

## Adolf le Comte – Mocca set

Adolf le Comte, born 1850 in a town between Delft and Rotterdam, was the artistic advisor and designer at De [Porceleyne Fles](#) for almost 40 years and became famous for that.

Despite being a teacher at the Royal Art Academy in den Haag and the Art Academy in Rotterdam, he was [a well known artist](#) for [pottery ware](#) and also drew oil and [watercolour paintings](#). His personal style had great influence not only on the products of [De Porceleyne Fles](#) but also on his students (W.W.F. von Gudenberg and Jurriaan Kok, who would become [business rivals](#)). He introduced the portrait painting on plates and wall tiles.



Marked proof A.C. (Adolf Le Comte), this 23.5cm portrait was unusually painted by Le Comte as a test piece.



Portrait of the girl with the earring by Vermeer. This 40cm plate is part of the 2008 [online shop](#) of the Royal Delft.

The test piece seen above, leads us to another example of how an experiment can become a independent piece of art.



The example of this mocca set (made ca. 1900 – 1910), is one out of the ordinary. It's probably a prototype, a unique "one-off" trial model, and therefore was never painted with any decoration ([delfts blauw](#) or polychrome). Le Comte and [Leon Senf](#) (the factory's other important "in-house"

designer at that time) both designed a lot of pieces that were never put into production. A number of these unique prototype pieces have survived - some in museum collections and others in private collections. Nowadays, the mocca set already seems to be completed in its design. The clear shape and simplicity of the mocca pot is common to the eye of the beholder these days. But for the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it must have been quite radical, maybe too radical to put into production.

Apparently, Adolf le Comte saw no contradiction in being an artist and working for a mass production company at the same time. Even though the pottery was produced in large amounts, it was still possible to make something very unique. Characteristic for [artistic](#) pottery ware is the ability to increase its [idealistic value](#) in making daily life more [special](#).