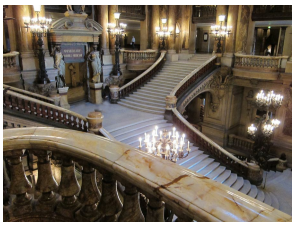
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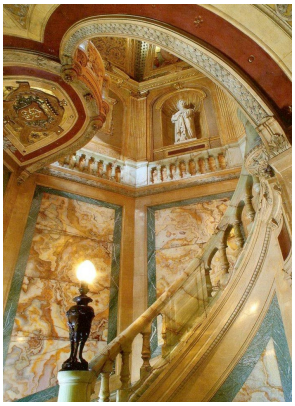
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The handrail of the staircase made out of onyx in the Opera house in Paris.

There are several types of **Onyx marbles**, but the most well known and the most widely used one comes from Algeria.

Algerian Onyx has been extracted in Ain-Snara, in the **Oran region**, since the 19th century. Exploited since ancient times, the quarries of onyx in Algeria were rediscovered in 1849. From then on onyx was abundantly used in Europe to create works of art, clocks or sculptures. Due to the importing price of onyx, it was more often used on small objects and rarely used on furniture.
However, the handrail of the large staircase in the **Opera House in Paris** was made out of Algerian Onyx, illustrating that extreme care and precious materials were employed to make this handrail.
The **company of Algerian Onyx marbles**, at first under the management of **Gustave Viot** and then the **sculptor Eugène Cornu**, exploited the onyx quarries in Algeria and made works of art and furniture using this material.
Highly renowned, the company was praised for the extremely high quality of its creations, especially those exhibited at the World's Fair of 1878 in Paris.
This onyx was also exploited by **Jules Cantini**, famous marble artisan and sculptor from Marseille.

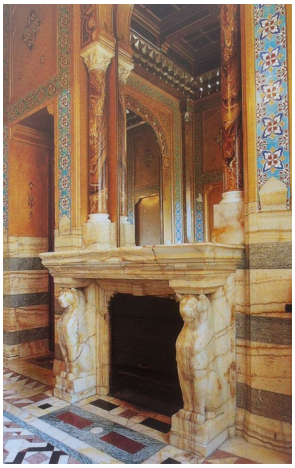


The staircase made out of onyx in the Hotel de Païva in Paris.

The **four large console tables with Atlantes found in the dining room of Hotel de Païva in Paris** have a mosaic table top made out of red marble, albâtre and onyx marble. Two of these four console tables are kept today at the Orsay museum and the Museum of Decorative arts in Paris.
The **Neo-mauresque style bathroom in the Hotel de Païva** in Paris is also decorated with onyx marble, but with onyx that comes from Egypt, including the beautiful fireplace with lions' feet that was made specifically for the Hotel.

Many sculptors, especially those from the **Second Empire**, made their items out of onyx marble, for example **Charles Cordier** made a whole series called *"Negros"*, a mix between bronze and onyx. In 1899, **Ernest Barrias** made his masterpiece *"Nature reveals Science"*, in a polychromy made up of marbles and different onyx marbles from Algeria.

Green onyx from Pakistan has several orange or white concretions against a background of jade green.
It was used a lot to make cafe tables and little works of art. It is very rare to find it used on fireplaces.



The Neo-Mauresque bathroom in the Hotel de la Païva in Paris, with a fireplace made out of onyx.



Sculpture by Charles Cordier.

Voir la vidéo sur YouTube

See also

Alabastro di Busca — La malachite — Napoleon III style — 1878 World's Fair — Orientalism — Jules Cantini

See our marble fireplaces



Sculpture by Barrias, Orsay Museum, Paris.