



Rosewater sprinkler

Johann Loetz Witwe

Not on display

Title/Description: Rosewater sprinkler

Artist/Maker: Johann Loetz Witwe (Manufacturer)

Born: 1900 c.

Object Type: Bottle

Materials: Glass, Silver

Technique: Blow moulding

Measurements: h. 258 x w. 125 x d. 125 mm

Accession Number: 21041

Production Place: Czech Republic, Klášterský Mlýn

School/Style: Art Nouveau

Credit Line: Donated by Sir Colin and Lady Anderson, 1978

This glass Art Nouveau vessel has been attributed to the Bohemian glass manufacturer Johann Loetz Witwe. Inspired by antique Persian rosewater sprinklers, the form has been blow-moulded in iridescent green glass. The dimpled globular body of the vessel has been pulled up into an undulating sinuous neck that culminates in a sensuous, half-moon mouth.

The neck and folded back rim of the sprinkler possess an organic quality evocative of unfurling leaves and buds. Nature has also inspired the scrolling stylised stems and flowers that have been applied to the glass as a fine silver overlay.

This vessel is similar in design and manufacture to object number: 21033 in the Sainsbury Centre Collection, suggesting that the goblet and rosewater sprinkler are companion pieces. Both objects resemble the 'Crete Papillon' range of 1898 in their colour and oil spot finish. [1]

The celebrated American glass-artist Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) also manufactured rosewater sprinklers in his trademarked Favrile glass. [2] This particular design by Loetz Witwe developed from early designs that were modelled after Louis Comfort Tiffany's 'Jack in the Pulpit' vase [Loetz Pattern Number 346/355] and Tiffany's rosewater sprinkler [Loetz Pattern Number 346/389]. [3]

Austrian-born, Loetz (?-1844) founded the Loetz glassworks in 1840 in Klostermühle, Bohemia (now Klášterský mlýn, Czech Republic). [4] From 1879, under the direction of Max Ritter von Spaun, the company produced historical designs inspired by Roman excavated glass and art glass, which emulated hard stones such as onyx and intarsia. [5] Non-European, archaic forms appealed to late 19th-century tastes.

Bohemian glass from this period adapted to the Art Nouveau style, manufacturing iridescent and acid-etched glass that emulated the commercially successful glassware of Émile Gallé and Louis Comfort Tiffany. Loetz worked with the avant-garde designers, Josef Hoffmann, Koloman Moser and Marie Kirschner to produce new and exciting work. [6]

Around 1851, Loetz' widow, Susanne, received ownership of the company and renamed the glassworks Johann Loetz Witwe (meaning 'Widow Johann Loetz'). [7]

Vanessa Tothill, January 2021

[1] <https://www.loetz.com/decors-a-z/papillon/crete-papillon> [accessed 15 January 2021], see object PN=I-7637 and PN=346/365.

[2] University of Michigan, object number 1972/2.223
https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/musart/x-1972-sl-2.223/* [accessed 15 January]

[3] <https://www.loetz.com/identifying-loetz-glass/early-loetz> [accessed 15 January 2021]

[4] <https://hickmet.com/blogs/newsfeed/know-your-artists-johann-loetz>

[accessed 26 November 2020]

[5] Paul Greenhalgh, ed., *Art Nouveau, 1890-1914* (London: V&A Publications, 2000), p. 215.

[6] Greenhalgh, pp. 215-16.

[7] <https://hickmet.com/blogs/newsfeed/know-your-artists-johann-loetz>

[accessed 26 November 2020]

Further Reading

Amaya, Mario, *Art Nouveau* (London: Dutton Vista, 1966)

Geitner, Amanda and Emma Hazell, ed., *The Anderson Collection of Art Nouveau* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2003)

Greenhalgh, Paul, ed., *Art Nouveau, 1890-1914* (London: V&A Publications, 2000)

Greenhalgh, Paul, ed., *The Nature of Dreams: England and the Formation of Art Nouveau* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2020)
