Art Nouveau Glass & Pottery

January 5 - February 3, 1985
Mitchell Museum
John R. and Eleanor R. Mitchell Foundation
Mt. Vernon, Illinois
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From the Syracuse University Art Collections

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Introduction

The Paris Exposition Universelle International of 1889 has a two-fold significance for the Syracuse University Art Collection's holdings in Art Nouveau glass and pottery. Over half of the artists or firms represented therein were in attendance at that exhibition, either as participants or as visitors. Emile Galle, Glasfabrik Loetz Witwe, and Clement Massier displayed recent innovations in their artistic lines. Galle showed examples of his recently developed cameo glass, Glasfabrik Loetz Witwe displayed glass in imitation of hardstones, Massier offered pottery with iridescent glazes. The Daum brothers, Antonin and Auguste, and Louis C. Tiffany were among the many speculators struck by these exhibitors. The Daums, already involved in glass production, were inspired by the Galle pieces to create their own art glass. Tiffany took note of the work of Loetz Witwe and Galle, and soon after began to create his own line of commercial ware.

The basic principles of Art Nouveau had their foundation in the English Arts and Crafts movement that was created soon after the midpoint of the nineteenth century. Its main exponents, artists William Morris and philosopher John Ruskin, espoused the view that art should be both beautiful and useful. They fought for a return to some of the standards of simplicity, beauty, and craftsmanship that were associated with earlier, pre-industrial times.

Artists involved with Art Nouveau embraced these points of view, while expanding its principles to include a return to the observation and imitation of nature. They abandoned the straight line in favor of the whiplash and used asymmetrical composition in an attempt to reproduce the forms of botanical growth. The Art Nouveau advocates rejected established academic traditions and the conventional historical revivals. They searched out artistic precedent in areas that were then unpopular and less well known. Certain styles that sprang from distant time and exotic cultures seemed to fulfill their own aspirations: the Middle Ages, the orient and the Middle East, and the recently excavated artifacts of classical civilization. These artists sought to emphasize the structure of the object through its decoration, uniting both to form an organic whole. Most importantly, they refused to maintain the long-standing distinction between fine and decorative arts, and hoped to make beautiful everyday surroundings and objects of daily use. In so doing, the attempt was made to produce ceramics that set bright glazes off against simple hand modeled forms. The Sicard-Weller line of art pottery to recreate his master's innovations. Sicard went on to produce ceramics that set bright glazes off against simple hand modeled forms. The Sicard-Weller line of art pottery was associated with earlier, pre-industrial times.

In Europe, the firm of Loetz Witwe produced glass objects with a graceful metallic lustre that came close to Tiffany's. Together, they inspired a whole range of art glass productions: Frederick Carder's elegant, iridescent Aurene ware; the Quezal Art Glass and Decorating Company's glass line (the founders of the company were formerly employed by Tiffany Glass, where they learned their techniques); and the Vireland Flint (who kept the Tiffany tradition alive by hiring as their artistic director the son of the founder of Quezal Art Glass).

Clément Massier's pottery combined iridescent glaze, natural decoration, and design inspired by the Near East to produce vessels of striking originality. His pupil, Jacques Sicard, was brought to America by the firm of Weller Pottery to recreate his master's innovations. Sicard went on to produce ceramics that set bright glazes off against simple hand modeled forms. The Sicard-Weller line of art pottery would soon rival Tiffany's glass in popular appeal.

In little over thirty years, the creations of the Art Nouveau craftsmen would alter forever the public's attitude towards art in their lives. It continues to be relevant to us today when we are able to view this style as a significant contributor to the changes that have paved the way for our own modern artistic era.
Clement Massier

Daum Nancy, Nancy, France (founded 1878)

Jean Daum was a lawyer and something of an entrepreneur when he came into possession of a failing glass factory in 1878 in Nancy, France (Verrerie de Nancy). His son, Auguste (1853-1909), also a lawyer by profession, entered the glass business in 1879 in a managerial position. He took it upon himself to get the firm onto a secure financial footing. Another son, Antonin (1864-1931), fresh from school with an engineering degree, took over the production side of the business in 1887.

Up until 1890, the factory had been producing commercial tableware and watch glasses. During that year, a bed-ridden Antonin designed the firm's first cameo art glass pieces which were to change the direction of the factory's output. Inspired in part by Gallé's cameo glass, these early pieces were decorated with floral motifs. The next year, a decorating shop was opened and full-scale production of an art glass line was begun. By 1900, Daum began taking prizes at major exhibitions for their innovations in art glass, especially in acid-etched cameo.

Throughout the years, the glassworks has remained under the directorship of the Daum family. They have been able to keep abreast of the decorative trends that have evolved since the Art Nouveau period and continue the production of art glass today.

Émile Gallé (French, 1846-1904)

Gallé is, undoubtedly, the quintessential Art Nouveau aesthetician. He created important and influential designs not only in glass, but in a whole range of decorative objects including furniture and ceramics.

Gallé became involved with glass early on — his father, Charles, was owner of a firm that produced tableware, and Gallé's earliest apprenticeship was at his father's shop. He pursued studies in art and botany (a life-long passion) in Weimar, Germany. Afterwards, he became an apprentice at the firm of Burgun, Schwerer and Company in Miesenthal. There, he became familiar with the latest innovations in glassmaking and was able to carry out research in glass chemistry.

In 1873, Gallé began his own workshop in Nancy, France, and persuaded his father to adjourn his company to the newly formed one. He soon developed designs that combined his love of art and nature, decorating his vessels with floral and insect motifs. This sort of ornamentation would become a hallmark of Gallé's oeuvre.

Gallé explored numerous methods of working with this medium. The best known of these is cameo glass. It is produced by a technique that involves a cutting away of the surface of a vessel to leave a design in relief. Gallé first exhibited cameo glass at the Paris Exposition of 1889; it met with immediate success.

While Gallé was responsible for a good portion of the objects made by his firm, he employed a large number of designers in his factory. All their innovations had to be submitted for his approval. Consequently, there is an artistic cohesion in the overall designs of the line.

After Gallé's death in 1904, the firm's glassware was characterized by a certain mass-produced quality; no new, major forms were developed. It continued production until 1931, with a brief closure during the First World War.

Glasfabrik Johann Loetz Witwe, Klostermühle, Austria (1840-c.1940)

Johann Loetz purchased a glasshouse in Klostermühle, Austria in 1840. He was a master glassmaker and his firm soon gained a reputation for the production of high-quality glass. At his death in 1848, the glassworks was taken over by his wife, Susanne, who named the firm Glasfabrik Johann Loetz Witwe (“Widow Johann Loetz Glassworks”).

Johann Loetz's grandson, Max Ritter von Spaun, took over the firm in 1879. He initiated a vast range of different types of glass and within 10 years, Loetz was winning awards at various European exhibitions.

By 1900, Loetz was one of the largest and most successful glassworks in Europe. The height of its creativeness occurred between 1888 and 1909 when it produced a multitude of designs of an originality and technique that influenced competitive firms in Europe and rivaled what was made in the United States.

In 1899, von Spaun introduced his Papillon glass in Paris. This glass was characterized by its decoration of multiple, closely clustered, iridescent spots of raindrop shapes, and was produced in a variety of colors. It was called Papillon because the glass was said to resemble an enlarged section of a colorful butterfly's wings. Loetz, along with Tiffany, is credited with the most creative use of iridescent glass, and is jointly responsible for its surge in popularity during the Art Nouveau period.

Max von Spaun died in 1909, leaving his son to direct the glassworks. The firm was not faring well financially, and in 1911 went into bankruptcy, to be reorganized as a smaller company. It continued a limited and less inventive production until it closed its doors during World War II.
Clément Massier (French, 1845-1917)

Massier was born in Vallauris, France, the son of a potter. He studied his craft in Bologna, Italy under Gardalì Gaeta­

no. There, he learned the formulas of the metallic effects

used on pottery in Italy during the Renaissance. Many of

his decorative motifs and vessel forms were inspired by

Hispano-Moresque pots. Massier started a factory in Golfe

Juan, France in 1881. He never produced pottery in any

large quantity.

Massier’s ceramics were highly valued during his own

lifetime. A contemporary critic wrote:

The products of M. Massier are all characterized by

originality and technical excellence. Large jar­

dinières and pedestals with colored glazes in imita­

tion of the secondary precious stones are simple

marvels of brilliancy... another noticeable spe­

cialty consists of articles silvered and then covered

with brilliant glazes — pale violet, amber and other

unusual tones. The effect is similar to the Limoges

enamels, and equals them in strength and purity.

1. W. P. Jervis, The Encyclopedia of Ceramics (New York:


Quezal Art Glass and Decorating

Company, Brooklyn, New York (1901-1925)

In 1901, a disgruntled Tiffany Glass employee, Martin

Bach (1865-1924), left Tiffany Glass and Decorating Com­

cany to set up his own glass house in Brooklyn. Bach had

been hired by Tiffany in 1894 as his first mixer in the

Corona plant. He had worked during the early, experimen­
tal years and had learned the ingredients used in Tiffany’s

glass melts and lustering compounds. Bach was joined by

Thomas Johnson, also a former Tiffany worker, who had

been trained as a glass blower at Tiffany’s. He went on to

reproduce the forms and designs he had learned there.

The new firm was named Quezal after the quetzal bird,

known for its multi-colored plumage. Early advertise­

ments compared their lustered glassware to the brilliant

feathers of this bird.

As Quezal Art Glass expanded, it hired more ex-Tiffany

workers. It is not surprising that Quezal ware differed little

from the Tiffany line. No new techniques or designs were

ever to emerge from the firm.

1. Daum Nancy

Steuben Glass Works, Corning, New York

(founded 1903)

The Steuben Glass Works, was created by Frederick Car­
der (1863-1963), an Englishman who came to the United

States in 1903 on a fact-finding tour of various glass­
houses in this country. One of his visits was made to the

T.G. Hawkes Company, a firm that conducted a glass
decorating business in Corning, New York. Carder was

persuaded to join Hawkes soon after, and a new company

was begun under the name of Steuben Glass Works.

Carder exhibited an early interest in decorative arts, and

spent a good deal of his younger days working in his

family owned Leys Pottery. He learned enough about plas­
tic form there to be able to impress John Northwood (a

distinguished cameo glassmaker). Northwood recom­

mended that Carder be hired by the glasshouse of Steves

and Williams, where he quickly rose in the ranks and

became one of their foremost designers. The decisive

fact-finding tour of 1903, was sponsored by the company

as a sort of bonus for work well done by Carder.

Once at Steuben Glass, Carder began experimentation

into the fabrication of iridescent glassware. His first

breakthrough resulted in an iridescent glass of both gold

and blue coloration. This, he called “Aurene,” a word

derived in part from the Latin word aurum (“gold”), and

the Middle English word for sheen (schene). Aurene glass

was designed in a number of different forms and soon

began to rival Tiffany’s iridescent Favrile glass. 1

As artistic director of Steuben Glass, Carder created a

large and continuous production of glassware. He retired

from active participation in the company at the age of 71,

but continued experiments in glass design until his death

at 100.

Steuben Glass continues production of art glass to this
day, and is, perhaps, most frequently associated with this

genre.

1. So much so, that a lawsuit was brought against Carder by

Tiffany in 1913, charging Carder of pirating Tiffany’s patent

on iridescent glass. It was later dropped.
Vineland Flint, Vineland, New Jersey (1857-1931)
Victor Durand (1870-1931), along with his father Victor Durand, Sr., took over the Vineland Glass Manufacturing Company in 1897. Durand had long been involved in glassmaking, serving as an apprentice at the Cristalleries de Baccarat in France, as well as several glassworks in the United States. Up until 1897, Vineland Glass had been involved in the production of cheap bottles and jars. Durand diversified its production, but was still involved with making commercial and functional glass.

Upon the retirement of Durand, Sr., Victor Durand took full control of the firm, and by 1900 he had created one of the most commercially successful glassworks in America. Durand had always been interested in art glass, and decided to start his own line in 1925. He hired Martin Bach, Jr., formerly of the Quezal Art Glass Company, as his artistic director. Bach surrounded himself with former Quezal men, and their earliest productions were well within the Quezal vocabulary. However, they were soon to break away and start an innovative line of their own. By 1926, Durand Art Glass had won a first prize gold medal at the International Exposition in Philadelphia.

Durand was killed in an automobile accident in 1931. At that time, a merger was underway with Kimble Glass Company. Subsequently, Vineland Flint was absorbed by the Kimble Glass Company, art glass production ceased, and the Quezal team was dismissed.

Weller Pottery, Zanesville, Ohio (1872-1948)
Started by Samuel A. Weller in Fultonham, Ohio in 1872. By 1882, he had opened his first factory in Zanesville. Weller entered the art-pottery field in 1895 with the purchase of the Lonhuda Pottery in Steubenville, Ohio.

In 1901, Weller imported two Frenchmen, Jacques Sicard and Henri Gellie, who had been making metallic lusterware for the Clément Massier Pottery in Golfe Juan, France. They continued making iridescent-luster pottery for Weller, a line that became known as "Sicardo.

Sicardo ware is most often cited as the finest art pottery ever made at the Weller firm.


2. Sicardo returned to France in 1907, where he operated a small pottery until his death in 1923. Gellie remained in the United States longer, but died in France in 1917 after being wounded during World War I.
Emile Gallé, Nancy, France (1846-1904)

1. Cameo Glass Bowl/Vase, c. 1895
   - 5 1/2" h x 2 3/4" d
   - Signed: "Gallé" on side
   - Mold blown, acid cut glass with wisteria design in purple on white ground.
   - S.U. 65.719

2. Cameo Glass Vase, c. 1900
   - 3 1/2" h x 3 1/8" d
   - Signed: "Gallé" on side
   - Mold blown, acid cut glass with nasturtium design in orange on white ground.
   - S.U. 65.717

3. Cameo Glass Match Holder, c. 1900
   - 2 9/16" h x 3 1/8" d
   - Signed: "Gallé" on side
   - Mold blown, acid cut glass with nasturtium design in orange on white ground.
   - S.U. 65.718

Glasfabrik Johann Loetz Witwe, Küstermühle, Austria

4. Cobalt-Papillon Vase, c. 1900
   - 6 5/8" h x 4 1/4" d
   - Unsigned
   - Clear blue glass with iridescent blue spatter design.
   - S.U. 65.823

Emile Gallé, Nancy, France (1846-1904)

5. Vase, c. 1900
   - 2 11/2" h x 2 3/8" W X 1 3/4" d
   - Signed: "C.M., Golfe-Juan, A.M." on base
   - Earthenware with painted design of twigs, iridescent glaze in tones of green.
   - S.U. 65.700

6. Vase, c. 1900
   - 2 1/2" h x 3 3/4" d
   - Signed: "C.M., Golfe-Juan, A.M." on base
   - Earthenware with painted design of mistletoe and dots; iridescent glaze in tones of purple, gold, and green.
   - S.U. 65.701

7. Vase, c. 1900
   - 4 3/8" h x 2 3/4" W x 2 1/8" d
   - Signed: "Clement Massier, Golfe-Juan, A.M." on base
   - Earthenware with painted design of graduated dots; iridescent glaze in tones of purple, gold, and blue.
   - S.U. 65.702

8. Vase, c. 1900
   - 4" h x 2 1/2" d
   - Signed: "M.C.M., Golfe-Juan, A.M." on base
   - Earthenware with painted design of mistletoe; iridescent glaze in tones of blue and gold.
   - S.U. 65.703

Quezal Art Glass and Decorating Company
Brooklyn, N.Y.

   - 7 7/8" h x 3 1/8" W X 2 3/4" d
   - Signed: "Quezal" on base
   - Clear amber glass covered with a gold iridescence.
   - S.U. 65.815

10. Light Shade, c. 1902-1925
    - 5 1/2" h x 3 1/2" d
    - Signed: "Quezal" on rim
    - Clear amber glass with gold spider webbing type decoration over an opal feather design bordered in green, all on a gold iridescent ground; notched rim.
    - S.U. 65.818

Steuben Glass Works, Corning, N.Y.
Executed by Frederick Carder (1863-1963)

11. Aurene Vase, c. 1904-1930
    - 4 3/4" h x 5" d
    - Signed: "Steuben" on base
    - Clear blue glass covered with a blue iridescence; pattern of vertical ribs and wide flared top.
    - S.U. 65.819

12. Aurene Finger Bowl and Plate, c. 1910-1914
    - Bowl: 2 1/2" h x 5" d
    - Plate: 1 3/4" h x 6" d
    - Signed: "Aurene - Haviland & Co." on base of each piece
    - Gift of Helen Fowler Moore
    - S.U. 40/50. 198 a & b

13. Calcite Tazza, c. 1915
    - 2 3/4" h x 6" d
    - Unsigned
    - Iridescent glass with gold Aurene lining.
    - Gift of Edward Fricke
    - S.U. 65.134
22. Tiffany

Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company,
Corona, N.Y.

8 1/2" h x 3 1/2" w x 3 1/2" d
Signed: "2699 Aurene" on base
Clear blue glass covered with blue iridescence;
pattern of striations on flower form.
Gift of Mrs. Grace Peckham
S.U. 73.150

15. Decanter with stopper, c. 1892-1893
10 5/8" h x 4 7/8" d
Signed: "1013 L.C. Tiffany, Inc. Favrile" on base
Cyprus design decanter of clear amber glass
covered with gold iridescence with highlights of
purple and pink.
Gift of Helen Fowler Moore
S.U. 40/50.201

16. Cypriote Glass Vase, c. 1899
6 1/4" h x 5 1/2" d
Signed: "L.C.T. K217" on base
Translucent light yellow glass with mottled surface
of dark brown; partially covered with gold
iridescence that drips down from the neck.
Gift of Helen Fowler Moore
S.U. 40/50.191

17. Seven-Stem Pond Lily Lamp, c. 1899-1920
21 1/2" h x 14" d
Signed: "Tiffany Studios, New York/365" on base
Green patinated bronze base of water lilypad, vines,
and buds with seven bronze stems
holding blossom shades of clear amber glass
covered with a gold iridescence with highlights of
purple and pink.
S.U. 65.824

18. Peacock Decorated Vase, c. 1900
18 3/8" h x 11" d
Signed: "Louis C. Tiffany 07352" on base
Clear green glass decorated with eight peacock
"eyes" of amber and green surrounding the rim
and eight smaller peacock "eyes" of purple and green below these.
The bottom of the body has a
dark blue iridescence with silver highlights, the
top portion is an opaque light blue.
Gift of Helen Fowler Moore
S.U. 40/50.188

19. Murano Lamp, c. 1900
18 1/4" h x 11 1/4" d
Signed: "L.C.T. Tiffany, Favrile 538" on base
Clear green glass with gold, green, and blue
iridescence in the Murano design. Domed shade
on slender base.
Gift of Helen Fowler Moore
S.U. 40/50.190

20. Paperweight Vase, c. 1902
4" h x 3 1/2" d
Signed: "L.C.T. R2203" on base
Clear amber glass decorated with dark green
tendrils and scattered red dots.
S.U. 65.812

7 1/2" h x 6 1/2" d
Signed: "L.C. Tiffany, Favrile V445" on base
Opaque brown glass with guilloche decoration of
blue iridescence on the shoulder and two
interlocking gold iridescent waves circling the lower
portion of the body. The exterior has a
light gold iridescence.
Gift of Helen Fowler Moore
S.U. 40/50.190

22. Goose-neck Vase, c. 1905
10 1/4" h x 4" d
Signed: "L.C.T." on rim of base
Numbered: "Y 1967" on light yellow button pontil
Green glass with an inner casing of opaque light
green. Starting at the base and reaching the
bottom of the neck are eight multi-colored
iridescent plumes.
Gift of Helen Fowler Moore
S.U. 40/50.192

23. Flower-Form Vase, c. 1906
12 1/4" h x 4 1/2" d
Signed: "L.C.T. 76914" on base
Vase of clear amber glass with a ribbed base, stem
and bowl. The entire vase has a gold iridescence
with purple and pink highlights.
Gift of Helen Fowler Moore
S.U. 40/50.183

24. Punch Bowl, c. 1909
16" h x 12 1/2" d
Signed: "Louis C. Tiffany, Favrile, 63371D" on
underside of bowl
Clear amber glass covered with gold iridescence
with highlights of purple and pink. Brass
pedestal with four elephant heads as feet; brass
rim with two dragons in an oriental manner.
Gift of Helen Fowler Moore
S.U. 40/50.189

Gift of Helen Fowler Moore
S.U. 40/50.190
25. Laminated Vase, c. 1912
5¼" h x 3" d
Signed: "L.C.T. 5023Q, Favrile" on base
Opaque glass comprised of yellow, mustard-yellow, green, tan, and dark brown swirls and patches.
Gift of Helen Fowler Moore
S.U. 40/40.194

26. Favrile Vase, c. 1917
12" h x 6" d
Signed: "L.C. Tiffany, Favrile 6560L" on base
Glass pyriform vessel with gold iridescent sides, intaglio carved with green lily pads and decorated with green tendrils.
Gift of Helen Fowler Moore
S.U. 40/40.196

The Vineland Flint Glass Works, Vineland, N.J.
27. King Tut Sherbet Glass, c. 1924-1931
3¼" h x 4" d
Unsigned
Clear amber glass with damascene decoration in blue on an opal ground; gold iridescent base and interior.
S.U. 65.622

Weller Pottery, Zanesville, Ohio
Executed by Jacques Sicard (1865-1923)
28. Vase, c. 1901-1907
5½" h x 4½" d
Signed: "Sicard-Weller" on side
Incised: "Weller, 11" on base
Earthenware with painted design of leaves and dots; iridescent glaze in tones of green, purple, and blue.
S.U. 65.706

29. Vase, c. 1901-1907
5¾" h x 6½" w x 5¼" d
Signed: "Sicard-Weller" on side
Incised: "56,3" on base
Earthenware with painted design of mistletoe and dots; iridescent glaze in tones of purple, green, and blue.
S.U. 65.707

30. Vase, c. 1901-1907
4½" h x 3½" d
Signed: "Sicard-Weller" on side
Earthenware with painted design of stylized flowers; iridescent glaze in tones of purple, green, and gold.
S.U. 65.709

31. Vase, c. 1901-1907
5" h x 3" d
Signed: "Sicard-Weller" on side
Earthenware with painted design of rings and dots; iridescent glaze in tones of gold, green, purple, and blue.
S.U. 65.710

32. Vase, c. 1901-1907
7½" h x 4" d
Signed: "Sicard-Weller" on side
Earthenware with painted design of flowers and dots; iridescent glaze in tones of purple, green, and blue.
S.U. 65.711

33. Vase, c. 1901-1907
7½" h x 5" d
Signed: "Sicard-Weller" on side
Incised: "27" on base
Earthenware with painted design of violets and dots; iridescent glaze in tones of green, blue, purple, and yellow.
S.U. 65.712

34. Vase, c. 1901-1907
5" h x 6" d
Signed: "Sicard-Weller" on side
Earthenware with painted design of violets; iridescent glaze in tones of purple, green, and blue.
S.U. 65.715

35. Jardiniere, c. 1901-1907
9½" h x 12½" d
Signed: "Sicard-Weller" on side
Incised: "211" on base
Earthenware with painted design of irises; iridescent glaze in tones of purple, blue-green, and yellow.
S.U. 65.716
Acknowledgment
We are very fortunate and proud to be able to present this exhibition of fine art glass and pottery from the collections of Syracuse University. These objects represent but a small portion of that University’s large holdings that span the entire history of art and cover a vast array of cultures. It is a testament to the Art Collection’s educational and cultural mission that they are so willing to share these objects with other institutions.

I would like to thank Thomas Piché, Public Information Officer for the Everson Museum in Syracuse, New York, for his extensive research and writing that went into the preparation of this catalogue and exhibition.

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This exhibition documents the cooperation that is inherent in the museum field. Underlying this spirit is an educational philosophy shared by all that mandates the sharing of one museum’s objects with another in an ongoing attempt to raise the aesthetic awareness of the general public.

David Prince
Acting Executive Director
Mitchell Museum
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Bibliography

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