

# The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release  
June 1986

## FACT SHEET

EXHIBITION VIENNA 1900: ART, ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

DATES July 3 - October 21, 1986

ORGANIZATION Kirk Varnedoe, Adjunct Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art, and Professor, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University.

SPONSORSHIP The exhibition has been generously supported by Mr. and Mrs. Ronald S. Lauder and the Lauder family. Additional support has been received from The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art. An indemnity for the exhibition has been provided by the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

CONTENTS This is the first major exhibition in the United States to present the complete range of Viennese painting, decorative objects, graphic design, and architecture produced between 1898 and 1918. Both visually seductive and intellectually provocative, the exhibition of approximately 700 works offers a unique glimpse into the special world of Vienna at a time when the city played a critical role in the birth of modernism.

The exhibition includes masterworks drawn from exhibitions of Viennese culture shown recently in Vienna and Paris along with a large number of previously unexhibited works from international collections. Included are major paintings and drawings by Gustav Klimt, Oskar Kokoschka, and Egon Schiele; a rich array of silverware, jewelry, bookbindings, furniture, fashion design, and ceramics; and architectural models and drawings, including one full-scale reconstructed facade, by the major architects Otto Wagner, Josef Hoffmann, Adolf Loos, and Joseph Maria Olbrich.

VIENNA 1900 is presented in seven sections:

I. This section of painting from the years 1898-1907 focuses on the work of Klimt and the circle of the Vienna Secession. This is seen in the Jugendstil design of the period, ranging from the Secessionist publication Ver Sacrum to examples of fabric design, decorative arts, and furniture.

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II. The next section is devoted to Klimt's great "Golden Style," c. 1906-09, revealing the artist's love for lavish decoration and his special mix of disturbing sensuality with seductive glamour.

III. The revolution against Jugendstil and the shift to a new geometric or rationalized design, c. 1902-04, is demonstrated in graphic design, decorative arts, and furniture--works often stemming from the collaborative design workshop, the Wiener Werkstätte.

IV. Folk influences and a turn toward expressionism, 1908-15, are illustrated primarily by graphic design and the decorative arts. This shift away from geometry toward a more ornate, elaborate vocabulary of form is represented here as well as in jewelry and fashion designs from the Wiener Werkstätte.

V. This section of drawings features especially the work of Schiele, along with that of Klimt and Kokoschka and such proto-Surrealist artists as Alfred Kubin and Klemens Brosch.

VI. Painting of 1907-18 highlights major works by Kokoschka and Schiele, as well as late paintings by Klimt and early expressionist work by Richard Gerstl and the composer Arnold Schoenberg.

VII. The final section of the exhibition is devoted to architectural drawings and models by the four major architects working between the 1890s and World War I: Loos, Hoffmann, Wagner, and Olbrich.

#### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

VIENNA 1900 presents art, architecture, and design from the years immediately preceding the collapse of the Hapsburg Monarchy and the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (both of which were consequences of World War I). A period of intense intellectual, artistic, and scientific development, the era was distinguished by Sigmund Freud's investigations into the neuroses of modern culture; philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein's new view of man's relation to his representations; composer Arnold Schoenberg's radical experiments in new music; and the outstanding achievements of the painters, architects, and designers of the age. Vienna at the turn of the century was both a crossroads and a cradle of modern cultural innovations. Poised at the intersection of Western and Eastern Europe, the city attracted cosmopolitan thinkers and artists who often crossed each other's paths.

#### SOURCE

The exhibition in Vienna (March - October 1985) focused on Viennese art and society from 1873 to 1930. Entitled Traum und Wirklichkeit (Dream and Reality), it was organized by Dr. Robert

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Waissenberger, director of the Historical Museum of the City of Vienna, and Professor Hans Hollein. The Paris exhibition (February - May 1986), Vienne: naissance d'un siècle, was organized by Gérard Regnier of the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, and focused on the years 1880-1938. The Museum of Modern Art's presentation of the early modern period contains many of the masterworks shown in these previous exhibitions, but is substantially different in concept.

#### PUBLICATIONS

The exhibition is accompanied by a major catalog by Kirk Varnedoe that provides an overview of all the visual arts of early modern Vienna. \$50 clothbound, \$19.50 paperbound. Published by The Museum of Modern Art.

In addition to the exhibition catalog, a handout in the form of a sixteen-page newspaper is available. Giving the appearance of a Viennese paper, it covers the cultural and intellectual developments of the period, as well as offering an orientation to the exhibition.

#### LECTURE SERIES

In conjunction with the exhibition, two lectures are planned for fall 1986. On Thursday, September 25, Carl E. Schorske, Dayton-Stockton professor of history emeritus, Princeton University, will discuss music in relation to the visual arts. On Thursday, October 2, James Shedel, associate professor of history, Georgetown University, will speak on "The Discreet Charms of the Viennese: Art and the Culture of Persistence," a discussion of the significant role of the social, political, and cultural context that shaped the art and architecture of Vienna around 1900. Both lectures, which are made possible by the generosity of the Austrian Institute, will be held in the Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 1 at 8:30 p.m. Tickets are \$7, \$6 Members, and \$5 students, and are available at the Lobby Desk or by sending a check and a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the Department of Education, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019.

#### VIDEO

A twenty-eight minute documentary videotape, Vienna 1900, will be screened daily at the Museum. The program expands on the themes of the exhibition, examining Viennese cultural life and its influence on the evolution of modern thought. It is narrated by Stephen Toulmin, a former student of Ludwig Wittgenstein who is currently professor of social thought at the University of Chicago and visiting scholar at the Getty Center in Malibu, California. The video was produced by Metropolitan Arts, Inc., under the auspices of The Austrian Press and Information Service, New York, and was made possible by the Creditanstalt, Vienna-New York, and the Austrian National Tourist Office.

CONCERT  
SERIES

On Wednesday and Sunday evenings in September and October, The Museum and the 92nd Street Y will collaborate in presenting Vienna 1900: A Festival of Music. A distinguished roster of musicians will participate in a unique series of concerts devoted to turn-of-the-century Viennese music. The programs, which have been generously sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Milton Petrie, will offer an overview of the period's outstanding repertoire, including works by Alban Berg, Franz Lehar, Gustav and Alma Mahler, Franz Schmidt, Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern, and Alexander Zemlinsky. World-renowned soloists and chamber ensembles will appear together in eight extraordinary evenings of music. Concert dates are September 7, 10, 24, and 28, and October 5, 15, and 19, at 8 p.m. Subscriptions to the eight-concert series are \$140 (\$120 Museum members), and may be reserved in advance by sending payment and a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the Department of Membership, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019. A limited number of single tickets will go on sale beginning Monday, August 4, at the Museum's Information Desk.

TICKETING

Tickets for admission to the exhibition are available on a same-day basis. These may be purchased at VIENNA 1900 ticket booths in the Lobby for \$6.00 (includes \$5.00 general admission). No advance or specially timed tickets are necessary. The Museum's pay-as-you-wish policy on Thursday evenings does not apply to VIENNA 1900.

VIENNESE  
CAFÉ

A Viennese Café, an open-air pavilion designed with architectural detailing of the period, has been created for the Sculpture Garden in conjunction with the exhibition. The Café offers Viennese coffees and pastries, along with wine, beer, and other beverages. Sponsored by the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber and designed and constructed in cooperation with the Museum, the Café will be open during the Museum's public hours through the period of the exhibition and during SUMMERGARDEN evenings in July and August.

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