

PRESS RELEASE



# FLEETING BEAUTY

Art and design of the 1920s from the  
JTI Collection Vienna

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BERTOLD LÖFFLER  
Design for a cigarette pack (no. 9),  
Dames | 1928  
JTI Collection Vienna

right:  
TRUDE FLEISCHMANN  
The dancer Tilly Losch | c. 1925  
IMAGNO/Austrian Archives

## Fleeting Beauty

### Art and design of the 1920s from the JTI Collection Vienna

The exhibition *Fleeting Beauty* not only reflects the zeitgeist of the interwar period through an everyday product but the approximately 150 packet designs and original packets from the JTI Collection Vienna created by renowned artists also enter into an exciting dialogue with works from the collection of the Leopold Museum. Among the exhibits are works by Robin Christian Andersen, Mea Angerer, Joseph Binder, Hans Bolek, Josef Dobrowsky, Anton Faistauer, Mathilde Flögl, Leo Frank, Mitzi Friedmann-Otten, Alfred Gerstenbrand, Albert Paris Gütersloh, Oswald Haerdtl, Richard Harlfinger, Carry Hauser, Ernst Huber, Julius Jirasek, Ludwig Heinrich Jungnickel, Ferdinand Kitt, Gabi Lagus-Möschl, Oskar Laske, Berthold Löffler, Max Snischek, Maria Strauss-Likarz and Franz von Zülow.

In 1928 the Austrian Tobacco Monopoly, as it was then called, held a competition for the redesign of its cigarette packs. This initiative was perhaps inspired by the company's efforts to match the quality of its packets to that of its products. In his novel »Die Strudelhofstiege« (The Strudlhof Steps), Heimito von Doderer supports this theory: »The old Austrian Monopoly – albeit no longer an Imperial Royal one – was rather good at that, it has to be said«. It could also have been occasioned by the corporation's wish to make a contribution to the increasing estheticization of everyday products.

In any case, the list of participating artists reads like a »Who's Who« of the art scene at the time. Members of the Secession and the Hagenbund created designs as did the artists of the Wiener Werkstätte and the Werkbund.





LUDWIG HEINRICH JUNGnickEL  
[He-Goat, Smoking. Design for a Secession poster | 1910](#)  
 Leopold Museum, Vienna, Inv. 1953

below:  
[Asta, pack of 25, with Carry Hauser's »Bathing Beach Kritzensdorf« as a picture inside the packet | 1928](#)  
 JTI Collection Vienna | © Bildrecht, Wien, 2015 | Photo: Pedro Salvadore

### New package design

The results of the competition met with approval. This was expressed not only in the catalogue of the Austrian Werkbund but also in the influential monthly magazine *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*: »Instead of the old, outdated packets with their nondescript colors and unsightly ornate lettering, we encounter well-proportioned packs in bright pink, yellow, blue or black and gold whose front sides are adorned with clear writing, the ornamentally stylized Austrian eagle providing the brand. For all their radically simplified designs, the new packets are far from uniform or lacking in character. Instead, the fact that the most diverse artists contributed to their designs is clearly felt. The slight deviations in lettering and structuring as well as in the choice of colors and type of paper reveal the artists' personal

tastes precisely to such an extent as is beneficial for the enlivenment of the overall impression without endangering the desired consistency«.

Indeed, the countless competition entries cannot be accused of uniformity. In fact, many of the designs were perceived to be too avant-garde by the jury who mostly selected creations of elegant reticence.

### Carrying landscapes in one's waistcoat pocket

Not only the design of the outer packaging but also the inside of the packets underwent a radical reimagining. Already from 1923, the inside of the cigarette packs were adorned with photographs of Austrian landscapes, an initiative that was well received. The Austrian smoker's magazine *Österreichische Raucherzeitung* commented: »Everyone knows the enchanting reproductions of Austrian landscape motifs in the cigarette and cigar packs of the Austrian Tobacco Monopoly. They represent not only a voluntary and entirely free advertisement for Austrian tourism but also a downright genius advert for the Monopoly itself on account of their simplicity and unobtrusiveness«.

Following the competition, the old black and white photographs were replaced by color reproductions of landscapes created by the participating artists. Among them were Franz von Zülow's views of Steyr and the Semmering Krauselklause as well as Anton Faistauer's depiction of Zell am See. Carry Hauser – who in 1928 acted as the Austrian Hagenbund's president – chose the motif of one of the most popular destinations for day-trippers at the time, the bathing beach of Kritzensdorf on the Danube.





GABI LAGUS MÖSCHL  
(ALSO: MÖSCHL LAGUS)  
[Rummy, design for a picture inside the packet | 1928](#)  
JTI Collection Vienna

below:  
MIZZI FRIEDMANN-OTTEN  
[Design for Canterbury cigarette pack | 1928](#)  
JTI Collection Vienna

Even details such as foils and cigarette paper underwent a redesign to match the exterior packaging. This prompted the London magazine Advertising Display to praise Austria as a »trendsetter« in the field of tobacco packaging.

The introduction of new brands was also meant to signal an opening towards Modernism. In July 1928 the Viennese newspaper Wiener Zeitung reported on the launch of several new brands. The first, created by popular request, was a cigarette especially for ladies. The Asta variety was sold in apple blossom colored packs of 25. Its special feature was a tip coated in red silk which provided an elegant solution to the problem of unsightly lipstick stains. The newspaper article further announced the introduction of two new English-type brands called Jam and Pearl.

The company also sought to rejuvenate the somewhat antiquated image of pipe tobacco with the creation of new brands. My Friend, Bobby's Dream and American Blend combined English and American ideals with Austrian tastes.

#### Sales strategies

The Austrian Tobacco Monopoly explored a new sales strategy with the introduction of special edition packs. Commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Franz Schubert's death, the artist Lázló Gábor designed a packet with the master's likeness, which proved to be immensely popular at the 10<sup>th</sup> celebration of the German Choral Association held in Vienna. Along with Schubert, the city of Graz was honored with a special edition pack to celebrate its 800 years of existence in 1928. The events chosen for these special editions afford insights into the political sensitivities in Austria at the time, as packs were designed celebrating the ten-year anniversary of the referendum in Carinthia in 1930 and the German Catholic Congress in 1933 (for which the company created a special pope cigar called Pontifex Maximus). The following year, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Tobacco Monopoly was commemorated with a special edition that saw cigars adorned with portraits of the pope, the chancellor and the finance minister. Engelbert Dollfuß, Austria's federal chancellor at the time, who was murdered only a few months after the celebrations, was honored with a special packet in 1935, which was introduced during the consecration of the Dollfuß Chapel in the Altaussee salt mine.



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Cover: From upper left to bottom right:  
C. Hauser | Kritzendorf (Detail) | 1928 | JTI  
Collection Vienna © Bildrecht, Wien 2015 ||  
B. Löffler | Egyptische (Detail) | 1928 | JTI  
Collection Vienna || V. Weixler | Pearl (De-  
tail) | 1928 | JTI Collection Vienna || B. Löff-  
ler | Dames (Detail) | 1928 | JTI Collection  
Vienna || A. Gerstenbrand | Cigarette brochure  
(Detail) | 1928 | JTI Collection Vienna || B. Löff-  
ler | Egyptische (Detail) | 1928 | JTI Collection  
Vienna || G. Lagus-Möschl | Rummy (Detail) |  
1928 | JTI Collection Vienna || F. v. Zülow |  
Steyr (Detail) | 1928 | JTI Collection Vienna ||  
M. Friedmann-Otten | Design for Canterbury  
cigarette pack (Detail) | 1928 | JTI Collection  
Vienna

## QUESTIONS / CONTACT

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