

## INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM, 1-2 JUNE, BUDAPEST

### The Cladding of Art Nouveau Buildings

Theory, history, and practice of architectural covering materials:  
ceramics, hydraulic cement tiles, terrazzo, metlachi

In the framework of Creative Europe project „Art Nouveau as a New EUtopia” (2024–2027), two international symposia have been organised. Those project partners who participate in the work package titled “Training Art Nouveau professionals in a sustainable era” have been actively working on two international symposia.

- In 2024, the first Symposium in Brussels traced a state of the art on restoration theory 30 years after the publication of the UNESCO Turin declaration under the title „Bringing Art Nouveau heritage back to life: theory and practice in restoration. From the Venice Charter to the Turin Declaration”. The two-day professional event was organised by the Réseau Art Nouveau Network.
- The second Symposium focuses mainly on architectural covering materials that played a key role in Art Nouveau architecture, the core topics of this call and conference. The professional event will be held in Budapest in June 2026.

Both symposia address professionals, researchers, students, and even property owners who are involved in researching, studying, restoring, and conserving Art Nouveau architecture.

Connecting to the main subject of the „Bringing Art Nouveau heritage back to life” symposium, the conference to be held in Budapest in 2026 intends to examine the topic of architectural covering materials in **Art Nouveau buildings** as part of a **Gesamtkunstwerk** system, after the Torino Declaration on the Preservation of the Art Nouveau Architecture (1994). How did architectural ceramics and cement tiles, as part of the Gesamtkunstwerk, appear in the colour scheme and visual harmony of the buildings? How did architectural ceramics, stained glass, and other facade elements refer to each other during the design process and on the overall effect of the buildings? What regional differences can we detect in the use of different materials and technologies?

*We invite applications from architectural historians and art historians, architects and engineers, craftsmen and restorers, and conservators who specialize in this field and are able to contribute to the theory, history, and practice of architectural covering materials for Art Nouveau buildings.*

The conference is thematically divided in three sections:

## SECTION 1

### **The principle of clothing in Art Nouveau buildings**

The Bekleidungstheorie formulated by the German architect Gottfried Semper had a remarkable effect not only on architectural theory in the 19th century but also on the designing process and visual appearance of buildings at the turn of the century. How did Semper's theory, and other related theorists impact the Art Nouveau architecture, and even more, the architectural covering manner of the style? How did the prominent protagonists of Art Nouveau architecture dress their buildings (like we see, for example, in the cases of Hungarian architect Ödön Lechner and Viennese architect Otto Wagner)?

## SECTION 2

### **Ceramic and cement tile manufactories and factories in the Art Nouveau period. Overview and case studies.**

This section focuses specifically on the historical landscape of ceramic manufactories and factories of the period. Our scope extends not only to the factories founded during the turn of the century, but to those that already had a long history and tradition by that time, and from smaller companies to bigger factories. (Among others, without claiming completeness, the Manufacture de Faïence, Boch Freres in Belgium, the Royal Copenhagen and Bing & Grøndahl in Denmark, the Mintons Ltd in Staffordshire, England, the Manufacture nationale de Sevres, furthermore the studios of Alexander Bigot, Louis Coilliot, Charles Gréber in France, the Villeroy & Boch in Germany, the Zsolnay Factory, the factories of József Walla and Péter Melocco in Hungary, the Manifattura Chini and Manifattura Fratelli Minardi in Italy, the Royal Delftware Factory Rozenburg, and De Distel in the Netherlands, the Fábrica de Faianças das Caldas da Rainha in Portugal).

The section consists of short presentations about the manufactories, or factories that are involved in producing architectural ceramic products, with attention to the ones founded at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. Each presentation contains the short history of the factory, the profile of founder, protagonists, designers, scientists involved in the designing and producing process of the factory, the periods of activities, the organisation of factory, territories, range of distribution, attendance at international world exhibitions, innovative technologies, inventing new materials, trade catalogues and pattern books, highlights of production. Special emphasis on exploring the different solutions, and diversified use of ceramics in architecture developed by the different factories.

### SECTION 3

#### **Art Nouveau architectural ceramics – embodiments of transition**

The period of Art Nouveau can be considered a transitional phase in several aspects. Not only as a bridge between historical styles and pure modernism, but also regarding the use of materials and techniques. What reasons and conditions led to the use of ceramics as covering materials (resistance, tenacity, sanitary considerations, economics, aesthetics)? What kind of new materials and technological innovations led to the special use of tiles? How did the transitional process from craftsmanship to industrialisation happen in the case of the factories mentioned in Section 2? Topics are welcome with a special emphasis on ornamentation, from monochromy to polychromy, from functional to decorative, complemented by the analysis of trade catalogs and pattern books. Research on historical context is also particularly noteworthy, answering questions such as how Art Nouveau architectural tiles can be considered as part of historical tradition, among others, in France, the Netherlands, and Portugal. Furthermore, to what extent did Islamic tile decoration and Gothic ideas influence the Art Nouveau architectural tiles?

#### PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

**Duration of each presentation: 20 minutes**

**The official language of the symposium is English.**

## CONDITIONS OF SUBMISSION AND SCHEDULE:

- Candidates are invited to send by email to: [anasaneweutopia@gmail.com](mailto:anasaneweutopia@gmail.com), [katona.julia@imm.hu](mailto:katona.julia@imm.hu) and [erika.giuliani@artnouveau-net.eu](mailto:erika.giuliani@artnouveau-net.eu) by **8 March 2026** 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 500 words)
  - For young researchers: two references
- The RANN will inform the candidates of the selection of the Scientific Committee by **25 March 2026** at the latest.

## SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

### **Ezio Godoli**

Researcher and President of the Documentation centre for contemporary architecture in Tuscany, Viareggio, Italy

### **Astrid Huber**

Head of the Information and Training Centre of Architectural Conservation, Wien, Austria

### **Breda Mihelic**

Researcher, Ljubljana, Slovenia

### **Josef Sisa**

Professor of the Department of 19<sup>th</sup>-century's Architecture and Fine Arts at the Institute of Art History, Budapest, Hungary

### **Barbara Van der Wee**

Architect, Brussels, Belgium

### **Benjamin Zurstrassen**

Curator, Horta Museum, Brussels, Belgium

## SCIENTIFIC COORDINATION

### **Julia Katona**

Secretary of research and research project leader at the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest, Hungary

### **Erika Giuliani**

Coordinator of the Réseau Art Nouveau Network

### **Irene Domènech Comella**

Assistant coordinator of the Réseau Art Nouveau Network

For any questions, please contact the RANN Secretariat at [erika.giuliani@artnouveau-net.eu](mailto:erika.giuliani@artnouveau-net.eu) or [irene.domenech@artnouveau-net.eu](mailto:irene.domenech@artnouveau-net.eu)

You cannot answer this call for papers, but would you like to keep in touch with the Réseau Art Nouveau Network for future scientific activities? Please contact [info@artnouveau-net.eu](mailto:info@artnouveau-net.eu)

## 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 benefited from the co-funding of the European Commission for several European projects of cooperation.

**WEBSITE** [artnouveau-net.eu](http://artnouveau-net.eu)

**LINKEDIN** @Réseau Art Nouveau Network

**FACEBOOK** @Réseau Art Nouveau Network

**INSTAGRAM** @reseauartnouveaunetwork

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