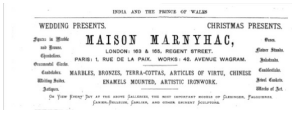
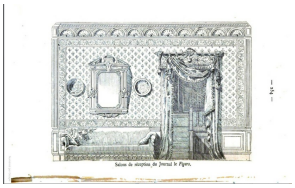
MARC MAISON

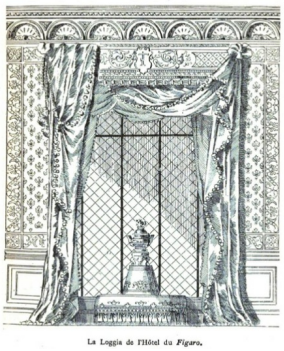
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Publicity in The Illustrated London News in 1875



Reception room in Hôtel Figaro



Loggia of the l'Hôtel Figaro



Auguste Clésinger (sculptor), Maison Marnyhac (makor), Buste woman with roses in bronze,
Musée d'Orsay, circa 1870

"Nothing weak, all in for Art"

The Maison de Marnyhac & Cie is a company of art bronze fabrication and trades which appears on the initiative of the artist Jacques Elie Edmond Armand de Marnyhac also known as Charles de Marnyhac (1840-1897) circa 1865.

The history of this company, not very much documented yet considered as the direct competitor of Barbedienne by the contemporary critic, is quite complicated. Indeed, we know that a first shop was established rue de la Paix and the workshop avenue de Wagram in Paris. In 1875, a second shop is open in the English capital on the 163 and 165 Regent Street after a successful participation to the London International Exhibition in 1871.

The company also participates at its beginnings to the 1867 World Fair and wins a bronze medal, then to the 1878 one where they are rewarded with a gold medal and the Légion d'honneur for the owner. The works of art display during this event was really noticed and especially by E.B. who wrote on this subject in *Les chefs d'œuvres à l'Exposition Universelle de 1878* : "*To resume and I conclude on this appreciation of which I am willing to take the whole responsibility, the exhibition of the maison de Marnyhac has shown clearly to me that Paris has two Barbedienne, meaning two art manufacturers that the entire Europe can not give us equals.*"

From now on, developing a strong commercial dimensions, the maison de Marnyhac chooses to create a luxurious and upmarket production. Thus, on the 29th June 1879, the maison de Marnyhac & Cie changes its name for the Société Anonyme d'Ameublement after the merge with the maison Foye-Davenne, which existed since 55 years. A new shop is open, following the model of the Department stores, on the 26 rue de l'Opéra the same year. This space is entirely dedicated to the furniture and art bronze, addressed to the society clientele. FG Dumas speaks about the commercial strategies of this department store dedicated to bronze on the *Catalogue illustré du Salon de 1882* (pp. 295-296): "*A department store has to be like a museum; nothing weak, all in for Art; we only should meet perfection and each work of art is made to serve as models. (....) Enter in these stores on the Avenue de l'Opéra and you'll see already displayed as for an installation all the most various part of furniture.*"

The production of the company answers the eclectic taste of the rich clients of the second half of the 19th century and follows the different stylistics movements. Thus, the furniture style is inspired by the Great Century, the Historicisme or even the Japonisme thanks to the antique Chinese and Japanese bronzes in Charles de Marnyhac's collection and from which he makes planters, cups, vases of all shapes adorned with fantastic dragons, chimeras, and fabulous twisting monsters.

Many private mansions of the Monceau and Faubourgs districts in Paris were furnished by the company, as the Continental hotel (named today The Westin Paris-Vendôme) and the Figaro hotel. Moreover we can read on the C *atalogue illustré du Salon de 1886* (volume 6) that «*Anyone who wants to furnish a private mansion, by reunited matching furniture could no choose a better guide than M. de Marnyhac.* »

Nevertheless, the major part of the company production rests on the modern sculpture reproductions of which Charles de Marnyhac was one of the most raging defender. As many competitors, he tries to satisfy his clientele thanks to collaborations made with famous contemporary artists, who are the true input of his success. We can especially name Eugène Piat (1827-1903), Auguste Clésinger (1814-1883), Alexandre Falguière (1831-1900) or even Edouard Lièvre (1828-1886).

The official announces of the Société Anonyme d'Ameublement activity being stop appear on the newspapers in 1864. The company also disappear from the Didot Bottin between 1891 and 1899, to appear again this same year settled on the rue des Jeuneurs. Nevertheless nothing indicates no more that he could be the succession of Charles de Marnyhac.

See also

Ferdinand Barbedienne — 1867 World's Fair — 1878 World's Fair — Japonisme — Gilt bronze

See our 19th-century objets d'art