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Link : <http://hongkongartman.tumblr.com/post/185695008349/outstanding-city-university-of-hong-kongan-art>
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HongKong Art Scene

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OUTSTANDING CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG—AN ART DECO EXHIBITION THAT CAPTIVATES

I love art exhibitions. The contradiction is that I am also cruel to it. I walked into an exhibition and once I did not find anything that interested me, I left after a short while. Enjoy what you want to like. Life is short. If time is wasted, nobody is going to make it up. I remember what Joan Miro said, "You can look at a picture for a week and never think of it again. You can also look at the picture for a second & think of it all your life."

'[Art Deco: The France-China Connection](#)' exhibition presented by City University of Hong Kong at 18th floor, Lau Ming Wai Academic Building is my favourite and I think of it now and then.

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Here is the official introduction of the exhibition: The Art Deco style, which flourished in Europe, Asia, and America from the 1920s to the 1940s, was born in France and named after the 1925 International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts held in Paris. Art Deco came on the heels of Art Nouveau (an elaborate and ornate style) and offered, in contrast, the geometric, simple, and energized shapes that pleased one and all.

Session 1 of the exhibition explained, with all the fine points, how Art Deco came into being. Session 2 described how the 'new vehicles of movement and motion' such as cars, piloted planes and ocean liners transported Art Deco far away from Europe. Session 3 placed the focus on the said International Exhibition held in Paris in 1925. Session 4 are the kind of ephemeral but magic moments for me. It gave me a quick history lesson: with the end of the Qing Dynasty and establishment of the first Republic, China began to open up to the outside world in 1920s. Shanghai, with her strategic geographical and commercial position, became the Art Deco capital. Shanghai's foreign concessions, established for the growing foreign communities, brought with them a cosmopolitanism that fostered rich cultural exchanges between China and Europe. What mesmerize me are the great pieces such as furniture, poster and vase produced by the Chinese artists who combined Chinese styles with those of Art Deco. Session 5 is more feminine. It displays old beauty kits, powder compact cases and evening bags which are elegantly Art Deco. I love some items which drew inspiration from the 'Egyptomania' during the 19th century!

This Art Deco exhibition is astonishingly fabulous. City University has done a very impressive job. Everything you can imagine but cannot expect became real in front of you. The time spent in this exhibition is a self-discovery, discovering what I like or do not like, feel or cannot feel about Art Deco. I do not quite like the stylized sunrays, one of Art Deco's popular patterns. I do love the 'streamlined' look of Art Deco objects.

City University should pride themselves on developing community art projects like the present one that benefit and nourish not only students, but also the general public of Hong Kong. I applaud this kind of outreach work by an academic institution, the social contribution of which is to let art and culture influence more people by instilling in them a sense of beauty, value of harmony and experience of life—across time and space.

<https://www.cityu.edu.hk/ceg/exhibitions/art-deco>

#City University of Hong Kong #Art Deco: The France-China Connection
 #Joan Miro #Lau Ming Wai #Egyptomania #Art Nouveau
 #International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts 1925

Jun 19th, 2019

