

The Collections of the University of Applied Arts Vienna

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Abstract

The Collections of the University of Applied Arts include works of art, architecture and design, and have recently expanded to incorporate costume and fashion collections. They are actively used in research and teaching.

The Collections of the University of Applied Arts, which were founded in 1867 as Viennese *Kunstgewerbeschule* (School of Arts and Crafts), are based on the former archives of the university, and currently consists of about 60,000 items.

Since the founding of the *Kunstgewerbeschule*, personal files on all students and archival records have been stored, and these are now kept on a database that is continually updated, and regularly used by researchers.

Until recently, the Collections were focused on:

- Artwork from the Wiener Werkstätte, Art Nouveau, Vienna Modernism
- Architectural models of seminal modernist Austrian buildings
- Examples from all areas of 20th century applied and visual arts
- The Oskar Kokoschka Centre (research library, photographic collection, archives, and, since 2005 the private library of Oskar and Olda Kokoschka)
- The estate of the architect Margarethe Schütte-Lihotzky



Fig. 1 – Patrick Werkner, director of the Collections, introduces UMAC guests to original graphic items by Josef Hoffmann and Bertold Löffler at the Collections of the University of Applied Arts Vienna © Silvia Herkt

The Costumes and Fashion collection with its 5,500 historically significant items was integrated into the Collections in 2004.

Today's collecting activities are mainly concerned with contemporary art works donated by or purchased from (former) teachers and graduates of the University of Applied Arts. Collections staff are involved in a range of activities including curating exhibitions, arranging international loans, producing publications, organising symposia, overseeing internal and external projects, and providing advisory services. Maintenance of the stores, the database - which now contains 50,000 records with almost 20,000 images, and the specialized libraries requires constant care and attention. The Collections are integrated in the university's teaching activities through classes and seminars.

These collections represent the cultural memory of the university and make a key contribution to its identity. Permanently accessible to users and researchers, these collections function as a research centre where collection, research and teaching are combined.

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