

Rene Lalique

1860 - 1945, French Designer

René Jules Lalique (b.1860 – d.1945) is considered to be one of the world's greatest glass artists and jewellery designers of the **Art Nouveau and Art Deco periods**.

In fact, he was one of the few artists who successfully made the transition from the Art Nouveau (1880's – 1900's) aesthetic to the sweeping, modern and elegant functionality of Art Deco (1910 – 1940).

His work features elements inspired by nature, as was the main theme of the Art Nouveau movement.

Like many other Art Nouveau artists, Lalique employed the most modern manufacturing techniques and equipment of his time to mass-produce his work while retaining a hand-made look.

His clear and frosted glass creations were popular during his lifetime and are still collected by museums as well as glass enthusiasts.

Early Years & Jewellery Career

Lalique's family moved to Paris when he was two years-old.

Beginning at age of 12, Lalique studied drawing with Jean-Marie Lequien. Four years later, upon the death of his father, Lalique began an apprenticeship with **Louis Aucoc**, one of the best jewelers of Paris, while continuing his drawing classes at the **Ecole des Arts**

Décoratifs de Paris. He later studied drawing at **Sydenham College** in London where he developed a unique naturalist style which was to influence his style as a jeweller.

Back in Paris, Lalique worked as a designer for a relative while doing freelance work for a great number of jewellers.

He also studied sculpture and etching.

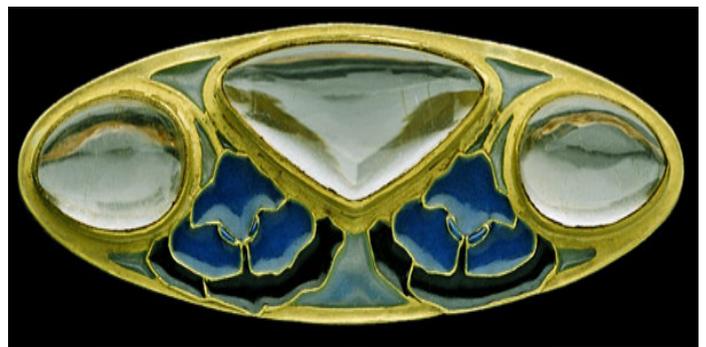
In 1885, Lalique began manufacturing his jewellery designs out of his own workshop. These employed non-conventional materials such as translucent enamel, semiprecious stones and ivory.

Success followed in 1893 when he won second prize in the **Centrale des arts Décoratifs**

Goldsmiths' competition for his Chardon glasses and an honourable mention for his Pampas and Satyrs vase.



Decorative Hairclasp.
Enamel, glass, and topaz.
1900.



Gold, crystal & plique-a-jour enamel brooch.
Length: 1.6cm. Width: 5.1cm
1903-1904



Art Nouveau multi-gem and enamel pendant necklace, BY RENE LALIQUE.

Glass Creations

By 1912, Lalique had largely turned away from jewellery to focus on glass. During World War I, his Combs-la-Ville workshops manufactured laboratory glass for hospitals and pharmaceuticals. He opened another factory in Wingen-sur-Moder in 1921, and had created the first of his emblematic vases, bowls and figurines in frosted glass by 1926.

By 1932, Lalique had designed the **Champs-Élysées Pigeons fountain**, the main doors of **Prince Asaka Yasuhiko's Palace in Tokyo** (now Teien Museum), as well as **St. Matthew's Church** on the island of Jersey in the UK.

He had also designed the interior of several French ocean liners, the **Orient Express**, radiator caps for **Citroën** and stained-glass windows for **Saint Nicaise Church** in Reims.

Cristal Lalique

In 1939, Lalique's factory in Wingen-sur-Moder was occupied by the German army.

Lalique did not live to see his factory re-opened, dying on **May 5, 1945** at the age of 85.

He is buried in Le Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris.

Lalique's son, Marc revived the family business under the name **Cristal Lalique** after World War II. The firm, currently run by

grand-daughter Marie-Claude, produces new designs as well as favourites by René and Marc.



Dragonfly brooch, gold, moonstones and diamonds.
1897 - 1898