



Orchid brooch

Georges Fouquet

Not on display

Title/Description: Orchid brooch

Artist/Maker: Georges Fouquet (Manufacturer)

Born: 1898 - 1901

Object Type: Brooch, Jewellery, Metalware

Materials: Enamel, Glass, Gold, Pearl, Precious stone, Ruby

Technique: Enameling, Metalworking, Pliqué à jour

Measurements: h. 100 x w. 105 x d. 25 mm

Inscription: 'Gges Fouquet' and numbered '1767'

Accession Number: 21149

Production Place: France

School/Style: Art Nouveau

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

Georges Fouquet was one of France's most innovative and brilliant jewellers, and this extraordinary brooch is among the finest examples of his work. Known as an orchid brooch, it is one of two known versions, the earliest of which first appeared in 1898. Executed in gold, pearls, mother of pearl, and *pliqué-à-jour* enamel, there are a number of drawings of it in the Fouquet Archive in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris.

A number of the key jewellery designers of the period, including Fouquet, René Lalique, Alphonse Mucha and Philippe Wolfers, were determined that their production was considered as art. Following their lead, modern jewellery came of age. There were developing vehicles for showing work. For example, there was a new incentive to submit jewellery to the Paris Salons for exhibition and competition. The Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts was established in 1890, the Salon d'Automne was founded in 1903, and in 1904 the Salon of the Société des Artistes Décorateurs was created. Through these and other venues, traditional sensibilities in the design of jewellery began to be challenged in France. Much of this challenge was manifested through the Art Nouveau style. Taking its name from Siegfried Bing's gallery, Maison de l'Art Nouveau, which opened in 1895, the style internationalised the idea of modern jewellery. Fouquet's brooch is in the form of an orchid, a flower favoured by Art Nouveau designers, and its curving, sensuous naturalism marks it out as a beautiful example of the style.

—

Gretha Arwas, gallerist

Exhibitions

Cleveland Museum of Art, 2008-10-19 to 2009-01-18, Fine Art Museum of San Francisco, 2009-02-14 to 2009-05-31
