

Design, Performance, and Media in Modern Vienna

Elana Shapira

February 3–14, 2025

4 ECTS

Course Description

Viennese Modernism is typically identified with Art Nouveau and Modernist architecture and design, as well as Black Romanticism and Expressionist art. Famous architects such as Josef Hoffmann and Adolf Loos designed interiors and fashion, collaborated with leading artists, and encouraged colleagues to create ceramics and children's toys to help shape a revolutionary culture that is crucial to understanding Viennese art and design around 1900.

This course explores the relationship between design, performance, and media in early twentieth-century Vienna. It examines how prominent and lesser-known figures such as the architect Otto Wagner, the designer Koloman Moser, the journalist Berta Zuckerkandl, and the dancer Grete Wiesenthal positioned themselves and developed their professional careers in the modern city of Hoffmann and Loos. How were their social and cultural identities formed in museums, theaters, coffeehouses, and private homes, and how did photographers contribute to their media presence? Our class will closely study their networks and works.

The course will include the following topics:

- Vienna's Ringstrasse: Building the Imperial Ringstrasse - Historical Visions as part of a European cultural project.
- "Modern People" and Urban scenery: the birth of mass media; new shopping and entertainment centers in the city.
- The Wiener Secession: Otto Wagner's railway stations and modernist buildings; Joseph Maria Olbrich and the Secession building; Gesamtkunstwerk (Total-Art-Work).
- Josef Hoffmann and the Wiener Werkstätte: Hoffmann's villas; Sanatorium Purkersdorf; modern design and women's fashion; illustrious female and male patrons and how they lived.
- Women in the City: photographers, artists and designers; Women's magazines in Vienna around 1900.
- Adolf Loos and his modernist architecture: Cultural criticism and liberal newspapers; the scandal of the "Loos House"; architecture and men's fashion
- Excursion "Rebellion in the Coffee House": the role of the coffee houses in shaping the culture of the modern city (to be discussed in class).
- Design and Orientalism: Japonisme, colonialist fantasies, art, and advertising
- Avant-Garde Performances: Grete Wiesenthal and modern dance, Richard Strauss and the Opera Salomé, and Oskar Kokoschka's expressionist drama

Requirements: **Attendance and participation** in class discussion constitute 30 %, **presentations** 20 %, and a **written final paper** 50 % of the grade.

Syllabus

1st week

Monday, February 3, 2025

8:30–10:30 am

Introduction –the creative industries in Modern Vienna

Tuesday, February 4, 2025

8:30–10:30 am

Vienna's Ringstrasse: Building the Imperial Ringstrasse - Historical Visions as part of a European cultural project

Style and identity: The Ringstrasse and the era of liberalism. The politics of the Viennese avantgarde: The Historicist *Künstlerhaus* (House of Artists) and the Jugendstil *Secession House*. The patrons and their salons.

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

8:30–10:30 am

"Modern People" and Urban scenery: the birth of mass media; new shopping and entertainment centers in the city:

The reception of modernity in liberal newspapers: *Neue Freie Presse* and *Die Zeit*; Journal as cultural criticism: Karl Kraus's *Die Fackel*; Art and Design journals: *Ver Sacrum* and *Das Interieur*; Humorist journals representing anti-bourgeois and racist ideologies: *Der Floh* and *Kikeriki*; Women's Journals: *Wiener Mode*, *Dokumente der Frauen*; Consumer culture around 1900: The shopping streets Kohlmarkt and Mariahilfe.

Thursday, February 6, 2025
8:30–10:30 am

The Wiener Secession: Otto Wagner's railway stations and modernist buildings; Joseph Maria Olbrich and the Secession building; Gesamtkunstwerk (Total-Art-Work)
The Secession movement in Vienna: its artistic program, motto, and its journal *Ver Sacrum*. Art Nouveau (Jugendstil) and the "Community of Art Lovers"; Urban modernization, marketing and Jugendstil architecture: fashion and architecture; the critics, protagonists and the exhibitions.

Friday, February 7, 2025
8:30–10:30 am

Josef Hoffmann and the Wiener Werkstätte: Hoffmann's villas; Sanatorium Purkersdorf; modern design and women's fashion; illustrious female and male patrons and how they lived.
Josef Hoffmann and the Gesamtkunstwerk (total work of art), the artists' colony, House Waerndorfer, and Villa Ast; The *Wiener Werkstätte* artists and their clients: the Wittgenstein family and Sonja Knips; Staging medical therapy in the Sanatorium Purkersdorf and in Sigmund Freud's Studio; Avantgarde performances at the *Cabaret Fledermaus* in Vienna. Reading: Wiener Werksätze work-program (1905)

2nd week

Monday, February 10, 2025
8:30–10:30 am

Women in the City: photographers, artists and designers; Women's magazines in Vienna around 1900
The women makers of Viennese modernism – women's right activist Rosa Mayreder, the art critic Berta Zuckerkandl and reform educator Eugenie Schwarzwald. Photographers of Viennese celebrities d'Ora and Trude Fleischmann; Women artists: Impressionist painter Tina Blau and the art school for women and girls, modernist sculptor Teresa Feodorowna Ries and the Secession; Children's toys and postcards designers Fanny Harlfinger-Zakucka and Susi Singer; and fashion designer Emilie Flöge. The reception of women's art and design in journals.

Monday, February 10, 2025
2:00–4:00 am

Excursion: Museum of Applied Arts

Tuesday, February 11, 2025
8:30–10:30 am

Adolf Loos and his modernist architecture: Cultural criticism and liberal newspapers; the scandal of the "Loos House"; Men's fashion versus women's fashion; Loos's designs of Café Museum, men's fashion stores, American Bar, Steiner House, and the scandal of the *Goldman & Salatsch House*. (*Excursion coffee houses and fashion stores). Reading: "Poor Rich Man" (1900) "Ornament and Crime" (1911).

Wednesday, February 12, 2025
8:30–10:30 am

Design and Orientalism: Japonisme, colonialist fantasies, art, and advertising
The reception of Japonisme in Vienna 1900; the role of Orientalism in modern design; Gustav Klimt's art; popular dance performances in Vienna; Representation of colonialist fantasies in advertising.

Thursday, February 13, 2025
8:30–10:30 am

Avant-Garde Performances: Grete Wiesenthal and modern dance, Richard Strauss and the Opera *Salomé*, and Oskar Kokoschka's expressionist drama
Influence of the dance performances of Isadora Duncan and Maud Allan (Vienna's Secession House) on art; Playwright Hugo von Hofmannsthal and dancer Grete Wiesenthal; Oscar Wilde's *Salomé* in Vienna; Richard Strauss and the Opera *Salomé*; Theater and art: Oskar Kokoschka's Drama in *Kunstschau 1908*.

Friday, February 14, 2025
8:30–10:30 am

Class presentations

Recommended Reading

Ashby, Charlotte, "The Cafés of Vienna. Spaces and Sociability," in: Charlotte Ashby, Tag Gronberg and Simon Shaw-Miller (eds.) *The Viennese Café and Fin-de-Siècle Culture*, New York: Berghann Book, 2013.

Beatriz Colomina, "On Adolf Loos and Josef Hoffman: Architecture in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in: Max Risselda (ed.) *Raumplan versus Plan Libre*, Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier, 1919-1930, Amsterdam, Delft University Press (1987), 1991, pp. 65-77.

Mary Fleischer, "Hofmannsthal and Wiesenthal", in: *Embodied Texts. Symbolist Playwright-Dancer Collaborations*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008, 93–148.

Tag Gronberg, Ch. 4. "Viennese Modernism: A New Look," in: Idem, *Vienna City of Modernity, 1890-1914*, Oxford: Peter Lang, 121-157.

Jill Lloyd and Christian Witt-Döring, *Birth of the Modern. Style and Identity in Vienna 1900*, Exh. Cat. Neue Galerie New York, 2011.

Hannah Marynissen (Assistant Curator at Kunsthalle Wien), "Femininity and Modernity: The Changing Face of Moderne Welt," <https://www.palaisdesbeauxarts.at/collection/hannah-marynissen/the-changing-face-of-moderne-welt> (2022)

Anne-Katrin Rossberg and Elisabeth Schmuttermeier (eds.), *Women Artists of the Wiener Werkstätte*. Exh. Cat. Basel: Birkhäuser, 2021.

Carl E. Schorske, "The Ringstrasse, Its Critics, and the Birth of Urban Modernism," in: Idem, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna, Politics and Culture*, New York: Vintage Books, 1980.

Elana Shapira, "The Viennese Visionary 'Other.' Metamorphosis in the Cabaret Fledermaus," in *Kabarett Fledermaus @ Bar du Bois* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 54-65.

Leslie Topp, "Modern Architecture and Antisemitism in Early Twentieth Century Vienna," in: Elana Shapira (ed.) *Design Dialogue: Jews, Culture and Viennese Modernism/ Design Dialog: Juden, Kultur und Wiener Moderne*, Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2018.

Mary L. Wagener "Fashion and Feminism in 'Fin-de-Siècle' Vienna," in: *Woman's Art Journal*, 1990, 29-33.