

## Vienna – City of Many Voices

Vienna at the turn of the twentieth century was the capital of a vast Austro-Hungarian Empire that stretched from Italy to Russia. The city's population, which had grown rapidly in the last half of the nineteenth century to nearly two million, was made up of people from all parts of the Empire including Czechs, Croats, Hungarians, Germans, Italians, Serbs, Poles and Ukrainians. Vienna was a city bursting with ideas and beliefs. In 1900, Sigmund Freud published his theories on the interpretation of dreams and was developing the new discipline of psychoanalysis. In the same year Max Planck presented his theory on quantum physics. Literature, politics, music, psychoanalysis, science, the visual arts and architecture were all interconnected in the intellectual life of the city. Modern thinkers struggled to break free of the ideas, values and structures of the past and to challenge the boundaries of what was accepted. In all fields of endeavour, public debate raged in the quest to find a voice that was true for modern life.

The Austro-Hungarian Empire was ruled by a conservative, tradition-bound monarch, Emperor Franz Josef I, who had held the throne since 1848. It also supported a large aristocracy. From the 1840s thriving industrial enterprise in Vienna had led to a new middle class that included bankers, industrialists and merchants. They were not prepared to submit without question to the political power and authority of the throne, church and aristocracy, and strove to enjoy some of the benefits of their new position, which had arisen through the innovations of the modern age. Art and architecture provided a means to assert their values and personality. Strong relationships developed between clients and artists in which each supported the aspirations of the other.



**Wilhelm Gause's painting shows the annual Municipal Ball taking place in the newly built Vienna City Hall. The Municipal Ball was an important event on Vienna's social calendar. Attendance affirmed one's position in the city's social hierarchy. Fashionable members of the aspiring middle classes look in to the centre of the painting where the Mayor, Karl Lueger, stands wearing his official mayoral chains. In front of him is the Emperor's representative, Archduke Leopold Salvator, who is the first to greet guests. A new social order brushes shoulders with the old.**

**Wilhelm GAUSE** Germany 1853–1916 *Vienna Municipal Ball* 1904. Watercolour and oil on cardboard, 62.0 x 88.0 cm, Wien Museum, Vienna. Commissioned by the City of Vienna, 1904

### DID YOU KNOW?

In line to succeed his uncle Franz Josef as Emperor was the Archduke Franz Ferdinand. In 1893, at age 30, the Archduke undertook a world tour with his wife, the Archduchess Sophie. In Australia, the Archduke indulged his passion for hunting. He was said to have shot many kangaroos, a number of varieties of duck, as well as pelicans, ibis, cranes, eagles, hawks, platypus and emus. The touring party also included a taxidermist and

a photographer. Animals, after being shot, were skinned, dissected and the bones numbered so that they could be reassembled for display in a museum in the Archduke's homeland.

Archduke Franz Ferdinand never became Emperor. In 1914, he and his wife were assassinated in Sarajevo. This incident triggered events that led to the start of the First World War. Four years later, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was dissolved.

## Café Society



**Reinhold VÖLKEL** Austrian 1873–1938 *In the Cafe Griensteidl Vienna 1896*. Watercolour. Private collection

Vienna's many coffee houses played an important part in Viennese life. Coffee houses were places of communication and discussion, in which people would share ideas, read and write. They were the meeting places of the city's intellectual elite, a tightly connected circle in which everyone knew nearly everyone else. The coffee house was not only a place for socialising and for artistic debate but also a place for dissemination of information.

*All the Viennese newspapers were available, and not the Viennese alone, but also those of the entire German Reich, the French and the English, the Italian and American papers, and in addition all the important literary and art magazines of the world ... Perhaps nothing has contributed as much to the intellectual mobility and the international orientation of the Austrian as that he could keep abreast of all world events in the coffee house.<sup>1</sup>*

In a city that had become overcrowded and where housing was scarce, the coffee house was, for many, like a home away from home – an escape from a small apartment or cramped, cold rooms. People would spend hours lingering over coffee or food and would frequent the same places regularly. Coffee houses included games rooms for billiards, chess and cards and often hosted musical performance. They served as de facto offices for some, and waiters would send and receive messages for regular clients. Some customers would even have their mail delivered to their favourite café. Though women were not excluded, cafés were a predominantly male domain.

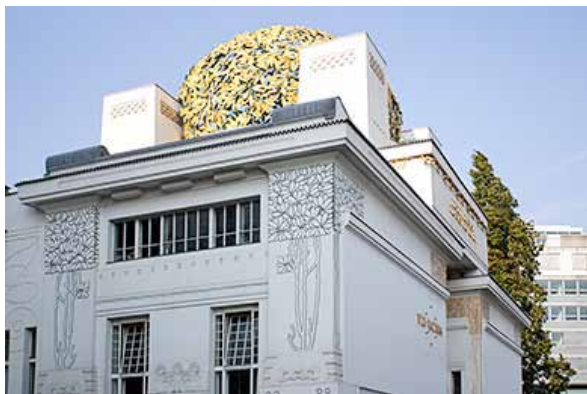
### → DISCUSS

*Viennese coffee houses were hubs in which information was shared, ideas were debated and social contacts were maintained. What performs these functions in our present day society?*

### DID YOU KNOW?

Coffee was said to have found its way to Vienna with the Turks during the Ottoman invasion in 1683. The Viennese adapted it to their taste by drinking it with milk and sugar.

# The Vienna Secession



Nearly destroyed during the Second World War by bombs and fire, the Secession building was restored in 1963 and renovated again in 1984. The building can be found on Friedrichstrasse 12, in Vienna's first district.

*To every age its art and to art its freedom*

**Ludwig Hevesi**

At the end of the nineteenth century, traditional art institutions and academies such as the Vienna Künstlerhaus (Artists' House) were seen as conservative and backward looking by young Viennese artists filled with a desire to embrace the new. The prevailing preference of the art Establishment was for Classicism and Historicism – styles which embodied the glories of the past and typified the conservatism of the ruling classes. Emerging styles in contemporary art, such as Naturalism, Realism, Symbolism and Art Nouveau, were met with resistance. Frustrated by limitations on their work, a group of artists resolved to break away from the academy and form their own association.

The Vienna Secession was established in 1897 by a group of artists, designers and architects that included Gustav Klimt, Koloman Moser, Josef Hoffmann, Joseph Maria Olbrich and Alfred Roller. They aimed to create new, progressive art, to bring contemporary international art to Viennese audiences and to provide a forum for the discussion and distribution of new ideas about art and culture.

The Secessionists sought to provide a community in which artists, supported by like-minded patrons, could explore new forms of expression, free from the restrictions of official tastes. Secession members consisted of architects and artisans as well as fine artists, who were united by a shared desire to integrate art into all aspects of life. They aimed to bring purer forms to art and design and to make a separation from the historical styles of the past. They viewed all forms of art and craft as having equal status and aspired to the Gesamtkunstwerk – the total work of art – that encompassed all aspects of the visual environment.

The Vienna Secession was not characterised by one single style but was linked closely with Jugendstil – literally 'youth style', the German-speaking world's adaptation of Art Nouveau. Art Nouveau was an international art movement that was characterised by its use of flowing curved lines and plant forms. Viennese Jugendstil evolved over time to incorporate greater emphasis on simplified forms and geometric motifs.

**Josef Maria OLBRICH**  
(architect) Austria/  
Germany 1867–1908  
*Secession Building* 1897  
Photos: Jean-Pierre  
Chabrol

In 1898, the Secessionists built an exhibition building to present the work of their members, as well as that of favoured international artists. Designed by Joseph Olbrich, the building was based on simple cubes and spheres. Its minimal white façade was contrasted by a dome decorated in gilded laurel leaves – symbolic of purity, victory, dignity. The building bore the inscription: *To every age its art, to art its freedom*, a saying coined by art critic Ludwig Hevesi. The Secessionists founded a journal, *Ver Sacrum* (*Sacred Spring*), in which they could put forward their ideas about art, life and culture.

From the outset the Secession was very well patronised by a public keen to view the best of emerging Viennese and international art and design.

The Secession marked a turning point for art in Vienna, opening the way for artists to explore new forms. From the influence of the Secession emerged artists such as Egon Schiele and Oskar Kokoschka, who found original ways to express their inner landscape as well as external realities.

Differences of opinion led many artists, including Gustav Klimt, to leave the Secession in 1905.

### DID YOU KNOW?

The Secession building was originally approved as a temporary exhibition pavilion that would exist for ten years at the longest. When it was completed the critical Viennese public said the building resembled 'a mausoleum' or 'a crematorium'. The dome was said to be like 'a head of cabbage'.

## THE BEETHOVEN FRIEZE

The Fourteenth Secession Exhibition in the spring of 1902 was intended as a celebration of the German composer and pianist Ludwig van Beethoven (17 Dec 1770 – 26 Mar 1827), who lived and died in Vienna. The exhibition revolved around a large monument to Beethoven by artist Max Klinger, and the other decorations were intended to enhance the effect of this work.

Gustav Klimt completed a large frieze (mural) around the top of the walls in one room of the exhibition building. Klimt's Beethoven Frieze was intended to be in place only for the duration of the exhibition and was applied onto the wall using casein (a binding agent) and gold paint, black and coloured chalk, graphite and various appliqué materials such as mirror, jewels, mother-of-pearl and curtain rings. It was based on the final movement of the 9th 'Choral' Symphony by Beethoven. Beethoven had been inspired by Ode to Joy, a poem written by Friedrich Schiller in 1785, about the brotherhood and unity of mankind. The description of the work in the catalogue of the exhibition finished with a quotation from Schiller's poem:

*Joy, fair spark of divinity, here's a kiss for all the world.*



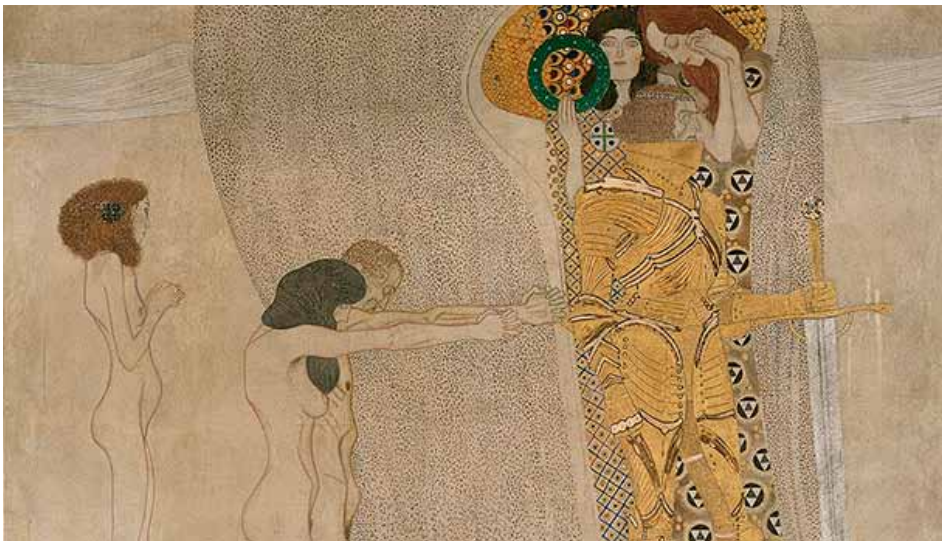
**Gustav KLIMT** Austrian  
1862–1918 *Beethoven  
Frieze* 1901-02.  
Painted plaster,  
216.0 x 3438.0 cm.  
Belvedere, Vienna

The links to Beethoven were highlighted further by the musical performance at the opening of the exhibition. Members of the Vienna Philharmonic orchestra, conducted by the Director of the Imperial Opera, the famous Gustav Mahler, performed part of the finale of the Chorale Symphony. Mahler was an enthusiastic supporter of the Secession. He was married to the step-daughter of the Secessionist artist Carl Moll and hired Secession founder, designer Alfred Roller, as chief designer for the Viennese Opera.

While Klimt's Beethoven Frieze received a number of very favourable reviews, some members of the public thought that the work was scandalous and obscene. Many people didn't understand Klimt's use of symbolism and viewed the work as incomprehensible:

*His frescoes would fit well in a psychiatric institute ... The representation of 'Lewdness' on the back wall is the last word in obscenity. And to think this is Klimt's path to Beethoven!²*

The Beethoven Frieze was bought by a collector in 1903 and removed from the wall in sections. It was not seen again in public until 1986.



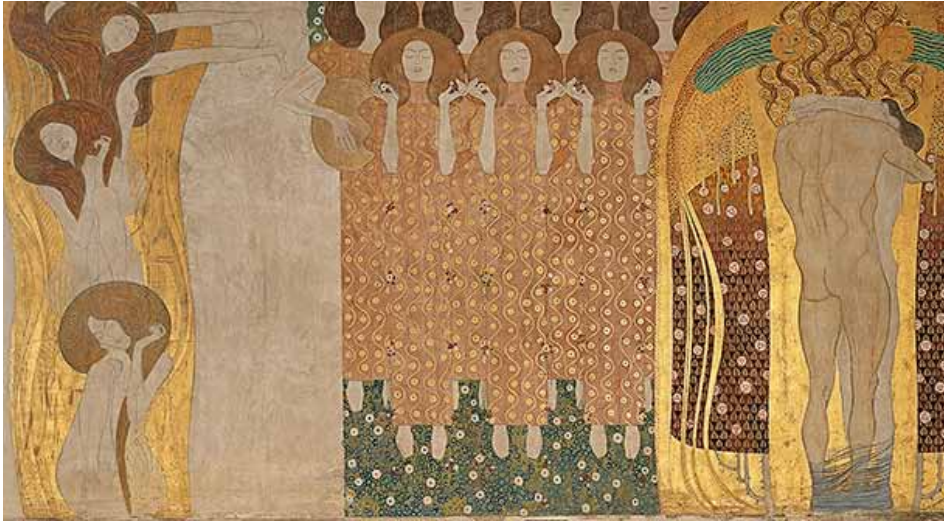
**The first wall of the frieze depicted a suffering humanity appealing to a knight in shining armour to take up the fight for happiness.**

Gustav KLIMT Austrian 1862–1918 *Beethoven Frieze: left wall* 1901-02 (detail). Painted plaster, 216.0 x 3438.0 cm. Belvedere, Vienna



**The next wall depicted the hostile forces: the gorilla-faced giant, Typhon, with his three gorgon daughters: Sickness, Madness and Death. To Typhon's side stood Lasciviousness (Lust), Intemperance (Gluttony) and Wantonness (Recklessness). Flying above them were the longings and desires of mankind.**

Gustav KLIMT Austrian 1862–1918 *Beethoven Frieze: central wall* 1901-02 (detail). Painted plaster, 216.0 x 3438.0 cm. Belvedere, Vienna



On the last wall, the yearning for happiness was appeased by Poetry. The Arts delivered humanity to a place where pure joy, happiness and love could be experienced. The embracing figures illustrated the quotation from Schiller's *Ode to Joy*: *Joy, fair spark of divinity, here's a kiss for all the world.*

Gustav KLIMT Austrian 1862–1918 *Beethoven Frieze*: right wall 1901-02 (detail). Painted plaster, 216.0 x 3438.0 cm, Belvedere, Vienna

## → DISCUSS

*Though you cannot please all men with your deeds and with your art, yet seek to please a few. To please the multitude is not good.*

**Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805) quoted by Gustav Klimt in response to criticism of his work.**

Discuss the **meanings and messages** of the Beethoven frieze and the way that Klimt has chosen to convey them.

Why might Klimt have chosen the Schiller quote above to respond to his critics?

In undertaking a commission, what responsibility does the artist have to his/her client? What responsibility does the artist have to the audience? Is there anything that artists should not be allowed to portray? Who should decide what is or isn't acceptable?

## DID YOU KNOW?

20,000 Viennese citizens lined the streets for Beethoven's funeral on 29 March 1827. The funeral procession, led by torch bearer composer Franz Schubert, was one of the most impressive Vienna had ever seen.

Beethoven's *Ode to Joy* is the official anthem of both the European Union and the Council of Europe.

# The Wiener Werkstätte (1903–1932)

The Wiener Werkstätte (the Vienna Workshop) was an association of artist-craftsmen, founded in 1903 by painter Koloman Moser, architect Josef Hoffmann and industrialist Fritz Waerndorfer. Its aim was to make hand-crafted products for everyday living that embodied a sense of quality, by combining good design with the highest standards of craftsmanship. Its work was intended to contrast with the mass-produced, factory-finished merchandise then available.

The Wiener Werkstätte was influenced by the English Arts and Crafts Movement (an international design movement that originated in England around 1880) and the work of Scottish artist Charles Rennie Mackintosh, whose work was shown in the Eighth Secession Exhibition in 1900.

Many Arts and Craft movement era workshops, such as those founded in England, aimed to bring the best of traditional workmanship to a mass market. The Wiener Werkstätte concentrated on good design for a more narrow audience. Hoffmann said, "Since it is not possible to work for the whole market, we will concentrate on those who can afford it."

The workshop embodied the belief promoted by the Secessionists that fine arts (painting and sculpture) and decorative arts (design of functional objects such as furniture, textiles and homewares) were of equal value.



Left: **Josef HOFFMANN** (designer) Austria 1870–1956 **ALEXANDER STURM, Vienna** (manufacturer) Austria est. 1882 *Mustard pot* 1902. Silver, semi-precious stone, 10.0 x 4.4 x 4.4 cm. Private collection. © Asenbaum Photo Archive

Right: **Koloman MOSER** (designer) Austria 1868–1918 **Josef HOLI** (silversmith) Austria active (early 20th century) **WIENER WERKSTÄTTE, Vienna** (retailer) Austria 1903–32 *Sweet basket* c.1905. Silver, shell, lapis lazuli, 14.8 x 19.4 x 8.6 cm. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Samuel E. Wills Bequest, 1976

Designs for the Wiener Werkstätte were produced across a range of materials including glass, metal, ceramics and textiles. Artisans worked with designers to produce work that embodied the qualities of good design and excellent craftsmanship, utilising the best materials. The clean lines and pure forms gave the designs a modern quality.

Wiener Werkstätte designs reflected the ideas and aesthetic of its founders. Historicism was rejected in favour of Jugendstil (Youth Style) and designs based on simplified, geometric shapes with a reduction of ornament and an emphasis on materials, form and functionality.

Many of the designers and craftsmen hired by the Wiener Werkstätte were graduates of the Kunstgewerbeschule – the School of Applied Arts, where Josef Hoffmann and Koloman Moser had begun teaching in 1899. Hoffmann taught in the architecture department and Moser taught painting.

Wiener Werkstätte members included gold and silversmiths, jewellery makers, leather workers, painters, cabinet makers and textile designers. They embraced the idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk – the total work of art, which unified or utilised many different forms of art. In architecture, this meant consideration for not just the design of the building itself, but also the interior and landscape design. The Wiener Werkstätte also provided for aspects of everyday life: clothes, jewellery, cutlery, crockery and household items.

Under the leadership of Hoffmann, the Wiener Werkstätte was responsible for the design of two major buildings: the Sanatorium at Purkersdorf near Vienna and the Palais Stoclet in Brussels. Artist Gustav Klimt designed the mosaic frieze for the dining room of the Palais Stoclet.

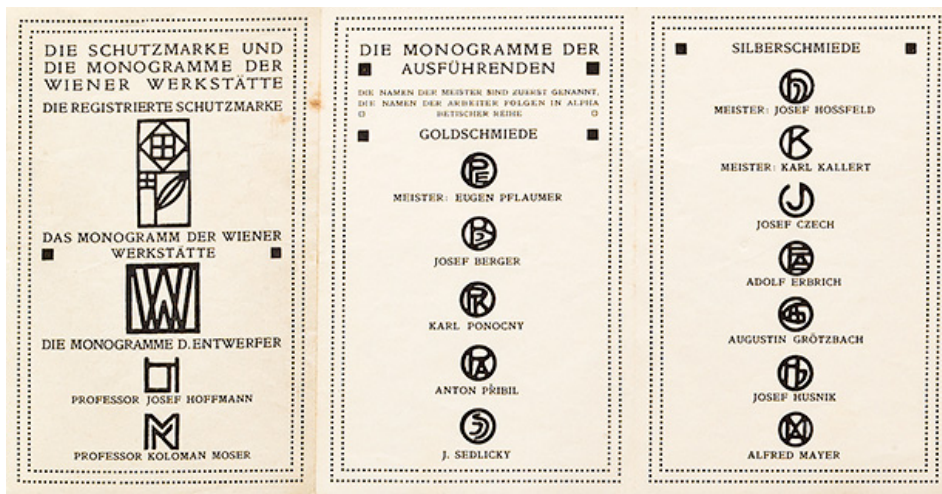
For a time the Wiener Werkstätte enjoyed great success and had branches in Munich, Berlin, Zurich and even New York. Over the course of the Wiener Werkstätte's operation,



Left: **Josef HOFFMANN** (designer) Austria 1870–1956 **J. & L. LOBMEYR, Vienna** (manufacturer) Austria est. 1823 *Bottle with stopper no. 17 (Model no. 462) and Wine glass no. 19 (Model no. 464)* c.1911. Glass (bronzite decoration), 21.5 x 12.0 cm diameter (bottle); 13.5 x 6.7 cm diameter (wine glass). Ernst Ploil Collection, Vienna © Ernst Ploil

Right: **Josef HOFFMANN** (designer) Austria 1870–1956 **WIENER WERKSTÄTTE, Vienna** (retailer) Austria 1903–32 *Fish knife, fish fork, fruit knife, fruit fork (Model nos. S 2569, S 2570, S 2571, S 2572)* (1911/12). Silver, malachite, (a) (1.0 x 2.6 x 19.4 cm) (fish knife), (b) (1.3 x 3.2 x 19.2 cm) (fish fork), (c) (0.8 x 1.5 x 18.2 cm) (fruit knife), (d) (1.0 x 1.9 x 18.2 cm) (fruit fork). Private collection, London, Photo: © Gallery Yves Macaux





Objects from the Wiener Werkstätte were often stamped with three marks: one to designate the Wiener Werkstätte, a square monogram which indicated the designer, and also the circular monogram of the artisan.

**Koloman MOSER** (designer) Austria 1868-1918  
**CHWALAS DRUCK, Vienna** (printer) Austria 1898-1978. *WW artists and craftsmen monograms* 1905. Lithograph, 14,0 x 72,0 cm. Ernst Ploil Collection. Photo © Ernst Ploil

different designers exerted their stylistic influence. Josef Hoffmann was the only designer to consistently stay with the workshop until financial difficulties forced it to close in 1932.

Through its elevation of the role of the craftsman, the Wiener Werkstätte helped to bring about a revival of the applied arts. The Werkstätte's consideration for the quality of materials, simple beauty of design and the functionality of objects marked the beginning of twentieth-century Modernism. The Wiener Werkstätte was, in many ways, a forerunner to the Bauhaus school in Germany, which also embraced the idea of the 'total artwork' and addressed the issue of mass production and design quality.

### → DISCUSS

*In your opinion, are all art forms equal in value? Does a textile or utensil design, for example, hold the same status as painting or sculpture? Why? Discuss with reference to examples in the exhibition Vienna: Art & Design – Klimt, Schiele, Hoffmann, Loos*

### DID YOU KNOW?

The artists of the Wiener Werkstätte were very prolific. In the textile department alone, about a hundred artists were responsible for designing over 1,800 patterns in a variety of colour schemes!

# Musical Vienna

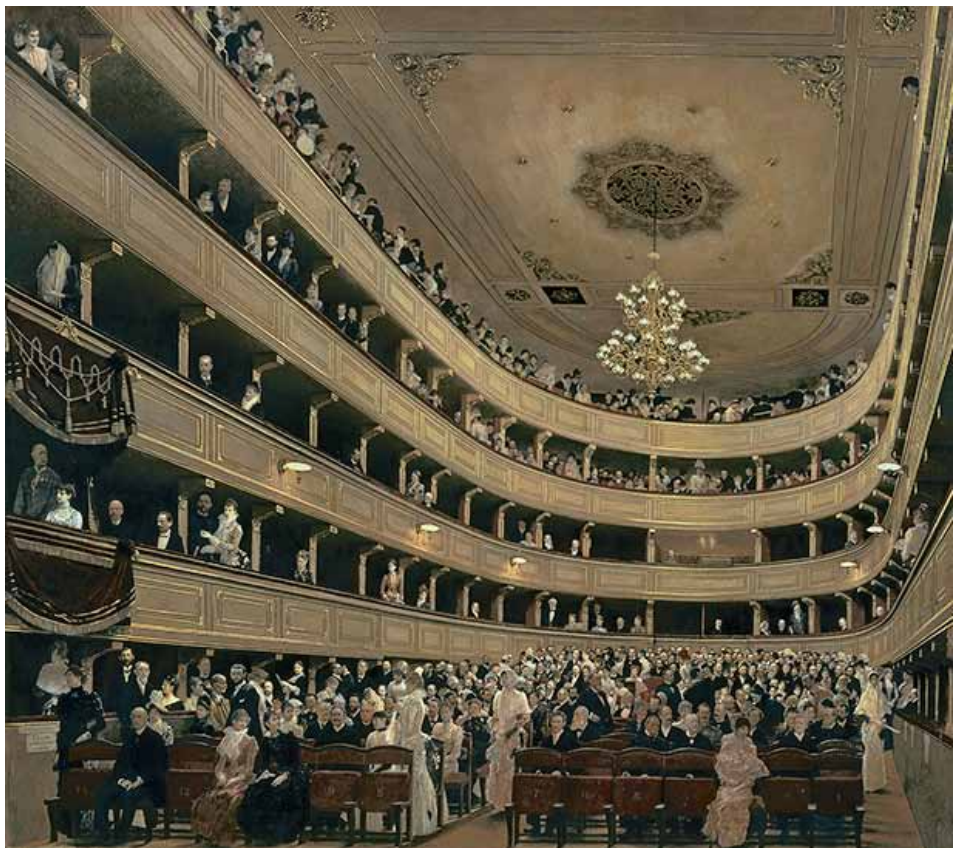
As the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, many elements of European culture were brought together in Vienna, and celebrated in music. Vienna was a musical centre from the seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At various time, it was the home of composers Vivaldi, Mozart, Beethoven, Strauss, Schubert, Haydn and Brahms, who sought to make their reputations in the Viennese court. The music of the Baroque period was followed by the emergence of Classical music, which flourished between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, supported by the aristocracy and private patronage. Romanticism, a style of music that sought to express strong moods and feelings, developed after Classicism in the nineteenth century. Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) bridged the Classical and Romantic periods. Romantic composers like Schubert (1797–1828), and Brahms (1833–1897) aimed to express intense emotion, explore imagination and fantasy and to instil a sense of national pride by capturing the character of folk songs and dances. The musicians of the Romantic period wrote for a public audience of concert and festival goers as well as for the aristocratic patrons who had traditionally supported their predecessors.

The Viennese had a rich calendar of operas, concerts and balls. Concert Halls and Opera Houses were built and schools of music, orchestras and musical companies were founded to cater for the Viennese passion for music.

Vienna was the birthplace of the Viennese waltz. Developed from the Ländler, a traditional Austrian dance, the Viennese waltz was adopted by the bourgeoisie and later by the upper classes. It was seen, at first, as quite daring, due to the close proximity of partners and because partners danced exclusively with one another, rather than progressing to new partners, as in the dance forms that had gone before. New waltzes were warmly received by a public enamoured of dancing. The waltz flourished in the nineteenth century, with composers Josef Lanner and Johann Strauss senior (1804–1849).

Music critic, Eduard Hanslick (1825–1904), wrote:

*You cannot imagine the wild enthusiasm that these two men created in Vienna. Newspapers went into raptures over each new waltz, and innumerable articles appeared about Lanner and Strauss.<sup>3</sup>*



**Gustav KLIMT** Austria-Hungary 1862–1918  
*Interior view of the old Burg Theater* 1887–88.  
Watercolour, gouache, gold, 91.2 x 103.0 cm.  
Wien Museum, Vienna.  
Commissioned by the City of Vienna, 1887

The popularity of the waltz was increased by composer Johann Strauss Junior (1825–1899).

Max Graf (1873–1958), Austrian music scholar has been quoted as saying:

*If there exists a form of music that is a direct expression of sensuality, it is the Viennese Waltz. It was the dance of the new Romantic Period after the Napoleonic Wars, and the contemporaries of the first waltzes were highly shocked at the eroticism of this dance in which a lady clung to her partner, closed her eyes as in a happy dream, and glided off as if the world had disappeared. The new waltz melodies overflowed with longing, desire and tenderness.*<sup>4</sup>

The musicians of the late twentieth century emerged from this musical history. As in all other spheres, music at the turn of the twentieth century was undergoing dynamic change. Musicians such as Gustav Mahler (1860–1911) and Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951) began to move away from Classicism, Romanticism and traditional melodic progressions, to explore music that aimed to convey the subconscious and inner life. Schoenberg developed new atonal, discordant, dissonant forms. Mahler, an opera director, conductor and composer, was said to have been a bridge between Romantic and more modern musical styles. As director of the Vienna State Opera, Mahler overturned many traditional ideas about set design, acting and music in opera.

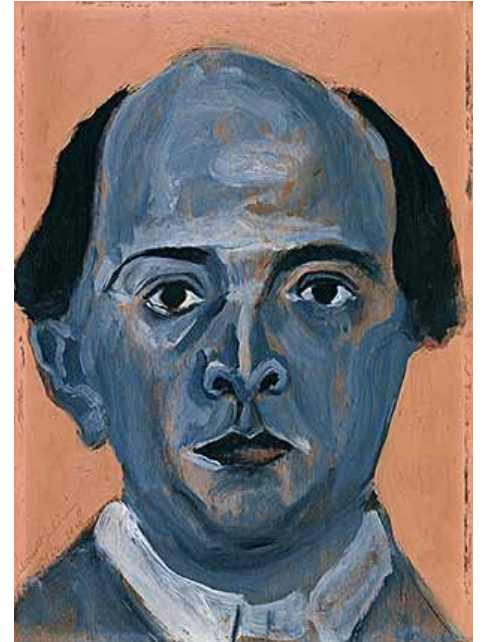
In an effort to promote modern music in Vienna, Schoenberg founded the Society of Creative Musicians in 1904. Gustav Mahler was Honorary President and conducted several of the Society's concerts.

Schoenberg's experimentation with musical structures and different tonal forms challenged audiences and was received with shock and outrage by the Viennese press and public.

In 1913, *New York Times* critic James Huneker wrote:

*Schoenberg is the cruellest of all composers, for he mingles with his music sharp daggers at white heat, with which he pares away tiny slices of his victim's flesh. Anon he twists the knife in the fresh wound and you receive another horrible thrill ... There is no melodic or harmonic line, only a series of points, dots dashes or phrases that sob and scream, despair, explode, exalt, blaspheme ... If such music making is ever to become accepted, then I long for Death the Releaser.*<sup>5</sup>

Schoenberg's compositions, while not always popular, opened the way for new musical forms of the twentieth century, including the structural/expressionist music of his pupils Alban Berg (1885–1935) and Anton Webern (1883–1945).



**Composer Arnold Schoenberg took up painting in 1907 under the tutelage of painter Richard Gerstl. He was associated with German Expressionism and the Blue Rider Group.**

**Arnold SCHOENBERG** Austrian 1874–1951 *Blue self-portrait* 1910. Oil on panel, 31.1 x 22.9 cm. Photo: Arnold Schoenberg Centre, Vienna. © Arnold Schoenberg/VBK, Austria. Licensed by VISCOPY, Australia

## DID YOU KNOW?

In 1762, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was presented as a performer at the imperial court in Vienna. He was only six years old!

# Cabaret Fledermaus

Cabaret developed in Paris and Berlin as a way to present political satire and air anti-establishment views. The cabaret's unorthodox approach to entertainment evolved from salon-like gatherings in basements and coffeehouses. As a showcase for the avant-garde, early cabaret incorporated a variety of theatrical elements, such as recitations, songs, dance, shadow or puppet theatre, dramatic scenes, humorous acts, and musical interludes, all introduced and commented upon by a master of ceremonies. True cabaret embodied a sense of spontaneity and social satire in which performers challenged beliefs about people, society, politics and sexuality.

Bohemian circles in turn-of-the-century Vienna were inspired to develop their own cabaret, similar to those of Paris and Berlin.

In October 1907, the theatre and cabaret Fledermaus (The Bat) opened in Vienna. The venue occupied the basement of a block of flats in central Vienna and was an example of *Gesamtkunstwerk* – a total artwork. The interior of the Fledermaus was designed by Hoffmann, and produced by members of the Wiener Werkstätte including Klimt and Moser. The walls were covered in brightly coloured tile mosaics, the floors in a black and white checkerboard and the furniture, especially designed for the café by Josef Hoffmann, was black and white. Programs, posters and menus were all designed by Wiener Werkstätte graphic artists. Entertainment at the Cabaret Fledermaus consisted of a variety of performances that combined theatre, music and writing by contemporary authors such as Peter Altenberg.

The cast and crew included Peter Altenberg, Lina Vetter-Loos (wife of architect Adolph Loos) and artist Oskar Kokoschka, amongst others. Many artists supplemented their work in the opera, theatre or orchestras by contributing to the cabaret, attracted by a creative environment free from limitations associated with the state-sponsored arts.

The Fledermaus lasted as a literary theatre until 1913, when it became the revue-theatre Femina.



**Bertold LÖFFLER** (designer) Austria 1874–1960 **Albert BERGER** (lithographer and printer) Austria 1863–1931 *Cabaret Fledermaus, poster* 1907. Colour lithograph, 62.5 x 43.5 cm. Wien Museum, Vienna. Purchased, 1962



**Josef HOFFMANN** Austrian 1870–1956 *Cabaret Fledermaus, view of the foyer and bar, showing the "Fledermauschair".* Gelatin silver photograph. MAK - Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art, Vienna. © MAK/Georg Mayer

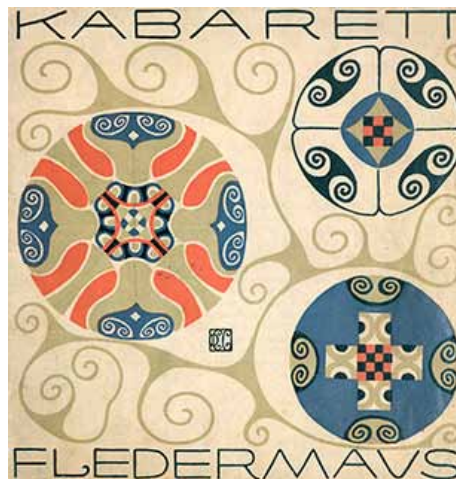


**Josef HOFFMANN** Austrian 1870–1956 *Model for Cabaret Fledermaus* 2003. Plywood, 29.5 x 112.4 x 119.4 cm. University of Applied Arts, Vienna



The bustling life of the city and the changing aesthetic of the modern age were quickly mirrored in the graphic arts. Posters, book design, pamphlets and other printed material emerged to meet the needs of the time. Exhibitions (such as those of the Secession), cabaret and theatre all required advertising posters, catalogues and programs, and these presented opportunities to explore the bold, dynamic look of a new era. *Ver Sacrum*, the magazine of the Secession, was another place where artists could show their graphic works. Josef Hoffmann, Koloman Moser, Joseph Olbrich and theatre designer Alfred Roller were regular contributors.

**Alfred ROLLER** (designer) Austria 1864–1935  
*Poster for the 14th Secession Exhibition 1902.*  
Colour lithograph, 203.0 x 80.0 cm. Wien Museum, Vienna. Purchased, 1928



**Carl Otto CZESCHKA** Austria/Germany 1878–1960  
*Cover of Program 1, Cabaret Fledermaus 1907.*  
Colour lithograph on paper, 24.5 x 23.5 cm. MAK - Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art, Vienna. © MAK/Georg Mayer



**Berthold LÖFFLER** Austrian 1874–1960  
*Arts Review, Vienna 1908.* Colour lithograph poster, 36.4 x 49.9 cm. Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney. Purchased, 1984

## → DISCUSS

The cabaret was a place for satire and social commentary where young artists could express their opinions and experiment with new forms. What avenues or platforms exist in contemporary society for public social commentary and satire?

## → ANALYSE

Describe which **elements and principles** play a dominant role in the poster designs above.

What **shared characteristics** define the posters as belonging to the same style or era?

What role does **letter form** play in the composition of each poster?

# Building a New Vienna

## ARCHITECTURE AS A SOLUTION TO THE MADNESS OF MODERN LIFE.

A growing Vienna demanded new buildings, both public and private. The decision to demolish the old city walls in the 1850s opened Vienna to new development. There was much public discussion about the shape the growing city should take. On the site of the old walls, a circular boulevard was built – the Ringstrasse – which was to house ostentatious buildings that reflected the grandeur and opulence of the Empire. The upper classes and the wealthy sought to erect mansions along the Ringstrasse to display their eminence. Ringstrasse architecture employed styles of the past – Gothic, Baroque or Neo Classical – depending on the use for which the building was intended. By the end of the nineteenth century, many thought a new architecture was needed to embody the changing character of Viennese society.

In his 1895 book *Modern Architecture*<sup>6</sup>, architect Otto Wagner expressed his view that modern architectural design should be based on the requirements of modern life. The new architecture was a reaction to the excessive decoration and ornamentation of the past. Its expressive strength would come from the design and construction and from the character of the materials used. Wagner made many designs for the growing city. His work included the metropolitan rail transport system– the Stadtbahn, and the Postal Savings Bank Building.

Wagner held a teaching position at the Vienna Academy. His pupils included Josef Hoffmann and Joseph Maria Olbrich, the designer of the Secession Building. Wagner’s philosophy had a lasting influence and he joined his students in support of the Secession.

In 1908 architect Adolf Loos published a decree that all ornament should be removed from building designs and that the visual appeal of buildings should be derived from their functionality and the integrity of materials.

*... the evolution of culture marches with the elimination of ornament from useful objects.*

**Adolf Loos, Ornament & Crime**

Architects like Loos, Hoffmann and Olbrich strove to create buildings that represented the modern age. Their work laid the foundations for future movements such as Art Deco and the architecture of the twentieth century.



**Otto WAGNER** Austria  
1841–1918 *Facade and positioning plan of PSK*  
1903. Pencil, India ink, gouache, 85.7 x 41.8 cm.  
Wien Museum, Vienna.  
Gift from an anonymous donor, 1950



**Otto WAGNER** Austria  
1841–1918 *Facade and cross section of PSK*  
1903. Pencil, India ink and watercolour, 157.0 x 56.0 cm.  
WAGNER:WERK Museum/ BAWAG PSK



Left: **Adolf LOOS**  
(designer) Austria  
1870–1933 *View of  
the 1911 Looshaus on  
Michaelerplatz Vienna*  
2007. Photo: Jean-pierre  
Chabrol

Right: **Otto WAGNER**  
Austrian 1841–1918  
*Apartmentbuilding, Linke  
Wienzeile 40 1898/99.*  
Heliograph, 48.1 x  
32.1 cm. Wien Museum,  
Vienna. Gift of an  
anonymous donor, 1946

## → DISCUSS

*Can architecture shape the way that people think? How? Which buildings define the character of your city? What character do they give? If you were given the opportunity to make a plan for the future development of your city, what would your design look like? What factors might you have to consider?*

## DID YOU KNOW?

Adolph Hitler moved to Vienna in 1908 with the aim of entering the Vienna Academy of Fine Art to train as an artist. His two applications were rejected because of the uninspiring quality of his drawings. Hitler lived in a men's shelter and made a meagre living doing labouring jobs and selling paintings of Vienna's famous landmarks.

'I owe it to that period that I grew hard and am still capable of being hard,' Hitler stated in *Mein Kampf*.

Vienna's mayor at the time, Karl Lueger, was outspoken and opinionated. His strong anti-Semitic speeches made a powerful impression on the young Hitler.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday: an Autobiography*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London, 1964.
- <sup>2</sup> Jane Kallir, Alfred Weidinger eds., *Gustav Klimt. In Search of the 'total artwork'*, Prestel, 2009, p.27.
- <sup>3</sup> [http://www.thefullwiki.org/Eduard\\_Hanslick](http://www.thefullwiki.org/Eduard_Hanslick)
- <sup>4</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/alabaster/A699122>
- <sup>5</sup> (*New York Times* Jan 19, 1913)
- <sup>6</sup> Franco Borsi & Ezio Godoli, *Vienna 1900: Architecture and Design*, Rizzoli, 1986. Ch. 5 'The Wagner School'.