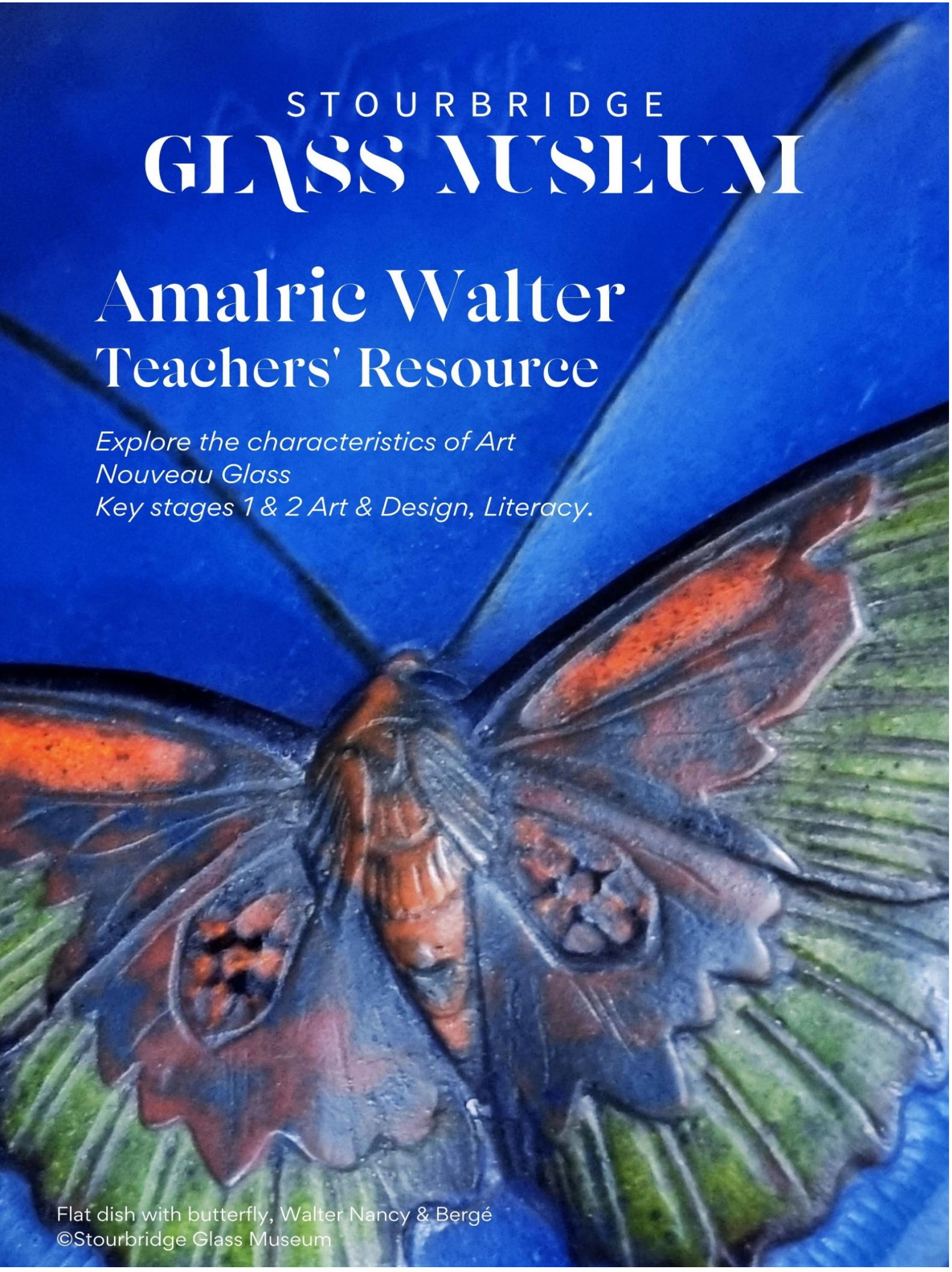
STOURBRIDGE
GLASS MUSEUM

Amalric Walter
Teachers' Resource

Explore the characteristics of Art Nouveau Glass
Key stages 1 & 2 Art & Design, Literacy.



Flat dish with butterfly, Walter Nancy & Bergé

Amalric Walter

Art Nouveau Glass Artist

Introduction

Amalric Walter

Amalric Walter was a French glass artist known for his glass work in the Art Nouveau style. He specialized in the technique of Pate de Verre, which involves creating glass objects by packing a mould with fine glass particles and heating it until the glass fuses together. Walter's animal sculptures are highly detailed and capture the essence of each creature he depicts. Walter began his artistic career working for the famous glass artist Émile Gallé, who influenced him greatly.

Key Stages of Amalric Walter's Life

Amalric Walter was born in 1870 in the French city of Nancy.

He started working for Daum, a French glass manufacturer, at the age of 14.

He spent many years perfecting the technique of Pate de Verre, which was popular in the Art Nouveau movement.

In the early 1900s, Walter started creating his own designs and became known for his intricate glass animals.

He won several awards for his work, including a gold medal at the 1925 Paris Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes.

Walter continued to work in glass until his death in 1959.

Art Nouveau

Art Nouveau style is inspired by the natural world characterized by sculptural, organic shapes, arches, curving lines. Common motifs include stylized versions of leaves, flowers, vines, insects, animals, and other natural elements.

'Our roots are in the depths of the woods, on the edge of the springs, on the mosses.' ~ Émile Gallé.

Materials & Techniques

Pâté de verre is a French term which means 'glass paste'. Ground glass, from the size of sugar grains down to the finest powder, which could be coloured by pigments, are filled into a mould and fired in a kiln to around 800°C, until the individual grains fuse into a single mass that takes the form of the mould The mould can only be used once as it is destroyed when the cooled glass is released from the mould. It was first applied by ancient Greeks and the art revived in the 19th century by Art nouveau and Art Deco artists who developed the technique by layering more colours and created fully three dimensional forms.

Figure 1, Mould filling technique

The original form would have been sculpted in wax, then a mould was built around it, once hardened, the wax inside is steamed out, leaving the cavity to be filled with glass grains. In Walter's case, the opening were kept as large as possible, so that he could work in great detail on the inside surface of the mould.

Figure 2, Chameleon Dish, A Walter Nancy, Berge.

It would have taken hours to fill each mould with the glass paste, which was usually made with natural oils and gums. These were used sparingly as they burnt off in the kiln firing process without leaving any residue. Colours would be applied either by paint brush, or spooned in and patted down with wooden tools. Each layer had to dry before the next one could be applied. The first layer of detail is most notable in the chameleon. Towards the outer edges of some of the dish and plate forms the glass and pigments flow, creating a painterly quality similar to watercolours. Glass animals created by Walter using Pate de Verre are incredibly detailed and intricate, with different colours and textures achieved by layering the glass paste. Walter was particularly skilled at creating lifelike glass animals using this technique, with a particular focus on capturing the movement and texture of the animals. The technique was popularized during the Art Nouveau period, and Amalric Walter was one of its most famous practitioners. His Pate de Verre glass animals are highly prized by collectors today.

Pre – visit activities.

- Watch the BBC's Wild Isles programme, a major new BBC natural history service, presented by Sir David Attenborough, revealing a rarely seen wild side of the UK: *https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0f0t5dp* .
- Research Art Nouveau artists.

Alphonse Mucha
Gustav Klimt

Glass ~ Émile Gallé
Louis Comfort Tiffany
Jean Daum

Animals & Nature

At the Museum

Find the Amalric Walter Glass collection on the upper floor of the Museum.

~ Name as many animals as you can in the Amalric Walter collection. Can you mimic the way these animals move? Can you name the natural habitats for these animals? What time of day would you expect to see them?

~ Write a short story about one of Amalric Walter's animal sculptures, imagining it coming to life. Imagine the animal journeying back to its natural habitat, decide what happens on the way back.

~ Write a descriptive paragraph about one of the Pâte de Verre animals using sensory language to describe the colours and textures.

~ Observe and sketch your favourite glass animal from the Amalric Walter animal collection. How would you describe the colours, shape, texture and decoration used to create the glass animals? Why is this your favourite?

~ Discuss the technique of Pâté de Vere. What is Pâté de verre? How is pate de verre different from other glass-making techniques? Why do you think Amalric Walter chose to create animal sculptures using pate de verre?

~ Go for a walk along the nearby canal and draw your favourite animal back in nature. Take photographs of your animal pictures in the environment. Think about and make suggestions of what we can do to keep the environment clean for animals to live safely.

Descriptive Words

Organic	Bright	Harmonious	Etched
Curvy	Textured	Blended	Polished
Translucent	Matt	Colourful	Natural
Opaque	Smooth	Glossy	Muted

Back at School

~ Write about the animal you drew in the museum, find out more information about where it can be found, what are its eating habits, how does it reproduce?

~ Draw or paint a colourful picture from the animal sketch you did at the museum.

~ Make a collage of all the animals together in a large landscape picture.

~ Create a 3D model with clay/air-dry clay of your chosen animal, once dry/fired, paint in with colours that merge like watercolours to recreate the blending found in Walters' glass animals.

~ Create a diorama depicting the environment the animal/s live in.

~ Research and discuss animal and environmental protection. Identify ways in which we can help protect the environment and the animals that live in it. This could include creating posters or presentations about recycling, reducing plastic waste, and conserving energy.

Figure 3 Two entwined lizards

Figure 4, Flat dish with butterfly

Figure 5, Bee dish

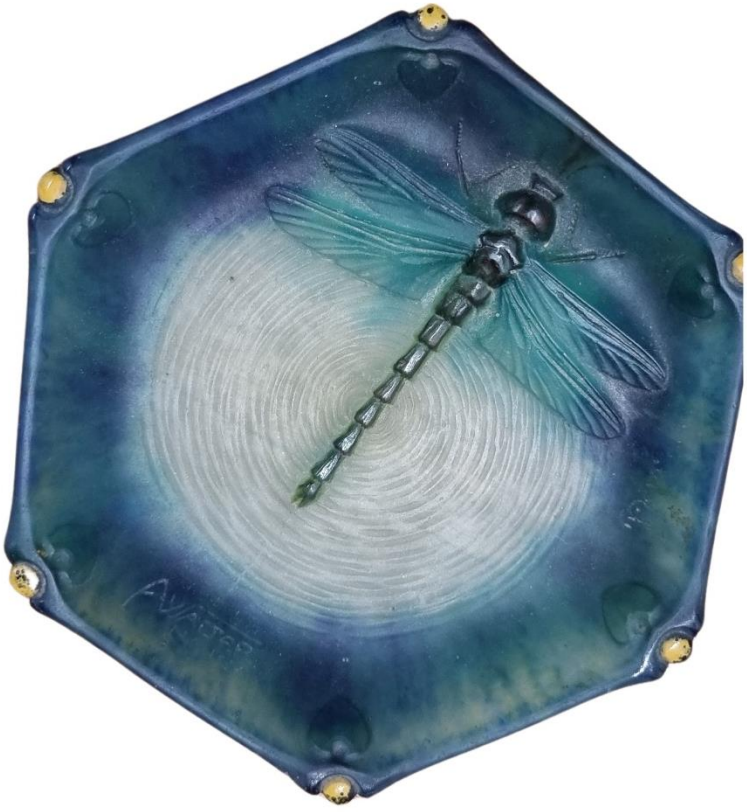


Figure 6, Hexagonal dish with dragonfly

Figure 7, Mouse

Figure 8, Frog on lily pad