

The Museum of Modern Art

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A 15-foot entrance arch from the Paris subway, designed by Hector Guimard around 1900, has been installed in the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden of The Museum of Modern Art after extensive renovation. The 3,000-pound cast iron gate was given to the Museum by La Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens (the Paris Transit Authority) in 1958.

The archway, which once spanned the stairway on Boulevard Raspail, was one of dozens of similar entrances designed by Guimard for the Paris subway system (Metropolitain or "Metro") which have been part of the Paris street scene for half a century. In recent years many of them have been dismantled by the government as the subway stations have been enlarged and renovated.

The arch was installed in the Museum's sculpture garden in 1959, but in 1963 was removed during construction of the Museum's adjacent new wing, at which time it was decided it needed restoration. Seventeen coats of paint had to be removed to get down to the original cast iron which was then galvanized and re-painted in its original green color.

Hector Guimard, the French architect and designer, who created the arch, was one of the foremost exponents of the Art Nouveau style which flourished during the 1890's. More than a dozen examples of Guimard's work are in the Museum's Architecture and Design Collection, ranging from a gilded bronze hatpin ornament to a desk and other furniture designed by Guimard for his own use.

Photographs and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Lynn Traiger, Assistant Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N. Y. 10019. Circle 5-8900.