



## The interiors of Art nouveau period : analyse, restore, make accessible

The Réseau Art Nouveau Network, a European network for the study, protection and enhancement of the Art Nouveau heritage, is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

Urban.brussels, founding member of RANN, is hosting an international symposium in Brussels, co-organised by RANN and urban.brussels in partnership with the Horta Museum and CIVA.

The research and progress of our knowledge of Art Nouveau has always been one of RANN's primary objectives. If Art Nouveau is accessible to everyone in the street itself and while the Art Nouveau facades are the ornament of many European cities, the interiors arouse both from the academic world as from the general public many questions related to their accessibility, to their knowledge, to the refined restorations that they require.

This topic of interiors has not yet been scientifically exploited transversally in Europe; the aim of this symposium is to bring about a confrontation on research practices, understanding, conservation and enhancement of Art Nouveau interiors, in order to identify new research perspectives.

Four themes will be addressed :

### 1. **KNOW. Current status: sources and new approaches**

How to apprehend the interiors of the Art Nouveau period? Many sources are available to the art historian: plans, photographs, descriptions, articles, drawings... How to approach, decrypt and analyse such sources? Can the use of other sources and documents improve our knowledge of Art Nouveau interiors? In this context what status to be given to literary sources or paintings of the same period? These are the different research leads proposed. This approach enable to better understand the issues and new techniques developed by historians and art historians.

### 2. **UNDERSTAND. Architectural fittings and decorative sets**

The Art Nouveau interiors correspond to uses and are rooted in a very special symbolism. The use value enables to better understand the programme at the origin of a building; the programme being itself modeled on lifestyles and use of specific spaces of the end-of-century period. But the Art Nouveau interiors are also often the result of a symbolism in which colors, ornaments and decoration agree to create a harmonious and totalising ensemble. Without a refined analysis of these two values (use and symbolism), the whole understanding of the building risks being jeopardised. The researchers will offer unseen and innovative analyses of these two fundamental aspects of Art Nouveau interiors.



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### 3. RESTORE. Approaches, techniques and new resources

The restoration of an Art Nouveau building involves many stakeholders: architects, restorers, craftsmen, art historians. The word will be given to them. New study techniques enable to prepare at best a restoration. Other more traditional approaches remain essential and require rigorous interpretations. In situ researches in which restorers and craftsmen play a key role will be addressed in this theme. Case studies as well as communications dedicated to questions and issues related to all restorations are welcome.

### 4. LIVE AND OPEN. Accessibility and contemporary issues

How to make a listed Art Nouveau building live? What are the problems faced by the owners (private, foundation, museum, state body...)? How to accommodate the different users as well as possible? Contemporary life, such as the use of an Art Nouveau building and therefore its interior spaces, raises many questions as the right balance between conservation and use is difficult to achieve.

The RANN also wishes to give the floor to young researchers: 25% maximum of the symposium lectures will be reserved for them (theses or dissertations defended or in the writing process).

The RANN cannot assure participants yet that this anniversary symposium will result in a publication.

### Practical arrangements

Interventions will be limited to 25 minutes.

The RANN will cover the justified real travel expenses (travel, accommodation) of the participants to a maximum amount of 200 euros.

### Conditions of submission and schedule

- Candidates are invited to send by email to [alalleaume@urban.brussels](mailto:alalleaume@urban.brussels) by **16 June 2019** in French or in English:
- CV, including contact details of the candidate (e-mail address, phone) and possible bibliography of articles or books already published
- An abstract / summary of the communication (maximum 300 words)
- For young researchers: two references
- The RANN will inform the candidates of the selection of the Scientific Committee by 29 July 2019 at the latest.



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### Scientific committee

Guy Conde-Reis, Architect, Promotion Information, [urban.brussels](http://urban.brussels), Brussels, Belgium  
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Valérie Thomas, Curator, Museum of the School of Nancy - Villa Majorelle - Nancy-Museums, Nancy, France  
Benjamin Zurstrassen, Curator, Horta Museum, Brussels, Belgium

### Organisation members

Anne-Lise Alleaume, Bruxelles Urbanisme et Patrimoine, Réseau Art Nouveau Network  
Benjamin Zurstrassen, Horta Museum  
Erika Giuliani, Réseau Art Nouveau Network

For any questions, please contact the RANN Secretariat at [alalleaume@urban.brussels](mailto:alalleaume@urban.brussels).

You cannot answer this call for papers but you would like to keep in touch with the Réseau Art Nouveau Network for future scientific activities? Please contact [alalleaume@urban.brussels](mailto:alalleaume@urban.brussels).

### Who are we?

The **Réseau Art Nouveau Network**, composed of institutions and experts from European Art Nouveau cities, was formed in 1999 to study, promote and help protect Art Nouveau heritage so it can endure for future generations to enjoy. We undertake a wide range of activities including exhibitions, publications, conferences and cultural exchanges aimed at adults, children, researchers and professionals.

Certified as Cultural route of the Council of Europe since 2014, the Network also benefitted from the co-funding of the European Commission for several European projects of cooperation.  
[artnouveau-net.eu](http://artnouveau-net.eu)

**Urban.brussels** (formerly Brussels Urbanism and Heritage) is an administration of the Brussels Capital Region.

Its main purpose is to support the territorial development of the Brussels Capital Region in a sustainable way, by implementing the regional policy with regard to urbanism, movable and immovable cultural heritage and managing operational programmes for urban revitalisation.  
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