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# CHICAGO ART DECO SOCIETY

Magazine



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**Planning the Century of Progress**

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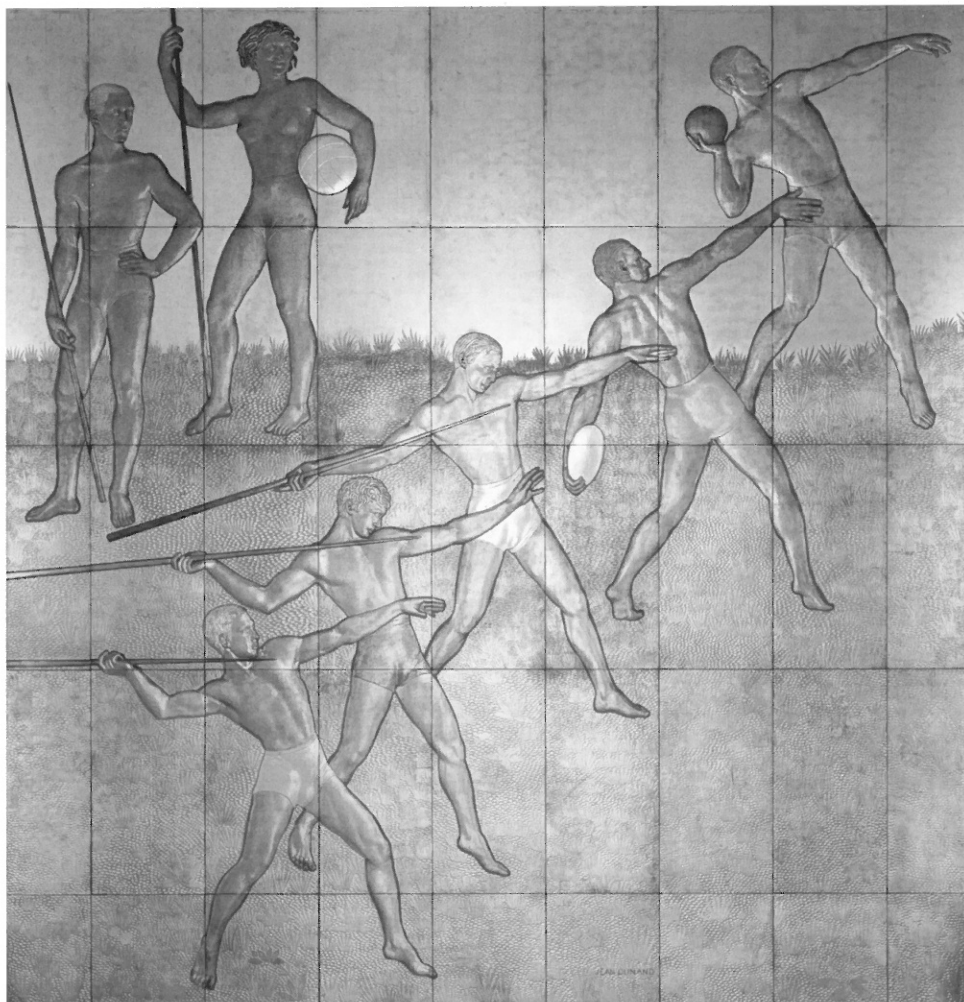
**Rockefeller Center**

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# Exhibition Features Parisian Collection



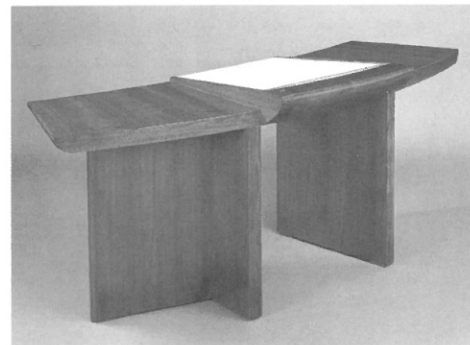
Jean Dunand (Swiss, 1877-1942)  
*Les sports (Sports)*, 1935  
 lacquer and gold on wood  
 Artwork: Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris.  
 Photo copyright: Photothèque des Musées de la Ville de Paris/Joffre

*Paris Moderne: Art Deco Works from the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris* celebrates the rich decorative style of domestic interiors in Paris during the 1920s and 1930s. It draws from one of the greatest Parisian public collections, giving an evocative impression of the lifestyle of affluent Parisians and the artists who made the works during this extraordinary period. The exhibition represents the first time the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (MAMVP) has selected works from their significant holdings of Art Deco objects to travel as a

group from France. *Paris Moderne* is on view at the Mississippi Museum of Art in Jackson through July 11, 2004—the only scheduled U.S. venue.

The exhibition comprises over 40 paintings and works on paper, 30 pieces of furniture and other decorative arts, and 10 indoor sculptures. Arranged together, these pieces recreate the lavish, decorative style during the bold and innovative years of the early twentieth century. *Paris Moderne* features paintings by many highly important artists such as Pierre Bonnard, Charles Camoin, Robert

Delauney, André Derain, Kees Van Dongen, Raoul Dufy, Marcel Gromaire, Moïse Kisling, Albert Marquet, Henri Matisse, and Amedeo Modigliani. The decorative arts featured are by the best-known Parisian craftsmen from the period, including André Arbus, Maurice Champion, Michel Dufet, Jean Dunand, Paul Foliot, Albert Guenot, Ivan da Silva Bruhns, and Gerard Saddier. They are made of a variety of refined materials ranging from crocodile skin to lacquered



Charlotte Alix (French, 1897-1987)  
 bureau (desk), 1937  
 Photothèque des Musées de la Ville de Paris/Joffre

gold. They represent the finest Parisian manufacturing techniques in furniture and decorative art design. Together the paintings and furnishings create an insider's look into affluent Paris interiors of the Art Deco era.

The centerpieces of the exhibition are furniture created by Gerard Saddier for the Hôtel de Ville de Paris on the occasion of a 1938 visit by the King and Queen of England and the varnished panels made by Jean Dunand for the *Normandie*. This is the first time the exquisite panels from the ocean liner have left Paris since the museum acquired them. Additionally, the exhibition includes specific commissions by André Arbus especially for the 1937 World's Fair in Paris.

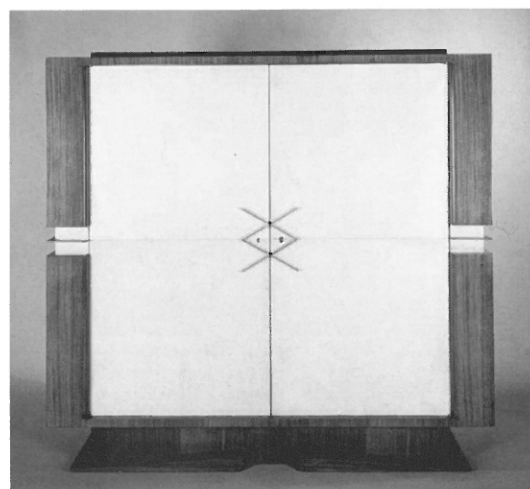
The building that houses the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris was constructed for the 1937 World's Fair. The museum's collection includes examples of

many influential movements in the history of early 20th century European art. *Paris Moderne* was organized by International Arts & Artists (IA&A), a dynamic, non-profit arts service organization dedicated to promoting excellence in the arts and located in Washington, D.C. IA&A enriches international and cross-cultural under-

standing through its collaborations with museums and cultural institutions, showcasing artists and arts movements to and from the United States, Europe, Asia, and Latin America in addition to its international Internship Program.



Gerard Saddier  
canape a cinq places (five-seat sofa), 1938  
Phototheque des Musées de la Ville de Paris/Joffre



Maurice Champion (French)  
meuble d'appui a deux portes (armoire  
with doors), 1937  
Phototheque des Musées de la Ville de  
Paris/Joffre



Eugene Printz (French, 1889-1948)  
commode a tiroirs (bureau), 1933  
Phototheque des Musées de la Ville de Paris

**The exhibition catalog** includes an essay tracing the trends and impact of the three world's fairs held in Paris between 1925 and 1937. Written by Dominique Gagneux, Curator of the MAMVP, the essay provides an excellent summary of the changing political climate in France and the evolution of modern art during that twelve year period. Gagneux suggests that the decorative arts "were at the heart of the ideological turmoil" between the two world wars.

All three fairs were showcases for the technical and artistic accomplishments of participating countries. The 1925 exhibition epitomized the care-free, luxurious years when the world seemed cleansed and new and when the machine held great promise for prosperity. The Colonial Exhibition of 1931, which opened before economic crisis hit France, emphasized improved understanding of foreign countries, especially the art and culture of African nations. The 1937 fair was profoundly affected by economic crisis, and intended in large part to create work for French artists and boost the market for French luxury goods overseas. Less optimistic than the fair that introduced Art Deco to the world, this one strove idealistically to put technology and design into the service of pacifism. Political propaganda and nationalism could be found in the displays and pavilions of nearly every country.


Gagneux describes the major architectural components and types of art, both fine and decorative, at each fair. She concludes with a brief comparison of the Paris exhibitions with the 1939 World's Fair hosted by New York City. The optimism symbolized in the skyscraper and streamline designs of that time faded as the shadow of war spread from Europe across the Atlantic Ocean.

The catalog can be ordered from International Arts and Artists, 3061 M Street, NW, 2nd fl., Washington, DC 20007; 202-338-0680.



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