



Cake dish

Emile Gallé

Not on display

Title/Description: Cake dish

Artist/Maker: Emile Gallé (Manufacturer)

Born: 1900 c.

Object Type: Dish, Plate, Tableware

Materials: Cameo glass, Glass

Technique: Blow moulding, Cameo glass

Measurements: h. 123 x w. 335 x d. 335 mm

Inscription: 'Gallé'

Accession Number: 21153

Historic Period: 20th century

Production Place: France, Nancy

School/Style: Art Nouveau

Credit Line: Donated by Rose Carver and Catriona Williams, 1987

This glass dish was produced by the innovative French glasswork factory established by Emile Gallé in Nancy in the 1870s. By 1900, Gallé had achieved international fame for his glassware, which fused experimental glassmaking techniques, with designs inspired by the symbolic properties of nature. The clematis design on this dish is embedded in layers of differently coloured 'cameo' glass, a technique for which the Gallé factory became well known.

Gallé employed approximately three hundred skilled craftsmen and women in his factory in Nancy. [1] Under Gallé's supervision, they produced stylish glassware for an elite commercial market. This dish is typical of the acid-etched cameo glassware produced for these ranges, which were sold in Gallé's shops in Paris, London and Frankfurt. [2]

While the business prospered, Gallé continued to focus on designing unique works, which were eagerly collected by wealthy patrons and friends. The range of Gallé's experimentations with technique, form and ornamentation secured his reputation for transforming glassware design. Nancy became a major centre for the Art Nouveau style and although Gallé died in 1904, his factory remained active until 1935.

This dish is one of the first Art Nouveau works that the Andersons collected in the early 1960s. They went on to acquire a total of ten works in glass by Gallé and three pieces of furniture. All reflect Gallé's fascination with the natural world, which inspired the form, decoration and symbolism of his designs. The significance of nature as a source for Gallé's work is evident in the personal motto which he had inscribed on his factory doors in 1896: 'Ma racine est au fond des bois' (my roots are in the heart of the woods).

Lisa Newby, June 2020

[1] Philippe Gardner, *Emile Gallé* (London: Academy Editions, 1976), p.28.

[2] *Ibid.*, p.109.

Exhibitions

The First Moderns, Sainsbury Centre, Norwich, 2011-12-01 - 2012-12-31

Further Reading

Geitner, Amanda and Emma Hazell (Eds.), *The Anderson Collection of Art Nouveau*, Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, 2003 (cat.12, p.12, 145, ill. p.12,67,132)
