War and peace at the Stockholm ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’ of 1917

by ELIZABETH CLEGG

IN LATE AUGUST 1917, on the threshold of what would long be recalled as one of twentieth-century Europe’s most traumatic and fateful autumns, a rail journey of several days brought six impatient travellers from a stifling, demoralised Vienna some 1,500 kilometres north, by way of Prague, Dresden and Berlin, to the reinvigorating light and comparative serenity of Stockholm. Capital of the warring continent’s most confident and proactive neutral, a forum for news and views from every quarter, a favoured halt of reformists and revolutionaries and the following of spies and agents provocateurs, the Baltic port city was now also host to the diverse and volatile assemblies of those who had come to attend a repeatedly postponed International Peace Conference.¹

The Viennese party, under the genial supervision of its leader, the German–Moravian architect and designer Josef Hoffmann, worked tirelessly between 3rd and 6th September to install around 650 components of an ambitious ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’ in the thirteen rooms of the Liljevalchs Konsthall, a municipal exhibiting gallery recently opened in the museum and entertainment quarter on the island of Djurgården (Figs. 1 and 2).² A remarkable survey of contemporary practice in the form of paintings, drawings, prints and sculpture, of glass, ceramics and metal, of textiles and documented architecture, with work by leading exponents in every category, this was the first such Austrian presentation to be seen in Scandinavia, and the largest to be sent abroad.³

Soon widely advertised, as Österrikisk Konstutställning (Fig. 3), the show formally opened at noon on Saturday 8th September for a convivial private view in the best inclusivist style of wartime Stockholm, marking the start of the Liljevalchs’ autumn season.⁴ But it also served, during its first seven days, as just one facet of a separately organised ‘Austrian Week’ intended to function as a relentless charm offensive. Well-attended lectures, eagerly over-subscribed concerts (given by a talented military band, here perforce in the civilian disguise of a Wiener Symphonie-Orchester), and two rapturously received ‘Viennese Fashion Shows’ (staged by a dozen purveyors of haute couture), all in choice venues across the city, complemented each other, and the exhibition, exhibition of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century French art in the winter of 1917–18.

¹ See exh. cat. Österrikiska Konstutställningarna, Stockholm (Liljevalchs Konsthall) 1917. Before 1917 the largest exhibition of Austrian fine and applied art sent abroad had been that presented in 1911 in the ‘Austria’ pavilion at the Roman ‘Belle Arti’ segment of the Cinquantennio, the international show staged to mark fifty years of unified Italian statehood; see ‘Padiglione de l’Austria’, in exh. cat. Esposizione Internazionale di Roma. Mostra di Belle Arti, Rome (Valle Giulia) 1911, pp. 114–45. This display, also installed by Hoffmann (on this occasion in collaboration with Friedrich Dörnhöffer, first Director of the Moderne Galerie, Vienna), comprised 382 catalogued items, although with a higher proportion of fine art than shown six years later in Stockholm.

² It is briefly discussed in E. Clegg: ‘“Austrian Art” on the Move: The Cultural

³ I am much indebted to the following scholars, curators and archivists in Stockholm and in Vienna for their assistance and encouragement: Lillemor Asp, Lillemor Björkman, Märtten Castenfors, Carina Ferlatti, Gerhard Gonsa, Andrea Hackel, Olof Hallmén, Peter Klinger, Susanne Kühberger, Gunnel Lindelöv, Klas Lundkvist and Kathrin Pallestrang. This article is dedicated to the memory of my mother, Margaret Clegg.

⁴ See anon.: ‘Engelske ministern på österrikiska konstutställningen’, Stockholm (Liljevalchs Konsthall) 1917. Before 1917 the largest exhibition of Austrian fine and applied art sent abroad had been that presented in 1911 in the ‘Austria’ pavilion at the Roman ‘Belle Arti’ segment of the Cinquantennio, the international show staged to mark fifty years of unified Italian statehood; see ‘Padiglione de l’Austria’, in exh. cat. Esposizione Internazionale di Roma. Mostra di Belle Arti, Rome (Valle Giulia) 1911, pp. 114–45. This display, also installed by Hoffmann (on this occasion in collaboration with Friedrich Dörnhöffer, first Director of the Moderne Galerie, Vienna), comprised 382 catalogued items, although with a higher proportion of fine art than shown six years later in Stockholm.

⁵ News of the presence at this event of the British Minister to Stockholm, Sir Eune Howard, along with other official representatives of Austria’s wartime enemies, soon found its way into the relentless local rumour mill and, in due course, fantastically exaggerated, into the columns of some of the pro–German local and national press. See anon.: ‘Konst och Politik’, Aftonbladet 238 (23rd September 1917), p. 5; and anon.: ‘Engelske ministern på österrikiska konstutställningen’, Stockholms Dagblad 265 (29th September 1917), p. 12.
as diverse cultural expressions of ‘Austria’. They were, more specifically, reiterated proof that ‘Austria at War’, for three years and on as many Fronts, had lost nothing of its daring and life-enhancing creativity, and an implicit promise of all that at the Austro-Hungarian Legation. As was later reported to the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry, the Ministerium des Äussern, Bittner had been commissioned to secure this formal agreement not by those responsible for the eventual ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’, but by the Austro-Hungarian War Ministry, the Kriegsministerium, for the benefit of its own Press and Propaganda Office, the Kriegspressequartier.

Since the autumn of 1915 this dynamic entity had run a centrally co-ordinated programme of ‘War Pictures Exhibitions’, ‘Kriegsbilderausstellungen’ (in addition to encyclopaedic, multimedia ‘War Exhibitions’), intended to honour and celebrate Austria–Hungary through a stirring visual record of the travails and triumphs of its armed forces. Initially these had been presented within the Empire and in the territory of its wartime allies and had comprised work on exclusively military themes by members of its own Art Department (men who in civilian life had trained and/or worked as artists). And this remained the case as the Kriegspressequartier first began to extend its exhibiting remit to include certain neutral foreign states.

By early 1917 the Kriegspressequartier had both ‘Scandinavia’ and ‘Holland’ in its exhibiting plans, and a small ‘War Pictures Exhibition’ was presented in Kristiania (Oslo) in March–April of that year. Under the new, energetic command of Colonel Wilhelm Eisner-Bubna, it was now in the process of evolving a decidedly less military style of display for presentation to neutral audiences (including work on civilian themes and loans of older


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Politics of International Exhibiting 1900–1918, in T.G. Natter and C. Grunenberg, eds: Gustav Klimt: Painting, Design and Modern Life, Liverpool ( Tate ) 2008, pp. 52–57 and 246–41. 4 See the Appendix for a list of the paintings/sculptures exhibited at the 1917 Stockholm ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’ by these artists (so far as it has been possible to establish this by cross-referencing printed, manuscript and photographic records held in Stockholm archives).


6 Karl, who had succeeded his seemingly ‘immortal’ great-uncle, Franz Joseph, on 21st November 1916, had two chief policy objectives during his short reign, both much to the fore in the summer and early autumn of 1917, but both ultimately thwarted: the geo-political repositioning of Austria–Hungary through its rapid removal from the War (its chief wartime ally, Germany, had quite other ambitions), and in effective reorganization through a restructuring of the Empire as a federation of nominally autonomous states (far too great a threat to the interests of the Austro-German and Magyar elites).

7 Stockholm Stadsarkiv, Liljevalchs Konsthall Korrespondens (cited hereafter as SStA/LKK), Es 2: ‘Överkommission mellan Liljevalchs Konsthall och Dr Karl Bittner, K i K österrikiska Regeringen’. Strictly speaking, this contract should refer not to the ‘Austrian Government’, but to the ‘Austro-Hungarian Government’, although the German translation (see note 13) preserves the error. The proposed show is described as an ‘utställning av maleri, skulptur, grafik och konstindustrielle alster’. The name ‘Liljevalchs’ was frequently (mis)spelt ‘Liljewalchs’ at this time. Sven Strindberg, who had spent several years in New York and had from 1913 to 1916 run his own art gallery in Helsinki, was a second cousin of the dramatist.


9 ÖStA/HHSt/MÄ/GA, Kopenhagen & Kristiania, Ausstellungen Box 122, 1917, file 452: draft letter and report, dated 6th May 1917, from the Austro-Hungarian Legation in Kristiania to the Kriegspressequartier, regarding press reception of, and sales made at, the ‘War Pictures Exhibition’ held at the Kristiania Kunstforening from 19th March to 14th April 1917.
paintings from museum collections), and was thereby soon arousing strenuous opposition for straying too far beyond its perceived field of expertise.12

Shortly after the contract with the Liljevalchs Konsthall had been signed on behalf of the Kriegspressequartier, the Austro-Hungarian Legation learnt that there was now also strong interest in arranging a display of Austrian art ‘for the new Stockholm exhibiting gallery’ on the part of the civilian authorities. Initially fostered by the Komitee für österreichische Edelarbeit und Kunst (a new sub-section of the Viennese Chamber of Commerce, set up to improve the co-ordination of cultural propaganda aimed at neutral foreign states), the proposal had subsequently attracted the formal support of the Press and Propaganda Office of the Ministerium des Äussern.13 As this was its first wartime venture in sponsoring an art exhibition, and this role (on the advice of the Komitee) was not to be publically advertised, the Ministerium was happy to place overall responsibility for selection and organisation in the capable hands of Josef Hoffmann, whom it promptly commissioned to investigate venues in Copenhagen and Kristiania as well as Stockholm. It appears that Hoffmann embarked on his Scandinavian tour in late June, intending to return to Vienna by mid-July.14

Apprised of these plans for yet another display with the Liljevalchs Konsthall in its sights, the Austro-Hungarian Legation in Stockholm noted that this gallery was almost certainly large enough to house two parallel exhibitions (the space required by the Kriegspressequartier constituting little over a third of the available total). Foreseeing no risk of incompatibility between military and civilian propaganda objectives, in early July it proposed a gallery-sharing scheme, although observing that the exhibition dates would have to remain as already fixed.15 Hoffmann was eventually delayed in Kristiania for a week by the need to undergo a minor operation, and he reached Stockholm only around 16th July.16 Presented with the proposed gallery-sharing scheme, he appears not to have objected to it on principle, but he soon found reason enough to declare it entirely ‘unworkable’. Upon visiting the Liljevalchs Konsthall and discovering precisely which rooms had been reserved for the Kriegspressequartier – a surviving sketch of the floor plan, pencilled in on the Legation’s copy of a German translation of the contract of österreichische Edelarbeit und Kunst’. The Komitee’s own primary preoccupation with regard to Stockholm (building on the success of previous, purely mercantile ventures sponsored by the Viennese Chamber of Commerce) was an early to mid-September promotion and celebration of Viennese fashion: the core of what later became the multifaceted ‘Austrian Week’. For the letter to Stockholm, see ÖStA/HHSt/MA/GA, Stockholm, Ausstellungen Box 112a, 1917, file 2834, enclosure no.1: letter, dated 25th June 1917, from Eich Pistor of the Komitee für österreichische Edelarbeit und Kunst, forwarded by the Ministerium des Äussern, on 28th June 1917, to the Austro-Hungarian Legation in Stockholm.17

12 On the strenuous opposition, see Vienna, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Allgemeines Verwaltungarchiv, Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht, Unterricht-Allgemein (cited hereafter as ÖStA/AVA/MKU/UA), 2949: Ausstellungen, Holland, 1917, file 25778, enclosure no.1: letter, dated 27th July 1917, from the Viennese artists’ societies Künstlergenossenschaft, Secession and Hagenbund to the Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht, requesting support for their formal objection to the decision of the Kriegspressequartier, in planning its exhibitions ‘for Holland and Scandinavia’ to include work on non-military themes as well as older pictures borrowed from museum collections without seeking expert advice on the matter of selection; and enclosure no.2: letter, dated 31st July 1917, from Colonel Wilhelm Eisner-Bubna of the Kriegspressequartier (who had heard independently of the three societies’ complaint) to the Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht, outlining the evolution and principles of the Kriegspressequartier exhibitions.

13 See ÖStA/HHSt/MA/GA, Stockholm, Ausstellungen Box 112a, 1917, confidential report, dated 8th February 1917, on ‘Der Schaffung eines Propaganda-Komitees für
14th June, indicates the spaces in question to be Rooms 2, 3 and 4 (Fig. 5) – he threatened to withdraw ‘his’ exhibition if no more ‘reasonable’ sharing arrangement could be found.\(^1\)

Such intransigence, risking an open confrontation between military and civilian interests that would have greatly embarrased the Austro-Hungarian Legation, demanded swift action; and on 18th July Karl Bittner took up the matter with a visiting representative of the Kriegspressequartier. The eventual outcome of their meeting was a decision that would have far-reaching consequences for both sides in the dispute. The Kriegspressequartier resolved to withdraw altogether from showing its planned Stockholm exhibition, ceding the Liljevalchs Konsthall in its entirety to the Ministerium des Äussern.\(^2\)

The Kriegspressequartier subsequently accounted for its withdrawal by citing a fundamental incompatibility between its own commitment to Austro-Hungarian ‘parity’ (by which it did indeed set great store) and the desire of the Ministerium des Äussern, despite its own Austro-Hungarian status, to present a purely ‘Austrian’ exhibition in Stockholm.\(^3\) The fact, however, that (even fifty years after the advent of Dualism) such distinctions were invariably lost on audiences abroad – as was to be the
case in Sweden – suggests that the Kriegspressequartier simply recognised that the immediate juxtaposition of military and civil cultural propaganda was unlikely, on Hoffmann’s account, to work to its advantage. An echo of its annoyance is perhaps detectable in the evidence that not all concerned were immediately aware of the change of plan. As late as 8th August Hoffmann found himself constrained to write to the Austro-Hungarian Legation to correct the assumption persisting among some of its staff that the exhibition he was organising was sponsored by the military authorities.20

A more positively motivating factor can be seen in the redoubled efforts and raised ambitions for the Kriegspressequartier’s plans for Holland. The ‘War Pictures Exhibition’ scheduled to open at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam in mid-October 1917, and to move on in mid-November to The Hague,21 was remarkable on three counts. First, for its scale (with 401 catalogued exhibits, it was well over the average size for such a display); second, for its efforts to balance military against civilian themes (albeit still with a preponderance of the former) and to insert among the largely contemporary works an occasional older item (thanks to loans of the latter from the Österreichische Staatsgalerie and other public collections in Vienna);22 and third, for its calculated appropriation of aesthetic shock value in the form of Egon Schiele’s disturbing 1912 double-portrait of himself with Klimt, 

Hermits, also illustrated in its catalogue.

At the Liljevalchs Konsthall, meanwhile, Hoffmann had assumed responsibility for the three capacious gallery rooms relinquished by the Kriegspressequartier, thus increasing the space available to him by around 40 per cent. He now had the opportunity to devise a much larger exhibition than he may originally have envisaged – should this prove possible in such a very short time. As he was eventually to inform the Legation, even with all the assembled material sent from Vienna ‘under military protection’, and thus assured of the ‘utmost speed and security’, it would have been impossible for him to honour the clause in the original contract stipulating that all proposed exhibits reach Stockholm by 5th August.23

Hoffmann did, all the same, have to work very much against the clock, both from late July to late August in Vienna (endeavouring by every means to contact and cajole potential exhibitors and potential lenders at this least convenient time of year, calling in favours, tirelessly talking up the new project) and then on his return to Stockholm. But he was in the end able to achieve a thoroughly considered and often relatively sophisticated hang, due in no small measure to the qualities of the Stockholm venue itself. For the Liljevalchs Konsthall (later widely acclaimed for inaugurating true architectural modernity in Sweden) had been designed, by the young Carl Bergsten in 1913, in full awareness of, and high regard for, Hoffmann’s own methods and achievements in the planning and utilisation of exhibiting spaces.24

The Stockholm exhibition building was noted above all for its exterior (Fig.1): a radical instance of the pan-European vogue of the early 1910s for a technologically advanced interrogation of the formal essence of (Neo-)Classicism, and a source of spontaneous ocular delight with its salmon-pink-plastered brickwork clasped by encroaching verdure. But it also evinced a thoughtful originality in the alignment and interrelation of its galleries (Fig.5). Here, characteristically for Bergsten, obtrusive symmetry (a sequence of larger, centrally positioned rooms flanked by smaller spaces to east and west, all sharing the same

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8. Three paintings from the Albin Egger-Lienz Room at the 1917 Stockholm ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’. From left to right: Man and wife (preliminary version of central couple in _The Ages of Man_ (1910), Early spring (1906), The sower and the devil I (1908/09). Anonymous photograph. Modern print from original glass negative. (Stadsmuseum, Stockholm.)


21 ÖStA/AVA/MKU/UA, 2949: Ausstellungen, Holland, 1917, file 21958: draft letter, dated 28th June 1917, from the Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht to the Kriegspressequartier in response to its request that a certain number of older pictures be loaned from the Österreichische Staatsgalerie for inclusion in the planned exhibitions.

22 ÖStA/HHSt/MÄ/GA, Stockholm, Ausstellungen Box 112a, 1917, file 3079, enclosure (document cited at note 20 above).

23 ÖStA/AVA/MKU/UA, 2949: Ausstellungen, Holland, 1917, file 21958: draft letter, dated 28th June 1917, from the Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht to the Kriegspressequartier in response to its request that a certain number of older pictures be loaned from the Österreichische Staatsgalerie for inclusion in the planned exhibitions.

maximum height of around 10 metres) was enlivened by its disruption (most obviously in the off-centre positioning of Room 4, but also in the repeated surprise of no two rooms sharing exactly the same horizontal dimensions or the same combination of top- and additional side-lighting). Of particular interest to Hoffmann, the interconnection of galleries was such as to permit, and thus to encourage, an ‘optimal visitor route’ (a route, that is, requiring almost no unintended retracing of steps).25 This offered him the opportunity to determine the first visual impression made by any given room and, where desired, to achieve within it a hang that immediately distinguished between principal and subsidiary walls.

In response to the perceived possibilities of this setting (which had of course influenced Hoffmann’s approach in selecting his show) and to the predetermined requirements for this particular account of ‘Austria’, several of the standard features of an installation style evolved over two decades of exhibition-making were now abandoned. Most significantly, Hoffmann eschewed his former preference for centring an entire display on one or two stars (Gustav Klimt in Paris in 1900, Klimt and the German–Bohemian sculptor Franz Metzner in Vienna in 1908), the number and/or positioning of their exhibits among the rest defining them as such.26

The artists Hoffmann had more recently thus promoted (since 1911, in Rome), Klimt and the German–Moravian sculptor Anton Hanak,27 were nonetheless still extremely well positioned at the Liljevalchs Konsthall. Hanak’s ten large and sixteen smaller plaster and bronze figures dramatised the spacious Room 1 (Fig.6), measuring 10 by 14 metres and opening to the south on to a tall portico. And Klimt’s thirteen canvases – four landscapes, four portraits, four further figure paintings (Fig.14) and one imposing allegorical composition (Fig.15) – occupied the adjoining, eastern Room 10 (Fig.7), measuring 9 by 12 metres.28 One visitor found the experience of passing among Hanak’s passionately tormented beings (The fanatic, The last man) and then on into the Klimt Room’s exhilarating dazzle of colour and pattern to be the most ‘sensational’ aspect of the display.29

In Stockholm, however, no fewer than five other exhibitors were each allotted an entire room, all but one of them still classifiable as ‘young’.30 The eastern Tyrolean Albin Egger-Lienz and the Salzburg sophisticate Anton Faistauer were given the two large central spaces, each only slightly smaller than the Hanak Room, and were expressly so positioned in order to draw attention, through provocative contrasts, to the thematic and stylistic diversity found within contemporary Austrian art. Few commentators failed to respond to this pointed juxtaposition. The sombre rural Symbolism and austere Alpine landscapes of the eleven Egger-Lienz paintings in Room 3 (Fig.8) reminded one reviewer of the work of Ferdinand Hodler and the Finn Juho Rissanen.31 The sumptuous colour and festive interiority of Faistauer’s eighteen portraits and still lifes in Room 2 (Fig.9) seemed to invoke the spirit of Cézanne. And his young Austrian devotee was readily acclaimed the most consummately ‘francophone’ artist in the show.32

Two of the further side galleries, to the west, were occupied by what proved to be the most aesthetically challenging images to be found in the ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’, and one, to the

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25 As reflected in the more straightforwardly reportorial of the account of Swedish commentators on the ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’, this route comprised the following sequence: Rooms 3 and 2, followed by Rooms 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 (the western enfilade), Room 1 (the southern, linking space), Rooms 10, 11, 12 and 13 (the eastern enfilade) and Room 4, with occasional variations at beginning and end.
28 Room dimensions given here and below are derived from an annotated large version of the 1917 floor plan in the archives of the Liljevalchs Konsthall.
29 See anon.: ‘Wienbesöket: Utställningen i Liljewalchs Konsthall. En mängsidig uppskattning af nutida österrikisk konst’, Stockholms Dagbladet 242 (9th September 1917), pp. 3 and 10, these observations on p. 10. Hanak was to be the only exhibitor in the fine arts segment of the Liljevalchs Konsthall display to sell a major work to the Stockholm Nationalmuseum, which acquired his kneeling female figure in plaster, Prayer (visible to left of Fig.6), for its Sculpture Department. See Statens konstsamlingars tillväxt och förvaltning 1917: Meddelan från Nationalmuseum N:o 42, Stockholm 1918, p.13.
30 While an effective merging of generational identities had occurred in 1912, when the (older) Klimtgruppe and the (younger) Neukunstgruppe had joined forces, for the purpose of exhibiting, as the Bund österreichischer Künstler, the 1917 show was the first state-sponsored Austrian venture in international promotion on a par with those in Paris (1900) and in Rome (1911) in which older and younger artists participated on the same terms.
31 See A.B-s.: ‘Österrikiska konstutställningen. En första överblick’, Svenska Dagbladet 243 (9th September 1917), p.11. The comparison with Hodler was by now a commonplace in commentary on Egger-Lienz, who in fact resented what he perceived as its implication that his own work was derivative.
32 On Faistauer in this respect, see K. Barr: ‘Den österrikiska konsten i Konsthallen.'
east, by those that were its most effortlessly enjoyable. Room 6 held fifteen paintings by Egon Schiele. Most were land- or townscape views of subtle colouration and a haunting melancholy. But set among them were two much larger, figural compositions that defied all conventional interpretation: *Evanescence (The blind II)* and *Resurrection (Graves)* (Fig.10). The second of these, though completed in 1913, had hung for a while in the ‘War Pictures Gallery’ at the Kriegspressequartier’s vast summer ‘War Exhibition’ still running in Vienna. Room 9 gathered fourteen portraits and figure paintings by an artist who was far more familiar to Swedes: Oskar Kokoschka. Among these was the recently completed, wistfully allusive *Émigrés* (Fig.11), a ‘self-portrait with friends’ that was itself in some respects a ‘war picture’.

In Room 11, by contrast, as if taking their cue from Klimt’s several sartorially distinguished female subjects (Fig.7, right and left of second and third rows), hung twenty of the exquisitely piquant and escapist fashion illustrations – pastel and watercolour originals and some offset reproductions – of Otto Lendecke (Fig.12), who had also been commissioned to organise and oversee the two ‘Viennese Fashion Shows’.

Other departures from Hoffmann’s earlier practice appear to have been prompted by his need to cut corners. The inclusion of a small ‘Slavic’, in fact almost exclusively Polish, collection of a small ‘Slavic’, in fact almost exclusively Polish, collection

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10. Three paintings from the Egon Schiele Room at the 1917 Stockholm ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’. From left to right: *Stein an der Donau, seen from the south* (1913), *Resurrection (Graves)* (1913), *Stein an der Donau, seen from the north* (1911). Anonymous photograph. Modern print from original glass negative. (Stadsmuseum, Stockholm).

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found in the thirteen vitrines and around the walls of Room 4 (Fig.13), at 17 by 9 metres the gallery’s largest exhibiting space – achieved an overall ratio of applied to fine art (almost 2:1) that was quite out of step with that maintained in earlier comparable mixed promotional exhibitions. It was here, moreover, that Hoffmann was not only at his most uncompromising in his emphasis on youth, but was also at his most pragmatic in exploiting what was to hand.

Around two hundred of the four hundred exhibits were supplied by the Wiener Werkstätte, now effectively run by Hoffmann (as sole ‘survivor’ of its three co-founders). 37 And a fair proportion of these were the work of versatile recent recruits, most of them (on account of the War) young women. The innovative textile designers Mathilde Flögl and Hilda Jenser and the exuberant ceramicist Vally Wieselthier – aged, respectively, 24, 23 and 22 in 1917 – were here able to show alongside Wiener Werkstätte stalwarts. 38 Hoffmann himself contributed over forty very diverse catalogued items (brooches, bonbonnieres, samples of bookbinding), and was also well-represented as an architect; 39 and Dagobert Peche, recently appointed Director of the new Zürich branch, showed around twenty-five predominantly metal and glass objects in his flamboyantly decorative style.

While there was some resistance to taking Room 4 as seriously as the rest of the exhibition, the Swedish press was notable for the expertise it could, on occasion, bring to this part of the Liljevalchs Konsthall show. These well-informed reviewers proved especially appreciative of the blending of tradition and innovation found in the displays of textiles, glass and ceramics. 40 The chance to exhibit in Stockholm was to boost the confidence of the young people involved, not least on account of the large number of sales agreed there, even though demand eventually proved too great for some Austrian workshops to meet in difficult wartime conditions. 41

As revealed by the several articles reporting and incorporating comments made by Hoffmann at the press conference he called on 4th September, during a break in installing the Liljevalchs Konsthall show (Fig.2), he used this occasion chiefly to list and characterise the participants and to outline the rationale of the

37 Although no Swedish press commentary recalled the fact, this was not the first time that Austrian women had participated in an exhibition at the Liljevalchs Konsthall. Two of those featured in September 1917, Helena Johnova and Ida Schwetz-Primavesi family (Otto Primavesi also serving as its Commercial Director from 1915 to 1925). Both before and after that date Hoffmann had appointed new designers as his associates, but he remained the chief arbiter on aesthetic issues.

38 Most of the Polish exhibits were, moreover, not obtained from individual artists or collectors but were simply made available by the Österreichische Staatsgalerie, along with older, Austro-German works, which Hoffmann grouped into a small retrospective collection in Room 13; see ÖStA/AVA/114/119, 153: 1861: Ausstellungen, Stockholm, 1917, file 26909, enclosure: letter, dated 5th August 1917, from the Ministerium des Äussern to the Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht, requesting that the September exhibition planned for Stockholm under its auspices, and being organised by Josef Hoffmann, be permitted to include a certain number of works that the September exhibition planned for Stockholm under its auspices, and being organised by Josef Hoffmann, be permitted to include a certain number of works borrowed from the collection of the Österreichische Staatsgalerie, both older items (to be selected in conjunction with the gallery) and contemporary works (to be selected by Hoffmann alone); and file 26909: draft letter, dated 7th August 1917, from the Ministerium des Äussern to the Ministerium für Kultus und Unterricht, granting the right MAK, Vienna).

39 Three chronologically grouped sets of drawings and photographs, covering Hoffmann’s major architectural projects of the last decade (among them the Palais Stoclet in Brussels, the 1911 ‘Austria’ pavilion for Rome, and the Österreich-Haus for the 1914 Deutscher Werkbund exhibition in Cologne) can be seen ranged along the right wall in Fig.13. Among other architects represented in the Liljevalchs Konsthall display were Otto Wagner and Hans Tesenow (the latter another strong influence on Carl Bergsten). See, in particular, A. Brauning: ‘Österrikisk konstljud hos Liljevalchs. Spetsar, broderier, sidentyger och glasvaror’, Svenska Dagbladet 257 (23rd September 1917), p.2, and K.A.: ‘Liljevalchs österrikiska utställningen’, Dagens Nyheter 261/16994 (27th September 1917), p.13. Agnes Branting was Sweden’s leading authority on ecclesiastical textiles and a noted textile designer in her own right.


41 SStA/LKK, E1: 3: letter, dated 12th November 1917, from Sven Strindberg of the Liljevalchs Konsthall to Karl Bittner of the Austria-Hungarian Legation, complaining of the most unsatisfactory way that orders placed during the exhibition had been dealt with since it had closed, and noting what a bad impression he feared this had made. Bittner sent a German translation of this letter to the Ministerium des Äussern. See ÖStA/HHSt/MÄ/GA, Stockholm, Ausstellungen Box 112a, 1917, file 5970, enclosure no.1: German translation of Strindberg’s 12th December letter, and enclosure no.2: Karl Bittner’s accompanying letter, dated 28th December 1917, to the Ministerium. Also: file 1839: final report with full lists, dated 21st May 1918, sent by the Ministerium des Äussern to the Austro-Hungarian Legation in Stockholm, declaring the matter now settled: ’Wie an diesen Vorzüglichkeiten herbeigekommen, hat die Mehrzahl der im Betracht kommenden Firmen sämtliche Nachbestellungen nach Stockholm effektiert’. See anon.: ‘En österrikisk vecka i Stockholm. Österrikisk konst hos Liljevalchs’, Dagens Nyheter 259/16972 (5th September 1917), p.8, and E.K-n.: ‘Den österrikiska

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12. On the terrace, by Otto Leindecker. 1917. Offset reproduction, of watercolour original, on paper, 26 by 20.6 cm. (Die Damenwelt, Vienna, June 1917; image copyright MAK, Vienna).
display. In response, however, to questions touching on the broader cultural-political motivation of the venture he tactfully deferred to the semi-autonomous member of his team who would serve as the exhibition’s ideological spokesman.\(^4\)

This was the German–Silesian cultural geographer Erwin Hanslik (founder, in 1915, of a Viennese Institute for Cultural Research, Institut für Kulturforschung), for whom the 4th September meeting would serve as the first of several Stockholm platforms.

Hanslik was a talented self-promoter but a true enthusiast, whose poetic fluency of exposition had won him a keen following, especially among the young. He now easily engaged the imagination of the assembled Swedish reporters, urging that the exhibition be viewed as an encapsulation of the ‘Austria’ extolled in his own writings: an environmentally conditioned, slowly evolving, harmoniously multi-ethnic whole, threatened by the ‘sickness’ of separatist nationalism but truly a model for the peaceful future of humanity.\(^4\) He further developed this theme in the insistently trailed last sentence he gave eleven days later in the scene-stealing opulence of the Hall of Mirrors at the Grand Hôtel. Here, he also spoke with more specific reference to artists featured in the Liljevalchs Konsthall show, above all Gustav Klimt, in whose supposed ‘mediation’ between the cultural essence of Orient and Occident he saw prefigured the larger ‘harmonising’ mission of Austria.\(^4\)

A preoccupation with the future also imbues two images created, at Hoffmann’s prompting, specifically for the 1917 Stockholm ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’. Its most public form of announcement, the poster commissioned from Anton Faistauer (Fig.3), potentially conveyed three distinct messages over and above its function as pure advertisement.\(^4\) As the more astute,\(^4\) he further developed this theme in the insistently trailed last sentence he gave eleven days later in the scene-stealing opulence of the Hall of Mirrors at the Grand Hôtel. Here, he also spoke with more specific reference to artists featured in the Liljevalchs Konsthall show, above all Gustav Klimt, in whose supposed ‘mediation’ between the cultural essence of Orient and Occident he saw prefigured the larger ‘harmonising’ mission of Austria.\(^4\)

The painting dated from what Faistauer fondly recalled as the happiest time of his life: the summer and early autumn of 1913. This had been spent with Ida, then pregnant with the couple’s first child, a son, was born.\(^4\) Exhibition in Stockholm as \textit{Lady in a red dress}, the original had a characteristically reduced palette, with the glow of the eponymous costume set off against a dark wall. In the poster, however, chromatic description made way for chromatic symbolism. For it can be no coincidence that the particular combination of five colours found here is that conventionally employed at this time as a visual shorthand for the Empire: the red and white of Austria, the distinctive black and yellow of the House of Habsburg, and the green (and red and white) of Hungary.\(^4\)

On this level, one semi-invisible branding was a safely discreet means

\(^1\) Hanslik’s arguments, as expressed in his several recent publications, most notably the volume Österreich: Ende und Gerät, appearing in Vienna in the early spring of 1917, were an idiosyncratic elaboration on long-established patterns of Austro-German thought about Austria, given added urgency by the advent of War and to be most famously summarized in Hugo von Hofmannsthal: ‘La vocation de l’Autriche’, \textit{La Revue d’Autriche} 1/1 (15th November 1917), pp.8–9, also published as idem: ‘Die österreichische Ider’, \textit{New Zürcher Zeitung} 138/2273, 3rd Sunday edn. (2nd December 1917), p.1. In Stockholm Hanslik appears to have persuaded Hoffmann to produce a design for a House of World Peace, Weltfriedenshaus, incorporating a theatre and several exhibition halls; see E. Sekler: \textit{Josef Hoffmann: Der architektonische Werk. Monographie und Werkverzeichnis}, Salzburg and Vienna 1982, pp.379–80, WV 207, plan and elevation drawing, inscribed ‘Josef Hoffmann Stockholm 1917’.

\(^2\) For two detailed lecture trailers, see anon.: ‘Vorführung im mänsklihenheit – En paroll från Wien framförd av prof. Hanslik’, \textit{Dagens Nyheter} 248/1698 (14th September 1917), p.6, and anon.: ‘En mänsklighetens apostel’, \textit{Svenska Dagbladet} 248 (14th September 1917), p.2. Not all reviews of the lecture itself were so enthusiastic, one taking the opportunity to ridicule Hanslik’s performance as mere ‘hocus-pocus’ and expressing amazement at the proposal that, of all states, Austria should in 1917 be held up as a model for the rest of humanity; see—län: ‘Den nya österrikiska mänsklighetens. “Menscheitbund” värvar prosgyter på Grand Hôtel’, \textit{Stockholms Tidningen} 250 (16th September 1917), p.10. For a post-War variant on Hanslik’s characteristic of Klimt, see the rather more negative account in Anton Faistauer: \textit{Noue Malerei in Österreich: Betrachtungen eines Malers}, Zürich, Leipzig and Vienna 1923, pp.11–14, which finds his work almost entirely ‘Oriental’.

\(^3\) It seems that a poster design may have initially been commissioned from Egon Schiele, who at an unknown date in the autumn of 1917 wrote to Hoffmann to request that the drawing originally intended for the Stockholm exhibition poster, ‘die seinerzeit für die Stockholms Ausstellung als Plakat gedachte Handzeichnung’, be returned to him; see C.M. Nebel: \textit{Egon Schiele 1890–1918: Leben, Briefe, Gedichte}, Salzburg 1979, p.435, no.1321.

\(^4\) This was one of seven portraits of Ida included in the Faistauer display. She was also seen, for example, as the Young woman on a red sofa and as the \textit{Seated lady in a blue blouse}, both visible in Fig.9. Only in one of the seven, however, where she is shown in half-figure wearing a dark suit and a tall, dark hat, was she identified as ‘the artist’s wife’ (‘konstnärens hustru’); see, Appendix, Stockholm cat. no.31. Ida was the sister of Faistauer’s friend and former fellow Viennese Akademie student, Robin Christian Andersen (their father was Danish), who himself exhibited four still lifes at the Liljevalchs Konsthall.

\(^5\) Subsequent misfortune had intensified this memory of happiness. Faistauer’s 1917 adaptation was made when he had only recently been ‘rescued’ from a series of tedious military posts through securing employment at the Viennese Army Museum, and not long after Ida’s second pregnancy had ended in the death of a second son and her descent into a period of more or less continuous ill-health (from which she was never to recover, dying in August 1919).

\(^6\) The approach adopted here might be seen as a more subtle variant of the then common practice of ‘enhancing’ monochrome photographic images of the most prominent Habsburgs, especially for their reproduction as postcards, through the addition of the five Austro-Hungarian colours, usually in the form of banners or ribbons.

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\(^13\) Main display of applied arts at the 1917 Stockholm ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’. Anonymous photograph. Modern print from original glass negative. (Stadsmuseum, Stockholm.)
of acknowledging the Austro-Hungarian Ministerium des Äussern as the exhibition’s sponsor. But on another it implicitly transformed the portrait of a woman into an allegory of imperial Austria and her unborn child into an emblem of the hopes invested in its endurance. There is here a coincidental echo of Hanslik’s (more unquestioningly optimistic) evocation of an ‘Empire in gestation’.49

Commentary of a less resolved but more dynamic character is to be found in the new picture made for inclusion in the Stockholm exhibition’s Klimt Room (Fig.14). Produced during a reluctant mid-vacation return to Vienna (primarily undertaken so as to help Hoffmann assemble a sufficiently large collection of textiles in the new picture made for inclusion in the Stockholm Children’s Day, Barnens Dag, coincided with the exhibition’s penultimate weekend.

53 It is not perhaps inapposite to ponder how far the choice of the new subject was influenced by an awareness (at least on Hoffmann’s part) of the especially child-friendly reputation of the Swedes. The boisterous celebrations of the annual Stockholm Children’s Day, Barnens Dag, coincided with the exhibition’s penultimate weekend.


51 The postcards from this particular sequence are now in the collection of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (Autogr. 959/53–5 to 959/53–11) and were first published in W.G. Fischer: Gustav Klimt und Emilie Flöge: Genie und Talent, Freundschaft und Berufesauflauf, Vienna 1987, p.229, nos.355–61. Klimt seems to have found his motivic starting point in a recent series of drawings of an infant shown both with and without his mother, see A. Strobl: Gustav Klimt: die Zeichnungen, Salzburg 1980–89, III, pp.224–25, nos.3032–40, and IV, pp.206–07, no.3731, who views these as primarily made in preparation for the swaddled sleeping baby featured in the unfinished late painting The bride (note 43), is dedicated to ‘den jungen Geist eines werdenden Reiches’.50

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50 Hanslik, op. cit. (note 43), is dedicated to ‘den jungen Geist eines werdenden Reiches’.50 Klimt’s display at Stockholms Dagblad eventually comprised items from his studio in addition to loans from six or seven collectors. It is probable that Hoffmann’s enthusiastic entreaties were in some cases as effective as Klimt’s perhaps more diffident approaches in amassing the final total of thirteen works. The possibility that the new picture was produced simply to make up the numbers can be discounted with a reasonable certainty.

14 Baby, by Gustav Klimt. 1917. Canvas, 110.9 by 110.4 cm. (National Gallery of Art, Washington, gift of Otto and Francesca Kallir with the help of the Carol and Edwin Fallhorn Fund).
explicitly male child: a future soldier offered up in sacrifice even while embraced by adoring womenfolk. In so far as Klimt’s new picture did supply a counterbalance to the earlier work, it would have done so through qualities evoked by its compositional structure as much as on account of its motif. The keen-eyed, neatly dressed and protectively swathed infant, captured in paint that was barely dry, may well have struck its first, Stockholm audience as a reassuringly happy successor to its somnolent, painfully exposed counterpart in the upper-right portion of the earlier painting.53 But the more immediately conveyed contrast between the larger and the smaller canvas would have been that between a narrative and an encounter, between philosophical contemplation and sensual immersion, between chronological compression and ‘real time’.

While Klimt, in his final recorded comment on the still unfinished new picture, admitted to ‘extremely mixed feelings’ about it,44 one measure of its success is found in the ease with which the engaged viewer is propelled through a series of improbable but revelatory re-readings. Firstly, attention is irresistibly shifted away from the painting’s nominal subject to the true source of its formal energy: its ostensibly subject-less foreground. Next, the heap of textiles found here, brightly coloured, boldly patterned, richly embroidered, is seen to consist not so much of anonymous lengths of cloth (such as wind or wrap themselves around the figures in so many of Klimt’s compositions) as of distinct items of clothing, each animated by the spirit of an absent wearer – a conceit first sparked through the ‘coupling’ of the plainer but most prominent (pale pink and bright yellow) garments.55 Finally, the child, as if removed to an indeterminate point beyond this simultaneously literal and fantastical vision of the fabric of humanity, appears now as its yet-to-be defined sequel.


alongside the German Emperor, over a spectacular military victory on the Italian Front (at the Battle of Caporetto). And he found himself the initially alarmed, then relieved beneficiary of the tumultuous transformation of his principal wartime enemy (through the Bolshevik seizure of power in Petrograd and prompt resolve to take Russia out of the ‘imperialist War’).56

In these circumstances, cultural propaganda was eclipsed by Realpolitik. But the enforced reticence in international promotion was more than compensated by lively internal debate in the context of a cross-Revolutionary art life.57 When the Central European art exhibition as international cultural propaganda first re-emerged, in the spring and summer of 1919, its appearance was both novel and curiously familiar. In this interval between the end of War and the coming of Peace,58 it was most eagerly used to assert the distinctive ethnocultural profile of two of the Empire’s emerging successor states: Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.59 The reduced, republican Austria was the last component of the former Empire to follow suit, with an ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’ for the new times.60


57 Peace in Central Europe was formally inaugurated in two acts: the signing of the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, on 19th September 1919, and the signing of the Treaty of Trianon, on 4th June 1920, respectively with the Austrian and the Hungarian halves of the former Empire.

58 The shows in question were the Exposition des Artistes Yougoslaves at the Petit Palais, Paris, in April–May 1919, and the Exposition d’Art Tchécoslovaque at the Kunsthalle, Bern, in July–August 1919. A Polish equivalent followed with the Exposition d’Art Polonais at the Grand Palais, Paris, in April–June 1921; and Hungary organised the first of several internationally touring promotional exhibitions in the mid-1920s.

59 Discounting participation in annual/biennial events (as in Venice), specialised international surveys (as in the 1925 Paris ‘arts décoratifs’), or exclusively historical displays, the Austrian Republic began to revive the spirit of the 1917 Stockholm show only a full decade later, with ‘Austrian paintings and applied arts 1900–1927’ (Oostenrijkische schilderijen en kunstnijverheid 1900–1927), which visited the Gemeentemuseum in The Hague, the Kunstmuseum in Rotterdam, and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam between mid-October 1927 and late January 1928.
STOCKHOLM 'AUSTRIAN ART EXHIBITION'

Appendix

Paintings/sculptures shown at the 1917 Stockholm 'Austrian Art Exhibition' by Albin Egger-Lienz, Anton Faistauer, Anton Hanak, Gustav Klimt, Oskar Kokoschka and Egon Schiele. Each entry lists, from left to right: Stockholm catalogue number; Swedish title; German title, date and number given in the catalogue raisonné; an asterisk indicates acknowledgement in the catalogue raisonné of inclusion in the Stockholm show.

Bibliography

Catalogue numbers for the Klimt drawings refer to the four volumes of Strobl, op. cit. (note 51).

The drawings that Klimt also showed at the Lifejovals Kunsthall, in Room 7, alongside works on paper by a good many other artists, were evidently chosen so as to best to complement and extend the selection of paintings to be found in the Klimt Room. (Equivalent care seems not to have been taken in the case of the drawings exhibited on this occasion by either Kockoschka or Schiele.) Noted in the Stockholm exhibition catalogue as twenty items embraced within a single entry (no. 110: ‘20 Technique’), of which it appears that only sixteen were displayed, arranged in two blocks of eight, all were in graphite and of vertical format (though in one case horizontal re-cast as vertical for the sake of Hoffmann’s hang), each between 49 and 59 cm. in height and between 32 and 38 cm. in width.

As identification of these has now proved possible (only one item had so far been identified), one may say that around half were studies made in direct or indirect connection with pictures included in the ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’: a relatively detailed three-quarter-length portrait of Friederika Maria Beer (III/2511), for example, or an almost schematically simplified mother and child, the latter a precursor of the painted Baby (III/353). The rest, even more significantly, were made in connection with some of the most intriguing creations of Klimt’s last years. Four of these (IV/1697, IV/1895, III/2515 and III/2576) charted the gradual transformation of his second portrait of Ria Munk into ‘The dancers of 1916–17’. A further four were part of work still in progress at the time of the Stockholm show: one (III/3865), a relatively detailed figure study for Adam and Eve, and was sold to the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm64 and three (III/3066, III/3070 and III/3075) – the most remarkable of all, albeit hard to ‘read’ for those unversed in Klimt’s ceaseless experimentation with viewpoint, pose or accessories – were studies for the ‘entwined or entranced, floating or dancing female semi-nudes of The bride’.


97 Porträt av en ung flicka, Made Provenier, 1913, ND 179, WSW 233
98 Porträtt, fætten B., Frederika Marie Beer, 1916, ND 196, WSW 228
99 Kæble ad bid, Tod og Leben, 1917/15, ND 183*, WSW 266
100 Landík I, Park, 1909, ND 165, WSW 196
101 Landík II, Forsthaus in Wicenohai II, 1914, ND 182, WSW 230
102 Landík III, Kirche in Untsch an dem Altrast, 1913/16, ND 298, WSW 225
103 Landík IV, italische Castelfondland, 1913, ND 214, WSW 215
104 Porträtt, J. L., Elisabeth Ledermann, 1914–16, ND 188, WSW 227
105 Bann, Baby, 1917, ND 221, WSW 253
106 Blondin, Der Pelzkragen, 1916, ND 197, WSW 229
107 Italieni, Der Blietzel, 1916/17, ND 206, WSW 242
108 Porträtt, Barbara Fluge, 1915, ND 191, WSW 223*

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Oskar Kokoschka (1886–1980)

110 Porträtt, Carl Moll, 1913, 96
111 Henselkus, Heuschrecke, 1912, 77*
112 Sbsolute, Patzehl, 1913, 78
113 Budikapet, Ritter, Tod und Tafel I, 1913/1, 63
114 Porträtt, de A., Alfred Adler, 1912, 52
115 Fortuna, Fortuna, 1914/13, ND 113
116 Spasilapet, Spasalce, 1912, 79
117 Porträtt, J. F. Et, Levit Grand, 1910, 34
118 Porträtt f. H. F. Franz Hauer, 1911, 59
119 Utsonundre, Die Auswanderer, 1917–16, 123
120 Porträtt av Albert Einstein, Albert Einstein, 1914, 108*
121 Grupped mit vatt, Lophesperan med Katze, 1917, 126
122 Porträtt av Frisankt Lichnowsky, Frisankt Mechtild Lichnowsky, 1916, 121
123 Fången, Der Gefangene, 1914, 105*

Egon Schiele (1890–1918)

203 Entschürbung, Entschürbung (Der Blondin II), 1915–16, 288*
204 Gemall stad, Stadt im Grünen (Die alte Stadt III), 1917, 313*
205 Gauar, Auferstehung (Gauar), 1913, 251*
206 Encarnas hu, unidentified landscape
207 Höstol, Wilde Sonnenblumen (Herbstol I), 1914, 280
208 Flaka, Mädchen (De Jungblut), 1917, 305*
209 Landskap, Einzelnche Häuser (Haus mit Berg), 1915, 292* (in Stockholm 206)
210 Man och kvinnor, Mann och Frau (Lophesperan) 1914, 275
211 Hals vid huvet, Die Hauser am Meer (Hausreiterei), 1914, 281*
212 Fortuner, Hauswand (Fortuner), 1914, 281*
213 Stein. Donau, Stein an der Donau, 1913, 269* (in 268 or 269)
214 Stein. Donau, Stein an der Donau, 1913, 268* (in 268 or 269)
215 Stein. Donau, Häuser am Fluß (Die alte Stadt), 1914, 279
216 Kran, Säppeln, 1913, 271
217 Forstal, Vostdal I, 1914, 282*

previous autumn’s ‘Austrian Art Exhibition’. This communication also refers to the Museum’s initial request that two ‘earlier’ Klimt drawings from the Lifejovals Kunsthall display be kept ‘on reserve’ for its consideration, with a view to a possible further purchase. No more having been heard on this matter from the curators concerned, Strindberg assumed they wished to buy only the one drawing.