



MAK

DECORATING

Even in the early days of what is now the MAK—Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art, fabrics by companies from across the monarchy were incorporated into the MAK Textiles and Carpets Collection. Among them are lengths of material by long-standing and renowned manufacturers such as Philipp Haas & Söhne, A. Flemmich's Söhne, and Johann Backhausen & Söhne; subsequently, the collection was augmented by samples from enterprises that were new at that time, like the Wiener Werkstätte. The MAK DESIGN LAB displays a selection of fabrics from the period around 1900 that paints a picture of what was considered good style at that time. The exhibits also testify to the ingenuity and diversity of patterns from the area in and around Vienna. The presentation of these materials is divided by the manufacturing techniques used: on the one side the printed fabrics are shown, on the other the jacquard fabrics.

It is particularly Johann Backhausen & Söhne and the Wiener Werkstätte that attained art historical prominence for their fabric production on account of the fact that they commissioned prestigious and innovative contemporary designers with textile patterns—a novelty at that time in Vienna. Inspiration came from a wide range of sources. Even before the founding of the Wiener Werkstätte (1903), Koloman Moser had designed textiles like the famous *Reicher Fischzug* [Rich Haul] (1899), which was based on Japanese models. The architect Robert Oerley also designed for Johann Backhausen & Söhne; Dagobert Peche worked for Philipp Haas & Söhne. Both companies primarily produced complexly woven fabrics for interiors.

From approximately 1910 the Wiener Werkstätte designed fabrics—mostly printed cotton, silk, or linen—the production of which was outsourced. Circa 1,800 fabric patterns were created in the years before its disbandment. Their rich repertoire of forms featured both geometric and floral patterns, but also abstract shapes. Among the designers were personalities such as Josef Hoffmann, Dagobert Peche, Koloman Moser, Eduard Wimmer-Wisgrill (who intermittently ran the Wiener Werkstätte's highly successful fashion division), and numerous women including Maria Likarz and Irene Schaschl, who worked for the Wiener Werkstätte until the 1920s. Textiles constituted the financially most profitable branch of the Wiener Werkstätte. Many of the patterns were also printed as wallpaper; indeed, the same patterns often reappeared on clothing and in interiors.

This room of the MAK DESIGN LAB enables visitors to dedicate their full attention to the individual fabrics and to study their variety of forms as manifest in the select samples on display.

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