

# What Is Art Deco and Why Is It Popular Again?

今回は、1920～30年代に流行した「アールデコ」が現代で再び注目を集めているニュースです。アールデコは幾何学的で豪華なデザインが特徴ですが、建築物だけではなくファッションショーやレッドカーペットなど、様々なジャンルにも影響を与えているようです。アートやデザインの話では、geometrical (幾何学的な) decorative (装飾的な) luxurious (豪華な) などの単語も覚えておくと表現の幅が広がりそうですね。ぜひ本文を読んで、アールデコやデザインの魅力について講師と話してみましょ。



## 1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

Art Deco is an international artistic style that was popular in the 1920s and 1930s.

Now, interest in the style and its qualities is growing. A new generation is enjoying the style's roots and turning it into something new.

A public showing, or exhibition, at the Museum of the City of New York provides a look at the style that helped **define** the city 100 years ago.

Famous Art Deco buildings include the Chrysler Building, the Empire State Building, Rockefeller Center and Radio City Music Hall.

The public showing, called "Art Deco City: New York Postcards from the Leonard A. Lauder Collection," also has clothing and film clips from the time.

In London, the Victoria and Albert Museum has a collection of day and evening clothing, jewelry and more. The collection comes from Les Ballets Russes, a dance company that had a major effect on fashion.

And in Paris, organizers of the 2024 Olympics created Art Deco posters last year to celebrate the games and mark the one hundred years since the 1924 Olympics, which Paris also hosted.

## A style of the 1920s and 30s

Experts have different opinions about Art Deco. Design writer Arricca Elin Sansone, for example, said last year in *Elle Décor* magazine: “Ask three historians to define the term Art Deco, and you’ll likely get three varying answers.”

Appearing after World War I, the first Art Deco era had a spirit of creativity and freedom. With the aim of appearing modern, the style became one of the most important forms of design in the 1920s and early 1930s.

The Art Deco style is believed to have first appeared at the 1925 International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts, in Paris.

The early 1930s saw the development of the style in Miami where South Beach’s Art Deco District is popular with visitors and a center for design.

In some large cities, low-rise buildings of two or three floors turned into landscapes of high-rise skyscrapers. Public and private spaces showed themes involving **geometrical** designs and **luxurious** materials.

In transportation, faster cars and better trains suggested a new age while jazz music urged people to celebrate.

## “A fashionable renaissance”

The same energy can be found in today’s fashion shows and red-carpet events for stars. Some of today’s colorful clothing suggests the Jazz Age, another name for the period when Art Deco was popular. Stars like Zendaya, Gigi Hadid, Beyoncé and Demi Lovato have used elements of the Deco era in new ways.

“The **aesthetic** of the 1920s is enjoying a fashionable renaissance,” said Kirsty Thatcher of the Australian fashion magazine *Russh*. A “renaissance” represents a rebirth of something from the past.

New York-based interior designer Vanessa DeLeon told the Associated Press, “The **boldness** and elegance of Art Deco are what appeals to me.”

Jamie Watkins and Tom Kennedy of the London design company Divine Savages include Art Deco elements in their collections of products for the home. Watkins suggested: “It’s no wonder we’re drawn to it again.”

Lynda Klich is the co-organizer or curator of the exhibition at the Museum of the City of New York. Klich noted that postcards were the social media of their day. Travelers at the time busily wrote messages to friends and family. New York's famous Art Deco buildings appear in over 250 postcards. There is also a selection of clothing from the 1920s, shoes and other objects.

"Art Deco was the look that sold the city to the world," said co-curator Lilly Tuttle.

The exhibition in New York City runs through February 17.

I'm John Russell.

Kim Cook reported on this story for the Associated Press. John Russell adapted it for VOA Learning English.

Source: **What Is Art Deco and Why Is It Popular Again?**

[VOA](#)

## 2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

**1. define (v.) to make up or represent what someone or something is**

Dave's childhood experiences helped define who he is as a jazz pianist.

**2. geometrical (adj.) related to basic shapes, such as triangles, squares, and circles**

The buildings of Renaissance Europe often have geometrical designs.

**3. luxurious (adj.) related to wealth or comfort**

On our honeymoon, we stayed at a luxurious inn north of San Francisco.

**4. aesthetic (n.) a particular artistic sense or style**

Balance, asymmetry, and attention to space are important parts of the aesthetic of Japanese calligraphy.

**5. boldness (n.) being brave or fearless**

First-time listeners are usually impressed by the boldness of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*.

## 3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What is Art Deco, and what are some examples of it?
2. Where and when did it develop?
3. What does interior designer Vanessa DeLeon like about Art Deco? Explain what she means by that.
4. What do you think of Art Deco?
5. Why do you think it is becoming popular again?