

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 17 – THÉODORE DECK ROOM

Introductory wall text

Théodore Deck : At the Origins of Art Nouveau ?

The ceramicist Théodore Deck may be regarded as a precursor of Art Nouveau, a style that would reach its full development after his death.

Established in Paris from 1847, he collaborated with his brother Xavier and experimented with various types of glaze before achieving, in 1861, the celebrated turquoise enamel known as the “Bleu de Deck.”

Deck drew inspiration from a wide range of sources: the ceramics of Iznik, China, Japan and Persia, as well as the Italian Renaissance maiolica tradition. From 1888 until his death in 1891, he served as administrator of the Manufacture nationale de Sèvres. There he surrounded himself with artists to whom he entrusted the decoration of his dishes, vases and plaques.

A major figure in the revival of ceramic art during the final third of the nineteenth century, he received numerous awards at international exhibitions—including International Exhibition of 1861, the Exposition Universelle of 1867 and the Vienna World Exhibition of 1873. He also trained many apprentices, several of whom later distinguished themselves within the Art Nouveau movement, such as Edmond Lachenal.

Expanded object labels

Théodore Deck (1823–1891), ceramist, and **Joseph Chéret (1838–1894)**, sculptor,

Plant pot : *Bacchantes pursued by butterflies*, 1892, fine earthenware

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Brother of the painter and poster artist Jules Chéret – whose works are displayed in the ceremonial chamber (S13) – Joseph Chéret trained with ornamentalists before becoming, around 1864, one of the principal assistants to the sculptor Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse, whose daughter he married in 1868. On his death in 1887, he briefly took on the role of director of artistic works at the Sèvres porcelain factory, a post that had been left vacant.