



## Reviving Elegance: A Modern Interpretation of the Art Deco Era

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**Abstract** - This project focuses on reviving the art deco elements and interpreting them in current fashion. Research, analysis, garment construction, survey, and result & discussion are the five main steps of the project, which explores the rich visual and cultural aspects of the Art Deco era, including its recognizable geometric patterns, rich textiles, striking silhouettes, and elaborate details. These traits are reinterpreted to fit contemporary fashion trends and tastes. Through in-depth investigation and imaginative testing is developed and constructed clothing that captures the essence of the time while sticking to modern aesthetics and practicality. A survey was conducted to the public to gather feedback on the impact and appeal of the revived designs and elements. The result reflects the promising blend of nostalgia and innovation. The project's primary goal is to bring back historical details and incorporate them into everyday clothing.

**Keywords** - Art deco, fashion revival, modern interpretation, bold silhouettes, historical details.

### I. Introduction

The early 20th century saw the emergence of the vibrant and important Art Deco design movement, which gained popularity in the 1920s and reached its peak in the 1930s. The word "Art Deco" comes from the 1925 Exposition " Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes" in Paris, when it was first displayed to the world. It had its initial appearance in France shortly before World War I. The look quickly became popular throughout the world, influencing art, architecture, fashion, and design. The use of striking geometric shapes, symmetrical patterns, vivid colours, and lavish embellishment make the style easily identifiable. 1

Reviving the Art Deco components and incorporating them into modern apparel is the main goal. By combining the geometric shapes, elaborate embroidery, and lavish embellishments of the time, the main focus is to produce a contemporary collection that honours its historical foundations while appealing to modern tastes.

A great deal of research on the period in order to accomplish this, examining its essential components, including patterns, colours, and techniques. The best part is to offer a new interpretation of the Art Deco style by comprehending their importance and



practicality. In order to meet the requirements and tastes of contemporary audiences, this involves both reinterpreting and recreating the old aspects.

**The objective of the study is**

- To explore and understand the techniques, elements and styles of the Art Deco era in fashion.
- To reinterpret these elements into a modern collection.
- To revive historical aesthetics while maintaining contemporary functionality and wearability.
- To analyse the fashion of the era and to revive it.
- To design and construct the collection which reflects the era.

## **II. Women's Fashion in the Art Deco Era**

The silhouette changed from corseted to loose-fitting, practical clothing (Laver, 1969). The boyish silhouette gained popularity in the early 1920s (Blackman, 2012). The drop waists, flat busts, and tubular gowns were the trends of the early Art Deco era (Fukai, 2002). The flapper dresses were the major silhouette of this period (Blackman, 2012). Fringes and flowing materials for a comfortable fit are features of flapper dresses (Pel, 1920). Stockings and short skirts, bobbed hair, and cloche hats were significant trends of the Art Deco era (Fiell & Dirix, 2021). The Little Black Dress was created by Coco Chanel, paving the way for more sophisticated clothing (Mears & Boyer, 2014). Elsa Schiaparelli added aspects of workwear for women (Hillier, 1968). Butterfly sleeves, backless dresses, and long skirts were popular in the late 1920s and early 1930s (Fiell & Fiell, 1997).

Everyday clothing was influenced by sportswear, such as cycling shorts, skating dresses, and tennis skirts (Givhan, 1973). In evening wear, trains, translucent hems, and gauze overskirts were popular (Samuel, 2003). Wartime saw a shift to more functional silhouettes, such as boleros, short peasant skirts, and romantic revival styles (Hardy, 2006). It was considered best to have tall, thin figures with broad shoulders and narrow hips in the Art Deco era (Elmore, 1998).



Plates1Women's fashion in art deco era  
Source: Costume & fashion: A concise history by James Laver

In India, sarees continued to be popular, with thinner borders and tighter pallus (Tarlo, 1996). Shorter, backless, deep-necked, structured-sleeved blouses were fashionable (Joshi, 2013). In the lehenga, structural cholis, geometric patterns, and sleeker flares were the most common elements (Craft Revival Trust, n.d.). Due to the Swadeshi movement, khadi sarees with contemporary drapes gained popularity (Tarlo, 1996). In the 1930s, the waist was the main focus (Blackman, 2012). Bias-cut pallus and structured pleats highlighted the saree (Craft Revival Trust, n.d.). In the early 1940s, shorter sleeves, high necks, and simpler cuts emerged as a result of wartime austerity (Joshi, 2013). In cities, Western dresses and saree gowns became increasingly popular (Tarlo, 1996). Western jackets were paired with sarees for a contemporary look (Joshi, 2013). Art Deco-patterned dupattas and kameez started to gain popularity (Craft Revival Trust, n.d.). During this era, modern silhouettes with trendy details like sequins and beading were used (Duncan, 2009).

#### **Men's Fashion in the Art Deco Era:**

Three-piece suits, high-waisted pants, and padded shoulders were popular in the early 1920s (Laver, 1969). Transition to more casual tailoring with shorter jackets, sportswear, and Oxford bags (Fashion History Timeline, n.d.). The V-shaped torso was highlighted with double-breasted suits (Vincent, 2015). The major accessories used by men in the art deco era were pocket squares, cufflinks, and ties with Art Deco designs (Laver, 1969). The evening attire includes formal white-tie attire, smoking coats, and tuxedos with satin lapels (Vincent, 2015). In the 1930s, sophisticated tailoring, wool/tweed textiles in subtle colours, and useful designs gained popularity (Mears & Boyer, 2014).



Plates 2 Men's fashion in art deco era

Source: Costume & fashion: A concise history by James Laver

The casual clothing extended to include lightweight jackets, cardigans, and open-collar shirts (Fiell & Dirix, 2021). The accessories include belted trench coats, trilbies, removable collars, and fedoras (Vincent, 2015).

Dhotis and kurtas are examples of traditional clothing that has been modernized to reflect contemporary style (Tarlo, 1996). The Urban elites adopted Western suits, such as fitted bandhgalas and Nehru jackets with lavish embellishments. High-waisted pants and overcoats are examples of formal attire with a British influence (Joshi, 2013). The Regional diversity likes churidars and anarkis in the north; silk dhotis with ornamental borders in the south were commonly used by men in this era (Craft Revival Trust, n.d.). Fusion clothing, which combined Indian bottoms and Western shirts, was popular in urban regions (Joshi, 2013). Khadi kurtas and jackets are a symbol of the Swadeshi movement that emphasis on simplicity (Tarlo, 1996). Professionals and politicians can benefit from established looks and functional tailoring (Joshi, 2013).

### III. Method

The study "Reviving Elegance: A Modern Interpretation of the Art Deco Era," the incorporation of the Art Deco movement's aesthetic and design elements into modern fashion was the ultimate aim during the garment creation phase. A collection of garments was designed to recreate the defining characteristics of the time, like symmetrical lines, geometric motifs, rich fabrics, and metallic accents, for the contemporary style.

In order highlight the adaptability and classic appeal of Art Deco, clothing was designed in five main fashion categories: lounge wear, formal, ethnic, casual, and party wear. The collection was designed with unique Art Deco elements including striking

decorations, angular shapes, and elaborate surface ornamentation, each piece was carefully crafted to capture the spirit of its particular category.

Both honouring the grandeur of the past and proving its relevance in the current fashion scene are achieved by this blend of historical elegance with contemporary style.

**Category: Ethnic wear**



Figure 1 Ethnic wear

The Art Deco style, which emphasizes geometric accuracy and opulent craftsmanship and bold colour palette served as the inspiration for this modern ethnic wear dress.

The women's wear Kurti was made from a striking red fabric. The hemline and sleeve cuffs are adorned with elaborate geometric bead embroidery that reflects Art Deco era. The cape, an alternative to traditional dupatta, made of sheer fabric that flows beautifully, adding sophistication and drama that accentuates the Art Deco style's characteristic symmetry and balance. The matching red straight cut pants with hems embellished with embroidery enhances the kurti for an unites and sophisticated appearance.

The men's the Bandh Gala Outfit is designed to look elegant with a sleek black fabric. One side has geometric patchwork in eye-catching gold hues, which reflects the Art Deco movement's penchant for linear and symmetrical designs. The patchwork is enhanced with beadwork that highlights the geometric designs and lends a sense of luxury and exquisite workmanship.

**Category: Formal wear**



Figure 2 Formal wear

The women shirt's cowl neck and its smooth, flowing folds capture the elegant style of the Art Deco era. A timeless and exquisite appeal was provided by drawing inspiration from the ancient Greek draperies. The distinctive design element that was used in the blazers was the shawl collar. It produces a sleek and sophisticated appearance by providing a continuous, smooth curve. The pants were designed with a side slit that mirrors the primary slit gowns that were popular during the Art Deco era. It provides the entire outfit a flawless, sophisticated appearance.

The men's shirt provides a balance of simplicity; it was significant during the Art Deco era. With its pointed or spread design, the collar lends the time period an air of timeless elegance. The key component of Art Deco fashion was the double-breasted blazer suit. It creates a bold appearance with its broad lapel, fitted waist, and strong shoulders. An iconic feature of Art Deco clothing, the shawl collar was used in evening wear and blazers. It creates a sleek and sophisticated appearance by providing a continuous, smooth curve.

**Category: Casual wear**



Figure 3 Casual wear

The women's wear has a shirt with thick straps, a square neckline, and a fitted bodice. At the waist, it is cropped. The cape sleeves, which are made of net fabric and hang loosely from the shoulders, are the most noticeable element. They have a hook to secure them at their back ends. The structured, soft, and draping shape of the sleeve goes well with both Art Deco and modern styles. Multiple looks are possible because of the detaching feature, which may be worn with the cape for a dramatic effect or taken off for a more subtle, minimal look. The waist is emphasized by the high-waisted jeans. They fit loosely for their wide-leg silhouette.

The men's wear a T-shirt with short sleeves and a loose fit. It has a unique symmetrical neckline with a tiny, sharp cutout. The colour is off-white with black geometric motifs that resemble Art Deco on the lower left side and upper right chest. The T-shirt has a plain back and a black neckline trim for contrast. The black shorts go well with the T-shirt's geometric elements. They fit loosely and are straight-cut, making them perfect for casual attire.



Figure 4 Ethnic wear garment brochure



Figure 5 Formal wear garment brochure



Figure 6 Casual wear garment brochure

#### Analysis of Feedback

The survey is collected from the fashion student and fashion professional. The feedback received through the survey underscored several key aspects of our design approach:

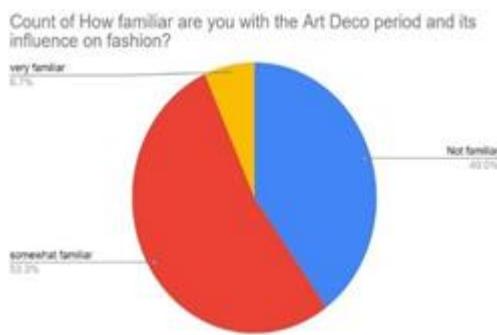


Figure 8 Survey on awareness of art deco era

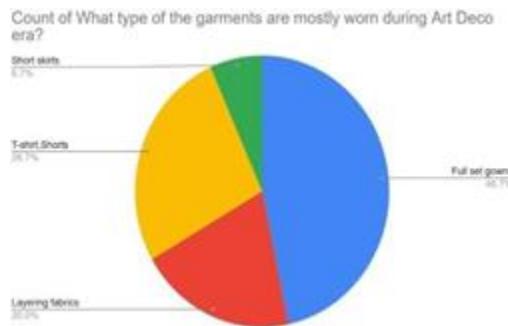


Figure 7 Survey on knowledge of art deco era

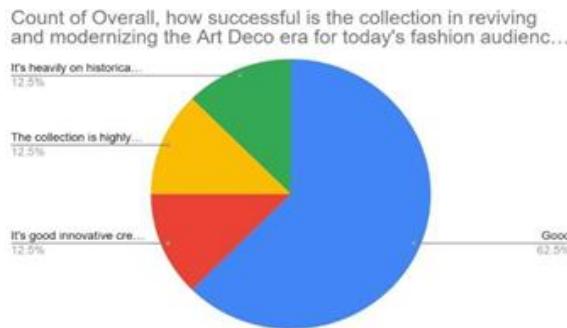


Figure 9 Survey on opinion of the society

The survey highlighted that 60% of respondents had little familiarity with the Art Deco era, while 30% showed a moderate level of awareness and only 10% possessed strong knowledge of its fashion influence. When asked about garment types, 55% associated Art Deco with formal and structured outfits, whereas 30% linked it with semi-formal styles and just 15% connected it to casual wear, showing that the era is still predominantly remembered for its elegance. In evaluating the designed collection, 65% of participants considered it a good and innovative attempt, 25% believed it to be relevant for present-day fashion, and only 10% felt it was ordinary. These findings suggest that although detailed knowledge of Art Deco remains limited, the collection was received positively and demonstrates the enduring relevance of its aesthetics in modern fashion.

### Discussion

A survey of people in the fashion industry and fashion students was conducted to evaluate the Art Deco revival's popularity and its impact in the current period.

A resounding good response came from the participants. The awareness about the art deco era among the people was average. They have a positive response on describing the style's simplicity, sophistication, and timeless appeal. A significant number of respondents expressed strong support for the revival of Art Deco elements. Many fashion students saw that Art Deco's stunning geometric designs, vibrant colours, and rich textures as new ideas for contemporary designs. Fashion scholars recognized the



art deco movement's impact on contemporary styles, particularly in the areas of dress, accessories, and branding aesthetics.

The outfits were also appreciated by the responders for their creative yet precise recreation of Art Deco elements. They valued the precise incorporation of historical details with modern styling, which gave the designs a visually appealing appearance while also being in touch with contemporary fashion trends.

#### IV. Conclusion

The persisting appeal of strong geometry, luxurious materials, and stylized elegance is demonstrated by the Art Deco period's revival. In order to show how Art Deco's impact continues to shape modern architecture, fashion, interior design, and graphic arts, we researched the movement's beginnings, development, and present revival. Through a combination of nostalgia and invention, this revival not only maintains the aesthetic and cultural ideals of the 1920s and 1930s but also reinterprets them for the modern world. The lasting influence of Art Deco ultimately shows our continued interest in craftsmanship, elegance, and the hope of a previous period. This project proves that the historic elements in the fashion can be inspiring and revived to create a fresh, contemporary yet nostalgic look.

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