

*Strand 2: The Historiography of Art Nouveau (Looking back on the Past)*

**Definitive abstract for paper presentation at the *coupDefouet* International Congress**

**The Teaching of Viollet-le-Duc: Form - Function - Material - Nature. Some reflections about the work of Antoni Gaudí and Víctor Horta...**

A number of art nouveau pioneers in Europe, such as Victor Horta and Paul Hankar in Brussels, Hector Guimard in Paris, Henri Sauvage and Lucien Weissenburger in Nancy and Antoni Gaudí in Barcelona were profoundly inspired by the theoretical oeuvre of the French architect and restorer Eugène Viollet-le-Duc. Through his research on medieval architecture he opened doors towards new horizons in the field of building techniques and metal structures as well as in new design inspired by nature. Gaudí's architecture radiates natural strength together with a language of forms that has been modelled after structures from real nature. Horta wrote in 1925 that Viollet-le-Duc's theories took architecture as a whole back to its absolute origin by means of a concise, precise and constructive analysis of every element of architecture, that origin being construction, from which any form of Art can emerge.

**L'enseignement de Viollet-le-Duc: forme - fonction - matière - nature. Quelques réflexions sur l'oeuvre de Victor Horta et Antoni Gaudí**

Quelques pionniers de l'Art Nouveau en Europe, comme Victor Horta et Paul Hankar à Bruxelles, Hector Guimard à Paris, Henri Sauvage et Lucien Weissenburger à Nancy et Antoni Gaudí à Barcelona étaient profondément inspirés par les théories de l'architecte Eugène Viollet-le-Duc. Par ses recherches sur l'architecture du moyen âge il ouvrait de nouveaux horizons dans le domaine des techniques en architecture et des structures en métal, ainsi que dans le langage des formes inspirées par la nature. Horta écrit en 1925 que les théories de Viollet-le-Duc ramènent par une analyse serrée, précise, constructive, de chaque élément d'architecture, tout l'ensemble de l'Architecture à son origine absolue: la construction, dont n'importe quelle forme d'Art peut sortir.

## Curriculum Vitae

Jos Vandenbreeden, architect, director *Architecture Archive – Sint-Lukasarchief*

**Jos Vandenbreeden**, architect and professor emeritus at the Department of Architecture Sint-Lucas Brussels and Ghent (Belgium). He restored for instance the Solvay house (1894-1902, Unesco World Heritage since 2000) in Brussels, designed by Victor Horta, the Art Deco Basilica Koekelberg (Brussels), three villas in Blankenberge reconverted as *Belle-Epoque Center*. He is director of the research center and the archives “*Architecture Archive – Sint-Lukasarchief*” in Brussels. Many publications on Belgian Art Nouveau architecture, the 19th Century, Art Deco and Modernisme.