A Study of Interior Design: An Examination of Popular Design Periods

Kristi D. Hamilton

Honors Thesis

Janet Fick, Advisor

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

May 2003
Abstract

An expressive method of presenting various periods of interior design is through three-dimensional models. Each model represents a design period, with elements significant to each style. Such elements include textiles, furniture styles, color selection, and material selection. Research of each period was involved, and a more detailed description of the design philosophies, designers, coinciding world events, and photographs was assembled into an accompanying booklet. The booklet also reflects elements of the styles that relate to each period.
Explanation of the Project

I chose to research and illustrate my findings of various periods of interior design, because it is an area of great interest to me. Within my major, which is interior design, there was limited information provided in my courses that dealt with the history of interior design. In the one class that was offered, little time was given to the study of more recent design styles. I chose to research Art Nouveau, Arts and Crafts, and Art Deco, because of their popularity and the philosophies of the creators that were behind each style.

I felt the best method to illustrate each period would be through three-dimensional models. This is yet another area where I have had little practice and lack experience. I have excelled in many formats of design and presentation but have never had the opportunity to assemble models to express my ideas. The models are ideal for demonstrating the styles to individuals who learn visually. They also add an interesting element to the project, aside from the booklet and more informative text. Because of the fact that information presented in the models is limited, I created a booklet of information that relates to each model. The booklet is relevant to each model in that it explains the history of each movement, key designers, influential factors, provides timelines of events, and includes photographs of additional interiors.
Art Nouveau

Design of the 1890s and Early 1900s

History of Art Nouveau
- The movement was first introduced by Samuel Bing, a writer of Hunting, Concerning
- Artists wanted to break away from the historicism that had dominated earlier 19th-century art
- Ministers created a new movement of artists, claiming they had "good ideas" for their designs that came from historic models and gave them the right to dispute with modernism together
- The nature form of Art Nouveau first appeared in France in the early 1880s. It continued to be more practiced in Belgium, Scotland, Germany, and Austria.

Timeline
- 1850s
  - French Revival Art
  - Industrial Revolution
  - Women's movement
  - William Morris
  - Art Nouveau

- 1880s
  - Floral motifs of Designers
  - William Morris
  - Louis Comfort Tiffany
  - Vincent van Gogh
  - Vincent van Gogh

Attributes of Art Nouveau
- These patterns are often more decorative than functional. The form of the design truly followed the function.
- One major influence for the movement was Japanese art. This helped them maintain the simplification of interior. The simplification was achieved by making nature and form free from decorative through flat, roughly approximated arrangements of color and patterns colored by bold, angular outlines.
- Japanese patterns "emphasized and unified" objects and forms them with ornaments.

Designers of the Period

William Morris
Louis Comfort Tiffany
Eugène Viollet-le-Duc
Auguste Rodin
Vincent van Gogh
(engraved by Wilde, London)

Influences
- Sea life, including fish, the octopus, jellyfish, and seaweed
- Japanese
- Zoological
- Birds
- Human figures
- Nature figures of women with long flowing hair, often associated with children
Art Nouveau Architecture

Redstone House, Germany

Casa Vicens, Spain

Art Nouveau Interiors

Dining Room: Keukenhof

Interior Design Motifs

Dining room: House and Interior

Other Examples of Art Nouveau

References


http://www.the-collector.co.uk/art.htm, March 22, 2003
Art Nouveau
Design of the 1890s and Early 1900s
Arts and Crafts
Design of the 1870s - 1920s

History of Arts and Crafts
- The style was developed in England as a protest against the character of mid-Victorian manufactured products.
- The creators condemned cheap workmanship, indifferent materials, insipid forms, and elaborate ornamentation.
- Architects regarded windows as a structure's soul.

History (cont.)
- The creators hoped to improve design by restoring conditions that were typical before the Industrial Revolution.
- These craftsmen considered themselves to be reformers, hoping to improve the quality of design and strengthen the character of the individual and society as a whole.
- The movement evolved to affect architecture, gardens, furnishings, accessories, and finishing materials.

Timeline
- 1870s
  - 3,600 Londoner Under the Sun
  - John Keats
  - Industrial Design
  - Color photography invented
  - American lifts run for first time
  - Telephone invented by Alexander Graham Bell
  - Photomontage invented by Alexander Graham Bell
  - Louis Tiffany and Joseph Pulitzer born

- 1880s - 1920s
  - The Statue; Smith
  - Museum of Liberty dedicated
  - First lift in New York
  - Albert Einstein born
  - Silent film
  - The American Tate
  - Tesla
  - First car built by Henry Ford
  - The Time Machine, H.G. Wells

Hand-made
- Simple forms with little ornamentation
- Focus on natural materials and their beauty
- Pewter and copper, often with a hammered finish
- Celtic motifs, stylized flowers, allegories from the Bible and literature, update downy hearts
Designers of the Period
- Charles Eames
- Frank Lloyd Wright
- Walter Gropius
- Frank Lloyd Wright
- Louis Comfort Tiffany
- William Morris
- Charles Rennie Mackintosh

Arts and Crafts Architecture
- Craftsman House, Rockford, Illinois

Arts and Crafts Architecture
- Craftsman House, Colorado

Philosophy of the Interiors
- Designed by what is present, rather than what is not
- Never pretentious
- Never, multinuclear in scale, arrangement, or texture
- Not overburdened with archaeological motifs or classical ornamentation
- William Morris said, "Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful."

Arts and Crafts Interiors
- Craftsman House, Rockford, Illinois

Interiors (cont.)
- Craftsman House, Rockford, Illinois
- Design by Harvey Ellis
Arts and Crafts
Design of the 1870s – 1920s
Art Deco
Design of the 1920s and 1930s

Art Deco is characterized as an attempt to unite the arts with industry.

Influences
Sources of influence include the Egyptian and Mayan civilizations, as well as Cubism, Fauvism, and Expressionism.

Influences (cont.)
Other influences include extravagant Hollywood musicals, the advent of synthetic materials, and the concept of mass production.

Timeline
- 1920s:
  - First commercial radio broadcast aired
  - League of Nations established
  - Woman granted the right to vote in U.S.
  - U.S. entered World War I
  - King Tut's tomb discovered
  - The Jazz Singer
  - Hitler publishes Mein Kampf
  - Pan-Pacific Conference opens in San Francisco

- 1930s:
  - World War II begins
  - Golden Gate Bridge opens
  - World War II ends
  - Broadway at "The Age of the Twenties" comes to an end
Characteristics of Art Deco

- Art Deco design is characterized by symmetry, hard-edged edges, streamlined lines, and sharp angles.
- Several motifs are derived from Egyptian design, such as lotus lilies, lotus leaves, and the eye of horus.
- Radiant elements were added when the Art Deco influence spread to the United States. An example of these additions can be seen on the Chrysler Building in New York City. Behavior and shapes were redefined for social forms.

Designers of the Period

Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann
Paul Follot
Pierre Chareau
Georges Pauli
Eileen Gray
Jean Puiforcat
Paul Poiret
Sue et Mare

Art Deco Architecture

- Golden Palace, Illinois
  - Frank Lloyd Wright

Architecture (cont.)

- The Seashore, St. Petersburg, Florida
- The Seashore, St. Petersburg, Florida
- The Seashore, St. Petersburg, Florida

Architecture (cont.)

- Empire State Building, New York City
- Empire State Building, New York City
- Bostad House, Stockholm
- Bostad House, Stockholm

Art Deco Interiors

- Louis Jean Armand, Poland
- Louis Jean Armand, Poland
- Louis Jean Armand, Poland
- Louis Jean Armand, Poland
Interiors (cont.)

Art Deco Furniture

Other Examples

References


Art Deco
Design of the 1920s and 1930s