

Exhibition *Art nouveau - Art déco. Marseille au cœur des styles*

Marseille, Château Borély – Musée des Arts décoratifs, de la Faïence et de la Mode

8th MAY 2026 – 25th APRIL 2027

Room 13 – STATE BEDCHAMBER

Introductory wall text

Jules Chéret : Between the Fête Galante and Art Nouveau

Commissioned by Gustave Geffroy, appointed head of the Gobelins from 1908, this ensemble illustrates the manufactory's openness to contemporary artists. Chéret's tapestries, mounted on seats designed by Roustan, foreshadow developments of the 1920s, when designers such as Paul Follot, Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann, Louis Süe and André Mare established a more assertive harmony between textiles and modern furniture.

A celebrated poster artist, Chéret transposed his compositions into the world of tapestry and furniture. The allegorical scenes - light, graceful and joyous - recall both the festive spirit that made his reputation and the elegance of eighteenth-century painted décor. Through the prominence given to the female figure and the suppleness of line, his style belongs to the current of Art Nouveau. Chéret also contributed to the decoration of the Art Nouveau pavilion of the department store Printemps, designed with the architect Charles Rester for the Exposition Universelle of 1900. The seats bear the emblems of the seasons: flowing garlands, female masks in violet tones, and floral and fruit attributes. The screen depicts four allegorical figures of the arts - Pantomime, Comedy, Music and Dance - animated by the vivacity and luminous palette characteristic of Chéret. The furniture still draws inspiration from the Louis XV style, which remained highly appreciated in public commissions at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Displayed in the château's state bedchamber, the ensemble enters into dialogue with the original furnishings of the Borély family and the room's textile décor, conceived as a unified decorative whole. It illustrates the persistence of a rococo taste in the decorative arts of the early twentieth century, in a historicist vein reinterpreted for the modern age.

Chéret's influence continued at the turn of the century through southern poster artists such as David Dellepiane. In their works, the female figure remains central—muse, allegory and joyful embodiment of a decorative art intended to embellish everyday life.

Expanded object labels

The Seasons

Ensemble created between 1908 and 1926, after cartoons by **Jules Chéret**, furniture by **Laurent Roustan**, Manufacture des Gobelins.

Manufactures nationales, Sèvres & Mobilier national, Paris

Screen, Tapestry & Chairs and Armchairs, Wood (moulded and carved beech) & wool