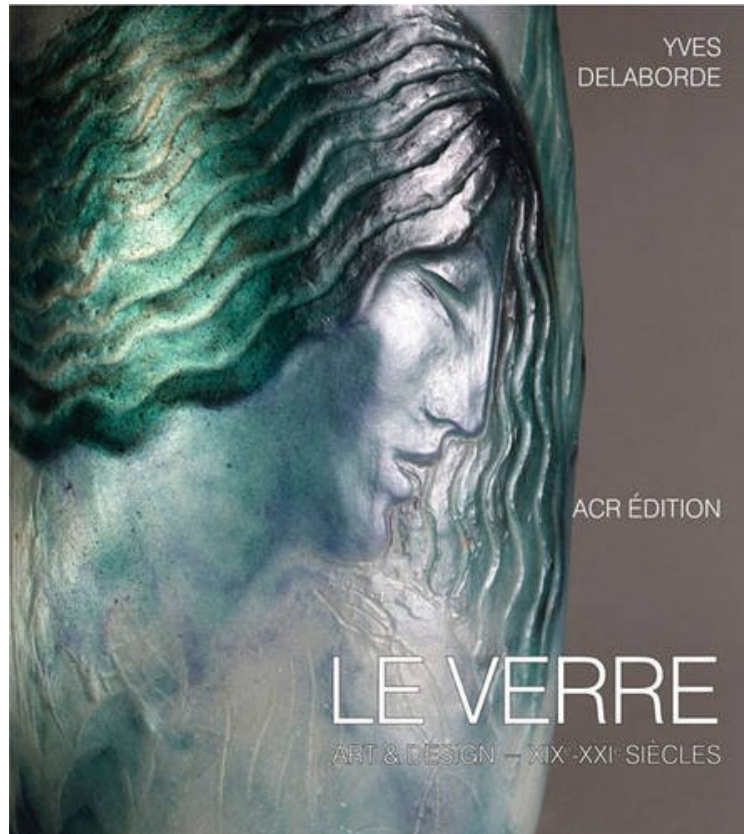


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Le Verre: Art Design. Encyclopdie du Verre en France

Yves Delaborde

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Starting with sand and mixed ashes but also with a mastered fire- the devil is not that far away-, they produce light that their breath shapes in precious objects. Since ancient times, glass makers are like real alchemists. The Ancient rgime did not make a mistake: while painters were submitted to a corporation, musicians nothing more then domestic helps, thtre folks were usually excommunicated by the Church, glassmakers could enjoy numerous advantages from the king.Somewhere in the middle of the 19th century, due to the enormous industrial production and the urge to do things fast and cheap, quality was not always guaranteed. It is however in this context that a few designers started to transform odrinary common objects in masterpieces that can master statues and paintings.One often says about Emile Gall that thanks to him, in just a few years, In France in the second half of the 19th century, the glass became more than just an utility art. True, he was the great inventor in this area but numerous discoveries and rediscoveries headed their way since years and a rvolution never starts by accident. You need the right scientific and industrial circumstances, economic and political convergences who make it possible for an artist to do just that in that precise

domaine, to surprise the gnral public.Emile Gall was just the right man at the right place with the right attitude.Others have taken over and one century and a half later, the world lives more than ever in the age of glass. The material became more important, not just a nice accessory but some kind of total environment at the point were it s industry makes us even forget that it s also an artistic expression we tend to banalise.

About the AuthorYves Delaborde est historien de l art et petit-fils d un des verriers majeurs de l entre-deux-guerres, Gabriel Argy-Rousseau, dont il a tabli le catalogue raisonn (ditions de l Amateur, 1990, ouvrage en collaboration avec Janine Bloch-Dermant).D abord commissaire d expositions (ministre de la Culture, Affaires trangres), il a t metteur en scne, crateur du premier parcours-spectacle audiovisuel (Chenonceau, 1978) et ralisateur de films documentaires sur l art et l architecture (Renzo Piano, Franois Mansart, Azay-le-Rideau...). Il est galement auteur de romans (La Bouche, Plon, 2000).