



MAK

Press Release

THE PRIVATE JOSEF HOFFMANN
Apartment Tours

Press Conference	Sunday, 31 May 2015, 12 p.m.
Opening	Sunday, 31 May 2015, 2 p.m.
Exhibition Venue	Josef Hoffmann Museum, Brtnice* náměstí Svobody 263, 58832 Brtnice, CZ * A joint branch of the Moravian Gallery in Brno and the MAK, Vienna
Exhibition Dates	2 June 2015– 5 June 2016
Opening Hours	June: Tue–Sun 10 a.m.–5 p.m. July/August: daily 10 a.m.– 5 p.m. September/October: Tue–Sun 10 a.m.– 5 p.m. and by prior arrangement Latest admission: 4 p.m.

The exhibition *THE PRIVATE JOSEF HOFFMANN: Apartment Tours* at the Josef Hoffmann Museum, Brtnice, offers intimate insights into the interiors in which the popular architect and designer actually lived. In this their tenth shared exhibition devoted to Josef Hoffmann (1870–1956), the Moravian Gallery and the MAK are showcasing hitherto unexhibited objects and little-known photographs from the personal estate of this prime architect of Viennese Modernism and long-time teacher at the Vienna School of Arts and Crafts. The exhibits reveal the style in which Hoffmann lived his private life, thus creating a very personal portrait of an artist at once exceptionally talented and highly reclusive. The exhibition also presents contemporary design positions in the form of object interventions that deliberately reflect Hoffmann's style and the traditional canon of forms of the Wiener Werkstätte in order to achieve new interpretations—or “updates”—of established classics.

Along the lines of Adolf Loos's “Wohnungswanderungen”, the Hoffmann “Apartment Tours” invite visitors to make a journey of discovery by way not only of contemporary photographs and private photographs taken by Josef Hoffmann himself but also of hitherto unexhibited private possessions: everyday household items, objects that served as sources of inspiration, or pieces from his collections. Furthermore, the inclusion in the exhibition of photographs in a family album donated to the Josef Hoffmann Museum and the municipality of Brtnice by the architect's daughter-in-law Ann Marie Hoffmann-Beerens facilitates an unprecedentedly vivid picture of the style in which Hoffmann and his family actually lived.

In addition to the rooms of the house in the Czech Republic where Josef Hoffmann was born, the exhibition focuses on three Vienna apartments associated with important phases of Hoffmann's life and artistic development: his bachelor apartment at



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Magdalenenstraße 12, the apartment at Margaretenstraße 5, and finally the apartment at Neulinggasse 24. All these apartments were documented in photographic form and described in the journals *Das Interieur*, *Hohe Warte*, and *Die moderne Wohnung und ihre Ausstattung*.

Typical features of the surprisingly eclectic personal living style of the Otto Wagner student Josef Hoffmann are informal ensembles and heterogeneous arrangements that contrast strongly with his strictly composed and *Gesamtkunstwerk*-orientated public commissions. This polarity serves to clarify the characteristic features of intimate living and representative living as Hoffmann defined them, revealed in the fields of tension of two antitheses: intimate living versus representative living, and heterogeneous mixtures of patterns, styles, and periods versus homogeneous uniformity. For Josef Hoffmann, his private apartments were laboratories for experiments, places for remembering, and sources of identity.

The Austro-Czech architectural critic and journalist Jan Tabor described Hoffmann's re-design of his parental house in Brtnice as a "retreat from his own artificiality". Hoffmann himself made statements on interior design in such writings as the early essay "Einfache Möbel" [Simple furniture] (*Das Interieur II*, 1901), illustrated with designs very similar to furnishings he had in his own apartment, and later in the article "Neues Wohnen" [New living] (*Neue Freie Presse*, 1936).

That Hoffmann's ideas on house and home still have the power to inspire today is shown by objects and interventions by contemporary designers reacting to Hoffmann's style. The creations of Hanna Krüger and Heath Nash are strikingly successful condensations and bold developments of the design features and esthetic typical of the Wiener Werkstätte.

The designer Hanna Krüger (* 1979) lives in Berlin and was the first recipient of the Nespresso Design Scholarship in Austria. In the process of her artistic research in the Archive of the MAK Collections she made a close study of design drawings by Josef Hoffmann and the Wiener Werkstätte. With her objects she questions the principle of authorship in these days of "creative commons". For example, all the designers whose works were used by Hanna Krüger for her vase *Pila*—plates from a Rosenthal collection—benefit from the sales of her creation.

The upcycling designer Heath Nash (* 1977), who lives and works in Cape Town and uses refuse material for his creations, found inspiration in the forms of Hoffmann's grid objects. For his hybrid objects, which he created during the period he spent at the MAK DESIGN SPACE (26 Sep – 26 Oct 2014) for the project *SOUTH MEETS NORTH: Local Innovation. Global Conversation*, he used not only cheap materials such as plastic bottles and remains of metal grids but also substandard products from the traditional J. & L. Lobmeyr company, which specializes in exclusive glassware.

In addition to the German and South African designs, the contemporary objects exhibited at the Josef Hoffmann Museum include select pieces of furniture by three Czech designers. The chairs by Jan Plecháč, Radim Babák, and Jan Tuček exemplify contemporary positions in Czech design.

The objects displayed in the exhibition *THE PRIVATE JOSEF HOFFMANN: Apartment Tours* are spatially and thematically fused with the permanent exhibition *JOSEF HOFFMANN: Inspirations*, which has since 2009 been using objects and designs to investigate Hoffmann's sources of inspiration at his birthplace Brtnice.

Josef Hoffmann Museum, Brtnice

In 1907 Josef Hoffmann refurbished the baroque house where he was born in Brtnice in accordance with the principles of the Wiener Werkstätte. As early as 1992 the MAK was present in Brtnice with the exhibition *The Baroque Hoffmann*. Since 2006 the house has been run by the MAK and the Moravian Gallery in Brno as the Josef Hoffmann Museum. This collaboration has hitherto seen the mounting of the following exhibitions: *JOSEF HOFFMANN. An Endless Process* (2005), *JOSEF HOFFMANN – CARLO SCARPA: On the Sublime in Architecture* (2006), *JOSEF HOFFMANN – ADOLF LOOS: Ornament and Tradition* (2007), *JOSEF HOFFMANN – DONALD JUDD: Hypothesis* (2008), the permanent exhibition *JOSEF HOFFMANN: Inspirations* (2009), *REWRITING THE SPACE: Dorit Margreiter/Josef Hoffmann* (2010), *JOSEF HOFFMANN – OSWALD OBERHUBER: Total Design and Drafts* (2011), *JOSEF HOFFMANN/STANISLAV KOLÍBAL: Plane – Line – Space* (2012), *JOSEF HOFFMANN – FRIEDRICH KIESLER: Contemporary Art Applied* (2013), and most recently *COLLEGIALITY AND CONTROVERSY. Josef Hoffmann and the Architects of Moravian Modernism from the Wagner School in Vienna* (2014).

Press photos on the exhibition are available for download at MAK.at/en/press.



Press Data Sheet

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Curators	Rainald Franz, Curator, MAK Glass and Ceramics Collection Thomas Geisler, Curator, MAK Design Collection Martina Lehmannova, Curator, UPM Prague
MAK on TOUR	MAK on TOUR is mounting an excursion to Brtnice: Sunday, 31 May 2015, Shuttle bus Vienna–Brtnice and back, Departure MAK 8:30 a.m. Return MAK ca. 6:30 p.m., Price € 40 (inclusive of travel, exhibition opening, and guided tour through the Josef Hoffmann Museum, Brtnice) Information and registration at T +43 1 711 36-231 or marketing@MAK.at , Details at MAK.at/MAKonTOUR
MAK Press and PR	Judith Anna Schwarz-Jungmann (head) Sandra Hell-Ghignone Veronika Träger Lara Steinhäüßer T +43 1 711 36-233, -229, -212 presse@MAK.at , MAK.at Vienna, 31 May 2015