



Vase

Not on display

Title/Description: Vase

Born: 1900 c.

Object Type: Vase

Materials: Glass, Silver

Measurements: h. 260 x w. 85 x d. 85 mm

Accession Number: 21049

Production Place: Austria, Germany

School/Style: Art Nouveau

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

This unsigned glass vase may have been manufactured in Austria or Germany around 1900. Its linear decoration reveals the artistic influence of the Art Nouveau style on European applied design. The German counterpart to Art Nouveau, 'Jugendstil' (Youth Style), took its name from the Munich journal *Die Jugend*. Founded in 1896, *Die Jugend* featured illustrations by Secessionist artists and designers who identified with the new aesthetic movement. [1]

Blow moulded in green glass, this tubular vase of swollen cylindrical form is decorated with an electro-deposited silver onlay design. The symmetry of the surface pattern suggests an insect, possibly a stylised butterfly with elongated wings. Glass cabochons, imitating opals and garnets, stud the arching silver lines, adding opulence to the design.

Silver deposit glass or silver electroplated glass was developed from techniques patented by Oscar Pierre Erand and John Benjamin Round for Stevens & Williams Ltd in Birmingham, England in 1889 and by John H. Sharling of New Jersey, USA in 1893. [2] Popular at the turn of the 20th century, the process of electroplating glass remained costly and labour intensive until it was revived and adapted in the late 1940s. [3]

The method of producing silver onlay is summarised below:

'The design would be handpainted onto the surface with a special flux - a mixture of turpentine and powdered silver, copper or brass. The glass was fired in a kiln to permanently fix the pattern onto it, then cooled and cleaned and placed into a water filled tank with a sheet of silver. Electric current

was then set up between the silver and the tank walls. The silver ions would migrate from the sheet and attach themselves to any other silvery metal surface within the field of the electric current. The longer the process continued, the thicker the build-up of the silver coating.' [4]

Two wine glasses in the Sainsbury Centre Collection (see objects 21048A and 21048B) resemble this silver electroplated vase in appearance and technique. All three items were gifted to Sir Colin and Lady Anderson by Derek Hill in 1964. [5]

Vanessa Tothill, January 2021

[1] Mario Amaya, *Art Nouveau* (London: Dutton Vista, 1966), p. 124.

[2] Barbara Wyrick, 'Silver Onlay', *National Cambridge Collectors Inc.*, Issue No. 409 (August 2007). <http://www.cambridgeglass.org/articles/0508/07crystalball409a.php> [accessed 28 January 2021]

[3] Barbara Wyrick, 'Silver Onlay', *National Cambridge Collectors Inc.*, Issue No. 409 (August 2007). <http://www.cambridgeglass.org/articles/0508/07crystalball409a.php> [accessed 28 January 2021]

[4] Barbara Wyrick, 'Silver Onlay', *National Cambridge Collectors Inc.*, Issue No. 409 (August 2007). <http://www.cambridgeglass.org/articles/0508/07crystalball409a.php> [accessed 28 January 2021]

[5] Amanda Geitner and Emma Hazell, ed., *The Anderson Collection of Art Nouveau* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2003), p. 19.

Further Reading

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

Couldrey, Vivienne, *The Art of Louis Comfort Tiffany* (London: Quarto Publishing, 1989)

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)
