



NEWS RELEASE

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AMERICAN ART DECO

DESIGNING FOR THE PEOPLE, 1918-1939

Opens June 5 at Joslyn Art Museum

(Omaha, NE) – *American Art Deco: Designing for the People, 1918-1939* investigates a dynamic period in American history and culture when the country and its citizens went through political, economic, social, and artistic transformation and revolution. From stylish decorative art objects to products of industrial design, modern American paintings to compelling photographic images, the multi-media works of art in this exhibition reflect both the glamour and optimism of the 1920s and the devastation and escapism of the 1930s.

American Art Deco is organized by Joslyn Art Museum and The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art (Kansas City, MO). The exhibition premieres at Joslyn, a landmark of Art Deco architecture, during its ninetieth anniversary (June 5–September 5, 2021). Major lender to the exhibition is Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art (Denver, CO).

Key loans from Kirkland Museum join loans from Fisk University Galleries and John Hope and Aurelia E. Franklin Library, Fisk University, Nashville, TN; Kansas City Museum, MO; Sheldon Museum of Art, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Wichita Art Museum, KS; and several private collections, along with objects from the collections of the Nelson-Atkins and Joslyn for this special exhibition. At Joslyn Art Museum, the exhibition is curated by Taylor J. Acosta, Ph.D., Willis A. Strauss Curator of European Art, in consultation with the exhibition's lead curator, Catherine Futter, Ph.D. (formerly Director of Curatorial Affairs at the Nelson-Atkins, now Interim Director of Curatorial Affairs and Senior Curator, Decorative Arts, at Brooklyn Museum).



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Joslyn Art Museum Presents American Art Deco: Designing for the People, 1918–1939

Jack Becker, Executive Director & CEO of Joslyn Art Museum, noted, "Joslyn is proud to partner with the Nelson-Atkins for this important exhibition. As we conceived it some years ago, to its fruition, it has evolved into an expansive exploration of the Art Deco style, but also a deep-dive into American life during the interwar years, bringing to the fore many issues that are still relevant today. As an institution born in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the nation, we are delighted to co-organize an exhibition that so thoroughly explores this time in our history."

Art Deco, short for *arts décoratifs*, took its name from the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes*, held in Paris in 1925. It celebrated a new style characterized by geometric ornament, symmetry, stylization, and angularity, which developed globally with different variants. In the United States, it combined modern style with an embrace of rich materials and new technologies, influencing the design of everything from skyscrapers and automobiles to clothing and radios. *American Art Deco* offers an in-depth examination of the cultural context of this international style as it flourished in the United States between the World Wars. Primarily from Midwest collections, the 140-plus objects in this exhibition exemplify the Art Deco style and underscore significant themes of the era, including the migration of designs and designers from Europe to the United States; industrial and technological advancement in the period following World War I; the changing profile of the modern woman; the rise of the middle class and consumer culture; and inequities in gender, race, and wealth.

The exhibition is arranged in ten thematic sections: *Paris to America*; *American Art Deco*; *The New Woman*; *An Architectural Era*; *Art & Design*; *Streamline Modern*; *American Expansion*; *Economic Depression and Stimulus*; *Jazz Age—Culture of Change*; and *Modern Living*. Highlights include glass by René Lalique and the Indiana Glass Company; sculpture by Paul Manship; ceramics by Frank L. Ferrell for Roseville Pottery Company; paintings by Aaron Douglas, Walter Dove, N.C. Wyeth, and Thomas Hart Benton; and photographs by Dorothea Lange and Carl Van Vechten. An array of everyday objects—from hats, compacts, and dresses to barware, clocks, and chairs—punctuates the exhibition.

After Joslyn, the exhibition will travel to Frist Art Museum (Nashville, TN; October 8, 2021–January 2, 2022), Wichita Art Museum (Wichita, KS; February 12–May 30, 2022), and The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art (Kansas City, MO; July 9, 2022–January 8, 2023).

Sponsors of the Exhibition at Joslyn Art Museum



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Joslyn Art Museum Presents *American Art Deco: Designing for the People, 1918–1939*

Exhibition Tickets, Hours, & Visitor Information

American Art Deco is a ticketed exhibition: \$10 for general public adults; \$5 college students with ID (tickets for those with a UNMC student ID are free); free for members and youth ages 17 and younger. All visitors, including members, must obtain a ticket at the admissions desk for entrance to the exhibition.

The *American Art Deco* exhibition is open during all current regular Museum hours: Wednesday–Sunday, 10 am to 4 pm; extended hours (10 am to 8 pm) on select Fridays: July 2, August 6, and September 3.

For the most current general information for visitors, see <https://bit.ly/JoslynVisitorInfo>
Join the conversation at #americanartdeco

Exhibition Mobile Tour

Free Wi-Fi is available in all Joslyn galleries. Guests may use their own mobile device to access the dual language *American Art Deco* mobile tour (transcript available in the website option). Dial (402) 881-3601 for English or (402) 972-4031 for Spanish or visit joslyn.org > Mobile Tours. Presented by Joslyn and OnCell. Special thanks to 91.5 KIOS-FM.

Exhibition Programs & Events

Wednesday, June 2 @ 7 pm

Members Virtual Lecture

Joslyn members are invited to a virtual lecture celebrating the show. Exhibition lead curator Catherine Futter, Ph.D., formerly Director of Curatorial Affairs at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, now Interim Director of Curatorial Affairs and Senior Curator, Decorative Arts, at Brooklyn Museum, will talk about Art Deco in America. Joslyn members receive information and registration instructions via email. To join Joslyn, visit www.joslyn.org.

Thursday, June 3 @ 5–8 pm

Members Preview

Joslyn members will enjoy a preview of the exhibition in the galleries. The Hitchcock Museum Shop will be open during this event. Joslyn members receive information and registration instructions via email. To join Joslyn, visit www.joslyn.org.

Friday, June 4 @ 10 am–8 pm

Members Friday

Joslyn extends its Friday hours the first weekend of each month. On Friday, June 4, 10 am–8 pm, Joslyn members will have the opportunity to see the exhibition the day before it opens to the public (general public visitors may purchase a membership onsite that day for immediate exhibition access).

Sunday, June 6 @ 2 pm

Outdoor Concert with Omaha Symphony

The Art Deco facade of Joslyn's Memorial building sets the stage for a pop-up chamber music performance by Omaha Symphony musicians. Violist Brian Sherwood, bassist Nate Olson, and flutist Maria Harding will perform Erwin Schulhoff's *Concertino for Flute, Viola, and Double Bass*, in the Museum's Peter Kiewit Foundation Sculpture Garden. Composed in 1925 in just four days, Schulhoff incorporated popular musical styles of the time into his work, arguing they were as valid and respected as the music he included from the Western canon. Led by the musicians, this intimate 40-minute program will also explore additional repertoire for this less-conventional instrumentation.

This is a free event for all; limited seating will be available at the base of the grand staircase; blankets, lawn chairs, and picnics welcome. Physical distancing is strongly encouraged. Indoor restrooms will be available. Inside the Museum, masks are strongly encouraged for all visitors (masks are required for all visitors ages 5+ who have not been vaccinated against COVID-19).

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Joslyn Art Museum Presents American Art Deco: Designing for the People, 1918–1939

Tuesday, June 8 @ 10:30 am

VIRTUAL Visualizing Literature—Rules of Civility by Amor Towles

Participants will meet online to discuss the book and discover connections to the exhibition *American Art Deco*. *Visualizing Literature*—for now, a virtual program—explores connections between the literary and visual arts through moderated book discussions and virtual tours led by experienced Joslyn docents.

Presented in partnership with UNMC's Passport Partners program, *Visualizing Literature* is open to anyone interested in art and literature. Book discussions are free to Joslyn Members and Passport Partner (UNMC) members; \$10 for general public (register online at www.joslyn.org). Participants will need a computer or tablet with a webcam, microphone, and speakers, and should feel comfortable using Zoom, a web-based cloud platform. *Rules of Civility* is available for purchase through Joslyn's Hitchcock Museum shop: \$18 softcover; member discounts apply.

Thursday, June 17 @ 9 pm

Outdoor Movie with Film Streams

(inclement weather date: Friday, June 18 @ 9 pm)

Guests will enjoy a screening of Ernst Lubitsch's *Trouble in Paradise* in Joslyn's Peter Kiewit Foundation Sculpture Garden. This 1932 film is a light-hearted and witty romantic comedy about partners-in-crime Gaston Monescu (Herbert Marshall) and Lily (Miriam Hopkins), whose plot to rob businesswoman Madame Marie Colet (Francis Kay) goes awry when love enters the mix. Dazzling Art Deco sets are the stylish backdrop for the trio's antics, and the perfect complement to the minimalist costumes that cemented Kay as a modernist style icon.

This is a free event for all; blankets, lawn chairs, and picnics welcome. Physical distancing is strongly encouraged. Indoor restrooms will be available, but Joslyn's galleries and other public spaces will be closed. Inside the Museum, masks are strongly encouraged for all visitors (masks are required for all visitors ages 5+ who have not been vaccinated against COVID-19).

Thursday, July 15 @ 6:30 pm

Virtual Lecture

"American Cacophony"—Midwest Art Deco 1918–1939: A Historical Context, by Jonathan C. Hagel, Ph.D.

Free online event; pre-registration required, details coming soon at www.joslyn.org.

Saturday, July 17 @ 10 am–4 pm

Vintage Vehicle Display with Meadowlark Model A Ford Club

Free outdoor event; details coming soon at www.joslyn.org

Dance Film "The Bee's Knees" with American Midwest Ballet

Watch for a link to this virtual performance, coming soon!

Recording of Omaha Symphony Chamber Music Performances from the Era

Watch for a link to this virtual performance, coming soon!

IMAGE PAGE 1: Paul T. Frankl, designer (American, born Austria, 1887–1958), Warren Telechron Company, manufacturer (Ashland, Massachusetts, 1926–1992), *Modernique Clock*, 1928, chromiun-plated and enameled metal, molded Bakelite, and brush-burnished silver, 7 3/4 x 6 x 3 1/2 in., Collection Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art, Denver, Gift of Michael Merson, 2010.0670. Courtesy of Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art, Denver. Photo by Wes Magyar

Our Vision – To be cherished and respected as a premier art museum.

Joslyn Art Museum showcases art from ancient times to the present. The Museum was a gift to the people of Omaha from Sarah Joslyn in memory of her husband, George, who made his fortune as president of the Western Newspaper Union. The Museum's original 1931 building is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the nation, with 38 types of marble from seven countries. The Walter and Suzanne Scott Pavilion, a 58,000-square-foot addition built in 1994, was designed by renowned British architect Norman Foster as his first U.S. commission. The Museum features galleries, a 1,000-seat concert hall, fountain court, education technology gallery, lecture hall, classrooms, sculpture garden, café, shop, and Art Works, an interactive space for art exploration.

In response to the Covid-19 global pandemic, some areas of the Museum, including the Café, are currently closed. Visit <https://bit.ly/JoslynVisitorInfo> for complete details.

General Museum Admission: Free

Special Exhibition Admission: Additional charge for *American Art Deco: Designing for the People, 1918–1939* tickets for general public adults (\$10) and college students (\$5; those with UNMC student ID are free). Exhibition tickets for members and youth are free.

Current Regular Museum Hours: Wednesday through Sunday, 10 am–4 pm; extended hours (10 am to 8 pm) on the first Friday of each month; closed Monday, Tuesday, and major holidays.

www.joslyn.org | (402) 342-3300 | 2200 Dodge Street | Omaha, NE 68102