

Press Release

Josef Hoffmann – Oswald Oberhuber: Total Design and Drafts

Opening	Sunday, 12 June 2011, 2 p.m. in the presence of Oswald Oberhuber
Exhibition Term	14 June–30 October 2011
Exhibition Venue	Josef Hoffmann Museum, Brtnice* náměstí Svobody 263, 58832 Brtnice, CZ * A joint branch of the Moravian Gallery in Brno and the MAK in Vienna
Opening Hours	April–October from Tues to Sun, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. July and August daily, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

The exhibition “Josef Hoffmann – Oswald Oberhuber. Total Design and Drafts,” to be shown at the Josef Hoffmann Museum in Brtnice, Czech Republic, will juxtapose works by Oswald Oberhuber with the drawings of Josef Hoffmann. This concept was chosen in celebration of Oberhuber’s 80th birthday.

As a painter, graphic artist, sculptor, object artist, conceptual artist, author, designer, stage designer and architect, the unbelievably active Oswald Oberhuber has brought to bear an improbable breadth of expressive means in creating his extremely complex and multifaceted body of works. As an instructor at (and later rector of) what is now the University of Applied Arts, he influenced the training of generations of students. Both Josef Hoffmann’s oeuvre and Oberhuber’s work as an architect, designer, teacher and exhibition designer bear witness to the transformation of each artist’s role within modernism: from an avant-garde figure to an upholder of tradition.

The presentation concept for the exhibition “Josef Hoffmann – Oswald Oberhuber: Total Design and Drafts” consciously draws a spatial distinction between the oeuvres of these two important artists by providing the work of each with both their own rooms and their own areas. This leaves to the observer the task of studying each artist’s drawing style, and of discovering differences and commonalities. A further dialog arises between the furniture objects by Oswald Oberhuber (integrated into the exhibition) and the architecture of the Josef Hoffmann Museum itself plus the furniture and objects made according to Hoffmann’s designs, which are displayed in the permanent exhibition “Josef Hoffmann. Inspirations.”

Oberhuber has long devoted a great deal of attention to the oeuvre of Josef Hoffmann. It was this interest which, among other things, led him to join forces with the MAK to realize the exhibition “Josef Hoffmann. Ornament Between Hope and Crime” (1987), which was Vienna’s first public presentation of sketches and objects by Hoffmann from the MAK Collection together with those from today’s University of Applied Arts.



As an artist, gallerist, professor and rector of the University of Applied Arts in Vienna, Oswald Oberhuber has played a highly influential role in the post-1950 Austrian art world. He views art as a life process, and under no circumstances has he ever desired to ascribe to any sort of exclusivity. He has thus consistently remained true to the theory which he has been espousing since 1958, a theory via which he calls for an end to all styles, the only permissible style being one of permanent change, as a personal program of life and art. "That is my principle; one might say that my style consists in the negation of any particular style." In this refusal to adhere to a consistent style, Oberhuber's position on art converges with that of Hoffmann.

Hoffmann's form-conscious individualism characterized his entire creative output. His practice of design, covering over sixty years of sketches, is marked both by continuity and by breaks. Hoffmann's drawing style is influenced by an ambivalent stance somewhere between artistry and functional design, governed by the "cult of the creative hand." Both his training at Vienna's Academy of Fine Arts under Carl von Hasenauer and, above all, Otto Wagner, as well as his trust in the knowledge of the involved craftsmen and construction specialists, is reflected in his sketches. Of his designs, Hoffmann himself said: "One shouldn't impose any limits on intuition. I always have to close my eyes and imagine a thing before I begin work on it."

The exhibition will be accompanied by a brochure with texts and quotations about and by Oswald Oberhuber and Josef Hoffmann.

To realize the exhibition "Josef Hoffmann – Oswald Oberhuber: Total Design and Drafts" at the Josef Hoffmann Museum in Brtnice, Czech Republic, as well as for exhibition and tourism projects in the Centrop region planned for the next two years, the MAK has applied together with the Moravian Gallery in Brno for financial support from the subsidy program of the European Union "European Territorial Cooperation Between Austria and the Czech Republic, 2007-2013."

As part of "MAK on TOUR", a bus trip to the opening of the exhibition "Josef Hoffmann – Oswald Oberhuber: Total Design and Drafts" will take place on 12 June 2011. A second such "MAK on TOUR" event is planned for 21 September 2011. Information at Tel.: (+43-1) 711 36-231, MAK.at/MAKonTOUR or by E-mail at marketing@MAK.at.

On the permanent exhibition "Josef Hoffmann: Inspirations"

Josef Hoffmann, one of the most important architects and designers of the 20th century, is the theme of the permanent exhibition "Josef Hoffmann: Inspirations" at the museum in Josef Hoffmann's birth house in Brtnice. On display are objects made after designs by Hoffmann from the MAK Collection and from Czech collections. The exhibition attempts to trace the artistic inspirations and impressions which Hoffmann gleaned from his hometown and via his active interest in folk objects from Moravia. The MAK is home to the world's most important collection of works by Hoffmann, most of which came into the museum's possession via the legacy of the Wiener Werkstätte. With his work, Josef Hoffmann had a decisive impact on the development of 20th-

century architecture and design in Europe. The trained architect had studied under Carl Hasenauer and Otto Wagner at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, and he became a founding member of the “Vereinigung bildender Künstler Österreichs Secession” (the Vienna Secession) in 1897. He went on to found the Wiener Werkstätte [Vienna Workshops] together with the painter and designer Koloman Moser and the industrialist Fritz Waerndorfer; this organization (which existed from 1903 to 1932) was modeled after the ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Hoffmann created designs for furniture, glass, porcelain, metal objects, jewelry and textiles. In 1907, the architect and designer Hoffmann—already well-known—remodeled the baroque house of his parents (which today houses the Josef Hoffmann Museum) according to Viennese modernist ideas.

The conception and realization process of the exhibition “Josef Hoffmann: Inspirations” has been supported financially by the program of the European Union “Culture 2007–2013” as part of the project “Architecture and Interior Design in Central Europe in the Early 20th Century. Josef Hoffmann and Dušan Jurkovič.” This project is being carried out by the Moravian Gallery in Brno, the MAK – Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art in Vienna, and the Slovak National Gallery in Bratislava, as well as ICOM-ICDAD.

Since 2006, the house in Brtnice, Czech Republic, where the artist was born has been run jointly as a museum by the MAK in Vienna and the Moravian Gallery in Brno. As early as 1992, the MAK was present in Brtnice with the exhibition “The Baroque Hoffmann,” which examined the roots of his work as an architect and designer. There followed “Josef Hoffmann: A Continuous Process” (2005), “Josef Hoffmann – Carlo Scarpa: On the Sublime in Architecture” (2006), “Josef Hoffmann – Adolf Loos: Ornament and Tradition” (2007), “Josef Hoffmann – Donald Judd: Hypothesis” (2008), the permanent exhibition “Josef Hoffmann: Inspirations” (2009), and most recently “Rewriting the Space: Dorit Margreiter / Josef Hoffmann” (2010).

Josef Hoffmann. Architecture Guide

The book “Josef Hoffmann. Architecture Guide,” published in 2010, is the first presentation of all European buildings designed by Josef Hoffman in a single volume. This publication was prepared in cooperation with the Moravian Gallery in Brno.

An essay by Jan Tabor and further contributions by Rainald Franz, Martina Lehmannová and Kathrin Pokorny-Nagel discuss Hoffmann's relevance and importance. Using 39 selected examples, this publication describes extant and (to varying extents) accessible buildings and interiors by Josef Hoffmann. These are discussed in brief descriptions and illustrated with archival and present-day photographs. The “Architecture Guide” also contains a comprehensive biography covering Hoffmann's life and works. The introductory texts are by Peter Noever and Marek Pokorný.

All press materials are available for download at www.MAK.at/press.

Press Data Sheet

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MAK on TOUR	As part of “MAK on TOUR,” the MAK is offering its visitors a trip to Brtnice for the exhibition’s opening: Departure from the MAK at 8:30 a.m., arrival back at MAK Vienna at 8 p.m.; tour fee: € 39 (covers travel, museum visit with guided tour, sightseeing in Brtnice). Information and registration at Tel.: (+43-1) 711 36-231, or by E-mail at: marketing@MAK.at Details at www.MAK.at/MAKonTOUR
Curator	Rainald Franz, MAK Library and Works on Paper Collection
Information on the Josef Hoffmann Museum, Brtnice	Kathrin Pokorny-Nagel, head of the MAK Library and the Works on Paper Room, Tel. (+43-1) 711 36-250
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