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## **Finding aid for the Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann drawings and papers, 1924-1936**

Finding aid prepared by Jennifer Maiko Kishi

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## Descriptive Summary

**Title:** Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann drawings and papers

**Date (inclusive):** 1924-1936

**Number:** 2002.M.18

**Creator/Collector:** Ruhlmann, Emile-Jacques, 1879-1933

**Physical Description:** 25.0 linear feet(11 boxes, 1 roll)

### Repository:

The Getty Research Institute

Special Collections

1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 1100

Los Angeles, California, 90049-1688

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**Abstract:** The Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann drawings and papers detail the later work of this French Art Deco interior and furniture designer. This collection of interior design drawings displays a cross section of Ruhlmann's most productive period and forms a significant resource for the study of the history of modernism in French decorative arts. Included in this collection are twenty-four portfolios for seventeen design projects that document perspective views, floor plans, and interior design details. Materials are largely visual, comprised of original sketches, drawings, stencils, and renderings. Scattered throughout the collection are several handwritten notes, financial statements, and textual records.

**Request Materials:** Request access to the physical materials described in this inventory through the [catalog record](#) for this collection. Click here for the [access policy](#) .

**Language:** Collection material is in French.

### Biographical/Historical Note

Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann, a Parisian interior and furniture designer, was born on August 28, 1879. Ruhlmann, a central figure in the development of the French Art Deco movement, was best known for his lavish, luxury interiors for wealthy elites.

Ruhlmann was interested in design from an early age when he began sketching everyday life. In 1900, with no formal training in cabinetmaking, Ruhlmann produced his first furniture design. It was at this time that he established a lifelong friendship with the architect and his future collaborator, Pierre Patout. In 1901, Ruhlmann began his study of landscape painting, which later became a lifelong hobby. He married Marguerite Seabrook in 1907. That same year, after the death of his father, Ruhlmann inherited Société Ruhlmann, his father's business that specialized in painting, wallpaper, and mirrors. From 1914 to 1918, Ruhlmann devoted himself to furniture-making after being declared unfit for military services in 1914. In 1919 he established the firm Ruhlmann et Laurent (REL) in Paris with Pierre Laurent, his friend and fellow decorating contractor.

In the 1920s, Ruhlmann joined several organizations, among them the Salon d'Automne and Société des Artistes Décorateurs. He was also involved in numerous exhibitions, including the *Salon d'Automne* and the 1925 Paris *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes*. Ruhlmann's Pavillon du Collectionneur (also known as the Hôtel du Collectionneur) in the 1925 Exposition, was the most admired attraction at the fair and brought much fame and success to Ruhlmann. In 1924, Éditions Albert Morancé published "*Harmonies*": *Intérieurs de Ruhlmann*, a portfolio of Ruhlmann's interior design works from 1918 to 1924, presented by Romanian architect, Jean Badovici.

In August 1933, after a sudden illness, Ruhlmann wrote a detailed will planning the closure of his business upon his death. Ruhlmann died in Paris on November 15, 1933.

During the course of his life Ruhlmann changed his first name from Jacques-Émile to Émile-Jacques, leading to a certain amount of confusion among scholars as to the correct form of his name. He was registered as Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann at birth and many publications of his time referred to him as such. Among his colleagues and friends, he was known variously as Jacques-Émile, Émile, and Milo, though he was most commonly referred to as Ruhlmann. Ruhlmann himself appears to have preferred Émile-Jacques, EJ, or Émile, as evidenced in many written records he created. Moreover, many of his earlier works have monogrammed initials arranged as either EJR or ER, though over time he simplified this to just his last initial R.

### Access

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### Publication Rights

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**Preferred Citation**

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<http://hdl.handle.net/10020/cifa2002m18>

**Acquisition Information**

Acquired in 2002.

**Processing History**

Jennifer Maiko Kishi rehoused and created the finding aid for the collection in 2013 under the supervision of Ann Harrison.

**Related Materials**

The Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann drawings and papers held by the Getty Research Institute represent only a portion of the designer's archive. Further collections of Ruhlmann's drawings are held by the Musée des Années 30 and the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

The Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann drawings and papers detail the later work of this French Art Deco interior and furniture designer. This collection of interior design drawings displays a cross section of Ruhlmann's most productive period and forms a significant resource for the study of the history of modernism in French decorative arts. Though many of the materials are undated, based on drawing and paper inscriptions from the collection, dealer's inventory, and research, the materials can be dated to between 1924 and 1936. Project titles are based on information provided in portfolio inscriptions and dealer's inventory.

Included in this collection are twenty-four portfolios for seventeen design projects that document perspective views, floor plans, furniture designs, and interior design details. Materials are largely visual, comprised of original sketches, drawings, stencils, and renderings. Scattered throughout the collection are several handwritten notes, financial statements, and textual records. The portfolios are labeled by project, but some drawings may be incorrectly filed.

Ruhlmann was a prolific "ensemblier" who designed furniture, wallpaper, carpet, floor coverings, window draperies, upholstery, and lighting. This collection provides rare visual documentation of Ruhlmann's conceptual design works through preliminary drawings and sketches. Notable clients represented in the collection include: André Tardieu, French Prime Minister from the 1920s; Daniël George Van Beuningen, Dutch collector and businessman; André Granet, architect; and Paul Rodier, textile and silk producer. The collection also provides documentation of Ruhlmann's last major interior design project for André Granet. This project began in 1932 and was completed by Alfred Porteneuve, Ruhlmann's nephew, in 1934 after Ruhlmann's death.

**Arrangement**

Projects arranged alphabetically by client name.

**Subjects - Topics**

Art Deco--France

Decoration and ornament--Art Deco

Furniture design--France--History--20th century

Interior decoration--France--History--20th century

**Genres and Forms of Material**

Presentation drawings

**Contributors**

Porteneuve, Alfred

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**Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann drawings and papers**

Box 1\*, Folder 1-2

**Apartment for Mr. Van Beuningen, circa 1930****Scope and Content Note**

Portfolio containing perspective drawings and sketches of interiors, floor plans, and annotated stencils.

- Box 1\*, Folder 3      **Project for Mrs. Charon (?), undated**  
                                 **Scope and Content Note**  
                                 Portfolio containing annotated perspective drawings and sketches of interiors.
- Box 2\*, Folder 1-4      **Apartment for Mr. and Mrs. Gianotti, circa 1933**  
                                 **Portfolio and envelope containing preliminary sketches for interior studies, perspective drawings and sketches, and floor plans**
- Box 2\*, Folder 5-6      **Portfolio containing annotated perspective drawings and sketches of interiors, floor plans, and stencils**
- Box 3\*, Folder 1-2      **Portfolio containing annotated preliminary sketches, perspective drawings of interiors, floor plans, and stencils**
- Box 3\*, Folder 3      **Office for Mr. Granet, circa 1932**  
                                 **Scope and Content Note**  
                                 Portfolio containing perspective drawings of interiors and floor plan for the office of André Granet, Ruhlmann's last major commission.
- Box 3\*, Folder 4      **Project for Mrs. Netter, undated**  
                                 **Scope and Content Note**  
                                 Portfolio containing annotated floor plans.
- Box 4\*, Folder 1      **Project for Pavillion Royal, undated**  
                                 **Scope and Content Note**  
                                 Portfolio containing perspective drawings and sketches of interiors.
- Box 4\*, Folder 2      **Apartment for Mr. Perrier, undated**  
                                 **Scope and Content Note**  
                                 Portfolio containing annotated perspective drawings of interiors and floor plans.
- Box 4\*, Folder 3      **Apartment for Mr. and Mrs. Quinson, circa 1924-1925**  
                                 **Scope and Content Note**  
                                 Portfolio containing perspective drawings of interiors and floor plans.
- Box 4\*, Folder 4      **Rendez-vous des pêcheurs de truites, circa 1932**  
                                 **Scope and Content Note**  
                                 Portfolio containing perspective drawings of interiors for the "Meeting Place of the Trout Fishermen" display, presented at the 1932 *Salon des Artistes Décorateurs* exposition.
- Box 5\*, Folder 1-3      **Interiors for Mr. de Rivaud, undated**  
                                 **Scope and Content Note**  
                                 Portfolio containing annotated perspective drawings of interiors, floor plans, and furniture design drawings.
- Box 6\*, Folder 1-3      **Office for Mrs. Rodier, circa 1931**  
                                 **Scope and Content Note**  
                                 Portfolio containing annotated perspective drawings and sketches of interiors, floor plans, and stencils of office designs for Mr. Bignon, Mr. Favier, Mr. J. Rodier, and Mr. P. Rodier. Includes large envelope marked with Ruhlmann's name and address.
- Box 7\*, Folder 1-3      **Office for Mr. Tardieu, circa 1929**  
                                 **Scope and Content Note**  
                                 Two portfolios containing perspective drawings of interiors and floor plans for the office of André Tardieu, former French Prime Minister.
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Box 8\*, Folder 3

**Office for the Director of Union Électrique, undated**

**Scope and Content Note**

Portfolio containing preliminary drawings and sketches of interiors.

**Project for Hôtel de Ville de Vincennes, undated**

**Scope and Content Note**

Portfolio containing perspective drawings of interiors and floor plans.

Box 8\*, Folder 1-2

Roll 1\*\*

Box 9\*, Folder 1-5

**Small drawings**

**Oversize drawings**

**Apartment for Mr. and Mrs. Wattinne, undated**

**Scope and Content Note**

Three portfolios containing annotated perspective drawings and sketches of interiors, floor plans, and stencils. Includes one handwritten note.

Box 10\*, Folder  
1-3

**Project for Mr. Ziegler, undated**

**Scope and Content Note**

Three portfolios containing perspective drawings of interiors, floor plans, and stencils.

Box 11\*, Folder 1

**Portfolio labelled P236, 1936 January-July**

**Scope and Content Note**

Portfolio containing one perspective drawing of interiors for an unidentified project, presumably work by Porteneuve. Includes two revenue and expenditure financial statements for Alfred Porteneuve and Marguerite Ruhlmann.

Box 11\*, Folder  
2-3

**Unidentified drawings, undated**

**Scope and Content Note**

Perspective drawings of interiors, floor plans, and architectural cross-sections for unidentified projects.