town, worked both in a neo-Renaissance idiom of traditional shapes decorated with garlands and medallions and, by 1900, in delicate gourd forms with pimply surfaces that looked as though they had been cast from the vegetables themselves (fig. 10, right).

Pushing the boundary still further were the organic ceramic forms created by Ernest Bussière. Working in Nancy, in the shadow of Gallé, Bussière created an extensive series of vases for the nearby firm of Keller et Guerin (fig. 28). Just as Gallé, the by-then legendary head of the École de Nancy, created glass vases in the forms of lilies and seashells, so too



27. Sèvres factory, France. Bottle-shaped vase, 1907. Porcelain, H. 11 in. (27.9 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2024 (2024.450.9)

28. Ernest Bussière (1863–1913; designer); Keller et Guerin factory, France. Orchid vase, ca. 1903. Earthenware, H. 13⅜ in. (34 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.19)

did Bussière invest his ceramics with vital, organic shapes. They were based on different plant species, some so highly abstracted that their identities are only apparent in their published titles. His model with iris flowers may be easily recognizable, but its freestanding stems and beaklike buds at the top are still remarkable for their novel approach to creating a new standard in European ceramics.

Also active in Nancy were the brothers Pierre and Jean Mougin, and they too furthered the Cult of Nature in the forms of their vessels. With subjects far more recognizable than Bussière's florals, the ceramics from the Mougin pottery celebrated plants common to that part of France. Here, we have the *ombelliflore*, a majestic plant that lines the roads of the region and was frequently used as inspiration by local cabinetmakers such as Gallé and Louis Majorelle, and the thistle, the emblematic plant of Lorraine (fig. 29). Unlike the mysterious iridescent glazes employed by Bussière, the Mougins' cheerful matte glazes welcome the viewer.

The Brittany-based followers of ceramist Jean Carriès, members of the so-called École de Saint-Amand, were enthusiastically dedicated to Japanese models and glazes, and also frequently turned to nature for inspiration. They mostly created vessels with wheel-thrown shapes enhanced by running matte glazes. Occasionally they added lizards or leafy appendages, also in the Japanese manner. Georges Hoentschel, a leading member of this group, created vases whose very forms were plantlike. Perhaps the most extravagant example is a large vase that seems to have been inspired by a squash or pumpkin (fig. 11). Its elongated neck and two stemlike handles are corded or ribbed in a sturdy, organic manner, as though it were a real plant. Its strength

29. Gustave Guéttant (1873–1935; designer); Mougin Frères, France. Vase with thistle leaves, ca. 1906–14. Stoneware, H. 8 ⅜ in. (21.3 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.25); Mougin Frères, France. Vase with flowering plants, ca. 1906–14. Stoneware, H. 9 ⅝ in. (24.4 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.26)

30. Royal Copenhagen, Denmark. Vase with centipede, ca. 1900. Porcelain, 4 3⁄16 in. (10.6 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.44)

and vigor, as well as its large scale, contrast with the delicate, petite gourd-shaped vases produced by Doat at Sèvres. But it is noteworthy that both French potters are responding to the same impetus — the Cult of Nature.

Scandinavian ceramists vied to be nearly as bold as their French counterparts. In Krog's frequent visits to Paris he learned about the French development of matte and crystalline glazes as well as the interest in nature as an inspirational force.[7] Falize called Krog "a Parisian from Copenhagen" and described the long conversations they enjoyed together at the 1889 Exposition Universelle. In fact, in his article on the Exposition de la Plante, Falize illustrated Krog's tray modeled after string bean leaves and pods. While the Royal Copenhagen artists working under Krog showed a consistent devotion to nature, the decorative subjects, whether painted or sculpted in high relief, rarely transformed the form of the vessel. As seen in one of the vases from this time, a frog looks hungrily at a dragonfly, just as mushrooms grow three-dimensionally out from the sides of another, but the shapes of the vessels remain essentially intact (fig. 14, left). Only occasionally, as in a series of small vases shaped like snails and other creatures, does a more complete transformation take place (figs. 14, center; 30). These experiments resulted in charming objects in the spirit of Japanese netsuke (small sculpted fasteners used with kimonos), and, in fact, in some instances the Danish artists directly emulated such works. The Bing & Grøndahl factory also exploited the turn to nature, as especially evident in the intricately carved designs of Effie Hegermann-Lindencrone and Fanny Garde (fig. 15). Artists at the Rörstrand factory likewise portrayed blooming plants in low and high relief, but unlike their Danish contemporaries, the Swedish artists frequently fused the decoration and the forms of the vessels (fig. 13).

While this vegetal aesthetic took hold in Scandinavia, apart from some exceptional instances, few German, Austrian, or Dutch potteries were drawn to this extreme organic reshaping of vessels. The Netherlands had its own interesting aside in the development of late nineteenth-century design. There, designers combined patterns drawn from batik textiles from the Dutch colony of Java (now Indonesia) with studies of plants to produce a bold new style. Working for the recently founded Rozenburg pottery in The Hague, T. A. C. Colenbrander created a vocabulary of abstract patterning that had no parallel in European art, at least not until the 1920s and Expressionism (fig. 16). He produced colorful designs, some densely packed, some spare, but expressed in highly abstract terms. While seemingly nonfigurative, they generally were based on plants and flowers, even if their specific botanical identities are not apparent. A plate created in 1889 has a network of thin lines rendered in pale colors that, were it not for the inscription on the underside, might not be recognizable as marsh reeds (fig. 17). While the Dutch interpretation of Javanese art was exceptional, it is nonetheless significant that, as elsewhere in Europe, the decoration was nature-based.

High Art Nouveau style — a language of abstract, rhythmically charged lines

31. Hector Guimard (1867–1942; designer); Sèvres factory, France. Vase (*Vase Cerny*), ca. 1901. Stoneware, H. 10 13/16 in. (27.5 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2024 (2024.450.10)

32. Maurice P. Verneuil for Eugène Grasset, *La plante ornementale* (Paris: 1896), plate 2, frieze with iris plants

that arose at the end of the nineteenth century — might appear to be the antithesis of the Cult of Nature. The former is a human-made system of abstract lines and the latter is based on the observation of specific natural species, yet there are significant bonds between them.[8] To look at these intersections we need to travel from Paris to Brussels in the early 1890s. There, Belgian painter Henry van de Velde had been working in the demanding pointillist style of Georges Seurat until suffering a mental breakdown. He emerged a changed man, now emulating the dynamic, energetic mode of Vincent van Gogh. Moreover, he began to explore "minor" arts such as book illustration and tapestry design — emblematic of his growing awareness of decorative arts — and brought his powerful, rhythmically charged idiom to these endeavors.

Victor Horta, a contemporary of van de Velde, explored the same approach in architecture, particularly interiors, with rhythmic lines thickening and thinning, spiraling around and then reversing their direction. His brilliantly conceived decorative borders painted on stairway walls, the mosaic patterns of his floors, his leaded glass windows, and the ironwork of his staircases and balconies are all caught in this unleashing of linear energy.[9] At the time, critics remarked that his designs resembled growing plants, and the compatibility between his abstract system and floral imagery is unmistakable. Horta succinctly expressed his intent: "I leave behind the flower and the leaf, and I take the stem."[10] Horta saw the stem as containing the energy, the life force of the plant. Free of specific botanical references, Horta's linear energy became the hallmark of European high Art Nouveau.

Horta did not contribute designs for ceramics, nor did many Belgian potteries follow suit.[11] Henry van de Velde did, but

only after he moved his atelier to Germany in the late 1890s. There, he and other young designers received commissions from the German government to create modern designs to aid the German ceramic industry. Van de Velde worked for several firms in the Westerwald region, a traditional center of pottery-making, including those of Reinhold Hanke and Franz Eberstein. His designs demonstrate how the so-called Belgian line could be exploited to full advantage with controlled but dynamic patterns.

The Belgian style was simultaneously transported to Paris, with Horta and his Belgian colleagues featured prominently in Siegfried Bing's new L'Art Nouveau gallery, which opened at the end of 1895. Architect and designer Hector Guimard elaborated on this mode of design in his work on the Castel Béranger apartment building — especially in the vestibule area, the balconies, and other small details. His daring designs for the Paris subway system, the Metro, disseminated his novel designs across the French capital. He also created several ceramic vessels in relation to the Castel Béranger, executed by Gilardoni et Brault. Guimard's architectural style was controversial and was described more than once as being like a nightmare. Surprisingly, the Sèvres manufactory commissioned several designs from him in 1900. One is a vase, halfway between rectangular and circular in form, with each side featuring a different asymmetrical design of sculpted linear growths rising from the surface (fig. 31).

The bringing together of figurative plants and abstract rhythmic lines is frequently evident in Grasset's *La plante et ses applications ornementales*. Not only were the flowers and leaves retained and conventionalized to decorative effect, but they were also charged with dynamic abstract energy, either in the backgrounds or in their forms. A frieze of flowering iris, for example, has clumps of iris leaves and blossoms repeated without variation, but some of the leaves curve — which is not typical of iris plants — creating a rhythmic cadence (fig. 32). Likewise, an overall pattern based on snowdrops is enlivened with free-floating curves formed from the plant's leaves.

This vocabulary of plant motifs enlivened by rhythmic flourishes can also be found in other French ceramics from the time. A splendid example is a large stoneware vase by French ceramist François-Émile Décorchemont (fig 33). Although Décorchemont would soon become more famous for his work in *pâte de verre* (glass paste), in the years just before and after the turn of the century he focused on clay. Many of his vases are decorated with seaweed motifs, a subject introduced into French design through Japonisme. But whereas Dammouse's plaque (fig. 25) portrays seaweed in a naturalistic but clearly Japanese-inspired mode, Décorchemont's vase has seaweed arranged in swinging arcs that endow the vessel with spirited movement; this motion is duplicated by arcs that rise energetically and crest at the top in high relief. A poetic phrase, "Les fleurs étranges de mer" (The strange flowers of the sea), runs around the vase's neck like a haiku on a Japanese scroll; this juxtaposition of image and text echoes Gallé's *verre parlante* (speaking glass), where the artist added phrases to his designs to heighten the poetic meaning of the depicted plant. While not as dramatically Art Nouveau as Guimard's transformation of the alphabet, the fluid calligraphy of Décorchemont's lettering is still a response to the energetic forces of French Art Nouveau design.

In an example of the interchange between Belgium and France, the Parisian firm of Émile Müller obtained the rights to produce glazed stoneware versions of several designs that the Belgian jeweler Philippe Wolfers first introduced in bronze. A vase decorated with vivid orchids is evidence of the omnipresence of floral motifs in the decorative arts at the time (fig. 34). The energetic ripples of the flower petals and leaves, accentuated by the boldly asymmetrical form of the vessel (undoubtedly Japanese inspired),

33. François-Émile Décorchemont (1880–1971; maker). Vase with inscription: *Les fleurs étranges de mer*, ca. 1901. Stoneware, H. 15 9/16 in (39.5 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.7)

34. Philippe Wolfers (1858–1929; designer); Émile Müller factory, France. Vase with orchids, ca. 1898. Stoneware, H. 10 in. (25.4 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2024 (2024.450.4)

register the tempo of late nineteenth-century design.

Vases designed by Georges de Feure and Edward Colonna for Bing's L'Art Nouveau gallery display rhythmically conventionalized plants with similar qualities. One vase designed by Colonna is related to Rörstrand porcelains in its palette of cool greens and pinks as well as its botanical theme (fig. 3, left). But here the depicted plant is abstracted to such a degree that we cannot be certain if it is an orchid or another similar flower. Set against a plain white ground, the angle of the long stem bending to the right, the shorter stem bending in the opposite direction, and the cant of the secondary lines in the background add to the design's rhythmic structure. Rephrasing Horta's dictum, Colonna did not give up the leaf or flower, but he conveyed the vital life force in the stem.

A similar mixture of plant-based imagery and abstract rhythmic lines is found in the ceramics of other European countries. A Rörstrand vase with a watery decoration of shrimp demonstrates how the two could be subtly merged (fig. 35). While the shrimp are rendered naturalistically, the water currents are exaggerated to create the sort of energetic motion that we associate with Art Nouveau, and at the mouth of the vase they form a scalloped edge. The vase recalls the words of Marcel Bing, the son of the famed promoter of Japanese art: "Some artists believed that they could find a new source of ornamentation . . . in various linear combinations. These attempts seem to have been inspired to a certain extent by the graceful wavy movement of Japanese line."[12]

In Germany, Max Läuger relied on simple forms ornamented with raised slip. His motifs, however abstracted, were identifiable plants and were generally structured in the new dynamic mode. A vase decorated with clover demonstrates this melding of natural imagery and

35. Karl G. E. Lindström (1865–1936; decorator); Rörstrand factory, Sweden. Vase with shrimp, ca. 1900–1910. Porcelain, H. 19⅞ in. (50.5 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.39)

36. Max Läuger (1864–1952; designer); Tonwerke Kandern factory, Germany. Vase with clover, ca. 1899. Earthenware, H. 12 5/16 in. (31.9 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.29)

rhythmic lines (fig. 36). Such designs were confined to a narrow period in Läuger's career. By 1910 he relied on more static, flat arrangements. By then the excitement of Art Nouveau had waned, even as the interest in floral decor persisted.

Reactions to Art Nouveau at the time were mixed, and fewer liked it than not.[13] But, all the while, floral designs continued to thrive. Symmetry again became a dominant feature of European design, and straight lines replaced curves. Such elements had been present in design prior to 1900, but these tendencies resurfaced with force. In a rectangular vase by de Feure (whose shape itself is telling), the flowers are positioned at the center and symmetrically in the corners. Likewise, in a charming vase with seahorses designed by Johannes Christiaan Lanooy for the Haga pottery in the Netherlands, the creatures and other sea life are positioned heraldically in static compositions (fig. 37). In these instances, the designers have conventionalized their motifs to different degrees of abstraction, but their decor is nonetheless nature-based, whether floral or marine.

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 is often cited as the outer boundary for this rich period of decorative arts, and to a large degree this is true. The world of design that reemerged in the late 1910s was oriented differently, toward plays on geometric patterns inspired by Cubism and new theories of a reductive, industrial aesthetic. Lilacs and roses were replaced by rectangles and arcs, as a new modernism took hold. Yet this generalization must be tempered. Older ceramists and large potteries such as Royal Copenhagen and Rörstrand went on as before. The Mougin factory continued to execute its old models well into the 1920s, even as it simultaneously produced designs in the new Art Deco style. In countries like France, where the Cult of Nature had taken firm root, the same subjects

37. Johannes Christiaan Lanooy (1881–1948; decorator); Plateelbakkerij Haga (factory), The Netherlands. Vase with seahorses, ca. 1904–7. Earthenware, H. 11 13/16 in. (30 cm). Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.49)

38. Prosper-Joseph Walter; Sèvres factory, France. Vase, 1926. Stoneware, H. 9 7/8 in. (25 cm). Private collection, New York

remained in use but were reimagined in the new aesthetic. A vase designed by Prosper-Joseph Walter for Sèvres is a splendid example of the tenacious hold the doctrine of the plant had in France, with flowers carpeting the surface expressed as geometric units, not botanical species (fig. 38).

While design aesthetics in the decades before and after 1900 crossed national boundaries, there were equally strong national and regional schools of thought. In his review of the ceramics shown at the Paris world's fair in 1900, Alexandre Sandier, an artistic director at Sèvres, wrote of "all the attempts made since 1889 to achieve new forms and decoration and to create a style or, rather, styles characteristic of our epoch," explaining that "instead of a single one, imposed by someone as in former times, and fashioned after a unique brand, we find at the Exhibition a bundle of individual styles, personal to each artist, in a word, a democratic art, an art produced by the freedom left to each one to act according to their taste and feelings."[14] Sandier casts these diverse, richly decorated ceramics in terms of emerging democracy and individuality, an interesting insight into contemporary thought. Yet despite the diversity of these styles, they also register their common allegiance to the Cult of Nature. When the cause for nature-based ornament was being pleaded in the late nineteenth century, it was argued that nature offered a never-ending source of inspiration. As can be seen in the ceramics discussed here, this proved to be true.

Notes

Making It Modern

Sarah E. Lawrence and Jeffrey Munger

1. Robert Brennan, *Painting as a Modern Art in Early Renaissance Italy* (Brepols, 2020).
2. Nancy Troy, *Modernism and the Decorative Arts in France: Art Nouveau to Le Corbusier* (Yale University Press, 1991), 7.
3. Martin Eidelberg, *Edmond Lachenal and His Legacy* (Jason Jacques Gallery Press, 2007), 23–24.
4. Eidelberg, *Lachenal*, 41.
5. Paul Arthur, *French Art Nouveau Ceramics: An Illustrated Dictionary* (Éditions Norma, 2015), 327.
6. Arthur, *French Art Nouveau Ceramics*, 326.
7. Arthur, *French Art Nouveau Ceramics*, 145.
8. For more information on the pavilion and on Hoentschel himself, see Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide et al., eds., *Salvaging the Past: Georges Hoentschel and French Decorative Arts from the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, exh. cat. (Bard Graduate Center, 2013), 212–16.
9. David Revere McFadden, *Rörstrand: Swedish Art Nouveau Porcelain from the Robert Schreiber Collection*, exh. cat. (American Craft Museum, 1999), 22–25.
10. McFadden, *Rörstrand,* 67.
11. Bengt Nystrom, *Rörstrand Porcelain: Art Nouveau Masterpieces* (Abbeville Press, 1996), 84.
12. Bodil Busk Laursen and Steen Nottelmann, *Royal Copenhagen Porcelain: 1775–2000; 225 Years of Design*, exh. cat. (NYT Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck, 2000), esp. 106.
13. Titus M. Eliëns, *T. A. C. Colenbrander (1841–1930): Ontwerper van de Haagse Plateelbakkerij Rozenburg*, exh. cat. (Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, 1999), 93.
14. Colenbrander's work is well illustrated in Yvonne Brentjens, *Rozenburg: Plateel uit Haagsekringen, 1883–1917* (Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, 2007), in addition to the publication listed above.
15. "Beitrage zum neuem Stil" in the original German. Judy Rudoe, "Aspects of Design Reform in the German Ceramic Industry around 1900, as Illustrated by the British Museum Collection," *Journal of the Decorative Arts Society* 14 (1990): 30.
16. Judy Rudoe, *Decorative Arts, 1850–1950: A Catalogue of the British Museum Collection* (British Museum Press, 1991), 17.

The Cult of Nature

European Ceramics around 1900

Martin Eidelberg

1. A[lfred] R[obert] de Liesville, *Exposition Universelle de 1878: Les industries d'art; La céramique et la verrerie au Champs-de-Mars* (Honoré Champion, 1879), 40–41.
2. Alex[andre] Sandier, "La céramique à l'exposition," *Art et décoration* 8 (July–December 1900): 194.
3. Lucien Falize, "Une exposition de la plante," *Revue des arts décoratifs*, 1890–91, 1–7; Victor Champier, "L'exposition de la plante," *Revue des arts décoratifs,* 1890–91, 351–52; Falize, "La plante: Histoire d'une exposition ajournée," *Revue des arts décoratifs*, 1891–92, 225–42; Émile Gallé, "Encore l'exposition de la plante," *Revue des arts décoratifs*, 1891–92, 377–80; Champier, "L'exposition de la fleur et l'étude des applications décoratives de la plante en Allemagne et en France," *Revue des arts décoratifs*, 1894–95, 148–52; "Notes sur l'art décoratif allemande," supplement, *Art et décoration* 13 (May 1903): 1–5. An actual school, called the Académie des arts de la fleur et de la plante, was operating in Paris by 1900; see supplement, *Art et décoration* 14 (November 1903): 5–6.
4. A drawing after the model inspired by artichokes illustrated here, as well as after several others in the same series, were illustrated in Falize, "La plante," 237–38.
5. Grasset's publication was preceded by manuals such as Martin Gerlach et al., eds., *Die Pflanze in Kunst und Gewerbe* (Gerlach & Schenk, 1886); and A. E. V. Lilley and W. Midgley, *A Book of Studies in Plant Form with Some Suggestions for Their Application to Design* (Chapman and Hall Limited, 1895).
6. Lucien Falize [Jossé, pseud.], "L'art japonais à propos de l'exposition organisée par M. Gonse," *Revue des arts décoratifs*, 1882–83, 330–31. This was published under a seemingly Japanese-inspired pseudonym.
7. Merete Bodelsen, *Sèvres-Copenhagen: Crystal Glazes and Stoneware at the Turn of the Century* (Royal Copenhagen Porcelain Manufactory, 1975).
8. This relationship between the two was discussed by James Grady, "Nature and the Art Nouveau," *Art Bulletin* 37, no. 3 (1955): 18–27. Since then, the complexity of the issues has been studied in different ways. See, for example, Siegfried Wichmann, ed., *Welt kulturen und moderne Kunst*, exh. cat. (Olympiade München; Galeries nationales du Grand Palais; F. Bruckmann, 1972); Mirjam Gelfer-Jørgensen, *Influences from Japan in Danish Arts and Design 1870–2010* (Danish Architectural Press, 2013).
9. For one of the first critical analyses of Horta's work, see François Thiébault-Sisson, "L'art décoratif en Belgique, un novateur: Victor Horta," *Art et décoration* 1 (January–July 1897): 11–18.
10. Émile Bayard, *L'art de reconnaître les styles: Le style moderne* (Garnier Frères, 1919), 100.
11. A notable exception is the work of Alfred W. Finch, but he soon left for Finland. More meaningful are the ceramics of the Dutch potter Willem Coenraad Brouwer, whose strong graphic decoration should be understood in the context of the Belgian artists under consideration here.
12. Marcel Bing, "Japan," in *Die Krisis im Kunstgewerbe: Studien Über die Wege und Ziele der Modernen Richtung*, ed. Richard Graul (S. Hirzel, 1901), 87.
13. Emblematic of the turn away from the movement, in 1904 Bing closed his L'Art Nouveau gallery. After his death, his son turned back to dealing in Asian art.
14. Sandier, "La céramique à l'exposition," 184.

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Front cover: possibly decorated by Sam Schellink or W. P. Hartgring, Rozenburg Plateelfabriek, The Netherlands, Plaque with seahorses and snake, 1898–99 (fig. 18; detail). Inside front cover: Henry van de Velde, Reinhold Hanke factory, Germany, Vase, ca. 1902 (fig. 19, left). Page 2: Johannes Christiaan Lanooy, Plateelbakkerij Haga, The Netherlands, Vase with seahorses, ca. 1904–7 (fig. 37). Inside back cover: Hector Guimard, Sèvres factory, France, Vase (*Vase Cerny*), ca. 1901 (fig. 6, left). Back cover: Roelof Sterken, Plateelfabriek Purmerend, The Netherlands, Vase with owls, ca. 1900–1910, Gift of Martin Eidelberg, 2022 (2022.421.53; detail).

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