

Press Release

The Second Skin.

Objects for Packing and Preserving

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| Press Preview | Tuesday, 12 April 2011, 10:30 a.m. |
| Opening | Tuesday, 12 April 2011, 8:00 p.m. |
| Exhibition Venue | MAK Study Collection Metal MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna |
| Exhibition Term | 13 April 2011 – 15 January 2012 |
| Opening Hours | Tue MAK NITE® 10 a.m.–12 midnight Wed–Sun 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Mon closed |

The wide range of containers used to hold all manner of objects since the Middle Ages—including chests, boxes and cases—will receive a close-up look in the exhibition “The Second Skin. Objects for Packing and Preserving,” to open at the Metal section of the MAK Study Collection on 12 April 2011. On display will be around 80 objects, the oldest of which is a 14th-century pyx made of leather and iron.

Passionately devoted collectors and increasing mobility were the two factors that guided the development of objects for packing and storing valuables as well as everyday objects both secular and sacred. Even as late as the 18th century, it remained customary to take along household items when traveling. Trunks, chests, cabinets, cases and other such containers were constructed for complete sets of items as well as for specific objects, mainly to prevent damage.

In order to demonstrate the diversity of formats and of the materials used, this presentation will also include examples of such objects—some even including their contents—from the holdings of the MAK Collection Asia, Glass and Ceramics, Furniture and Woodwork and Textiles and Carpets, as well as from the MAK Library. The older objects, in particular, are often decorated—some quite sparingly, others all over. These include strongboxes, small coffers and boxes as well as large cabinets which collectors had custom-made in order to store things like coins, medals, stones and jewelry.

Among the objects to be displayed are a case for a venesection scarificator from 1784, several 17th-century toiletry cases made of leather, precious metals, parchment and silk, and further small cases for travelers’ eating utensils.

Strongboxes, recognizable by their vaulted lids made of wood, leather and metal (and perhaps covered in fabric), were originally derived from travel chests. Differences in size and material correspond with their specific intended uses. So-called wedding caskets, for example, were used to present dowry gifts such as coins, jewelry and toiletry items. Worthy of special note is one such casket from 16th-century Italy with relief embroidery, as well as a further one finished in Japanese namban lacquer. This latter type was even produced in variants decorated with Christian scenes for the purpose of storing relics.

So-called “case makers” made their products primarily from leather, which was either used to cover a wooden base or was first shaped around a wooden mold before being glued, sewn and ornamented. Some such cases actually reveal more than they conceal, replicating the form of the enclosed object like “second skins” and thus identifying their contents.

All press material on this exhibition is available for download at www.MAK.at/press

This press conference will introduce two exhibitions at once: “The Second Skin. Objects for Packing and Presenting” and “The Emperor’s New Colors. 19th -Century Chinese Art from the MAK Collection.” These exhibitions will be opened together at 8 p.m.



MAK

Applied Arts | Contemporary Art

Press Data Sheet

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| Curator | Elisabeth Schmuttermeier, MAK Curator Metal and Wiener Werkstätte Archive |
| MAK Expert-guided Tour | Thursday, 28 April 2011, 5:00 p.m. |
| MAK Admission | € 9.90 with MAK guide / € 7.90 / reduced: € 5.50 Free admission on Saturdays® |
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Vienna, 12 April 2011