

Renee Lalique (Art Nouveau designer)

Where/when was he born....?

Reneé Lalique was born on **April 6, 1860** in **Ay, France**. He became interested in art and was sent at 16 to an apprenticeship with the famous Paris jeweller, Louis Aucoc.

Who was he - what did he do...?

By the age of 21, Lalique was creating his own original jewellery. In 1885, he opened a workshop where his unique jewellery style soon gained publicity due to **his use of flowing and majestic plant, animal, and human forms** - these were in the style known as **Art Nouveau**. **Geometric designs, smooth, flowing lines, and vibrant colours** are all characteristic patterns and qualities of Lalique.

His main works are....?

Designs for jewellery featuring insects, plant forms and the female form - all themes from Art Nouveau. **He also designed and manufactured perfume bottles** - now highly collectible - some fetching up to \$58,350 at auction, **vases and car bonnet mascot designs** - he created 29 "car mascots" in the shapes of fish, horse head, frog, dragonfly, shooting star, and St. Christopher Carrying the Christ Child! Female nudes were also a favourite design. Today, these hood ornaments are antique collector's items. These designs were all made in the Art Nouveau design style.

What materials did he use.....?

Lalique jewellery designs are made in gold, with precious gems and enamelling - enamelling is a technique which involves using a powdered substance which must be kiln fired to melt at high temperature - this material melts and becomes "glass" like, brightly coloured, and shiny. Parts of his jewellery have areas cast/ welded/ and enamelled.*(see jewellery glossary sheet - for explanations of terms).

Lalique also experimented with **glass** in jewellery making - **he became a master glassmaker**. Lalique opened a shop near the business of the famous perfumier Francois Coty. In 1907, he began creating classic perfume bottles for Coty. Eventually, he was engaged to do the same for perfume makers - Worth, Forvil, D'Orsay, Guerlain, Roger et Gallet, and many others.

Lalique also "personalised" much of his work with frosting, polishing, and glazing to give it an individual look. Lalique also worked on the design of **glass vases**. **Lalique used machine made mass production techniques to make his work available and affordable to people in most income brackets**. Literally millions of pieces have been created since the early 1900s, and Lalique factories continue to produce fine glass and crystal today.

