

# HORTA MUSEUM

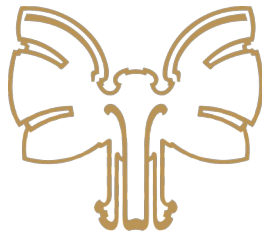
## PRESS PACK

SECRETS OF THE STUDIOS / ART NOUVEAU DECORATION

ART NOUVEAU DECORATION

2 JULY – 27 SEPTEMBER 2020





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SAINT-GILLES  
HORTAMUSEUM  
SINT-GILLIS

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RÉGION DE BRUXELLES-CAPITALE  
BRUSSELS HOOFDSTEDELIJK GEWEST  
BRUSSELS-CAPITAL REGION



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the Brussels-Capital Region, and the Fonds Baillet Latour.



St Gilles Gillis



## A TANDEM EXHIBITION

### *Secrets of the studios / Art Nouveau decoration*

*Il n'y a d'urgent que le décor*

Pierre Loti

In spring 2020, the Horta Museum will immerse itself in the creative processes of late 19th century artists and architects. It will exhibit over 80 drawings (61 of them previously unpublished) by designers such as William Morris, Henry van de Velde, Josef Hoffmann, and Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The works in question, all designs for fabric or wallpaper, will be displayed as a large fresco—a kind of herbarium—of motifs and decorative ornaments. Every stage of the creative process will be illustrated, from the first pencil-stroke to the finished work.

At the same time, the room originally occupied by Horta's team of draughtsmen will be opened up permanently to the public, providing the perfect opportunity for a display of metalwork and casts, 60 in all, that give a sense both of Horta's approach to ornament and of his method of working. Stepping into these painstakingly restored and adapted surroundings, visitors will find themselves at the heart of the building that was creative home to the master of Art Nouveau.

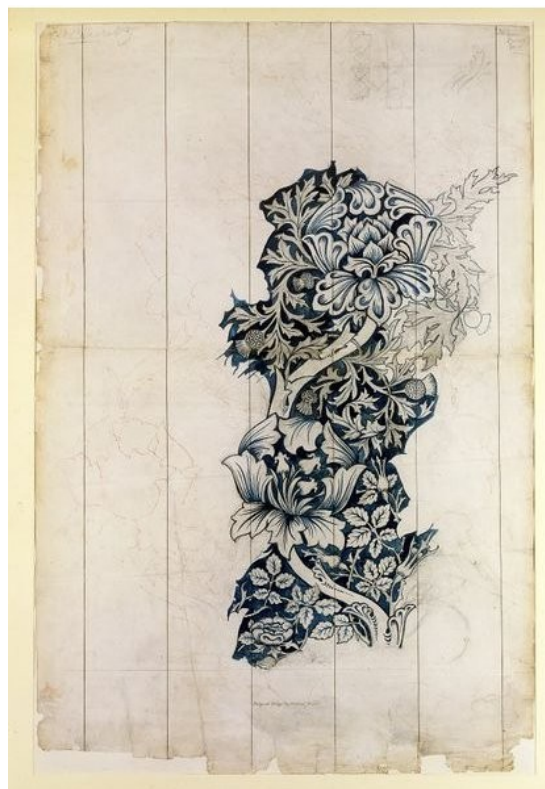


*Hector Guimard, wallpaper  
design, 1896–1898.  
Paris, Bibliothèque Forney*

## IN BRIEF...



- **80 drawings** and designs, of which **61 previously unpublished**
- **9 major designers** from the European Art Nouveau period and turn-of-the-century modernism: Victor Horta, Paul Hankar, Henry Van de Velde, William Morris, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Hector Guimard, Maurice Denis, and Josef Hoffmann
- Works **from across Europe**: Trondheim (Kunstindustrimuseum), London (Victoria & Albert Museum), Paris (Bibliothèque Forney), and Brussels (Musée Art et Histoire, CIVA)
- **60 years of artistic output** encapsulated in **80 works** displayed in a large-scale fresco arranged by date and thematic focus (1860–1920)
- **2 strands**: iconic Art Nouveau (by designers such as William Morris and Charles Rennie Mackintosh) and everyday Art Nouveau (anonymous designs)
- **4 thematic fields** covering all the trends in Art Nouveau: eclecticism, nature-based design, stylization, geometricism
- A close-up view of the **creative processes** of these architects and designers



*William Morris, 'Rose and Thistle', textile design, 1882, Victoria & Albert Museum, London. Bequeathed by Miss Mary (May) Morris, daughter of the artist.*



## RENEWING THE FUTURE

‘We have amongst us enough talented men to supply all our wallpaper factories with the designs they need. Most manufacturers never even consider this option, or else worry about consumer conventionalism, and turn down novel combinations for fear of offending against custom. This is a mistake.’ Henry Nocq, Art Nouveau promoter, in the *Journal des Artistes*, 3 March 1895.

Until the 19th century, fine arts and industry were commonly treated as separate categories. Despite this, Art Nouveau designers battled against the hierarchization of the arts and it was quite natural, in this situation, that they should turn their attentions to the design of wall-coverings. But how was a design for a wallpaper or fabric created at the turn of the century? **What were the stages by which a sketch on a scrap of paper was transformed into a finished product?** These are the studio secrets that the Horta Museum is eager to share with visitors.

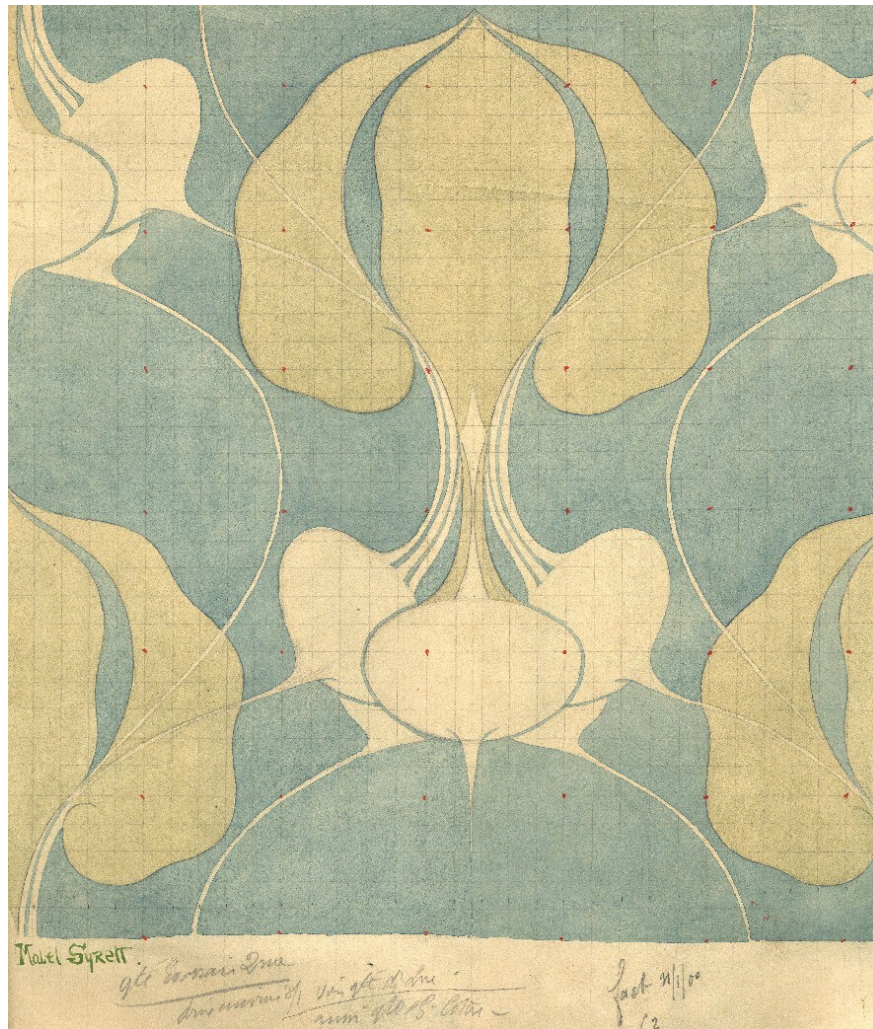


Anon., *Textile design*, 1904.  
Brussels, Van Hoe Collection

## A NEW LEASE OF LIFE FOR INTERIOR DECORATION

Besides defying artistic hierarchies, Art Nouveau crossed social divides. The pieces chosen for display at the Horta Museum aim to represent this range. Major representatives of European Art Nouveau such as **William Morris, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Hector Guimard, Maurice Denis, and Josef Hoffmann** will feature in the exhibition, but their works will also ‘dialogue’ with anonymous pieces from the collection of Brussels-based textile designer **Marc Van Hoe**. These little-known creations will thus be given their first public outing—at the Horta Museum and in Brussels.

The spotlight will also be turned on the Belgian representatives of the movement. Visitors will be able to follow the different stages of creation of a work by **Paul Hankar** and compare variations of a wallpaper-design by **Maria Sèthe and Henry Van de Velde**.



*Mabel Syrett, 'Radishes,' design for a Jacquard furnishing fabric, 1900, Van Hoe Collection, Brussels.*



## 60 YEARS OF CREATIVE OUTPUT IN FOUR THEMATIC PHASES

Seeing the different stages involved in these artists' work will give visitors an understanding of how and why Art Nouveau emerged and evolved. Having first sampled the eclectic output of the second half of the 19th century, they will be presented with a series of works illustrating the early stages of Art Nouveau and its opening-up to arts from outside Europe. Unfurling across the next section will be the familiar floral curves that characterized the movement at the close of the century and last on show will be a stricter, more geometric output typical of works dating from the early decades of the 20th century.



C. F. A. Voysey, textile design, 20 July 1889, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.  
Given by G. P. & J. Baker Ltd.

## DIARY DATES

The theme of this exhibition will be explored more fully in a seminar to be organized by the Horta Museum's Research Centre in June 2020. **The exhibition also ties in with the opening, from 19 March 2020, of the former drawing studio on the second floor of Victor Horta's studio.** This space will be given over to Horta's decorative work—in this case in three-dimensional form, with a display of his plaster casts and metalwork.

### Related activities

- Seminar on Art Nouveau decoration, June 2020
- Trail-leaflet for schoolchildren and families detailing two routes round wonderful Art Nouveau houses in the Saint-Gilles district
- Display of Horta-designed floor- and wall-coverings in the architect's study at the Horta Museum
- Mini-workshop for children within the exhibition. Kaleidoscopes provided.
- Carte blanche commission to four contemporary artists to create four wallpaper designs to be hung in four of the Museum's rooms, autumn 2020



*Maurice Denis, 'Trains', wallpaper design, c.1893. Private collection, France.*



## LENDERS



The Van Hoe Collection, Brussels



Art & History Museum, Brussels



Victoria and Albert Museum, London



Nordenfjeldske Kunstindustrimuseum, Trondheim



Bibliothèque Forney, Paris



CIVA & Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles, Bruxelles



De Wit Koninklijke Manufactuur van Wandtapijten, Mechelen



Archives de la Maison Brazet, Bruxelles

And the many private collectors who have generously loaned work.

# Visitor information

## Horta Museum

Rue Américaine, 27  
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Belgium

[www.hortamuseum.be](http://www.hortamuseum.be)

+32 2 543 04 90

[info@hortamuseum.be](mailto:info@hortamuseum.be)

## Getting here

Trams 81, 92, 97 (place Janson) / Bus 54

## Opening times

14.00 to 17.30 Tuesday to Friday incl.

11.00 to 17.30 Saturday and Sunday

Last entry 17.00

Mornings are reserved for group visits.

The interior of the Museum's is made up of 11 half-floors arranged around a narrow central staircase. Because the whole of this structure has listed status, we are unable to welcome visitors with reduced mobility to all areas. A virtual tour is, however, available on application at the ticket-counter.

## Closing times

Every Monday, 1 January, Easter Sunday, 1 May,  
Ascension Day, 21 July, 15 August, 1 November,  
11 November, 25 December

## Prices

Admission to the exhibition is free, but the  
following charges apply for access to other areas:

Adults – 10.00 €

Students (18+) – 5.00 €

Seniors, Belgian jobseekers, residents of Saint-Gilles – 6.00 €

Primary and secondary school children/children 6 to 18 years – 3.00 €

Article 27 – 1.25 €

ICOM, OKV concessions, press-card holders, disabled visitors – free



**St Gilles Gillis**

