Art Deco New York

Volume 3, Issue 1 Spring 2018

Journal of the Art Deco Society of New York

Deco Conversions Automats Cocktail Culture Exploring Israel Modernism

THE EXPERTS IN ART DECO RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE

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Ralph Walker portfolio alone.

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– Ralph Walker

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President's Message

Dear Deco Friends,

It is hard to believe that this month marks the fifth anniversary of my assuming the presidency of the Art Deco Society of New York (ADSNY). It has been an honor, a privilege, and a joy to collaborate with our members, our volunteers, and leaders of various cultural institutions to celebrate New York's great Art Deco architecture, design, and culture.

I am very proud of ADSNY's many achievements over the past five years. With your support, we have played an essential role in the preservation of our Art Deco icons and presented 120 programs of lectures, walking tours, and special events, including our recent tour to explore the roots of Modernism in Israel. As a former teacher, I am especially delighted that *Documenting Deco*, our growing K-12 educational program launched in 2014, has grown to serve students in ten city schools and is inspiring the next generation of New Yorkers to recognize and appreciate the Art Deco treasures in all of the boroughs. And, I am very pleased with our fourth issue of the *Art Deco New York* journal.

These achievements were made possible through the dedication of ADSNY's volunteers, members of our Board of Directors and Advisory Board, financial support from our members, and grants from the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural affairs, the Puffin Foundation, and more.

This June 2018 issue of the *Art Deco New York* journal is the product of long hours from our devoted volunteer team, including ADSNY's Vice President and Executive Editor, Anthony W. Robins; Susan Klein, Graphic Designer; Sandra Tansky, Copy Editor; Proofreaders Alma Kadragic, Peter Singer, and Harriet Abramson; and photographer Lynn Farrell. Special thanks to Meghan Weatherby, who masterfully managed to supervise its publication while juggling her many responsibilities as ADSNY's Executive Director.

We hope that you enjoy the wide range of articles, including Mary Beth Betts' insightful cover story about the conversions of Art Deco commercial buildings into luxury residences taking place throughout the city today. Anthony W. Robins whisks us back in time to the city's first fast food chain, the legendary Automats that changed the way New Yorkers dined. We sail the high seas on legendary Art Deco ocean liners with Bill Miller, indulge in Jazz Age cocktail culture and ephemera with Maddy Lederman and Stephen Visakay, and explore René Lalique's masterpieces with Nick Dawes.

We hope that you enjoy this issue. On behalf of the ADSNY team, best wishes for a wonderful summer.

Roberta Nusim, President

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What is Art Deco?

By Judith Gura

When I think of Art Deco, the first thing that comes to mind is the French incarnation of the style that's inextricably tied to the event from which its name was derived: L'Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes. Notwithstanding subsequent interpretations in America and many other countries, the masterpieces of that first generation of Deco virtuosos remain, in my estimation, the crowning achievements of what became an international phenomenon. One of my graduate school instructors referred to what was then called *Le style moderne* as "the last great period style," a reminder that French Art Deco was the final iteration of the superlative craftsmanship and design in luxury goods for which France had been celebrated since the time of Louis XIV.

> "Art Deco encouraged the acceptance of contemporary design"

Looking at the extravagance of many French Art Deco designs, we're apt to forget that their makers intended them to be modern. Formed in 1900, the *Société des artistes décorateurs* proposed new standards for design and production, and in 1912, the French government decided to sponsor a decorative arts exhibition that could recapture the country's stature. Originally scheduled for 1915, it was delayed by war until 1925. Though many countries participated, the exhibition organizers hoped that the French entries would be outstanding enough to reposition France at the forefront of design, and to compete with the innovative work emerging from Austria and Germany—hence the inclusion of the key words "*industriels modernes*," declaring the French alliance with the Modernist camp.

The guidelines for the exhibition did not specify what the designs should be, but only what they should *not* be: "…Reproductions, imitations, and counterfeits of ancient styles will be strictly prohibited," read the pamphlet of regulations. This meant eschewing anything that was visibly "period" in origin—none of the Louis, or their successors, and nothing of the more recent Victorian era, or overwrought Art Nouveau. But it was difficult for the French to wrest themselves free of their heritage.

The master furniture craftsmen and *ensembliers*—interior designers—circumvented the restrictions by using the richest materials, making the most of exotic patterned woods like amboyna, rosewood, and zebrawood, adorning surfaces with layers of lustrous lacquer and using accent materials like galuchat and ivory. Ornament, an element that was studiously avoided by the Bauhaus and proponents of the more radical forms of Modernism, was enthusiastically embraced in Art Deco masterpieces by Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann, Louis Süe, André Mare, Pierre Chareau, and Jean Dunand. Metalwork by Edgar Brandt and glass by René Lalique followed a similar aesthetic of maximalism rather than minimalism. It is the enduring influence of classical French design that makes French Art Deco pieces so irresistibly elegant—and so increasingly rare in the current marketplace.

Despite America's absence from the exhibition—Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover declined on the grounds that the United States did not have sufficient examples of good modern design—the new French style had considerable impact on America, though at first only for its links to tradition. Showcased at a 1926 exhibition that traveled to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and eight other major institutions, works by Ruhlmann and Süe et Mare were praised in the accompanying brochure for preserving "the spirit of the older French furniture…in forms suitable for the modern home." Apparently, for Americans, the idea of Modernism was preferable to its actual incarnation. It would take about another decade for *Le style moderne*, particularly in the decorative arts, to be Americanized into the streamlined, more accessible, and ultimately more successful version of the style that was later renamed Art Deco. French Art Deco encouraged the acceptance of contemporary design, and remains a high point in the chronicle of design history.

Judith Gura is a design historian, author, and lecturer on twentieth century design and decorative arts. Her most recent book is Postmodernism Design Complete: Design, Furniture, Graphics, Architecture, Interiors.

Front Cover: Irving Trust Company's Banking Room at One Wall Street. The 1931 building was designed by the architectural firm Voorhees, Gmelin & Walker. The mosaic was fabricated by Pühl & Wagner and installed by Ravenna Mosaics. The abstract pattern, created by Perry Coke Smith and Hildreth Meière, provided scale and gradations of color for the faceted design.
Photo: Hildreth Meière Dunn © 2009
hildrethmeiere.org

ADSNY thanks David Garrard Lowe, author of the book *Art Deco New York*, for granting permission to use the title for this journal.

The Art Deco Society of New York (ADSNY) is a not-for-profit 501c3 tax-exempt organization chartered in the state of New York in 1982 for the purpose of education, preservation, and celebration of the city's Art Deco icons and heritage.

Art Deco Society of New York
ArtDeco.org | Info@ArtDeco.org
P.O. Box 6205 New York, NY 10150-6205
(212) 679-DECO (3326)

From Business to Pleasure: Transforming Manhattan's Art Deco Office Towers

By Mary Beth Betts

Long ago, advocates for historic preservation learned that one effective way to keep old buildings standing was adaptive reuse: to find new uses for them. Approximately forty years ago, this approach was tried with Manhattan commercial buildings that had outlived their original purpose, but could find new life through conversion to multi-family residences. Early examples in New York included Liberty Tower on Liberty Street in lower Manhattan and the former U.S. Archive Building on Christopher Street, but they remained rare in New York until the 1990s, when older commercial buildings were losing tenants at the same time that the city's housing shortage was growing more severe.

American Radiator Building, 40 West 40th Street, was designed by architect Raymond Hood and built 1923-24, and designated a New York City Landmark in 1974.

Cities Service Building, 70 Pine Street, was designed by architects Clinton & Russell, Holton & George and built 1930-31, and designated a New York City Landmark in 2011.

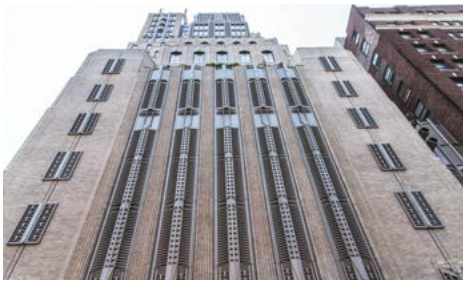
Panhellenic Tower, 3 Mitchell Place, was designed by architect John Mead Howells and built 1927-28, and designated a New York City Landmark in 1998.

Today, some of the most extraordinary and successful examples of adaptive reuse involve major skyscrapers, and in particular Art Deco office towers. They include the conversion of six significant Art Deco—or in the case of the American Radiator Building at 40 West 40th Street, proto-Art Deco—buildings: Panhellenic Tower at 3 Mitchell Place; the Cities Service building at 70 Pine Street; and a trio of buildings designed by Ralph Walker: the Walker Tower at 212 West 18th Street, the Barclay-Vesey Building at 100 Barclay Street, and the Irving Trust Company Building at One Wall Street.

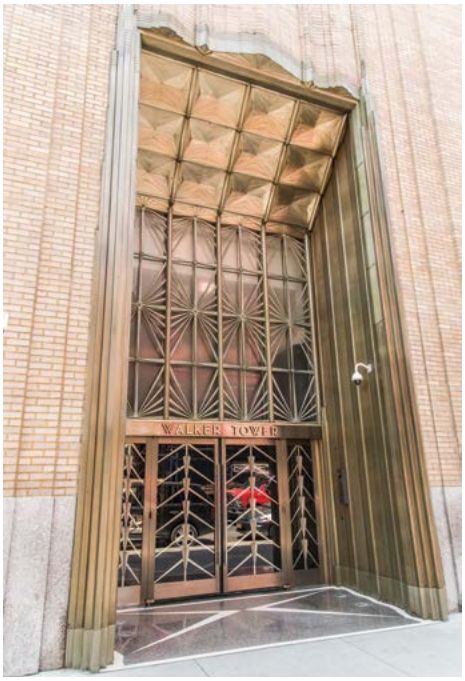
Conversions Begin Downtown

The 1990s boom in residential conversions started in Lower Manhattan. In response to an abundance of vacant downtown office space following the 1987 stock market crash, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's administration created a plan for revitalization through zoning changes and tax incentives. Developers found the floor plates—the total area of a given floor—of 1920s office buildings too small for contemporary offices with their open plans and technological needs, but just right for residential use. Former Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) Director of Research Marjorie Pearson said that Chairwoman Jennifer Raab "saw an opportunity to capitalize on the program and move forward with designation of early twentieth century office buildings." Lower Manhattan conversions of older office towers offered the best of the old and new.

According to a study by the Alliance for Downtown New York, *Everything Old is New Again: Conversion of Historic Properties in Lower Manhattan*, "Combined with Class A space in new construction, the district's rich collection of historic, Landmarked buildings is an influential selling point." Tax incentives like the 421-g real estate tax abatement program initially spurred conversion, but even when those credits expired in 2006, residential conversion continued.

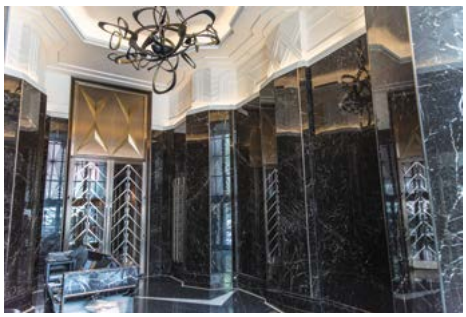


Walker Tower at 212 West 18th Street, built in 1929, and designed by famed designer Ralph Walker of Voorhees, Gmelin & Walker.



The ground floor entrance of Walker Tower boasts the impressive lines, details, and high quality materials original to the building.

Walker Tower lobby is particularly inviting with ornate detailing and sweeping interior spaces.



The decorative elements of the Walker Tower lobby are a classic representation of the Deco era.

Designated New York City Landmarks in more traditional styles such as the neo-Gothic Manhattan Company Building at 40 Wall Street were among the first to benefit from the program. Even without the incentives, however, developers saw the advantages of repurposed buildings, particularly those with Art Deco features. While several such buildings are designated New York City Landmarks, making their demolition almost impossible, developers often promote Landmark status as an added value. Developer Adam Rose says the Cities Service Building's designated status "was the least problematic" issue.

The Attractions of Residential Conversion

Examined as a whole, the conversions reveal some physical and associational values shared by 1920s office towers. In general, conversions can be seen to provide the best of old and new, combining contemporary interiors with historic exteriors and sometimes lobbies. In the words of a condominium owner at Barclay-Vesey, "This brick building is nearly 100 years old, but it's got all the modern amenities I want, plus high ceilings, big windows, and lots of character." James Nevius in the *New York Post* wrote: "These older buildings often feature covetable amenities from high ceilings (often 13 feet) to open floor plans that are far more expensive to build—and ultimately to buy—than with new construction. These structures also offer unrivaled period details such as gilded lobbies, ornamented façades, and ultra-thick, nearly soundproof windows."

Spectacular views: In websites and articles developers promoted the extraordinary views at the Panhellenic, Walker, and Irving Trust buildings. The setbacks mandated for commercial buildings by the city's 1916 zoning law make terraces possible for a larger number of apartments than in traditional apartment buildings. Because 1920s buildings relied on daylight for illumination—as well as windows that actually opened—the resulting spaces enjoy sunlight and fresh air, as well as high ceilings. Barbara Ballinger writing in *Multifamily Executive Magazine* noted: "Today's residential buyers crave views, light, and outdoor space."

Construction quality: The presence of art works and the type of materials used, inside and outside, are also desirable. According to DXA, the firm that converted the Barclay-Vesey building, "You don't really see the same sort of grandiose spaces you'd find in pre-war structures in contemporary developments. In addition, the construction methods used in pre-war buildings are often much better quality."

Multiple floor plans: Even the diminishing dimensions of floor plates caused by the upper-story setbacks—initially viewed as a drawback—are now seen as an advantage, providing for a greater variety of floor plans and apartment layouts. According to the website 6sqft, sponsored by the Barclay-Vesey ownership, "The varying floor plates, which was a challenge at the start, gave us the opportunity to create a variety of sizes and programs within the apartment types. This enables us to cater to different buyers, young professionals, and to large families." The large floor plates of the lower stories provide space for desirable amenities for recreation, storage, restaurants, and social clubs.

Historic cachet: The association with New York City history and the panache of Art Deco buildings, longtime icons of the Manhattan skyline, have great appeal. Michelle Higgins reported in *The New York Times* that "a historic pedigree is viewed as a way to stand out in Manhattan's increasingly crowded luxury development market." She quoted Jonathan J. Miller, the president of the appraisal firm Miller Samuel, as saying, "It's that first impression that really sets the tone for the rest of the building. The idea is for a lobby to really blow away the people coming in."

Economics: Finally, Elise Knutsen writing in the *New York Observer* about the Walker Tower hints at another benefit, that of cost: "If you're looking for a new pad and want the pre-war façade without the pre-war maintenance fees, this might be a good place to start." In other words, Art Deco office towers can provide a luxurious façade without the expense associated with purpose-built pre-war apartment buildings.

An Early Example: The American Radiator Building

An important precedent for these conversions is the American Radiator building, 40 West 40th Street, designed by Raymond Hood and built in 1923-24 as an office building. The striking black and gold building straddles the line between the

neo-Gothic style of the earlier 1920s and the Art Deco design that Hood would develop later at the Daily News, McGraw Hill, and Rockefeller Center buildings. Its design is also a precedent for the use of massing and color by architects Ralph Walker, Ely Jacques Kahn, and Joseph Urban. The four architects, in fact, were close colleagues and had regularly scheduled lunches together. The LPC designated the Radiator building a New York City Landmark in 1974. The designation was controversial at the time, according to Pearson: " . . . the Commission's action, was not without controversy in part because of the building's dramatic design, and designation was opposed by the American Standard Company, the owners of the building."

The initial history of this early designation of a tall office building—only the Flatiron Building, 175 Fifth Avenue, and the Liberty Tower, 55 Liberty Street, both designated in 1966, are earlier—reveals some of the problems encountered in converting office buildings. By 1994, according to Christopher Gray's "Streetscapes" column in *The New York Times*, the Radiator building had been vacant for four years. Gray noted that its typically small floor areas would be more profitable for residential use, and that the owner, Clio Biz, was actively pursuing this. In late 1997 Philip Pilevsky and Brian McNally bought the structure and converted it into The Bryant Park Hotel, which opened three years later. The hotel thrives today, suggesting that designation has both preserved a significant building and encouraged creative approaches to adapting historic properties.

The Panhellenic Tower

The Panhellenic Tower (later the Beekman Tower Hotel) at 3 Mitchell Place near East 51st Street and First Avenue was designed by John Mead Howells and built in 1927-28 to provide affordable housing for young working women. Designated by LPC in 1998, the building underwent an extensive exterior restoration completed in 2011. In January 2013 the building was purchased for $82 million, renovated for another $24.2 million, and repositioned as "luxury residential and corporate housing units, and 3,500 square feet of ground-floor community and retail space." The building's website touts its status as a 1920s Art Deco skyscraper, its neighborhood, its views, and its architect: "The Beekman Tower is an historical Landmark that rises prominently over the East River in one of Manhattan's most exclusive neighborhoods."

The Trend Moves to Larger Skyscrapers: The Cities Service Building

From these comparatively slighter Art Deco towers with their smaller floor plates, the residential conversion boom has moved to taller and more massive Art Deco towers. The Cities Service building, 70 Pine Street, designed by architects Clinton & Russell, Holton & George and built 1930-31, was designated by LPC in 2011. The 952-feet, 66-story building, an icon of the Manhattan skyline, was at the time of its completion the tallest structure in lower Manhattan and the third tallest structure in the world. The Commission designated both the exterior and the public lobby spaces, but not the spectacular glass-enclosed observatory, ineligible at the time because it was not customarily accessible to the public.

Rose Associates purchased the building in 2012 to convert it to residential use. According to *Curbed New York*, the plan, completed in 2016, was for residential apartments, extensive amenities, an extended-stay hotel, retail, and a yet-to-be-realized restaurant. The StreetEasy Blog wrote that there are 611 residential units, with 150 having private outdoor space, and 400 different floor plans. The building's website highlights its merger of old and new: "Soaring 66 stories in the sky, 70 Pine rises above Lower Manhattan reclaiming its place as a historic fixture of the Manhattan skyline. Re-imagined for residential living, every space has been thoughtfully designed to embody the style, technology, and convenience of modern living while capturing the vibrant spirit of classic New York." The Alliance for Downtown praised the building: "New York City's most iconic Art Deco building still stands out as a slender and alluring fixture on the Lower Manhattan skyline. An enclosed glass observatory on the 66th floor offers sensational views. The lobby was Landmarked in 2011, and indeed, few buildings from this era boast such a spacious, ornate, and well-preserved public space."

The Walker Buildings

The last three conversions are all the work of a single architectural firm: McKenzie, Voorhees & Gmelin, later known as Voorhees, Gmelin & Walker, and its chief

The exterior and the public lobby spaces of Cities Service Building were designated a New York City Landmark in 2011.

The Cities Service Building was at the time of its completion the tallest structure in lower Manhattan and the third tallest structure in the world.

The Pine Street lobby of the Cities Service Building was Landmarked in 2011.

The Cities Service Building lobby is a spacious, ornate and well-preserved example of Art Deco.

One Wall Street, constructed in 1929-31 at the intersection of Broadway and Wall Street, was designated a New York City Landmark in 2001.

The Red Banking Room of One Wall Street dazzles with its red mosaic-encrusted walls and ceiling. Photo: Hildreth Meière, hildrethmeiere.org

Detail of the red mosaic-encrusted walls and ceiling. Photo: Hildreth Meière, hildrethmeiere.org

designer Ralph Walker. Walker is famed in American architectural history for the Barclay-Vesey Building, considered the first and prototypical Art Deco skyscraper, and his career has enjoyed renewed interest thanks to Kathryn E. Holliday's exhibition and monograph on his work, sponsored by the developers of the Walker Tower. As described in a *Daily News* article, "The surge of interest of work by Walker, who died in 1973, has not been accidental. The development team behind Walker Tower, which began selling in 2012, worked with branding expert Richard Pandiscio and spent months delving into Walker's story in a bid to educate prospective buyers on the importance of the architect's work and the quality of his buildings, even going so far as to commission a book on the subject." What made Walker buildings special? "For one thing, they're great examples of New York City's Art Deco history, with impressive lines and details. They're also some of the city's sturdiest structures. Walker was the architect of choice for the New York Telephone Co., and many of his buildings were used for storing heavy telephone equipment, meaning they had to support a great deal of weight."

Walker Tower

The first Walker building converted to residential use was Walker Tower at 212 West 18th Street. Built in 1929 for the New York Telephone Company, it was purchased in 2009 for a residential conversion, completed in 2012, though Verizon, the successor to New York Telephone, kept the first eight floors. The conversion includes a four-story addition, rooftop garden, and a change in fenestration, possible because Walker Tower is the only building in the group not a Landmark. The architect of the conversion, Nancy Ruddy of Cetra Ruddy Architecture, praised the building's "great bones," high quality materials, and lack of significant alterations, adding, "The ground floor still had its beautiful metalwork, and on the outside Verizon hadn't made significant changes."

The building's website touts its Walker pedigree, modern amenities, private terraces, high ceilings, and spectacular views: "Built before neighborhood height limits were enacted, Walker Tower rises high above its surroundings and features stunning and protected 360-degree Manhattan views." Elise Knutsen, in her *Observer* article, praised the building's "lavish entryways, ornate detailing, and sweeping interior spaces that are unheard of in today's construction practices." The conversion was so successful that the same team purchased another Walker telephone company building at 425 West 50th Street, creating Stella Tower, named for Walker's wife.

The Barclay-Vesey Building

Walker's most famous building, the Barclay-Vesey Building, was built in 1923-27 for the New York Telephone Company. This was Walker's first major design and the building is credited with being the first New York City Art Deco style skyscraper. Thanks to Walker's skillful handling of the setbacks required by the 1916 zoning code, the result was dramatic massing combined with complex nontraditional ornament. This established the model for the massing and decoration of subsequent Art Deco buildings. The building's exterior and interior were designated as Landmarks in 1991.

In 2013 a developer purchased the top twenty-one floors of the building to convert those stories to residential use while Verizon continues to occupy the lower stories. Initially the lower stories' massive floor plates might seem difficult to convert to residential use, but in the *Post* Nevius writes about both Barclay-Vesey and One Wall: "Similarly, the large floor plates on lower stories and deep basements give buildings like 1 Wall and 100 Barclay ample room for amenities—in the latter, 40,000 square feet, including two pools." The building's website praises the features of the Landmarked lobby: "Today, the original touches have been restored to new grandeur. They can be found in the vibrant overhead murals depicting the history of human communications that line the vaulted Grand Lobby ceilings, and in the intricate and ornate cast bonze detailing that surrounds the elevators."

One Wall Street

Walker designed One Wall Street as the corporate headquarters for the Irving Trust Company. It was constructed in 1929-31 at the intersection of Broadway and Wall Street, which was considered to be the "most expensive real estate in New York." Designated a New York City Landmark in 2001, it was subsequently acquired by Macklowe Properties in 2014 for residential conversion. The faceted limestone-clad building has spectacular interior spaces including an observation lounge with large windows featuring panoramic views of the city and the original banking hall, known as the Red Room after Hildreth Meière's red mosaic-encrusted walls and ceiling. The website for the building spells out its desirable features: "The building itself has many features including exceptional panoramic views, ideal floor plates for multiple uses, excellent ceiling heights, the 'Red Room,' multiple entrances and access to multiple transportation hubs."

The conversion of Art Deco office towers into residential buildings continues to be a success. While critics once voiced concerns that this was a passing trend, the opportunity to own an apartment with a distinctive, historical façade, perhaps a fabulous lobby, high ceilings, great views and light, combined with modern construction and *au courant* amenities, strikes many buyers as too good to pass up.

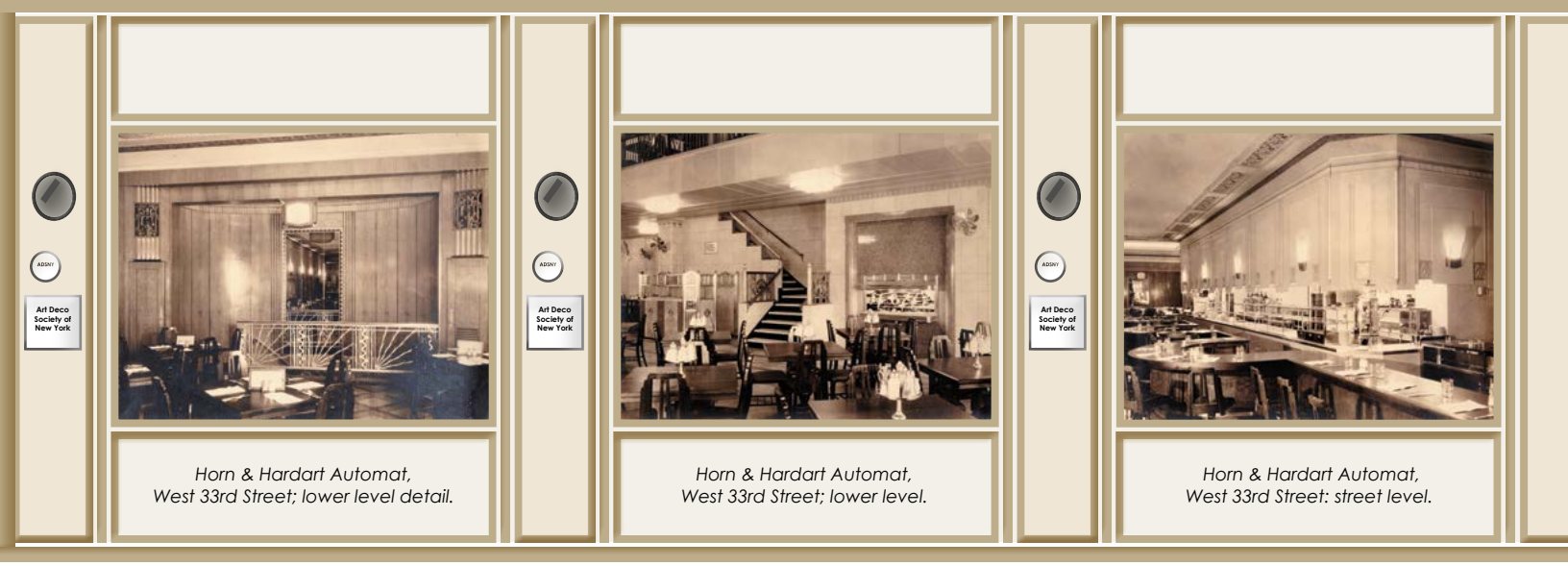
Mary Beth Betts is an architectural historian at the Public Design Commission and The Skyscraper Museum. She was the curator of exhibitions on the architecture of New York City Hall and McKim, Mead & White and has published essays on the New York City waterfront, the architecture of Cass Gilbert and New York City Hall.

Photos: Lynn Farrell

Art Deco Automats in 1930: An Interview With Louis Allen Abramson

By Anthony W. Robins

New Yorkers and visitors of a certain age remember with great affection the old Horn & Hardart Automats, such a well-known institution that they inspired songs across the decades from Irving Berlin's Depression-era "Let's Have Another Cup of Coffee" to the original 1949 *Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend*: "A kiss may be grand but it won't pay the rental



Horn & Hardart Automat, West 33rd Street; lower level detail.

Horn & Hardart Automat, West 33rd Street; lower level.

Horn & Hardart Automat, West 33rd Street: street level.

on your humble flat, or help you at the Automat," to a 1960s comedy revue number (at Julius Monk's Upstairs at the Downstairs) sung in a tragic tone of voice: "It's autumn at the Automat!"

Often credited as the nation's first major fast food chain, Horn & Hardart at its peak became the world's largest restaurant company, serving some 800,000 people every day.[1]

When it first opened in 1902 in Philadelphia and then in 1912 in New York (but nowhere else), the Automat posed as the restaurant of the future, offering Automatic dining: find the various components of your meal in a wall of shiny steel and glass compartments, insert the requisite number of nickels, and serve yourself.

By the 1930s, the Automat had become a refuge for the Depression-era down-and-out, who famously mixed the free ketchup with the free hot water to make a passable tomato soup.

By the 1960s, Automats delighted children who could get change for a dollar from the change lady—with a sweep of her hand deftly rolling out a half-circle of twenty nickels—and then, as empowered diners, choose from chicken pot pie or baked beans, various sandwiches, and, best of all, desserts: rice pudding, strawberry shortcake, or coconut custard pie.

The unkind decade of the 1970s saw most Horn & Hardart outlets in New York rebranded and redesigned as Burger Kings, so very few of the original façades survive.[2] Lost with the happy childhood memories are the wonderful Art Deco Automats of the 1920s and 1930s; just one—at Broadway and West 104th Street—has earned Landmark status. But once upon a time Horn & Hardart brought Modernist sparkle to neighborhoods all over town.

One firm, F.P. Platt & Brother, designed most of the city's Automats, but two of the most intriguing came from the hand of an architect who, for a time, specialized in streamlined eateries: Louis Allen Abramson. I came across these two buildings—one on West 33rd Street, the other on West 181st Street—in early 1980 while researching Horn & Hardart. I hunted articles on his work, and then, on a whim, flipped open the Manhattan phone book, and discovered a listing for him on lower Fifth Avenue. I dialed the number, not knowing what to expect, and heard the voice of Abramson, then 93 years old. We arranged an interview, and on February 16th at three in the afternoon I found myself in his living room with a tape recorder.

Abramson had designed the two Automats in 1930—exactly half a century earlier. To a 29-year-old historian, he was living history. Abramson got his start as an office boy to John Duncan, the legendary late Victorian architect who designed Grant's Tomb in the 1890s. From Duncan he learned to admire the work of McKim, Mead & White. When Abramson spoke of that firm's University Club or Penn Station, he was talking about buildings that he likely saw under construction. Abramson designed his first building, a Y.W.H.A. on West 110th Street, in 1913; he smiled as he recalled the design: "The auditorium was Stanford White's Italian. That was the influence."

Abramson died in 1985, at the age of 98. But though he's gone, thanks to twentieth century cassette technology, we can still hear the voice of this remarkable man. The following is an edited excerpt from the transcript of that 1980 interview.

AWR: *How did you come by the commission from Horn & Hardart?*

LAA: I have tried to reconstruct how they first came to me, and I'll be damned if I can remember. The only clue that I have is that the real estate people that handled their work also did work with my brother, who was an attorney, and I imagine that was how it came about. Then they came to me, they wanted me to do a job for them, I say a little job, a restaurant on West 33rd Street, near Seventh Avenue.

AWR: *Had you been in a Horn & Hardart Automat before you designed these two in 1930?*

LAA: When I was studying engineering, there used to be a little place on lower Broadway. Duncan's office was on 25th, 26th Street and Fifth Avenue, and I used to walk down to Cooper Union, and I used to stop in there and have my dinner. I'd forgotten all about that little place. It must've been one of the very early ones, a dingy sort of a place. [Later, when his own office was near Fifth Avenue and 45th Street] when we were in a rush, a bunch of the draftsmen and myself would go in [a basement Automat] at 45th Street and Fifth Avenue. As a matter of fact, they had a delightful men's room I recall, very spacious, very accommodating. Anyway, we were familiar with the operation.

AWR: *What were they like to work with?*

LAA: I enjoyed working with them, because they were very easy to get along with. I had almost no contact with them excepting a young man, the liaison, and I really had very little to do with him . . . they wanted me to be extremely conscious in the working areas of sanitation. Everything would be as easily cleanable as possible. Nothing absorbent in the working areas, for instance. That's all I can recall of my personal

Horn & Hardart Automat, West 181st Street; interior.

Horn & Hardart Automat, West 181st Street; close-up showing the wall and ceiling ornamental glass.

Longchamps restaurant, first floor of the 42nd Street side of the Chanin Building.

contact with anybody in connection with the organization.

AWR: *What kind of instructions did they give you regarding the architectural style of the 33rd Street building?*

LAA: I knew they were building in what would now be termed Art Deco, I suppose, [including] a restaurant on Sixth Avenue, and rather nicely done. I asked them whether they had any preference for style, and I recall that Mr. Hardart said yes, we like modern, but not Moderne. I was very much amused by that.

AWR: *What did that mean to you? Didn't you do the reverse? Wouldn't you call the 33rd Street building Moderne, and not modern?*

LAA: Perhaps you can give me the distinction. I can't. I think it's a fine line. I'm sure that I was influenced by the one near my office on Sixth Avenue, and if that's the character of the thing they wanted, why, I'd take that as my base and proceed. Anyway, I designed that little one down there, and then I built one up in Washington Heights.

AWR: *Did they say anything about style?*

LAA: They left it entirely to me, and I don't remember that I ever submitted any designs to them. I'm sure I never did.

AWR: *What do you remember about the 181st Street building?*

LAA: *This is* a building that brings back very many memories. I remember it, because I had a great deal of fun. I developed the design myself. It was on the way to the George Washington Bridge, whose opening was right in that period. That was the motive in the design.

AWR: *What is the design of the glass on the wall about—the skyline, tug boats, a woman's figure?*

LAA: [Laughing] Oh, you're giving me credit for having the memory of an elephant! I couldn't recall. I have no recollection at all.[3]

AWR: *The 181st Street Automat looks more elaborate than many others.*

LAA: That was an expensive building. And I'm sure that they never came to me and said that we want to cut back on the cost. They gave me carte blanche.

AWR: *Did that ever happen, before or since?*

LAA: [Laughing] Rather rare.

AWR: *Did you go on to do other restaurants?*

LAA: I went all the way from a busy bee type of quick service all the way to the arrivals building at Kennedy Airport, the big restaurant [there]. In fact, I did the restaurants for the Brass Rail who were the operators before that, in the old building, in the Quonset Hut buildings that were out at Kennedy at the time, when it was still called Idlewild. (Abramson also designed the Brass Rail outlets at the New York 1939 World's Fair, as well as several other cafeteria chains.)

AWR: *I found a picture of a Longchamps restaurant you designed in 1936. How many did you do?*

LAA: Five or six. As a matter of fact, I was telling my wife the other day the fun that I had working, because the client could not read plans. I continued doing those restaurants until the owner got into trouble with the authorities.

Abramson began the series of Longchamps restaurants in 1934, and worked with painter Winold Reiss on six branches, each arranged around a different pictorial theme. One outlet once occupied much of the 42nd Street front of the Chanin Building—a perfect tenant for one of Midtown's earliest Art Deco skyscrapers.

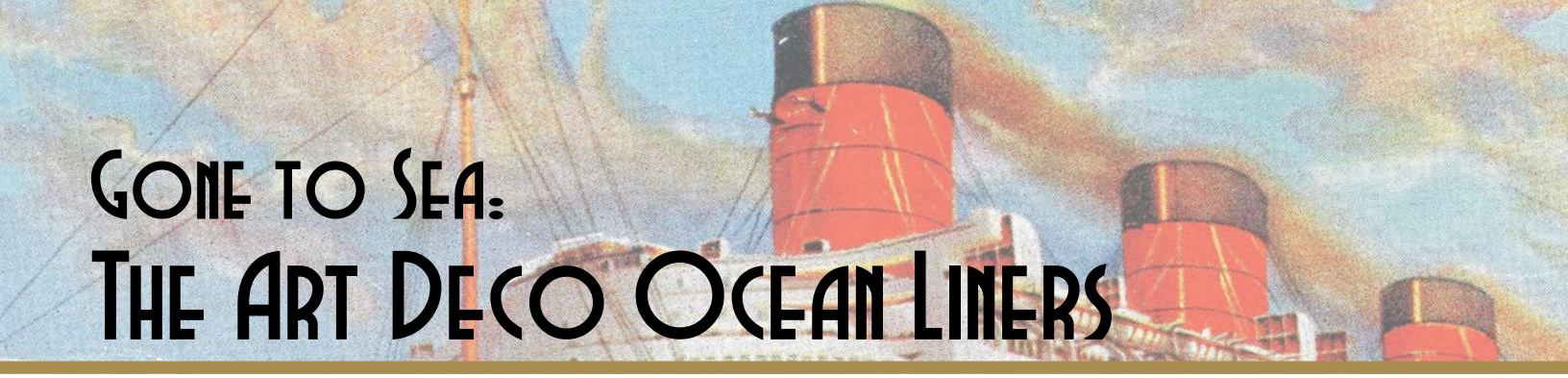
After Abramson died, I learned that he'd left me a shopping bag with photos of some of his buildings. Those are the photos that illustrate this article, and they are all that survive of Abramson's two Automats, which sadly have been altered beyond recognition.

Before and after the Automats, Abramson enjoyed a long and varied career, specializing in hospitals and synagogue complexes, designed in styles ranging from "Stanford White's Italian" to what we now call mid-century Modern. But it's his Art Deco buildings that stand out, at least for those of us who love the period.

Anthony W. Robins, ADSNY's Vice President, is a historian and writer specializing in New York architecture. A twenty-year veteran of New York's Landmarks Commission, he now teaches at NYU and Columbia University and consults on historic preservation projects. A popular leader of walking tours, he is best known for Art Deco, a passion reflected in his most recent book, Art Deco New York: A Guide to Gotham's Jazz Age Architecture. *If you'd like to read more of this interview, you will find it in Robins's essay, "New York From Classic to Moderne: Local Architects Remember," in* Everyday Masterpieces: Memory & Modernity *(Serra, Bollack, Killian, Edizioni Panini, 1988) or online at anthonywrobins.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Interviews.pdf, which can be more easily accessed at tinyurl.com/Robins-interviews.*

All Photos: Author's collection

(1) For a nice summary, see Carolyn Hughes Crowley, "Meet Me at the Automat," in Smithsonian Magazine, *August 2001, at smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/meet-me-at-the-Automat-47804151/.*
(2) Horn & Hardart held the franchise for the New York Burger King stores and repurposed the spaces.
(3) Christopher Gray described them in a Streetscapes *column in* The New York Times Real Estate *section, January 29, 2012, page 7.*



Gone to Sea: The Art Deco Ocean Liners

By Bill Miller

Ocean liners were once described as the "greatest moving objects made by man." They were also great symbols: They embodied size, might, and speed, but were also maritime temples, boasting the latest achievements in interior design. Some say the Art Deco liners were the very best, absolutely the most glamorous and memorable of all the great ships. There were six that stand out: the SS *Île de France*, RMS *Empress of Britain*, SS *Rex*, SS *Conte di Savoia*, SS *Normandie*, and RMS *Queen Mary*. And the beloved *Île de France* was just the beginning.

Innovation on the High Seas: Compagnie Générale Transatlantique

The SS *France* (1912) was extremely pleasing in almost every way, especially its stunning decor. Its first class accommodations were so popular that it had the lowest number of vacant berths in first class of any Atlantic Ocean liner during the mid-1920s. In the wake of the great success of the *France*, the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique (known as the French Line in the U.S.) began construction on the new SS *Paris* in 1913, which was due in 1916. However, construction came to a halt because of the First World War, and the *Paris* finally emerged in the summer of 1921.

The *Paris* was highly innovative—it differed from the heavily gilded, Edwardian styles of the earlier *France*, by introducing a new, more contemporary look—Art Nouveau on the high seas. Some say that the designers of the *Paris* actually introduced the very first, authentic ocean liner style. (Others attribute this to the next French liner, the Art Deco *Île de France*.) The designers of the *Paris* broke from the trend of copying landside structures such as manor houses and country homes, chalets and hunting lodges, and instead used a newly created decorative style. It was a sensation, but after a serious dockside fire at Le Havre in August, 1929, the *Paris* was repaired and at the same time modernized: much of the Art Nouveau was removed and was replaced by even more modern, *Île*-inspired Art Deco. The *Paris* became more popular than ever and an even better companion to the slightly larger, immensely popular *Île de France*.

While moderately sized liners seemed to be more in vogue in the 1920s and more cost-effective, the French opted next for a larger, grander, more sumptuous version of the *Paris*. The 43,000-ton *Île de France* was commissioned in 1927 and immediately captured the imagination of the world. Innovative, trendsetting, luxurious, and featuring the finest kitchens afloat, it was, in many ways, the most successful, most adored of all French liners.

The accommodations aboard the 791-foot-long *Île de France* were divided into three classes—first class, cabin class, and third class. All cabins, even in lower deck third class, offered beds instead of bunks. The first class quarters were exceptionally lavish and included a large assortment of suites and cabins de luxe. It was said to offer the finest selection of suites on the Atlantic. By 1935, the *Île de France* had carried more first class passengers than any other transatlantic liner.

But it was the overall style and extraordinary decor that fascinated both travelers and competitors of the French Line. Inspired by the influential Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes held in Paris in 1925, the *Île*'s interiors marked the beginning of Art Deco on the high seas. It was the new modern and the immediate standard of ocean liner decor and style. The new design style could also be seen in office buildings, hotels, railway terminals, movie theaters, and department stores. The designers of the *Île de France* introduced the sleek new age of angular furniture, sweeping columns and panels, inventive and indirect lighting, and a great sense of spaciousness that all but eliminated the heavy

The Cathay Lounge aboard the Empress of Britain, designed in a style we might now call "Shanghai Deco."

The bedroom of the Rouen Suite aboard the Normandie.

clutter of prior ocean liners. The first class bar was the largest afloat and the main restaurant, often compared to a modern Greek temple, rose three decks in height. It had a grand staircase as a main entrance, another feature that became a French Line trademark. The main foyer rose three decks high, and the chapel was designed in a Gothic-inspired style with fourteen pillars. Indeed a floating city, the 1,786-passenger *Île* also had a shooting gallery, merry-go-round, and fully equipped gymnasium.

"From the beginning of her days, the *Île* always had a great reputation," recalled the late Lewis Gordon, a veteran of over one hundred Atlantic crossings. "She was said to be the happiest and cheeriest way to cross the Atlantic. And, of course, she had great glamour. More celebrities—royalty, politicians, and especially Hollywood stars—preferred her. The *Île* always, always had a distinct tone of chic, that very special French chic, about her!"

Dual Purpose: An Empress of the Seas

The North Atlantic run to Eastern Canada warranted many more small and medium sized passenger ships than the route to New York, but only one super liner: the *Empress of Britain* of Canadian Pacific Steamships, which was commissioned in 1931. Capped by three oversized funnels and with an all-white hull, it was the grandest, largest, and fastest liner ever to sail on the Canadian route between Southampton and Quebec City. In winter, the ship served an alternate purpose: four-month-long luxury cruises around the world. The *Empress* also had superb accommodations: columned lounges, a Grecian-inspired main lounge, luxurious suites and staterooms, and the very first large tennis court on its top decks. The ceiling of one of its many bars depicted the history of the cocktail while the Cathay Lounge was designed in *chinoise moderne*, or what we might now call "Shanghai Deco."

On the Sunny Southern Route: Italy's Rivieras Afloat

Mussolini and his Fascist ministers wanted their share of the ocean liner business and created two super liners, the *Rex* and the *Conte di Savoia*, in 1932. They were both Art Deco super ships of the early 1930s and together would offer the first big ship service on the mid-Atlantic, to and from Mediterranean ports (Naples, Genoa, Villefranche-sur-Mer, and Gibraltar).

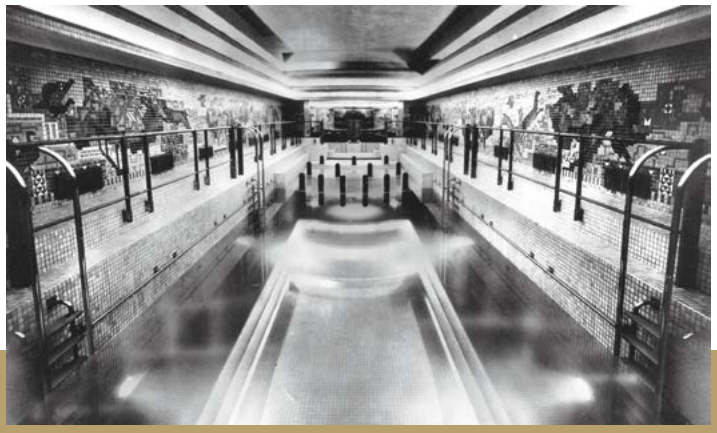
Both the *Rex* and the *Conte di Savoia* had lavish lounges, superb dining, and the first outdoor pools aboard super liners. With striped umbrellas and real sand covering the decks, this outdoor pool area was called the "Lido Deck." This novelty deck and the ships themselves were often described as the Rivieras afloat.

Ocean-Going Perfection: The Extraordinary Normandie

France's *Normandie* was the most glamorous and superbly decorated Atlantic super liner. Its exceptional $60 million cost ($1.5 billion in 2018 dollars), heavily underwritten by the French government, also made it the most costly liner of its time. It was planned as the largest, fastest, and grandest ship, but also as showcase for "the genius of France," according to the French Line's publicity department. The ship was a floating ambassador, a grand flag-waver, but also a floating hotel and even a floating museum. The very finest designers and decorators in France would contribute to this maritime tour de force. However, Vladimir Yourkevitch, a former designer of Imperial Russian battleships, was placed in charge of the project, creating the advanced overall design and exterior.

The *Normandie* was exceptional in every way: the first liner to exceed 75,000 tons and the first to surpass one thousand feet in length. Names such as *Neptune*, *General Pershing*, *La Belle France*, *Napoleon*, *Jeanne d'Arc*, and even *Maurice Chevalier* were suggested before *Normandie* was finally selected. Launched at Saint-Nazaire in western France in October 1932, the ship already had experienced a tragic event: one hundred workmen were swept into the Loire at launching. With its construction halted for a time due to the Great Depression, it was finally completed and entered service between Le Havre, Southampton, and New York in May 1935. The maiden voyage broke all transatlantic records: thirty-two knots at full speed and with a passage of four days and three hours.

On board, the *Normandie* was beyond impressive and certainly wondrous. The ship was an Art Deco paradise, a floating fantasyland of 1930s decor. The main restaurant, decorated in bronze, hammered glass, and Lalique fixtures, was longer than the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, seated one thousand guests, and offered some three hundred items on the dinner menu. The bronze doors outside led to a vestibule lined with Algerian onyx. There was an indoor, one hundred-foot pool of tiered, lighted levels and a winter garden complete with fresh greenery and live birds. There was a chapel, the first movie theater at sea, an extensive library, a grill room, various salons, and the very finest suites and penthouses on the Atlantic. The penthouses even had their own music rooms and private dining salons. In first class, no two cabins were alike—



The tiled, lighted indoor pool aboard the Normandie that measured almost 100 feet in length.

The main first class lounge on the Queen Mary.

The main dining room aboard the Normandie.

including one decorated in Louis XIV and another in red lacquer. Even the dog kennel had its own sun deck. There was a florist, chocolate shop, and tailor onboard who could prepare a man's suit within the crossing period. The *Normandie* was indeed a floating city.

In 1938, there were plans to build a super *Normandie*, another advanced design but bigger still, of some 90,000 tons and dubbed *Bretagne*. Plans were scrapped because of cost, but mostly out of concern for the looming war in Europe. The *Normandie* was a great success for the image of France, but was not an economic success. In its four years of service, the *Normandie* sailed at only 59% capacity; many travelers did not have the means for such luxurious travel. With the exception of the *Queen Mary*, all of the large, new super liners of the 1930s were less than economically successful. The *Empress of Britain* was simply too big for the Canadian run and the mid-Atlantic service to the Mediterranean for the *Rex* and the *Conte di Savoia* had yet to fully catch on.

The exquisite *Normandie* was docked in August 1939 at New York, owing to the uncertainty of the political situation in Europe, never to sail again. The ship caught fire at its berth at West 48th Street in February 1942, then capsized, was later salvaged, and the remains were finally demolished in 1947.

Pride and Profit: The Glorious Queen Mary

The 81,000-ton *Queen Mary* came into service in the spring of 1936 and was immediately the greatest rival to France's *Normandie*. While the French flagship was more innovative and certainly more lavish, Britain's *Queen Mary* was in contrast a great financial success, sailing in its first years at 98% of capacity.

"The *Normandie* was the most extravagant, luxurious, and celebrated liner of her time," said the late maritime historian Everett Viez. "But the *Normandie* was most likely too luxurious, too Art Deco extravagant. Comparatively, the *Queen Mary* was less glamorous, possibly less stunning, and certainly less pretentious. She too was a Deco liner, but British Deco. She was welcoming, warm, and a classic British liner: comfortable and even cozy in places, decorated in polished woods, swirl carpets, sconce lamps, soft chairs, and lots of linoleum floors. While the decor of the *Queen Mary* was once described as 'Odeon cinema,' it greatly appealed to the ocean traveling public. While the *Normandie* was Champagne and caviar at midnight, the *Queen Mary* was tea and cakes at four in the afternoon."

The *Queen Mary* also had, by far, the longest career. It sailed for the Cunard Line for thirty-one years, until 1967, and crossed the Atlantic one thousand times. Afterward, the ship found life as a hotel, museum, and collection of shops and restaurants moored in Long Beach harbor to this day.

There were, of course, many other Art Deco liners. Holland's MS *Nieuw Amsterdam*, commissioned in 1938, had splendid interiors. Flying the British flag, the RMS *Orion* of 1935 introduced Art Deco on a route east of Suez: from London to Sydney. And three American liners—the SS *Panama*, SS *Ancon*, and SS *Cristobal*, each built in 1939 and used in New York-Caribbean service—made great use of stainless steel, sleek, armless chairs, and touches such as clock dials without numbers.

Without question, Art Deco on the high seas was high style. The late maritime historian Frank Braynard once noted, "Deco liners were like the Waldorf Astoria except they moved!"

Bill Miller is considered an international authority on the subject of ocean liners. Called "Mr. Ocean Liner," he has written over one hundred books on the subject: from early steamers, immigrant ships, and liners at war to other titles on their fabulous interiors in postcard form, and about their highly collectible artifacts. He has written histories of such celebrated passenger ships as the United States, Queen Mary, Rotterdam, France, Queen Elizabeth 2, Costa Victoria, Super Star Leo and Crystal Serenity.

Photos: Author's collection

René Lalique: Father of Art Deco?

By Nicholas Dawes

René Lalique (French, 1860-1945) is best known for thousands of glass designs, but he was a master of two careers. The first, as a jeweler, largely during La Belle Époque, lasted until he was in his early fifties. While much of his later work, in glass, is readily identifiable as Art Deco, admirers prefer the contemporary term, *le style Lalique*.

I have never heard the term "Father of Art Deco" applied convincingly. Surely the complexity and sheer longevity of what we have come to embrace as the Art Deco movement severely weakens the case for a single parent. A paternity test eliminates most of the common candidates: Erté (unwittingly given the title by a clever dealer who "rediscovered" him forty years ago) may be more aptly called the father of Art Deco revival, Paul Poiret (more like an uncle in the garment business), Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann (too chic and a bit late to the party), Pierre Chareau (way too chic and not even at the party), and Paul Iribe (a dark horse with plenty of offspring but unlikely to be accepted by the family even if the test results were positive).

One name rarely given this questionable accolade may deserve it more than any: René Lalique. Lalique began his career in an impressionistic, *japoniste* Paris we can only dream of today. I like to think of him as a background figure in Gustave Caillebotte's famous *Paris Street; Rainy Day*, painted in 1877 when Lalique was seventeen and beginning his apprenticeship at a nearby jeweler. "Nothing was more sublime," said Victor Hugo. It was here that the seeds of Art Deco were planted into a deep and rich cultural soil that ensured growth to fruition a generation later. No father of the movement could have missed this formative time and place.

Through the years we know as La Belle Époque, Lalique evolved into the most successful and fashionable jeweler in the world, a status confirmed by his spectacular display at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1900. The Grand Palais had never seen such elegant jewels. "But where is the Art Deco?" you may ask. It is there, deeply rooted in the fundamental fabric of René Lalique's early career.

Languedoc vase by Lalique, c. 2012. This modern version is almost identical to the original 1929 version, differing in glass type and weight. Unlike the original, the new model is also available in other colors and sizes.

Imagine the stimuli. Lalique held regular soirées at his hotel, attended by luminaries of applied and performing arts and industry. Among those we know he dined with are Auguste Rodin, Georges Clairin, Edmond Rostand, Paul Follot, Henri Rapin, and, in Alsace, Ettore Bugatti. He wrote poetry in the French Romantic tradition, took extraordinary photographs, regularly attended the ballet, theater, and opera while working furiously in his atelier, making jewelry and *objets de vitrine* conceived from the exquisite drawings he produced daily in pencil, ink, and watercolor.

Look into the drawings and you will find the seeds: Meticulous geometry, flora and fauna chosen for their elegant, symmetrical forms, superbly balanced colors, and a juxtaposition of materials rarely seen since the Renaissance. We have all heard how Art Deco evolved from Art Nouveau and organic design became geometric, but this is a grossly oversimplified and overplayed

Continued on page 16

Global Calendar

Current Exhibitions

Americans All: Race Relations in Depression-Era Murals
The Wolfsonian
Miami Beach, FL
wolfsonian.org/305-531-1001

Art and Design in the Modern Age: Selections from the Wolfsonian Collection
The Wolfsonian
Miami Beach, FL
wolfsonian.org/305-531-1001

Williamsburg Murals: A Rediscovery
Brooklyn Museum
Brooklyn, NY
brooklynmuseum.org
718-638-5000

Online
Reginald Marsh
Museum of the City of New York
mcny.org/212 534-1672

Online
Worth and Mainbocher: Demystifying the Haute Couture
Museum of the City of New York
mcny.org/212 534-1672

To July 1
Thoroughly Modern: Women in 20th Century Art and Design
Speed Art Museum
Louisville, KY
speedmuseum.org/502-634-2700

To July 8
Anything Goes: The Jazz Age
Nassau County Museum of Art
Roslyn Harbor, NY
nassaumuseum.com
515-484-9338

To July 15
The End of Golden Times: Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele and Viennese Modernism in the Collections of The National Gallery in Prague
Exhibition Palace
Prague, Czech Republic
ngprague.cz /(+420) 224 301 122

To July 22
Cartier: The Exhibition
National Gallery of Australia
Canberra, Australia
nga.gov.au/+61 2 6240 6411

To July 22
Rockwell Kent: Prints from the Ralf C. Nemec Collection and Paintings from North Country Collections
Hyde Collection
Glens Falls, NY
hydecollection.org/518-792-1761

To July 22
The Age of Tiffany: Between Nouveau and Deco
Heckscher Museum of Art
Huntington, NY
heckscher.org/631-351-3250

Cover Image of Art Deco Chicago, Photo: Hedrich Blessing image in the collection of the Chicago History Museum

November 2-November 4

Art Deco Chicago

This fall the Art Deco Society of New York will experience Art Deco in the Windy City to celebrate the Chicago Art Deco Society's new publication, *Art Deco Chicago* and the opening of a companion exhibition at the Chicago History Museum.

Our weekend will include an opportunity to stay in a landmarked Art Deco building; walking and bus tours of various Art Deco enclaves in the city; a reception and group dinner featuring scenic views of the Chicago River; a private, guided exhibition tour; tours of important Art Deco and Frank Lloyd Wright architecture and design; an evening at a local Chicago blues club; and more.

Contact: Info@ArtDeco.org

To July 29
Who Shot Sports: A Photographic History, 1843 to the Present
Allentown Art Museum
Allentown, PA
allentownartmuseum.org
610-432-4333

To July 29
Sacred Spring: Vienna Secession Posters from the Collection of LeRoy E. Hoffberger and Paula Gately Tillman Hoffberger
Baltimore Museum of Art
Baltimore, MD
artbma.org/443-573-1700

To July 29
The Beginnings of Modernism: British Design, 1870-1910
Minneapolis Institute of Art
Minneapolis, MN
artsmia.org/888-642-2787

To July 31
Impressions: Prints of Mexico, 1930s-40s
Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University
New Brunswick, NJ
zimmerlimuseum.rutgers.edu
848-932-7237

To August 5
Red and Black: Revolution in Soviet Propaganda Graphics
The Wolfsonian
Miami Beach, FL
wolfsonian.org/305-531-1001

To August 12
Constructing Revolution: Soviet Propaganda Posters
The Wolfsonian
Miami Beach, FL
wolfsonian.org/305-531-1001

To August 26
Margaret Bourke-White's Different World
Cornell Fine Arts Museum
Winter Park, FL
rollins.edu/407-646-2526

To August 31
Malvina Hoffman
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
Cedar Rapids, IA
crma.org/319-366-7503

To September 2
Who Wore Sports
Allentown Art Museum
Allentown, PA
allentownartmuseum.org
610-432-4333

To September 3
Modern Times: American Art 1910–1950
Philadelphia Museum of Art
Philadelphia, PA
philamuseum.org/215-763-8100

To September 16
The Shape of Speed: Streamlined Automobiles and Motorcycles, 1930–1942
Portland Museum of Art
Portland, OR
portlandartmuseum.org
503-226-2811

To October 8
Walk this Way: Footwear from the Stuart Weitzman Collection of Historic Shoes
New-York Historical Society
New York, NY
nyhistory.org/212-873-3400

To October 14
American Modernism: Selections from the Kunin Collection
Minneapolis Institute of Art
Minneapolis, MN
artsmia.org/888-642-2787

To October 21
In the Beginning: Minor White's Oregon Photographs
Portland Art Museum
Portland, OR
portlandartmuseum.org
503-226-2811

To October 21
Icons of Style: A Century of Fashion Photography, 1911-2011
Getty Center
Los Angeles, CA
getty.edu/310-440-7300

To October 28
Elegance in the Sky: The Architecture of Rosario Candela
Museum of the City of New York
New York, NY
mcny.org/212 534-1672

To October 28
Josef Hoffman-Koloman Moser: On the Use and Effect of Architecture
Josef Hoffman Museum
Brtnice, Czech Republic
mak.at/+420 724 543 722

To November 4
Crash to Creativity: The New Deal in Vermont
Bennington Museum
Bennington, VT
benningtonmuseum.org
802-447-1571

To December 9
The Rabblerouser and the Homebody: Minnesota's Elizabeth Olds and Wanda Gág
Minneapolis Institute of Art
Minneapolis, MN
artsmia.org/888-642-2787

Denotes Art Deco Society of New York event. Denotes New York City event.

To December 30
Women of Influence (Part II): Elmira Bier, Minnie Byers, and Marjorie Phillips
Phillips Collection
Washington, DC
phillipscollection.org
202-387-2151

To December 31
Art Deco
National Gallery of Australia
Canberra, Australia
nga.gov.au/+61 2 6240 6411

To January 6, 2019
History of Transportation: A Mural Study by Helen Lundeberg
Nevada Museum of Art
Reno, NV
nevadaart.org/775-329-3333

To January 6, 2019
Bes-Ben: The Mad Hatter of Chicago
Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields
Indianapolis, IN
discovernewfields.org
317-923-1331

To January 7, 2019
Glass of the Architects: Vienna 1900-1937
Corning Museum of Glass
Corning, NY
cmog.org/607-937-5371

To May 27, 2019
Postmen of the Skies
National Postal Museum
Washington, DC
postalmuseum.si.ed
202-633-5555

Upcoming Exhibitions

September 6-December 8
NeoRealismo: The New Image in Italy, 1932-1960
Grey Art Gallery, New York University
New York, NY
greyartgallery.nyu.edu
212-998-6780

September 8-December 9
The Art of Romaine Brooks
Polk Museum of Art at Florida Southern College
Lakeland, FL
polkmuseumofart.org
863-688-7743

October 5-January 27, 2019
The New Berlin 1912-1932
Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium
Brussels, Belgium
fine-arts-museum.be
+32 (0)2 508 32 11

October 7-January 6, 2019
Balenciaga in Black
Kimbell Art Museum
Fort Worth, TX
kimbellart.org/817-332-8451

October 19-January 20, 2019
I, Too, Sing America: The Harlem Renaissance at 100
Columbus Museum of Art
Columbus, OH
columbusmuseum.org
614-221-6801

October 19-April 28, 2019
Deco: Luxury to Mass Market
The Wolfsonian
Miami Beach, FL
wolfsonian.org/305-531-1001

Opening October 28
1918-1938
Exhibition Palace
National Gallery in Prague
Prague, Czech Republic
ngprague.cz
(+420) 224 301 192

November 4-February 18, 2019
Gordon Parks: The New Tide, Early Work 1940-1950
National Gallery of Art
Washington, DC
nga.gov/202-737-4215

November 9-March 11, 2019
The Novembergruppe: From Höch to Taut, From Klee to Dix
Berlinische Galerie
Museum of Modern Art
Berlin, Germany
berlinischegalerie.de
+49 (0)30-789 02-600

December 19-April 22, 2019
Koloman Moser: Universal Artist Between Gustav Klimt and Josef Hoffman
MAK—Austrian Museum of Applied Arts
Vienna, Austria
mak.at/+43 1 711 36-0

Upcoming Events

July 10
Art Deco in Manhattan's East Fifties Walking Tour
Art Deco Society of New York
artdeco.org/212-679-3326

July 13-15
Winter Deco Weekend
Art Deco Trust
Napier, New Zealand
artdeconapier.com
+64 6 835 0022

July 27-29
New York Antique Jewelry & Watch Show
Metropolitan Pavilion
New York, NY
newyorkantiquejewelryand-watchshow.com/239-732-6642

July 29
Set Sail to Hidden Art Deco on Ellis Island Behind-the-Scenes Tour
Art Deco Society of New York
artdeco.org/212-679-3326

August 11
American Patriots: The Tuskegee Airmen And The Harlem Hellfighters Guided Exhibition Tour
Art Deco Society of New York
artdeco.org/212-679-3326

August 21
Celebrating Dorothy Parker at 125 Walking Tour
Art Deco Society of New York
artdeco.org/212-679-3326

September 9
Gatsby Summer Afternoon
Dunsmuir Hellman Historic Estate
Oakland, CA
Art Deco Society of California
gatsbysummerafternoon.com
510-271-6760

September 20
Art Deco New York: The Architects Speak, a talk with Anthony W. Robins
Art Deco Society of New York
artdeco.org/212-679-3326

October 14
Art Deco Collectors of Connecticut Bus Tour
Art Deco Society of New York
artdeco.org/212-679-3326

October 18-21
Palm Springs Modernism Week, Fall Preview
Palm Springs, CA
modernismweek.com

October 19-21
Palm Springs Modernism Show and Sale, Fall Edition
Palm Springs, CA
palmspringsmodernism.com
708-366-2710

January 18-27, 2019
Winter Antiques Show
Park Avenue Armory
New York, NY
winterantiquesshow.com
718-292-7392

February 13-17, 2019
Tremains Art Deco Festival
Art Deco Trust
Napier, New Zealand
artdeconapier.com
+64 6 835 0022

February 14-24, 2019
Palm Springs Modernism Week
Palm Springs, CA
modernismweek.com

February 16-18, 2019
Palm Springs Modernism Show and Sale
Palm Springs,CA
palmspringsmodernism.com
708-366-2710

Fifteenth World Congress on Art Deco

The November 2019 Congress on Art Deco will feature a week of illustrated talks, tours, social events, exhibitions, dinners, and a final gala evening enjoying the Art Deco heritage of Buenos Aires. Pre- and post-Congress tours include a visit to the neighboring city of Montevideo in Uruguay to explore its stunning Modernist architecture. More details coming soon.

September 20

Art Deco New York: The Architects Speak

The Art Deco style transformed New York City architecture in the 1920s and 1930s, through thousands of buildings designed by dozens, if not hundreds, of architects. ADSNY's vice president, Anthony W. Robins, had the good fortune to meet and interview three of those architects. Marvin Fine, of the firm of Horace Ginsbern, designed the first Deco apartment house in the Bronx. Israel Crausman designed many Bronx apartment houses on and off the Grand Concourse. Louis Allen Abramson designed notable Horn & Hardart Automats, as well as restaurants in the Longchamps chain. Robins's talk brings their experiences to life, and lets us hear their words as we admire their buildings.

The 33rd Street entrance of a Horn & Hardart Automat designed by Louis Allen Abramson. Photo: Anthony W. Robins' collection

Please note: All dates and events are subject to change. Check host's website for details and updates.

Rene Lalique Victoire automobile mascot, c. 1928, length 10.25 in. This example shows the desirable amethyst tint, evidence of exposure to sunlight, and is fitted on original chrome illuminating mount supplied by Breves in Knightsbridge, London.

Continued from page 13

perspective. However, the remarkable drawing below, from about 1908, shows this transition over a few centimeters of BFK Rives parchment paper and perhaps a few minutes; Lalique's style evolves from organic naturalism to geometric stylization. Imagine him working the petals of the aster, likely in a vase before him. We see him in two minds, old and new, Nouveau and Deco.

All progressive artists are in a constant state of transition, but this drawing pinpoints a defining moment, before the Ballets Russes rocked Paris, and at least five years before Paul Iribe saved the rose from sacrifice on the altar of the machine.[1]

The course of World War I played a critical role in the evolution of Art Deco, particularly the rapid advancement of new European cultural ideals that came with peace. Within two years of the armistice, Lalique opened a new factory in Alsace (regained as French territory after the war) complete with advanced machinery to blow, cast, and work hot and cold glass, much of which continues in operation today.

Lalique glass of the interwar years can be classified as Art Deco simply through its function. The onset of elegance into everyday life, evident in modern forms of travel, dress, makeup, and general demeanor, precipitated new consumer demands that Lalique met in style. Dressing table accessories—from hand mirrors and trinket boxes to atomizers, perfume burners, and bottles—were designed to be carried through an age of travel that Lalique supplied with all an elegant voyager could need. *Artistes décorateurs* used Lalique panels and lighting in every type of elegant interior, including luxury railway cars and ocean liners. An array of glass motoring mascots were designed to illuminate the radiator cap of the automobile as it sped ahead into an optimistic future. After a spin, one could enjoy everything for the cocktail hour: glasses and decanters, swizzle sticks to bring a champagne cocktail to life, ashtrays, and smoking accessories, even cocktail bars and tables were designed and made at Lalique's factory. Architectural glass and lighting were without parallel in quality of design and execution.

Few individual designers were even present at both the 1900 and 1925 fairs, and none who were enjoyed the success and acclaim of René Lalique. In 1925, the millions who entered through Edgar Brandt's main gates, *La Porte d'Honneur*, were met by Lalique's extraordinary *Les sources de France*, a fifty-foot fountain of illuminated glass, the most admired and elegant feat of engineering on the grounds. His work was found in architecture and interiors throughout the fair, including two pavilions under the name R. Lalique et Compagnie.

The exposition led to great commercial success for Lalique, notably expansion into the United States market, allowing the company to gain a valuable foothold prior to the Depression years. Many of the 1925 exhibits were vases, made either by blowing into hot metal molds or forcing the molten glass using a vertical power press, one of many innovative techniques developed and patented by Lalique. Production declined steadily through the 1930s and slowed during German occupation and the war years, but continued at the Alsace works until René Lalique's death in 1945, three days after the official end of World War II.

The postwar years were difficult. Reconstruction began under René Lalique's son Marc (French, 1900-1977), with a focus on the expanding United States market and reliance on Nina Ricci perfume bottles and accessories, produced under the guidance of Marc's business partner, Robert Ricci. The elegant Art Deco sensibility was largely absent from the modern line, and remained absent until recently, though the company continued to make several older models well into the 1990s, including some motoring mascots (offered as paperweights), quaint desk accessories including rocker blotters

Wine decanter and pair of Strasbourg glasses, c. 1928. Table glass, often in high Art Deco fashion, was an essential part of Lalique's commercial empire during the later 1920's into depression years.

Presentation with metal case for Perfume A by Lucien Lelong, inspired by the New York skyline and aimed at the American market, c. 1932.

A remarkable drawing for an Aster perfume bottle, c. 1908. Lalique's style in transition, depicted over a few centimeters and perhaps a few minutes, between naturalistic and geometrically stylized design.

and letter openers, and a large number of ashtrays. Following Marc's death in 1977 the reins passed to his daughter Marie-Claude (1935-2003), whose style was more evocative of the Art Nouveau movement. In the spirit of 1970s artistic freedom, any trace of Art Deco vanished from new lines.

In 2008, the Lalique Company entered an optimistic chapter with its takeover by Silvio Denz, a Swiss fragrance industry entrepreneur who had admired and collected perfume bottles by René Lalique. His collection, the finest in the world, is now on view at the Musée Lalique in Wingen-sur-Moder, opened in 2011 and located a few minutes from the Lalique factory. Together with the nearby Maison Lalique, the Villa Lalique, a boutique hotel and restaurant converted from René Lalique's former residence, the museum has brought new attention to the art of Lalique, and has successfully revived interest in the Art Deco appeal of his 1920s designs.

Under Denz's direction, Lalique reintroduced several classic vase models, including *Languedoc* and *Serpent*. In addition, the company offers several vase designs with no direct reference to the period but with clear Art Deco influence. The most striking Art Deco revival at Lalique, however, is in architectural designs, what the company calls *Art de Vivre*. Suites of living room and bedroom furniture, panels and screens set with glass, door hardware, lighting of every description, and even illuminated fountains are available, together with automobile mascots, perfume bottles, and table glass originally designed by René Lalique, some offered in a new range of colors and sizes.

Where the company goes from here is difficult to predict, but I hope that a few Art Deco designs proven perennially popular will persist, and keep René Lalique's legacy alive for generations to come.

Nicholas Dawes is a decorative arts professional and a leading expert on the work of René Lalique. He has forty years' experience as a dealer in Lalique, as an auctioneer, and department head at Phillips, Sotheby's, and Heritage Auctions in New York. Author of four works on decorative arts and many articles, he lectures widely, and has taught at several universities. In 1989 he curated the exhibition Lalique: A Century of Glass for the Modern World. *He is familiar to many as a regular appraiser for* Antiques Roadshow *on PBS.*

All photos: Heritage Auctions

(1)Paul Iribe, protégé of Paul Poiret and formative figure in the Art Deco movement, is known for his work for Jeanne Lanvin and, in later life, as the lover of Coco Chanel. His stylized rose, a prelude to much Art Deco design, appeared in about 1912 in an illustration. He warned against "sacrificing the rose on the altar of the machine" as a caution against wanton geometric stylization.

Rescuing Lalique's Glass Façade for Coty's Fifth Avenue Store

Interview with Andrew S. Dolkart

Andrew Scott Dolkart, Professor of Historic Preservation at Columbia University, discusses his role in the discovery of New York's only Lalique-designed glass building façade. It would have been destroyed but for his curiosity and determination. Restored and repaired, Lalique's windows now sparkle above the entrance to Henri Bendel at 712 Fifth Avenue.

***ADSNY**: How did you discover this long-forgotten Lalique?*
Dolkart: While walking on Fifth Avenue one day I noticed a building whose windows had three-dimensional ornaments. They were so filthy I couldn't tell what they were. But I was curious about them. It happened that the Municipal Art Society had asked me to review some Fifth Avenue buildings, which gave me the opportunity to research those curious windows. I took the elevator to the building's third floor. From up close, the floral ornament in the glass looked like Lalique. My next step was to find a glass expert.

***ADSNY**: Who?*
Dolkart: Nonnie Frelinghuysen, a curator of American Decorative Arts at the Metropolitan Museum. We met at the building, and she said, "Lalique." So I continued my research, hoping to confirm this attribution and discover how these windows came to Fifth Avenue.

***ADSNY**: What did you find?*
Dolkart: The building was an old house that had been rebuilt as a commercial structure in 1906; the new façade had a large expanse of clear glass set within steel framing. Then, in 1910, François Coty rented the building for his American headquarters.

***ADSNY**: Coty already had a relationship with Lalique?*
Dolkart: Lalique had designed Coty's perfume bottles. I called Coty, and spoke with a senior executive. He said the records were gone, but suggested I talk to Jean Després, who'd been sent to New York in the early twentieth century to run the Coty store. I phoned, and Després confirmed that Coty had specifically commissioned the Fifth Avenue windows from Lalique, to fit into the existing steel frames.

***ADSNY**: So that clinched it?*
Dolkart: That plus Coty's connection to Lalique, and the attribution by Nonnie and other Lalique experts. I also found historic photos taken after the windows had been installed. The photos, incidentally, show a short mezzanine level with Lalique glass that has since disappeared.

***ADSNY**: So then the Landmarks Commission became interested?*
Dolkart: I showed everything I'd found to the MAS, and we leaked it to the press. A small piece in the *New York Times* generated publicity. To everyone's surprise, the Commission announced a public hearing.

***ADSNY**: How did the developer of the proposed tower, Steadsol Fifth Associates, take this?*
Dolkart: They were very much opposed. But they deserve credit: instead of arguing financial hardship, they had the tower redesigned and set back from Fifth Avenue, and turned the Coty Building into its atrium entrance. Then they restored the glass—recasting several damaged pieces—and made them publicly accessible.

***ADSNY**: What a happy ending!*
Dolkart: Every time I pass the building, it makes me smile. I call them "my windows."

Cocktail Culture

By Maddy Lederman

Jazz Age poster/advertisement capturing the spirit of the cocktail craze. Poster reads "Five o'clock in the morning and the bartender is having hallucinations!"

> **It was an age of miracles, it was an age of art, it was an age of excess, and it was an age of satire.**
>
> – F. Scott Fitzgerald, *Echoes of the Jazz Age*, 1931

When Prohibition became the law of the land on January 16, 1920, alcohol was thought to be effectively banned. But the law was ambiguous—it was never illegal to drink liquor as long as you hadn't made, bought, or moved it.

What followed was a fascination with alcohol that ran like wildfire into the American collective consciousness. People who'd never tasted a cocktail suddenly wanted to. The mystique of the outlaw had a powerful allure and cocktail parties came to symbolize high society and Jazz Age sophistication. More than just the American way to serve drinks, cocktails became a part of American culture and the American state of mind.

When 8,168 licensed, liquor-serving saloons and restaurants in New York were shuttered because of the new law, 32,000 illegal speakeasies soon sprang up. The ability to spot a Federal Prohibition agent was more valued than knowing the finer points of tavern deportment; without licensing hassles or city inspections, anyone could open a speakeasy or become a bartender, if they didn't mind breaking the law. Americans flocked to speakeasies.

America's old love affair with tea and the tea dance, a popular group entertainment in hotels and halls where young people could meet, took a back seat to this new libation and gathering place. Speakeasies were regarded as more chic than criminal. It was the Jazz Age and liberated flappers were smoking, bobbing their hair, dancing the Charleston and the Black Bottom. The gin martini and cocktail shaker ruled. Cocktails became a symbol of free thinking and free spirits.

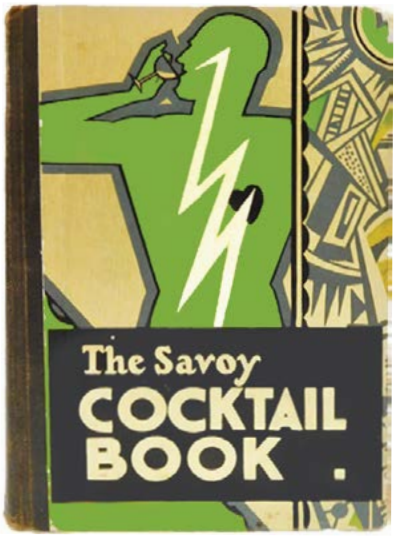
The Nineteenth Amendment giving women the right to vote passed on August 16, 1920, and, with one foot on the brass rail and a cigarette in hand, women asserted themselves by ordering their cocktail of choice. It was liquid emancipation, equal rights served in a cocktail glass. Single women, long excluded from drinking in public restaurants and dining rooms, invaded speakeasies. Drinking was once a man's game, but now men and women could drink together openly.

The at-home afternoon tea, once an inexpensive way to repay social obligations, turned into the five o'clock cocktail hour and a new American institution was established. Cocktail shakers resembled the teapots they replaced, and the ability to mix a good cocktail was just as important as learning the latest dance step. Colorful concoctions with sweet mixers stretched out the supply of illicit alcohol and helped disguise the taste of homemade hooch. Gin, easier to duplicate than rye or scotch, became popular, and the martini was a favorite. Among the well-to-do, cocktails before dinner were obligatory, and a common topic of conversation at cocktail hour was, naturally, spirits and cocktails. People boasted about their favorite bootleggers and their prices, recent openings or closing of speakeasies, new cocktail recipes, and the latest accessories they added to their liquor cabinets.

Young people set new trends, and the nation followed. It was smart to drink, and to drink be-

Typical 1920s cocktail set, including a tea pot shaped cocktail shaker, ten cocktail glasses, and serving tray. Hammer finish, silver plate, the Apollo line by Bernard Rice and Sons, New York, NY.

Teapot style cocktail shaker, c. 1920. Nickel plate, Paris pattern by William Rogers & Son, Hartford, CT.



The Savoy Cocktail Book*, by Harry Craddock, 1930. The author left the United States during Prohibition to work honestly at the American Bar in the Savoy Hotel in London.*

yond excess. Liquor was sold and distributed on college campuses by students with bootlegging connections, and the fact that this was an illicit activity only added to the glamour. College towns filled with speakeasies and bootleggers. Students bragged of their ability to "tie one on" and the hip flask, tilted above faces both masculine and feminine at the big college football games, was as common as a raccoon coat. It was the Jazz Age and this wild, new generation danced into the limelight. Quickly their elders joined the party—anyone with the ability to raise a glass could join in. The economy soared, jazz music roared, and bathtub gin poured.

Major department stores placed large ads in newspapers featuring the latest beverage mixers—a.k.a. cocktail shakers—along with glassware and serving trays. Dainty tea napkins, now featuring embroidered roosters, were sold as cocktail napkins. Coffee tables were re-dubbed cocktail tables, and small home bars were offered, complete with brass rails. Specialty stores sold a wide variety of cocktail items, recipe books, suitcase-like traveling bars for the businessman, and hip flasks in an endless assortment of designs. Cocktail shakers, starting at two or three dollars in silver plate, could cost up to six hundred dollars for a complete set in sterling silver. Respectable Fifth Avenue shops, which would normally shudder at the thought of selling window jimmies and other tools designed for breaking laws, proudly displayed these anti-Prohibition items in their store windows. A cocktail shaker was the perfect gift for weddings or holidays.

Obtaining spirits was never a problem during this period, despite the law. Liquor poured over American borders. Huge shipments of whiskey arrived from Canada and England to the once quiet ports of Nassau, Bermuda, and Freeport, to be sold to rumrunners and offloaded along the eastern coast of the U.S. Shippers would purchase directly from these countries and wait outside the three-mile limit, open for business. A great deal of liquor entered the country through Florida because of the proximity of rum production in Cuba.

More shipments were trucked from Ontario into Michigan. As the Great Lakes froze over, the length of the border that could be crossed increased. The intrepid rumrunners crossing the frozen expanse did so on dark nights, headlights off, and on the lookout not only for Prohibition Agents ("the Feds"), but hijackers, and state and local police. Stateside, large sophisticated liquor rings produced whiskey and beer. The Feds could tell how much ground they were losing by watching ever-rising sales of corn sugar, malt, and hops. In rural areas moonshiners expanded their operations, although many were pushed out and their stills taken over by organized crime.

If there was no liquor to be bought, many consumers produced homemade spirits. Articles were published in newspapers and magazines about distilling and home brewing. Cocktail recipe and instructional books at public libraries became dog-eared and went missing. The U.S. Department of Agriculture even published booklets with information on the manufacture of liquor from fruits, grains, potato peelings, beets, vegetables, and pumpkins. The Grape Brick, a dried, grape concentrate about the size of a one-pound block of butter, was available at grocery stores. This product had bizarre, specific instructions on its label: do not add yeast; mix with one gallon of water; and store in a dark place for thirty days (because this would produce an illegal drink). Stores accepted orders for five- or ten-gallon crocks and delivered the quantity of grape concentrate in eight flavors including Muscatel, Burgundy, and Claret with similar warnings about how one might "accidentally" make alcohol. Hardware stores sold copper tubing, jars, and liquor manufacturing accessories. Anything needed for a home still that would produce gallons of spirits for the next party was available.

Nowhere was the new cocktail culture more evident than in the motion picture industry. Studios embraced the anti-Prohibition, hedonistic life style. The 1920s film, *The Flapper*, introduced and popularized this new type of woman. At 16, she dreamed of lovers, jazz clubs, and speakeasies. Films took advantage of the public's lust for jazz, fast cars, wild parties, sex, and drinking scenes. Movie attendance swelled for films with titles like *Flaming Youth* (1923) and *The Perfect Flapper* (1924). In 1928, MGM

From Left to Right:
Cocktail shaker in the form of a dumbbell, c. 1935. Molded colbalt blue glass with silver bandings.
Cocktail shaker in the form of a lady's leg, c. 1937, manufactured by West Virginia Glass Specialty Co.
Cobalt blue, glass cocktail shaker featuring recipes for seven Prohibition Era cocktails: The Manhattan, Martini, Bronx, Bacardi, Dubonnet, Side Car, and Alexander.
Cocktail shaker in the form of a rooster, c. 1928. Hand-hammered silverplated body by Wallace Brothers.
Boston Lighthouse cocktail shaker, c. 1927. Silverplated body by International Silver Co.
Cocktail shaker in the form of a penguin, c. 1936. Silverplated body in the style of the famous shaker designed by Napier in 1936.
Cobalt blue, glass cocktail shaker, c. 1930 designed by Hazel Atlas as part of the Sportsman series, featuring white triangular nautical flags on three flagpoles.

featured a young Joan Crawford in the risqué *Our Dancing Daughters*. In one scene, Crawford rips off part of her dress as she maniacally dances the Charleston on a tabletop.

Cocktail culture continued roaring across the screen into the 1930s and the Great Depression. *Our Modern Maidens* (1929), *Our Blushing Brides* (1930), and *Dance, Fools, Dance*, *Laughing Sinners*, and *This Modern Age* (all 1931) featured heavy drinking and exquisite barware on their sets. Almost all the characters had a liquor cabinet in their stylish apartments, as drinking was a part of daily life. Stars were constantly mixing and sipping cocktails when they weren't lighting each other's cigarettes, another symbol of sophistication. Movie fans who watched Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers dance across the screen wanted their own symbol of the good life during the Depression. A cocktail shaker, the perfect size for any china cabinet, was shiny and delivered a transforming elixir.

The Thin Man (1934) was the first in a series of six highly successful films that established William Powell and Myrna Loy as a leading screen team. Playing Nick and Nora Charles, wisecracking darlings of society, they mixed cocktails and sleuthing savoir faire. They were delightfully sodden through the first film and, in an iconic scene, Nick, in an impeccable tuxedo, gives a lesson in cocktail shaking: "The important thing is the rhythm," he drawls, in his urbane, slightly sauced speech. "Always have rhythm in your shaking. Now, a Manhattan you shake to a foxtrot. A Bronx, to two-step time. A dry martini you always shake to waltz time." *The Thin Man* received an Academy Award nomination for Best Picture, but *It Happened One Night*, starring Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert as an upstart, society girl won the award that year.

Repeal of Prohibition in 1933 incited another surge in the demand for cocktails and accessories. If you want to make something popular, pass a law against it. To make it even more popular, perhaps wait fourteen years and then repeal that law. Modern cocktail culture masked the harshness of life during the Depression years. It was the spirit of a nation that expressed optimism about the future with an escapist disdain for the dingy realities of the slowing economy in the 1930s.

Meeting the increased demand for all things cocktail, Machine Age factories began turning out shakers and barware at high speed. Mass-produced cocktail sets brought both utility and glamor to the average home after repeal. Great glass companies such as Cambridge, Heisey, Hawkes, and Imperial created stunning etched and silk-screened designs in brilliant hues of ruby and cobalt. Rush orders for barware by hotels and stores caused Libbey Glass Company to fall twelve weeks behind on delivery schedules. Modernistic cocktail shakers and barware were affordable luxuries for all, a symbol of the good life. By the end of the 1930s, cocktail shakers and barware were standard household objects, affordable to all, and offered in new forms: bowling pins, dumbbells, penguins and even a lady's leg. Every home had at least one shaker; used or not, it represented the good life and better times ahead.

The cocktail culture and the economic depression it thrived in would both end on December 7, 1941, the day that went down in infamy with the attack on Pearl Harbor. America's involvement in World War II began, and the golden age of the cocktail was over. Energy was directed toward the war effort, and companies that once made cocktail shakers now produced artillery shells.

After the war, few thought of their cocktail shaker sets. It was the Atomic Age, a time of jet-propelled airplanes, television, and new cars with lots of chrome. Popular at the time were the highball, martini, and Manhattan, easily mixed with little reward for effort and showmanship.

Across the country, cocktail shakers ended up in attics and closets. There they would sit waiting for nearly half a century to be recalled to duty.

Thankfully, cocktail culture is with us again, starting most notably in 1987 with the reopening of the Rainbow Room above Rockefeller Center and its bartender extraordinaire, Dale DeGroff. DeGroff pioneered a historian's approach to recreating the great classic cocktails, and has since been credited with reinventing the bartending profession, launching a cocktail revival that continues to flourish.

Maddy Lederman writes about media and culture. Her first foray as a novelist, Edna in the Desert, *chronicles an American teen's struggle without her phone. Other writing has appeared in the* Huffington Post, The Los Angeles Times, *and* The Sun Runner.

Exploring the Roots of Modernism In Israel

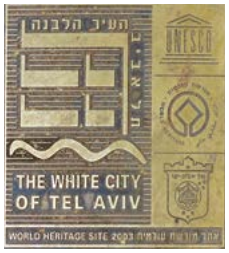
By Robin Grow

What happens when you take a group of New Yorkers, passionate about twentieth century architecture, history and art, mix them with like-minded friends from Chicago, Miami, Melbourne, and London, and let them loose in Israel for a week? You walk a lot, learn a lot, gain new appreciation of history (and Israeli wine!), and visit places not previously on your radar.

Roberta Nusim, President of the Art Deco Society of New York (ADSNY), organized the trip for ADSNY and members of the Board of the International Coalition of Art Deco Societies (ICADS). The Cinema Hotel in Tel Aviv, a key component of the Modernist buildings that constitute Dizengoff Circle, was the perfect accommodation. Formerly the Esther Cinema, it has been converted to a boutique hotel, and contains many pieces of memorabilia from the rich history of Israeli cinema.

The city of Tel Aviv, developed north of Jaffa in 1909 by Jewish groups seeking freedom from Arab control in Jaffa, was part of the British Mandate that governed Palestine from 1917 until the state of Israel was created in 1948.

The prevalent architectural style of early Tel Aviv was Eclecticism, which contained elements of Art Nouveau along with Orientalist and Biblical motifs. But soon the prevailing style changed to reflect new influences, and what was constructed over the next three decades was a treasure trove of simple, functionalist buildings with origins in European Modernism (also referred to as International Style and later tagged as Bauhaus). Much was designed by architects trained under major Modernist architects in Europe; many were from Germany, France, Russia, and Poland, and some had trained at the Bauhaus school of design. The result was one of the world's highest concentrations of buildings (around 4,000) in the Modernist style, a volume that enabled the city to qualify in 2003 as a UNESCO World Heritage site called the White City. According to Professor Michael Levin, the result was a city "where a stylistic synthesis was achieved,"[1] underpinned by



Plaque of the White City World Heritage Site Designation.

Figure of the Hebrew Worker at the entrance to the Levant Fair.

Curved corner window vertically spanning the staircase of a private residence in Haifa.

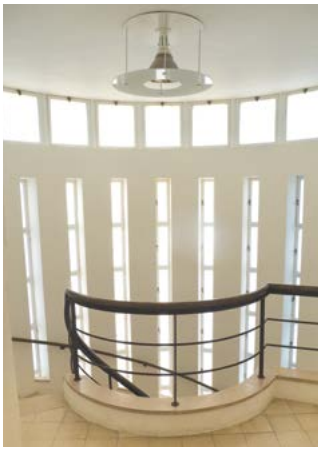
Sleek detailing above the entrance to a residential building in Tel Aviv on Rothschild Boulevard.

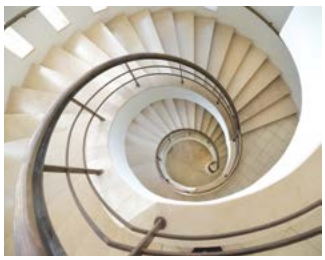
Façade and interior views of the Hotel Cinema, origionally the Esther Cinema.

Residential building in Tel Aviv with approved two-story addition.

1934 Levant Fair Poster featuring the unique flying camel logo.

Private home of Chaim Weizmann and his family designed by Erich Mendelsohn in 1936.





Various views of the staircase designed by Erich Mendelsohn in the 1936 private home of Chaim Weizmann and his family.

the principles of the garden city concept, which resulted in a green city of parks, tree-lined streets, and gardens.

The venue for many of our excellent presentations by Israeli experts on preservation, poster design, and the UNESCO experience took place at the Bauhaus Center on Dizengoff Street, where we were hosted by Micha Gross, one of the founders of the Center in 2000.

After communicating online with Micha for many years, it was a pleasure to meet him. Our visit was timely, as the Bauhaus Center was recently admitted to ICADS. He led us on walking tours near the Center, pointing out his favorite examples of Bauhaus design. We saw examples of great apartment blocks—generally three-stories, with white finishes, sunshades, balconies, ribbon windows, and sitting on pilotis or piers.

A major consideration in interwar construction was the climate, and provisions were needed in the era before air conditioners, when windows were positioned to catch cross breezes. One of the joys of exploring Tel Aviv's Modernist buildings is the variety of balcony designs—some long and protruding, others with long, narrow horizontal openings, while many others incorporated planters. An intriguing feature of many blocks was concrete pergolas on flat rooftops, where residents slept on hot nights. With the advent of air conditioning, many balconies were enclosed, and the garden areas on ground level are often now used for parking. Traffic is the major curse of Tel Aviv, but luckily it is a great walking city, and a subway is under construction.

Many buildings are modest and simple, quick and inexpensive to construct. Their condition varies—some have been immaculately maintained, some renovated, some are in relatively poor condition (because of rent controls, owners lack incentive to maintain their properties). An interesting aspect of Tel Aviv is how it combines conservation and building extensions. It is common practice for building owners to seek permission to add another floor if they undertake to renovate and upgrade the existing building. Like other cities, Tel Aviv has buildings listed as heritage properties, and others that are not. Ironically, unlisted buildings are easier to renovate, having fewer restrictions.[2]

We were impressed by the dedication and commitment to preservation, led by the Municipality of Tel Aviv-Yafo with its comprehensive conservation plans. New construction and renovation is everywhere. Perhaps our favorite street was Rothschild Boulevard—tree-lined,

with walking and cycling paths, punctuated by cafes and restaurants, and bordered by some of Tel Aviv's best examples of Bauhaus. They included examples of Thermometer Houses, with strip windows in stairwells resembling the degree markings on a thermometer. The interplay of light and shade produced by sunshine and sharp corners is observable on many of these buildings.

Other streets we enjoyed walking along included Arkozorov, Balfour, Bialik, Allenby, Shenkin, and Frishman, where we visited a workers' collective housing project designed by Arieh Sharon, a major architect in the development of the city.

At the site of the former Levant Fair, near the port of Tel Aviv, we heard the story of the fair from preservationist Tamar Tuchler, of the Society for Preservation of Israel Heritage Sites (established in 1984). In the early 2000s a new spirit of preservation gained force in Tel Aviv, and the Levant site was recognized as one of the most important collections of International Style buildings in Israel. We observed the efforts to revive the area and upgrade the buildings, constructed in 1934 for a fair that aimed to attract commerce to Palestine and draw attention to the increasing importance of Near Eastern markets in global trade. The fair was an opportunity to present Modernist architecture "as the fitting symbol of a dynamic and progressive society."[3] By 1934, Tel Aviv was a thriving, modern metropolis, and the most modern town of the Eastern Mediterranean region.

Richard Kaufmann, the prominent Zionist architect, was responsible for the fair's master plan. Construction of seventy pavilions, including a dozen major buildings, was achieved in eight months. The buildings featured roofs cast in reinforced concrete, plastered and painted white in the style that came to characterize Tel Aviv.

The logo of the fair was a flying camel. According to one version of the story, the Arab mayor of Jaffa scoffed at the idea of an international fair in Tel Aviv and told Tel Aviv's Mayor Dizengoff that a Levant Fair would only happen "when camels fly." But, it is more likely that the flying camel symbol was designed by Arieh El-Hanani to represent the connection between East and West as the slow and traditional East took flight and became advanced, innovative, and dynamic.

A highlight of the tour was a bus trip to Rehovot, south of Tel Aviv, to the Weizmann Institute of Science, which includes a house designed in 1936 for Chaim Weizmann—the scientist who became the first president of Israel—by legendary architect Erich Mendelsohn in the European Modernist style. He had fled Germany in the 1930s for Great Britain, working there and in Israel before relocating to the United States. The house includes a stunning central stairwell that resembles a tower looking over the coastal plains to the west and the Judean Mountains to the east. Mendelsohn also wanted to design the entire interior and arrangement of furniture in the minimalist house. But Mrs. Weizmann insisted on bringing her own furniture—which Mendelsohn deplored—from London. Reputedly the two never spoke again!

Art lovers on the tour were captivated by Tel Aviv's Rubin Museum, former home and studio of the acclaimed painter Reuven Rubin. His daughter-in-law, Carmela, provided a wonderful presentation on early Israeli art and the paintings by Rubin, whose work represented modern Israel's cultural identity. With its curator, Estee Cohen, we also toured the Bauhaus Museum's collection of decorative arts, household items, and original furniture by noted designers such as Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer, and Mies van der Rohe.

A highlight for fashion lovers was the Shenkar College of Engineering and Design archives. Curator Tal Amit displayed Israeli fashion creations, as well as striking works of fashion designer Yonah Zaliouk, a local artist who worked in the 1920s for a Parisian fashion house where she produced superb designs in the latest styles before returning to Palestine.

We visited Haifa, an ethnically diverse city located between the Mediterranean Sea and Galilee Mountains, extending to the summit of Mount Carmel. Unlike those in Tel Aviv, the façades of many buildings in Haifa were finished in sandstone. The seaside is dominated by a multi-storied grain tower in the Art Deco style, clearly visible from the balcony of a private home where we were generously welcomed by the owner.

One of the joys of tours like this one is being surprised by a destination. As we headed to Kibbutz Mishmar Hamek outside Haifa, we had visions of communal farming, rudimentary buildings, and dormitory living. Nothing prepared us for the main building—a remarkable Modernist school, designed by Joseph Neufeld and constructed from 1934 through 1937. A major renovation in 2010 saw the school replaced with a library, in the same style as the original building.

The Betrothed, c. 1929, painting by Reuven Rubin.

Our tour finished in Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, where thousands of years of history combine with modern life. Jerusalem is a mix of nationalities, religions, and cultures. Most of the buildings are finished in Jerusalem stone, dictated by the British under the Mandate, providing a sense of continuity and unity. One highlight was a visit to the Schocken Library, by Erich Mendelsohn, where we viewed a collection of printed fifteenth century Hebrew works. It was one of many places we visited not normally accessible to the public.

We were in the lush garden of the former 1930s YMCA, now the Three Arches Hotel, for our final dinner. All agreed that it had been a wonderful week of architecture, religious sites, ancient and modern history, and much more.

Robin Grow is the longtime President of the Art Deco & Modernism Society of Australia (ADMSA) and author of the award-winning Melbourne Art Deco *(2009). He has researched and written extensively on the interwar era and has presented papers at local, national and international conferences. He is active in the preservation of interwar buildings around Australia, and a number of the buildings there have been Landmarked as a result of efforts of ADMSA. He is heavily involved in ICADS and currently holds the role of Vice-President with responsibility for preservation activities.*

Photos: Susan Klein

(1) Michael Levin, Modern Movement Architecture in Israel*, n.d., p. 2.*
(2) The book Preservation and Renewal, Bauhaus and International Style buildings in Tel Aviv, *edited by Micha Gross, shows a wonderful collection of buildings before and after renovation.*
(3) Constructing a Sense of Place: Architecture and the Zionist Discourse*, edited by Haim Yacobi, 2017.*

Exploring Deco in . . .
Bay Ridge

By Kelly Carroll & Victoria Hofmo

The neighborhood of Bay Ridge in southwest Brooklyn hugs the New York harbor and is embraced by parks. Originally settled by the Lenape tribe, the area was claimed in the 1620s by the Dutch, who valued it as fertile farmland; they named it Yellow Hook, after the color of its soil and its shape. In the 1800s, Bay Ridge evolved into a summer resort for the wealthy. It did not become part of Brooklyn until 1896, two years before the consolidation of New York City.

Bay Ridge's strong sense of individuality derives from the many historic layers of its built environment. Four centuries of development have resulted in great architectural diversity: farmhouses, mansions, main street storefronts, row houses, apartment buildings, religious institutions, schools, and theaters.

Bay Ridge's development exploded at the turn of the twentieth century thanks to transportation improvements, including the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Avenue streetcar lines, an elevated railroad, and after 1915 the Brooklyn Rapid Transit subway. Following completion of the subway, Bay Ridge development shifted to multi-family apartment buildings, prompting the neighborhood's transformation from a suburban enclave to a dense middle-class urban district.

The stately apartment buildings of the 1920s and 30s survive largely intact, and retain their original ornate lobbies adorned with terrazzo floors, frosted glass, murals, plaster work, and mantelpieces. The Art Deco style arrived in Bay Ridge after 1930 and continued until 1939. Stylistically, these buildings have a transitional Art Deco/Streamline Moderne design and feature steel casement windows, glazed brick, and cast stone. St. Anselm's Roman Catholic Church, while designed in the Art Deco style in the 1930s, was not completed until 1954 due to delays in construction because of World War II. Bay Ridge retains much of its architectural heritage despite the lack of official Landmark status, from which the neighborhood could greatly benefit.

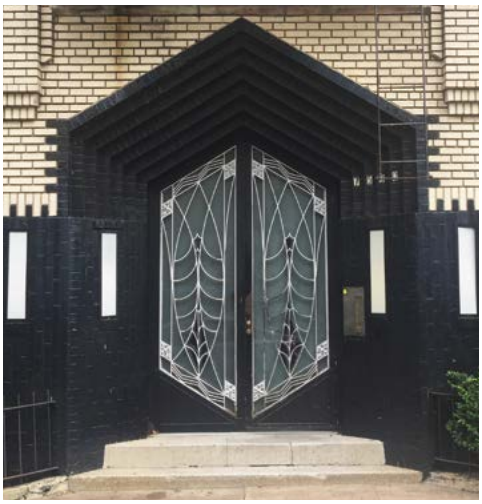
Kelly Carroll is the Director of Advocacy & Community Outreach for the Historic Districts Council and holds a M.S. in Historic Preservation from Columbia University. Kelly is a Bay Ridge resident, Art Deco enthusiast, and board member of Henry River Preservation Fund in North Carolina.

Victoria Hofmo was born and raised in Bay Ridge where her first foray into preservation was to advocate to landmark the Bennett/Farrell site. She then went on to found The Bay Ridge Conservancy whose mission is to preserve, protect and enhance the built and natural environment of Bay Ridge.

Photos 1–5: Meghan Weatherby
Photos 6–10: Lynn Farrell

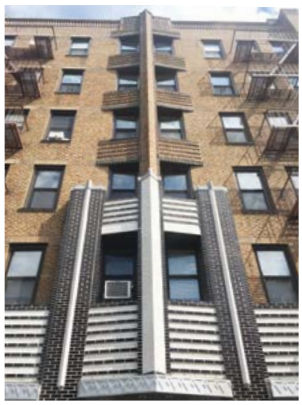
1. 6702 Ridge Boulevard
One of Bay Ridge's most interesting Art Deco compostions, this 1936 building by Morris Rothstein is unusual in its successful execution of an asymmetrical façade treatment. Details like its projecting and corbelled brickwork, an oversized cast stone flourish on the façade, and a pristine, original lobby with green and yellow terrazzo make this building a must-see.

2. 7005 Shore Road (originally Castle Gardens)
The design by Joshua Tabatchnik of corner balconies and corner window treatments, some still with the original steel casements, evokes the Bauhaus style in Brooklyn. This low-scale building retains its original curved fire escapes, geometric railings, and some of the original casement windows.



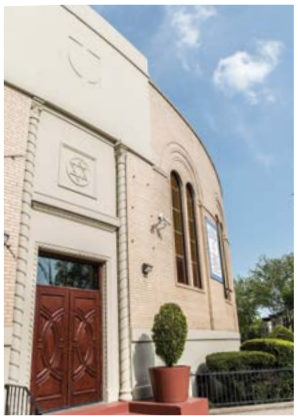
4. Splendor Apartments, 7502 4th Avenue
This 1931 Bennett & Koepple building's use of contrasting glazed black and buff brick creates a dramatic façade. A striking recessed entry with original Art Deco doors leads to a modest lobby, featuring original terrazzo and ornate period elevator doors.

8. St. Anselm Roman Catholic Church, 356 82nd Street
The church was designed in the 1930s by Henry V. Murphy, but construction, because of World War II and funding, was not completed until 1954. The bell tower steals the show with its large, stylized sculptures. The sanctuary's interior was designed by Leif Neandross, owner of the Rambusch Decorating Company, who lived nearby on 82nd Street.



3. 7119 Shore Road
Though the architect is unknown for this 1931 building, it is an architectural stunner with its glazed black and white brick entry surround set within brown brick that creates the profile of a small skyscraper on this building's façade. A lobby restoration, including frosted glass sidelights, was recently completed.

5. 7427 5th Avenue (originally Lincoln Savings Bank)
The curved façade of this 1934 Koch & Wagner building features a copper medallion portrait of Abraham Lincoln at the entry. Inside, there are monumental original murals of Shore Road prior to the construction of the Belt Parkway.



6. Bay Ridge Jewish Center, 405 81st Street
The curved façade of this 1925 structure was ahead of its time. The austere façade promotes clean lines and is spare in ornamentation.

7. 215 4th Avenue
The dotted line of black brick on this 1937-38 structure outlines a skyscraper silhouette. The original Moderne marquee covers a glass block entrance to a stunning lobby featuring a Moderne mantel with asymmetric mirror, an original mural, and abundant ribbed moldings and plasterwork.

9. The Normandie, 9437 Shore Road
This 1939 building incorporates cutaway corner balconies and retains its original cast stone entry and elements from its Moderne lobby.

10. 9229 Shore Road
Benjamin Braunstein's 1931 design features original balconies, cast stone and metal details, and spandrels.

On Collecting: the Manhattan Cocktail Set by Norman Bel Geddes

By Stephen Visakay

Norman Bel Geddes was a visionary American theatrical and industrial designer. He designed, produced or directed over two hundred stage plays, films, and operas. In 1927, Bel Geddes opened the first industrial design studio popularizing the streamline design style of the 1930s. He is best remembered for his design of the General Motors Pavilion, known as Futurama, for the 1939 New York World's Fair, a look at America twenty years into the future in 1960. It was the most popular exhibit at the fair, attracting over ten million visitors. Bel Geddes became one of the most famous American designers in the world.

Legend has it that Bel Geddes was inspired by the New York skyline when creating this masterwork. But sometimes legend and fact, like gin and vermouth, are mixed to create something far superior to any single ingredient.

The iconic *Manhattan* cocktail set, with its sleek lines and gleaming chrome, exemplifies the cocktail age and Art Deco styling. Legend has it that Bel Geddes was inspired by the New York skyline when creating this masterwork. But sometimes legend and fact, like gin and vermouth, are mixed to create something far superior to any single ingredient. Many Art Deco fans know the Bel Geddes cocktail shaker set, but not everyone knows the story of how it came into existence.

During the Great Depression, Revere Copper & Brass Inc. sought new avenues to increase income, and decided to follow Chase Brass & Copper into the giftware field. They contracted with Bel Geddes for a number of pieces in late 1933. The designer's name would bring star power and publicity to the first catalog by Revere.

This was a busy time for Norman Bel Geddes, creating a cornucopia of products. He was designing the complete interior of the Pan American Airways *China Clipper*, as well as refrigerators for General Electric and other companies, vacuum cleaners, a prefabricated service station for Vacuum Oil Company, and the Oriole stove for the Standard Gas Equipment Corporation, to a design form that is still followed to this day. With an abundance of major accounts that needed his attention, Bel Geddes spent little time at the drafting table. Instead, he devoted his time to meetings with his large design staff discussing research and projected outcome, and he reviewed all stages of a design—sketches, designs, and blueprints—from the beginning to the end of the project.

The Norman Bel Geddes & Co. executive in charge of the Revere account was Frances Waite, who married Bel Geddes that same year. Frances had a degree in design and was an equal partner in the firm.

The first Revere gift catalog, in 1935, featured chrome-plated household products in the Moderne style, including a nucleus of seventeen designs by Norman Bel Geddes & Co., the first of which was the *Manhattan* serving tray. The catalog boasted "a most individual tray which gains its effect by a frank use of straight lines, delicate flutings . . . The distinguished simplicity of the *Manhattan* lends character to either formal or informal entertaining."

The remaining designs in the catalog consisted of ashtrays, cigarette boxes, a candy dish, six candlesticks, two more trays, and one lamp. Few reflect the innovation and brilliance for which Norman Bel Geddes was noted. Bel Geddes did not design and draw any of these giftware items for the catalog by Revere. They were all designed by his staff—there are no drawings with the initials NBG.

One more important item was needed for the catalog: a cocktail serving set. Prohibition had been repealed on December 5, 1933. The nearly fourteen-year-long dry spell was over, and Revere wanted to join the party.

The famous Bel Geddes cocktail shaker would wait a year for its debut. We are fortunate to have a record of that period of gestation. Bel Geddes knew his work was important and would be studied by future generations. He saved all of his records and drawings. The Bel Geddes archives, located at the University of Texas at Aus-

tin, houses twenty-one original drawings, measuring twenty-two inches by thirty-two inches, graphite on tissue-thin drafting paper, now browning and faded, of cocktail shakers for Revere, with a total of thirteen different cocktail shaker designs. These are not simple sketches, but blueprints in assorted stages of completion. There is not one teapot style among them, which was more typical of shaker design at the time. They are rectangular, oblong, rocket ship shaped, streamlined, and industrial. "Revere Copper & Brass Company" is the first line in the title block on the lower right hand corner of the blueprints; all are dated between 1933 and 1934.

It is presumed that Bel Geddes saw and approved the still unnamed *Manhattan* cocktail shaker, as three detailed drawings show the cocktail shaker in various heights: five inches, eight and a half inches, eleven and three-quarters inches, and fourteen and seven-eighths inches. In the end, Revere produced a twelve and three-quarters inch size. The artist designer in the legend box under "Drawn By:" is the same for all three drawings, with initials C.B.

There is a drawing of a round serving tray, clearly part of a set, with eight small circles two inches in diameter and one large circle three and three-quarter inches in diameter on the tray. The small circles are meant to match a drawing of a cocktail cup that is two and one-quarter inches high, two inches in diameter with a one inch deep bowl. The drawing is signed G.G. and dated April 23, 1934. The cup has a spiral pattern in the center.

The round tray and cup shown on the blueprints were never produced. Instead, the Norman Bel Geddes & Co. cocktail shaker was matched with the existing 1935 *Manhattan* tray. It was a cost-saving choice. And the design for the cups was actually the top of the cocktail shaker turned upside down with a stem and base added. This was another economic design decision that eliminated expensive tooling. It was all coming together to form a brilliant cocktail set.

The cocktail set was featured for the first time in the 1936 Revere gift catalog, and called "Cocktail Ensemble." The catalog picture showed the stemmed cups clustered to one side of the tray arranged like architectural components on the plaza-like stepped serving tray opposite the skyscraper style cocktail shaker, giving the set the feeling of a small metropolis. From the catalog: "The streamlined design of the Revere Cocktail Shaker with its vertical ribs, an exclusive Revere feature, provides a practical as well as decorative note. It allows a firm grip and makes pouring easier." The cocktail set sold well.

It would prove to be the definitive cocktail set. The set was again called the Revere "Cocktail Ensemble" in the 1937 catalog. In 1938 Revere renamed the set *Manhattan*. A complete set with *Manhattan* cocktail shaker, tray, and eight cocktail cups retailed for $16.50, an increase of two dollars from the 1937 price of $14.50 for the "Cocktail Ensemble." Any item in the set could also be purchased individually.

The design services of the most famous industrial designer in the world were not cheap. His retainer fees, design fees, and royalties were extremely high. Revere soon found they could do just as well with less costly designers of the day. Although Revere remained on good terms with Bel Geddes for many years, the cocktail shaker set would be the last design by Norman Bel Geddes & Co. for the catalog by Revere.

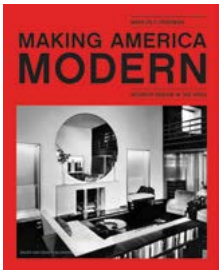
Revere published a catalog for seven years, from 1935 to 1941. As the Great Depression continued, the stock market sagged, and in 1937 the nation plunged into another recession within the Depression. The alphabet soup of programs by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his reassuring fireside chats could not shake the country out of economic despair. The nation was at a standstill. As sales slowed in 1938 and 1939, some items in the catalog were dropped. In 1940 the *Manhattan* cups were dropped after only four years, and the cocktail shaker was eliminated in 1941 after only five years. The *Manhattan* tray is found in the 1941 catalog, giving it the longest life, seven years.

Today a single *Manhattan* cup sells on eBay for over $1,000 owing in part to its rarity due to limited availability, while a complete *Manhattan* set with six cups sold at Sotheby's on December 18, 2015, for $15,000.

Like the martini with its share of mythology, recalling a bygone age of top hat and tails, style and elegance, the Norman Bel Geddes *Manhattan* Cocktail Set has become a classic example of the era.

Stephen Visakay is a longtime cocktail shaker collector and author of Vintage Bar Ware. *His exhibition* Shaken Not Stirred: Cocktail Shakers and Design *has toured venues around the country including The Milwaukee Art Museum and the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts in Alabama.*

Permissions
Edith Lutyens-Bel Geddes, Theatre Arts Collection, Harry Ransom Center The University of Texas at Austin.
The Daily Sentinel, Rome, New York, October 4, 1937. Newsweek, *February 12, 1930.* The Streamlined Decade, *Donald J. Bush, 1975, Braziller, NY.*



For Your Art Deco Library

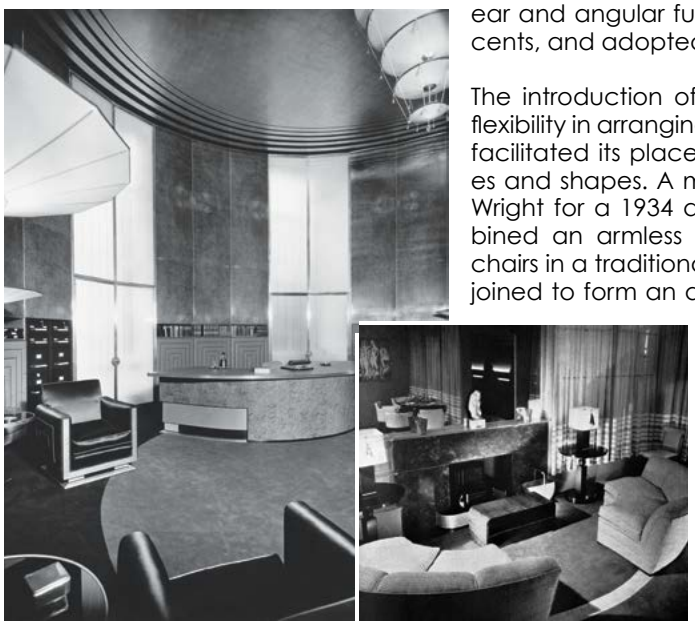
Reviewed by Kathleen Murphy Skolnik

Making America Modern: Interior Design in the 1930s

By Marilyn Friedman
(Bauer and Dean Publishers, 2018)

A 1933 article in *Women's Wear Daily Retailing* reported that sales of modern designs accounted for less than five percent of total department store furniture sales in ten of the thirteen cities surveyed. Five years later, *House Beautiful* was declaring 1938 "the year of the emergence of American Modern," a style "as American as redwoods, steamed clams, the Palisades, and Pike's Peak." *Making America Modern: Interior Design in the 1930s*, the latest book from design historian Marilyn F. Friedman, relates the evolution of modern American interior design and its acceptance by American consumers over that decade.

As chronicled in Friedman's 2003 book *Selling Good Design*, in the years following the 1925 Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes in Paris, American consumers became aware of trends in modern design largely through department store exhibitions of modern furniture from both European and American designers. *Making America Modern* picks up where *Selling Good Design* left off and follows the modernization of American interior design through the 1930s, year by year.



(Left) Joseph Urban and Irvin L. Scott, apartment for Katherine Brush and Hubert Winans, New York, 1932. Photo: Fay S. Lincoln. Fay S. Lincoln Photograph Collection, 1920–1968. Eberly Family Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University Libraries; (Right) Living room in the Suburban House of Forward House *at R.H. Macy & Co., New York, 1933, from* The Upholsterer and Interior Decorator, *October 15, 1933.*

At the beginning of the decade, newly-formed professional associations such as the American Union of Decorative Artists and Craftsmen (AUDAC) took the lead in promoting modern design. The interiors displayed at exhibitions by these groups and commissioned by clients wealthy enough to withstand the hardships of the Great Depression showed a strong European influence.

Donald Deskey selected tubular steel furniture for the penthouse living room he designed for the AUDAC exhibit at the 1930 Home Show in New York's Grand Central Palace. The tables and chairs in the dining room designed by Hammond Kroll in 1931 for the New York apartment of Florence and Robert Ackerman resembled those of Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann and Maurice Dufrêne, and the study created by Joseph Urban and Irwin L. Scott in 1932 for Katherine Brush borrowed from the Vienna Secession and Pierre Chareau's library/office at the Paris Exposition.

Even in these early years, however, designs were starting to combine elements of European Modernism with sleek curvilinear forms, new American-made materials like Formica, cushioned seating, and an emphasis on comfort and simplicity that enhanced their appeal to an American audience.

Toward the mid-1930s, designers began to embrace a so-called classic modern approach to interior design, which *Decorative Furnisher* described as "still modern . . . but tamed down to blend inconspicuously into the most traditional of backgrounds." Classic modern designs enabled consumers to introduce individual pieces of modern furniture into their homes without committing to a completely new modern interior. The classic modern living room of the Suburban House in Macy's 1933 *Forward House* exhibition combined curvilinear and angular furniture, used metal only for accents, and adopted a soft color palette.

The introduction of modular furniture allowed for flexibility in arranging and rearranging furniture and facilitated its placement in spaces of different sizes and shapes. A model room designed by Russel Wright for a 1934 display at Bloomingdale's combined an armless loveseat and two one-armed chairs in a traditional sofa. The two chairs could be joined to form an armed loveseat appropriate for a smaller space.

Designs inspired by Asian and Swedish modern aesthetics began to replace the Central European influence of earlier years. "Serial manufacture," the term for production in volume preferred by Richard Bach, the Metropolitan Museum's Director of Industrial Relations, enhanced efficiency and lowered costs. These trends, combined with the simplicity, flexibility, practicality, beauty, and comfort tailored to American life in the twentieth century, contributed to the acceptance of modern interior design in this country.

Almost every page of *Making America Modern* contains historic photographs of interiors commissioned by private clients or included in exhibitions organized by department stores, galleries, or professional associations. The designs represent the work of the foremost designers of the time—Donald Deskey, Gilbert Rohde, Walter Dorwin Teague, Eugene Schoen, Russel Wright—and the text contains short biographical sketches of each one. Friedman also includes liberal footnotes and an extensive bibliography. *Making America Modern* is a valuable resource for scholars of twentieth century American interior design as well as an informative and engaging narrative of the introduction of Modernism into the American home.

Kathleen Murphy Skolnik teaches art and architectural history at Roosevelt University in Chicago and is a member of ADSNY's Advisory Board. She lectures extensively on Art Deco topics and is the co-author of The Art Deco Murals of Hildreth Meière *and* The Architecture of Harry Weese.

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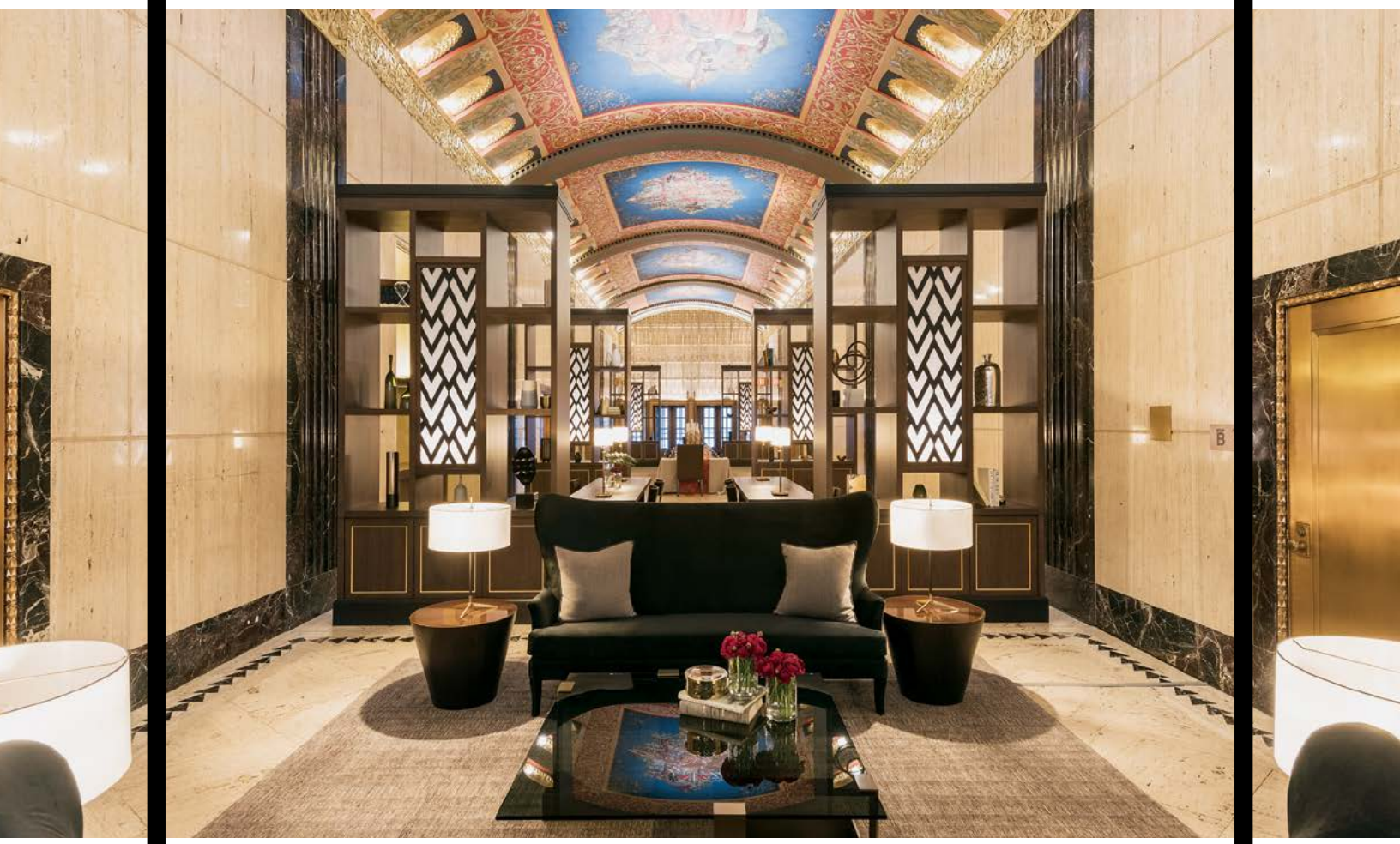

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