

Press Release

MAK Releases Multimedia Tablet App for *Vienna 1900*: For Use at Home and at the Museum

Talk with Q&A session on Tuesday, 16 September 2014, 6:00 p.m.
the launch of the app MAK Columned Main Hall
 MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna

Authentic insights from original photos and videos, an inspiring variety of perspectives in audio commentary from MAK experts, snapshots from visitors, comics from international illustrators: on 16 September 2014 the MAK will release a tablet app that offers multimedia information on the MAK Permanent Collection *Vienna 1900. Design / Arts and Crafts 1890–1938* and invites visitors to embark on an inspiring journey. As a free download for Apple and Android tablets, the app encourages visitors to browse through *Vienna 1900*, gain an overview, and return to the collection through innovative approaches, even outside the museum—whether at home, at a hotel, or on a train. The content, introduction, and user experience of the MAK app have been designed both for use at the museum and for pre-and post-visit situations.

MAK Director Christoph Thun-Hohenstein: “The new app for *Vienna 1900* brings important paradigms from the MAK such as the linking of art and everyday life, intercreativity, interaction, and innovative learning into the digital space. With this high-end museum app, the MAK can stand up to comparison with offerings from other museums around the world.” The app will also be installed as a multimedia guide on 30 iPad Air devices that visitors can borrow at the museum.

Users can follow a tour during their visit to the MAK Permanent Collection *Vienna 1900. Design / Arts and Crafts 1890–1938* or stroll through the exhibition rooms and look up information on specific objects. Along the way, they can listen to authentic audio commentary from curator Christian Witt-Döring as well as other curators and restorers at the MAK. In addition to audio clips on the cultural history of Viennese modernism, the app also includes videos that offer an in-depth look at furniture, photographs that take visitors back to the original locations where the works were exhibited, as well as design drawings and explanatory photographs that offer additional context. Much of the content in the MAK app can also be shared via Facebook and Twitter or sent by e-mail.

Exploratory and Emotionally Engaging

Users getting to know the app will be surprised by its exploratory approach: verbs that function as associative keywords are combined with objects from the collection to form a constantly changing matrix. For example, humorous associations with everyday activities are made, and emotional bridges are built between the object and the user.

Verbs also run through the interactive functions of the MAK app as a common thread: visitors are invited to post snapshots of selected objects on a “pinboard” and share them on social networks. By adding a verb or a comment, they can lend context to their photos and provide suggestions, questions, or provocations for other visitors.

The objects that are photographed the most often by visitors will be featured in comics by various illustrators, which will be published on a quarterly basis exclusively through the MAK app. One of the verbs posted by the visitors will be chosen and integrated into the story. The emphasis will be on an associative, playful perspective conveyed through the medium of comics, which have regained popularity in recent years.

The MAK app was created in a close partnership with the Vienna-based company NOUS Wissensmanagement GmbH, which has developed mobile apps for cultural institutions such as the Wiener Staatsoper, the broadcasters NDR and Ö1, as well as companies such as Red Bull, Spar, and Die Presse since 2006. Since 2009 the company has also maintained branches in the United States and has completed numerous high-profile projects with cultural institutions in Austria (the Kunsthistorisches Museum, the Wiener Staatsoper, and the Jüdisches Museum) as well as international museums (the Staatliches Museum Ägyptischer Kunst in Munich, the Perot Museum in Dallas, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art). Thus, as an experienced partner the company was able to contribute a wide range of expertise to the planning and implementation of the MAK app. The user interface was created by the renowned interaction designer Ulf Harr, who also worked with NOUS on the Ö1 app and the app for the technology portal Futurezone.

Users who bring their own tablet with the app installed on it to the museum will receive discounted admission to the MAK (€ 5.50) through the end of the year. It is also possible to download the MAK app over Wi-Fi at the museum. Visitors have the additional option of borrowing an iPad Air at the museum for a fee of € 2 and using the MAK app as a multimedia guide.

The app is available for free on the iTunes Store (<https://itunes.apple.com/at/app/mak-oesterreichisches-museum/id912757639?mt=8>) and the Google Play Store (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.nousguide.android.makpublicguide>).

It requires an iPad or iPad mini (iOS 7 or later) or an Android tablet (Android 4.4 or later).

The MAK has received financial support for the development of the app and for exhibitions and tourism projects in the Centropo region from the European Union funding program “European Territorial Cooperation, Austria-Czech Republic, 2007–2013.” NOUS Wissensmanagement GmbH contributed a sponsorship of *departure – the Creative Unit of the Vienna Business Agency* to the project.

The app will be presented on 16 September at 6:00 p.m. in a talk followed by a Q&A session entitled “The Development of a Museum App: The New MAK App for Tablets” in the MAK Columned Main Hall. Max Arends (Project Manager, NOUS Wissensmanagement GmbH), Ulf Harr (user interface designer), Christian Henner-Fehr (cultural consultant), and Beate Lex (Head of New Concepts for Learning, MAK) will speak about the approaches and challenges of the project.

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