



Electric lamp

Albert Cheuret

Not on display

Title/Description: Electric lamp

Artist/Maker: Albert Cheuret (Designer)

Born: 1900 - 1910

Object Type: Lamp

Materials: Alabaster, Metal, Mineral

Technique: Carving, Casting, Metalworking

Measurements: h. 394 x w. 150 x d. 150 mm

Inscription: 'Albert Cheuret'

Accession Number: 21111A

Production Place: France

School/Style: Art Nouveau

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

Manufactured around 1900-1910, the sculptor-decorator Albert Cheuret (18884-1966) created a design for an electric lamp that was directly inspired by nature. The object's innovative form resembles a clump of three white tulips, growing from a mound of earth. Engraved 'Albert Cheuret' on its base, this item is one of a pair of identical lamps in the Sainsbury Centre Collection (see object number: 2111B).

At the time that this lamp base was manufactured, the supply of AC electrical current for domestic use was a relatively new invention, having been developed throughout the 1880s and 1890s. For this reason, the lamp base can be viewed as a symbol of technological progress and modernity. [1]

Carved from alabaster, the tulip shades of this lamp are translucent and allow the light emitted by the concealed electric bulb to pass through this fine-grained stone. The flower heads are supported by three metal tubular stems, which contain the flex. The curling leaves and textured base of the lamp were carefully moulded, before being cast in bronze.

Cheuret studied sculpture under Perrin Lemaire, Professor at the École de Beaux Arts in Paris. In

1900 Cheuret designed the interior and frontage of a shop for the Paris Expositions Universelle. [2] In the year 1907, he set up his own studio at 11 Avenue Franco-Russe, near the Champ de Mars [3], and he became a member of the Société des Artistes Français. [4] He established a reputation as a designer of decorative furnishings, and became known for his animal sculptures, furniture designs, mirrors, lamps and light fittings.

In 1908, Cheuret was awarded the First Prize in Ornamental Sculpture by the Bronze Manufacturing Guild [5], and in 1925 he presented his bronze and alabaster light fixtures at the Exposition des Art Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes in Paris. [6]

Vanessa Tothill, January 2021

[1] <https://americanhistory.si.edu/lighting/19thcent/comp19.htm> [accessed on 16 November 2020]

[2] Amanda Geitner and Emma Hazell, ed., *The Anderson Collection of Art Nouveau* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2003), pp. 129-30.

[3] <https://www.sothebys.com/en/articles/the-life-of-artist-and-sculptor-albert-cheuret> [accessed 20 January 2021]

[4] Geitner, p. 129.

[5] <https://www.sothebys.com/en/articles/the-life-of-artist-and-sculptor-albert-cheuret> [accessed 20 January 2021]

[6] Geitner, p. 130;
<https://www.sothebys.com/en/articles/the-life-of-artist-and-sculptor-albert-cheuret> [accessed 20 January 2021]

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)
