



MAK

Press Release

FRANZ VON ZÜLOW. Paper

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| Press Preview | Tuesday, 26 November 2013, 10:30 a.m. |
| Opening | Tuesday, 26 November 2013, 7 p.m. |
| Exhibition Venue | MAK Works on Paper Room MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna |
| Exhibition Dates | 27 November 2013 – 11 May 2014 |
| Opening Hours | Tue 10 a.m.–10 p.m., Wed–Sun 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Free admission on Tuesdays 6–10 p.m. |

A very personal view of Franz von Zülow's approach to art and the arts and crafts will be revealed by the exhibition *FRANZ VON ZÜLOW. Paper*, which the MAK is dedicating to this Austrian painter and graphic artist on the occasion of his 130th birthday and the 50th anniversary of his death. Inspired by the Vienna Secession and the Wiener Werkstätte, and under the lasting influence of his mother's rural origins, Franz von Zülow (15 March 1883 – 26 February 1963) produced an extensive oeuvre characterized by his own unmistakable artistic handwriting. Thanks to the MAK's direct access to the artist's entire estate, this exhibition will concentrate primarily on personal output that, for the most part, has never been publically shown.

Franz von Zülow was a master of versatility. He became known with painting work and oil paintings and other painted works, and he had an assured command of the wide repertoire of applied art forms. The exhibition *FRANZ VON ZÜLOW. Paper* places the focus on graphic and often intricate works that fall into the arts and crafts category, as well as on large-scale, artfully folded paper constructions. These frequently quite private witnesses to his life's work serve to shed light on a side of him that was previously little known.

Zülow's origins and his fondness for all things agrarian had an impact on entire oeuvre. His father was descended from the landed nobility of Mecklenburg, and his mother came from a Lower-Austrian farming family. When Zülow brought his earliest paintings, made in Haugsdorf, to Vienna, they attracted attention. The Vienna School of Arts and Crafts admitted him as a student, and he began creating illustrations and designs for the Wiener Werkstätte even before graduation.

The era's omnipresent enthusiasm for experimentation and a new understanding of both style-consciousness and creative intent nourished the young applied artist's fascination with the non-European world, above all with Japan—so like many of his colleagues, Zülow was strongly influenced by the art of Katagami. In 1903, he



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adapted this paper stencil technique to create a printing process, which he had patented in 1907 as “paper-cut printing”; this process enabled him to produce several prints from each design.

Franz von Zülow first made a name for himself with original, self-published monthly booklets called *Monatshefte*, which he hand-painted or printed in very small runs from December 1909 to July 1915. Parallel to this work, he began exploring the arts and crafts. Decorative works make up the largest category within his oeuvre. It was in wallpaper, pictorial broadsheets, and wall decorations that his unmistakable artistic handwriting could most clearly be seen—and demand for Zülow’s work took off. He went on to create decorative frescos and tapestries, including a large wall tapestry for the Ankara residence of Mustafa Kemal Pasha (later known as Atatürk) in 1932.

The Wiener Werkstätte likewise appreciated Franz von Zülow’s colorful and formally rich style and commissioned him to create fabric designs and tapestries. Since Zülow remained strongly anchored in the world of craftsmanship, it was easy for him to provide designs for the Schleiss ceramics workshop in Gmunden and the Augarten Porcelain Manufactory. His most important and monumental works include the frescos for architect Clemens Holzmeister’s Bräuhotel in Lofer (1929). In later years, he concentrated more and more on easel paintings and watercolors that are every bit as colorful as the rural gardens that he so loved to paint.

Zülow was also commissioned by Josef Hoffmann to provide designs for the wallpaper to be used in the nursery of Stoclet House. These were ultimately not used, however, even though both their serial arrangement and their figural elements, strongly reduced to geometric forms, would have harmonized well with the villa’s architecture.

Franz von Zülow’s decorative, Jugendstil-derived planar art, which he combined with folk art inspirations, is particularly clear to see in his *Monatshefte*, which were subscribed to by artists including Josef Hoffmann, Gustav Klimt, and Egon Schiele, as well as in his later work *Die 12 Monate* (1921), a portfolio created for the Wiener Werkstätte that contained depictions of the year’s 12 months. In 1927, Zülow landed one of his most widely received commissions: graphic work for the tobacco producer Tabakregie, which saw him design both cigarette packs and the company’s product catalogue.

Over his entire career, which was characterized above all by graphic art, Zülow repeatedly created works for children. He drew stage set-like watercolors and carousel picture books in a dioramic style, and it seems almost a given that Zülow eventually went on to develop puppet theaters with paper scenery, including the carousel picture book *Aus 1000 und 1 Nacht* [One Thousand and One Nights] (1946) shown in the exhibition. His later picture book *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* (1954) is characterized by impressive variety, intense colors, and the light, weightless design of its three-

dimensional staging. Similar things can be said of the watercolored work *Urwaldtiere* [Jungle Animals] (created before 1955), which consists of six pictorial surfaces layered in a stage-like manner.

In 1947, having reached the zenith of his success, Zülow set to work on a painting handbook entitled *Die Malfibel*, which contained a compilation of those techniques for the decoration of everyday items that he deemed most important as examples to be followed. Using 82 illustrations, he explained six easy painting techniques that could be employed in printing and painting without elaborate equipment or preparations—and in doing so, he also conserved the aesthetic sensibility that he had acquired in turn-of-the-century Vienna.

His whole life long, Zülow remained a quintessential applied artist. Whether as a designer of fabrics and tapestries (Wiener Werkstätte) or of porcelain (Schleiss in Gmunden, Augarten Porcelain Manufactory), in his monumental frescos (the Bräuhotel in Lofer, Schärding's town hall, Austrian Parliament), or in his designs for the fire curtain of Vienna's Akademietheater and door decorations at the Kammer spiele in Linz: Franz von Zülow's technical and material execution of his themes was exemplary in the fullest sense of the word.

This exhibition will see the release of a catalogue as part of the *MAK Studies* series: *FRANZ VON ZÜLOW. Papier / Paper*, ed. by Christoph Thun-Hohenstein and Kathrin Pokorny-Nagel, with written contributions by Roland Girtler, Friedrich C. Heller, Peter Klinger, Gerd Pichler, Kathrin Pokorny-Nagel, and Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, Verlag für moderne Kunst Nürnberg, 2013, 144 pages, € 24.

Press photos are available for download at MAK.at/press.

Press Data Sheet

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| Curator | Kathrin Pokorny-Nagel, Head of the MAK Library and Works on Paper Collection / Archive |
| Guided Tour with the Curator | Thursday, 28 November 2013, 5 p.m. |
| Publication | <i>FRANZ VON ZÜLOW. Papier / Paper</i> , ed. by Christoph Thun-Hohenstein and Kathrin Pokorny-Nagel, with written contributions by Roland Girtler, Friedrich C. Heller, Peter Klinger, Gerd Pichler, Kathrin Pokorny-Nagel, and Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, Verlag für moderne Kunst Nürnberg, 2013, 144 pages, € 24. |
| MAK Admission | € 7.90 / reduced: € 5.50 / family ticket: € 11 / Free admission for children and teens up to 19 |
| MAK Press and PR | Judith Anna Schwarz-Jungmann (Head) Sandra Hell-Ghignone Veronika Träger Lara Steinhäuber T +43 1 711 36-233, 229, 212 F +43 1 711 36-227 presse@MAK.at www.MAK.at Vienna, 17 October 2013 |