

Vienna, November 2020

Wien Museum Online Collection

On November 12, over 47,000 objects in the collection of the Wien Museum were made available to the public at sammlung.wienmuseum.at. The Online Collection can be used as a resource and image database for scholarly, creative, or journalistic purposes, but also for school lessons or simply for private use. There are illustrations for all available objects, and in most cases these can be used further free of charge ("Open Content"). In the coming months and years, the Online Collection will be continuously expanded, adding tens of thousands of objects.

"The Wien Museum is setting new standards with its new Online Collection", says City Councillor for Culture Veronica Kaup-Hasler. "Up to now, the citizens of Vienna have been able to admire the magnificent collection in exhibitions. Now the objects are brought into the living room via an image database, which is not only animating, user-friendly and incredibly fast, but the images are also largely available for free use. A big step in the digitization process of the City of Vienna."

"The digitization of our huge and diverse collection is a fascinating, long-term and high-impact project," says Wien Museum director Matti Bunzl. "With the new Online Collection we have reached a milestone. Our cultural heritage should be available to everyone, and as low-threshold as possible. After all, we are responsible for a municipal collection that will now find an even broader public than we have been able to reach so far. I am particularly pleased that we are able to present this offer at a time when our museum on Karlsplatz is closed for renovation".

What does the Online Collection include?

In addition to objects relating to the history of the city and everyday life, the Wien Museum also has an important art collection. It also has special collections (fashion, clocks, Prater, coins and medals, etc.) and archaeological finds. In total, the museum collection, which is stored in the depot, comprises over one million objects. The Online Collection, with its more than 47,000 objects, provides a broad insight into the museum's diverse holdings right from the start. In addition to highlights and a selection of objects from past exhibitions, large collections from the fields of photography, graphics, painting and fashion are accessible. Currently available for search are, for example, objects from the graphic estate of Otto Wagner, more than 400 works by Gustav Klimt, photographs by Trude Fleischmann and Robert Haas, large unpublished photographic collections on political Vienna in the 1970s as well as frequently sought-after images from the topographical photo collection and on the topics of the

Viennese coffee house, the Prater, the Revolution of 1848 and rulers. In addition to well-known holdings, the search often yields numerous surprising hits.

Basic information about the property and a high-quality photo are the prerequisites for putting something online. Many objects have several images, so that a total of over 75,000 images are already online. The general focus of digitisation is on collections that are specifically relevant to science and the public and are in particularly high demand. Digitisation means that delicate objects need to be moved less and are therefore better protected.

What search options and functions are available?

The detailed "Search" is particularly useful for users who know exactly what they are looking for – here, for example, it is possible to filter by date, person, type of object, material and technology. Those who prefer to browse, use the free search or get inspiration from "Albums" and "Suggestions". The objects have been provided with keywords relating to themes and pictorial motifs, resulting in a variety of links and relationships. Thus, even users who know little about the museum's collection will quickly find what they are looking for. The indexing of the data sets in terms of content and their referencing is carried out using "controlled vocabulary" – these international standards ensure long-term data quality and meaningful future networking with other databases. Search results can be saved in "My Album" without login and can also be shared with friends as a personal compilation. Furthermore, albums and object data sheets can also be saved as PDF files.

Open Content

The aim of the Wien Museum is to make knowledge and image material on the objects available as easily and comprehensively as possible. A large part of the images in the collection can be freely reused and are marked with the Creative Commons "CC0" or "CC BY 3.0 AT". If this is not legally possible, the images can only be used on request and after consultation with the respective rights holders.

All texts and information on the objects in the Wien Museum Online Collection may be shared, used and exploited without request. For the use of the object images, in addition to the obligatory naming of the images marked "CC BY 3.0 AT", reference is made to the Fair Use Guidelines of Europeana (e.g. protecting the reputation of the artist and the museum; showing respect for the original; sharing knowledge; being sensitive to other values). To facilitate correct citation, a citation suggestion is offered during download, which can be copied to the clipboard by mouse click.

Design

The Design Studio bleed, which with offices in Oslo and Vienna is currently one of the most exciting players in the field of visual identities, is responsible for the design of the site. bleed, together with the developers Urban Trout and Empty Graphics, has implemented a fast, contemporary and user-friendly site that attractively presents the extensive contents of the museum collection and at the same time makes it easy to search.

International comparison

In terms of scope, user-friendliness and openness, the new Wien Museum Online Collection ranks among the international museum projects that are offensively using the net to ensure the accessibility of their public collections. In the German-speaking world, for example, the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg (MKG) and the Städel Museum should be mentioned here – internationally, online presences of the Danish national gallery Statens Museum for Kunst (SMK) and pioneers such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the USA are inspiring.

What's next?

The Online Collection is constantly growing and, where possible, objects from acquisitions and inventory or digitisation projects are also made publicly accessible. For the following months, further volumes from the topographic photo collection and from the art collection are already in preparation.

A tutorial introducing the Online Collection can be found on the Wien Museum YouTube channel

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