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Hector Guimard Entrance Gate to Paris Subway (Métropolitain) Station, Paris, France c. 1900

- Not on view

The emergence of the Art Nouveau style toward the end of the nineteenth century resulted from a search for a new aesthetic that was not based on historical or classical models. The sinuous, organic lines of Guimard's design and the stylized, giant stalks drooping under the weight of what seem to be swollen tropical flowers, but are actually amber glass lamps, make this a quintessentially Art Nouveau piece. His designs for this famous entrance arch and two others were intended to visually enhance the experience of underground travel on the new subway system for Paris.

Paris was not the first city to implement an underground system (London already had one), but the approaching Paris Exposition of 1900 accelerated the need for an efficient and attractive means of mass transportation. Although Guimard never formally entered the competition for the design of the system's entrance gates that had been launched by the Compagnie du Métropolitain in 1898, he won the commission with his avant-garde schemes, all using standardized cast-iron components to facilitate manufacture, transport, and assembly.

While Parisians were at first hesitant in their response to Guimard's use of an unfamiliar vocabulary, his Métro gates, installed throughout the city, effectively brought the Art Nouveau style, formerly associated with the luxury market, into the realm of popular culture.

Publication excerpt from The Museum of Modern Art, *MoMA Highlights*, MoMA Highlights, p. 39.



Audio about Entrance Gate to Paris Subway (Métropolitain) Station, Paris, France



Audio for kids

Medium

Painted cast iron, glazed lava, and glass

Dimensions

13' 11" x 17' 10" x 32" (424.2 x 543.6 x 81.3 cm) Each vertical stanchion: 1040 lbs. Horizontal component: 460 lbs. Glazed lava sign: 100 lbs.

Credit

Gift of Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens

Object number

177.1958.a-f

Department

Architecture and Design

- Hector Guimard has [31 works](#) online.
- There are [2,921 architecture works](#) online.
- There are [48 architectural fragments](#) online.

Installation views

We used machine learning to identify this work in photos from our exhibition history.



[ModernStarts: Places October 28, 1999–March 14, 2000](#)



[*ModernStarts: Places*](#) October 28, 1999–March 14, 2000



[*The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden: Inaugural Installation*](#) November 20, 2004–December 31, 2005



[*The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden: Inaugural Installation*](#) November 20, 2004–December 31, 2005

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[*From Line to Plane* June 8–November 1, 2010](#)



[*Figure in the Garden* May 20, 2011–July 17, 2013](#)



[*Sculpture from the Collection 1960–1969* June 25, 2016–July 14, 2017 3 other works identified](#)

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[If Everything Is Sculpture Why Make Sculpture? Artist's Choice: Peter Fischli June 12, 2018–May 10, 2019 2 other works identified](#)

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