

Artist	Hector Guimard
Title	Castel Beranger
Date	1898
Materials	Brick, cast iron, stone
Scope	Domestic architecture
Style	Art Nouveau
Location	Paris



Description: A block of 36 apartments commissioned by a wealthy widow to be rented to occupants. First building in Paris to be completely Art Nouveau in style. Each apartment different in appearance to give a sense of individuality. Asymmetrical exterior, cast iron organic forms on balconies and decoration- linking to Art Nouveau style. Ground floor apartments placed around a central open air courtyard- linking to nature; nature = art nouveau.

Influence from cultural/social factors: Planning laws in Paris at this time encouraged new architecture which would break away from the very symmetrical ordered/balanced Second Empire (Beaux Arts) style as seen in the Paris Opera House. Castel Beranger is asymmetrical and does not make any direct links to classical architectural design.

Formal features	
Composition	Asymmetrical- giving a sense of originality- breaking with the very symmetrical balanced Beaux Arts style. 6 storeys high. 36 apartments. Cast iron gate in front gives access to the 'lobby' and an open air courtyard.
Colour	Earthy toned stone and brick link to nature. Cast iron appears green and is a complementary colour to the orange/red of the exterior stone/brick.
Materials	Brick and stone- both derived from the earth and thus nature= Art Nouveau Cast iron

Use or development of materials, techniques & processes: Cast iron- a modern technique. Casting in iron allows the architect to produce flowing organic lines in the main entrance, balconies and external decoration- all typical of Art Nouveau.

Stylistic comment and artistic influence: Typically Art Nouveau with the flowing lines on the main door/entrance, balconies and decorations features stylised images from nature such as seahorses. Named a Castel (castle) to suggest a Gothic theme. Gothic style and themes popular in Art Nouveau and mid-late 19th century artists and architects. Guimard was inspired by Victor Horta and Horta's Hotel Tassel in Belgium. The Hotel Tassel was considered the first building in the Art Nouveau style.