Art & Architecture at the

Brookfield Zoo
Chicago Zoological Society

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2016
What is Art Deco?

Art Deco is a style connected with the late 1920s and early 1930s emphasizing geometric patterns, metals, new materials and styles. A decorative approach to modernism. Modernism was a movement that had a philosophical goals to revitalize the way modern civilization viewed life, art, politics, and science.

The springboard for Art Deco was the Paris Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs of 1925.
Elements of Art Deco Style...

• geometric and angled shapes
• chrome, metal, glass, shiny fabrics, mirror tiles
• stylized images of aeroplanes, cars, cruise liners, skyscrapers
• nature motifs – flora & fauna, animals, sea shells,
• High contrasts - polished wood and black lacquer mixed with luxurious fabric and furs
Feathers & Scales formerly Aquatic Bird House
Repetitive geometric shapes and vertical lines in combed concrete gives the work a rhythm.

Feathers & Scales: was Aquatic Bird House
South Gate entrance, completed 1927
Nature Motifs
Reptiles & Birds, formerly Perching Bird House
Naturalistic rockwork fabrications
WPA Wayfinding Signs Discovery Center
Industrial elements
Reinforced concrete
Handmade steel girders

Pachyderm House
Building was cutting edge architecture 1932
Pachyderm House
Interior
Handmade steel girders
Decorative Stylized elements on HVAC, signage, plaques
North Gate
Aluminum
Animal theme
Nature motif
Pachyderm House
Art Deco elements
Decorative fountain plaques
Works Progress Administration
Signage
Naturalistic art motif appears in graphic art
Works Progress Administration
Stone Fountain Frieze 1934

Stylized animals
Nature motifs

Louise Pflasterer Ross, Sculptor

Inlaid formica tables
Discovery Center
Art Deco color palette
Lesson Activities

1. Treasure hunt for art deco motifs all through the zoo

Feathers & Scales formerly Aquatic Bird House
Exterior
A. Palladian curved arches
B. Combed concrete niches
Interior
A. Combed aluminum decorative elements
B. Art Deco light fixtures
C. Art Deco fluted pilasters
D. Art Deco coffered ceiling with beautiful horizontal lines

Discovery Center
A. In the Lobby Inlaid formica tables mounted towards ceiling
B. WPA way finding signs in the lobby & the Founder’s Room
C. WPA Photographs featuring the stone carvers
D. Stone themed animal frieze carved by Louise Pflasterer Ross 1934
Treasure Hunt Activity (continued)

1. Treasure hunt for art deco motifs all through the zoo
   Pachyderm House
   A. Beautiful Art Deco block stylized lettering & vertical lines
      of the Doric columns on each end of the building
   B. Combed aluminum entrance on each end of the building
   C. Soaring rounded cathedral like steel girders
   D. Find the fountain plaques, & original exhibit signs

Reptiles & Birds Building formerly Perching Bird House
   A. Exterior Front of the building--triangle
      Striking blue & white terracotta bas relief featuring a big
      peacock and many other birds

   B. Interior
      Aluminum jewel box exhibits
      Compass made by WPA with animal motif on the terrazzo-
      floor
Lesson Activities
Continued

2. Show students stylized animals on the inlaid formica tables or animals on the Stone Frieze in the Discovery Center and ask them to draw their own animal (in this style) not featured on these items. (Cows, cats, dogs, pigs, horse)

3. Students can draw/cut out art deco borders and create their own Art Deco borders and make a picture frame.

4. Students can work with art deco worksheets to create examples of Art Deco alphabet fonts and add missing Art Deco elements to a hotel building.
Lesson activity
Art Deco borders for picture frames
Lesson activity
Art Deco borders for picture frames

PNG format

Art Deco Elements
by Nolamom3507
Lesson activity
Art Deco border for picture frames
Art Deco Worksheets

• World Association of Technology Teachers
  - Links to Art Deco Worksheets with activities relating to identifying Art Deco style. Creating art deco alphabet & adding art deco elements to a hotel building that are missing.
  - http://www.technologystudent.com/prddes1/deco2.html