

Vase, Modell Nr. 93, 1919  
Entwurf/Ausführung: Francois Décorchemont  
Material/Technik: Glas, formgeschmolzen, poliert  
13.8 × 10.9 cm  
Eigentum: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK



The highly complex *pâte de cristal* technique found its master in François Décorchemont (1880–1971). Five detailed female heads materialize out of the refined lines of this vase, gazing from the winds of antiquity into the future of Art Deco.

In September 1976, the school board of the City of Zurich notified the local education authority that, at the request of the curator of the Museum Bellerive, a vase by the famous French glass artist François Décorchemont would be purchased for 16,300 Swiss francs to enrich the collection (which is now part of the Museum für Gestaltung Zürich) with “a very outstanding object.” The extraordinary purchase involved a decorative vase made of *pâte de cristal*. After World War I, Décorchemont found his way back to his kilns in the city of his birth, Conches in Normandy, where he had begun in 1902—inspired by the pieces created by his compatriot Albert Dammouse—to work with the *pâte de verre*, or glass paste, casting technique. Born into a family of artists, Décorchemont learned painting and pottery from his father and spent long years experimenting with various techniques. For *pâte de verre*, broken glass was first combined with silicates, then pulverized and mixed with quince

seeds (as a binding material) to create a paste. In later years, Décorchemont reverted to using ready-made raw material. The pieces were fired at varying temperatures, and controlled cooling over several days completed the process. The fact that so many pieces developed cracks in the coke ovens, whose temperature was difficult to control, made the few that turned out perfectly so precious. Oil-heated kilns later provided better working conditions, while the Art Deco style began to prevail in the design of the glass objects. (Sabine Flaschberger)

<https://www.eguide.ch/en/objekt/modell-nr-93/>