

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Museum Liaunig The new exhibitions**

Vienna/Neuhaus, April 13, 2016

The Museum Liaunig possesses one of the most comprehensive collections of Austrian art from the period after 1945, which is supplemented by leading representatives of classic modernism and exemplary works from international artists. In addition, the museum exhibits historical collections of decorated glass and portrait miniatures from the 16th to 19th century, and has now added a new presentation of African beaded art. All of these displays, which are seen by the museum as a contrast programme to its contemporary artistic works, are provided with a more than adequate architectonic and museological framework by the museum building, which was designed by the Viennese architectural team *querkraft* and has already achieved the status of a protected object.

In the 2016 season, a multifaceted exhibition programme will await visitors to the Museum Liaunig. The main show “Augen-Blicke” in the long gallery, which can be seen from outside, will again be compiled from the constantly growing collection of contemporary art and will focus on new acquisitions.

Furthermore, a number of retrospectives are planned for the special exhibitions room, which for the first time will also be used for concerts. As part of the “old friends” series of presentations, works from Drago j. Prelog (May/June), Hans Staudacher (July/August) and Josef Mikl (September/October) will be displayed in sequence. These are artists with whom Herbert Liaunig has enjoyed friendly ties ever since he began his collecting activities more than 50 years ago.

Another highpoint is the opening of the sculpture park, which will extend above the largely underground museum. In good weather, this new feature will offer an invitation to stroll through a spacious park landscape and interact with the works, which have been placed in a relationship to the natural surroundings in which they stand. Together with the works presented in the circular sculpture depot, this open-air exhibition constitutes a representative selection of pieces by Austrian and international sculptors and object artists that extends from the classic modern period to the present day.

## Opening Hours

May 1, 2016 – October 30, 2016

Wednesday – Sunday 10.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Guided tours 11 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. respectively

The Museum Liaunig can be viewed **without prior registration**  
and **without participation in a guided tour** during opening hours.

Ticket valid for all the exhibitions in the Museum Liaunig and  
the sculpture garden (on condition of fine weather), guided tour included € 14,50

Ticket valid for the special exhibition € 5,50

Museum Liaunig

9155 Neuhaus 41 · Austria · + 43 4356 211 15

office@museumliaunig.at · [www.museumliaunig.at](http://www.museumliaunig.at)

## Queries & contact

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Press releases and press photos (© Museum Liaunig) are available at  
[www.museumliaunig.at/de/presse/aktuell.html](http://www.museumliaunig.at/de/presse/aktuell.html)

## PRESS PHOTOS



Museum Liaunig – Aerial view

Museum Liaunig – Terrace view

Museum Liaunig – Terrace

Museum Liaunig – Entrance area

Museum Liaunig – Josef Pillhofer, Raumentfaltung für HL, 1956/2008

© Museum Liaunig

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **“Augen-Blicke” – new purchases**

**The 2016 exhibition contains 180 works from 64 artists consisting of newly acquired and previously unseen paintings, sculptures, object art and graphics.**

“Augen-Blicke” is the sixth special show to be held in the long, upper gallery of the museum and its annex, which is predestined for the display of smaller works. The exhibition represents this year’s seasonal event in the museum, which is privately owned by the Carinthian industrialist Herbert Liaunig, and was designed by the Viennese architectural office *querkraft*. The museum opened in the autumn of 2008 and in the meantime has won numerous international awards and is already a listed building.

The exhibition, which focuses on recent art history and current, contemporary Austrian art, manifests itself as an experience that is both pleasurable and lasting. It offers arresting diversity in the form of singular, specially selected, exemplary works and installations, which are nonetheless generally gathered in groups that furnish comparisons and contrasts.

**“Augenblicke”** (which literally translated means “in the blink of an eye”) not only represent the first, virtually imperceptible form of visual encounter, but also eye-catchers that have a variety of consequences. In the field of the visual arts, which primarily become accessible via the eye and not via content, it is the optical confrontation with the artwork and the duration of its single or repeated perusal that challenge the exhibition visitor. In a nutshell, it can be said that in order to see clearly one requires good eyesight, however the approach to artworks and the related temporal requirement remain a matter for the viewer. Therefore, **“Augen-Blicke”** as the hyphenated title of an exhibition poses questions and places the artworks within the general context of our viewing habits and the current understanding of images.

At present, it is apparent that the museum is the most popular venue for taking the time to look exactly and allow what has been observed to sink in. The increasingly and ever-better employed possibilities for encounters with art and visual regeneration prove of benefit to the individual and also serve as a counterweight to the constant stress situations generated by the barely considered flood of optical images in the environment and the electronic media.

**The Liaunig collection of contemporary art, which consists of 3,400 works, has been catalogued in two extensive volumes, published in 2008 and 2015 respectively. These were both written by Peter Baum, as was the recently issued catalogue for the “Augen-Blicke” exhibition.**

## Artists

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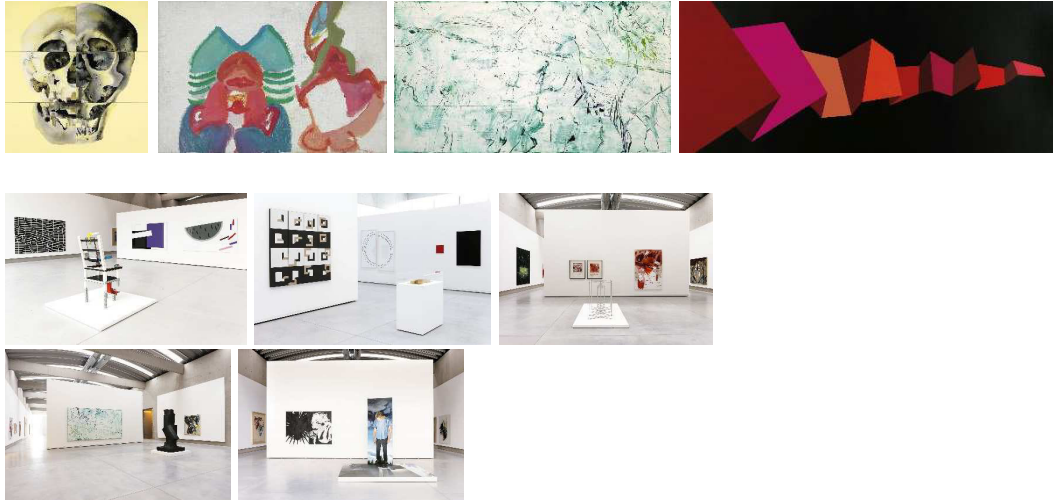
Marc Adrian  
Karel Appel  
Christian Ludwig Attersee  
Bernard Aubertin  
Anna-Maria Bogner  
Tony Cragg  
Canan Dagdelen  
Gunter Damisch  
Oliver Dorfer  
Manfred Erjautz  
Tone Fink  
Karl Anton Fleck  
Adolf Frohner  
Jakob Gasteiger  
Tibor Gáyor  
Franz Graf  
Helmuth Gsöllpointner  
Erwin Heerich  
Wolfgang Hollegha  
Hildegard Joos  
Peter Krawagna  
Suse Krawagna  
Richard Kriesche  
Hans Kupelwieser  
Edit Lajos  
Maria Lassnig  
Franz Lerch  
Markus Lüpertz  
Gottfried Mairwöger  
Dorá Maurer  
Jürgen Messensee  
Josef Mikl

Hannes Mlenek  
Gerhardt Moswitzer-Hewlach  
Zoran Music  
Heribert Nothnagel  
Ingo Nussbaumer  
Franz Xaver Ölzant  
Josef Pillhofer  
Markus Prachensky  
Norbert Pümpel  
Gerwald Rockenschaub  
Hubert Scheibl  
Eva Schlegel  
Walter Schmögner  
Martin Schnur  
Klaus J. Schoen  
Manfred SCHU  
Zbyněk Sekal  
Peter Sengl  
David Smyth  
Fritz Steinkellner  
Wolfgang Stifter  
Esther Stocker  
Helmut Swoboda  
Walter Vopava  
Manfred Wakolbinger  
Wolfgang Walkensteiner  
Walter Weer  
Max Weiler  
Turi Werkner  
Markus Wilfling  
Fritz Wotruba  
Erwin Wurm

## Exhibition “Augen-Blicke“

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## PRESS PHOTOS



Wolfgang Walkensteiner, OGU, 2012

Maria Lassnig, Zwei Figuren, 1962

Hubert Scheibl, Das ist eine sehr schöne Zeichnung, Dave ... (2001: Odyssee im Weltraum), 2007

Edit Lajos, Big Dragon, 2010–2013

Exhibition view „Augen-Blicke“ Stocker, Erjautz, Rockenschaub

Exhibition view „Augen-Blicke“ Gáyor, Bogner, Heerich, Aubertin

Exhibition view „Augen-Blicke“ Scheibl, Smyth, Wilfling, Stifter, Dorfer

Exhibition view „Augen-Blicke“ Scheibl, Wotruba, Appel

Exhibition view „Augen-Blicke“ Hollegha, Graf, Schnur, P. Krawagna

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## **Start of the “Alte Freunde” exhibition series**

### **Drago j. Prelog**

In the triangular, special exhibitions room, during the season changing retrospectives will be held that will present artists (“Old Friends”) with whom Herbert Liaunig has enjoyed amicable ties that have been maintained for over 50 years, from the beginning of his collecting activities until the present day. The “Alte Freunde” series will commence with Drago j. Prelog (1 May – 26 June 2016), who Eva und Herbert Liaunig met in the 1960s and through whose connections they obtained access to the many artists in the orbit of the “Zum roten Apfel” and “Nächst St. Stephan” galleries in Vienna. The friendships established at that time mark the launch and provide the foundations of the Liaunig collection of contemporary Austrian art, which Herbert Liaunig already started to acquire during his student days.

The Liaunig collection contains seminal works from all the creative phases of Drago j. Prelog, who was born in 1939 in Celje, Slovenia and grew up in Upper Styria. By means of selected pieces, the exhibition, which has been curated by Peter Liaunig, demonstrates the enormous diversity and clearly defined development phases in the multifaceted oeuvre of the artist. This includes drawings, paintings and prints and can be divided into four independent work phases.

Having finished a course in the Decorative Painting Department of the Graz School of Arts and Crafts, in 1958 Prelog started studies at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts under Albert Paris Gütersloh. The “QUR-AN” manuscript, which was completed in just six weeks during the same year using a cryptology developed by the artist, already indicates Prelog’s fascination with lettering and lines that had begun during his childhood.

From these student years at the end of the 1950s, during which the artist approached the implementation and depiction of lines, strokes and characters in a variety of ways, there are early, block-like life drawings next to abstract, central formations inspired by Wols and Rainer, which consist of underlying and superimposed lines. Prelog also experimented with various materials, comprised frequently by used and crumpled paper. Collages resulted that subsequently led to the development of his tapestries.

From 1960 onwards, Prelog filled his picture grounds with marks in lines and abstract typographic characters that extend down to a free bottom area, which provides an insight into the underlying, structured material. These works marked the beginning of a scriptural work phase that lasted a decade and which forms one of the focal points of the exhibition. A concentrated, meditative working methodology resulted in increasingly dense, multi-layered images, which in a subsequent development phase, the artist interrupts and reopens. This process also involves the use of powerful colours, initially in a horizontal and later, in a vertical direction. At the start of the 1970s, these “openings” led to the representational “bomb and explosion” pictures in which the

typographic characters of the scriptural phase are increasingly pushed into the background. Initial topographic and landscape-architectonic pieces follow and include maps and images of mountains, as well the “towers of St. Stephen’s” that were extrapolated from motifs of the Cathedral of St. Stephen in Vienna and for which Prelog employs both graphic and painterly elements.

Having overcome a creative crisis, in 1975 Prelog developed an independent group of works called the “circulatory pictures”. During their production the artist laid the pictorial ground on a table and then approached it from all four sides, which for him were of equal importance. He then applied lines, frequently with several pencils in one hand, using his left-hand as a right-hander and also employing a remote controlled toy car, or a syringe, in order to lend chance adequate space within his working process.

In 1986, the artist then created “Prelography”. In these “skin and scale” images, Prelog again played with the principles of randomisation, using stencils and Iris printing on pictures and prints to produce structures in graduated colours that are reminiscent of snakeskin.

In later work phases, Prelog continually returns to individual elements from past creative periods and combines them in new images. However, the line is and remains the determining element in his oeuvre.

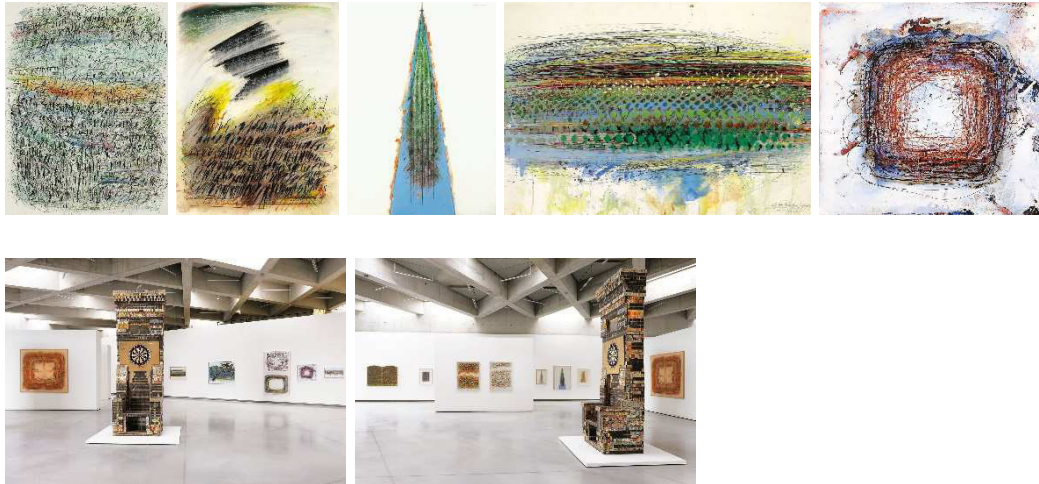
A richly illustrated catalogue with an introduction by Dieter Ronte accompanies this Museum Liaunig retrospective.

The “Alte Freunde” series of exhibitions, which begins with the personal development of Drago j. Prelog, will continue with shows of Hans Staudacher (2 July – 28 August 2016) and Josef Mikl (3 September – 30 October 2016).

Special exhibition “Alte Freunde”: Drago j. Prelog  
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## PRESS PHOTOS



Drago j. Prelog

Ohne Titel, 1964

Ohne Titel, 23.11.1967

Blaugrüner Steffl, 1971

Im Zeichen der Schlange, 1975 and 1986

Quadratnest im Winter, 2015

Exhibition views with throne (also called "Bauern-Schwitters"), 1976

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **African Beaded Art**

If in past years the artistically and ethnologically unique “Gold of the Akan” display delighted the visitor, this year another and no less fascinating, non-European collection of the Liaunig family is to be presented as a counterpoint to the exhibition of contemporary artworks. This presentation consists of beaded art, which comes from the more recent history of various ethnicities from West and Central Africa and extends up to the present day.

Above all, the roughly 300 exhibits, which consist of ceremonial objects richly decorated with glass beads, as well as everyday items, derive from the Nigerian Yoruba, the Bamileke and Bamum of Cameroon, and the Kuba, who are native to the Democratic Republic of Congo. Jewellery, headdresses, clothing, masks and figures with glass bead trimmings provide an insight into the worlds and traditions of these peoples and following the exhibition of African gold, which ran from 2008 to 2015, present a facet of African art that to date has been little researched.

Even today, the glass bead objects, which with their stunning, multi-coloured brilliance cannot fail to impress, continue to be frequently underestimated and attract little attention in ethnographic collections. From a Western perspective, glass beads are often merely perceived as being a cheap substitute for genuine pearls and in addition, the works created using European-made products are not regarded as being of genuinely African origin.

In fact, as soon as the Portuguese and Dutch started colonial trade, glass beads and metals such as copper were exchanged for slaves and ivory, and served subsequently as a means of payment. Initially, only a few beads were utilised for the decoration of clothing and the body, but following their devaluation, glass beads later offered fresh possibilities in a decorative and artistic regard. Around 1900, this led to the emergence of extensive and sometimes complicated patterns.

The peoples using the beads not only see their value in purely materialistic terms, but also from a multifaceted, intrinsic and symbolic perspective. The colours and shapes of the glass beads reveal a great deal about their age, origins and their employment on differing objects in the various cultures. They thus underline their significance with regard to representation, religion and mysticism.

The relatively young “African Beaded Art” collection on display, which has been assembled in roughly fifteen years, has been analysed scientifically by Michael Oehrl and is described in a comprehensive and richly illustrated catalogue containing also contributions from Bettina von Lintig and Peter Liaunig. Moreover, the study of primary sources and original objects in the museum depot helps to compensate for the general lack of literature regarding the use of glass beads in African art.

## PRESS PHOTOS



Small king's crown *orikogbofo*  
Yoruba, Nigeria

Prestige figur  
Yoruba, Nigeria

Small king's crown *orikogbofo*  
Yoruba, Nigeria

Große Königskrone *ade nla*  
Yoruba, Nigeria

Elephant mask *tukum*  
Bamileke, Cameroon

Headdress *fé*  
Bamum or Bamileke, Cameroon

Prestige bottle  
Bamum or Bamileke, Cameroon

King's belt *yet*  
Kuba, Dem. Rep. Congo

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Portrait miniatures from 1590 to 1890**

As the name suggests, portrait miniatures are hand-painted likenesses of the smallest and very smallest size with heights ranging from less than a centimetre to around fifteen to twenty centimetres and occasionally even larger.

From the middle of the 16th century to the time of the discovery and spread of photography in the mid-19th century, they fulfilled the task of providing the most life-like facsimile of a loved one that could be worn, or furnishing an impression of the appearance of a person that one did not know, but with whom one was to become acquainted (if the countenance in the picture rendered this prospect appealing). Therefore, well into the 19th century and long before the arrival of Internet dating, in what were generally arranged marriages prior to which the bride and groom had frequently never met, the exchange of portrait miniatures was the only possibility to assess the extent to which the couple found one another attractive.

During the separation of people sharing a close relationship, above all pairs and family members, portrait miniatures served as a stand-in for the absent person rather like the wallet photo continues to do today. Therefore, miniatures played a significant role in times of crisis and warfare.

Accordingly, it is striking that the Liaunig collection of miniatures contains an especially large number of likenesses from the politically turbulent times of the English Civil War and Oliver Cromwell in the mid-17th century, as well as numerous portraits from the years of the French revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic wars between 1790 and 1815.

Europe's rulers also liked to distribute valuable (advertising) gifts, frequently in the form of orders encrusted with diamonds or precious gold snuffboxes, which were decorated with a tiny portrait of the potentate. Naturally enough, the recipients quickly turned the gold and gems into cash at the nearest jewellers, but nonetheless retained the miniature, which although materially worthless, was a souvenir.

Royal countenances are well represented in the Liaunig collection, not only through portraits of the Habsburgs, Empress Maria Theresia, her husband and daughters Maria Anna and Marie-Antoinette, as well as Empress Elizabeth, but also their political opponents such as King Friedrich II of Prussia and Emperor Napoleon of France. Many of the French Bourbons are also present with numerous miniscule portrayals of Louis XV and his successors, right up to the last French king, Louis-Philippe from the House of Bourbon-Orleans.

While the ordinary soldier who went off to war was generally unable to afford an expensive, first class portraitist to paint his picture for presentation to his loved one(s) as a final likeness, the ruling classes and the bourgeoisie had the financial means to be able to pose for the best painters of their time.

For example, Jean-Baptiste Isabey (1767-1855) was not only a star in his French homeland. He worked initially as a court painter for Emperor Napoleon, but thanks to his flattering brushstrokes also remained popular with the emperor's political foes and successors. He travelled to the Congress of Vienna and painted every one of rank and reputation. His portrait of the grand-duchess Maria Pawlowna, the sister of Emperor Alexander I, which was painted in Vienna in 1815 and is part of the Liaunig collection, can currently be admired in the Vienna Congress exhibition in the Belvedere Museum in Vienna, where it is on loan until the end of June. However, Isabey's likeness of Emperor Napoleon painted five years earlier in Paris is on display at the Museum Liaunig.

The leading miniature painter of the Viennese Biedermeier period was undoubtedly Moritz Michael Daffinger (1790–1849) and his most famous self-portrait is one of the treasures of the Liaunig collection. Until 1921 this picture was in the possession of the Daffinger family's antecedents and then in the collection of the infamous financier Camillo Castiglioni (1879–1957). This Daffinger "selfie" is familiar to all Austrians of the pre-euro generation, as a copperplate engraving of the miniature served as the basis for the design of the last 20-schilling banknote.

Of the almost 300 miniatures in the Liaunig collection (tendency upward), a representative selection of 100 items painted in Europe between 1590 and 1900 is shown in this exhibition and these are documented scientifically in a catalogue with over 400 pages. In three years at the latest, another 100 portraits from the collection will replace the current choices. This is partly due to the fact that miniatures are painted largely using light-sensitive watercolours and therefore are only displayed publically at a handful of museums. Interested persons are generally only permitted to see individual pieces upon request in the study rooms, as is the case in the Louvre and the Albertina in Vienna. Therefore, the Museum Liaunig is one of the few institutions in the world and the only one in Austria, in which such large numbers of significant miniatures are accessible to the public. An achievement made possible by the very latest museum technology.

Dr. Bodo Hofstetter  
(Exhibition curator)

Exhibition "Portrait miniatures from 1590 to 1890"

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Nicholas Hilliard (1547-1618/1619)  
Woman in brocade dress  
London, um 1585/1595

Samuel Cooper (1608/1609-1672)  
Young woman, Mrs Graham  
London, ca. 1645/1650

Charles Boit (1662-1727)  
Double portrait: Sir Thomas Cookes and Lady Mary Cookes  
England, 1689

André Rouquet (1701-1758)  
Young woman  
London, ca. 1730/1740

Pierre Pasquier (1731-1806)  
Marie-Antoinette  
Paris, 1771

John Smart (1741-1811)  
Commander  
Madras, 1789

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Glass from 1500 to 1850**

The enlargement of the museum building in 2014 allowed the presentation of the Liaunig glass collection to a broader public. In a purpose-designed room and exhibition showcases, glasses from various epochs are on display. The exhibits range from the beginnings of artistic, European glass in Venice to the products manufactured for the Congress of Vienna and the wealthy patrons of the Bohemian spas.

The splendour of the Renaissance is best illustrated by the tazza of the service of the Medici popes. During their reigns such fine, transparent glasses were regarded as being as precious as gold and gems. Indeed, potentates such as Ferdinand of Tyrol had to request the Doges of Venice for the temporary loan of their famed glassblowers, as they were more or less permanently resident in Murano.

While it was only possible to paint these fine glasses or score them with diamonds, in the 17th century inventive alchemists not only invented gold ruby glass, but also changed the glass flow in such a way as to facilitate the manufacture of a hard, thick glass for engraving with a copper wheel, which first and foremost commenced a triumphal progress north of the Alps. This advance is represented in the exhibition by a glass art incunabulum in the form of a sheet from the engraver Caspar Lehmann, which has returned after twenty years on loan to the British Museum in London.

However, there were not only these inventions alone, but also technical improvements such as water-powered cutting works that greatly eased the workload of the “Hochschnitt” (high face) goblet engravers in Silesia. Apart from rock crystal pieces, the extremely complex works from Friedrich Winter of Hermsdorf number among the most coveted objects of the time.

The cultivated nobility and princes of the period created artistic and curiosity cabinets in their palaces and such glasses were a source of great wonderment. Indeed, the glasses of the 17th and 18th century afford a fascinating insight into European history that is just as diverse as the methods employed by the various masters and the manner in which they were sponsored by their patrons.

The spectrum of high-face and deep-cut goblets, beakers and bowls extends from representative works for the princes with their exquisite tableware, to gifts for high-ranking personages and souvenirs as mementos of battles, hunts and festivities at the respective courts. Many significant events such as the Battle of Belgrade fought by Prince Eugene are depicted in masterly engraved goblets.



The collection is rounded off by splendid glasses from Gottlob Mohn und Anton Kothgasser with their transparently painted views, which evoke the Biedermeier period and the Congress of Vienna with its aim of establishing a new order in Europe.

In the spas of Bohemia the aristocracy and the affluent bourgeoisie were not only able to recuperate, but also have their portraits engraved by outstanding master craftsmen such as Dominik Biemann. The imperial family and numerous members of the nobility also numbered among his clientele, as well as wealthy families with children.

The glasses on display form a representative cross-section through all of these eras, their special features, stories and the idiosyncratic personalities of the various masters of the art of glass, as well as the various techniques involved.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue.

Regine Kovacek  
(Exhibition curator)

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## PRESS PHOTOS



Goblet with lid  
Innsbrucker Hofglashütte, Tyrol, 1570–1591

Tankard „Reichsadler“  
Bohemia, 1616

Flagon with calligraphy inscription  
Willem Jakobsz van Heemskerk, Leiden, the Netherlands, 1685

Goblet with flower vines  
Friedrich Winter, Hermsdorf, Silesia, ca. 1700

Ruby gold goblet  
Potsdam, ca. 1725

Pedestal pot  
Dominik Biemann, Franzensbad, Bohemia, 1849

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