



THE BRILLIANCE OF AN ERA

European Art Nouveau Jewellery

25.02. – 20.06.2011
prolongated until 25.07.2011

An exhibition in cooperation with the
Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt

 **Landes**
museum
Darmstadt



Gustav Fischmeister, Two Art Nouveau Butterfly Brooches, ca. 1910
Private Collection, Photo: Craig Dillon

PRESS INFORMATION

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THE BRILLIANCE OF AN ERA

ART NOUVEAU JEWELLERY FROM EUROPE

For early 2011, the Leopold Museum has joined forces with the Hessian State Museum in Darmstadt to mount Austria's most comprehensive exhibition to date on the theme of Art Nouveau jewellery. This presentation, initiated by Peter Weinhäupl and curated by Patricia Spiegelfeld, features a representative cross-section of objects from turn-of-the-century Europe's most important centres of jewellery production. The lion's share of the loan items are distinctive objects from the collections of the Hessian State Museum in Darmstadt. These are joined by valuable – and above all Austrian-made – pieces from private collections as well as from the Leopold Museum, Wien Museum and the MAK. Wolfgang Glüber is head of the Arts and Crafts Collection at the Hessian State Museum, on which he has conducted extensive research and for which he also edited the catalogue. This catalogue, recently released in book form, is joined by a brochure published specifically for the Vienna exhibition which focuses on the loan items from Vienna.

150 MASTERPIECES OF ARTISANSHIP FROM AROUND 1900



BELT BUCKLE, 1901
Design: Hans Christiansen
Production: J. Friedmanns Nachfolger D. & M.
Löwenthal / Frankfurt am Main
Gold-plated silver, mother-of-pearl plates,
baroque pearl
Height: 5.8 cm; width: 8.4 cm
Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt
Inv. No. KG 67:51
Photo: Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt

A total of 150 jewellery objects – including impressive belt buckles, elegant combs, precious brooches, magnificent tiaras, valuable rings, refined necklaces and much more – bear witness to the inspirational richness and diversity present in the jeweller's art around 1900. The rise of industrial production – with which entrepreneurs achieved great success as exporters in addition to the production of their traditional handcrafted products – is likewise a topic of this exhibition, which itself represents the latest in a series of recent Leopold Museum contributions to work on turn-of-the-twentieth-century art. The past few years have seen the museum mount showings dedicated to Adolf Hoelzel and Kolo Moser (2007), to the overall re-presentation of the collection (2008), to Josef Maria Auchentaller (2009) and to Joseph Maria Olbrich (2010). In putting together the current exhibition, a central consideration was that characteristic which Prof. Rudolf Leopold considered to be the most important of all: the quality of the objects themselves. All works brought together for the exhibition *The Brilliance of an Era* are of particular value and rarity, and/or characterised by creative originality.

DARMSTADT AND VIENNA – TWO ART NOUVEAU METROPOLISES

Like Vienna, Darmstadt was a centre of the Art Nouveau movement. During the period around 1900, Hessian Grand Duke Ernst Ludwig brought to Darmstadt the best artists he could find – including Joseph Maria Olbrich (who built the Vienna Secession) and Hans Christiansen, as well as architect Peter Behrens. They built a pioneering model community on a hill above town, the Mathildenhöhe artist's colony. Just last year, the Leopold Museum's strong ties to this Hessian city of art gave rise to the largest-ever exhibition on Olbrich, which was mounted in Darmstadt and in Vienna in cooperation with Institut Mathildenhöhe.

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During this cooperative effort between the two museums, Leopold Museum employees took note of the magnificent Art Nouveau holdings at the Hessian State Museum, and the idea for a presentation in Vienna quickly developed into a wonderful mutual project.

ART NOUVEAU JEWELLERY AT THE HESSIAN STATE MUSEUM



OVAL PENDANT WITH CHAIN, CA. 1910
Production: L. W. van Kooten
Gold, opaque enamel, turquoise
Height: 4.6 cm; width: 2.8 cm; length: 31.5 cm
Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt
Inv. No. KG 63:C103
Photo: Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt

An essential part of the jewellery holdings at the Hessian State Museum are based on the Arts-and-Crafts collection of Dutch Court Jeweller Karel A. Citroen (*12 February 1920). The art dealer Citroen, who is now 91 years old, began collecting in 1952 – at a point in time when it was anything but fashionable to collect artisan craftwork from the Art Nouveau. By 1959, after having collected for just a few short years, the Amsterdam-based jeweller had succeeded in bringing together several hundred objects from all over Europe, the lion's share of which were jewellery. In the early 1960s, Citroen began exhibiting his collection – first in the Netherlands, and then as part of exhibitions in Paris and London, after which he finally showed it at the Hessian State Museum in 1962. The museum's director at the time, Gerhard Bott, succeeded soon thereafter in purchasing the over 300 Art Nouveau works which Citroen had by then collected. As early as 1963, the collection was given its first presentation at the Folkwang Museum in Essen as holdings of the Hessian State Museum. Today, the objects from the former Citroen Collection number among the absolute highlights of the Hessian State Museum's holdings.

ART NOUVEAU: LALIQUE'S GENERATION



»PEACOCKS« ORNAMENTAL COMB, CA. 1904/05
Design: René Jules Lalique
Horn, gold, topaz
Height: 6 cm; width: 10.7 cm
Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt
Inv. No. KG 63:C89
Photo: Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt

A central part of the collection consists of works by important Parisian jewellers. Foremost among these are objects by goldsmith René Jules Lalique (1860-1945), as well as by Japanese art aficionado Lucien Gaillard (1861-1942) and by Georges Fouquet (1862-1957), who collaborated intensively with Czech artist Alfons (also spelled Alphonse) Mucha (1860-1939). Also remarkable are the works by Neuilly-based enameller Andre-Fernand Thesmar (1843-1912). Thesmar was specialized in cloisonné and plique-à-jour objects. Cloisonné is a technique first perfected by the ancient Chinese in which vitreous enamel is poured between metal strips placed on a base material. In plique-à-jour works, the material's opacity is of primary importance. Extremely thin, transparent enamel is connected by strips made of precious metals. In this exhibition, a wonderful orchid brooch created in 1902 bears witness to the Art Nouveau enameller Thesmar's artistry.

Goldsmith and glass designer René Lalique was by far the most successful French jewellery designer working around 1900. As a true pioneer of the field and surely the most creative designer of his generation, he influenced fin-de-siècle artisan craftsmanship far beyond the borders of France. 1894 saw him begin designing theatre jewellery for the famous actress Sarah Bernhardt, and in 1900 he was awarded the coveted Grand Prix at the Paris World's Fair.

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»MOTH« BROOCH / PENDANT, CA. 1902
Design and production: Eugène Feuillatre
Gold, platinum, plique-à-jour technique, moonstone,
cut diamond, diamonds, pearl, enamel
Height: 7 cm; width: 6.8 cm
Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt
Inv. No. KG 63:C51
Photo: Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt

No French jewellery producer influenced the Art Nouveau movement to such an extent as did René Lalique. He produced his works for his own workshop as well as for other important firms such as Arcoc and Cartier. By the close of the 19th century, Lalique had touched off a revolution in the field of jewellery design. He designed sumptuous jewellery for the world of the Belle Époque, and his customers included prominent turn-of-the-century personalities. The richness of colours and forms to be found in his works seems virtually inexhaustible. The exhibition at the Leopold Museum presents pieces including an elegant ornamental comb (1904/05) made of horn with symmetrically arranged peacocks, complimented by a golden bar ornamented with topazes. The producer Fouquet is represented by an enchanting fuchsia brooch (1902) designed by Charles Desrosiers. The flower's petals are formed by opals set in gold; the stamens, which end in anthers, are formed by individual golden rods (the filaments) with the anthers themselves being made of diamonds. Gaillard took a keen interest in the art of Japan. Particularly impressive is a piece of neck jewellery which he made in the form of a stag beetle (ca. 1905). The beetle's back, enamelled in multiple colours, is mounted on silver with a green, faceted peridot set between the antlers. Another interesting piece is the »Sarah Bernhardt« brooch created by an unknown French jeweller around 1900 in honour of the renowned actress Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923). This piece of jewellery, inspired by a poster design by Alfons Mucha (for *La Princesse Loïe Fuller* in 1896), had for a long time been attributed to Fouquet. Wolfgang Glüber, head of the Arts and Crafts Collection in Darmstadt, has determined based on extensive research that this piece was not, in fact, made by Fouquet. He offers a fascinating explanation of his conclusion in the catalogue, thereby also showing how disproving a dubious work's attribution can be every bit as difficult as the reverse. Also worthy of mention is the enchanting moth brooch by Eugène Feuillatre (1870–1916). The moth's gold-coloured, enamelled human head is surrounded by closed, blue-green wings done in plique-à-jour and crowned with golden antennae.

GERMANY'S JEWELLERY INDUSTRY AND JEWELLERY ART



BELT BUCKLE, CA. 1902-1905
Design and production:
Kirchgaessner & Kraft, Pforzheim
Nickel silver, vitreous enamel
Height: 7.2 cm; width: 6.6 cm
Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt
Inv. No. KG 58:73
Photo: Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt

The centres of the German jewellery industry were Hanau in Hesse and the towns of Schwäbisch Gmünd and Pforzheim in Baden-Württemberg. The painter and jewellery designer Emil Riester (1855-1925), who taught at the School of Arts and Crafts in Pforzheim, began employing Far Eastern elements in his jewellery creations and other work as early as 1880. The belt buckle pictured at left, made by the Pforzheim company of Kirchgaessner & Kraft (1902-1905), exhibits an impressive design. A mask-like face strongly reminiscent of a fountain figure holds an oval, orange-coloured piece of glass between the sharp teeth of a wide-open mouth. Tendrils reaching to the ground represent this creature's hair. Beneath the glass oval are two rows of needles which merge into drops, most probably symbolizing water. The silver-coloured material is so-called »alpacca« or nickel silver, a silver-coloured alloy of copper, nickel and zinc which hardness made it particularly well-suited to the production of tableware, dining utensils and clasps.

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Also located in Pforzheim was the company Wild & Cie. A plique-à-jour pendant by them (ca. 1900-1905?) with mistletoe leaves and studded with diamonds, pearls and rubies is a particularly pleasing piece inspired by the works of Lalique.

Outstanding artists such as Hans Christiansen (1866-1945), a member of the artists' colony in Darmstadt, designed pieces of jewellery which they then had produced by jewellers. Christiansen is represented in the Leopold Museum exhibition by an elegant belt buckle designed in 1901 and produced by D. & M. Löwenthal of Frankfurt.

AUSTRIA: BETWEEN TRADITION AND THE SECESSION



BUTTERFLY BROOCHES, CA. 1910
Design: Gustav Fischmeister
Production: Rozet & Fischmeister
Yellow gold, plique-à-jour technique, diamonds, rubies
Height: 5.7 cm; width: 4.3 cm; length: 1 cm
Company of Rozet & Fischmeister, Vienna;
Private collection
Photo: Craig Dillon



TWO-PART BELT BUCKLE, CA. 1900/01
Design: Josef Maria Auchentaller
Producer: company of Georg Adam Scheid, Vienna
Gold-plated silver, opaque enamel, plique-à-jour technique, lapis lazuli
Height: 6.4 cm; width: 7.5 cm
Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt
Citroen Collection
Inv. No. KG 63:C122
Photo: Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt

The aforementioned French goldsmith Lalique was also a source of inspiration for the Viennese Art Nouveau (often referred to as *Jugendstil*) which was, however, to develop in a completely different direction. On exhibit at the Leopold Museum will be valuable pieces by Chamber Jeweller and Court Purveyor A. E. Köchert and Chamber Purveyor Rozet & Fischmeister which are done entirely in the style of Lalique. The exhibition shows a magnificent tiara created around 1900 which is still fully indebted to the historicist tradition. This piece, made of silver, gold and diamonds, once again captures the full glory of the declining Dual Monarchy. On the other hand, it is gold, silver, diamonds, rubies and smaragds that combine to produce the wonderfully shimmering interplay seen in the two butterfly brooches made by Gustav Fischmeister around 1910, which are permeated through and through by the lightness of the French Art Nouveau movement. Their yellow gold bodies and antennae compete for attention with the wings, which are done in plique-à-jour. These brooches are studded with rubies and diamonds, which form the insects' eyes and eye spots. Gustav Fischmeister (1875-1935) attended the Ecole des Arts Decoratifs in Paris and was also a pupil and employee of Lalique. The collection of the Hessian State Museum contains only a few jewellery pieces by Viennese Art Nouveau designers, but these include a particularly beautiful two-part belt buckle (1900/1901) by Josef Maria Auchentaller (1845-1949) produced by the company of Auchentaller's father-in-law, Georg Adam Scheid (1837-1921). The silver jewellery producer Scheid – who was originally from Germany, having previously worked in the jewellery centre of Pforzheim – moved to Vienna in 1858 and subsequently became one of the leading jewellery exporters of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, as Andreas Maleta details in his written contribution to the brochure for the Leopold Museum exhibition. Kolo Moser (1868–1918) and Auchentaller designed jewellery for the producer »G. A. S. Schmuckfabrik« beginning in 1895. While the Secessionists Joseph Maria Olbrich (1867-1908), Kolo Moser and Josef Maria Auchentaller had at first worked in an Art Nouveau style referred to as »floral Jugendstil«, the period that began in 1900 at the latest saw the emergence of a more geometric character which was based in particular on the connection of vertical and horizontal structures. While turn-of-the-century Viennese jewellers generally worked in a historicist style for a rather conservative audience, there do exist several particularly pleasing works from this period which exhibit the idiosyncrasies of the Viennese Art Nouveau and the differences which distinguish it from the Art Nouveau elsewhere in Europe. Selected loan items from private collections, as well as items from the holdings of the Leopold Museum, Wien Museum and the MAK, serve

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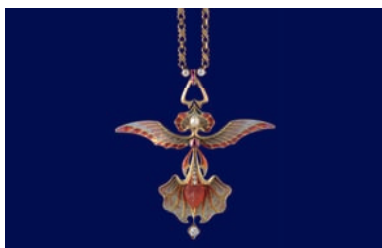
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**SQUARE BROOCH WITH
CHESSBOARD MOTIF, 1910-1911**
Design: Josef Hoffmann
Production: Wiener Werkstätte /
company of Josef Souval, Vienna
Silver, opaque enamel
Height: 4.1 cm; width: 4.1 cm
Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt
On loan from a private collection
Photo: Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt



COMB, CA. 1909-1914
Design and production: Georg Arthur Jensen
Silver, opals
Height: 8.2 cm; width: 9.1 cm
Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt
Inv. No. KG 65:50
Photo: Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt



»ORCHIDEE AILEE2 PENDANT, CA. 1902
Design and production: Philippe Wolfers
Gold, transparent enamel, plique-à-jour, glass, rubies,
cut diamonds, diamonds, pearls
Height: 6.4 cm; width: 5.7 cm; length: 3.2 cm
Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt
Inv. No. KG 65:C335
Photo: Hessian State Museum, Darmstadt

to demonstrate this stylistic independence.

In 1903, industrialist Fritz Wärndorfer founded the production community known as the »Wiener Werkstätte«. He did so along with the painter and designer Kolo Moser and the architect and designer Josef Hoffmann (1870-1956). Bertold Löffler (1874-1960), as well, worked for the Wiener Werkstätte.

The participating artists ascribed to the view that jewellery as an art form should demonstrate not the wealth, but rather the individuality of its wearer. They therefore preferred semi-precious stones and silver to diamonds and gold, for they believed that the value of their jewellery pieces was derived above all from their extraordinary design and quality of workmanship, and less from their actual material value. One object from the Hessian State Museum exhibited at the Leopold Museum is a medallion-shaped pendant by Bertold Löffler, created in 1909, which shows a winged cherub holding a bouquet of flowers in his hands while riding on a fish. Also from the Darmstadt-based collection is a square brooch with a chessboard motif designed by Josef Hoffmann (1910/11). From a private collection comes a silver pendant by Kolo Moser (1904) consisting of a shape formed by balls and ornamented with three opals, as well as an elaborately designed, colourful parrot brooch by Hoffmann (ca. 1910). Both were produced for the Wiener Werkstätte.

BELGIUM, DENMARK, GREAT BRITAIN, THE NETHERLANDS, RUSSIA

A particularly beautiful Nordic piece is the wonderful silver comb studded with light-blue opals by Danish artist Georg Arthur Jensen (1866-1935). The collection of the Hessian State Museum also contains jewellery from the »Nieuwe Kunst« movement in the Netherlands, the home of collector Citroen. One such object shown in this exhibition is an oval pendant with a chain created around 1910 by gold and silversmith Bert Nienhuis (1873-1960). Two golden dragonflies face each other and hold an oval, aqua-coloured cabochon. The two creatures are surrounded by golden tendrils on a dark-blue background. Nienhuis designed for companies including the »De Distel« ceramics factory and »De Lotus«, his own tile factory. Also on exhibit will be works by the cofounder of the »De Woning« company, Jan Eisenlöffel (1876-1957). The workshops of legendary Russian goldsmith Carl Peter Faberge (1846-1920) in Moscow and St. Petersburg – famous above all for the Easter eggs they created for the Tsar's family – oriented themselves more towards historicist ideas, with Art Nouveau pieces being more the exception. This exhibition features an original pendant with two storks created in 1900. Belgian Art Nouveau is represented via pieces made by jewellery producer and designer Philippe Wolfers (1858-1929), including the handsome pendant with a winged orchid – the »orchidee ailee« (1902). This gold-and-enamel pendant is studded with rubies, diamonds and pearls. Jewellery from Great Britain, the birthplace of the Arts & Crafts Movement, can also be seen at the Leopold Museum. This category includes a belt buckle created by William Hair Haseler (1864-1949) for Liberty & Co., as well as a pendant from the hand of British architect and designer Henry Wilson (1864-1934).

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THE BRILLIANCE OF AN ERA EXHIBITION ARCHITECTURE



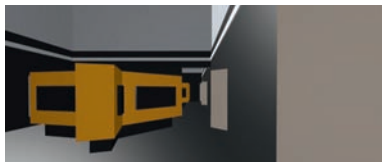
EXHIBITION ARCHITECTURE
»The Brilliance of an Era.
European Art Nouveau Jewellery«
Architekturbüro Sonderformat, Vienna

In the interest of presenting the exquisite objects shown in *The Brilliance of an Era. Art Nouveau Jewellery* from Europe in the best-possible light, Architekturbüro Sonderformat was asked to custom-design this exhibition's architecture.

THE ROOM

The exhibition space, transformed into a black box, employs a sound-absorbent cloth wall-covering and a soft underground to create a singular atmosphere in which one's full concentration can be devoted to the individual objects. The simple elegance and neutral structure of the golden, black-lined display cases provide the delicate and filigree objects with the necessary grounding thanks to their massive yet unobtrusive presence, while at the same time they serve to guide visitors among the various exhibits. No sooner has one's gaze come to rest on an object, than the display cases melt away into the background, creating a space within which one's attention is trained exclusively on the artwork at hand. The pieces of jewellery in the predominant colours of gold and silver stand out wonderfully against the dark interior lining of the cases.

DISPLAY CASE ARRANGEMENT



EXHIBITION ARCHITECTURE
»The Brilliance of an Era.
European Art Nouveau Jewellery«
Architekturbüro Sonderformat, Vienna

The display cases are distributed within the space in the form of four three-spoked, asymmetrically placed cross-like shapes from which one sees two large cases extending outward when looking from any direction. The structure and placement of the exhibition furniture divides the available space into smaller »séparées«. This mode of presentation keeps the pieces of jewellery from getting lost in the vastness of the overall space. In order to guarantee an ideal view of the jewellery items, the presentation surfaces are tilted diagonally. This makes it possible for the observer to see both the top side and part of the underside of each piece, with the jewellery also retaining that plasticity which makes it so lively when worn. This plasticity is supported by the velvety background throughout the room, which is black on the floor and in the display cases and a matte gold hue on the display case walls. Only the wall texts – which provide information on Art Nouveau-period jewellery production – are brightly (back)lit. The texts' installation likewise conforms to the »séparée« concept thanks to the three-dimensional pillars upon which they are printed; these lend additional structure to the room and help visitors find their way through the exhibition. The restrained lighting of the display cases brings the jewellery objects to life, allowing the gemstones and other fine materials to quite literally reflect the »Brilliance of an Era«.

Architekturbüro Sonderformat
www.sonderformat.at

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FREE GUIDED TOURS OF THE EXHIBITION

Every Sunday and holiday at 3 p.m.

GUIDED TOURS UPON REQUEST

Tours can be booked in various languages and on various themes.

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Wild Times at the Jewellery Zoo!

At the LEO Kids' Studio we cut, shape and bend our own pieces of jewellery and favourite animals.

Dates: 27 Feb., 13 and 27 Mar., 15 and 22 May, 12 and 19 Jun. 2011

Adieu winter, hello spring!

At the LEO Kids' Studio, we construct our own spring decorations out of construction paper, foils and pearls.

Date: 20 March 2011

Educational programs on the exhibition for school students, including a visit to the Studio, can be booked for all age groups.

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