



MAK

Press Release

ADOLF LOOS: Private Houses

Opening	Tuesday, 8 December 2020, 10 a.m.–7 p.m. Free admission
Exhibition Venue	MAK Permanent Collection Contemporary Art MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna
Exhibition Dates	8 December 2020 – 14 March 2021

The MAK is mounting an exhibition to mark the 150th birthday of Adolf Loos (1870–1933), one of the most important pioneers of modernism in architecture. *ADOLF LOOS: Private Houses* focuses on his revolutionary private residential buildings, the lion's share of which were luxuriously appointed single-family homes, villas, and country residences for a bourgeois, frequently Jewish clientele as well as for artists and literary figures. As a contrast to such structures, the present selection of 100 design sketches, plans, photographs, and models from the Albertina Museum's Adolf Loos Archive also includes important social projects designed by this exceptional architect, including structures for the housing cooperative Wiener Siedlungswerk, for the municipality of Vienna, and for the Austrian Werkbund.

Adolf Loos's complex oeuvre, especially his architecture and his writings, had a sustained influence over the past century's culture of building. With his revolutionary architectural solutions, Loos satisfied one of the most important human needs—the need for housing. Later architectural icons such as Richard Neutra, Heinrich Kulka, Rudolph M. Schindler, and (briefly) Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky numbered among his students and colleagues.

As an energetic opponent of the historicist Ringstraße style and a sharp critic of both Art Nouveau and the Vienna Secession, Loos also left his mark on Vienna's aesthetic discourse around the turn of the last century. In his numerous theoretical tracts and especially in his legendary polemic *Ornament and Crime* (1908), he spoke out vehemently against all newly invented ornamentation of utilitarian objects and buildings.

Residential buildings were a topic for Loos throughout his career, and they occupy a special place in his output. This MAK exhibition sheds light on both his planned and his realized projects, which can be divided into private and public housing. Loos created his structures in a highly independent manner but not without a wide array of influences, among which one can discern complex ties to American, English, and Mediterranean architecture as well as to classicism and antiquity.

From the USA, where he spent three years of his life, Loos brought to Vienna an entirely new impression of modern culture that he propagated in polemic newspaper articles and demonstrated in his famous *Looshaus* (1910/11) on Michaelerplatz: this building's structural clarity and unadorned façade created a public scandal in the Vienna of that day.

Whenever possible, Loos preferred to design his often flat-roofed private residential buildings with large terraces and in accordance with his idea of the *Raumplan* (lit.: “spatial plan”): this self-developed system departed from the method of simply “layering” floors on top of each other, with each room instead being given the height and floor space necessary for its intended use. This economical way of dealing with space gave rise to a complex, spatially interlocked system that did and still does offer a high degree of livability.

Projects planned and/or built according to this system between 1903 and 1931, such as the houses for the Dadaist figure Tristan Tzara (1925/26), for the singer and dancer Josephine Baker in Paris (1927—this house was never realized), for the builder František Müller in Prague (1928–1930), and for the textile manufacturer Hans Moller in Vienna (1927), number among the world's most important 20th-century single family homes.

In addition to showing Adolf Loos's architectural projects, this exhibition will for the first time ever juxtapose the plaster replica of his bust by sculptor Artur Immanuel Löwental (1911) with his death mask, which was taken by Adolf Rainbauer in 1933.

After the exhibitions *WAYS TO MODERNISM: Josef Hoffmann, Adolf Loos, and their Impact* (17 December 2014 – 19 April 2015) and *LOOS: Our Contemporary* (13 March – 23 June 2013), the MAK's *ADOLF LOOS: Private Houses* offers a renewed opportunity to experience and explore the oeuvre of a forward thinker who quested after a distinctly human form of modernism.

As part of its comprehensive digital offerings, the MAK invites to a private view into the exhibition *ADOLF LOOS: Private Houses*. The virtual guided tour with Rainald Franz, Curator, MAK Glass and Ceramics Collection, is accessible from 4 December, 11 a.m. via the MAK YouTube channel (youtube.com/makwien) as well as via [MAK.at](https://mak.at).

Press photos are available for download at [MAK.at/press](https://mak.at/press).

Press Data

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Opening Hours	Tue 10 a.m.–6 p.m. (until further notice), Wed–Sun 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Project Coordination	Rainald Franz, Curator, MAK Glass and Ceramics Collection
Guest Curator	Markus Kristan
Exhibition Architecture	Michael Embacher
Supporting Program	See MAK.at/en/adolfloos
MAK Admission	€ 14 / Reduced € 11 / Family Ticket € 15 Every Tuesday from 6 to 9 p.m.: admission € 6 Free admission for children and teens under 19
MAK Press and PR	Judith Anna Schwarz-Jungmann (Head) Cäcilia Barani Sandra Hell-Ghignone T +43 1 711 36-233, -212, -229 presse@MAK.at www.MAK.at

Vienna, 3 December 2020