

Vienna 1900: Klimt, Schiele, and Their Times: A Total Work of Art

Christian Meyer, Franz Smola, Beate Susanne Wehr



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At the beginning of the twentieth century, Vienna was one of the six largest cities in the world, recently transformed by rapid industrialization, and by successive waves of immigration from various corners of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Its lively cabaret and coffeehouse culture was abuzz with creative zeal and played host to the most exciting developments in European culture, from psychoanalysis to the earliest incarnations of Austrian modernism, above all the Viennese Secession and the Wiener Werkstätte. Hatje Cantz's opulent publication on turn-of-the-century Vienna examines the years 1890-1918, placing at the center of those maelstrom decades the openly sexual portraits and landscapes of Gustav Klimt and the erotically contorted figurations of his protégé, Egon Schiele. Also profiled are the portraits of the young Oskar Kokoschka, self-portraits by Richard Gerstl, paintings by composer and painter Arnold Schönberg and works by many other artists, architects, furniture designers and craftspeople from the Secession, the Werkstätte and beyond: Adolf Loos, Otto Wagner, Koloman Moser, Joseph Maria Olbrich and Josef Hoffmann. Essays by Christian Meyer, Franz Smola, Barbara Sternthal and Beate Susanne Wehr set this motley assembly of artists and craftsmen in historical and theoretical context, showing how they paved ways for the Bauhaus and De Stijl movements to come.

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