

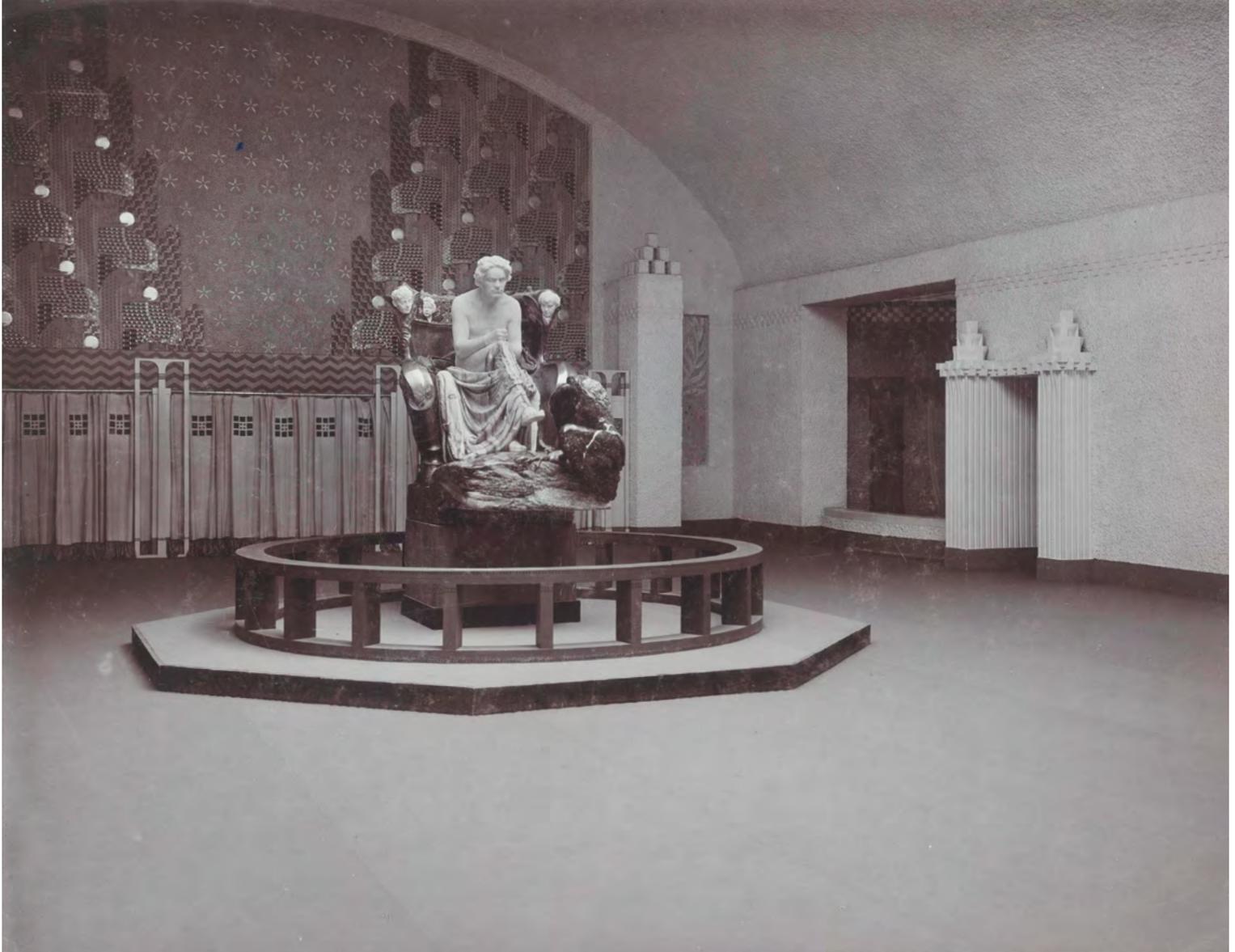
Markus Kristan

Nothing but »Crystallized Plaster«?

Moriz Nähr and Josef Hoffmann's Overdoor Reliefs
in the Vienna Secession's 1902 »Beethoven Exhibition«

in: Uwe Schögl, Sandra Tretter, Peter Weinhäupl for the Klimt Foundation (eds.):
Moriz Nähr (1859–1945). Photographer for Habsburg, Klimt and Wittgenstein.
Catalogue Raisonné, Vienna 2021.

[1]
Moriz Nähr: Insight into the main hall of
the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition
with Max Klinger's *Beethoven*, 1902



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The Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition in 1902, the so-called »Beethoven Exhibition«, undoubtedly stands out as the highlight of the shows presented in the first phase of this Association of Austria's Visual Artists (1898–1905).¹ Never before, and never since, has there been anything even remotely comparable to the close interaction of all the artists involved in this presentation. With the performance of passages from Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 at the preopening of the show, the event approached the ideal goal of creating a Gesamtkunstwerk harmoniously uniting all the arts to the best of its possibilities.

The undertaking was based on Richard Wagner's and Friedrich Nietzsche's ideas, which the Viennese Secessionists became familiar with through the Leipzig sculptor, painter, and graphic artist Max Klinger (1857–1920). The occasion for the Secessionists' joint project was the first exhibition of Klinger's *Beethoven* sculpture, with which the artist paid tribute to the musical titan of the past century (fig. 1). All works created by the Vienna Secession's members especially for this exhibition and for this purpose addressed Beethoven's music, very often his Symphony No. 9, yet subordinated themselves to Klinger's sculpture, as was explicitly noted in the exhibition catalog and in many contemporary reviews (particularly those by Ludwig Hevesi, Josef August Lux, Franz Servaes, and Berta Zuckerkandl).

Alongside Klinger's *Beethoven* sculpture, Gustav Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze* and Josef Hoffmann's so-called overdoor reliefs² are seen as milestones in the development of art to this day. However, a change in assessment can be observed: In 1902 and the years immediately following the presentation, the greatest attention was paid to Klinger's *Beethoven* and Klimt's frieze, while Hoffmann's reliefs were not considered at all. In the past fifty years, a radical rethinking has taken place in this regard: Today, Klinger's *Beethoven* is hardly spoken of anymore, Klimt's frieze is still the subject of numerous treatises, and Hoffmann's reliefs have come to arouse the greatest attention worldwide with dense regularity, although they have not been preserved in the original and—if they had not been photographed by Moriz Nähr—we would probably hardly be aware of

their temporary existence today and know nothing at all about their appearance.

In all probability, Hoffmann, like all the other Secessionists in the works of art they exhibited, referred to Beethoven's music in his two reliefs. As an architect, however, he could not or did not want to represent the subject figuratively like his colleagues. In going for a non-representational solution, he opened up a new dimension for art—long before this path gained currency. With this radically new approach to the representation of music, Hoffmann clearly set himself apart from the rest of the contributions to the show.

The importance that this exhibition had for the Secessionists is also indicated by the fact that it was documented far more carefully by its photographer, Moriz Nähr, with around seventy photographs³ than any other Secession show—which is why we may still gain, in the literal sense of the word, a »good picture« of it today.

The Genesis of the Exhibition

In May 1901, the Association of Austria's Visual Artists decided to »interrupt the series of familiar exhibitions of pictures with an event of a different kind«. ⁴ Whereas previous shows had attempted »to harmoniously unite alien parts«, the planned event was to create a unified space that painting and sculpture would embellish in its service. All »parts were to be subordinated to the effect of the whole«. What drove the Secessionists to face such a tour de force was the longing for a hitherto missing great task that compelled them to »dare carry out this idea in their own house«. The forward-looking artists devoted themselves to the »purposeful design of an interior« with a lot of verve and joy in experimentation. The longed-for »great tasks« were to follow soon with the construction of the Westend Sanatorium in Purkersdorf and the Palais Stoclet in Brussels. The experience gained from the experiment of the »Beethoven Exhibition« could be translated into a lasting functional practice in the context of these projects.

As the artists knew that they could not create anything lasting in their exhibition house, the Secession building, »since one presentation must inevitably devour the

work of the previous one«, they commissioned the photographer Moriz Nähr to record the exhibition for posterity while it was still being set up (an unusual request at the time) and especially after it had been installed. Nähr produced a unique documentation of probably one of the most important exhibitions of the twentieth century—also in international terms. The large number of photographs makes it clear that the members of the Secession were aware of the importance of their show.

Idea and Conception

The guiding idea behind the conception of the exhibition was the Leipzig-born sculptor, painter, and graphic artist Max Klinger's *Beethoven* monument, which was nearing completion. Since the finalization of the sculpture, on which Klinger had worked for sixteen years,⁵ was delayed as immense technical difficulties had to be overcome, the exhibition could only be shown nine months later than originally planned, from April 15 to June 15, 1902.

Josef Hoffmann was in charge of the overall artistic direction and interior design of the exhibition's three main halls and, next to Rudolf Bacher, Adolf Böhm, and Alfred Roller, was also a member of the hanging commission. This is why no one knew better than he where which work of art would be placed in the rooms. Only the interior design of the reading room was taken care of by Leopold Bauer. The entire layout of the exhibition was determined by Klinger's *Beethoven* as its centerpiece.

On April 11, 1902, the Beethoven sculpture was installed in the Secession in the presence of Max Klinger: »He looked around in the room, which in its totality is nothing but a framework for the one *Beethoven*. Almost every artist of the Secession has, according to a jointly developed plan, contributed something to the best of his ability to create this framework, mostly al secco wall paintings that will have to be knocked down after the end of the exhibition and fall prey to destruction.«⁶

On the occasion of the installation of Klinger's *Beethoven*, the second movement and passages of the fourth movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 were per-

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Moriz Nähr: Insight into the left side hall of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition with a section of Gustav Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze*, 1902



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Insight into the left side hall of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition during the construction work, print laterally reversed presumably by Moriz Nähr for unknown reasons, 1901

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Moriz Nähr: Group portrait of the artists of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition in the middle hall of the Secession building, April 1902



serted one of his two non-figurative reliefs, one entered, turning to the right at a right angle, the central hall with Klinger's Beethoven sculpture through a portal decoratively designed by Leopold Bauer.

In a symmetrical movement, again turning right through the portal designed by Leopold Bauer in the same manner as its counterpart and climbing some stairs, one reached the right aisle passing under Josef Hoffmann's second abstract overdoor relief. This hall's main works, murals by Josef Maria Auchentaller and Ferdinand Andri, related to the fourth movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. The passageway through the opposite end wall provided access to the reading room created by Bauer (and photographed by Nähr), from where the tour led back to the entrance hall.⁹

Moriz Nähr's photographs

As already mentioned, Moriz Nähr, by way of exception, began documenting the exhibition while it was set up. A contact print¹⁰ showing the construction of the left aisle, the so-called Klimt Room (fig. 5), has been preserved in the archives of Vienna's Künstlerhaus. The still empty niches for the

decorative panels and Hoffmann's overdoor relief¹¹ as well as the empty wall space for Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze* are clearly visible. The print is quite obviously laterally reversed, however (as also indicated in handwriting on the back of the photograph)—a fact that cannot be explained conclusively and satisfactorily at present. Thus, the impression created is that it shows the right and not the left aisle of the exhibition. Since the glass negative of this photograph is not available, only circumstantial evidence can be provided: The craftsman seen in the photograph is carrying the tool in his left hand and not—as is usually the case—in his right. That the two black catches¹², which can be seen on the right margin of most of Nähr's landscape-format photographs, are visible on the left side of the Künstlerhaus archives' print, may be taken as a further indication. These catches, which served to hold the glass negatives, were cut away in published photographs. It also seems logical and consistent that Nähr as a friend of Klimt photographed the room in which the latter's murals would be located. A further—and, to all appearance, also particularly strong—indication that the picture that has come down to us is a laterally reversed print of the glass

negative was discovered only recently:¹³ The back wall of the niche to the right of the passageway (to the left of it if enlarged correctly) shows the letters »Oeffn« (for »Öffnung«, opening) in mirror image—probably a hint to the carpenter that the niche was to be kept free there for the »decorative panel« designed by Ernst Stöhr with the depiction of Medusa under Klimt's frieze.

One of Moriz Nähr's most famous photographs documenting exhibitions at the Vienna Secession was apparently taken immediately before the opening of the show in mid-April 1902. It is the group portrait of members of the Secession in the main hall of the »Beethoven Exhibition« (fig. 6). Gustav Klimt is depicted enthroned, a painter's smock over his elegant suit, in the fauteuil decorated with sculptures by Ferdinand Andri.¹⁴ In front of it, eleven members of the Secession are grouped behind and on a rolled-up textile bale. Two workers can be seen above Klimt on the balustrade. The surviving portrait of Klimt enthroned on the fauteuil is not a detail of the group portrait but another photograph Nähr took on this occasion.¹⁵

The picture showing how the construction work started and the group shots after its completion mark the beginning and the end of a significant event for the Secession. Nähr photographed both views of the five exhibition rooms (entrance hall, left aisle, main room, right aisle, reading room) and individual works of art. It cannot be ruled out that not all photographs created by Nähr have been preserved. Most of the known pictures have already been published repeatedly in contemporary journals.¹⁶

We know four photographs of the entrance hall, two photographs of the room and two frontal views of individual works of art. As for the left hall, where Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze* was located, three views of the room and thirteen photographs of details as well as a series of (at least seven) pictures of details of the frieze have survived. The appearance of the large central main hall has come down to us in six photographs of the room and fifteen pictures of its details. The often-published photographs in which Klinger's *Beethoven* sculpture can be seen against a dark background were not taken by Moriz Nähr but by Nicola Perscheid in Leipzig at

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Moriz Nähr: Insight into the right side hall of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1902



an earlier point in time. As for the hall on the right, we know four views of the room and seventeen photographs of its details (fig. 7). Only one photograph of the room and a second photograph showing the stained-glass window designed by Kolo Moser is all we have to envision what the reading room was like.

Hoffmann's Overdoor Reliefs

Like everything else in this exhibition, the catalog formed an indispensable part of the Gesamtkunstwerk. Three texts by Ernst Stöhr, Max Klinger, and Josef Hoffmann explain the basic intentions of the exhibition and describe the presentation and material of its individual works of art. Artistically designed monograms of the twenty artists participating in the show were affixed to the walls as small reliefs below the individual works to avoid unsightly inscriptions in the exhibition rooms; these monograms could only be deciphered with the help of the catalog.

Remarkably, the catalog does not mention Josef Hoffmann's supraport relief in the left aisle. Thanks to Moriz Nähr's photographs, we have knowledge of its existence, albeit only a partial one as about a third of the somewhat upright oblong relief is obscured by a pillar in the pictures (fig. 8). Nähr obviously chose the viewpoint for these photographs according to Klimt's frieze at the front of the hall or the openings to the main hall and not to Hoffmann's relief.

Hoffmann's second relief in the right hall, which, fortunately for us, was photographed frontally by Moriz Nähr, albeit from a distance (fig. 9), is only laconically and incorrectly described as »Above the entrance: Josef Hoffmann OM [ordinary member]. Cut mortar« in the catalog (fig. 10). Thanks to Nähr's frontal view, the relief could be meticulously reconstructed by the sculptor and restorer Willi Kopf in 1985 on the occasion of the exhibition »Dream and Reality« in Vienna's Künstlerhaus.¹⁷ The listing in the catalog is to be categorized as »laconic« since it does not address the content, meaning, and message of the relief at all, and as »incorrect« because it would have been impossible to produce the relief in the form of cut mortar. Hoffmann obviously made use of the wooden

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Moriz Nähr: Insight into the left side hall of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1902



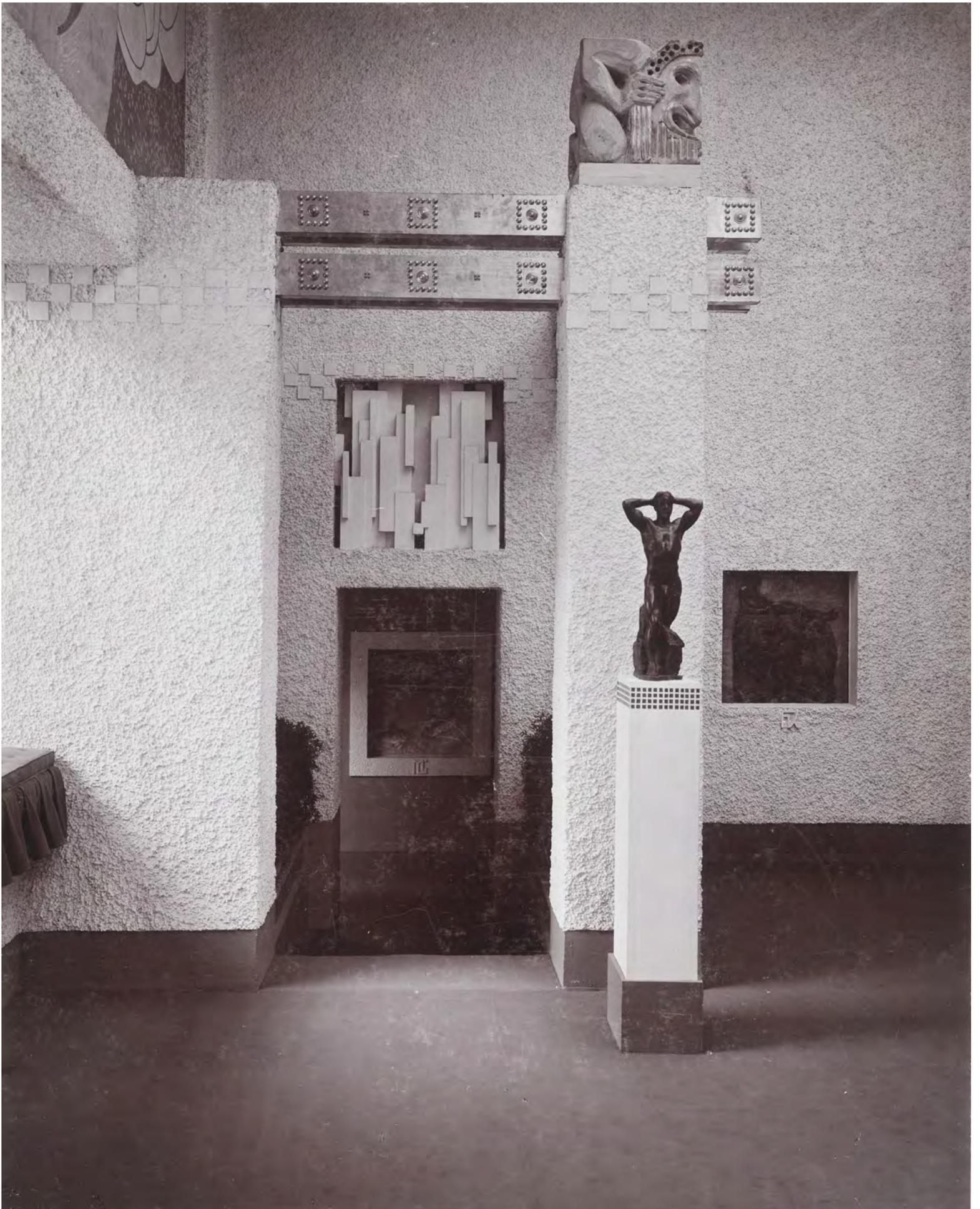
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boards and beams lying around during the construction of the exhibition, which were still cut to inch scale at that time¹⁸ and—according to Willi Kopf’s explanations—partly trimmed to centimeter scale with a saw. The wooden parts were joined together and painted white in keeping with an apparently well-thought-out concept, which once again shows Hoffmann’s great talent for finding the ideal proportions—a talent nourished by his familiarity with ancient buildings of Italy.¹⁹

Art critics of the time—both positively minded and, even more so, negatively biased

journalists—seem to have regarded Josef Hoffmann’s two overdoor reliefs as mere decoration without content, message, and function. This is why the reliefs are—with two exceptions—not mentioned in the entire contemporary literature available. Only the congenial Ludwig Hevesi referred to them in two of his five essays on the »Beethoven Exhibition«. He wrote in the daily *Fremden-Blatt* (April 18, 1902): »We come upon quite a few short-stemmed pilasters crowned with configurations of simple small cubes and quite a few doorposts whose capitals crystal-

lize in an equally geometric manner as if by themselves.²⁰ »Crystallized plaster«, jokes Hoffmann. This plaster crystal appears in particularly whimsical compositions comparable to formations of some undreamt-of calcite in the fillings above some of the doors. And these things emerge so simply from the plain material that one hardly thinks of the autochthonous character of this invention.«²¹ Hevesi’s review in the weekly *Kunstchronik* (May 1, 1902) covers the reliefs in more detail: »The woodwork is white or gilded. A primitive ornament of ge-



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Moriz Nähr: Insight into the right side hall of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1902

ometric character has been devised for the doors (for part of which Leopold Bauer was responsible) and individual pillars structuring the space. These elements merge into innovative feldspar-like crystal formations in particular in the overdoors; they have been jokingly called 'plaster crystals'.²²

Interpretation of Hoffmann's Overdoor Reliefs

What ideas did Josef Hoffmann pursue in designing the reliefs? What images did he have in his mind's eye? What did he want to convey to the people confronted with his reliefs?

There are some contemporary accounts of the exhibition that, while not explicitly mentioning Hoffmann's reliefs, provide information in this regard. According to Franz Servaes, the theme of the exhibition was »to create a temple environment for Klinger's *Beethoven* and to decorate it in a meaningful way«. ²³ Berta Zuckerkandl wrote: »The theme of the vocal finale of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, the »Ode to Joy, runs through the entire decoration as a leitmotif. All the arts subject themselves to the main accent of the exhibition, to the great memorial image of the tonal hero—and merge—to the praise, to the glorification of its ingenious conception«. ²⁴

These and numerous similar statements in Ernst Stöhr's catalog text as well as in other serious art reporters' essays allow only one answer: Hoffmann, too, tried to visualize passages of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in his reliefs, doubtlessly influenced by the most varied personal experiences and inspirations. Why else would he have designed two different reliefs for the two mirror-image side halls if he had been concerned with pure decoration? Leopold Bauer's identical portal designs (fig. 11), for example, are quite a different matter: They are purely ornamental and do not convey a message of any kind—they are intended to be nothing but »decoration«.

Hoffmann and other Secessionist artists had probably already designed abstracted ornaments on paper in the context of creating »surface art«. This time, however, Hoffmann concerned himself with reliefs, with volumes in space, for the first time. Compared to flat objects, structures extending into the depth of space involve two additional parameters

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Page 55 of the Catalogue of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition with the misleading reference to Josef Hoffmann's relief »above the entrance«



that are also vital for music: space and time. When dealing with a three-dimensional object, the human eye needs more time to grasp it properly. When listening to a piece of music, notes that have faded away remain in our memory while the next chords are being played—only in our brain does a connection, a continuum emerge; when looking at a relief, something similar presumably happens.

The basement of the Secession building accommodated a workshop run by Leopold Stolba²⁵ where the Secessionist artists most likely created and discussed a large part of the artworks in a joint endeavor. This must also have been what happened in the case of the two overdoor reliefs, for which even rests of the lumber used for the construction of the exhibition design were used.²⁶

A possible interpretation would be, for example, that Hoffmann intended to illustrate some chords from the first movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the re-

lief in the left hall, where, according to his specification, one should begin the exhibition tour. The wider beams and boards could have stood for low notes and the narrower ones for high notes. The wooden parts in the background of the relief may have represented the chords that had faded away, the ones in the foreground the chords that could be heard just now. The idea of organ or portative pipes may have played a decisive role, too.

With the relief in the right hall, whose artworks refer exclusively to the fourth and last movement of the symphony and the setting of Friedrich Schiller's »Ode to Joy« (»An die Freude«), Hoffmann may have attempted to transpose chords of this movement. Another inspiration might be seen in the choristers usually standing behind the orchestra in performances. One could also assume—likewise standing to reason—that he wanted to link Schiller's poem with Beethoven's music to a pictorial abstracted

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Moriz Nähr: Insight into the main hall of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1902

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representation. There are hardly any limits to the imagination and the possibilities of interpretation here. The only thing that counts and undoubtedly hits the mark is that the reliefs are about Beethoven's music.

It is also remarkable that when musical compositions are created on the computer today, the sounds appear on the screen in forms reminiscent of those of the elements of Hoffmann's overdoor reliefs of 1901/02. The composers Roman Haubenstock-Ramati and Karlheinz Stockhausen created graphics

with which they strove to visualize music, achieving results similar to those of Josef Hoffmann more than half a century earlier.

Notes and references

- 1 In June 1905, the so-called Klimt Group (the »symbolists« among the Secession's members, which included Gustav Klimt, Josef Hoffmann, Kolo Moser, Carl Moll, Wilhelm List, Alfred Roller, and Otto Wagner) spectacularly left the Secession in protest against the »naturalists« (whose spokesman was Josef Engelhart), bringing the first phase of the artists' association, founded on April 12, 1897, to an abrupt end.
- 2 The term »overdoor« refers to a painting or relief placed above a door or portal. Josef Hoffmann, who had spent a year in Italy, especially in Rome, after his studies, was certainly inspired in his reliefs by the overdoor reliefs above the passages of ancient triumphal arches (such as the Arch of Constantine or the triumphal arch of Septimius Severus on the Forum Romanum).
- 3 See Agnes Husslein-Arco and Alfred Weidinger, eds., *Gustav Klimt/Josef Hoffmann. Pioneers of Modernism*, publication accompanying the eponymous exhibition in the Belvedere, Vienna (October 25, 2011–March 4, 2012) (Munich, London, New York 2011).
- 4 Ernst Stöhr, »Unsere XIV. Ausstellung«, in *Max Klinger/Beethoven. XIV. Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstler Österreichs. Secession Wien*, exh. cat. Vienna Secession (April 15–June 15, 1902), 9. The following quotations also come from Stöhr's text.
- 5 Max Klinger had drawn his first sketches for the *Beethoven* monument in Paris in 1886 at the age of twenty-nine. Until then, he had not yet worked as a sculptor but exclusively as a painter and graphic artist.
- 6 »Max Klinger in Wien«, *Neue Freie Presse*, April 12, 1902: 6, col. 2.
- 7 L. K., »Max Klingers 'Beethoven«, *Prager Tagblatt*, April 13, 1902: 10, col. 1. See also Ludwig Hevesi, »Max Klinger in Wien«, *Fremden-Blatt*, April 13, 1902: 1.
- 8 Joseph August Lux, »XIV. Kunst-Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstler Secession 1902. Klingers Beethoven und die moderne Raum-Kunst«, *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, 5th year, no. 10, July 1902: 480, col. 2–481, col. 1.
- 9 From the large number of essays and articles dealing with Josef Hoffmann's interior design of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, I would like to highlight the essay in *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, which has not been considered in recent literature: –H–, »Die XIV. Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstler Österreichs, Secession: in Wien 1902. Architekt: Prof. Josef Hoffmann in Wien«, *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, vol. XXXVI, no. 50 (June 21, 1902): 317–321 (numerous ill.).
- 10 No glass negative has survived.
- 11 Since the construction work had started in May 1901—the »Beethoven Exhibition« was scheduled to open in October of this year—and this photograph of Nähr must have been taken shortly after work had begun, it can be assumed that Hoffmann already knew at that point that he wanted to use the niche above the door for one of his two reliefs. Accordingly, the overdoor reliefs would have to be dated not as »late« as 1902 but to 1901—that is, one year earlier than previously assumed.
- 12 For more on this, see the unpublished study by Andreas Gruber, »Moriz Nähr's Photographic Technology«, in Uwe Schögl, Sandra Tretter, and Peter Weinhäupl for the Klimt Foundation, eds., *Moriz Nähr (1859–1945). Photographer for Habsburg, Klimt, and Wittgenstein. Catalogue Raisonné*, Vienna 2022, www.moriz-naehr.com.
- 13 My cordial thanks for this hint extend to Nikolaus Domes, archivist of the Vienna Künstlerhaus.
- 14 My cordial thanks for this hint extend to Marian Bisanz-Prakken, Kaltenleutgeben.
- 15 It should be noted that there is a print with painting stains on Klimt's smock and another without such stains as pointed out by Alfred Weidinger in *Gustav Klimt & Emilie Flöge. Photographs*, ed. Agnes Husslein-Arco and Alfred Weidinger (Munich, London, New York 2012), and Uwe Schögl in *Moriz Nähr. Photographer of Viennese Modernism*, ed. by Uwe Schögl and Hans-Peter Wipplinger, exhib. cat. Leopold Museum-Privatstiftung, Vienna (August 24, 2018–October 29, 2018) (Vienna and Cologne, 2018), 118.
- 16 Particularly rich in illustrations is *Lux 1902*, see note 8: 457–518.
- 17 This first reconstruction of the relief is in the possession of Julius Hummel.
- 18 My cordial thanks for this hint extend to Julius Hummel, Vienna.
- 19 See Willi Kopf's text on the reconstruction of the overdoor reliefs in the archives of Vienna's University of Applied Arts (Josef Hoffmann holdings).
- 20 Hevesi refers to Leopold Bauer's portal framings.
- 21 Ludwig Hevesi, »Secession«, *Fremden-Blatt*, April 18, 1902; reprinted in Ludwig Hevesi, *Acht Jahre Secession* (Vienna, 1906), 390–394.
- 22 L. H.-i. (= Ludwig Hevesi), »Wien. Max Klinger's Beethoven ...«, *Kunstchronik. Wochenschrift für Kunst und Kunstgewerbe. Neue Folge*, vol. XIII, no. 24 (May 1, 1902), col. 379.
- 23 Franz Servaes, »Secession (Ein Versuch in moderner Tempelkunst)«, *Neue Freie Presse*, May 3, 1902: 1, col. 2.
- 24 Berta Zuckerkandl, »Klingers Beethoven in der Wiener Secession«, *Die Kunst für Alle*, 17th year, no. 17, June 1, 1902: 385, col. 1.
- 25 My most cordial thanks for this hint extend to Marian Bisanz-Prakken, Kaltenleutgeben.
- 26 Numerous books and essays have been published on the Secession's »Beethoven Exhibition« and especially on Josef Hoffmann's extraordinarily remarkable abstracted reliefs over the past five decades. All these texts have presented a formal derivation of the reliefs but no interpretation of their content. Some of the most important publications are Marian Bisanz-Prakken, *Der Beethovenfries. Geschichte, Funktion, Bedeutung* (Salzburg, 1977); Eugene A. Santomaso, »Josef Hoffmann's Reliefs at the Beethoven Exhibition of the Vienna »Secession«, 1902: Beginnings of Abstraction«, *The Structurist*, vol. 1981/82, no. 21/22, January 1, 1981: 25–32; Dieter Bogner, »Die geometrischen Reliefs von Josef Hoffmann«, *alte und moderne Kunst*, 27th year (1982), nos. 184/185: 24–32; Eduard F. Sekler, *Josef Hoffmann. Das architektonische Werk* (Salzburg and Vienna, 1982), 58–63 and 275–276; Thomas Zaunschirm, »Wien und die Anfänge der Abstraktion«, in *Orient und Okzident im Spiegel der Kunst. Festschrift H. G. Franz zum 70. Geburtstag* (Graz, 1986), 465–475; Sabine Forsthuber, *Moderne Raumkunst. Wiener Ausstellungsbauten von 1898 bis 1914* (Vienna, 1991), 68–89; Dieter Bogner, »Das 'constructive' Ornament. Der Beitrag Wiens zur Abstraktion«, in *Ornament und Abstraktion. Kunst der Kulturen. Moderne der Gegenwart im Dialog*, ed. Markus Brüderlin, exh. cat. Fondation Beyeler, Riehen/Basel (June 10–October 7, 2001) (Cologne, 2001), 36–43; Markus Brüderlin, »Die Geburt der geometrischen Abstraktion aus dem Geiste des Ornaments. Der secessionistische Geometrismus aus der Sicht von heute«, in *Secession*, ed., *Secession – Gustav Klimt – Beethovenfries* (Vienna, 2002), 71–85; Dieter Bogner, »Gustav Klimts »geometrisierende Kompositionen«, in Serge Lemoine, ed., *Wien um 1900* (Stuttgart, 2005), 68–74; Agnes Husslein-Arco and Alfred Weidinger, eds., *Gustav Klimt/Josef Hoffmann. Pioneers of Modernism*, publication accompanying the eponymous exhibition in the Belvedere, Vienna (October 25, 2011–March 4, 2012) (Munich, London, New York, 2011); Otto Kapfinger, »Dionysius spricht durch Apollo. Zum Quellgrund des Gesamtkunstwerks bei Olbrich, Hoffmann, Moser«, in Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, Christian Witt-Döring, and Elisabeth Schmutzmeier, eds., *Koloman Moser. Universal Artist Between Gustav Klimt and Josef Hoffmann*, exh. cat. Museum of Applied Arts Vienna (December 19, 2018–April 22, 2019) (Basel, 2018), 82–109.

I would like to express my gratitude to all authors of these publications as well as to other scholars and friends with whom I was able to discuss the »Beethoven Exhibition« and the overdoor reliefs in the past months, even if I do not always share their opinions without reservation: (in alphabetical order) Marian Bisanz-Prakken, Rainer Bischof, Dieter Bogner, Alessandra Comini, Lilli Dutz, Rainald Franz, Otto Kapfinger, Bernhard Leitner, Georg Riha, and August Sarnitz.

Location and image credits

[1]

Moriz Nähr: Insight into the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1902. View of the main hall, about 70 cm lower than the side halls, with vaulted ceiling as a temple room for Max Klinger's *Beethoven*, on the right Leopold Bauer's decorative door framing, on the back wall Alfred Roller's mural *Nightfall*, glossy collodion paper, 19.3 × 25 cm, Austrian National Library, Picture Archives and Graphics Department, Vienna, inv. no. Pk 2539, 97

[2]

Orientation plan for the wall paintings and sculptures in the Catalogue of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1902, Klimt Foundation, Vienna, inv. no. B1311

[3]

Orientation plan for the decorative panels set into the walls in the Catalogue of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1902, Klimt Foundation, Vienna, inv. no. B1311

[4]

Moriz Nähr: Insight into the left side hall of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1902. View of the front wall in the left side hall with a section of Gustav Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze* (»The Hostile Forces«) from an elevated vantage point: the giant Typhoeus, against whom even the gods fought in vain until he finally succumbed to Zeus; to the left his daughters, the three Gorgons; above them Sickness, Madness, Death; on the right Lust, Unchastity, Intemperance; »Gnawing Grief« and the yearnings and desires of humankind flying past them above; Josef Hoffmann's relief, half concealed by the pylon, above the doorway to the middle hall; on the flat ceiling the textile velum stretched under the skylight, silver gelatin glass negative, 21 × 27 cm, Austrian National Library, Picture Archives and Graphics Department, Vienna, inv. no. 94917 E

[5]

Insight into the left side hall of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition during the construction work, print laterally reversed presumably by Moriz Nähr for unknown reasons, 1901. Josef Hoffmann's relief as well as Gustav Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze* and all other works of art are still missing, photograph, 20.8 × 26.6 cm, Archives of the Künstlerhaus Vienna, Secession exhibition views 1898–1938, no. 76

[6]

Moriz Nähr: Group portrait of the artists of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition in the middle hall of the Secession building, April 1902; front row from left to right: Kolo Moser, Maximilian Lenz (lying), Ernst Stöhr, Emil Orlik, Carl Moll; back row from left to right: Anton Nowak, Gustav Klimt, Adolf Böhm, Wilhelm List, Maximilian Kurzweil, Leopold Stolba, Rudolf Bacher; in the background: two unknown persons, silver gelatin paper, 13.9 × 19.8 cm, Klimt Foundation, Vienna, inv. no. KF S306

[7]

Moriz Nähr: Insight into the right side hall of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1902. View of the passage to the main hall and Josef Hoffmann's overdoor relief; Max Klinger's bronze statue *Athlete* in front of the pylon crowned by Rudolf Bacher's sculpture *Gorgon* (?); strongly cropped mural *Freude, schöner Götterfunken* by Josef Maria Auentaller above the openings to the main hall, glossy collodion paper, 25.8 × 20.4 cm, Austrian National Library, Picture Archives and Graphics Department, Vienna, inv. no. Pk 2539, 111

[8]

Moriz Nähr: Insight into the left side hall of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1902. View of the front wall with a section of Gustav Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze* (»The Hostile Forces«): the giant Typhoeus, against whom even the gods fought in

vain until he finally succumbed to Zeus; on the left his daughters, the three Gorgons; above them Sickness, Madness, Death; on the right Lust, Unchastity, Intemperance; »Gnawing Grief« and the yearnings and desires of humankind flying past them above; Josef Hoffmann's relief, half concealed by the pylon, above the passage to the middle hall; in front of the pylon Max Klinger's *Head of a Girl*, silver gelatin glass negative, 21 × 27 cm, Austrian National Library, Picture Archives and Graphics Department, Vienna, inv. no. 94916 E

[9]

Moriz Nähr: Insight into the right side hall of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1902. Frontal view of the passage to the main hall with Josef Hoffmann's overdoor relief; Max Klinger's *Athlete* in front of the pylon crowned by Rudolf Bacher sculpture *Gorgon* (?), glossy collodion paper, 25.2 × 20 cm, Austrian National Library, Picture Archives and Graphics Department, Vienna, inv. no. Pk 2539, 112

[10]

Page 55 of the Catalogue of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition with the misleading reference to Josef Hoffmann's relief »above the entrance«, Klimt Foundation, Vienna, inv. no. B82

[11]

Moriz Nähr: Insight into the main hall of the Fourteenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, 1902. On the right Leopold Bauer's decorative door framing; to its left fountain niche with figures made of stamped concrete by Richard Luksch; on the back wall Alfred Roller's strongly cropped mural *Nightfall*, glossy collodion paper, 20 × 25.2 cm, Austrian National Library, Picture Archives and Graphics Department, Vienna, inv. no. Pk 2539, 104

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