



# **20<sup>th</sup> Century**

## **Furniture Designers and Architects**

**Eileen Gray 1878-  
1976 Ireland/France**

# Eileen Gray 1878-1976

## Ireland/France

- Eileen Gray was born into a well off artistic family in Ireland which enabled her to study at the Slade School of fine Arts in 1898.
- She developed a broad range of design skills.
- 1902 she moved to France to study drawing.
- She then trained under Songawara - a Japanese craftsman in the art of lacquer.
- During World War I she left France and spent most of her time in London, returning to Paris in 1918.
- She worked as a furniture designer until 1919. The furniture that she designed was only made in small quantities.

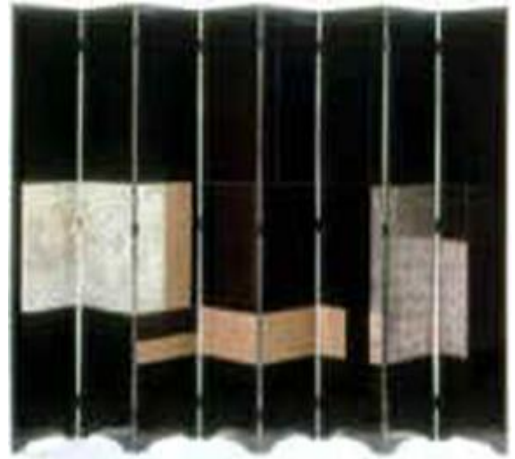
# Eileen Gray



Jean Désert at 217 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré

- In 1921 Eileen decided to open a shop as she was tired of clients invading the privacy of her home.
- Eileen called the shop Jean Désert, Eileen felt that a man's name would give a more serious tone to the business.
- Shop closed in 1930

# Eileen Gray Screens



Eileen Gray screen and Lacquer panels



- Eileen Gray's Black lacquer screen, estimated worth up to €1.5 million

# Eileen Gray Screens



- This eight-panel screen, circa 1921-23,
- by Eileen Gray is estimated at
- \$1.5 and 2.5 million dollars.

# Eileen Gray House E1027



Scale model of house

- She met an Architect and designed their house with him. She called the house E.1027 after Badovici and herself.
- 'E' for Eileen,
- 10 for 'J' (Jean) the tenth letter of the alphabet,
- '2' for B (Badovici) and
- '7' for G (Gray)
- It was finished in 1929 when she was fifty-one years old.

# Eileen Gray

- During the 1970's her furniture was reproduced by Zeez Aram. It was a very difficult task as there were often few surviving pieces and he had to rely mainly on photographs.
- Now, a steady stream of rediscovered designs are put into production every year.
- Most famous for her adjustable table called EI027 this was made for her first house that she designed
- The National Museum of Ireland at Collins Barracks purchased her archives in 2002 and opened a permanent exhibition of her work.
- <http://www.museum.ie/Decorative-Arts-History>

# Eileen Gray



E1027 Eileen Gray table



The Nonconformist  
Chair

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*Bibendum chair*

Bibendum

# Eileen Gray

Eileen Gray's St.  
Tropez Rug  
Designed in 1920



Bilboquet Table

# Eileen Gray



- In 2009 her 'Dragons' armchair sold in Paris for an very impressive €21.9 million, making it the worlds most expensive chair. Also setting an auction record for 20th century decorative art. This price may be due in part to it's previous owner Yves Saint Laurent.
- <http://www.eileenmoylan.com/2011/03/eileen-gray/>