

Paul Follot
(1877-1941)

Follot was a leading French designer of furniture and interiors in the transition from Art Nouveau to Art Deco before World War I, and in the subsequent popularization of the Art Deco style. He was a pupil of Eugene-Samuel Grasset in Paris, and his earliest designs, in the Gothic style, were published in *Art et Decoration*, the journal of design reform founded in 1887. From 1899 Follot was designing bronzes, jewelry and textiles for La Maison Moderne, the commercial outlet for Art Nouveau objects, and his interior design for a study, shown in 1904 at the first Salon of the *Societe des Artistes-Decorateurs*, of which he was a founder-member. This project demonstrated his affinity with the prevailing curvilinear characteristics of Art Nouveau. Follot's design for a study shown at the same Salon in 1909 revealed a change towards simpler, more rectilinear forms inspired by the revival of Neo-classicism, which became characteristic of his style. He employed light woods, ornamented with carved and gilded fruits, garlands and cornucopias. Before 1914 he earned a reputation as a deluxe designer, working for private patrons as well as for commercial retailers of the highest quality. In 1911 Wedgwood commissioned designs from Follot, and the Pomona, Sylvia and Galbia ranges were put into production in 1919. In 1923 he was appointed head of the Atelier Pomone, the design studio of the Paris department store Le Bon Marche. During this time Follot designed the Pavilion Pomone for the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes* of 1925 in Paris. In 1928 he was engaged to design furniture and interiors for the Modern Art Department of Waring & Gillow in London. Opposed to the austerity of modernism, Follot exhibited a sumptuous dining-room at the *Salon des Artistes Decorateurs* in 1929, and in 1935 designed a luxury suite on the liner *Normandie*.