

THE DRAWING ROOM 16R Newtown Lane, East Hampton, NY 11937 T 631 324.5016

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FRENCH 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY
DRAWINGS FOR DESIGN

From January 12 through February 26, The Drawing Room is pleased to present *Drawings for Design*, an exhibition featuring original French Art Nouveau and Art Deco designs in watercolor and gouache for textiles, wallpaper, jewelry, industrial design and the stage. Together these drawings, created originally for utilitarian purposes, demonstrate the breadth of aesthetic innovation that characterizes these two influential movements in the decorative arts.

Two studies for wallpaper by Armand Segaud (1875-1930), best known for his wall decorations at the Palm House at the Jardin D'Acclimatation and the Sarah Bernhardt Theater in Paris, exemplify the Art Nouveau period (1890-1910) with stylized flowers and undulating patterns. Pendulous red fuchsias hang from sinuous vines in a complex pattern that cleverly conceals the wallpaper's repeat. In the second design, wreaths of winterberries laced together with ribbons are depicted in a primary scheme of gold and red, with a blue and green inset showing the designer's alternate palette.

An example of Art Nouveau in industrial design is found in a six-foot ironwork design for the gate at the train station in Caen, France. In ink and blue watercolor washes, this project drawing celebrates the malleability of wrought iron with curving tendrils and decorative stars fixed in a functional form. Just as today, architects in the nineteenth century had to reconcile their design ideals with practical engineering considerations. In a series of diagrams for structural metalwork by architect Jules-Germain Olivier (1869-1940), rhythmic compositions emerge from the interplay between steel blue beams and smaller elements rendered in deep orange. A 1903 series of drawings for dynamos by Albert Drablier of the Ecole d'Electricité illustrates the equipment used to convert mechanical into electrical energy. Meticulously rendered washes reveal effects of light and shadow on each facet of the circular gears and pistons in these truly modern images.

Art Deco (1910-1930) designers embraced imagery associated with machinery, aviation and skyscrapers. A group of glistening jewelry designs by Andrée Legrand and the Atelier of Paul and Raymond Templier present stacked forms, chevrons and sunbursts of diamonds in an opulent style, a reaction to the forced austerity of World War I.

Because working designs such as these rarely survived the rigors of the workshop, they appear fresh to the contemporary eye. The draughtmanship, pulsating color, and skillful handling of these page layouts imbue drawings made for practical purposes with an enduring aesthetic life.

For further information and reproduction quality images contact Candace Whitman at 631.324.5016 or info@drawingroom-gallery.com.