



Past
Exhibition

POSTER

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Art Deco

Commercializing the Avant-Garde

Sep 28, 2023–Feb 25, 2024

The term “Art Deco” did not exist until the 1960s. Prior to that, the geometric, bold, machine-focused styles now collectively packaged within that genre were known by many names—Style Moderne, Modern Classic, Jazz Style, La Mode 1925, Ship Style, Style 1925, Streamline Moderne—representing a variety of regional versions of Modernism. While the origins of Art Deco are frequently linked to the famous Paris Exhibition of 1925, whispers of what is now considered Deco appeared as early as 1910, after the Ballets Russes made its debut in Paris, exposing Europe’s cultural hub to a fresh blend of Asian and Eastern European folk motifs. Later, the 1922 discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb further contributed to the Western obsession with the “exotic.” Fashion and book illustration began incorporating these elements, heralding a shift away from the flouncy, organic forms of Art Nouveau and the Belle Époque toward a style that combined the progressive with the traditional.

This exhibition comes to Poster House through a generous loan from William W. Crouse.



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Art Deco Exhibition Poster

The Dawn of Deco

In the wake of the Paris exhibition, Art Deco became the first truly international style.

—Arnold Schwartzman

The exhibition that would have introduced the world to these new stylistic concepts had originally been scheduled for 1913; however, World War I put a 12-year pause on these plans. Myriad branches of Modernism, however, continued to evolve during this time, reaching their zenith just as the world was entering an era of postwar optimism and prosperity. By 1925, France was eager to reclaim its reputation as the artistic capital of the world rather than pass the torch to the United States. Despite the collapse of the French franc in 1924, a surge in American tourism and an aggressive bond drive provided solid funding for a lavish and expansive showcase that would come to be known as the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes (commonly known today as the 1925 Paris Exhibition). While 20 countries participated (the United States and Germany being notably absent), France dominated the stage, taking up almost two-thirds of the 72 acres allocated for the event. The singular “rule” was that only the new and modern could be displayed—anything that resembled previous styles would not be permitted.

Between April and October of 1925, more than 16 million visitors from around the world attended the fair. Each of the 15,000 exhibitors aimed to express their country’s version of Modernism. As many of the pavilions were run by department stores and other commercial endeavors, equal weight was given to mass-produced items and to the concept of better living through the power of the machine. The glamorization of industry during this period was more a testament to efforts at postwar reconstruction and national pride than to an actual belief in the utopian ideals and intellectual tenets of various avant-garde artistic and intellectual movements. This resulted in the championing of artistic beauty in all aspects of everyday life without the moral substance of the movements that spawned it—a decadent commercialism that millions of people paid to admire. The success of this event inspired many other wildly popular international exhibitions, including the Paris Colonial Exhibition (1931), the Chicago World’s Fair (1933), the Brussels International Exhibition (1935), and the 1939 New York World’s Fair, all of which would promote the Art Deco aesthetic as the first truly global style. This exhibition chronicles that evolution through the birth and proliferation of Art Deco around the world within advertising posters, considered today to be some of the rarest and most valuable works of graphic design.

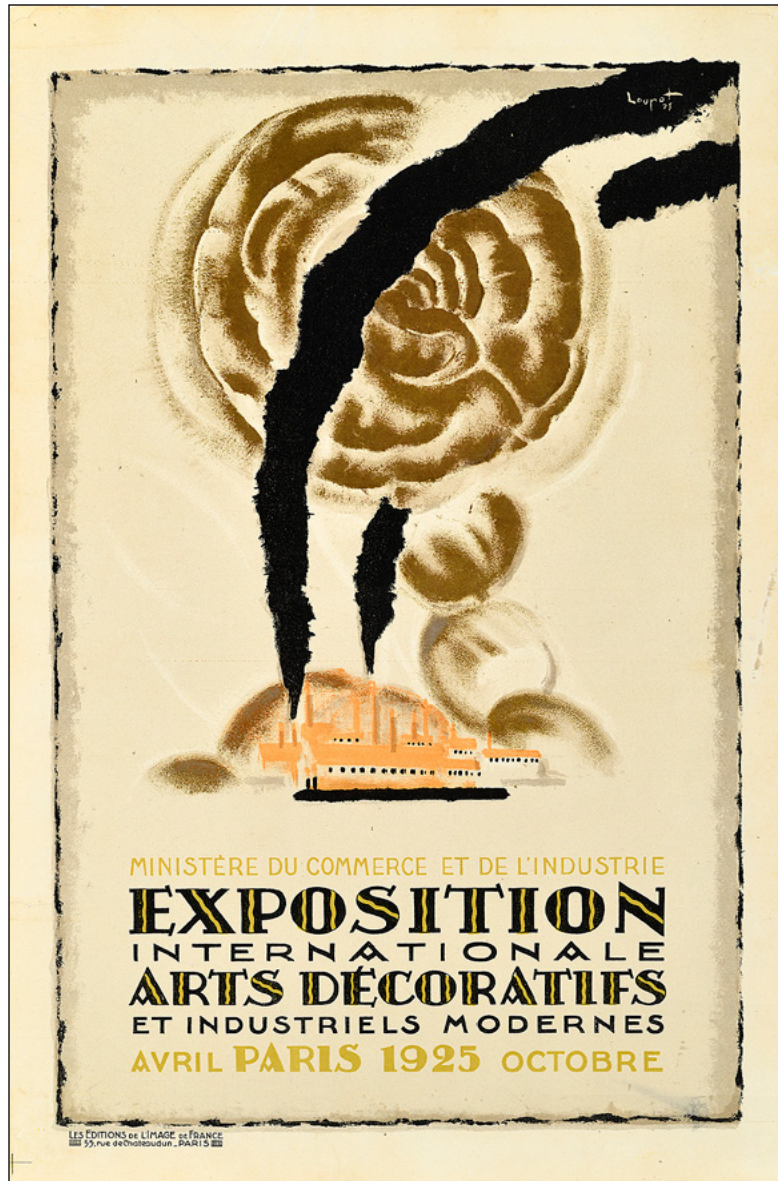


Cycles Brillant, 1925

A. M. Cassandre (Adolphe Mouron, 1901–68)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- One of Cassandre's rarest and earliest designs, this poster is also one of his most minimal. In a composition made up almost entirely of circles and lines that takes full advantage of negative space, it economically expresses a cyclist speeding around a velodrome. Added dynamism is provided by the lettering mimicking the slant of the bicycle.
- Track cycling was an incredibly popular type of indoor bike competition during the first half of the 20th century. Cyclists would race around an oval-shaped track with pitched curves, meaning the participants would be at the type of incline depicted here by Cassandre.
- Born in Ukraine, Cassandre moved to Paris to study painting. From 1923 to 1928, he worked for the Hachard printing office, introducing his interpretation of Modernism to the world through advertising. It would become the most recognizable form of commercial Art Deco.



**Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs
et Industriels Modernes, 1925**

Charles Loupot (1892–1962)

Poster House Permanent Collection

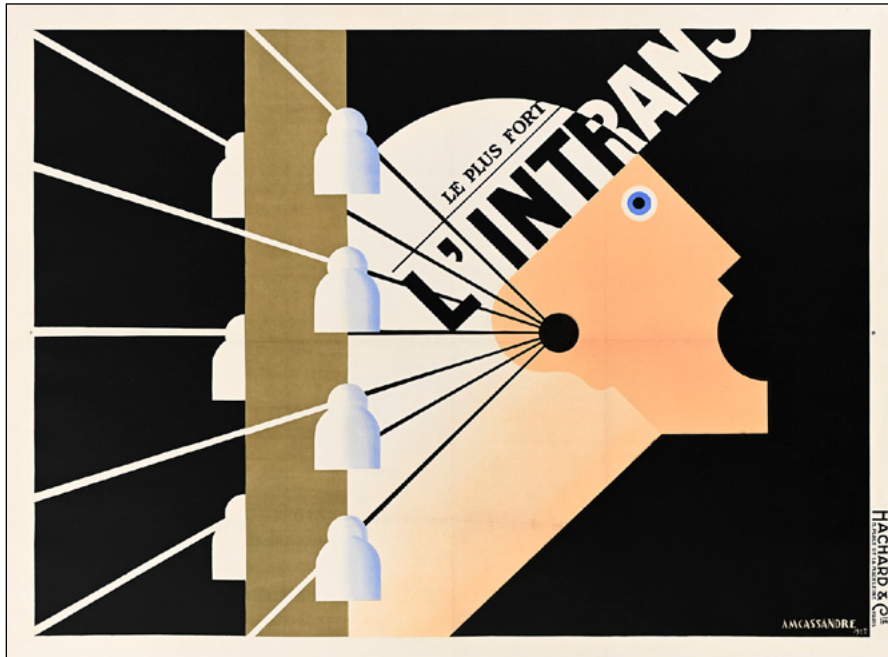


Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes, 1925

Émile-Antoine Bourdelle (1861–1929)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- These are two of at least six designs created to promote the 1925 Paris Exhibition. André Girard, Louis Pierre Rigal, Henri Rapin, and Robert Bonfils also made posters, each of which presents a slightly different interpretation of Modernism that would not be considered classically “Deco” today.
- The exhibition exposed millions of visitors to the latest styles and trends from around the world, many of which presented Modernism as a blend of the avant-garde and the power of mechanized production.
- While the exposition was intended to put French taste at the forefront of Modernism, submissions from other countries added aesthetic diversity to Art Deco, thus making it the first truly international style.



L'Intransigeant, 1925

A. M. Cassandre (Adolphe Mouron, 1901–68)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- While originally a liberal daily newspaper, *L'Intransigeant* became an outlet for right-wing politics in the 1920s. It also positioned itself at the forefront of news by investing heavily in new technology and being one of the first French papers to incorporate photography.
- Léon Bailby, the director of the newspaper, commissioned Cassandre to create this design based on the theme of “information.” In it, the name of the publication vanishes off the page—the presumption being that it was well-known enough to be recognizable—while a screaming newsboy announces the daily headlines. His ear is connected to telegraph wires, complete with ceramic insulators, implying that the news was delivered to the journal with such rapidity that it could compete with radio.



Vov, c. 1926

Marcello Nizzoli (1887–1960)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- While Prohibition prevented the sale of alcohol in the United States throughout the 1920s, the consumption of spirits and wine increased in Europe as postwar supply chains reopened. More efficient forms of factory production combined with faster shipping services created a new international market for regional brands of liquor, and posters promoting alcohol proliferated.
- Vov takes its name from *vovi*—the Italian word for eggs—and is a liqueur made from marsala, egg yolks, vanilla, milk, and sugar. The bottle is opaque to keep the dairy products from spoiling. Traditionally, it is added to espresso as an “invigorating” treat.
- While many of Nizzoli’s other posters include Cubist elements (see his design for Campari in the museum’s Poster History Timeline), this composition embraces the dramatic force of Futurism with the name of the product barreling toward the viewer. The incorporation of dramatic angles, often giving the viewer the sense of looking at a product from above, combined with a visual impression of swift motion, were hallmarks of Art Deco advertising around the world.



Sables D'Or les Pins, 1926

LEC (Dates Unknown)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Printed in France and created by an unknown designer, this poster promotes a new seaside resort built specifically to entice British tourists away from more illustrious destinations like Deauville. The text boasts a sporting paradise complete with 18 holes of golf and the most picturesque beach in Brittany.
- The graphic style is heavily influenced by the fractured geometries of Cubism and Orphism, and the powerful color palette of Fauvism, made more accessible to a mass audience through the clear representation of a central golfing figure. For more information on these and other artistic movements of the period, please see *A Little Book of Avant-Gardes* at the entrance.
- Postwar prosperity and a proliferation of state-of-the-art means of transportation led to a boom in leisure travel for the middle and upper classes. More posters promoting new hotels and novel destinations were printed in the 1920s than during all the previous decades combined.



PKZ, 1928

Herbert Matter (1907–84)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- While Herbert Matter is best known for his travel posters that deftly combine Constructivist photomontage techniques with capitalist advertising principles, this early work is an upbeat, lighthearted example of 1920s Art Deco airbrushing and geometry.
- Through an economical use of simple shapes and subdued colors, Matter presents a hotel porter so impressed with a PKZ overcoat that he “oos” in delight. Presumably, this figure had seen thousands of coats in his career, many custom-made by tailors, yet this ready-to-wear example stands out for its high quality.

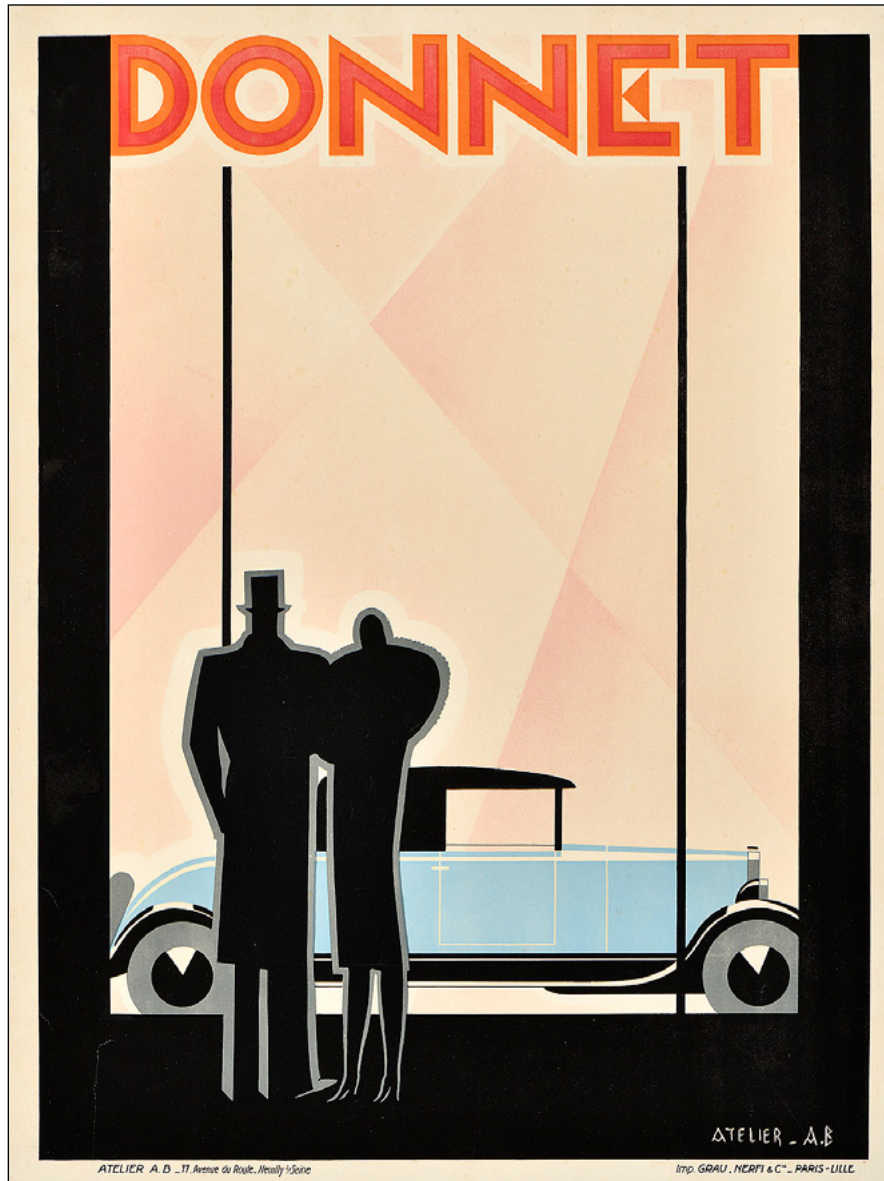


PKZ, 1928

Otto Morach (1887–1973)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- This poster is part of a triptych in which the same two figures read newspapers printed with slightly different text in Italian, French, and German—*Jedermann* (everyone), *Vestiti* (clothes), and *Vêtements* (clothes). This was common for advertisements printed in Switzerland, as the government required that they be issued in the country's three official languages.
- Although PKZ was founded in 1881 as Switzerland's first large-scale men's clothing retailer, the 1920s saw it and many other department stores around the world enter a golden era of merchandising. Posters like this were meant to entice passersby to partake in modern sophistication and luxury through the consumption of clothing and accessories.
- Partly trained in Paris, Otto Morach was a Swiss designer who frequently combined Cubism with Futurism in his paintings. Here, though, he avoids the shadows and detailed flourishes of his fine-art practice in favor of a flat background, simplified human forms, and a satisfying visual rhythm that together create a more impactful advertisement.

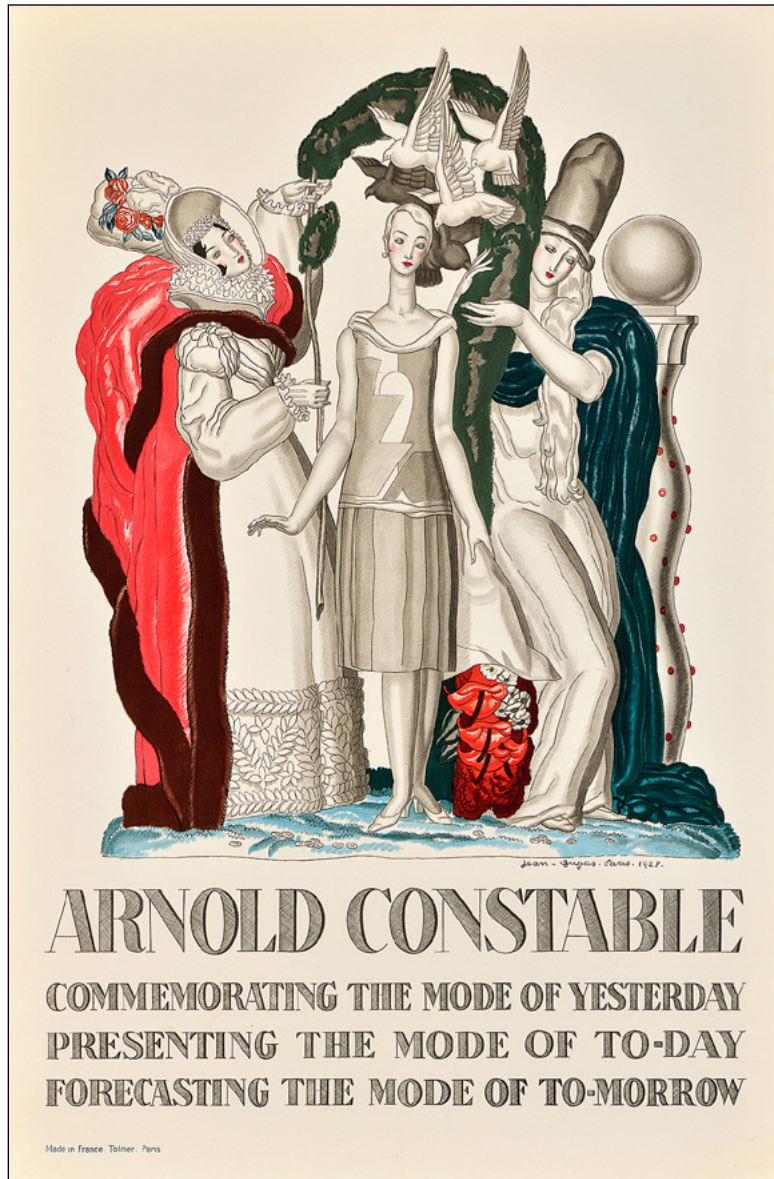


Donnet, 1928

Alexey Brodovitch (1898–1971)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Born in Belarus of Polish heritage, Alexey Brodovitch fled to Paris in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution, where he created backdrops for the famed Ballets Russes. His training exposed him to many of the most notable avant-garde movements in Europe, from Futurism to Fauvism. In this composition, the shattered-light effect from within the showroom demonstrates a knowledge of Orphism, most notably seen in Robert Delaunay's paintings of the 1910s.
- Founded in 1914, Donnet was a French manufacturing company that primarily built automobiles. Here, the designer attempts to equate the brand with high-class luxury, presenting a fashionable couple gazing at the latest model through a large, beautifully lit showroom window during a night on the town.
- Throughout the 1920s in the United States and parts of Europe, personal car ownership saw a rapid and exponential increase. High employment, soaring stock markets, and an overarching sense of postwar optimism resulted in a surplus of disposable income and a desire to spend it, much of which went toward leisure and luxury items.

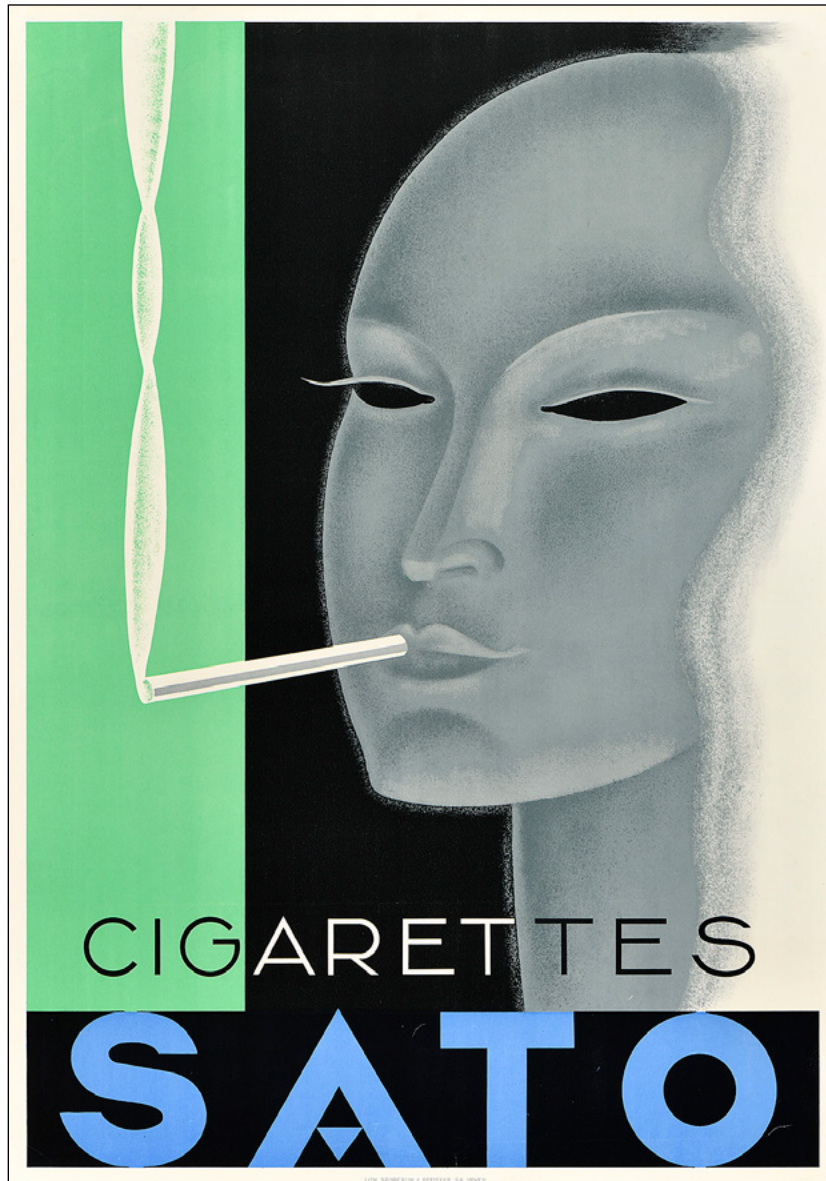


Arnold Constable, 1928

Jean Dupas (1882–1964)

Poster House Permanent Collection

- Located in downtown Manhattan, Arnold Constable was at one point the most luxurious department store in New York. Here, French artist Jean Dupas positions the institution as the tastemaker in fashion for the past, the present, and the future.
- Created the year before the Wall Street Crash, this poster represents the height of American Jazz Age glamour and excess.
- Dupas was one of the most prolific and notable painters and illustrators of the Art Deco period, not only providing numerous fashion plates for publications like *Vogue*, but also designing part of the interior of the SS Normandie, for a time the largest and fastest passenger ship ever built.
- Dupas's version of Art Deco combined the weight of Fernand Léger's Cubist figures with elements of Giorgio de Chirico's Surrealist landscapes—an Italian-French hybrid that reflects his formal artistic education in both countries.



The poster is not a painting but a machine to advertise.

—A.M. Cassandre

Sato Cigarettes, 1933

Designer Unknown

Collection of William W. Crouse

- During the 1920s and '30s, colonial regimes remained a powerful force, and colonial exhibitions continued to present the products and peoples of lands under foreign control. The implication that an item originated from an “exotic” location added to its saleability, and many companies falsely claimed foreign origins for their wares.
- Sato was a Lausanne-based cigarette brand that used dark tobacco, commonly referred to as “Turkish.” In earlier posters for the company, Charles Loupot created a vaguely Ottoman female mascot, opulently smoking while seated on a floor pillow. Her image was always accompanied by the tagline “Egyptian Cigarettes,” despite the fact that the tobacco was Turkish. The company removed this text when Turkish tobacco fell out of favor in the postwar period.
- A stylistic departure from Loupot’s Mannerist design, this poster presents a new type of ethnically ambiguous female figure popular during the Art Deco period. Composed of dramatic almond-shaped curves that echo the slender plume of smoke undulating from her cigarette, her masklike features associate the brand with the mystery and exoticism of a modern femme fatale.



Trage Schmuck du Gewinnst, 1927

N. Weber (Dates Unknown)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Hosted by the Central Committee for German Jewelry Culture, Berlin's Jewelry Week was an ostentatious showcase for the latest in fine adornments. This extreme level of extravagance is perfectly captured in the event's tagline: "wear jewelry, you win."
- The image of the expressionless female face, complete with downcast eyes, was a popular motif within avant-garde circles of the 1920s. It was perhaps made most iconic through Man Ray's 1926 Surrealist photograph of the French model Kiki de Montparnasse, *Noir et Blanche*, first published in Parisian Vogue.
- Art Deco jewelry was heavily influenced by Chinese and Egyptian motifs, as well as by the industrial abstraction of the machine age.



Art Deco As International Phenomenon

Art Deco had two distinct phases. Before the Wall Street Crash of 1929 and the onset of the Great Depression, Deco reveled in luxury and optimism. It was the style best symbolized by the opulence and excess of *The Great Gatsby*. After 1930, it evolved to embrace mass production and streamlined efficiency for all. Both periods favored geometry, symmetry, and a touch of the “exotic,” but the materials by which these were achieved shifted from jewels, lacquer, and gold to chrome, steel, and plastics.

Within poster design, this transition is less stylistically obvious. Instead, the shift is most evident in the ways designers interpreted global politics and the growth of nationalism in the lead up to World War II. What began as a decidedly French advertising genre swiftly morphed into a means by which individual countries—many of them newly formed in the aftermath of World War I—could express their own artistic traditions through the lens of Modernism. Unlike in the fine arts, however, these posters combined various avant-garde ideas and styles with the clarity of commercial advertising.

The resulting posters are simultaneously international and deeply regional—and yet all would ultimately be couched under the umbrella of Art Deco. Concepts presented by many of the avant-garde factions that had sprung up throughout Europe in the early 1910s lost their utopian ideals and were distilled for mass consumption in the name of commercialism. Visual elements of Cubism, Futurism, De Stijl, the Bauhaus, Constructivism, and Fauvism were transformed into eye-catching but ideologically bereft means to sell goods and services. Increased production created the need for powerful advertising on a mass scale, turning graphic design into a legitimate career and Art Deco into the universal language of its proponents.



Maccabiah, 1932

De Soto (Dates Unknown)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Art Deco design motifs spread to colonized parts of the world about five to ten years after they first appeared in Europe. Here, simplified Modernist geometries are used to promote the first Maccabiah Games held in the British Mandate of Palestine, formerly a territory within Ottoman-controlled Syria.
- Inspired by the Olympics, the Games are an international sporting event primarily for Jewish athletes (today, all Israeli citizens may participate, regardless of religion). This inaugural competition took 14 years to plan and involved a team of ambassadors traveling throughout the Middle East to gather support and interest, as well as the needed donations to build a stadium in Tel Aviv (the silhouette of which can be seen in the cityscape at the lower left).
- Tel Aviv would become a stronghold of Art Deco architecture after members of the European avant-garde sought asylum there during World War II.



Coupe Davis, 1932

A. M. Cassandre (Adolphe Mouron, 1901–68)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- As cities became more overcrowded with visual information, poster designers had to deploy new, dynamic tactics to catch the eyes of passersby. Here, Cassandre transforms the viewer from a spectator into a participant within the composition; the ball appears to be directed at the observer, who is put in the position of a tennis player expected to return the serve.
- First held in 1899, the Davis Cup was the premiere international mens' tennis team event. Here, the "challenge round" is being advertised, in which the winners from this year's tournament will face off against last year's champions; France ultimately defeated the United States.
- In 1931, Cassandre and fellow graphic designers Charles Loupot and Maurice Moyrand founded the Alliance Graphique, one of the world's first advertising agencies. The formation of this group signified the legitimization of the profession and the high demand for posters as a means of modern communication.



Mistrzostwo Świata: Krynica, 1930

Stefan Osiecki (1902–77) &
Jerzy Skolimowski (1907–85)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Prior to World War I, present-day Poland had been divided among the German, Russian, and Austro-Hungarian powers. The country achieved independence in 1918, when the Republic of Poland was created. Krynica, the host city noted in this poster, had previously been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.
- As Poland's largest spa town, Krynica was seen as a prime meeting point between Western Europe and the East, and was often used for international events. This poster promotes the 1931 Ice Hockey World Championships, during which Canada, represented by the University of Manitoba Grads hockey team, won gold. This began Canada's dominance in the sport—its teams won 12 times between 1931 and 1952.
- While 14 flags are shown in the lower panel of the poster, only ten countries participated—Japan, Germany, Belgium, and Switzerland were absent.



Campeonato Abierto de Basket-Ball, 1934

Caroselli (Dates Unknown)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Similar in composition to the poster promoting the first World Cup, this design also features an athlete lunging across the page with a ball. While the former image relies on minimal geometry and references to indigenous Uruguayan art, however, this one highlights a weighty, elastic figure in Argentine national colors surrounded by airbrushed shadows, and is more in line with European Deco.
- While little is known about the 1934 Open Basketball Championship, the text indicates that only clubs “not affiliated with the Argentine Basketball Federation” were allowed to compete. As the federation had been in place since 1921 and remains the governing body for the sport in Argentina, few, if any, professional-level groups would have been unaffiliated at that time. Impressively, this rare Deco design, therefore, was made for an amateur event.
- In 1932, Argentina was one of eight founding member countries of the International Basketball Federation, a group that, among other things, sets the rules for the sport around the world.

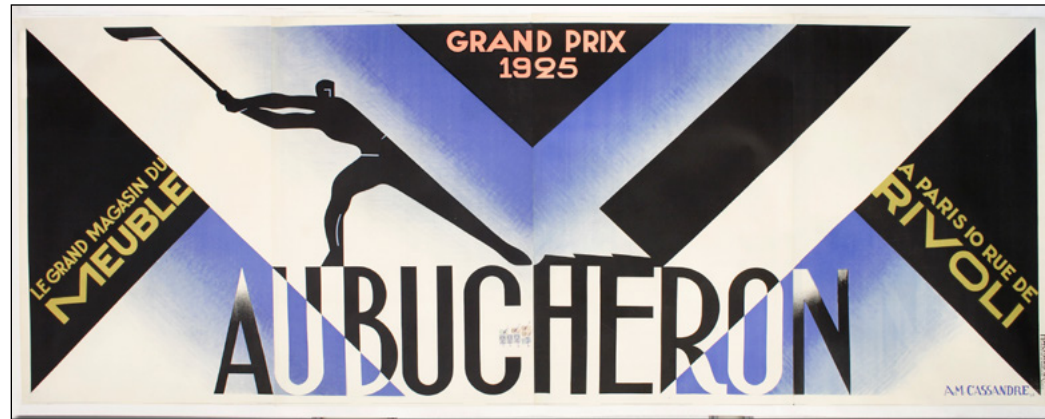


1er Campeonato Mundial de Football, 1930

Guillermo Laborde (1886–1940)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- This fabulously stylized design of a goalkeeper blocking a ball promotes the first FIFA World Cup, held in Montevideo, Uruguay in 1930. The event took place during the centenary of its constitution, ultimately holding special significance for Uruguay as its team beat Argentina in the finals, becoming the first international soccer champion.
- Guillermo Laborde studied the work of the avant-garde in France, Spain, and Italy before returning to Uruguay. Here, he combines a distilled version of those aesthetics with motifs from indigenous Uruguayan art, most notable in the geometric lettering and zigzag arrow.
- As part of an effort to show off Uruguay's position as a modern country, the government commissioned the Estadio Centenario, a stadium built in a streamlined interpretation of Art Deco. It also offered to cover all the expenses of participating countries during the World Cup in order to entice teams to travel to Montevideo (only France, Belgium, Romania, and Yugoslavia would make the trip from Europe).



Au Bûcheron, 1926

A. M. Cassandre (Adolphe Mouron, 1901–68)

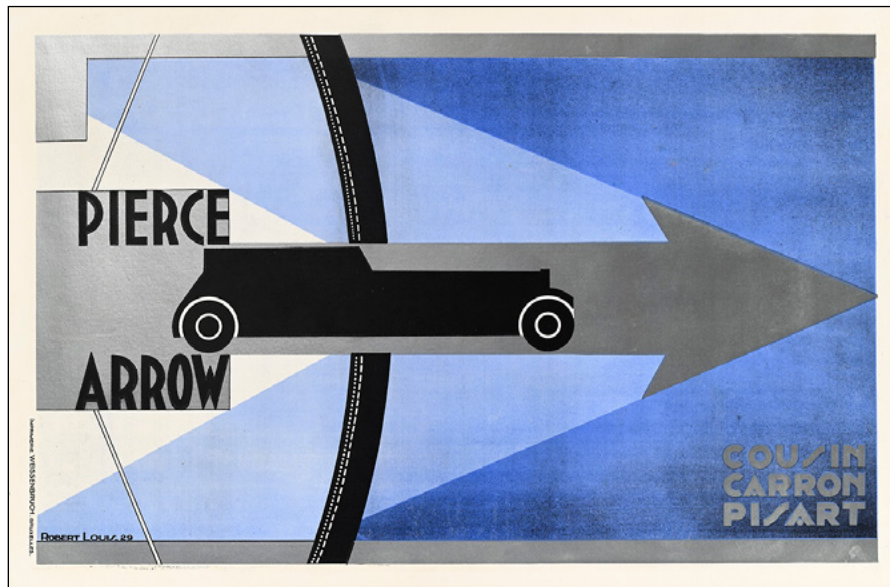
Collection of William W. Crouse

- This dramatic billboard is a reinterpretation of Cassandre's earliest Art Deco-style poster for the same company. The original 1923 composition focuses on the muscularity of the lumberjack and the weight and mass of a mighty tree as it is felled. Here, Cassandre presents what would become his more geometric style, reducing the figure and the tree to nearly symmetrical graphic gestures.
- Au Bûcheron was a furniture store in Paris that embraced the “style moderne” aesthetic. As noted at the top of this composition, it won the grand prize for design at the 1925 Paris Exhibition.
- Unlike many posterists of the period, Cassandre was not a painter by trade, but focused primarily on promotional material. His work, and the work of those like him, allowed the development of graphic design as a legitimate profession.



Au Bûcheron, 1923

A.M. Cassandre



Pierce-Arrow, 1929

Robert Louis (??–1965)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Founded in Buffalo, NY in 1901, the Pierce-Arrow Motor Car Company primarily manufactured luxury automobiles. Known for their size and elegance, they were among the cars of choice for celebrities and heads of state around the world, perfectly representing the glamour of the Roaring Twenties.
- More so than radio and posters, the greatest promoter of the Art Deco aesthetic was Hollywood. Seen by more people around the world than any single image, American-made movies established Deco as the aspirational style of the modern era, promoting fashion, home decor, architecture, and automobiles like the Pierce-Arrow.
- This poster was produced for the Belgian market, incorporating metallic silver into the understated design. Such lustrous inks were costly and rarely seen in large-scale advertisements—underscoring the luxe nature of the product.



L.M.S., 1928

A. M. Cassandre (Adolphe Mouron, 1901–68)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- As in his design for the *Statendam*, Cassandre's poster for the London, Midland, & Scottish Railway (L.M.S.) focuses entirely on a near-abstract of the machinery rather than the service advertised; however, rather than highlight elements of De Stijl, Cassandre embraces the dynamic power of Italian Futurism.
- Originally created to promote travel on France's *Nord Express*, the composition was rejected by the train's parent company. Cassandre then offered it to L.M.S. in England. That company also rejected the design, however, as it diverged too radically from the typical British railway posters of the period, characterized by bright seaside scenes and sweeping minimal depictions of the countryside.

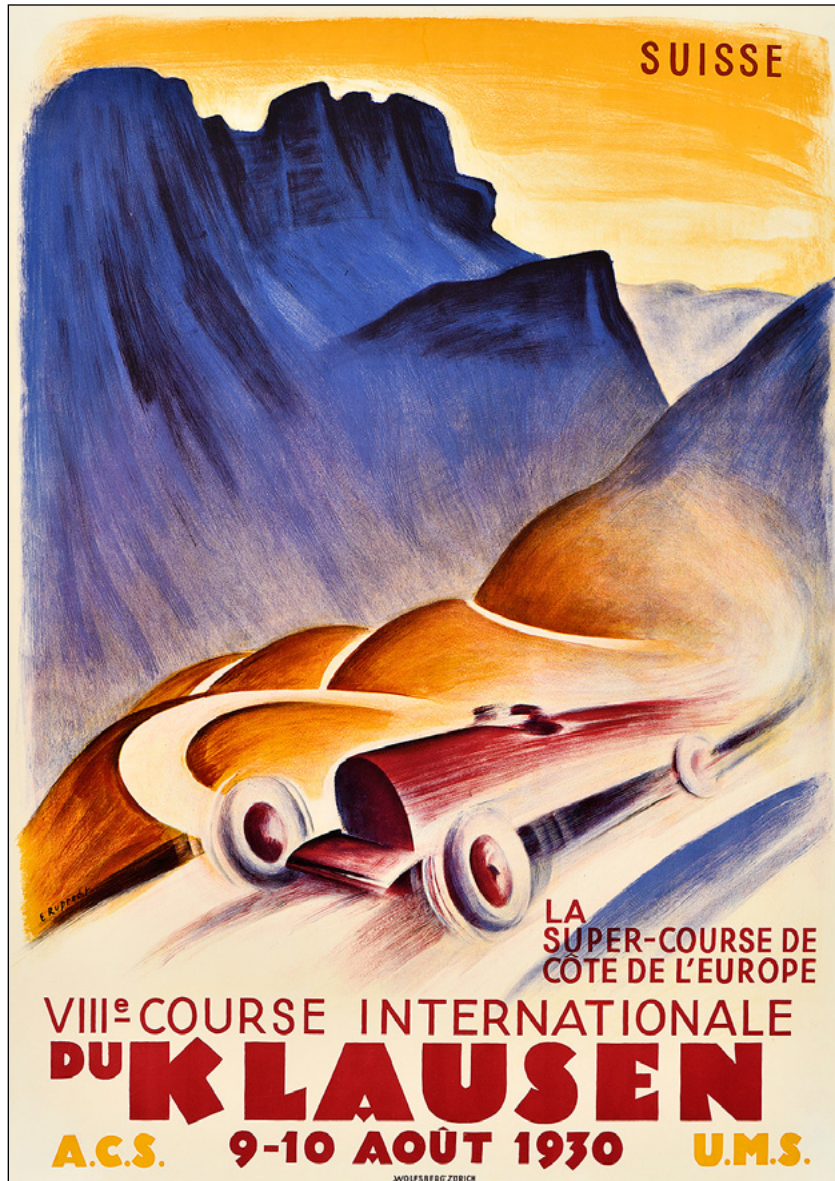


Aeroput Jugoslavija, 1930

Hans Wagula (1894–1964)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Printed in present-day Croatia and designed by an Austrian artist, this poster emphasizes the speed of modern air travel. The advertising copy states that “train travel leaves you tired; air travel leaves you rested.” It was issued in multiple languages for international distribution.
- The composition embodies a pared-down version of Art Deco that emerged during the Great Depression, with less emphasis on ornament and luxury, and more on streamlined simplicity. The plane, shown flying during the day, not only implies saved time for the traveler but also a rush toward the future through technology.
- Founded in 1927, Aeroput was the national airline of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia—a country formed in the aftermath of World War I from territories previously under the rule of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires. After numerous border changes and civil unrest, the area is presently split among seven countries: Serbia, Slovenia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The airline was rebranded as JAT Airways in 1947, and is now the national carrier of Serbia.



Ville Course Internationale du Klausen, 1930

Ernst Ruprecht (1891–1954)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Known as the Klausenrennen, this International Hill Climb race invited male and female drivers of both cars and motorcycles to attempt to reach the top of the Klausen Pass in the Swiss Alps.
- Consisting of narrow, windy gravel roads designed for pedestrians, this was an incredibly difficult and perilous route, on which vehicles reached top speeds of 124 miles per hour.
- This was the first year in which the track was part of the European Hill Climb Championship. Louis Chiron of Monte Carlo finished first in a Bugatti Type 37 in just over 16 minutes. The race was discontinued in 1934.

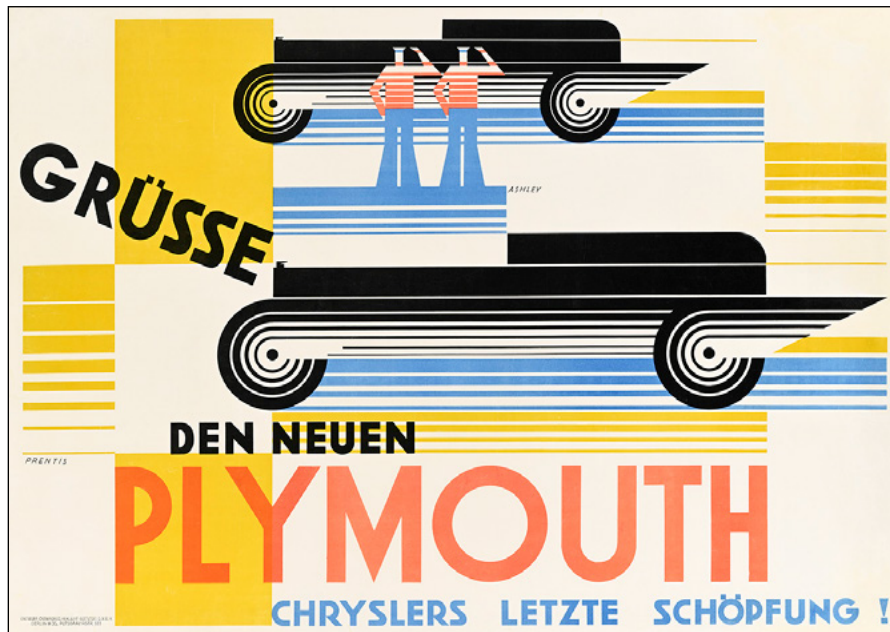


Statendam, 1928

A. M. Cassandre (Adolphe Mouron, 1901–68)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Many of Cassandre's posters were used outside of France. Here, he created an English-language design for Holland America Line's SS *Statendam III* that was printed in the Netherlands for foreign distribution.
- Rather than focus on the glamour of the new ship or the excitement of its destinations (Rotterdam to New York City), Cassandre highlights the nearly abstracted ventilation cowlings and funnels in a stark De Stijl-inspired color palette. This emphasis on machinery would come to define most of his travel posters and become a much-imitated hallmark of Art Deco advertising.
- As self-contained floating cities, ocean liners were ideally suited for transformation into complete Art Deco wonderlands. Every aspect of their construction in the 1920s served to express modern glamour—so much so that in New Zealand, Art Deco was known as “Ship Style.”



Plymouth, 1928

Ashley Havinden (1903–73)
& Terence Prentis (1903–46)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Designed by two British artists, this poster was printed in Berlin for the German market, indicating an international clientele for the American brand. The advertising copy reads: “Say hello to the new Plymouth, Chrysler’s latest creation.”
- Composed of primary colors and strong black lines, the composition reflects a knowledge of De Stijl, particularly the work of Piet Mondrian. As with most posters of this period, however, the signifiers of that avant-garde style are made more commercial through the addition of identifiable figures and promotional text.

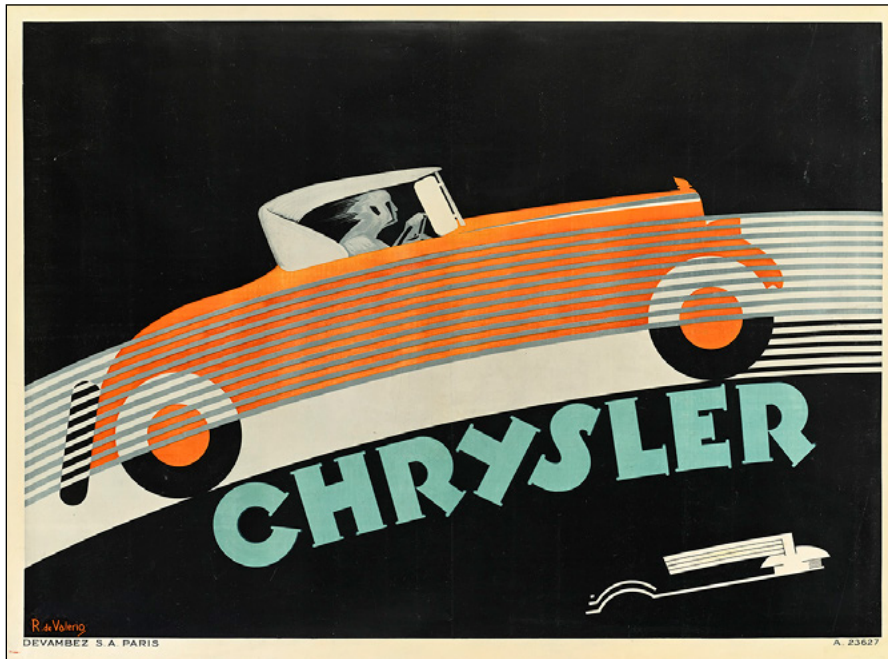


Batavier Lijn, 1929

Franciska Clausen (1899–1986)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- In business from 1830 to 1958, Batavier Line was a Dutch shipping company that specialized in mail and passenger service. It was also the first foreign carrier to establish a regular route between London and Rotterdam.
- This poster was printed in the Netherlands for a local audience, filtering elements of the Dutch De Stijl movement through a commercial lens. De Stijl focused on horizontal and vertical geometries, heavy black lines, and primary colors, all of which appear in this composition; however, the preference of De Stijl artists for complete abstraction is superseded here by the need to advertise a product clearly and concisely. The result is a design that commercializes elements of the Dutch avant-garde.



Chrysler, 1930

Roger de Valerio (Roger Laviron, 1886–1951)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Unlike many other automobile companies, Chrysler actually expanded its market share during the Great Depression, overtaking Ford as America's second-largest car manufacturer. Such success was achieved by cutting costs, requiring greater efficiency in its factories, and increasing production to anticipate the demand that would result from mass highway expansion in the 1930s.
- In this poster, a DeSoto CK-6 Roadster flies across the page, equidistant horizontal lines implying the wind rushing around the vehicle as the driver's stylized hair whips behind him. Such visual indicators of speed were commonly used in Art Deco posters and were primarily inspired by similar motifs in Futurist painting and sculpture.



Grand Prix Automobile de Genève, 1931

Francis Portier (1876–1961)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- As a painter, Francis Portier's output consisted of blandly traditional landscapes. In the few posters he produced, however, he demonstrates a sensibility for the drama of Italian Futurism, best shown in this composition for the 1931 Geneva Grand Prix.
- This was the first international automobile race held in Switzerland. Run over a street track in the municipality of Meyrin, it was won by Marcel Lehoux of France in a Bugatti Type 51.
- A hallmark of Futurism within Art Deco advertising was the use of speed lines combined with a dramatic vantage point. Here, by focusing on the rear of the vehicles at a low angle, Portier gives viewers the sense that they have just whipped round their heads as their eyes follow the cars moving so fast that they are almost a blur.



Giornata del Prodotto Italiano, 1930

Giuseppe Riccobaldi del Bava (1887–1976)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- The Roman numerals underneath 1930 indicate that this is the eighth year of Benito Mussolini's Fascist dictatorship. His regime confronted a long history of regionalism and geopolitical division, and promoted instead a strong sense of national identity among its citizens, taking every opportunity to remind them that they were part of a single Italian entity.
- This poster promotes a festival of Italian products. Organized by the Italian Secretary of Fascism Abroad, this event was held over a two-month period in multiple cities throughout Italy as well as in major Italian-speaking communities around the world, including São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, New York, and Abyssinia (present-day Ethiopia). The purpose was to encourage the Italian diaspora to focus its business exclusively on Italian-made products, with particular emphasis on food, textiles, artisanal items, and industrial wares.
- Because of its aggressive sense of line and powerful graphics, Futurism was eventually co-opted by the Fascist government as a favorite style for political propaganda, becoming one of the few avant-garde movements ultimately associated with a dictatorship.



Bugatti, 1930

René Vincent (1879–1936)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- This large and imposing composition represents the height of Art Deco glamour. Floating against a simple striped backdrop, the wheels of the elegant Bugatti Type 46 appear to spin, as if it is about to glide off the page.
- René Vincent was best known for his fashionable depictions of women during the Deco period. Here, both passenger and driver are female—a nod to the burgeoning freedoms associated with the “New Woman” of the flapper era.
- As much of the classic Art Deco aesthetic of the 1920s was introduced through fashion, Vincent was an obvious choice for rendering an automobile so associated with Gatsbyesque style.



Power: The Nerve Centre of London's Underground, 1931

Edward McKnight Kauffer (1890–1954)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- While England itself had a rather dismissive attitude toward the Art Deco aesthetic, the London Underground (later known as London Transport) incorporated it into many of its advertising campaigns and a few of its new buildings throughout the 1920s and '30s.
- In this poster commissioned by the Underground Electric Railway Company, American designer Edward McKnight Kauffer focuses on London's recent dedication to modernization, highlighting the Battersea Power Station (then still under construction) in the upper right. This immense structure was the first stage in the London Power Company's bid to nationalize the country's electricity.
- Here, Kauffer fuses man with machine, depicting a muscular forearm bursting out of the London Underground logo inside a rapidly spinning turbine. Its fist grips a lever made of lightning bolts, harnessing raw electricity for the subway system.
- As a Modernist graphic designer, Kauffer incorporated elements of Cubism, Futurism, Vorticism, Surrealism, and Constructivism, yet his style is often identified mainly with Art Deco.



Exactitude, 1932

Pierre Fix-Masseau (1905–94)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Pierre Fix-Masseau apprenticed under Cassandre from 1926 to 1928, adapting many of the designer's signature motifs as his own. This poster, considered Fix-Masseau's finest, is heavily influenced by the foreshortened locomotive and extreme vanishing horizon in Cassandre's Nord Express from 1927.
- Fix-Masseau's design is distinguished from Cassandre's by its warm color palette and the inclusion of a human figure. His overall style is also more streamlined and minimal, in keeping with the growing aesthetic restraint of the 1930s.
- The second half of the Art Deco period favored precision and expediency in all aspects of life. Fix-Masseau's *Exactitude* depicts a train leaving a station at a specific time, emphasized by the central clock and the dominance of the word "punctuality" to describe the service of the Chemins de fer de l'État (State Railways).





Osaka Railways, c. 1935

Toyonosuke Kurozumi (1908–55)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- By the 1930s, Art Deco had become the first Western graphic movement to be fully embraced and “exotified” by Eastern cultures. Japanese designers in particular found ways to blend European avant-garde structural concepts with traditional motifs. While Toyonosuke Kurozumi incorporates the geometric minimalism of Modernism in this poster, he does so through the flattened perspective and pastel color palette commonly associated with *ukiyo-e* (woodblock) prints.
- The pink and blue lettering in this design advertises various train routes that provide increased access from major cities like Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe to the Ise Grand Shrine, one of the most important sites for Shinto devotion.



Imperial Airways: By Air in Comfort, c. 1937

Stephane Cavallero (Dates Unknown)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- While little information on Steph Cavallero survives, the artist seems to have been inspired by Edward McKnight Kauffer, whose reduced, geometric graphic designs set at surprising angles helped establish Art Deco in the United Kingdom.
- Operational from 1924 to 1939, Imperial Airways was a British long-haul commercial carrier. In 1937, it introduced its Short Empire flying boats, which this poster may be advertising given its depiction of a cozy club chair (as opposed to the wicker chairs of the 1920s) and the partial silhouette of a curvaceous-yet-professional flight attendant.



Anybody's Pearls, 1930

Edward McKnight Kauffer



Dubo, Dubon, Dubonnet, 1932

A. M. Cassandre (Adolphe Mouron, 1901–68)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- This triptych is one of the masterpieces of Art Deco advertising, combining bold graphics with humor and visual narrative. It proved so effective and popular that numerous other formats and scenarios were released, including a 1956 reprint of the final panel for the Danish market.
- The brilliance of the three posters lies in the marriage of image with text. As the figure partakes in a glass of Dubonnet, both he and the lettering become more colorful. By reading only the shaded parts of the brand's name in each panel and pronouncing them phonetically, a narrative forms that matches the visuals. First, there is *du beau* (looks good) while he is questioning the beverage; then, as he begins to drink it, he deems it *du bon* (tastes good); finally, upon finishing a glass and starting to pour another, the brand's complete name is announced.
- Unlike many posterists of the period, Cassandre was not a painter by trade, but focused primarily on promotional material. His work, and the work of those like him, allowed the development of graphic design as a legitimate profession.



Posters: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1931

Austin Cooper (1890–1964)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- In the 1930s, numerous major art museums around the world hosted poster exhibitions, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York. They touted the medium as one of the most forward-thinking, modern, and artistic means of mass communication. This poster by the Canadian artist Austin Cooper announces a 60-poster show of mostly British designers at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.
- All of the posters in the exhibition were commissioned by British transport companies, linking graphic design with modern travel.
- This is one of Cooper's most purely Deco compositions, heroically presenting a geometric portrait of Mercury, god of swift communication and trade. The dramatic shadowing effect was achieved through the use of an airbrushing tool, a relatively new technique within the art of poster design.



K.L.M., 1933

Munetsugu Satomi (1900–95)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- In 1922, Munetsugu Satomi emigrated from Japan to study in Paris, quickly deciding to focus on commercial art. He befriended Art Deco masters Jean Carlu and A. M. Cassandre, and went on to introduce a French audience to Japanese graphic design.
- This poster for K.L.M. highlights the various long-distance routes offered by the Dutch airline. Other versions of the design were issued in which the named cities were either changed or removed entirely from the border or now included the amount of time needed to complete the journey.
- Art Deco designers frequently used aerial views to attract attention. Flight was still a novel and rarified mode of transportation, and artists capitalized on the public's sense of wonder when promoting all manner of products and services.



Watt Radio: Torino, 1933

Giuseppe Vincenti (Dates Unknown)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- This aggressive design depicts an anthropomorphised radio tube screaming the news, concentric sound waves emanating from its mouth. Further attention is drawn to the source of information by cutting off the lettering so that it does not extend beyond the edge of the tube's "face."
- The composition debuted in 1931, and was so successful that it went through multiple reissues. These later printings lacked the original signature and incorporated the addition of the word "Torino" under the brand's name. At some point, presumably in the 1980s, the signature of the well-known designer Nikolai Diulgheroff was added to unsigned copies of the poster in order to fetch a higher market price. While this version of the poster is authentic, the signature is a forgery.



Mar del Plata, c. 1930

Ernesto Scotti (1901–57)

Collection of William W. Crouse

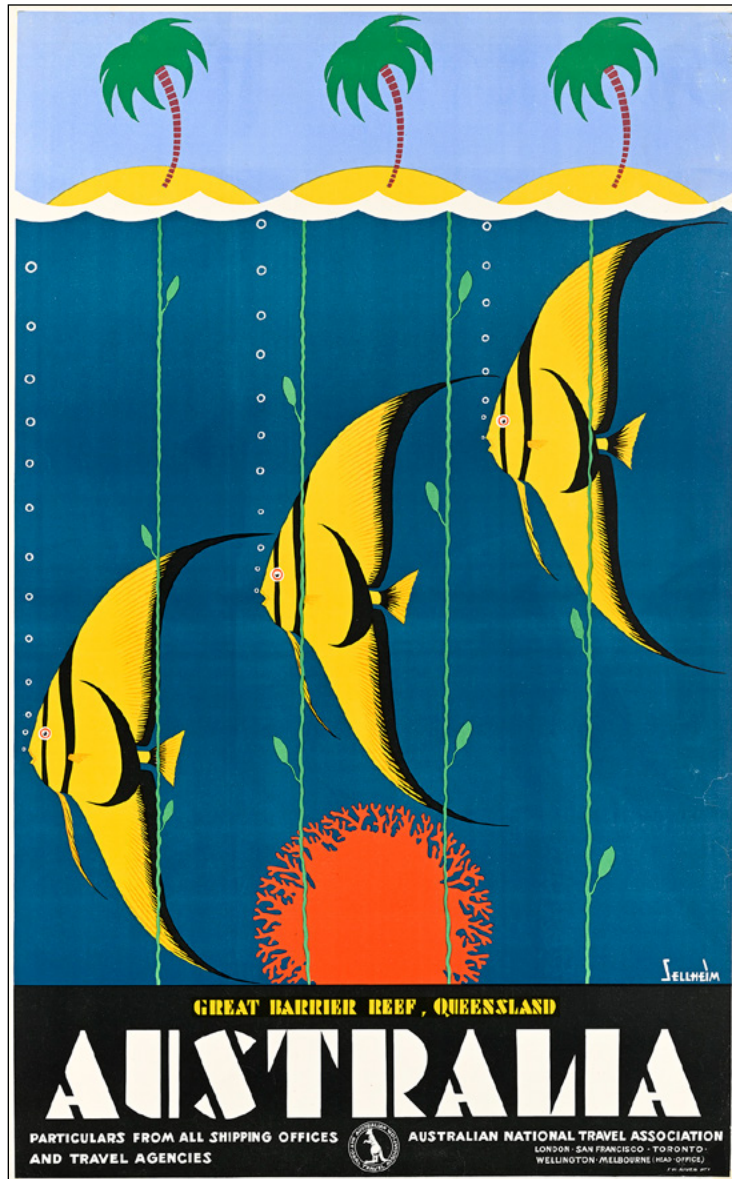
- Art Deco became briefly popular in Argentina in the 1930s, as immigrants from Eastern Europe arrived in Buenos Aires and other major cities. As with Uruguay, the best examples of Deco style within the country are reflected in its architecture, while only a handful of exceptional posters was produced. Fascist military rule, however, would put an end to the widespread use of Deco.
- This composition gets its visual rhythm from the contrast of light and dark coloring repeated on both the nearly identical figures and stylized lettering—both common elements in Deco advertisements.
- Each character represents a different attraction of the popular resort town of Mar del Plata (the “silver sea”), noted here as the “greatest spa” in Argentina. From the left, the viewer is tempted with deep-sea fishing, genteel socializing in town, and leisurely swimming.



Australia: Surf Club, 1936

Gert Sellheim (1901–70)

Collection of William W. Crouse



Australia: Great Barrier Reef, 1937

Gert Sellheim (1901–70)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- In 1926, Estonian architect Gert Sellheim emigrated to Australia, bringing with him the avant-garde principles he learned while studying in Germany, Austria, and France. Within a few years, he had established his own commercial art studio in Melbourne.
- These two posters are part of a larger series he made for the Australian National Travel Association, which commissioned him to “visualize the story of Australia’s emergence as a modern nation of the future.” At the onset of the Great Depression, this tourism board was established through private investment as a means of encouraging spending in the hospitality sector. Bureau locations, from London to San Francisco, are noted in the lower register of the designs, indicating where the posters would have been displayed.
- Each image in the set presents a diagonal composition of nearly identical figures representing an essential part of Australia’s identity in the visual language of Art Deco. The poster on the right shows female lifeguards demonstrating a reel-and-line rescue, a necessary precaution at the country’s beaches due to the growing popularity of leisure swimming by those without much experience in the open water.
- Despite being a foreigner, Sellheim was the first graphic designer to incorporate Aboriginal motifs into his work. While a form of cultural appropriation, his appreciation for Indigenous art helped legitimize it as both distinctly Australian and worth celebrating.



Sepo (Severo Pozzati, 1895–1983)

- Italian designer Sepo worked for Noveltex, a French men's shirt and collar company, from 1925 to 1951. His graphics followed popular taste, first aligned with the Art Deco aesthetic and gradually becoming more illustrational.
- This is his strongest Deco composition, incorporating a Cubist-inspired face in the brand's signature colors with the puffed-up body of a man in evening attire.
- The tilted "s" in "soir" is a lettering variation seen in many posters of the period, in which that particular glyph is pitched either forward or backward (sometimes referred to as the "escalator 's'"). This simple choice provides visual movement and dynamism to otherwise staid text.



Modiano, 1929

Róbert Berény (1887–1953)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- After studying in Paris, Róbert Berény became one of the first artists to introduce Cubism, Expressionism, and Fauvism to the Hungarian avant-garde. While his paintings are deeply entrenched in the Expressionist aesthetic, his posters are masterful constructions of Art Deco principles, featuring an economical use of sharp lines and bold color.
- Modiano was a Trieste-based rolling-paper company known for its exceptional advertising campaigns. The brand was so popular in Hungary that it ultimately built a factory in Budapest, simultaneously creating a range of notable posters for that market, of which this is considered the best.
- Composed entirely of circles and rectangles, the image relies on an asymmetrical tilt to attract the viewer's gaze, combined with vertical and horizontal squiggles of smoke. Additional visual rhythm is provided by the concentric circles of the monocle, the exhaling mouth, and, finally, the cherry of the cigarette that also acts as the dot on top of the "i" in the brand's name.



Larrañaga, 1929

Jean Carlu (1900–97)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Jean Carlu was one of the most versatile commercial artists of the Art Deco period, with a career that extended into the 1960s and embraced changing aesthetic tastes. Here, he simply uses a fine, lightning-shaped line to indicate a face, transforming a cigar into a monocled admiral wearing the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George. The resulting elongated figure is reminiscent of Amedeo Modigliani's stylized approach to Cubism.
- Carlu originally created this design for Service d'exploitation industrielle des tabacs (SEIT), the French state-owned tobacco monopoly, specifically for its premiere Diplomat label. It rejected the composition, at which point Carlu's agent in the United Kingdom presented it to a British importer of Larrañaga, one of the most prestigious Cuban cigar brands.



La Revue Black Birds, 1929

Paul Colin (1892–1985)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Starting around 1925 with the debut of Josephine Baker in *La Revue Nègre* (for which Paul Colin also made a poster), Paris embraced what is known as the “Black Craze,” a period during which Black performers, particularly from America, found unparalleled success.
- In 1928, the white producer Lew Leslie launched *Blackbirds of 1928*, a musical comedy revue that became the longest-running all-Black Broadway show, with 518 performances. In January of 1929, he brought the production to the Moulin Rouge in Paris (subtly hinted at through the presence of a red windmill on one of the figure’s lapels) where it played to sold-out crowds for three months.
- Today, Colin’s renderings of the show’s stars, Bill “Bojangles” Robinson, Adelaide Hall, and Tim Moore, look like the racist caricatures used to advertise blackface minstrelsy. At the time, audiences would have been familiar with the stylized geometric forms that he used for figures of all races, but that were developed in a different context.

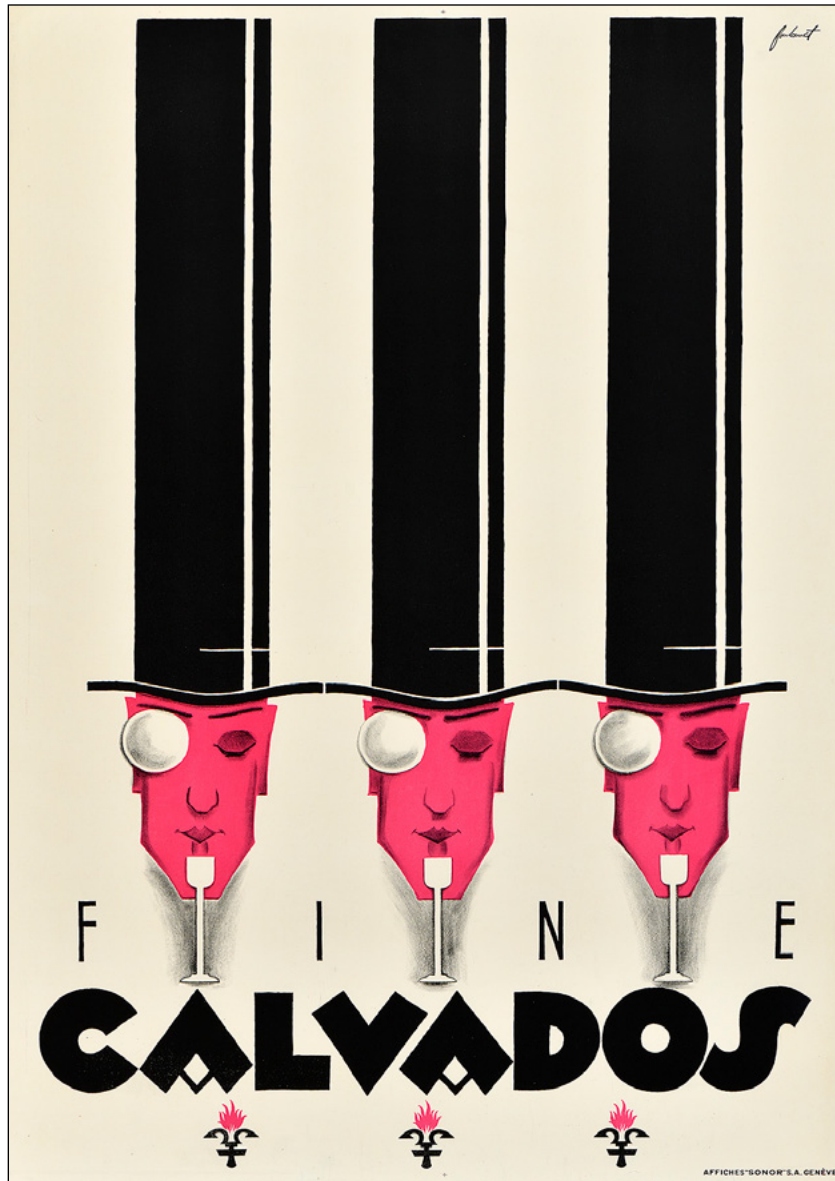


Glaswerk Leerdam, 1929

J. C. Nederhand, Jr. (Dates Unknown)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Royal Leerdam was a Dutch glasswork company that, in the 1910s and 1920s, collaborated with various artists and designers to mass-produce specialized glassware. Unfortunately, the avant-garde ideals behind these efforts to bring beauty to the everyday contradicted the reality that the general population did not need martini glasses and wine decanters.
- As the company's artistic director, J. C. Nederhand, Jr. created at least five other similar in-store advertising displays, each relying on the relatively new technique of airbrushing to create a stencil-like, minimalist composition.
- This is the most luxurious of the posters for the company, incorporating a geometrically stylized, posh couple coolly observing three blue martini glasses. A few years prior, Royal Leerdam had showcased its wares at the 1925 Paris Exhibition.



Fine Calvados, c. 1930

Noël Fontanet (1898–1982)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Noël Fontanet was a prolific Art Deco poster designer. Here, he uses a trio of sophisticated gentlemen to promote a brandless vintage of fine calvados (incidentally, the lowest and least-expensive grade of the spirit).
- Simple, geometric forms in satisfying rhythms (especially in odd numbers) were a standard motif within Deco advertising. So successful was this composition that Fontanet would repeat the idea in his 1942 poster for Morgafarin.





Week End Cigarettes, 1933

Paul Colin (1892–1985)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- SEIT, the French government's tobacco monopoly, introduced Week-End Cigarettes to the market in 1932 as a means of competing with other "light" tobacco brands, often referred to as having a "goût anglais" (English taste) despite being made of Virginia tobacco.
- The composition of this poster embodies idealized Art Deco country-club glamour of the years before the Wall Street Crash. The three nearly identical smokers casually pass a dual-compartment pack of Week-Ends across their diagonally positioned lounge chairs, indicating a life with an excess of leisure time. Colin has also arranged the text so that it frames the figures, drawing the viewer's eyes down and across the page. This harmony is further emphasized by the way in which the lettering of the brand's name echoes the thin, white wood of the chairs.



Beristain: Dunhill, 1932

Jacint Bofarull (1903–77)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Spain experienced a less catastrophic version of the Great Depression than many other countries, allowing for some luxury retailers to survive. Here, Spanish designer Jacint Bofarull brings the energy and dynamism he would later use in political posters during the country's Civil War to promote the men's retailer Beristain, particularly its imports from British-based Alfred Dunhill.
- This is one of four posters he created for the store, each highlighting a different type of luxury accessory. While all four designs rely on the Art Deco signifiers of diagonal compositions, geometric figures, strong colors, text continuing off the page, and airbrushing to create texture, this elegant image promoting the Unique lighter—the first designed for use with one hand—is his best.



Lyra Extra, c. 1929

M. J. B. (Dates Unknown)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Little is known about this rare German poster promoting Lyra cigarettes, a company founded around the turn of the century by the Jewish film producer Max Wagowski that dissolved in 1931.
- While there are elements of Cubist figuration and a Futurist sense of line in this composition, it is also heavily influenced by Expressionist posters for avant-garde German cinema from the Weimar period. Inspired by that genre, the artist produces a rakish central character who daringly embodies the tagline “pleasure is Lyra Extra.”
- While the monogram does not resemble his known signature, it is possible that the Expressionist designer Martin Jacoby-Boy created this poster, as he also designed packaging and other posters for the brand.



Twining, 1930

Charles Loupot (1892–1962)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- With a history dating back to the early 1700s, Twinings is one of the world's oldest tea importers, originally sourcing its product primarily from China. In 1910, it opened its first shop in Paris, the sign for which left off the "s" in the brand's name.
- Focusing on the fact that the letter "T" sounds like the word for "tea" in both English and French, Loupot produced a sophisticated, minimalist design in which the architectural geometry of the letterform resembles the silhouette of a kimono—a subtle nod to the (incorrect) origins of the brand's product as well as to the contemporary fascination with all things Eastern.
- Playing on Cubist perspectives, the cup is seen simultaneously from both the side and from above, flattening the graphic plane. As a global interest in air travel increased, many designers incorporated aerial views into their posters to make them appear more "modern."



St. Raphaël, 1938

Charles Loupot (1892–1962)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- In 1936, Loupot began a 20-year professional relationship with St. Raphaël, the French aperitif wine, producing dozens of posters—each more progressive and modern than the last.
- Each of Loupot's designs features a short, rotund, red waiter and a tall, skinny, white waiter, representing the two flavors ("rouge" and "blanc") of the beverage. In his final poster for the company, Loupot made the figures nearly abstract.
- Along with Cassandre and Carlu, Loupot was considered one of the most important French Art Deco poster designers; his work helped to establish the graphic identity of the era and legitimize the profession.



Leroy, 1938

Paul Colin (1892–1985)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- As Paul Colin was best known for his theater and cabaret posters, this design for a Parisian optician is unusual. Some sources claim that he was friends with the owner of the business, thus explaining this exception to his typical subject matter.
- Graphically, this composition represents a natural progression from the sketchy, ebullient geometries of his 1920s work to the more refined, three-dimensional Modernism, complete with airbrushing, associated with the 1930s.
- In a humorous twist, Colin has made the lettering appear blurry so that passersby are forced into a second glance to confirm that their vision is not, in fact, failing—the perfect advertisement for glasses.



Tungsram Radio-Röhren, 1933

Designer Unknown

Collection of William W. Crouse

- This poster by an anonymous designer advertises Hungarian radio tubes to the German market. In the 1930s, radios became progressively cheaper, so much so that despite economic hardship, millions of households purchased them.
- The composition blends Art Deco simplicity with the photorealism of the Object Poster, or *Sachplakat*, that had dominated German poster design around the turn of the century. This hybrid style demonstrates the amorphous nature of Deco, drawing from many artistic movements, including those of the past.



Megnyilt Hirdető, 1933

Aladár Richter (1898–1950)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- In the early 1930s, Hungarian architect Aladár Richter helped design the new office for the Advertisement Corporation of Budapest, creating a modern, Art Deco structure out of steel, stone, and glass. The facade of that building is depicted in this poster—also by Richter—shown at an angle presented by a heavily stylized figure of Mercury, Roman god of communication and trade.
- The use of silver ink to mimic the shining steel of the building was an expensive printing choice and therefore rarely seen in posters from this era, especially after 1930.



By the inter-war years, speed had become a public obsession.

—Allison Holland

Grosser Masaryk Preis, 1935

Walter Gotschke (1912–2000)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- This poster is a triumph of Czechoslovakian graphic design, combining a modern, aerial perspective of a speeding vehicle rendered in Futurist style alongside a classic Deco typeface.
- Variations on this composition were issued in both Czech and German, the primary language in Czechoslovakia at the time.
- Named after the first president of Czechoslovakia, the Masaryk Grand Prix was one of the country's premiere automobile races. In 1935, Bernd Rosemeyer of Germany came in first, helping to solidify the country's dominance in the sport under the Nazi regime.



Trelleborg, 1933

Olle Svanlund (1909–94)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- This Swedish poster advertises the Trelleborg rubber company's tires for motorcycles and cars. Both products are presented realistically, highlighting the technological details of the different treads, while the accompanying car and motorcyclist almost fade into the background.
- Diagonals were frequently used in Art Deco compositions, visually implying motion and drawing the eye across the page more dynamically than a traditional rectilinear layout.
- The faceless geometric man is also a recurring figure in Art Deco advertising, transcending countries and cultures.

The Death of Deco

During the 1930s, with another world war on the horizon, the fanciful flourishes of Art Deco and the emphasis on form mirroring function lost its popular appeal. The Great Depression and rising global tensions made austerity and thrift aspirational virtues. Nowhere was this shift felt more radically than in advertising, as production in many nations now outweighed consumption. Selling wanderlust, power, and beauty was no longer popular or profitable.

While some Fascist regimes—most notably that of Mussolini in Italy—attempted to embrace parts of the Art Deco aesthetic, others found it too close to what they saw as the “decadent” and “degenerate” ethos of the avant-garde to make it their own. The style had its last global hurrah at the 1939 World’s Fair in New York City, the last moment of cultural optimism in the West before the outbreak of World War II.

Although the academic popularity of some of the individual artistic movements seen in posters from this period would wax and wane over the subsequent decades, Art Deco as a concept was not really established until the 1960s. While Le Corbusier is considered to have coined the term (used in a negative context), British art historian Bevis Hillier brought it to widespread use in his 1968 book *Art Deco of the '20s and '30s*. Since then, Art Deco has become as well known a style as Impressionism, influencing everything from fine art to film to fashion. Today, Art Deco posters are among the most sought after and rare, showcasing a broad array of interpretations of the style through groundbreaking graphics.



XVe Salon de L'Aviation, 1936

Dolbeau (Dates Unknown)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- First held in 1909 and restarted on a semiannual basis after the end of World War I, the Paris Air Show—as with many grand events held in the French capital—was the most important aviation exposition in the world.
- This poster promotes the penultimate air show before the outbreak of World War II. Due to rising political tensions, Germany and Italy were notably absent. The participating countries were eager to showcase innovation (and, by extension, national strength), and introduced their fastest, most powerful aircraft.
- This poster is a fine example of how the increasing minimalism of Art Deco during the 1930s still incorporated elements of the various avant-gardes. The geometric shading of light rays subtly references Orphism, while the blurred wings of the plane and its upward projection embody the aggressive force of Futurism.



New York World's Fair: The World of Tomorrow, 1939

Joseph Binder (1898–1972)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Absent from the 1925 Paris Exhibition, the United States did not embrace Art Deco until much later than the rest of the world—and even when it did, it was rarely used in poster design. American Deco alternatively focused on the streamlined simplicity of factory-made objects and skyscrapers.
- This award-winning design by Austrian artist Joseph Binder is one of the best examples of American Deco, promoting the 1939 World's Fair through glowing images of the event's iconic Trylon and Perisphere flanked by searchlights and a fleet of airplanes. Below, the silhouettes of a brightly lit ship and train cross the Atlantic Ocean and country respectively to meet in New York City.
- One of the last examples of true Deco in the graphic arts, this poster advertises an event that opened just four months before the onset of World War II.



Italian Aerial Lines, 1935

Umberto di Lazzaro (1898–1968)

Collection of William W. Crouse

- Italy was one of the last countries in Europe to offer commercial air service. This was largely due to its unstable government, mountainous geography, and an overwhelmingly poor population that could not afford air travel. In 1934, eager to promote Italy as a modern country, Mussolini nationalized its independent airlines, consolidating them into Ala Littoria.
- This poster promotes general Italian tourism aboard its state-run airline. The planes, reflecting a powerful Futurist aesthetic, are shown in dramatic motion, one departing as the other is landing. The composition aligns nationalist pride with an Art Deco sensibility.
- Printed in the colors of the Italian flag, the higher seaplane is a Macchi M.C.94 “flying boat,” while the other is a Caproni Ca.133, once used as a bomber during World War I. The image exists in at least two other language variants, indicating an international release.





Press Reviews

THE BROOKLYN RAIL

The New York Times



**NEW YORK REVIEW
OF ARCHITECTURE**

Sarasota Magazine

The Daily Seller.

POSTER HOUSE