

**New Spaces of Art, Design and Performance:
Alfred Roller and the Vienna Secession 1897-1905**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to establish how the concept of space informed and characterised the art of the Vienna Secession between 1897 and 1905. This question is examined through the practices and concerns of founding Secession artist and designer Alfred Roller (1864-1935). Roller is better-known in his role as stage designer at the Vienna Court Opera from 1903, in partnership with its music director, Gustav Mahler. A central argument of this thesis is that Alfred Roller demonstrated the pursuit of a synthetic aesthetic which transposed Wagner's ideas of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* to other spheres or spaces of art.

Roller's contribution to art and design histories of the Vienna Secession has been little recognised. This thesis argues that Roller, as Secession founder, editor of and contributor to the Secession art periodical, *Ver Sacrum* (1898-1903), and designer of Secession exhibitions was a pivotal figure in the achievements of the Vienna Secession in its early years. An analysis of Roller's roles within the Secession, and at the Vienna Court Opera, indicate a turning point in modern practice in three seemingly disparate spaces of art: the design of the art periodical, the design of exhibitions, and stage design, notably for the music dramas of Wagner. The thesis reveals that Alfred Roller was an emblematic figure in the overstepping of artistic boundaries, a distinction attributed to Vienna's artistic and cultural endeavours at the turn of the century.

This thesis is tested through an examination of these three spaces of art which form the subjects of its central chapters. The two-dimensional spaces of the art periodical *Ver Sacrum*, and the interior spaces of the *Secession Haus* (1898-), the exhibition pavilion, were designed by the Secession in their pursuit and presentation of new forms of modern art and design. It is already well established that Roller brought innovative new practices to the revivification of the staging of Wagner's music dramas, amongst other works, to the Vienna Court Opera. However, here it is argued that Roller invested the spaces of the stage with concerns which were shaped by his Secession practices, demonstrating the fluidity of his aesthetic principles from two to three dimensions.

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New Spaces of Art, Design and Performance: Alfred Roller and the Vienna Secession

INTRODUCTION

One cannot simply *cordon off* areas and say, here the musician begins and the painter stops... (Theatre) has to involve the development of the whole.¹

In his interview for the Viennese music and theatre newspaper, *Der Merker*, quoted above, Alfred Roller described his view of the synthetic artist.² Roller's conviction was that the arts should seamlessly coalesce in their presentation. The director could not divide off the 'musician from the painter', either in his own imaginative spaces or in the staging of the work. Instead the overlapping interests of each art form would contribute to the 'new shaping of the stage'.³ The interview was given jointly with *Jung Wien* writer and playwright Hugo von Hofmannsthal and the conductor Bruno Walter as if to underline Roller's sentiment.

The interview took place seven years after Roller's first collaboration with Gustav Mahler with the staging of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, 1903, and eleven years after the Vienna Secession went public with the first issue of their art periodical *Ver Sacrum (Holy Spring)*, 1898-1903). By this time, Roller's artistic practices were recognised in Vienna for their merits in fusing music and drama into 'an inseparable unity', as music critic Julius Korngold described in his review of the *Tristan und Isolde* production.⁴ This thesis argues that such beliefs would not have been 'cordoned off' from Roller's other artistic practices in different artistic spheres, time and space. Roller's emphatic statement against the compartmentalisation and separation of the arts may stand equally for Roller's aesthetics from their earliest inception.

Alfred Roller was born in Brünn (Brno), Moravia, the predominantly Czech region of the Austro-Hungarian empire on the 2nd October 1864. His father, Josef Roller, was a professor in drawing and the graphic arts at Vienna Technical University. Changing from the pursuit of law at Vienna University, in 1884, at the age of twenty, Roller enrolled at the Vienna Academy of Applied Arts (*Akademie der Bildenden Künste*), where he attended lectures by Rudolf von Eitelberger, Vienna's first professor of art history and a champion of the applied arts. Letters home to his parents in 1884 convey his excitement in these early, formative experiences: a chance and encouraging meeting with Professor Eitelberger; his lunchtime spent with six volumes of the writings of Viollet-le-Duc; his

¹ Alfred Roller, 'Gespräch über Reinhardt mit Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Alfred Roller und Bruno Walter', *Der Merker*, 1, 17 (10 June 1910), (699-701), 699, cited Charles S Maier, 'Mahler's Theatre' in Karen Painter (ed), *Mahler and his World* (Oxford: Princeton University, 2002), 72.

² AR, *Ibid*, 73.

³ AR, *Ibid*, 73.

⁴ Cited Maier, 'Mahler's Theatre', 72.

enthusiastic and immediate response to the new opportunity, the first at the Academy, for life classes.⁵

His initial aptitude for the study of law provides an early indication of the distinguishing qualities Roller demonstrated throughout his intensely productive working life: his particular ability to combine logic and attention to detail with his creative talents. His early enthusiasm for life-drawing prefigured his interest in the dynamics of the body in space, an interest which was evident in his design of Secession exhibitions, where the audience's movement through the exhibition spaces was prescribed, and in his role as director of stage design (*Leiter des Ausstattungswesens*). Roller completed his studies in 1892 with awards which included the gold *Füger* medal 'for his assignment for the resolution of the murders of *Aegistheus* and *Klytemnestra* from Goethe's *Iphigenie*'.⁶ By this time, he was meeting in Vienna's cafés with groups of young artists who would later form the Secession and the rival art group, the *Hagenbund*.⁷ [1]

From 1897, as a founder and member of the Vienna Secession and intensively from 1902, the year of the Secession Beethoven exhibition, when Roller presided as Chairman of the Secession, he could perhaps best be characterised as 'extraordinarily busy'.⁸ He appeared to lead several parallel and overlapping lives, firstly as periodical editor and exhibition designer and then as one of the most prolific stage and costume designers for opera and the spoken word theatre in Europe. In this role, he was 'entrusted with the conduct of this business' at the Vienna Court Opera (1903-1909; 1919-1934).⁹ This was significant, since it encompassed several functions previously carried out by separate craftsmen. This he combined with an enduring commitment to the *Kunstgewerbeschule*, (the Vienna School of Applied Arts) firstly as Professor of Drawing, and then as its Director (1909-1934).¹⁰ Under his aegis, the school attracted students from all over Europe. He married Mileva Stoisavljevic (1886-1945), his student at the *Kunstgewerbeschule*, in 1906. She was photographed by Viennese society portraitist Madame Dora in reform dresses designed by Roller. He brought the same attention to detail, and simplification of style to his theatre costumes.

⁵ AR, letter, January 25th 1884, cited Manfred Wagner, *Alfred Roller in Seiner Zeit* (Wien: Residenz, 1996), 29,30. No footnotes or references provided.

⁶ Evan Baker, 'Alfred Roller's Production of "Don Giovanni": A Break in the Scenic Traditions of the Vienna Court Opera', (unpublished part-doctoral thesis, New York University, 1993) 46, citing records of the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna.

⁷ Baker, 'Alfred Roller's Don Giovanni' citing letter from AR to later Secession member Leopold Stolba, September 29th 1892, announcing his impending return to Café Sperl ff 27, 46.

⁸ Margit Krisper, interview, Vienna, April 19th 2007.

⁹ AR's three years contract with the KK Court Opera, cited M. Wagner, *Alfred Roller*, 77.

¹⁰ For an account of AR's directorship, Gottfried Fliedl, *Kunst und Lehre am Beginn der Moderne: die WienerKunstgewerbeschule 1867-1918* (Salzburg: Residenz, 1986).

Sometimes described as difficult, with a typically dry, rather spare style ('*Typisch Rollers'chen Lapidarstil*'), according to Secession founder Felician von Myrbach,¹¹ Roller was also 'raved about' (*schwaermte*) by progenitors of the artworks which he displayed or presented to the public.¹² Typically, of the eminent figures with whom he collaborated, Richard Strauss declared him 'a marvellous man', ('*Sie sind ein wundervoller Mensch*'), during a difficult period preparing for the first production of his opera, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, (*The Woman without a Shadow*), 1919.¹³

On many occasions, as the archived correspondence to Roller bears witness, artists, performers and composers confided their concerns and aspirations to Roller. Other than those mentioned above, amongst these were Secession artist and its first Chairman, Gustav Klimt; architect Otto Wagner; Secession designers Josef Hoffmann and Koloman Moser; artist Giovanni Segantini who gave Roller permission to reproduce his works in *Ver Sacrum* from its inception; the modernist dancer Grete Wiesenthal; celebrated Viennese marionette designer, Richard Teschner; opera singers Anna Bahr-Mildenburg and Lotte Lehmann; actress Helene Thimig; theatre director and impresario Max Reinhardt.¹⁴ Many of these letters were not simply written in friendship, but acknowledged Roller's particular strengths in bringing to fruition the artist's vision. Roller worked in the spaces between the original text or art-work, its visual presentation and the audience's experience.

Mahler's 1907 letter of resignation from the Vienna Court Opera resides, with handwritten amendments, in the Roller archive. It is very likely that Roller assisted with the drafting of it. Despite Mahler's repeated supplications to Roller to join him in 1908 in New York ('I have proved to the management beyond doubt that it is *above all* the stage here that needs a new master, and I know of only one man with the artistic and personal ability to clear up the mess here'), Roller declined.¹⁵ Intriguingly, Mahler's comment clearly defines Roller's role as master of the spaces of the stage itself. Instead, Roller continued to enjoy a successful career in stage design in Vienna at the Court Opera, the Vienna *Burgtheater*, and in the major German-speaking cultural centres of Berlin, Munich, Dresden and Salzburg (and in New York, without the presence of Roller), until shortly

¹¹ Felician von Myrbach, AR's predecessor, Director of the *Kunstgewerbeschule* (1899-1905), letter to AR 1933, cited Oskar Pausch, *Gründung und Baugeschichte der Wiener Secession mit Erstedition des Protokollbuchs von Alfred Roller* (Wien: Österreichischer Kunst, 2006), 58.

¹² Term used in letters to AR by Max Klinger and Richard Strauss, Pausch, *Gründung*, 62.

¹³ Evan Baker, Oskar Pausch (eds), *Das Archiv Alfred Roller*, (Vienna: Böhlau with Österreichischen Theaternuseum, 1994), 11. Catalogue of some 1,000 archived letters to AR.

¹⁴ For brief summary of letters from Mahler to AR, Bahr-Mildenburg to AR, for example, see Baker: Pausch, *Das Archiv*, 99-104; 20-28.

¹⁵ Letter GM:AR, Hotel Majestic, New York, 20 January 1908, AM 47.471, ÖTM, cited Zoltan Roman, *Gustav Mahler's American Years 1907-1911: A Documentary History* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon, 1989), Mahler's emphasis, 63.

before his death in 1935.¹⁶ Fittingly, in 1934, his last year of productive work, he staged a new production of Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Berlin State Opera, the work which had premiered in 1911 with an enduring visual interpretation.¹⁷

This brief account says much about the physical and imaginative spaces inhabited by Roller and his own artistic vision, surely Wagnerian in its impulse. Moving easily in the spaces between music, painting, song, dance, and performance, and the artists of these various singular disciplines, he gathered up each of the art forms expressed in strength by notable artists of the day, evincing, as Wagner wrote, 'the common urge of all the arts to communicate in the most direct way'.¹⁸

This thesis examines how such concerns were made manifest through Roller's profound involvement with ideas of space as a material of art and its plastic potential, in three spaces of art: the two-dimensional spaces of surface and page, with particular reference to *Ver Sacrum* (*Holy Spring*, 1898-1903), the art periodical of the Secession; the concerns for surface and depth as Secession exhibition designer, and thirdly his aesthetic concerns in the spaces of the stage. It is argued that Roller, Secession founder and later stage designer, amongst his several roles, was a pivotal figure in Secession art. Roller has received little exposure in art, design and cultural histories of Vienna. Yet he exemplified the 'overstepping of artistic boundaries', which characterised Viennese modernism at the turn of the century.¹⁹

Analysis of the roles Roller held within the Secession and at the Vienna Court Opera indicates a turning point in modern practice in three seemingly disparate fields, or spaces of art practice. This thesis sets out to establish the prevailing interest of the Secession for notions of space in their search for a new language of art, and common aesthetic concerns between three separate fields of artistic practice. The insistent presence of Wagner's concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* shadows Roller's path, and his reputation, through these three spaces of art. The Vienna audiences for the staging of his operas described his fulfilment of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Through analysis of his practices

¹⁶ AR's designs for *Fidelio* were 'duplicated with painstaking care' for the 1908 Metropolitan Opera production, see Roman, *Gustav Mahler's American Years*, 105.

¹⁷ AR also presented a new production of *Parsifal* at Bayreuth at the invitation of Adolf Hitler in 1934. It is fortuitous that his death in 1935 prevents anything other than speculation as to how he would have reconciled his longstanding relationships with Jewish cultural figures including Mahler, Hofmannsthal and Reinhardt with the genocidal policies of the National Socialists. See Brigitte Hamman, *Adolf Hitler in Vienna: A Dictator's Apprenticeship* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1999), 38,60, for anecdotal account of their near-meeting in 1908.

¹⁸ R Wagner, *Kunst der Zukunft*, cited in James L Zychowicz, 'Reinventing the Gesamtkunstwerk: Gustav Mahler and Alfred Roller's Modernist Production of *Tristan und Isolde*', *Tristania*, XXII, 2003, 85-110, (87).

¹⁹ Patrick Werkner, *Austrian Expressionism: The Formative Years* trans. Nicholas T Parsons (Palo Alto, Ca: Society for the Promotion of Science and Scholarship, 1993), 240.

this thesis seeks to answer the question of how Wagner's ideas were made manifest in the mutually contingent spaces of Secession art.

Roller discourse

The singular nature of Roller's contribution to Secession aesthetics has remained submerged in art, design and cultural histories of fin-de-siècle Vienna. Inevitably art and design discourse has focussed on the main events of the Secession in the early years, the most prominent artist, Gustav Klimt, and Secession architects Otto Wagner, Josef Maria Olbrich and Josef Hoffmann. More recently, secondary figures have been given greater prominence in Vienna through exhibitions and related monographs, notably the designer Koloman Moser.²⁰

Roller's name surfaces in Vergo's account, as 'a prominent editor' of *Ver Sacrum*, notably as designer for the first cover of the periodical.²¹ Bisanz-Prakken also characterises Roller's role as editor of and contributor to *Ver Sacrum* as significant. Her analysis of early Secession art points to the importance of *Flächenkunst*, literally 'surface art', and a distinctive Secessionist style in the graphic arts.²² In chapter one of this thesis, the concept of *Flächenkunst* is analysed through the prevailing design theories of the late nineteenth century, figures directly connected with the Secession and the practices of Alfred Roller and his Secession colleagues. Roller, in his role as Chairman of the Secession, has been seen as a central contributor to the 1902 Secession *Beethoven* exhibition. The exhibition is frequently cited as the high point of Secession art in its aspirations to create a *Gesamtkunstwerk*.²³ Drawing on evidence from Roller's archives, this thesis argues that Roller played a significant role in collaboration with designer Josef Hoffmann in the realisation of the exhibition, which we might now term its artistic direction.

Roller's contribution to the vivification of aesthetic spaces in Vienna at the turn of the century is mainly confined to his role as stage designer at the Vienna Court Opera, and to musicological and stage design histories. Critical analysis in both fields has unsurprisingly focused on the Mahler years which ended in 1907. There is little on Roller's stage design aesthetics beyond this point. The detailed works on Mahler by Henri-Louis de la Grange include biographical portraits of Roller (the only accounts in English), extensive analysis of Roller's stage productions and costume designs including those productions acknowledged to be ground-breaking musically and visually, namely Wagner's *Tristan*

²⁰ Sandra Tretter (ed), *Koloman Moser 1868-1918* (London: Prestel with Leopold Museum, 2007).

²¹ Peter Vergo, *Art in Vienna, 1898-1918: Klimt, Kokoschka, Schiele and their Contemporaries* (London: Phaidon, 1993), 40.

²² Bisanz-Prakken, 'die frühe secessionistische Flächenkunst', *Heiliger Frühling: Gustav Klimt und die Anfänge der Wiener Secession 1895-1905* (Wien: Christian Brandstätter, 1999), 109-111.

²³ J-P Bouillon, *Klimt: Beethoven: The Frieze for the Ninth Symphony* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987).

und *Isolde* (1903); Beethoven's *Fidelio* (1904); *Rheingold* (1905); Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (1905).²⁴ Frequent observations on Roller's uncompromising personal and professional style provide colour and insight into the 'earlier' Secession artist: the same Roller who later took 'stern measures' to ensure that the 'swimming Rhine maidens' stuck to their uncomfortable suspended baskets to evoke the necessary effect of movement through the watery spaces of the stage.²⁵

The 1903 production of *Tristan und Isolde* and Roller's contribution is covered extensively in music and stage design history relating to the staging of Wagner operas and music dramas, to Mahler and more widely to the theatre reform movement at the turn of the century. His work is widely acknowledged as ground-breaking.²⁶ Virtually all accounts also refer to the connection between the Wagnerian stage design theories of the 'visionary' Swiss stage designer Adolphe Appia (1862-1928) and Roller's interpretation of Appia's ideas on the Vienna Court Opera stage in 1903. These interpretations concentrate on Roller's widely noted lighting and colour effects for the work.

Appia holds no particular significance for *fin-de-siècle* Vienna except in one important respect. In 1903, Roller was the first theatre designer to put Appia's transformative Wagnerian staging and lighting ideas into practice on a major international opera stage. They later corresponded warmly regarding Appia's ideas for the staging of Wagner's *Parsifal* (1882).²⁷ This convergence placed Mahler, Roller and Vienna at the forefront of the Stage Reform Movement of the early twentieth century, and of 'operatic modernism', a term defined more recently by Carl Schorske and Michael P Steinberg.²⁸ This thesis argues that the ideas of Wagner, Appia and Roller converge in Roller's concern for the *effect* of his productions on the audience. This was publically acknowledged in the idea of *Stimmung*, which might be explained literally as a prevailing atmosphere, attributed, usually as an accolade, by music writers and critics, to Roller's opera stagings.

Musicologist Manfred Wagner's 1995 monograph, *Alfred Roller in Seiner Zeit*, is the only examination of Roller's life and work.²⁹ Wagner's survey includes transcriptions of letters

²⁴ Henri-Louis de La Grange (HLG), *Gustav Mahler V2: Vienna the Years of Challenge 1897-1904; Gustav Mahler V3 Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion 1904-1907* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1995, 1999).

²⁵ HLG, *Mahler V3*, 79.

²⁶ HLG, *Mahler V2*, 561-578; Also Barry Millington and Stewart Spencer (eds), *Wagner in Performance* (London: Yale, 1992), particularly Mike Ashman 'Producing Wagner', 29-47; Patrick Carnegy, 'Designing Wagner: Deeds of Music Made Visible?', 48-74.

²⁷ See Richard C Beacham, *Adolphe Appia, Texts on Theatre*, (London: Routledge, 1993). Appia's detailed scenario for *Tristan und Isolde* was first published with *Musik und die Inszenierung*, Munich, 1899, not included in *Texts*.

²⁸ Carl E Schorske, 'Operatic Modernism', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 4:2006, 675-681; Michael P Steinberg, 'The Politics and Aesthetics of Operatic Modernism', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Ibid, 629-648.

²⁹ M Wagner, *Alfred Roller*, 1995.

from Roller to family members in his early student life in Vienna. The author indicates spatial concerns as an early interest of Roller.³⁰ The account does not place particular emphasis on the impact of Roller's ideas on the Vienna Secession. Neither is it concerned with the (Richard) Wagnerian impulse in Secession art exemplified by Roller, a recurrent theme of this thesis.

The task of drawing on Roller's notebooks as primary evidence of the formative days of the Secession in this thesis has been assisted by Oskar Pausch, and his archival work, *Gründung und Baugeschichte der Wiener Secession, mit Erstedition des Protokollbuchs von Alfred Roller*. Roller's notes are annotated, with facsimile pages of jottings and rough sketches made at coffee-house meetings.³¹ [2] Pausch describes Roller's talent for 'unifying strategies', and briefly speculates that Roller was 'a significant early figure in arts management'.³² This thesis tests this assumption through an analysis of Roller's various roles within the Secession and as *Leiter des Ausstattungswesens* (director of stage design) at the Vienna Court Opera at a time when concerns for artistic control emerged in these seemingly disparate fields of cultural production.

Two theses in English are each concerned with a singular Mahler:Roller production.³³ Theatre design historian Evan Baker's 1993 dissertation focuses on Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at the Vienna Court Opera in 1906, in the context of the early twentieth-century Stage Reform Movement.³⁴ His detailed technical analysis of Roller's productions provides support for the further insights into Roller's stage design aesthetics and his manipulation of the spaces of the stage in this thesis.

Stephen Thursby's 2009 thesis, *Gustav Mahler, Alfred Roller and the Wagnerian Gesamtkunstwerk* critically analyses Roller's 1903 production of *Tristan und Isolde* in the context of a detailed account of Wagner's theories and the mutually influential Mahler:Roller partnership.³⁵ Thursby explores the affinities between the arts in his analysis of German cultural theories of the nineteenth century and beyond. He traces the influence of Wagner's ideas on the American architect and theatre designer Louis Sullivan, the Viennese architect Camillo Sitte, and Wassily Kandinsky. His analysis of the 1903 *Tristan* production and Roller's aesthetics rests on a detailed visual and musical

³⁰M Wagner, 'As constant (features) of these talents was clearly a spatial thinking.' (*Als Konstanten dieser Begabung standen eindeutig ein räumliches Denken*), *Alfred Roller*, 37.

³¹ Pausch, *Gründung*, (2006).

³² Pausch, 'und Sie haben ihn zu einem der wichtigsten Kulturmanager im frühen zwanzigsten Jahrhundert gemacht', *Gründung*, 62.

³³ See also L. Kitzweigerer, 'Alfred Roller als Bühnenbilder', (unpublished doctoral thesis, Vienna University, 1959).

³⁴ Evan Baker, 'Alfred Roller's Production of "Don Giovanni": A Break in the Scenic Traditions of the Vienna Court Opera', (unpublished part-doctoral thesis, New York University, 1993).

³⁵ Stephen Thursby, 'Gustav Mahler, Alfred Roller and the Wagnerian Gesamtkunstwerk, Tristan and Affinities Between the Arts' (unpublished part-doctoral thesis, College of Music, Florida State University, 2009).

analysis of a series of previously unpublished black and white pen, ink and pastel drawings of the figures of *Tristan und Isolde*. These fascinating drawings have only recently come to light.³⁶ [3]

This analysis uses these same drawings to provide similar new evidence of Roller's commitment to develop his stage designs from the spirit and musical meaning of the progenitor's work, in the introduction to chapter three. Thursby's work shows how the ideas generated by the Mahler:Roller partnership later influenced stage design practices in the first half of the twentieth century. It does not attempt to relate Roller's stage design aesthetics to Secession art, or situate Roller's aesthetics in the cultural discourse of Vienna.³⁷ Nor is its focus the aestheticisation of space, the concern of this thesis. Roller's practices and a Wagnerian tendency are analysed here by drawing out the defining characteristics and injunctions of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, to illuminate their implementation in practice by Roller and his Secession colleagues through three spaces of art.

These accounts have been constrained by the parameters of an hermetic, rather than interdisciplinary view of Roller's work in the Secession period leading up to his appointment at the Vienna Court Opera in 1903. This thesis takes a different approach. A significant body of critical response to Roller's stage productions acknowledged his achievement in the visual fulfilment of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Such evidence has prompted this examination, which considers the ways in which Roller's synthetic practices informed his two earlier spaces of art. Similarly, an analysis of his earlier practices has suggested a more nuanced view of his stage design aesthetics.

Viennese modernism and space

The Vienna Secession launched their project to challenge the prevailing conservative and restrictive art world of Vienna's Academy, and the *Künstlerhaus*, not with a programmatic approach to their own art, but rather with intent to create two unrestrictive and liberating spaces for art. *Ver Sacrum*, and the *Secession Haus* were to be, in Vergo's words, 'proof of their existence'.³⁸ The urgency of this impulse prompted Schorske's rhetorical question, on behalf of Gustav Klimt and the Secession: 'who could know in advance what spatial organisation would meet the requirements of displaying modern art and design?'³⁹ This interrogative point might be interpreted as an apologia. Instead, this thesis argues

³⁶Recorded by this author, ÖTM, January 15th-18th 2007, Vienna, with the assistance of Dr Vana Greisenegger, ÖTM. Recorded by Stephen Thursby in the summer of 2007. The ÖTM reserves the right to publish these drawings in an exhibition catalogue in preparation for a Mahler exhibition, March 2010.

³⁷ Thursby notes the synthetic tendencies in Secession art, particularly the 'Beethoven' exhibition.

³⁸ Vergo, *Art in Vienna*, 88.

³⁹ Carl E Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Vintage, 1981), 218.

that this impulse might be seen differently. Protocol meetings during 1897 record ideas and decisions which indicate a confident vision for *Ver Sacrum* and the *Secession Haus*, the spaces of their art, if not the art itself, in their 'rejection of the nineteenth-century's certainties', the common driving force of early modernists.⁴⁰ Schorske's question reveals notions of space as a dominant subtext in Vienna discourse.

Discourse on the birth of urban modernism in Vienna has employed the notion of space as a persistent *Leitmotif*, initially in Schorske's intellectual history, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, first published in 1961. Schorske's defining view of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna was the flight of liberal intellectuals into an aestheticised realm, which he characterised as an oedipal revolt.⁴¹ Significantly, for this thesis, Schorske uses the paradigm of Vienna's *Ringstrasse*, and its destabilising spaces as the concept against which Vienna's cultural modernists reacted. The monumental, historicist buildings of the *Ringstrasse*, representing the seats of liberal enlightenment, government, and culture, were created on a huge tract of open land which encircled the old city. It represented a greater significance than 'the projection of values into space and stone'.⁴² It was the symbol of stasis. These were the values rejected by the Secession and other notable cultural and political figures in his account. Yet the spatial conception which inspired its design 'was original and new'.⁴³ This was the spatial conception which Roller and his fellow Secession members, from their student days in the early 1880s, witnessed in its completion.

Reversing the powerful Baroque conception of space which placed the viewer at the centre of architectonic relations, the *Ringstrasse* used the buildings 'to magnify the horizontal space' of the street itself, *without* architectonic containment.⁴⁴ Vistas were suppressed in favour of flow. Spatial dissonance, rather than structural consonance, remained, and still remains a dominant feature. In this space, which, unlike Haussmann and Paris, was ungoverned by one overall visionary architect or controlling force 'the public buildings float unorganised *in a spatial medium* whose only stabilising element is an artery of men in motion', a sense of unrelatedness and isolation prevailed.⁴⁵ The elements were organised 'without architectonic containment and without visible destination'.⁴⁶ Space, ill-defined by the *Ringstrasse* in Schorske's terms, played its role in the negative effects, the fleeting and contingent half of Baudelaire's modernity, destabilising the notion of the seeming eternal and immutable certainties of monumental stone.

⁴⁰ Schorske, *Ibid*, 219.

⁴¹ This has been contested more recently by the 'critical modernism' of Allan Janik and Steven Beller, see S. Beller (ed), *Rethinking Vienna 1900, Austrian Studies* V 3 (Oxford: Berghahn, 2001), referred to below.

⁴² Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, 25.

⁴³ Schorske, *Ibid*, 31.

⁴⁴ Schorske, *Ibid*, 32.

⁴⁵ Schorske, *Ibid*, 36.

⁴⁶ Schorske, *Ibid*, 31.

Spaces carefully defined and mutable were the desired outcome for the Secession, their response to the 'rage for open space', as Viennese architect and critic of *Ringstrasse* space, Camillo Sitte (1843-1903) described it.⁴⁷ Empty *Ringstrasse* spaces should be reconstructed as the square, 'a comfortable enclosed space, which had in the past given expression to the ideal of community'.⁴⁸ The past Sitte referred to was the Greek ideal of the *agora*, or market place. Sitte, Schorske described, yearned to transmute the anonymous spaces of the *Ringstrasse* 'by the containing sides of a square into a human scene'.⁴⁹ Instead, Sitte wanted to see spaces 'enclosed by walls, a room outdoors...a theatre of the common life'.⁵⁰ While architect Otto Wagner's city plans won the day, Sitte's concerns for framed spaces became a driving concern of the Secession. Through Roller's practices, lifted from a footnote in Schorske's account to the central place in this thesis, we may see how the Secession and their rejection of 'the nineteenth-century's certainties' exemplified by the *Ringstrasse*, nevertheless also relied on notions of space, transposed to a new and different language of design.⁵¹

Underlying the discourse on space and Vienna's cultural production, the theme of dissonance emerges, a musical term used variously to denote the inharmonious and destabilising aspects of *Ringstrasse* spaces. Schorske characterises the critics of the *Ringstrasse* as 'those who perceived dissonances in the relationship between style and function'.⁵² As this thesis establishes, notions of dissonance as well as space were subsumed productively into the characteristics of Secession art.

Edward Timms' paradigm for Vienna's intellectual life around 1900 is a series of overlapping social and creative circles.⁵³ Timms' diagrammatic circles adroitly signify physical and metaphysical space: on the one hand, the interior spaces of the Vienna coffee-house and the tables around which sat leading intellectuals and their supporters, and on the other, the imaginative spaces where creative interaction materialised both within individual fields, and across disciplines. Roller appears in small print in the Klimt circle. Roller, who used 'the flowing colours of the Klimtian palette in his stage designs', provides the rationale for its intersection with Mahler's, which in its turn, overlaps with Hofmannsthal, Reinhardt and Richard Strauss.⁵⁴ Evidence of how creative interaction

⁴⁷ Schorske, *Ibid*, 64, citing Camillo Sitte, *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen* (5th ed), (Vienna, 1922).

⁴⁸ Schorske, *Ibid*, 64.

⁴⁹ Schorske, *Ibid*, 64.

⁵⁰ Schorske, *Ibid*, 64.

⁵¹ 'Alfred Roller, a charter member of the Secession, had made his fame as stage designer for Gustav Mahler at the Court Opera', Schorske, *Ibid*, (ff), 338.

⁵² Schorske, *Ibid*, 62.

⁵³ Edward Timms, *Karl Kraus, Apocalyptic Satirist: Culture and Catastrophe in Habsburg Vienna* (London: Yale University, 1986), 8.

⁵⁴ Timms, *Karl Kraus*, 7.

materialised as the cross-fertilisation of ideas between disciplines, is more difficult to define. This thesis traces Roller's creative practices through the arc of three interconnected spaces, defined by Timms, from the Klimt circle to Hofmannsthal's, and the movement of practices through three artistic spheres. Timms, like Schorske, also remarks on the distinctive 'dissonances' of Vienna's cultural life: the dissonance of a public predominantly hostile to new and 'dissonant' forms of creativity, from Gustav Klimt's University paintings to Otto Wagner's architectural visions, and Schoenberg's music.⁵⁵

Schorske's paradigm of Vienna and the aestheticised moment was contested by Steven Beller and Allan Janik who redefined Vienna 1900 as the site of 'critical modernism'.⁵⁶ Yet space remains a dominant theme of their argument in favour of the new 'social spaces of a surrogate society'.⁵⁷ Scott Spector argues that Vienna 'is best conceived not as a realm unto itself, but rather as a thin ridge of a mountain range, which...reveals a vast and radically different terrain before it'.⁵⁸ The ridge metaphor operates temporally as well as spatially, beyond the boundaries of Vienna. A more panoramic space is required to construct a view of Vienna's modernity.

This rather more panoramic view of Vienna's cultural production is also espoused by Tag Gronberg, who uses the figure of Peter Altenberg, coffee-house habitué and poet, to explore the permeability of space and cultural production.⁵⁹ Vienna's 'spaces of interiority' were in constant dialogue with the liminal spaces between Vienna and its surrounding countryside, and between the city and its mountain range resorts. 'The emphasis on Vienna as the product of culture coexists with a rather more organic conception of Vienna's modernisation...perceived as the most recent phase of a continuous process'.⁶⁰ Gronberg likens Vienna's spheres of cultural production to Otto Wagner's 1911 view of the city, a series of circles radiating outwards from the centre.⁶¹

Gronberg argues rather for the notion of a series of symbiotic relationships between one space and another and an absence of oppositions and boundaries. This more permeable view of spaces and the nature of the productive transfer of ideas supports the ideas argued here of the mutability of the aesthetic ideas in the spaces of Roller's artistic practices, and for a less polarised view of historicist and modernist art practices. Rather than a break with the past, certain continuities existed, particularly in the theatrical presentation of Vienna's artistic productions.

⁵⁵ Timms, *Ibid*, 6.

⁵⁶ Janik, 'Vienna 1900 Revisited', 32.

⁵⁷ Janik, *Ibid*, 32.

⁵⁸ Scott Spector, 'Marginalisations', in *Rethinking Vienna*, 137.

⁵⁹ Tag Gronberg, *Vienna, City of Modernity 1890-1914* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007).

⁶⁰ Gronberg, *Ibid*, 21.

⁶¹ Gronberg, *Ibid*, 21.

The *Gesamtkunstwerk* in Vienna discourse

The idea of space in Vienna's modernist aesthetics, and in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna discourse is a mutable concept, in constant dialectic with notions of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. The particular conditions of Vienna, Schorske argues, intensified interest in, and a yearning for the ideal of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*.⁶² The *Gesamtkunstwerk* held out the promise of aesthetic unity, in the place of a sense of chaos, uncertainty, and fragmentation. Alan Janik argues for the influence of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* as a social and political model for two opposing world views: in 1898, Mayor Carl Lueger's totalising politics used anti-semitism to mobilise dissonant social groups in Vienna; journalist and editor Theodor Herzl's vision of a Jewish state construed with Herzl's 'marked flair for the dramatic and deep debt to Wagner and the *Gesamtkunstwerk*'.⁶³

Simon Shaw-Miller has defined Vienna as a city of ring spaces, adding two further rings to Schorske's *Ringstrasse* paradigm: a metaphysical space, and a musical space.⁶⁴ Vienna's ring with the hollow centre, or 'the soul with the hole' (after Thomas Harrison), signifies the problematic yet culturally productive spaces of Viennese expressionism. Shaw-Miller emphasises the centrality of Richard Wagner's ideas and music dramas as a reference point for a more radical generation of Viennese art, and the third Ring, Wagner's own many layered *Ring* tetralogy, *The Ring of the Nibelungen* (*Der Ring der Nibelungen*, 1848-1874). Wagner's *Ring* seems by implication to confer a halo of light, particularly gold, on the aesthetic productions of the Vienna Secession. The paradoxical and contesting notions of the power of Wagner's '*Ring*', for unity on the one hand, and disputatious fragmentation leading ultimately to disintegration on the other, may also stand as a powerful metaphor for *fin-de-siècle* Vienna itself.

In Vienna, the Wagnerian inheritance for musicians was, Amanda Glauert states in her study of the *Lieder* composer, Hugo Wolf, the most challenging and problematic burden.⁶⁵ No such inhibitions were exhibited by artists, architects and designers in Vienna, who saw Wagner's ideas as the magnetic point for their artistic endeavour and aspiration to create a new language of modern art. For non-musicians, Wagner's ideas, transposed to other art worlds, were an ideal to strive for, without the burden of Wagner's musical legacy either in the art or in the discourse which accompanied it.

⁶² Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, 68-72.

⁶³ Janik, 'Fin-de-siècle Vienna Revisited', 36.

⁶⁴ Simon Shaw-Miller, 'Art in Vienna 1900-1935', in *Vienna 1900-1935* (London: Cantate, 2008), 24-27.

⁶⁵ Amanda Glauert, *Hugo Wolf and the Wagnerian Inheritance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1999), 3.

Since then, as musicologist Wolfgang Dömling amongst various commentators has observed, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* has been used extensively outside of the musical world and musical discourse. In cultural 'jargon', everything that is called a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, almost always lies outside music. Dömling briefly refers to 'the Klinger exhibition' (the Secession exhibition of 1902), as an example.⁶⁶ Peter Vergo analyses Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* and its influence on (mainly Viennese) expressionist art, declaring its proliferation in art and discourse as a 'series of fruitful misunderstandings'. 'The *Gesamtkunstwerk* had been applied to things Wagner would himself never have conceived of: book design, typography, interior décor and architecture'.⁶⁷ By way of reference Vergo cites an article in one of the first issues of *Ver Sacrum* in 1898, which described the art of book decoration 'in *Gesamtkunstwerk*-like terms'.⁶⁸

In art and design discourse, the notion of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* has taken on a life of its own. The term is detached from Wagner as the progenitor and theorist, to become, in Viennese discourse, many things. Leslie Topp's analysis of architectural truth in Vienna, and the ideas of Otto Wagner, draws together notions of space with 'the impulse for the visual unity of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*...neither surface nor space dominated'.⁶⁹ Gronberg observes 'the concept of home as *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and similarly a blurring of boundaries between outside and inside'.⁷⁰ Typically, the *Wiener Werkstätte* 'was conceived of in the *Gesamtkunstwerk* tradition of the Secession's periodical *Ver Sacrum*, the works unifying the best in design, materials and execution'.⁷¹

Paradoxically, Wagner's own concerns for and theories of space are marginalised in favour of the notion of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* in Wagner historiography. Yet as this analysis of Roller's stage spaces argues, in chapter three, Wagner's theories on drama and the theatre space, and his concern for the design and function of the theatre itself, provide insights into the plastic space of Roller's third sphere of art. Matthew Wilson-Smith's account of Wagner's total work of art and its impact on mass culture in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries describes Wagner's 'total stage' and points to Wagner's ideas on the importance of enclosure, of the audience within 'the vista', eliding performance and spectator space.⁷² Wagner stressed the importance of framing spaces

⁶⁶ Wolfgang Dömling, 'Reuniting the Arts: Notes on the History of an Idea, in *19th Century Music* XVII/1 (Summer 1994), 3-9.

⁶⁷ Peter Vergo, 'The origins of Expressionism and the notion of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*', in Shulamit Behr, D Fanning, D Jarman (eds), *Expressionism Reassessed*, (Manchester, Manchester University,), 12.

⁶⁸ Vergo, 'Origins of Expressionism', 12.

⁶⁹ Leslie Topp, *Architecture and Truth in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2004), 2.

⁷⁰ Gronberg, *Vienna*, 43.

⁷¹ Joann Skrypzak, (ed), *Design Vienna 1890s to 1930s* (Cat), (Madison, Wis. with Elvehjem Museum of Art: University of Wisconsin, 2003), 22.

⁷² Matthew Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art, From Bayreuth to Cyberspace* (London: Routledge, 2007), 39.

of the stage, and described the effects of such framing.⁷³ Roller's own idea of framing, referred to briefly in an article as *Rahmenkunst*, the art of the frame, is recognised in chapter three as significant.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis further to examine evidence of Wagner's influence on the culturally productive life of Vienna in the period from his death in 1883, and the first two decades of the twentieth century. This is well covered elsewhere.⁷⁴ Beyond serious academic studies on this subject, intriguing anecdotal evidence can be found in the young Alma Mahler-Werfel's diaries and her many evenings spent with numerous figures of the Vienna Secession, playing piano reductions of Wagner's music dramas for their mutual entertainment.⁷⁵ Another thesis might be devoted to tracing how Wagner's influence was experienced by artists in the fine and applied arts.

Rather this thesis takes issue with the use of the term as epithet, as it is commonly used in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna discourse, and particularly in art and design histories. This analysis seeks to make explicit the complex aesthetic continuities and discontinuities between Wagner's ideas of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and their interconnectedness, firstly with Roller's aesthetic practices, and secondly with the dissemination of Roller's ideas in the expanded spaces of Secession art.

The thesis sets out to analyse how Wagner's ideas were made apparent by Roller's aesthetic practices and in what way Wagner's own aspirations for the presentation of art were embodied by Roller, in his various roles to impose an over-arching vision on the production of art and the spaces of art. This has been pursued by reference to and through a process of deconstruction of some of Wagner's main principles on the *Gesamtkunstwerk* and the 'art-work of the future'. I have drawn on the prose works of 1850-1854, when Wagner developed his ideas of the total work of art: *The Art-Work of the Future, Opera and Drama* and *The Theatre*.⁷⁶ In addition, in chapter three I have placed particular stress on Wagner's essay based on his speech at the founding of the

⁷³ Wilson Smith, *Ibid*, 39.

⁷⁴ See William McGrath, *Dionysian Art and Populist Politics in Austria*, (London: Yale, 1974), for an analysis of the impact of Wagner's and Nietzsche's ideas on politics, culture, and significant figures including Gustav Mahler; A Glauert, *Hugo Wolf*, for an analysis of Wagner's ideas, and the notion of the 'small *Gesamtkunstwerk*', in Vienna; Simon Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds of Music: Art and Music from Wagner to Cage* (London: Yale, 2002), for case studies on the Austro-Hungarian artist, Frantisek Kupka, composers Arnold Schoenberg and Josef Matthias Hauer; Tobias G Natter and C Grunenberg (eds), *Gustav Klimt: Painting, Design and Modern Life* (cat) (London: Tate, 2008), particularly Estha da Costa Meyer, 'Gesamtkunstwerk, or the Politics of Wholeness', which argues that Wagner's ideas were 'spread' in Vienna's art and design world through Gottfried Semper, the result of the mutual compatibility of their theories, 24-31.

⁷⁵ Alma Mahler-Werfel, *Alma Mahler-Werfel Diaries, 1898-1902*, selected, trans. Anthony Beaumont (London: Faber 1989), 6, 81 and other references.

⁷⁶ Richard Wagner's Prose Works (RWPW): *The Art-Work of the Future*, VI; *Opera and Drama* VII; *The Theatre* VIII, trans. William Ashton Ellis (London: Kegan Paul, 1892, 1893, 1894).

Festspielhaus at Bayreuth in 1873 for its insights into the importance placed by Wagner on the nature of performance space itself.⁷⁷

Methodology

Schorske's model of Viennese cultural production is significant for this thesis in two respects: his notion of temporal compression and its effects, and secondly, his stress on the interrogation of the art object with respect to tendencies in its own field, and in other branches of culture at the same time.

Vienna was unique, Schorske has argued, because of the specificity and intensity of circumstances surrounding the production art and ideas. Instead of the *longue durée* of France's *fin-de-siècle*, Vienna was a period of 'intense temporal compression,' unknown elsewhere in Europe.⁷⁸ In Vienna the signs and effects of modernity were experienced and expressed in a shorter time period and under greater pressure than other cities. The modern movements appeared in the 1890s, and were fully matured two decades later.

The main temporal focus of this thesis is the period of eight years, 1897 to 1905, representing the intensity and compression of Roller's overlapping concerns between his three spheres of artistic practice. Roller became overall editor of *Ver Sacrum* in 1898, a prolific contributor of graphic art to its pages; exhibition designer, firstly for the 1901 Segantini memorial exhibition, and then organiser with Josef Hoffmann of the twelve-week *Beethoven* exhibition from April to June 1902. During the *Beethoven* exhibition, Roller started his new, parallel career as stage designer, sending his first colour sketches for *Tristan und Isolde* to a delighted Mahler in June 1902.⁷⁹ By the end of 1905 Roller and Mahler had presented three of their ground-breaking productions, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Fidelio* and *Das Rheingold*.

This compression in time and space is paralleled by the 'early' years of the Vienna Secession, often characterised as their 'Holy Spring', (*Heiliger Frühling*, after *Ver Sacrum*). The organisation was formed in 1897, enjoyed a brief maturity, and then split, with the departure of the Klimt group in 1905. In this analysis, Roller's artistic endeavours are viewed as a continuous, unfolding temporal sequence, through the lens of his stage design practices.

⁷⁷Richard Wagner, *Wagner on Music and Drama: A Compendium of Richard Wagner's Prose Works* (WOMAD), selected, arr. Albert Goldman and Evert Sprinchorn, trans. H Ashton Ellis (New York: Dutton, 1964).

⁷⁸Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, xxvi.

⁷⁹GM:AR, expressing pleasure in the sketches, June 20th 1902 (AM47.466RO), ÖTM, see also Baker:Pausch, *Das Archiv*, 100.

Schorske's model challenged the value of a singular, historiographical or linear approach to the complex set of inter-relationships and correspondences of *fin-de siècle* Vienna. Instead, he approached his study and the complex interweaving of case-specific material on leading Viennese figures in literature, music, art, architecture 'where two lines intersect...the diachronic...the relation of a text or system of thought to previous expressions in the same area of cultural activity', and the other, 'the synchronic', the relation of the text to what is appearing in other arts at the same time.⁸⁰

An analysis based on a linear model of history, or a model reliant on single medium specificity, would do little justice to the complex shaping of ideas and practices which make up the complementary and contesting notions of Viennese modernity. The same is true for an understanding of the fullness of Roller's contribution to Vienna's modernist art practices through the trajectory of the three spaces which are examined here. The discourse on periodicals, exhibitions and stage design has been used to situate Roller's practices in its vertical context in each of the three chapters. In the cause of temporal, as well as medium specificity, secondary sources drawn from the fields of art, design, music, architecture, and theatre have been used to reveal the unities between ideas in these separate, yet interconnected disciplines. It is hoped that each chapter will create 'a coherent field in which several parts will cast light on each other to illuminate the whole'.⁸¹ At times, issues of strict chronology within the chapters have been sacrificed in favour of a thematic clarity.

Notions of space in this thesis:

In the graphic arts, Roller's aesthetic spaces encompassed book art, the design of page spaces for *Ver Sacrum* and Secession exhibition catalogues, notably the 1902 Beethoven catalogue. His poster art has been viewed as the first truly modern example of the medium in Vienna. In the art of the exhibition, he designed exhibition spaces in the mutable interior of the *Secession Haus*, murals which were set into exhibition space, and choreographed the installation of two- and three-dimensional artworks. He worked in the vast spaces of stage and proscenium arch in the design of settings, lighting and colour effects and in the design of equally celebrated costumes for every production. These two vignettes, from the first Secession exhibition catalogue in 1898, show Roller's proclivity for theatrical effects even in the smallest of these framed spaces: the calm expanse of an open landscape; the drama of a nightmarish vision. [4]

The applied arts in all their productive manifestations in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna enjoyed equality in the hierarchy of the fine and applied arts, and an equal appreciation in the

⁸⁰ Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, xxii.

⁸¹ Schorske, *Ibid*, xxviii.

public imagination. A retrospective review of art activities in Vienna written for the New York art periodical *Parnassus* in 1930 describes this non-hierarchical effect: 'ceiling decorations based on local Vienna legends; paintings of Klimt, König and Lenz; the excitement of the public in an exhibition of the work of Max Liebermann; and the graphic arts of Max Slevogt, the boundless fantasy and productiveness characteristic of Viennese arts and crafts and the students of the Wiener *Kunstgewerbeschule*'.⁸² The smallest vignette displaying a modern tendency, was, in its context, as warmly welcomed (and criticised in equal measure) by its audiences, as were Roller's stage productions.

In this thesis, notions of space are interpreted in four ways. Firstly, the term is used to denote the physical spaces of Secession cultural production, and the subject of each of the three chapters, namely *Ver Sacrum*, the art periodical of the Secession, the *Secession Haus*, and the spaces of the stage, which were transformed, it is argued here, by Roller's aesthetics. Secondly, taking the lead from Roller's artistic practices, space is investigated as a material of art: the spatial order with other materials within the artwork itself, the manipulation of interior architectonic spaces in the *Secession Haus*, and the spaces defined by the stage of the Vienna Court Opera. Thirdly, singular concepts of space given pertinence by Secession aesthetics and Roller's practices are analysed. Fourthly, this thesis is also concerned with the metaphorical spaces of art between the spectator and the artwork: the reader, the exhibition visitor and the theatre audience.

In relation to the physical spaces of Secession cultural production, consideration is given to the important aspect of the framing of space: the distinctive squareform of *Ver Sacrum*, and the particular disposition of space in the interior of the *Secession Haus* and the stage. The notion of space as a *material of art*, a fluid and permeable concept, is the subject of a sustained investigation throughout this thesis. It is argued that this idea was given particular emphasis in Secession practices, revealed initially through close examination of the art-forms with which they populated the pages of *Ver Sacrum*, their first collaborative artistic production. The investigation of singular concepts of space is concerned firstly with *Flächenkunst*, the surface art of two-dimensions, and secondly, *Raumkunst*, or 'spatial art'. The third spatial concept is *Stimmung*, which may be translated as 'atmosphere' or 'mood', an attribution given to Roller's stage presentations in Vienna. *Stimmung* is concerned with the spaces of subjectivity between the physical world of the artwork and the audience. These concepts emerged as notable ideas in the writings and artistic practices of the time.

Each chapter deals thematically with four central ideas. The first is the significance of Roller's various roles pertaining to each of the physical spaces. Secondly, each of the

⁸²Heinrich Glück, 'Recent Art Activities in Vienna', *Parnassus*, V2, 1, (January 1930), 11-13+43(11).

singular concepts of space provides the interpretative framework for each chapter. Thirdly, the emerging concern with the effect of Secession artistic productions on the audience is investigated through the case studies. These are intended to amplify the dynamic relationship between the various concepts of space employed in this thesis. Finally, through the case studies, notions of space and time, and the dissolving boundaries between the two, are considered in the context of the theatrical characteristics of Secession art. This investigation indicates that space, used in synthesis with other materials of art, intersects with notions of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, transposed to the visual arts in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna.

Chapter one is concerned with the two-dimensional spaces of the graphic arts as exemplified by *Ver Sacrum*, and other ephemeral art forms, notably the art of poster design. It draws together the design theories of architect Gottfried Semper (1803-1879) with Wagner's ideas of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, to consider the disposition of space with other materials of the graphic arts, in the pages of the periodical. Harry F Mallgrave establishes Semper as the first nineteenth-century architectural theorist to consider the hermeneutic of 'space' in the applied or 'industrial' arts without reliance on the principles of the four orders.⁸³ Semper characterised space, which was 'independent of construction', as 'the *inner life* separated from the *outer life*, and as the formal creation of the idea of space...The structure that served to support, to secure, (and) to carry this spatial enclosure...had nothing directly to do with *space* and the *division of space*'.⁸⁴

Part one of this chapter establishes *Ver Sacrum* as an indicative sign of Secession art, and Alfred Roller as a pivotal figure in the founding year of the Secession, 1897 and as 'overall editor' (*Redaktion verantwortlich*) of *Ver Sacrum*.⁸⁵ This account relies on Roller's personal notebooks as a record of his contribution. The notebooks, housed in the Roller archives (ÖTM), restore to life the quotidian events in the formation of the Secession which marked out their plans for a series of spectacular set pieces in their early years: the publication of *Ver Sacrum*, and the building of the *Secession Haus* (November 1898). Part two establishes the antecedents of, and practices associated with the concept of *Flächenkunst*, in order to define its meaning. *Flächenkunst*, it is argued here, emerged in synchronicity with the 1899 Secession exhibition of European drawing. This exegesis considers the convergence of ideas from various sources, including the theoretical text of artist Max Klinger, *Painting and Drawing (Malerei und Zeichnung)*; design theorist and book art designer, Walter Crane, and the tendencies and practices of Roller and his Secession collaborators. In the final part, analysis of the art world enclosed

⁸³ Mallgrave, 'Introduction', Gottfried Semper, *Style*, 48-49.

⁸⁴ Gottfried Semper, *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, trans. H F Mallgrave and W. Herrmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1989), 254, Semper's emphasis.

⁸⁵ The term used to describe his role in *Ver Sacrum*, from issue 1, (January, 1898), also 'Verantwortlicher Redakteur', 'overall editor'.

within the pages spaces of *Ver Sacrum* in its first year of publication, and in an exceptional 1901 issue displaying the characteristics of *Flächenkunst*, devoted entirely to the reproduction of *Lieder*, suggests the convergence of temporal and spatial concerns.

Chapter two is concerned with the interior spaces of the *Secession Haus*. It is argued here that a theatrical tendency in the exhibition displays practices of the Secession was in evidence in 1901, with Roller's Segantini exhibition, designed as a commemorative space for the artist. The themes of the chapter are introduced by reference to the fourteenth Secession exhibition, commonly titled the *Beethoven* Exhibition. Roller's central role as exhibition designer, in partnership with Josef Hoffmann is examined in part six. The chapter concludes with an imaginary analysis of the audience experience of the *Beethoven* exhibition, in the context of the notion of *Tempelkunst*, the stated aspiration of the progenitors of the exhibition. It considers how the designers of the exhibition evoked a *Stimmung*, or prevailing atmosphere throughout.

This exhibition has been extensively analysed in Vienna art, design and cultural histories as the acknowledged high point of Secession art and their aspirations to create a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. In this account, it is argued that Max Klinger's importance extends beyond his contribution of the central, monumental *Beethoven* sculpture. Max Klinger's notion of *Raumkunst*, translated variously as 'an art of space' or 'spatial art', is interpreted in this thesis through his only theoretical text, *Painting and Drawing, (Malerei und Zeichnung 1891)*. This provides an interpretative framework, together with other findings on Roller's over-arching role and his stress on the supporting artworks in the exhibition, to consider the effects of the manipulation of space and the choreography of the audience experience. Notions of time and space were dissipated in favour of the theatrical experience.

Chapter three, the spaces of the stage, and the place of Wagner's own *Gesamtkunstwerk*, considers the proposition that Roller exemplified the role of stage design director which Wagner desired for the fulfilment of his vision of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, but which he could not achieve in his lifetime. In the spaces of the stage, Roller brought to bear the principles of *Flächenkunst*, and *Raumkunst*, the spatial art, to a reworking of the spaces of the stage. The arts of space converge with the musico-dramatic work to create *Zeitkunst*, Adorno's term for the creation of temporal relationships among the constituent parts of the work, unfolding in time as does music.⁸⁶

This chapter explores Roller's interpretation and practice of the defining concerns of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* in his own chosen field of stage design. In the central section of this

⁸⁶Theodor W Adorno, 'On Some Relationships between Music and Painting' (*Über einige Relationen zwischen Musik und Malerei*, 1965) trans. Susan Gillespie, *Musical Quarterly*, 70:1 (1995:Spring), 71-79.

chapter, the notion of *Stimmung*, ascribed a central position in Wagner's writings on the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and then re-interpreted in the theories of Adolphe Appia and the practices of Roller, is examined. The concept of *Stimmung*, an unstable term like *Flächenkunst*, *Raumkunst*, and the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, had particular resonance for the Viennese audiences of Roller's productions. Even audiences further afield sought '*Stimmung*' as the ultimate Wagnerian experience, 'the real festival experience, a harmony, a continuity of atmosphere, in a word the almost untranslatable, *Stimmung*, the subtle force', as *The Musical Times* described in 1911.⁸⁷

Primary archival materials of Roller's art – stage design paintings and stage groundplans – are analysed through this chapter. Materials are drawn from productions of *Tristan und Isolde* (1903); Wagner's *Rheingold*, 1905; Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, 1906; Goethe's *Faust*, part one, 1909. The analysis is grounded in authoritative secondary sources from opera, music and theatre for the interpretation of Roller's primary materials in the context of the progenitors' musical and theatrical works. The materials have been chosen to establish Roller's concern for the aesthetic art of *Stimmung*; the manipulation of stage space through the scenic art of framing, which Roller referred to as *Rahmenkunst*, the art of framing; the concentration of the drama in the spaces of the stage and the visual realisation of *Stimmung*. Finally, this chapter seeks to establish that the contiguous events of the *Beethoven* exhibition, Roller's involvement with Mahler, and his first designs for the production of *Tristan*, were significant in two ways: temporally and spatially, evincing the movement of ideas from one space to another, from the spaces of the *Secession Haus*, to those of the Vienna Court Opera.

Roller left no significant theoretical texts. His writings were mainly confined to articles on stage design. These have been useful in illuminating his views about art and design more generally. Roller makes no direct reference in his published articles to the sources of his ideas, either to Richard Wagner, Max Klinger, Adolphe Appia, or to the design theories of Gottfried Semper and Walter Crane whose ideas are used here to illuminate his art. It is impossible to say whether he knew of their writings at first hand, through secondary texts or through art, design and theatre journals. It is known that the theories of Wagner, Semper and Klinger, along with Appia, whose most important early theories, *Musik und die Inszenierung*, were first published in Munich in 1899, and of Walter Crane, were widely circulated in the German speaking world. Max Klinger and Walter Crane were both foreign members of the Secession from its inception. Max Klinger's theories were reproduced in Secession exhibition catalogues.

⁸⁷ Bertram Smith, 'The Bayreuth "Stimmung": A Subtle Force', *The Musical Times*, August 1, 1911, 519.

I have placed particular weight on Roller's behind-the-scenes correspondence to show his connections with his contemporaries, and to indicate Roller's own Vienna circles through which common ideas flourished. The writings of Ludwig Hevesi have also been given emphasis in this thesis.⁸⁸ Hevesi chronicled the aesthetic continuities of Roller's aesthetic practices through space and time. He remains a touchstone for art and design historians in modern critical analysis of the complex shaping of aesthetic ideas of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna.

⁸⁸ Ludwig Hevesi, *Acht Jahre Sezession März 1907-Juni 1905* (AJS), (Wien: Carl Konegen, 1906); *Altkunst, Neukunst: Wien 1894-1908* (ANW), (Wien: Carl Konegen, 1909).

Introduction

The paper of the cover is like a canvas. The powerful, individual effect that is achieved by the two colours, the light ochre of the background with its powerful yet compatible red print, the powerful effect of these two colours alone...and in addition the mastery with which picture and type, *empty and full surfaces*, are combined...the reader may believe us that such a cover alone is a work of art.¹

In January 1898, the Vienna Secession publicly announced their arrival with the first issue of their art periodical *Ver Sacrum*. The cover of this issue, designed by Alfred Roller, a tree on ochre ground with its blossoms pressing impatiently against the fictive surface of the page, has become a defining image of the early years of the Secession. An account of Roller's cover design is used through the first part of this chapter to establish the importance of surface to the two-dimensional space of the page, a space of art on which the Secession laid particular stress.² [1.1] An examination of these spaces is intended to show how fruitful they were in their many manifestations in Secession art. In *Ver Sacrum*, the space of the page was treated not simply as the gap between text, image and the edge of the page, but rather as a material of the graphic arts in its own right, with its own aesthetic value.³ This notion is explored primarily through an examination of the early Secession roles and aesthetic practices of Alfred Roller, as editor and contributor to *Ver Sacrum* and his colleagues in their endeavours to define a new, as yet undefined art in this, the first indicative 'space of art' of the Vienna Secession.

Ver Sacrum, the official art periodical of the *Vereinigung Bildender Künstler Österreichs* (VBKÖ), or Secession, was published for six years from January 1898 to December 1903.⁴ It was distinguished by its squareform, an uncharacteristic format amongst the burgeoning new European market of art and design periodicals, or 'little magazines', as

¹ Hevesi, 'Ver Sacrum', (February 15th 1898), '*Das leinwandartige Papier des Umschlages, der lichte Ockerton des Grundes mit seinem kräftigen und doch tonigen Rotdruck, die starke und eigentümliche Wirkung, die mit diesen beiden Tönen allein erreicht wird, dazu die Meisterschaft, mit der Bild und Schrift, leere und volle Flächen kombiniert sind – der Leser mag uns glauben, dass ein solcher Umschlag allein ein Kunstwerk ist, (das nicht jedem jeden Tag einfällt.)*', AJS, 7. Also part-cited Christian Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum 1898-1903* (New York: Rizzoli, 1977), 23.

² For a biographical account of *Ver Sacrum*, details of its contributors, examples of outstanding graphic work, technical information, contemporary commentary, see Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum 1898-1903*.

³ See Bisanz-Prakken, *Heiliger Frühling*, '*Der klare Schrifttypus, der Schriftsatz, die eigenwilligen, oft ganzen Zeilen rhythmisch ausfüllenden Interpunktationen trugen ebenso zum Gesamtbild bei wie die Leerzeilen oder die bewusst ausgesparten Flächen*', 15; also for similar analyses Walter Koschatzky and Horst-Herbert Kossatz (eds), *Ornamental Posters of the Vienna Secession*, (London :Academy, 1974), 23-28.

⁴ Its ending is somewhat shrouded in mystery. AR's appointment in 1903 to the Vienna *Hofoper* was probably a contributory factor; Josef Hoffmann and Koloman Moser set up the *Wiener Werkstätte* from this time.

they have been termed, of the last decade of the nineteenth century.⁵ It was produced monthly in its first two years of life, from 1898 to 1899. Each issue averaged between twenty-four to thirty pages including the cover. From its third year, from January 1900 to December 1903, when it ceased publication, twenty-four issues a year were produced in a scaled-down version of the original: a smaller squareform, with fewer pages, and increasingly less content devoted either to editorial, articles, or literary contributions. Rather the predominantly visual content stood alone.

A total of one hundred and twenty issues were produced during its lifetime for the general public. In addition, a Founders' edition was produced monthly for the first two years. It was reportedly more conservative in style, at a higher cost, and with a strong emphasis on rich, metallic inks, particularly for the cover designs.⁶ It had a small print run, like other specialist art periodicals brought into being at this time by a group or movement of self-interested artists or literary figures, and a knowledgeable audience, many of whom would have been known to the Secession members. One of those interested readers, the young Alma Schindler (Mahler-Werfel), step-daughter of founding Secession artist and patron Carl Moll, provided an indicatively enthusiastic idea of the response to its publication. As she wrote in April, 1898, the circulation had already risen to over two thousand. Indeed, 'the Klimt number (March 1898) alone caused a rise of over one thousand'.⁷ In 1900, there were around three hundred subscribers. Six hundred copies of the issues of the sixth and last edition were printed.⁸

During its lifetime, Secession artists contributed four hundred and seventy-one drawings, fifty-five original lithographs and two hundred and sixteen woodcuts.⁹ By 1903, when it ceased publication, the squareform had become an emblematic sign of Secession art in many different media, including the distinctive square-framed landscapes of the first Secession Chairman, Gustav Klimt. The 'quadratic in ornamentation', as A. S. Levetus,

⁵ For a survey of popular magazines, see David Reed, *The Popular Magazine in British and the United States 1880-1960* (London: British Library, 1997). For a detailed account of British and American 'little magazines' in the context of social and cultural trends, see Mark S Morrison, *The Public Face of Modernism: Little Magazines, Audiences and Reception 1905-1920* (London: University of Wisconsin, 2001). See also 'Magazines and the Domestic Interior, 1870-1965', Special Issue, *Journal of Design History*, V 18, 1, 2005, particularly Stefan Muthesius, 7-20, and Jeremy Aynsley on the Viennese periodical, *Das Interieur*, 43-59. See Peter Brooker and A Thacker (eds), *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines V 1, Britain and Ireland 1880-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), particularly 1-28, for definitions of the modernist periodical, as 'alternative, radically innovating experimental artists... proposing a new kind of art for a new kind of social and perceptual world', after R Williams, *The Politics of Modernism*, a useful definition of the category in which *Ver Sacrum* might be positioned, 2. Volume 3, *Europe*, (scheduled 2012) will include a section on Vienna, *Ver Sacrum* and the *Wiener Werkstätte Almanach* (1911), by this author; *Die Fackel* and *Der Brenner* by Edward Timms.

⁶ See Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum*, 32, for details of pricing.

⁷ A Mahler, *Diaries*, 24.

⁸ Nebehay, *Ibid*, 32-34.

⁹ Nebehay, *Ibid*, 30.

the respected writer on Austrian art for *The Studio*, declared in 1906 'is so prominent a feature of the modern Viennese School'.¹⁰

During the six year period in which Roller and his colleagues published one hundred and twenty issues, they also designed and organised sixteen Secession exhibitions of between eight and twelve weeks each, in the newly built *Secession Haus* which opened in November 1898.¹¹ This chapter establishes the effect of this compression of time and space on the pages and issues of *Ver Sacrum*. It was revealed not as an orderly progression from one aesthetic tendency to another, but rather as consonance and dissonance. Its trajectory reveals complementary and competing notions of a Viennese art of the decorative, and of a modern style, if not in its complete state, then at least it represented 'the work-in-progress' of the Secession designers, artists, and architects who were involved.

Bisanz-Prakken has characterised the first year of publication as 'the year of experimentation', and the second year, 1899, as 'a more homogenous impression... in the spirit of formalised principles of design and layout'.¹² This description mirrors frequently expressed views on a defining turning point in Secession aesthetics around 1900. Typically, this is denoted as a move from an eclectic mix of 'natural and floral forms, geometric and abstract motifs' towards 'a reduction and simplification of the ornamental framework to geometric forms... and a more rigid linearity'.¹³ Topp describes a transition from the 'luxuriant and fanciful... to simplification'; Schorske's summation is the 'replacement of *art-nouveau* ... with rectilinear geometric forms'.¹⁴

This development towards 'a more rigid linearity' may be observed in the cover designs from 1900 when *Ver Sacrum* changed to its smaller format and to twenty-four issues a year. Individual and original designs integrating the lettering of the title turned each cover in its first two years into a complete artwork in its own right, using the totality of the surface space. [1.2] These were replaced by a simple, highly stylised vignette usually centred on the otherwise blank space of the cover page, between a standardised version of the periodical title, and that of the disseminating body, the *Vereinigung Bildender Künstler Österreichisches* (VBKÖ). Indeed, there were times when Secession art was

¹⁰ A S Levetus, 'Modern Painting in Austria', in *The Art Revival in Austria*, special summer issue, *The Studio*, (London, 1906), D vii.

¹¹ As well as other Austrian exhibits for example the Paris World Exhibition of 1900.

¹² Bisanz-Prakken, 'Der zweite Jahrgang (1899) vermittelt insgesamt einen homogenen Eindruck, wobei sich sowohl im Layout als auch in den graphischen Beiträgen die Gestaltungsprinzipien zu festigen scheinen.' *Heiliger Frühling*, 109.

¹³ Bisanz-Prakken, 'The Beethoven Exhibition of the Secession: the Younger Viennese Tradition of the Gesamtkunstwerk', in Erika Nielsen (ed), *Focus on Vienna: Change and Continuity in Literature, Music, Art and Intellectual History*, (Houston: Wilhelm Fink, 1982), 143-144. Also confirmed, interview, Bisanz-Prakken, Albertine Museum, Vienna, September 7th 2007.

¹⁴ Topp, on Josef Hoffmann, *Architecture and Truth*, 70. Schorske, on Klimt and Hoffmann, *Fin-de-siècle Vienna*, 265, 266.

poised on the point of abstraction. Roller's own contribution to a November issue in 1901, a series of eight squareform vignettes in intense orange, exhibited nothing more than a series of modulated striations standing for this modernist turn. [1.3] However, the covers of *Ver Sacrum* do not tell the whole story. To impose a progressive model on the design forms contained within its pages would risk overlooking the richness and plurality of its contents.

It cannot be said that *Ver Sacrum* in its progression through six years of life clearly revealed an aesthetic high-point with quite the clarity of the Fourteenth Secession *Beethoven* exhibition of 1902. This event has taken on a mythical quality in accounts of the Vienna Secession and their aspirations to create a *Gesamtkunstwerk* in the spaces of the *Secession Haus*.¹⁵ No single issue of *Ver Sacrum* has been awarded any such specific accolade, despite its reputation, as one commentator typically described in a 1976 review of fin-de-siècle art magazines, for its 'daring unity of style, a refined aestheticism...kept under perfect control'.¹⁶ However, the distinguishing characteristic of *Ver Sacrum* has been to attract a singular reputation amongst turn-of-the century art periodicals as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* in periodical form, evoking 'a euphoric confirmation of unity', as Bisanz-Prakken has stated.¹⁷ This analysis of *Ver Sacrum* considers how a periodical or more specifically this particular periodical may exhibit a Wagnerian tendency in the more distanced field of graphic art. It seeks to make explicit the connections between the art and ideas of Roller, his Secession collaborators, and Wagner's own theories contained mainly in his writings on *The Art-Work of the Future (Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft)*, (1849-1850).¹⁸

Wagner's writings on the *Gesamtkunstwerk* united three central ideas. The first of these was the paradigm of an equality of ideals and art forms, as Wagner declared, 'the ideal expression of art...concentrated...into one focus to bring forth the highest conceivable form of art'.¹⁹ In other words, each individual art form, in all its strength, would join together to create a single, new conception of art. Wagner stressed the importance of 'all the rich elements of spontaneous art', to suggest the freedom of the individual artist.²⁰

¹⁵ Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* ideas are cited in the Secession Fourteenth *Max Klinger: Beethoven* exhibition catalogue, (Wien: Adolf Holzhausen, 1902), 20.

¹⁶ Trevor Fawcett, 'Illustration and Design', T Fawcett and Clive Phillpot (eds), *The Art Press: Two Centuries of Art Magazines* (London: The Art Press at the Victoria and Albert Museum, 1976), 55-58(57).

¹⁷ Bisanz-Prakken, *Heiliger Frühling*, 'ein euphorisches Bekenntnis zur Einstimmigkeit innerhalb der Pluralität der Gesinnungen und Tendenzen', 18, cited in Topp, *Architecture and Truth*, 'a euphoric unanimity within a plurality of orientations and tendencies', 185,

¹⁸ Richard Wagner, *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*, (Leipzig, 1850), RWPW, VI.

¹⁹ WOMAD, 77,78. Also cited Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds of Music*, 45.

²⁰ WOMAD, 78.

Secondly, the 'highest conceivable art form' was not necessarily simply a larger, more monumental version of the same. Wagner's *mythos*, 'from whose essence alone... can we learn to comprehend the *view-in-common* of the essence of things',²¹ *mythos*, the bearer of universal ideas was 'the stuff of drama, the essence, its correspondence with wide-reaching content, *which will manifest itself in utmost concentration*'.²² The concern with spareness and concentration of form is suggestive of the decorative and ornamental forms found in the pages of *Ver Sacrum*: its book decorations, or *Buchschmuck*, as the Secession titled them, together with decorative lettering, saturated and simple colours, and the sheer ingenuity and multiplicity of design forms and drawings which made up its one hundred and twenty issues. [1.4]

The third idea advocated by Wagner in his aspirations for the 'Art-Work of the Future', was the spirit of community, described as 'all of those men who feel a common and collective want'.²³ This notion, interpreted here as a community of the arts, and a community between those that practised the arts and their audience, has particular pertinence to the Secession in the applied arts of periodical design. Their commitment to an artistic community and a non-hierarchical notion of the applied and fine arts was revealed through the pages and earliest issues of *Ver Sacrum* in its first two years of production.

The theories of Gottfried Semper in his work, *Style in the Technical and Tectonic Arts*, (*Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten oder praktische Ästhetik*), first published between 1860 and 1863, are also used here to illuminate the concerns and tendencies exhibited in *Ver Sacrum* in its first two years of its life and beyond.²⁴ Semper's significant role in the grand design of Vienna's *Ringstrasse* art museums, the dissemination of his ideas in the German-speaking world and their salience to the theories of Vienna's architects and designers have been covered elsewhere. His place in this thesis has been founded on two main principles. As Mallgrave has established, Semper was the first architect of the nineteenth century to elaborate ideas about space and the decorative arts outside of a consideration of the 'Four Orders'.²⁵ These were explored conceptually in his theories on style. However, Semper was concerned not just with space, but also with ideas of framing, 'one of the most important basic forms of art', and the enclosure of space, on which this and the ensuing chapters lay particular stress.²⁶ Semper's ideas about the enclosure of surface space and framing emerged from

²¹ WOMAD, 89.

²² WOMAD, 90.

²³ WOMAD, 85.

²⁴ Semper, *Style in the Technical and Tectonic Arts; or Practical Aesthetics*, trans. Harry Francis Mallgrave and Michael Robinson, (Los Angeles, Ca: Getty Research Institute, 2004).

²⁵ See Mallgrave, 'Introduction', *Style*, 48.

²⁶ See Semper, *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, trans. H F Mallgrave and W Herrmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University 1989), 201. See also Debra Schaffer, *The Order*

his theories of 'Bekleidung', to use Semper's term, a concept meaning dressing, which drew its meaning from the surface patterns of textiles, regardless of the materials it was applied to.²⁷ These theories were far-reaching in their implications for Secession artists, who, like Semper, conceived of 'dressing' or surface decoration as transmutable in its movement across different spaces of art, and theatrical in its effect.²⁸

The decorative forms and their placement on the pages of *Ver Sacrum* in the early years, and the assertions made at the time were suggestive of Semper's ideas in these two further respects. The first of these is represented in 'Proportionality and Direction' (Unity of Movement), part of the 'Prolegomena', in which Semper introduced the fundamental principles of his theories. He described the direction of line, as 'will power... *the felicitous resolution of the struggle of the organic vital force* against matter on the one hand and will-power on the other'.²⁹ The tree in Roller's first cover design, its leaves pressing against the fictive frame of the cover, may represent 'the felicitous resolution of the organic vital force'.

Secondly, the designers and artists working on *Ver Sacrum* as editors and contributors appeared to draw on a deep well of pre-determined archetypal forms to create newly conceived ornamental and decorative motifs. As Semper may have described, these were 'old motifs (which were) *discernable in every new form*. In just the same way, art is based on a few standard forms and types that derive from the most ancient traditions. They reappear constantly'.³⁰ Like Wagner, for whom the 'mythos', the defining underlying force of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* was 'true for all time', Semper too, wished to find underlying principles of form and style that crossed time, and were instead determined by material and technique.³¹ Semper placed his own emphasis on the notion that such forms were true or authentic for all time. He used the phrase, 'always *the same*', to express the integrity of these forms.³²

Mallgrave and others have shown that Semper's ideas devoted to a single, over-riding vision, emerged in parallel with, and at times, were mutually influenced by Wagner's ideas for *The Artwork of the Future* (1849-53).³³ Like Wagner, Semper strove throughout

of Ornament, the Structure of Style: Theoretical Foundations for Modern Art and Architecture (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1993) for the continuity of Semper's ideas with those of the Vienna Secession, Otto Wagner and Adolf Loos.

²⁷ Mallgrave translated *Bekleidung* as 'dressing', regardless of what material it is applied to, see 'Introduction', *Style*, viii, see also 50.

²⁸ See Harry F Mallgrave, 'Introduction', Gottfried Semper, *Style in the Technical and Tectonic Arts, or Practical Aesthetics*, trans. H F Mallgrave and M Robinson, (Los Angeles: Getty, 2004), 50.

²⁹ Semper, *Ibid*, 90.

³⁰ Semper, *Style*, 72.

³¹ WOMAD, 90.

³² Semper, *Style*, 106, Semper's emphasis.

³³ Mallgrave, 'Introduction', *Style*, 51.

to 'see beauty as a unity...not just as a sum or a series,' and to consider the expression of unity through multiplicity of form.³⁴ By 1892, in the writings of German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), Semper was regarded as the progenitor of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* in architectural form: 'Semper envisioned a *Gesamtkunstwerk* in which architectural masses became enlivened and shaped as it were by ornament, colour, and a host of painted and plastic forms'.³⁵

Semper was concerned with decorative form and the applied arts, a defining characteristic of the Vienna Secession which set them apart from the fine artists of the Munich Secession (1892), and the Berlin Secession, founded by artists Max Liebermann and Francis Leistikow (1898).³⁶ Semper's Ringstrasse building, the Kunsthistorisches Museum was completed in 1891 as Gustav Klimt contributed his paintings to the lofty domed heights of its interior spaces. The yet-to-become Vienna Secession members were, at the same time, gathering to discuss the future of their own art and the birth of a modern style in Austrian art, in their various café haunts in Vienna.³⁷ The relaxed drawing of the young Alfred Roller dated March 19th 1895 by one of his artist collaborators in the Café Sperl provides further evidence of their early collaborations. [1.5]

Secession interest in the idea of two-dimensional space and its plastic potential was characterised in their invention of the term *Flächenkunst*, literally an art of surface space, which emerged as a defining concept in Secession art around 1899, as this chapter will establish. *Flächenkunst* embodied a graphic and ornamental style employed in *Ver Sacrum*, and other two-dimensional spaces which emphasised abstracted or highly stylised decorative forms and repeating patterns, lacking perspective or shadowing. It was important to the Secession in their search for a new design language which could be identified as Viennese.

In the last section of this chapter, notions of temporality and space are examined in two issues of *Ver Sacrum* drawn from its first year and its fourth, 1901 when a single issue was devoted in its entirety to the publication of eleven *Lieder*. The pages of this *Lieder* issue, like the surface decorations of the 1902 *Beethoven* exhibition, exhibit 'Schein', Nietzsche's term for 'semblance', or appearance, through their use of precious metal.³⁸

³⁴ Semper, *Style*, 72.

³⁵ Cited in Mallgrave, 'Introduction', Gottfried Semper, *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, trans H. Mallgrave and Wolfgang Hermann, (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1989), 1.

³⁶ For brief comparison of three Secession groups, see Peter Paret, *The Berlin Secession and its Enemies in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard, 1980), 36-37.

³⁷ See Vergo, *Art in Vienna*, 18, for coffee-house origins of the young artist groups which preceded the Secession.

³⁸ See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik*, 1872; Raymond Geuss and Ronald Spiers (eds), *Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings* (Cambridge:

This particular issue exemplifies *Flächenkunst* and lends itself to an analysis based on the substance and form of musical as well as design theories of the time. The vignette on Alfred Roller, as editor and contributor to *Ver Sacrum*, is provided here.

Part 1: Alfred Roller, realist and stylist

In Alfred Roller and the way of new art, these qualities happily meet together. He is the *realist and stylist* at the same time.³⁹

Roller's role and contribution to *Ver Sacrum* is characterised through this chapter in two ways: his role as controlling editor of the periodical during the first two years, and the skills and interests he brought to *Ver Sacrum*, as a contributor, in drawing, and other associated two-dimensional art forms, notably the art of poster design. These two skills, the ability to organise, and to create and innovate provide the clearest examples of the attributes bestowed on him by Ludwig Hevesi and his defining epithet for Roller, as 'realist and stylist at the same time'.⁴⁰ Hevesi awarded this accolade to Roller in his review of Roller's stage design for Wagner's *Die Walküre*, at the Vienna Court Opera in 1907. It was clearly informed by Hevesi's earlier knowledge of Roller in his pivotal roles in the founding and early years of the Vienna Secession, predating Roller's higher profile position as *Leiter des Ausstattungswesens*, director of stage design.

In the Roller archives (ÖTM), a notebook amongst his papers has provided the most vivid evidence of the role Roller played with his colleagues and friends in the formation of the Secession, in 1896 and 1897.⁴¹ [1.6] His records of significant 'Protocol' meetings show that, unsurprisingly for Vienna, they took place in the Hotel Victoria café, Favoritenstrasse 11, and not the Café Sperl, more usually celebrated as the founding café of the Secession. His records remain, although the Hotel Victoria does not.⁴² His notes were often accompanied by provisional lists of potential and nominated Secession members, from inside Austria and wider afield in Europe. Amongst Roller's various lists, his notes dated July 21st 1897, for a full meeting of the *General Sammlung*, (General Committee) include the names of the celebrated Leipzig artist Max Klinger, and the Italian-born artist,

Cambridge University, 1999), 3-116 (156) also 'The Dionysiac World View' (1870, unpublished in Nietzsche's lifetime), 119-138.

³⁹ Hevesi, 'Und in Alfred Roller treffen sie, wie in wenigen Männern der Neukunst, glücklich zusammen. Er ist der Realist und Stilist zugleich', 'Die Walküre', (February 5 1907), ANW, 264.

⁴⁰ Hevesi, ANW, 264.

⁴¹ ÖTM letters and estate archive, (AR6: E4504; RO_61U35BC), also Pausch, *Gründung*, 99, 111, for facsimile pages.

⁴² Hotel Victoria café is not noted in any published accounts of the early years of the Secession. AR's notebooks provide evidence that the nascent Secession used the Hotel and the Café Dobner for their 'Protocol' meetings to exchange ideas and bring to fruition the Vienna Secession, unlike many other such anecdotes which provide no evidence of the outcome of café cultural exchange.

Giovanni Segantini. Both artists played an important role in Roller's exhibition of 1901, a subject of the next chapter.⁴³

Roller's notes were often richly embellished with decorative doodles. [1.7] One such *motif*, a series of linked geometric and circular forms, drawn in orange and blue, bears a resemblance to a decorative hanging on the wall of his studio, with which Roller was photographed in an uncharacteristically aesthetic pose. [1.8] The tall, slim, and youthful figure of the artist displays slender, attenuated fingers curled gently round a crumpled sheet of paper, and a rakish French-style beret. The image conveys a more sympathetic impression of the artist at work, than the heavily bearded, professorial and formally suited figures normally found in photographs of Secession members.⁴⁴

Roller's notebooks show that he was instrumental in dealing with the many practical details which attended to their formation, funding and to the distillation of ideas into plans and a coherent vision. These interventions ultimately led to a superbly co-ordinated series of set-pieces in the early years of the Secession: their intensive exhibition programme, the creation and building of the Secession *Haus*, and the publication of *Ver Sacrum*. The notes of a meeting on April 8th, 1897 reveal that he was appointed the Secession's *Schriftführer*, or Organisation Secretary, fulfilling a greater role than that of a mechanical recorder. Rather, Roller brought together and synthesised the important ideas which were discussed often between fifteen or more influential members in attendance, including Gustav Klimt, the Secession's first President.⁴⁵ Indeed it is intriguing to find matter-of-fact evidence of events in the notebooks which have been enshrined in Secession history.⁴⁶ For example, on April 4th, 1897, the Secession members discussed the plans for building Josef Maria Olbrich's *Secession Haus*. Roller noted that 'everything depends on talking to (Karl) Wittgenstein'.⁴⁷ The wealthy industrialist, patron of the arts and father of philosopher, Ludwig, generously funded the building.

Roller was the only Secession member to serve on two committees to organise their parallel endeavours in different 'spaces of art': the *Ver Sacrum*, or *Zeitschrift* committee, and the *Presscomité*. The forming of these committees was recorded in Roller's

⁴³ ÖTM, (AR6: E4504) as above.

⁴⁴ See for example often-reproduced photograph of Secession members 'on the set' of the *Beethoven: Klinger* exhibition, prior to its opening.

⁴⁵ O. Pausch, interview, ÖTM, Vienna, April 19th 2007.

⁴⁶ Author, 'Alfred Roller's notebooks, the *Hotel Victoria Café* and the founding of the Vienna Secession: from café table to *total work of art*', *The Viennese Café as Centre of Cultural Exchange*, Royal College of Art, October 17th 2008.

⁴⁷ Pausch, 'Item 3, Protocol meeting 10th April 1897, Olbrich spricht zunächst mit W(ittgenstein) hiervon hängt alles', *Gründung*, 98.

notebooks in the notes of meetings in July 1897.⁴⁸ Both of these committees were concerned with presenting a unified view to the outside world. This found its public embodiment in a special eight-page supplement, '*Frühling in Österreich*', which promoted the artistic interests of the Vienna Secession in the *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung* in 1898.⁴⁹ Literary works and poetry of prominent *Jung Wien* writers including Hugh von Hofmannsthal, Peter Altenberg and Arthur Schnitzler appeared in the supplement, identifying the Secession with other avant-garde figures. Roller's dramatic, simplified flower forms dominated the page, a contrivance for spatial definition and the framing of the columns of text. [1.9] The supplement took the message of the Secession from the narrow circle of their immediate supporters to the wider audience of the popular press, and was, in its turn, circulated in the same café spaces which had fostered their early ideas.

Even the most collaborative of groups requires a controlling force, to bring together diverse and different ideas to create a unity, a force which, as Wagner described in his writings on *The Artwork of the Future*, must 'exclude alien and unnecessary detail'.⁵⁰ The positions held by Alfred Roller as *Schriftführer* embodied this level of control: the economy of his note-taking characterises his ability to 'exclude unnecessary detail'.⁵¹ The Secession message to its public in Vienna was managed and controlled.

In parallel with his Secession involvement, Roller sustained a deep engagement in, and influence on the teaching and policies of the *Kunstgewerbeschule*, the School of the Applied Arts, Vienna, from at least 1899. In 1900, he was appointed Professor in Figurative Drawing. From 1909 until 1933, two years before his death, he served as its Director. There were many comings and goings between the Secession and the School. Architect Josef Hoffmann (1870-1965), designer Koloman Moser (1868-1918) and Roller, were appointed Professors by the new director Baron Felician von Myrbach, also a Secession founder, who preceded Roller in the same role. The students and their designs were featured in the pages of *Ver Sacrum*, and at Secession exhibitions. Roller founded a short-lived publication titled *Die Fläche*, ('The Surface'), (1901-1902) with von Myrbach, Moser and Hoffmann. The publication showcased a rich inventory of original decorative or 'surface design' patterns, vignettes and motifs created by the students of the School, as well as their Professors.

⁴⁸ Indicative of an early form of press management intended to control the Secession message in the Viennese press, often highly critical of new art in all its forms.

⁴⁹ Josef Münz (ed), '*Ver Sacrum* has indeed already made our young ornamentalists so popular that their sweeping lines are recognised everywhere', '*Frühling in Österreich*', *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung* (Wien: Johann R Bernay, 1898), nominally 1-8, (8).

⁵⁰ WOMAD, 227.

⁵¹ WOMAD, 227.

Roller's ardent pursuit of progress in the applied arts in Vienna in these early years and the ubiquity of his involvement and influence as he moved through the intensively interconnected fields of design and the plastic arts may be illustrated by these further vignettes. Schorske stated:

The protocols of the Vienna Arts Council (February 1899, May 1890), contain striking examples of the energy and candour with which Otto Wagner, Carl Moll and Alfred Roller pressed the interests of modern artists...(as does) a Memorandum from Alfred Roller to the Minister of Culture, von Hartel, on the development of a Modern Gallery and its collections.⁵²

Roller wrote the preface to the publication *Aus der Wagner Schule*, (Vienna 1900), produced by the group of young, progressive architects around Otto Wagner.⁵³ As he prophetically declared in this article, 'One day some art scholar will take it upon himself to write the history of the Modern in Vienna... He will have his work cut out for him... our time (is) full of contradictions'.⁵⁴

Through his *Kunstgewerbeschule* associations, Roller was also connected with Rudolf von Larisch (1856-1934), of the 'illustrious family of the Larischs', as Allan Janik described them, and Roller's fellow-teacher from 1901.⁵⁵ Rudolf von Larisch became an important protagonist of new lettering design and form, principally from 1899, setting up a school whose students continued to have an impact on modern graphic design through the first half of the twentieth century.⁵⁶ His theories, as Aynsley has described, were concerned with the bodily movement involved in lettering, which he believed was as important as the resulting design.⁵⁷ They stressed the affinities between the act of writing, music and dance, through his interest in eurhythmia.⁵⁸ These interests were commonly shared across the arts, notably by the Wagnerian stage designer and theorist, Adolphe Appia, whose ideas were important to Roller in his later role at the Vienna Court Opera. Larisch's influence, or at least the convergence of his ideas with those of the Secession and his involvement later with the *Wiener Werkstätte* has been somewhat underplayed. His contribution to the codification of the aesthetics of *Flächenkunst* is examined below.

Roller's interests in contemporary design issues extended to the contentious subject of Reform Dress. He wrote several articles on the subject, as the typed versions in his

⁵² Schorske, *Fin-de-siècle Vienna*, 275, (ff 35). The Memorandum was published in *Ver Sacrum*, March, 1900, 178.

⁵³ Cited in Topp, *Architecture and Truth*, 5.

⁵⁴ Topp, *Ibid*, 1.

⁵⁵ Allan Janik and Hans Veigl, *Wittgenstein in Vienna: A Biographical Excursion through the City and its History* (New York: Springer, 1998), 4.

⁵⁶ See Eberhard Höllcher, *Rudolf von Larisch und Seine Schule: Rudolf von Larisch and his School* (Berlin, Leipzig: Heinze & Blanckertz, 1938-9).

⁵⁷ Jeremy Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany 1890-1945* (London: Thames & Hudson 2000), 73.

⁵⁸ Aynsley, *Graphic Design*, 73.

archives show, one of which appeared in the same ground-breaking issue of *Dokumente der Frauen* (1902) as that of architect, polemicist and Secession critic, Adolf Loos.⁵⁹ In 1908, when he was still deeply involved in his role as stage designer at the Court Opera, as Eduard Sekler reports 'the young Charles Eduard Jeanneret, (en route from his tour of Italy to Vienna in 1908), came to show his travel sketches to Alfred Roller'.⁶⁰

Some further insights may be gleaned from the interconnecting circles with which Roller was directly or indirectly connected and which typified the 'overstepping of traditionally fixed artistic boundaries'.⁶¹ As cited by Bisanz-Prakken, Alfred Roller wrote to the writer and librettist, Max von Millenkovitch-Morold (1866-1945) on his views about the artistic direction of *Ver Sacrum*.⁶² It was a friendly correspondence which started at least as early as 1892.⁶³ There were many connections between Morold and important figures in the fields of music and opera in Vienna. Through his writings and published books Morold was connected with composers Anton Brückner, Franz Liszt, who was also Wagner's mentor and father-in-law, the *Lieder* composer Hugo Wolf, whose music was featured in the special issue of *Ver Sacrum* in 1901, and Richard and Cosima Wagner. This last contact culminated in a slim volume, *Richard Wagner in Wien*, published in 1934.⁶⁴

Roller designed the poster in simple graphic lettering for Arnold Schoenberg's first performance in Vienna of *Gurrelieder* (1901-1911), his Wagnerian choral and orchestral work.⁶⁵ The two men corresponded briefly in 1912: Schoenberg related that his pupil, the Austrian musician Heinrich Jalowitz (1882-1946) wanted to be the first to conduct Roller's setting of *Fidelio* in Stettin.⁶⁶ Roller appeared to bridge the divide, at least in the company he kept through his work, between the 'painters and decorators', as Adolf Loos derisively described the group of Secession artists and designers gathered round Gustav Klimt, and Loos' own circle of 'critical modernists' which included Karl Kraus, the satirist, founder and editor of *Die Fackel* (1899-1936) and Arnold Schoenberg.⁶⁷

Following in the footsteps of his father, Joseph Roller, who was author of a didactic work *Technik der Radierung* ('Etching Technique'), Roller quickly developed a reputation in the

⁵⁹ See Janet Stewart, *Fashioning Vienna: Adolf Loos' Cultural Criticism* (London: Routledge, 2000), 113. Also various typed articles on the subject intended for publication, ÖTM.

⁶⁰ Eduard F Sekler, *Josef Hoffmann, The Architectural Work, Monograph and Catalogue*, trans. author, cat. trans. John Maass, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1985), 113.

⁶¹ Werkner, *Austrian Expressionism*, 240.

⁶² Max von Millenkovitch-Morold (pseudo. Max Morold), writer, mainly on musical figures, also director of the k k Hofburgtheaters, 1917-1918.

⁶³ AR: Milenkovitch-Morold letters, (104669), Handschriftensammlung, Wienbibliothek im Rathaus (Vienna).

⁶⁴ Max von Millekovitch Morold, *Richard Wagner in Wien* (Leipzig, 1938), expresses extreme German National Socialist sentiments.

⁶⁵ Performed in 1913.

⁶⁶ ÖTM, AM 47.684 RO, Baker:Pausch, *Archiv*, 12.

⁶⁷ Janik, 'Vienna 1900 Revisited', 41.

graphic arts beyond his work for the Secession.⁶⁸ His commercial poster design for the Austrian Pensions Savings Institute (*Altersversorgunganstalt*) in 1899, illustrates clearly his concern for the spatial definition and organisation of surface. [1.10] The poster was divided into three vertical sections to shape a sequential visual narrative. It demonstrated his ability to reflect *the experience* communicated by the message, rather than just the message itself. Disembodied hands and coins are illustrated against an abstract background of striated lines, perhaps to indicate the flow of time. Roller's version of the quotidian act, of giving money to the institution, and in turn, having a greater sum returned is an arresting and visually explicit sequence. It intimates two actions at different times which are brought together in the same space, in a design which was unconventional for its time and context.

Finally, a caricature of Roller by the Secession artist Friedrich König in a special issue of *Ver Sacrum*, 1901 devoted to humorous renderings of the main Secession figures was particularly telling, at least to the observers of the day.⁶⁹ It shows the tall, lean-limbed figure of Roller practising a wide sweep of the paintbrush, denoted '*Der Grosze Schwung*', suggesting a sweeping line. [1.11] Ludwig Hevesi commented:

This is how they painted in ancient Japan. Not with a mere flick of the wrist, but with the whole arm, and indeed with the whole body, for only in that way was it possible to produce this very special kind of 'sweeping line'. (Roller's caricature) ... shows *our own Alfred Roller* standing as though rooted to the spot, tracing a larger-than-life curve with a powerful sweep of his arm that reflects the whole life of his body.⁷⁰

A Japanese style was associated with *Flächenkunst*, and prized in the eclectic art world of the Secession. By 1901, when this caricature appeared, a complete issue of *Ver Sacrum*, issue seven in 1899, and the sixth Secession exhibition, 1900 had been devoted to the Secession designers' re-interpretation in graphic form of Japanese pattern book designs and to Japanese art.⁷¹

Furthermore, Hevesi's sentiments may describe two things about Roller and his relationship with his world. The words were indicative of the affectionate respect which

⁶⁸ See Evanthis Greisenegger, Wolfgang Greisenegger, Oskar Pausch, *Alfred Roller und seine Zeit* (Wien: Böhlau, 1991), 9. See also Josef Roller, *Technik der Radierung: Eine Anleitung zum Radieren und Ätzen auf Kupfer* (Wien und Leipzig: Hartelben, 1911), 3rd ed. (although this has a forward by J Roller who died in the 1890s).

⁶⁹ *Ver Sacrum*, issue 3, year 4, (March, 1901), 62.

⁷⁰ Cited Franzpeter Messmer, 'Alfred Roller's costumes and set designs from Richard Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier*', in *Der Rosenkavalier: Figurinen und Bühnenbildentwürfe/Costume and Set Designs by Alfred Roller* (Wien: Dr Richard Strauss, 1996), 2, from Hevesi, 'Hokusai', ANW, 535-536. Messmer connects AR's sweeping line with the musical style of Strauss.

⁷¹ See Bisanz-Prakken, 'Der Quadrat in der Flächenkunst der Wiener Secession', in *Alte und Moderne Kunst*, 27, January 1982, 39-46. See also Peter Noever, (ed), *Verborgene Impressionen – Hidden Impressions: Japonismus in Wien 1870-1930* (Wien: Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst, 1990).

Roller had achieved amongst his familiars and friends, and a reputation for a specifically idiosyncratic way of working. Hevesi appears to credit his way of working, 'his whole body', with a primal understanding of the artistic influences considered important to the Secession. Roller instilled and expressed the new, in this example, the principles of Japanese art, merely by his physical presence and style. Roller published very little on the graphic arts. It is difficult to read the extent of his aesthetic influence through his theoretical views. However, it appears that he conveyed the innovative in art through his person.

Part 2: *Ver Sacrum*, indicative sign of Secession art

Alfred Roller's first cover for *Ver Sacrum* set out as strong an aesthetic mandate for the Secession as did the declarations of intent inside the pages of the first issue.⁷² Its publication marked a pivotal moment in the Vienna Secession's existence. This first issue of *Ver Sacrum* was inextricably linked through its title to the Roman idea of the *Secessio Plebis*.⁷³ The Secession announced their break with the Vienna Academy of Art, and the *Künstlerhaus*, Vienna's only official exhibiting body, as a mission to renew the art of Austria by association with the ancient Roman rite: the consecration of youth in times of danger to undertake a divine mission and secede from the established order.

The ideal, described by Vienna theatre director and writer Max Burckhardt, in his lyrical prose piece in the opening pages, ascribed the notion of 'Holy Springtime', ('*Heiliger Weihefrühling*') with these first signs of new life for the Secession, who yearned to create '*der Stadt der Künste*',⁷⁴ a city for artists and art. Burckhardt's address particularly emphasised the importance of the term '*Ver Sacrum*' as the embodiment of the 'new community of artists', 'those born during the *Ver Sacrum* and were themselves a "Holy Spring",⁷⁵ rather than the term Secession, derived from '*secessio plebis*'. The reference to 'a new community of artists' has particular salience to the unique features of *Ver Sacrum*, even amongst *fin-de-siècle* magazines which were commonly published by those who wished to propagate their own view of modern art, a particular cultural philosophy or avant-garde tendency.

Ver Sacrum was not simply the mouthpiece of the Secession. It was designed and edited by the founding members themselves, who contributed original, and often new,

⁷² Articles by Max Burckhardt, and the unacknowledged authors of 'Why we are publishing this journal', 'Weshalb wir eine Zeit-Schrift Herausgeben?', *Ver Sacrum*, January, 1898, 1-7, thought to be AR, see Pausch, *Gründung*, 60.

⁷³ 'it repeatedly happened that part of the population arose and went to the *Mons sacer*... and threatened to stay their and found a second Rome.. a second city', Max Burkhardt, *Ver Sacrum*, (January, 1989), 1, cited Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum*, 49.

⁷⁴ *Ver Sacrum*, issue 1, year 1, (January, 1898), 3.

⁷⁵ Cited in Nebehay, *Gustav Klimt: From Drawing to Painting* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1994), 49, 50.

decorative woodcuts, prints, stylised architectural drawings, and a plethora of decorative elements designed specifically for the periodical. These designs, 'the first fugitive jottings of the architect', as Secession designer Josef Hoffmann described them, were often taken from details of their various endeavours in the built environment, or exemplified their ideas, both real and fantastic, for these mutually-related spaces of artistic endeavour.⁷⁶ This Romanesque column, a 'study for a pergola', rhetorically and wittily framed within a classical column contributed by architect Josef Maria Olbrich for the opening pages announced this tendency. [1.12] It may show how closely linked were two defining events: the introduction of *Ver Sacrum* and the first public expression of Secession art, 'An Austrian art!' as Hermann Bahr declared.⁷⁷

Indeed, the first issue of *Ver Sacrum* published a manifesto, which is believed to have been written by Alfred Roller. Under the title, framed as a question, 'Why are we editing (an illustrated art) magazine?', the same editorial stated: 'it lies in the hands of every one of you to influence his own circle and win supporters. It is for us to march ahead of you'.⁷⁸ The quarterly literary and art periodical PAN, (1895-1900), published in Berlin, was co-founded and edited in its first year by the influential art historian and critic, Julius Meier-Graefe and the poet, Otto Julius Bierbaum, who were not its prime contributors. Instead, *Ver Sacrum* was commonly edited by a panel drawn from its founding members of designers, architects and artists.⁷⁹

Ver Sacrum appeared eleven months before the opening of architect Josef Maria Olbrich's Secession *Haus*, (November 1898-) and three months before the first Secession exhibition, held in Vienna's *Gartenbau*, in March 1898. The Secession concern for the reinvention of surface spaces was exemplified both by Roller's cover, and the interior design created for this first exhibition. The cover design of *Ver Sacrum* used the saturated denseness and richness of red ground to draw attention to surface and flatness. The task of Secession architect Josef Maria Olbrich was to give the huge spaces of the Vienna *Gartenbau*, more usually used to house horticultural shows, some feeling of scale, continuity and colour.⁸⁰ He masked distracting details of the existing hall with flat panels of green canvas, stencilled with stylised flowers.⁸¹ The *Gartenbau* was transformed, not quite as dramatically as the new spaces of the Secession *Haus* would

⁷⁶ Josef Hoffmann, *Ver Sacrum*, August, 1898, 27, cited Sekler, *Josef Hoffmann*, 253.

⁷⁷ Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum*, 17.

⁷⁸ Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum*, 24.

⁷⁹ For an account of Julius Meier-Graefe and his involvement in PAN, see Patricia G Berman, 'The Invention of History: Julius Meier-Graefe, German Modernism and the Genealogy of Genius', in Françoise Forster-Hahn (ed), *Imagining Modern German Culture: 1889-1910*, (Washington: National Gallery of Art: University Press of New England, 1996), 91-105.

⁸⁰ Robert Judson Clark, 'Olbrich and Vienna', in *Kunst in Hessen und am Mittelrhein: Schriften der Hessischen Museum* (Darmstadt: Eduard Roether, 1967), 27-51(3), also for reproduction of the entrance hall of the First Secession Exhibition, 1898.

⁸¹ Judson Clark, *Ibid*, 37.

be, but nevertheless enough to attract crowds of over fifty thousand people to this first exhibition.⁸² The space of the entrance hall, characteristically in those first Secession exhibitions, was punctuated by the symmetrical placement of decorative laurel trees in pots. The emblematic laurel tree first seen on Roller's cover was perhaps also reinterpreted most famously as the spectacular dome of Olbrich's Secession *Haus*, an open gold and green network of laurel leaves and berries.⁸³

In the ephemeral two-dimensional spaces of *Ver Sacrum*, Roller's cover announced a transformation of another kind. The mythic promise of renewal embedded in the title and lettering in the name *Ver Sacrum* was expressed in distinctively modern style.⁸⁴ The rhythmic placement of each letter invoked a synthesis of form, space and word to create a decorative statement of greater significance to the developing aesthetic of the Secession. The totality of the effect and the use of lettering as an integral element of each cover design, showed an appreciation of the importance of the dialectic between 'empty and full spaces', as Ludwig Hevesi acutely observed.⁸⁵ Inspired by the newness of form emerging on the cover of this first public statement of aesthetic intent, Hevesi in his turn used a new critical language to interpret what he saw, in a review published on February 15th 1898. Revealing sensitivity to space and elements of design on the surface of the page, he wrote of the powerful impact of the saturated colour of red against an ochre ground, emphasising '*the mastery with which picture and type, empty and full surfaces, are combined*'.⁸⁶ 'The mastery', italicised in Hevesi's report, was Roller's. Using the materials of the graphic arts at his disposal in this space, Roller had created 'a work of art'.

Hevesi directed his readers to consider the total surface design, including the blocks of spaces on the page which were empty and undecorated, as well as those which were 'full'. His comments were indicative of a new concern to see and appreciate the totality of the effect: the counterbalance between illustration and empty space and the relationship between the text and typographical elements. Hevesi's pleasure in empty spaces appeared to denote, on the one hand, a reaction to the heavily decorated surfaces of *Ringstrasse* architecture, and on the other, to the dense, predominantly monotone, typographically-filled pages of other contemporary periodicals. The most recent in Vienna, *Kunst und Kunsthandwerk*, (1898-1921), the fine and applied arts periodical of

⁸² *Katalog der I Kunstausstellung der VBKÖ* (1898), credits both Olbrich and Hoffmann for the design of the exhibition, 7. Hoffmann is credited with the design of the *Ver Sacrum-Zimmer*, 48.

⁸³ See Judson Clark, *Ibid*, 37. Olbrich's design existed in 1897, and was circulated at meetings held in the Hotel Victoria.

⁸⁴ See Jost Hermand and Bidy Martin, 'The Commercialisation of Avant-Garde Movements at the Turn-of-the-Century', in, 29, *The Origins of Mass Culture: The Case of Imperial Germany 1871-1918, New German Critique*, Spring-Summer, 29, 1983, 'Art Nouveau... was the only style to express itself in terms of spring, youth, *Floréal*, *Ver Sacrum*... as a total social utopia'. 78.

⁸⁵ Hevesi, 'Ver Sacrum' (5th February 1898), *AJS*, 7.

⁸⁶ Hevesi, 'Ver Sacrum', 7, also part-cited Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum*, 23.

the *KK Österreichs Museum für Kunst und Industrie*, published monthly, typified this convention.⁸⁷

Similarly, *The Studio*, (1893-1963), the 'illustrated magazine of the fine and applied arts', edited by Charles Holmes in London, with a wide British and European circulation was also produced predominantly in monotone, in conventional 'slab' style. It was, nevertheless, greatly influential and eagerly received in the cafés of Vienna and the homes of the Secession designers, friends and patrons. Indeed, the importance of access to new literary and art periodicals to Viennese society cannot be over-estimated.⁸⁸ As writer Stefan Zweig described, in the face of a stifling conservatism in the *Gymnasium*, the students sought out their antidote in Vienna's cafés. Here they had access to 'all the important literary and art magazines of the world, the *Revue de France* no less than the *Neue Rundschau*, *The Studio* and the *Burlington Magazine*'.⁸⁹ Following the appearance of *Ver Sacrum* as the public face of the Secession, *The Studio* heralded a new era in its regular feature, 'Studio Talk', in 1898:

Vienna has been participating with but a very moderate share in the production of what is today to be generally understood as modern painting, even the most pronounced optimists among art critical observers will hardly pretend to deny: scarcely any attempts to venture beyond safe boundaries of well-established traditions...quite recently however there have been unmistakable signs of a revolutionary tendency towards Secession, culminating in the newly organised *Verein der bildenden Künstler Österreichs*...Principally to create a separate exhibition building ... The results remain to be seen.⁹⁰

A brief introduction to the overtly Nietzschean PAN (1895-1900) also bears some merit, as a counterpoint to what follows.⁹¹ Produced quarterly, its large-format pages and high-quality cream art paper provided calm, spacious and well controlled ground for literature, poetry and sometimes music. Its style was defined by an unhurried approach to its content, often taking three or four pages for one, unembellished contribution. This allowed the texts to breathe as if they were being exhibited for their own sake. As Meier-Graefe described, the name PAN was 'to indicate joyousness in the spirit of the Greek god, and the manifold arts to which the members were to devote themselves'.⁹² On page one of the second issue, in 1896, Nietzsche's *Lied*, 'die junge Fischerin' (1865) was

⁸⁷ *Kunst und Kunsthandwerk*, ed. by Arthur von Scala (Wien: kk Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie), ceased publication in 1897, newly introduced January 1898 with new publisher.

⁸⁸ For importance of periodicals in the defining of Viennese modernism see Gronberg, *Vienna*, 128-129.

⁸⁹ Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*, 41.

⁹⁰ 'Studio Talk', *The Studio*, V, XII, 1898, 51.

⁹¹ *Genossenschaft Pan*, PAN 1, 1895/6 Verein von Künstlern und Kunstfreuden. See Ingrid Dennerlein, *Bildende Kunst 1850-1914: Dokumentation aus Zeitschriften des Jugendstil Band 1: PAN 1895-1900* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1970), for archival record of contributors to PAN.

⁹² Berman, 'The Invention of History', 92.

reproduced in this spacious style, without added decoration, typical of the devotion to his literary works and poetry which continued through the first two years.⁹³

However, even the only fully illustrated colour cover design in the life of the elegantly designed periodical may not have given such pleasure to Hevesi as did Roller's for *Ver Sacrum*. [1.13] A dramatically modern re-writing of Nietzsche's Dionysian drives by the artist Josef Sattler, it exhibited its *art-nouveau* credentials in sinuous lettering and a decidedly provocative *Pan* figure rising above a simplified landscape of startlingly strong saturated colours.⁹⁴ Yet the design does not stress 'empty and full' spaces with the same emphasis as *Ver Sacrum*.

PAN appeared to create a complete world in its own right. Material was drawn mainly from the established literary and art worlds. It was beautifully produced and printed, using each year a single new typeface colour. Yet in the main, it remained restrained and self-contained, hermetically sealed from events in the outside world. It lacked the juxtaposition of imaginary art forms and contemporary events, such as the Secession exhibitions, which were reflected through the pages of the issues of *Ver Sacrum*. The editorial statement in the first quarter's issue reflected this hermeticism, describing PAN as 'a house with many rooms furnished according to the characters who live in them', and seeing its spaces as enclosed rather than permeable.⁹⁵ Rather, Roller described the spaces of *Ver Sacrum* somewhat differently, as the following account establishes.

Part 3: Alfred Roller and his fellow-editors

The Secession aim, to privilege decorative art forms above literary or other contributions was described in the first note of intent, recorded by Roller in his notebook on June 23rd, 1897:

Moser suggested publishing an art magazine as an official organ of the association... the directive: art; poetry and prose shall not be excluded *if linked with art*: possibly illustrated... Among the members are some thirty who could be relied on when it comes to illustrations, so the illustrated part is secure. Then exhibition brochures; individual brochures about individual artists.⁹⁶

In the pages of *Ver Sacrum* distinctions in terms of status or hierarchy, between fine art reproductions and decorative forms appeared to exist only in the interest of the overall

⁹³ Berman, *Ibid*, 92.

⁹⁴ It then adopted a simple, neo-classical vignette of the head of the Greek god Pan, which appeared on every cover designed by Franz Stuck, Josef Sattler.

⁹⁵ 'eine illustrierte Zeitschrift dagegen ist ein Haus mit vielen Zimmern und Gelassen. Das Haus selbst, in seiner ganzen äusseren Erscheinung, muss einheitlich stilganz wirken, aber die einzelnen Räume sollen nach Wunsch und Wesen derer eingerichtet sein, die in ihnen wohnen', die Redaktion der PAN, 1, 1895-96, 40.

⁹⁶ Pausch, *Gründung*, 59, 140.

page design. Designers of book decorations were credited alongside the featured artist's work; the designer of the surrounding decorative elements credited, as well as the poet whose work he had embellished. [1.14] It seems clear that the Secession artists wanted to be associated with these more modest representations of their talents, as if each vignette represented an indictative example of the work of the artist, or indeed a small work of art in its own right. To underline this point, in an article in the seventh issue of *Ver Sacrum*, accompanying his architectural sketches, Josef Hoffmann stated, ' We have long been accustomed to view the sketches of painters and sculptors with serious interest...why should we not bring...the first, most personal thoughts of the architect'.⁹⁷ [1.15] No such attribution for the individual artist creators of decorative book art appeared as consistently in other turn-of-the-century art periodicals.

Roller and his colleagues had joined together for two of the Secession committees. In the same way, other unions and collaborations were formed amongst the members, such as the Building Committee (Gustav Klimt and Secession members Nowak and Mayreder), to see through the completion of the *Secession Haus*.⁹⁸ On the surface of the page such collaborations, indicating a unity of ideas and aspirations, were exemplified by the opening pages of *Ver Sacrum*. On page three, Josef Hoffmann and Koloman Moser were attributed as the designers of the book decoration. Josef Hoffmann's strange, organic pod-like form shares the page space with Koloman Moser's drawing of a nude female standing on an empty block, engraved with the words *Ver Sacrum*, reaching her hands, Daphne-like to form the branches of the overhanging blossom. [1.16] It seemed that the Secession designers enacted Wagner's communitarian ethic: 'a common impulse toward dramatic artwork can be at hand only in those who actually enact the work of art in common...a fellowship of players'.⁹⁹

This spirit of collaboration also determined the mode in which *Ver Sacrum* was edited. During 1898, two figures shared the task. The task of issue editing, or *Schriftleitung*, equivalent to copy editing for the first five issues was taken by Wilhelm Schölermann, a contributor to *Ver Sacrum* in the first year. Alfred Roller was credited with the role of 'Redaktion verantwortlich', overall editor, inferring control of the overall issue. [1.17] From the sixth issue, until the end of the first year, December 1898, Alfred Roller assumed full responsibility for the editorship. In the October issue, Roller's 'billing' as overall editor became more prominent and expansive as part of the technical details on *Ver Sacrum*, in a beautifully illustrated run of four pages by the publishers, *Martin Gerlach* of Vienna.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ VBKÖ, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, year 1 (August 1898), 27, cited Sekler, *Josef Hoffmann*, 253.

⁹⁸ Pausch, *Gründung*, 148.

⁹⁹ WOMAD, 79

¹⁰⁰ *Ver Sacrum*, year 1, issue 9 (October, 1898), unnumbered pages following 32.

From February 1899 and throughout the second year, when *Ver Sacrum* was published by A. E. Seemann, Leipzig, the editorial panel, described as '*Redaktion des Künstlerischen Teiles*', (editing of the artistic sections), was made up of Secession designers Friedrich König, Koloman Moser, Alfred Roller, and architect Josef Maria Olbrich.¹⁰¹ Despite this communitarian impulse, Roller's controlling hand, as overall editor throughout the first year, was distinguished by his continuing attribution, '*Redaktion verantwortlich*'. His authoritative voice was indicated with greater definition in the often-cited letter from Nebehay addressed to Gustav Klimt, Chairman of the Secession of April 19th 1898 in which Roller expressed his view of *Ver Sacrum* as an artistic space.¹⁰²

Dear Klimt

The question of competent authority in the affairs of *Ver Sacrum* was debated yesterday, and the discussion came to an end, without *in my opinion achieving any result*... VS made the aims of the *Vereinigung* public long before anything was actively done to prepare for an exhibition and is now participating in its success...At the same time, I want to say that the *Vereinigung* has two organisations for dealing with publicity, the exhibition and 'VS', and that these two undertakings are of equal value...The numbers of 'VS' that have appeared so far have their faults...at the same time *I demand equal trust* for the people who run VS (as for those who run exhibitions).

I maintain very firmly that each number of VS is a miniature exhibition in itself, just as VS in its entirety is a full-scale one...I am going to make a practical suggestion: let the Committee act as a jury as it has done so far and continue to decide whether to accept or refuse letterhead and pictures. Then let it be left to the editorial committee acting as the hanging committee to make decisions according to how things are at the time. *It would be a source of great satisfaction to me* if these suggestions were approved.¹⁰³

The letter almost certainly refers to the Klimt special issue, March 1898. It was written, it seems, to reassure Klimt that an overall vision for *Ver Sacrum* was firmly in place. Roller described each issue of *Ver Sacrum* as a miniature exhibition in its own right, 'just as *Ver Sacrum* in its entirety is a full scale one'. The letter, addressed to the most celebrated artist in Vienna at the time did not deter Roller from certain firmness, and an uncompromising view of the distinctive differences between the artist, and the artistic direction of the spaces in which the art was to be viewed by its readers. It was written in the tone of someone who may have been trying to rebuff a reproach, or deflect interference.

Roller thought of *Ver Sacrum*, not just in its two-dimensional form, but as permeable space in a dialectical relationship with their exhibitions, and the yet-to-be completed *Secession Haus*. He demonstrated his singular vision across two complex undertakings, the surfaces of the pages of *Ver Sacrum* and the arena space of the *Secession Haus*. He

¹⁰¹ Olbrich took up his commission in Darmstadt, Germany, November 1899.

¹⁰² Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum*, 212-217. Letter held by Nebehay.

¹⁰³ Nebehay, *Ibid*, 212, 217. The abbreviation 'VS' is used by AR. Each exhibition had a new hanging committee made up of Secession members.

insisted that the control and presentation of *Ver Sacrum* should be left not to Klimt as an artist-contributor, but in the hands of those responsible for the presentation of the complete artwork. An earlier letter to his friend Max Morold on March 8th 1898 revealed his guiding principles.¹⁰⁴ His words were not dressed for display, but in the language of realism. Roller firstly described his concern that an article by the eminent writer, Dr Riccarda Huch, 'Symbolism a Hundred Years Ago' ('*Symbolistik vor hundert Jahren*'), planned for the same issue was pitched at too high a philosophical level.¹⁰⁵ He declared that 'the effect is completely different from (simply) an illustrated article: it is rather a piece of art, created by the *concerned mind of the master* in its entirety'.¹⁰⁶

Was Roller the 'concerned mind of the master'? As David Reed describes, in the world of periodical publishing, the role or figure of art editor, as it would be termed, did not emerge until the very end of the last decade of the nineteenth century:

The new title, that of art director, made its appearance in the late 1890s, the decade in which photo-mechanical reproduction took over...this newly authorised individual had other new means at his disposal as the century ended which enormously enhanced the publication on which he worked.¹⁰⁷

Yet Roller appeared to take on this role in his concern for the totality of the effect of the visual aesthetics of *Ver Sacrum*. This might also be described as the concerns of a clear-sighted editor's controlling hand. The artwork in the issue was not to be jeopardised in favour of one overly serious article, the interest of the particular, thus detracting from the impact of the whole. Roller appeared to privilege the overall aesthetic, the combination of text with Klimt's artworks, on the spaces of the page, rather than the written word alone. Using the '*Stoff*' or materials at his command: the typeface, drawings, decorative vignettes, colour and page space, a complete composition was to be achieved.¹⁰⁸ Wagner's injunction for 'The Artist of the Future' informs this and all Roller's later aesthetics:

The Artist of the Present must certainly have an influence, determining in every respect upon the Art-Work of the Future, and he may well collect up this influence in advance, for the very reason that he must grow conscious of it even now.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ AR: Max Morold, letter 5th April, 1898, Wienbibliothek, cited Bisanz-Prakken, *Frühling*, 15.

¹⁰⁵ Huch contributed four literary pieces in the first two years: 'Symbolistik vor hundert Jahren', issue 3, 1898, 7-18; 'Über moderne Poesie und Malerei', (Concerning Modern Poetry and Painting), issue 9, 1898, 15-17; 'Die Weltuntergang', (The Universal Decay), short story, issue 2, 1899, 3-27; 'Über E T A Hoffmann (Concerning ETA Hoffmann) issue 11, 1899, 17-32.

¹⁰⁶ Bisanz-Prakken citing Roller, 'eben ganz anders als ein illustrierter Artikel; es ist ein, aus dem Sinne des betreffenden Meisters herausgeschaffenes abgeschlossenes Ganzes, selbst ein Stück Kunst', *Heiliger Frühling*, 15.

¹⁰⁷ Reed, *The Popular Magazine*, 45.

¹⁰⁸ Work commonly used by Wagner to denote the 'stuff' or materials from which art is made, sometimes referred to as the mythic stuff.

¹⁰⁹ RWPW, VI, 279.

Similarly, a reputation for the fulfilment of Wagner's ideas has followed in the path of Roller's artistic practices. In the expanding historiography which deals with the art periodical, and the Vienna Secession, *Ver Sacrum* has achieved particular recognition as a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. The terms 'unity', in English and, in German, 'Gesamt', or total, from *Gesamtkunstwerk*, have been widely employed to evoke such an inference. Typical of such descriptions are the qualities ascribed to *Ver Sacrum* by Peter Vergo as 'a unity of the printed page, subordinating the individual processes of ornamentation and typography to a single purpose'.¹¹⁰ *Ver Sacrum* was, as Werner Schweiger described, the 'Gesamtkunstconzept' or 'total art concept' of the Secession.¹¹¹

Others describe its 'brilliantly integrated high quality papers, new type fonts, texts and decorative borders', which created 'a synthesised artwork, a harmonious fusion of form and content'.¹¹² *Ver Sacrum* achieved 'a controlled environment'; it was concerned with the concept of unity, described as 'a sense of wholeness which the viewer experiences from start to finish'.¹¹³ The publication as a whole 'was conceived as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* ... an all encompassing aesthetic manifestation'.¹¹⁴

Indeed, the reputation of *Ver Sacrum* has encouraged the use of the term to describe a unified aesthetic more widely. Aynsley's account of *Das Interieur*, (1900-1915), the Viennese periodical of the domestic interior, highlights this tendency: 'the use of typical Secession lettering...the entire design seemed informed in the belief of the aesthetic philosophy of the total work of art – the *Gesamtkunstwerk*'.¹¹⁵ Roller's biographer, Manfred Wagner has described the issues of *Ver Sacrum* as 'dramaturgies of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*' ('*die Dramaturgie eines Gesamtkunstwerkes*'), and Roller's tree from the first cover, a synthesis of the old Austria and the new, giving it national significance.¹¹⁶ His stress on *Ver Sacrum* as a dramatic production implies the theatrical although this theme has not yet been further developed.

Bisanz-Prakken characterises *Ver Sacrum* in terms of '*dekorativen Gesamtcharakter*' (total decorative character), the most important maxim of its creative form (*Gestaltung*).¹¹⁷ She describes it in terms of '*Gesamtbild*', (total picture), emphasising the 'close rapport

¹¹⁰ Vergo, *Art in Vienna*, 40.

¹¹¹ Werner Schweiger, 'Der Secessions-Zeitschrift *Ver Sacrum* gleichzusetzen...sie unter das Gesamtkunstkonzept der Zeitschrift unterzuordnen.' *Aufbruch und Erfüllung: Gebrauchsgraphik der Wiener Moderne 1897-1918* (Wien: Brandstätter, 1998), 12.

¹¹² Skrypzak, *Design Vienna*, 20.

¹¹³ Deborah Wye, *The Russian Avant-Garde Book 1910-1934* (New York: MOMA, 2002), 15, 18.

¹¹⁴ Christoph Grunenberg, 'Luxury and Degradation: Staging Klimt', in *Gustav Klimt, Painting, Design and Modern Life*, (London: Tate, 2008), 32-55 (37).

¹¹⁵ Aynsley, 'Das Interieur', 44.

¹¹⁶ M Wagner, 'Tatsächlich waren die Hefte auf die Dramaturgie eines Gesamtkunstwerkes hin ausgerichtet, mit einem ungewöhnlichen Anspruch.' *Alfred Roller*, 60.

¹¹⁷ Bisanz-Prakken, 'Der "dekorative Gesamtcharakter" war die oberste Maxime bei der Gestaltung der einzelnen Hefte', *Frühling*, 15.

between typeface and pictures...the empty spaces, left empty'.¹¹⁸ Based on an interpretation of his letter to von Morold, Roller endowed *Ver Sacrum* with 'the blessing of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*'.¹¹⁹ These commentaries, which stress unity, the qualities of control, and the deliberate use of page space, it would seem, owe a debt to Ludwig Hevesi, and his first reading of the cover.¹²⁰ In his review, Hevesi also hinted at the importance of the artist's mastery of the space: 'one glimpse at the first issue of this new art periodical - and before one has leafed through it, one has noticed that *here the artist knows what he wants*'.¹²¹ His further remark, that picture and the print, combined with empty and full spaces joined together to make 'a lively living organism' emphasised 'the cover alone' as a work of art: 'Alfred Roller, who designed this cover, has earned the praise of his friends'.¹²²

Hevesi appeared to acknowledge a fundamental new aesthetic principle embodied not only in his design for the first cover, but also in the figure of Alfred Roller. Perhaps, in singling Roller out, Hevesi also knew of the significance of his earlier, behind-the-scenes roles as the appointed *Schriftführer* of the Secession, and a member of both the *Zeitschrift* or *Ver Sacrum* committee and the *Presscomité*. Such notions, from Hevesi onwards, appear to draw their antecedents from Wagner's often diffuse descriptions on the importance of the completeness of the arts. Wagner expressed this tendency variously as the 'will to be the whole thing',¹²³ 'the great United Art-work',¹²⁴ and refers to the importance of 'organic unity' of the whole work.¹²⁵ In at least one essential feature these descriptions are nevertheless different.

In Wagner's *Art-Work of the Future*, the spaces of the stage were an implicit yet integral element of the total work of art.¹²⁶ In his writing on architecture, Wagner described the special surroundings necessary for the display of the 'Human Artwork', (the dramatic art), as a 'frame for a fellowship of artists...The *Scene* has firstly to comply with all the conditions of "space" imposed by the joint (*gemeinsam*) dramatic action to be displayed thereon...In the arrangement of the *space for the spectators*, the need for optic and acoustic understanding of the artwork will give the necessary law'.¹²⁷ The emphatic

¹¹⁸ Bisanz-Prakken, *Frühling*, 15.

¹¹⁹ Bisanz-Prakken, 'sie erhalten die Weihe des Gesamtkunstwerkes', *Frühling*, 8.

¹²⁰ See also Grunenber, 'Luxury and Degradation', *Gustav Klimt*, 36.

¹²¹ Hevesi, 'Ein Blick auf dieses Erstlingsheft der neuen Kunstzeitschrift - und ehe man noch darin geblättert, hat man gemerkt, dass hier der Künstler weiss, was er will.' *AJS*, 7.

¹²² Hevesi, 'Alfred Roller, diesen Umschlag erfunden, hat sich damit und seine Kamaraden verdient gemacht.' 'Ver Sacrum', *AJS*, 7.

¹²³ RWPW, VI, 98.

¹²⁴ RWPW, VI, 88.

¹²⁵ RWPW, VI, 369. This brief phrase from 'A communication to my friends' (1851); Wagner describes the important principles of thematic motif and prevailing or 'chief' moods, in his early operas, those verging on music dramas.

¹²⁶ WOMAD, 77-78.

¹²⁷ RWPW, VI, 184-185, Wagner's italics.

punctuation is Wagner's, as if "space", itself, elusive and mutable, required a new emphasis. Indeed, Wagner wrote more extensively about space and its aesthetics in *Opera and Drama*, describing the stage as a space which needed 'to be narrowed...to frame the performers'.¹²⁸

Like other inheritors of Wagner's ideas which were then transposed to different art worlds, Ludwig Hevesi and subsequent contemporary writers have drawn on different notions of space in their appreciation of the periodical. In this case, stage space has been transposed to reflect the particular aesthetic concerns of the Secession, the use of surface and page space in *Ver Sacrum* as Hevesi described, joining together with other graphic art forms to create a masterful combination of picture and type.¹²⁹ So while the pages of *Ver Sacrum* were somewhat removed from the spaces of the stage, it was the use made of page space as an 'organic unity' with other elements of the illustrative and graphic arts which differentiated *Ver Sacrum* from other periodicals of the time, and which has earned it the accolade of *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

Dramatic impulse in *Ver Sacrum*:

The disposition of images, text and empty space on pages fourteen and fifteen of the Klimt issue of *Ver Sacrum* exhibit characteristics described by Wagner as 'the scene, which has to comply with all the conditions of "space" imposed by the dramatic action to be displayed'.¹³⁰ Klimt's studies were originally commissioned for the spandrels and inter-columnar paintings for the *Kunsthistorisches* Museum (1890). Two medievalist female figures, in flowing postures reflecting the curve of triangulated semi-arches of their original setting, appeared as if torn from their original context, held and separated by the white spaces of the page, in timeless suspension. [1.18] The scene, interrupted and fragmented, was brought into close proximity to the reader, unlike the lofty spaces of the *Kunsthistorisches* Museum in which the paintings originally resided. Forming a proscenium-like frame into the empty, otherwise undecorated space of the page, the figures appeared to herald an event about to be enacted. The blocks of text below were set like the apron of a stage. The article by Ricarda Huch on Symbolism which had concerned Roller aptly described 'an art which reached beyond representation of the mere thing, in itself, towards the expression of a mystical essence'.¹³¹

Klimt's March issue of 1898 displays a dramatic impulse throughout. The silent expanses of space in dialectic with the images and text and the tones of soft green and brown, drawn from the cover, were used as the second colours for text and image. A seeming

¹²⁸ RWPW, VII, 128-129.

¹²⁹ Hevesi, 'Ver Sacrum', AJS, 7.

¹³⁰ RWPW, VII, 128-129.

¹³¹ VBKÖ, *Ver Sacrum*, March, 1898, 15, also cited Topp, *Architecture and Truth*, 57.

dissonance of images distinguishes the interior space. Klimt's famous drawing version of *Nuda Veritas*, (1898), was one of four such illustrations which appeared framed as slim vertical panels either side of a wider panel of text on pages twelve and thirteen. [1.19] His dramatic allegorical portrait of 'Tragedy', a female figure gazing challengingly outwards from the picture plane, a contorted mask in her hand was placed as a singular squareform above two columns of text on page seven. [1.20] The consistency of tone lends a prevailing atmosphere, or as Wagner described, 'a decisive mood' (*Stimmung*) throughout the issue.¹³²

A Wagnerian tendency was not limited to the pages of *Ver Sacrum* but was also established in the building of the *Secession Haus*. Following Wagner's guiding principles of a trinity of art forms, 'the three humanistic Arts of the common man', reunited in the same place, the notion that painting, architecture and the plastic arts would join together to achieve some greater aesthetic ideal in the liberating spaces of the *Secession Haus* was sealed like a promise into the building's fabric.¹³³ The mythic figure of the Gorgon's head appeared in relief, not once, but three times above the entrance to the building. Her snake-like hair was entwined with the words, *Malerei, Architektur, Plastic* (painting, architecture, sculpture). [1.21]

In the two-dimensional world of *Ver Sacrum*, the sign of the three shields, representing a unity of three art forms, their form as yet unspecified, was the similarly emblematic motif. This motivic reference appeared in Roller's first cover as three empty shields placed amongst the leaves of the tree. The empty spaces of the shield may have denoted an art as yet unspecified, or rather an art of empty spaces. The enigmatic cover designed by Klimt for the March issue represented a trinity of the arts in several different ways. [1.22] In a slim panel, integral with colour-saturated expanses of the cover in green and gold, Klimt represented the sacred 'Winged Tripod' of Apollonian mythology, in simplified attenuated form, a design reminiscent of Greek vase renderings.¹³⁴ The tripod, incense streaming from its bowl indicated by single, curved lines, appears to fly upwards towards the three empty shields in the top right hand corner of the illustration. The landscape below is indicated only by a linear abstraction as a silent, distant place. The use of contrasting saturated colours across the whole of the cover dramatises the cover space, creating a complete artwork in its own right.

¹³² WOMAD, 'Breaks with Operative Convention', 267.

¹³³ RWPW, VI, 149. Wagner described the union of 'three chief artistic faculties of the entire man', the three art forms, Dance, Tone, Poetry, in 'The Three Varieties of Humanistic Art, in their Original Union', *The Artwork of the Future*, 95. The translator noted that by 'dance' Wagner means 'the grace of gesture and motion which he sums up in this...term', (ff) 95.

¹³⁴ Klimt used a similar motif in the painted frame of his earlier portraits of musician Joseph Pembauer (1890) where its symbolic association with great artists may have been legible.

Like Roller's first cover, Klimt's design appeared as if fully formed. It appropriated iconography from a mythic world, and yet displayed a deliberate discontinuity with such a world in time and space, through the simplicity and modernity of the design, stripped of all historicist reference. Despite its dense symbolic meanings in mythology, and its classical references to great artists, Klimt's drawing of the tripod was unaccountable and indecipherable.¹³⁵ Semper had described the classical tripod, in its spareness of form, as a kind of perfection in the applied arts: 'this (tripod) form that Hellenic art brought...to its greatest height'.¹³⁶ Such forms were true for all time, transformed by contemporary interpretation and placement. The iconography appeared to owe its precedent to Wagner's various descriptions of the union of the arts, mutable, moving from the classical period to a new language of art, from 'Hellenic art (on which we may)...sharpen our gaze', to Wagner's future time and the art-work of the future.¹³⁷

In 1908, three years after the Klimt group had separated from the Secession, a distinctively Wagnerian tone may also be found in one of Klimt's rare public statements, at the *Kunstschau*, ('Art-show'), one of two final exhibitions of the original Klimt grouping:

We understand the words 'work of art', in a very broad sense, and our understanding of the word "artist", is equally broad, for it conveys not only those who create art...artistic genius means the partnership of all creators and those who enjoy their creations.¹³⁸

The statement echoed the principles set out in the first issue of *Ver Sacrum*, in answer to the question posed by the anonymous editorial voice, 'Why are we publishing this periodical'?

Our aim is to awaken, encourage and propagate the artistic perception of our time... We know no difference between 'great art', and 'intimate art', between art for the rich and art for the poor. We have dedicated ourselves with our whole power and future hopes, with everything that we are, to the SACRED SPRINGTIME...(*Heiliger Frühling*).¹³⁹

Wagner described a similar ideal: 'so may each of the individual arts find its own self again in the perfect, liberated artwork...by sinking of itself within the kindred arts...the perfect work of art to which it knows itself expanded'.¹⁴⁰ Wagner had his own way of using the metaphor of a sacred Spring to signify rebirth. In *Die Walküre*, the second of his music dramas from the *Ring* tetralogy, he marked transcendence and the passage from darkness to light with scenes which were celebrated or 'blessed' with the coming of

¹³⁵ WOMAD, 90.

¹³⁶ Semper, *Style*, 536.

¹³⁷ RWPW, VI, 90.

¹³⁸ Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum*, 113.

¹³⁹ VBKÖ, 'Weshalb wir eine Zeitschrift herausgeben?', year 1, issue 1, *Ver Sacrum*, (January 1898), 5-7.

¹⁴⁰ WOMAD, 122.

Spring.¹⁴¹ At this point in the drama, the stage is dominated at its centre by the trunk and branches of an ancient ash tree into which a sword had been plunged.

Wagner's musical ideas received renewed impetus in Vienna with the not insignificant event of Gustav Mahler's appointment as Music Director of the Vienna Court Opera. Mahler conducted his first performances of Wagner's music dramas, *Lohengrin*, and the *Ring* in August 1897 in parallel time to the founding of the Secession. His performances received an ecstatic welcome. Mahler was seen by Vienna's music critics as the embodiment of Wagner on earth, 'a total conductor' ('*Gesamtdirigent*') with 'a sacred mission'.¹⁴² These events were extensively reported in the *feuilletons*, the cultural commentaries on the front pages of the Viennese press, as the Secession were making their plans for the publication of *Ver Sacrum*, and the building of the *Secession Haus*.

Roller's first cover for *Ver Sacrum* was indicative of a transformation in periodical design. This more detailed analysis of the cover evokes this new direction. Roller's tree, its roots bursting from their container, evoked Wagner's concern for 'the exclusion of all useless and historic detail', which brought with it 'the advantage that minor details would be eliminated'.¹⁴³ The flattened surface of petals, described with a spareness of line, expands to fill the space of its lozenge-shaped framing device, and is cut off by it. Movement is banished in favour of stasis, the leaves and petals fixed by the rigid frame of their geometry. The disappearance of dimensionality and perspective is emphasised by the emptiness of the leaves which reveals as their surface the ochre of the paper colour, in contrast to the saturated denseness and richness of the red ground.

The effect of flatness is heightened by the repeating motif of the three shields which float, empty, in the leaves of the tree. Spareness of line and the concentration of pattern distinguish the drawing. Each element of the design has a purpose to serve the whole: the letters which make up the title, and which form a rhythmic design in synthesis with space; the block of text describing the official name of the Secession, which acts as a further decorative element, but which also imparts support to the title, *Ver Sacrum*.

Such a design resists an historicist view. It has no visual context in terms of setting or obvious narrative. It can be read as an indicative sign of a modernist tendency, reflected more widely in the new architectural ideas of design and decoration advocated by the dominant figure in Viennese modernism, Otto Wagner. In flattened reliefs, Roller's tree

¹⁴¹ In the first act of *Die Walküre*, as Sieglinde and Siegmund recognise their mutual love, the Spring night bursts in on their darkness to herald the birth of the hero-figure Siegfried. An ancient ash-tree dominates the scene, the interior of Hunding's hut, as originally instructed by Wagner. See Carnegie, 'Designing Wagner', 52 for stage-design painting, (1876).

¹⁴² See HLG, *Mahler*, V 2, 29, and 26-30 for an account of these performances which received a rapturous welcome, describing Mahler as 'truly Wagnerian... in the spirit of the master', 30.

¹⁴³ WOMAD, 269, 267.

may also be found clinging to the fascias of Wagner's new, residential apartment buildings, famously the *Majolicahaus* on the *Wienzeile* (1898-1899). As Schorske described, Otto Wagner decorated his buildings with 'trees of life, gilded and clipped... a façade proclaiming in its flatness, its findings as wall'.¹⁴⁴ The architect derived this architectural language from the two-dimensional art of the Secession. Similarly, Roller's cover exemplified the use of space as an underlying structure throughout the early issues of *Ver Sacrum*. The control exercised in the placement of designed elements in the space, and the use of single, saturated colours, or tones of colours, softened and muted were characteristic of those issues which exemplified a prevailing atmosphere or effect, throughout. Roller, as overall editor, embodied Richard Wagner's idea of 'the Artist of the Present... who must have a determinant influence in every respect upon the Art- work of the Future'.¹⁴⁵ In sentences reflecting the importance of the freedom of the 'natural Will' to create 'the Artwork', Wagner prefigured the driving concern of the Secession to give art its freedom.¹⁴⁶

In a defining theme of *The Art-Work of the Future*, Wagner emphasised his concern to eliminate historical accretions. He stated: 'The plastic unity of the mythic *Stoff* (the materiality of art)...brought with it the advantage that minor details...were quite unnecessary'.¹⁴⁷ This description serves graphically to underline the cover art of Roller and Klimt, their adherence to the picture plane and to 'empty and full surfaces'. Both illustrations were early indications of the notion of *Flächenkunst*, a term used to describe the essence of flatness in Vienna's decorative and applied arts. *Flächenkunst* denoted the Secession ambition to achieve an affirmation of surface as a fundamental new spatial dimension, and is the subject of the following investigation.

Part 4: *Flächenkunst* and its progenitors

Surface decoration must leave us in no doubt that *it is the surface we see... it is the essence of flatness*.¹⁴⁸

The notion of *Flächenkunst* and its related term, *Flächendekoration*, appeared to hold a particular significance for Roller and the artists of the Secession.¹⁴⁹ The ideas surrounding these terms first emerged in 1899 in the foreword to the catalogue for the Fifth Secession (winter) exhibition. *Flächenkunst* defined the art of drawing, transposed to a modern idiom in graphic art, which emphasised abstracted or stylised forms lacking perspective. The exhibition catalogue foreword drew directly on Max Klinger's only

¹⁴⁴ Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, 85, 86, and 86 (ff), illustrated 88-89.

¹⁴⁵ RWPW, VI, 279.

¹⁴⁶ RWPW, VI, 279.

¹⁴⁷ WOMAD, 267.

¹⁴⁸ Vorwort zur V. Ausstellung der VBKÖ', Katalog der V Ausstellung Bildender Künstler Österreichs, *Secession*, (1899), 6.

¹⁴⁹ VBKÖ, 'Vorwort zur V Ausstellung', *Ibid*, 6.

published treatise, *Painting and Drawing (Malerei und Zeichnung)*, which first appeared, published privately by the author in Leipzig, in 1891.¹⁵⁰ By 1899, the year of the Secession's third exhibition, which featured Klinger's monumental painting, 'Christ on Olympus' (1897), the essay was in its third edition. At the Fifth (winter) Exhibition, devoted entirely to European drawings and engravings, significantly the foreword stated:

Quite rightly does Klinger say in his profound text *Painting and Drawing*, that 'every material has its own spirit and its own poetry which derive from its appearance and its amenability, and which, in the hands of the artist, reinforce the character of the composition and are themselves irreplaceable'.¹⁵¹

Klinger had achieved critical prominence at the age of twenty-one, following the *Art Union in Berlin* exhibition in April 1878, which showed his suite of ten ink-drawings entitled 'The Glove'. The drawings were published in 1881, were widely disseminated, and were amongst his most famous works. In this respect Klinger's treatise was perhaps unusual. Rather than idealising an art of the future, it appeared to rest on his existing and developing *praxis*, from 1878, when he first exhibited his drawings, until 1891, when he published his essay.¹⁵² During this time, Klinger had elevated drawing, and the tonalities of black and white associated with the medium, to the status of high art.¹⁵³

Both Klinger and another featured artist of the exhibition, the English designer, theorist and practitioner in the art of drawing and book illustration, Walter Crane, were foreign members of the Secession from the outset.¹⁵⁴ Crane's name was recorded on one of Roller's early provisional lists of members in his notebook in 1897. Their work had been featured in the first Secession Exhibition, at the *Gartenbau*, Vienna, in April 1898, and subsequently in later exhibitions, including the 1899 exhibition.

The opening theme of Klinger's treatise was an impassioned plea for the elevated status of drawing in the hierarchy of the arts for its ability to express more freely the artist's imagination:

As we have said the *drawing enjoys a freer relationship with the representable world: it gives the imagination free reign...* It can handle forms which are not part of the main point, with such freedom that again the imagination is called into

¹⁵⁰ Max Klinger, *Malerei und Zeichnung*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: Georgi, 1899) (MKMZ); also Max Klinger, *Painting and Drawing* (MKPD), trans. Fiona Elliot and C. Croft (Birmingham: Ikon Gallery, 2004).

¹⁵¹ VBKÖ, 'Mit Recht spricht Klinger in seiner tiefsinnigen Schrift "Malerei und Zeichnung" von dem "eigenen Geist und der eigenen Poesie des Materiales, die bei künstlerischer Behandlung den Charakter fördern und die durch nichts zu ersetzen sind".' *Katalog der V Ausstellung*, 4, also MKPD, 12.

¹⁵² Barbara John, 'Max Klinger – An Introduction', Jonathan Watkins (ed), *Max Klinger* (Cat). (Birmingham: Ikon Gallery, 2004), 9-17(14).

¹⁵³ Elizabeth Pendleton Streicher, 'Max Klinger's *Malerei und Zeichnung*: the Critical Reception of the Prints and their Text', in Françoise Forster-Hahn (ed), *Imagining Modern German Culture*, 229-249 (229).

¹⁵⁴ An account of Crane's authority follows below.

play...it can *isolate the subject* such that the imagination must *create the space around it*.¹⁵⁵

Accordingly, in this new aesthetic hierarchy which elevated the status of drawing, the writers of the Fifth Secession exhibition catalogue averred their interest in *Flächenkunst*:

What has to be stressed is that the drawings in our exhibition did not evolve by chance in this specific medium: *they could not have been done by any other technique because only through drawing could what we wanted to express, be expressed completely, entirely. The medium is intrinsic to the work.*

The principles of surface decoration (*Flächendekoration*), and those of the picture (*Bildes*), are completely oppositional. Surface decoration must leave us in no doubt that it is the surface we see...it is the essence of flatness, which the picture seeks to remove, so that the effect is one of space.¹⁵⁶

While these statements relied for their authority on Klinger's theories, they were seemingly also contingent on, or convergent with, Semper's principles described in the section 'On Surface Figuration', contained within Semper's extensive exegesis on 'Textiles', the foremost and most expansive part of his work.¹⁵⁷ Semper stressed the importance of textiles as the bearer of surface patterns, the first medium from which 'all other arts borrowed their types and symbols'.¹⁵⁸ Textile designs would retain integrity of form as they were applied to different surfaces, and from one medium or space of art to another. This process was a transformative one, as Semper acknowledged: 'style in dressing (was) transformed over the course of cultural history', as was its use of materials: the lotus flower, he stated, may adorn a dress, and retain its essence of form in an Egyptian capital.¹⁵⁹ This notion, of decorative forms moving from the surface space of the page, to another flat surface, was characteristic of Secession practice. Spaces appeared permeable; design forms were transferred from page space to other flat art, such as posters, and from wall surfaces in the interior of the *Secession Haus*, to poster, and page. The progression of Roller's tree from the cover of *Ver Sacrum* to other surface and architectonic spaces described above may exemplify these practices.

Semper described the attributes of surface as 'the absence of a third dimension as a visually active element':¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁵ MKPD, 20, my italics.

¹⁵⁶ VBKÖ, 'Die eigentliche Domäne der farbigen Zeichnung der Flächendekoration und jene des Bildes sind die ausgesprochensten Gegensätze. Während die Flächendekoration uns keinen Augenblick im Zweifel lassen darf, dass wir eben eine Fläche vor uns haben, ist es dagegen wesentlich für den Charakter des Bildes, dass der Eindruck der Fläche aufgehoben und wir an eine Raumwirkung glauben müssen, (Katalog) *der V Ausstellung*, 5-6.

¹⁵⁷ Semper, *Style*, 127.

¹⁵⁸ Semper, *Style*, 113.

¹⁵⁹ Semper, *Ibid*, 237, 238.

¹⁶⁰ Semper, *Ibid*, 123.

the principal importance of *surface ornamentation*, which arises from the basic idea of the *surface* as such and accordingly reaffirms it...this follows from the uniformity of what the dressing encloses as a *unity and a whole*... This goal will only be achieved using ...precisely the properties of ornamentation that develop a priori from the concept of *the surface* as such.¹⁶¹

Semper stressed the characteristics of, and italicised references to, surface in this excerpt, as if to draw attention to this new space. He emphasised the effect and affect of its emptiness, or lack of decoration, on the one hand, and on the other, the effect of surface ornamentation, which self-reflexively draws attention to 'the concept of *surface*'. As Semper himself described, his own ideas had been inspired by the published *Report on Design* (1851) commissioned for the Great Exhibition of 1852, written by the British designer Richard Redgrave, who stated that ornament should be 'flat and conventionalised, avoiding harsh or cutting lines or forms on the ground'.¹⁶²

A pattern-book design for embroidery from Roller's archives may serve as an indicative example of Semper's ideas derived from textile designs. [1.23] It bears Roller's carefully hand-painted monogram, and the name of the publishers, Anton Schroll.¹⁶³ The intricate white motif draws on Roller's favoured knotted form, its intricate workings implying a third dimension.¹⁶⁴ Yet the design is emphatically flat.

In the polemical tone of the 1899 Secession exhibition catalogue, *Flächenkunst* was appropriated to the cause of the Secession in their search for a modern style in the graphic or 'Stylus Arts', the term coined by Klinger, with its roots in the elevated status of the art of drawing, synthesised with the notion of surface and flatness as described by Semper.¹⁶⁵ The statements of the exhibition working committee drew specifically on Klinger's ideas, which mutated into the Secession's own emphatic claim: 'with good reason, we speak of a "*malerische Fleckenwirkung*" (painterly stain), and the transition to the simple opposition of our black and white drawings'.¹⁶⁶

The theories of Walter Crane, 'admired by the Secession', as Vergo described, also illuminate the views of the Secession in this respect.¹⁶⁷ Crane had written the first modern

¹⁶¹ Semper, *Ibid*, 127, 128. Mallgrave suggests that Semper was one of the first architectural theorists to be concerned with the notion of space without reference to the 'Four Orders', but refers more specifically to Semper's theories in the section on 'Stereotomy', or stone-masonry, rather than 'Textiles', see 'Introduction', *Style*, 48. The term '*Raum*', in German architectural and design theories emerged vigorously in the 1890s, see Mallgrave, *Ibid*, 48-49.

¹⁶² Semper, *Ibid*, 128. Report produced at the request of the Royal Commission.

¹⁶³ UAKW, (AR, 14:271), overprinted 'Wiener Kunststickereien, Anton Schroll'.

¹⁶⁴ See also AR's framing design for 'Siehst du den Stern', *Lieder* issue, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 24, year 4, (December 1901), discussed below.

¹⁶⁵ 'I should like to choose the word "stylus art" to denote the art form before the arrival of print, but will use "drawing" despite its inadequacy', MKPD, 8.

¹⁶⁶ VBKÖ, 'Vorwort zur V Ausstellung', 4,5. 'Fleckenwirkung', another untranslatable term.

¹⁶⁷ Vergo, *Art in Vienna*, 28. Crane's work was featured in the first Secession exhibition in 1898, and the first issue of *Ver Sacrum*, January 1898, 5, 6.

text on the history and theory of book design, *The Decorative Illustration of Books*, in 1896, which was based on a series of lectures given in London at the Society of Arts in 1889.¹⁶⁸ During the 1890s, there was considerable enthusiasm for his work in Europe, particularly Austria, Germany, France and Belgium, where his books were very rapidly translated.¹⁶⁹ His writings were also translated and published, with his drawings in German art periodicals, specifically, the first issue of PAN, in 1896, which featured his work in an article on 'The English Book'.¹⁷⁰ In 1898 Crane designed the cover for the Munich journal, *Jugend*, inextricably associated with the dissemination of the German term, *Jugendstil*.¹⁷¹ His theories and his art were popularised through his lecture tours, as well as the exposure they received in print.

Crane made a distinction between 'purely graphic design...unrelated to the conditions of the page', and 'book-ornaments', a term similar to *Buchschmuck*, or book decoration, used by the Secession in the first issues of *Ver Sacrum* to define their unique graphic contributions. This shared terminology denotes the notion of something small, even precious, and a commonality of aesthetic purpose. Like Klinger, who argued that drawing 'had all the advantages of being fresh, reckless, almost instinctive', and who valued drawing above painting for its ability to express more freely the artist's imagination,¹⁷² Crane similarly defined the art of drawing as an intimate art, reflective of the world of 'dreams and aspirations'.¹⁷³

As Crane described of drawing, 'a kind of imaginative chemistry of forms, masses, lines continually evolving new combinations...no rules or principles can be laid down'.¹⁷⁴ Indeed, an element of the creativity of the spirit, and the spaces of the imagination beyond voluntary or conscious concerns and control, were implied in the texts on drawing of both artists. In his opening pages, Crane declared 'in the language of line and letters, each age writes its own story'.¹⁷⁵ His credo bore some similarities to that of the Secession, 'To every age its art, to art its freedom'.

Klinger had also emphasised the importance of surface, as a space on which the artist gathered ideas which were accessed directly from the imagination. Referring to the master, Raphael, he stated: 'In his mind's eye he saw a painting in more or less all its

¹⁶⁸ Walter Crane, *The Decorative Illustration of Books* (London: George Bell, 1896).

¹⁶⁹ See Rosalind Depas, 'Walter Crane: precursor of Art Nouveau', in *Neohelicon*, V8, 2, September 1981, 173-189, for a survey of Crane's work and the dissemination of his theories in France, Germany and Belgium.

¹⁷⁰ See Stephan Tschudi-Madsen, *The Art Nouveau Style* (New York: Mineola, 2002) for survey of the influence of British artists in Germany and Austria. As he states, PAN V2, 1, 1896-7 published two articles, 'Englische Kunst im Hause', and 'Das Englische Buch' featuring Crane, 307.

¹⁷¹ Depas, 'Walter Crane', 188.

¹⁷² MKPD, 10.

¹⁷³ Crane, *Illustration of Books*, 2.

¹⁷⁴ Crane, *Ibid*, 279.

¹⁷⁵ Crane, *Ibid*, 2.

details. The drawing served to collect his ideas *on a flat surface* and to prepare the lineature and the forms of the figures he had conceived'.¹⁷⁶ Similarly, Walter Crane, in his work on the art of the book described, 'the page of the book may be regarded as a *flat panel*, which may be variously spaced out... Sometimes the text is arranged in a single column, sometimes in double, and these square and oblong panels are enlivened by large and small initial letters, sparkling in gold and colour, *inclosed* (sic) in their own framework. These larger initials increase to such proportions as to include... a subject picture in short'.¹⁷⁷

The art form of 'the flat panel' and the squareform were inextricably linked in Crane's writings, as they became in the Secession notion of *Flächenkunst*. The framing of initials, sometimes even with the 'sparkle of gold', which created 'a subject picture', were often illustrated in the pages of *Ver Sacrum*. Gustav Klimt's own initial 'G', a simple, cipher-like form in white on black ground, relieved by curving lines obliquely indicating the forces of wind and landscape, with a scattering of stars, appeared in the March issue of *Ver Sacrum*, 1898, one of the artist's rare contributions to book decoration.¹⁷⁸ [1.24].

Drawing, illustration and its associated art forms in the graphic or 'stylus arts' also held a specially favoured place in the art world of the Secession designers in the years leading to the founding of the Secession in 1897, the publication of *Ver Sacrum* in 1898, and beyond.¹⁷⁹ This interest was not limited to those trained as painters and designers amongst them, but also to Secession architects Josef Maria Olbrich and Josef Hoffmann.¹⁸⁰ Later, their mentor, Otto Wagner, contributed the cover illustration for the eighth issue of *Ver Sacrum*, 1899, an issue devoted to his work on the Court Pavilion which was reserved for the use of the Imperial family at *Hietzing Stadtbahn* station (1898). The dramatic, graphically curvilinear, abstract detail from the ceiling design for the interiors of the Court Pavilion, black on the cream colour of the cover, was cleverly integrated with the words *Ver Sacrum*. [1.25] Inside the issue, Wagner's graphic cover design and delicate palm-leaf vignettes may be discerned in their changed and concentrated form, in photographs of the interior furnishings of the Pavilion. [1.26] Alfred Roller's own ideas on the art of drawing in the years immediately preceding the founding of the Secession, and his practices are described below.¹⁸¹ They more simply express

¹⁷⁶ MKPD, 10.

¹⁷⁷ Crane, *Illustration of Books*, 38. Description based on book illustration of practices of the medieval period.

¹⁷⁸ VBKÖ, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 3, year 1, (March, 1898), 23.

¹⁷⁹ MKPD, 8.

¹⁸⁰ Judson Clark stresses that it cannot be claimed that Olbrich started his career as a book illustrator, as some have suggested, 'Olbrich and Vienna', 33.

¹⁸¹ See also Bisanz-Prakken, 'Drawing in the Service of *Ver Sacrum*', *Frühling*, 109-119.

Klinger's views that 'the most powerful emotions can be compressed into the most confined spaces'.¹⁸²

In June 1896, at the age of thirty-one, eighteen months before the publication of the first issue of *Ver Sacrum*, Alfred Roller wrote an art lesson by letter to his sister Marianne, from Vienna, where he had lived since 1883, as an art student and later as a teacher.¹⁸³ The letter provides an insight into the significance attached to the art of drawing in Roller's artistic world, which predated his formal Secession involvement. It is evident that he shared similar sentiments on the status of drawing with those of Max Klinger.

You have to accept from the start that painting is nothing else than coloured drawing, and you have to come from drawing alone...I seek to get my students to actually get their chosen nature motive onto their *drawing or painting surface*... The effect of a picture always lies in the foreground *where light and shadow strongly contrast*; the distance, where light and shadow are closer in value is always just the *poetic narrative* to the picture. So if I want to paint a factually interesting object that can only be surveyed from a larger distance, *the effect of the picture never lies in this object but in something in the terrain of the foreground...You have to draw during the painting, while you are painting; painting is drawing.*¹⁸⁴

The emphatic statement, 'painting is drawing', underlined in his letter, goes further to highlight the importance of drawing, the freer of the two art forms, as the route to a better effect in colour, and equally a kind of equivalence between the two. Roller was interested in the dynamic between foreground and background, emphasising the importance of foreground, 'where light and shadow strongly contrast'. His interest in the background effect, 'where light and shadow are closer in value', is suggestive of a consciousness of background as atmosphere, or mood, a defining aesthetic which accompanied Roller through his roles as exhibition designer, and ultimately into the world of stage design. In this world of two-dimensional surface space, Roller described drawing as a process of simplification:

Someone who thinks he has done with the drawing work before painting, by drawing the natural object in every detail will be bored during painting...sketch very little, but this little has to be absolutely right.¹⁸⁵

Such sentiments were illustrated by his drawings from his earlier days as a student at the Vienna Academy from 1884. One such example, his studies of the bare branches and gnarled roots of a tree, were drawn onto a single sheet divided into four equal quadratic

¹⁸² MKPD, 22, 23.

¹⁸³ AR:Marianne Roller, June 1896, cited M. Wagner, *Alfred Roller*, 46, 47, AR's emphasis, (also ÖTM).

¹⁸⁴ AR:MR in M. Wagner, *Alfred Roller*, 47, my translation

¹⁸⁵ M. Wagner, *Alfred Roller*, 47, my translation

spaces.¹⁸⁶ With a lightness of touch, yet attention to the detail and shape of natural form, the sketches may be the forerunners of his cover for the first issue of *Ver Sacrum*, the tree with its similarly gnarled roots. Yet his interests in drawing, the dynamic of the picture plane, surface and foreground were exemplified in even greater simplification of form, in the stylised poster designs he was commissioned to produce a decade or so later, and with which he was occupied commercially, at the time of his letter to Marianne. It was a medium Roller made his own.

Roller's poster for the Fourth Secession Exhibition, 1899, also appeared in a monochromatic and concentrated version of the original as the opening illustration for *Ver Sacrum* in July 1899. [1.27] The word, 'Secession' floats, in simplified, curvilinear form, like the title of a poem. Each letter has its own unique form, moving rhythmically across the surface of the poster. The poster image, reduced to the simplest form, has no context in time or place. Stars scatter the night-time sky like tiny pinpoints of light. The moon, emphatically flat, like a ring in the sky, is transmuted to a symbol of the Secession bearing the three shields in its circumference. It leaves a dense trail of yellow across the water, the scattering of light on a dark blue sea, or as Max Klinger described in a strangely contiguous passage:

The palette has the advantage of intensity and colour, the stylus makes up for it with its unlimited capacity to represent light and shade. It can portray direct light and direct darkness, sun, night time...The ring ...stands for the sun which is quite sufficient to convey to us its nature and effect... just as night time can be expressed in a few allusions...The ring need not only stand for the sun, it can also be freedom, warmth and space...night time (is also) peace, sleep.¹⁸⁷

Through this same issue of *Ver Sacrum*, semi-tone versions of the colours drawn from Roller's introductory poster and the cover design imparted atmosphere, softening the impact of the reproductions, yet deepening their mystery and meaning. Klinger's description similarly evokes this effect:

The value of...a work of art – self-contained, as it should be, resides in the *through-composition* of form, colour, atmosphere and expression. Every subject treated in such a way that it meets these requirements is a work of art.¹⁸⁸

Klinger used the term 'through-composed' which has particular meaning in music. It describes a composition with a relatively uninterrupted continuity of musical thought and invention.¹⁸⁹ A through-composed song relies on continuous structures for its coherence, rather than a repeating refrain, in strophic form. It seems well-suited to describe the characteristics in this and other issues of *Ver Sacrum* which used consistent tonalities of

¹⁸⁶ Reproduced M. Wagner, *Ibid*, 31

¹⁸⁷ MKPD, 24.

¹⁸⁸ MKPD, 17, this author's italics.

¹⁸⁹ See Ian Rumbold, 'Through-composition', (*durchkomponiert*), Stanley Sadie (ed), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music*, V 25, (London: Macmillan, 2001), 434.

colour and the disposition of illustrations in space for coherence, notably the Klimt issue of 1898.

As the 1899 Secession Exhibition catalogue stated: 'coloured graphic works in accordance with the technique of coloured drawings should have the character of a painting'.¹⁹⁰ Roller's contribution to *Flächenkunst* was the synthesis of drawing with the use of simple, saturated colours, perhaps closest to the dramatic intensity of black and white, in the art of the poster. In this medium, Roller placed purpose at the centre of his aesthetic. He delineated a consciousness of the effect on the audience, and the poster as an art form which should convey the unique atmosphere of the event it was advertising.

One of the most prolific contributors to *Flächenkunst* in *Ver Sacrum*, Josef Hoffmann's search for a de-historicised illustrative language found its form in repetitive, rhythmic frieze-like motifs, such as these insistent, complex book decorations in issues seven and eight of *Ver Sacrum*, 1898. [1.28] They appeared in *Ver Sacrum* like calling cards for his larger works in the architectonic spaces of the *Secession Haus*, and the residences in the new Vienna suburb of Hohe Warte. These forms appeared to draw on the seemingly familiar, yet their appearance and significance were inscrutable. In a single colour, black or dark red, the designs summoned the fleeting impression of the sail of a ship, an organic trace, or a strangely primitive mechanical contraption. Sekler, Hoffmann's biographer, describes the designer's enjoyment 'in designing ambiguity into his built structures and his graphic work...with figure-ground compositions, which at first appear purely ornamental'.¹⁹¹ The term 'figure-ground composition' in this more recent account denoted the principles of *Flächenkunst*: the dynamic relationship of form and ground; the absence of perspective or modelling, in other words 'the essence of flatness'.¹⁹²

In the same issue seven of *Ver Sacrum*, in an article titled 'Book Decoration', Wilhelm Schölermann described the new relationship between typography and illustration: 'the decorative border, at once ornament, decoration, and yet at the same time a *profound allegory of line and colour...which surrounds the actual work*'.¹⁹³ As if to amplify these ideas directly, Schölermann's article is illustrated by Hoffmann's musical *Flächenkunst*. [1.29] The figure is modelled on the treble *clef*, or the scroll and neck of a cello, using positive and negative forms, an optical illusion of depth and surface. Such illustrations appeared to borrow something from musical notation, with its lack of foreground and

¹⁹⁰'In besondere sollen farbige Werke der Graphik, der Technik entsprechend, nie den Charakter eines Bildes haben.', Katalog der V Ausstellung, 5.

¹⁹¹Sekler, *Josef Hoffmann*, 33, my italics.

¹⁹²*Katalog der V Ausstellung*, 5-6.

¹⁹³Schölermann, 'Sie gebiete der Symbolik, der Arabeske, der Vignette. Sie bildet gleichsam ein Rankenornament, eine Zier und doch zugleich eine sinnige, tiefe Allegorie in Linien und Farben, welche das eigentliche Werk umhüllt und es gegen seine Umgebung abschliesst', *Ver Sacrum*, issue 9, year 1, (September 1898), 26. Schölermann translated John Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture* in 1900.

background, its adherence to surface, the shaping of a run of notes on the staves, and musical signs or slurs.¹⁹⁴

One further significant contributor to the aesthetics of *Flächenkunst* and the graphic arts was not a member of the Secession, yet his new forms of decorative lettering became an integral element of Secession art. The name of Rudolf von Larisch (1856-1934) was often bound together with those of Roller, Hoffmann and Moser as the progenitors of new graphic art. They were described in a special edition of *The Studio* on 'The Art of the Book' by the respected English art critic, A S Levetus, as 'the men of the new school':

All that is best in graphic art of the past has served as the ground work on which to build the art of our time...first, in the teaching of ornamental writing is Professor Rudolf von Larisch, his tenets published in a pamphlet, *Instruction in ornamental Lettering (Unterricht in ornamentaler Schrift 1905)*, and a slim volume, *On Decorative Lettering in Art (Über Zierschriften im Dienste der Kunst)* in 1899.¹⁹⁵

Levetus succinctly described the artistry of von Larisch: 'What he aims at is form, configuration and spacing to add rhythm to the letters themselves, and to harmonise one with another in the building-up of the word ...Even the simplest of words should be decorative'.¹⁹⁶ Larisch's writings had 'caused a stir in professional circles', and brought him to the attention of the *Kunstgewerbeschule*.¹⁹⁷ In these texts, he laid down the principles of the integrity of lettering to foreground, surface and background, as well as negative and positive space.¹⁹⁸ Each letter was to be given equal value in favour of a rhythmic pacing and spacing to create a total design.

Larisch based his theories on the principles of heraldic figures:

the precondition (for which), is the silhouette...and above all, its readability...to work according to rules...the figures have to be configured in a particular way in which the spaces are quite strictly and specifically regulated...to give an equal distribution to the heraldic forms.¹⁹⁹

He formulated two simple rules. The terms '*Flächen*', and '*Flächeninhalte*', were emboldened and emphasised in his text: '*In a word, the distance between each letter*

¹⁹⁴Peter Behrens' design for '*Der Tod krönt die Unschuld*', *Ver Sacrum*, 'Sonderheft', (after issue 12), year 1, (1898), 29, 30 exemplifies this tendency. A simple linear framework draws directly on the form of the notes.

¹⁹⁵A S Levetus, 'The Art of the Book in Austria', in Charles Holme (ed), *The Art of the Book: a Review of Some Recent European and American work in Typography, Page Decoration and Binding* (London: The Studio, 1914), 214.

¹⁹⁶A S Levetus, 'The Art of the Book', 215.

¹⁹⁷Höllcher, *Rudolf von Larisch*, 39

¹⁹⁸Rudolf von Larisch, *Über Zierschriften im Dienste Kunst*, (München: Jos Albert, 1899). 7. Also 'die Flächeninhalte der Hintergrundausschnitte a, b und c einander gleich sein.' 9.

¹⁹⁹Larisch, 'Der Raum ist durch die Wappeneintheilung genau vorgezeichnet; in diesem ist das Ornament – die heraldische Figur- mit der richtigen Massenvertheilung, d.i. im günstigsten Verhältnisse zwischen Ornament und Hintergrundausschnitt einzuzeichnen.' *Über Zierschriften*, 7.

should appear to be the same, the distances themselves of equal value'.²⁰⁰ In a simple graphic exercise, Larisch demonstrated that the spaces between the letters, which he shaded black, leaving the letters in white, had to appear the same. He described these spaces as 'background cutouts'.²⁰¹ The rule, he stated, went against everything which was taught in schools. As he declared, in his second rule, 'it is the surface space between the letters, which has to be equal, and not the distance between the end of one letter and the start of another'.²⁰²

Using the spatial dynamic between the letters, Larisch envisaged new ways of seeing and creating art and 'a new modern art of lettering', freed from 'the fatal concept of "style-purity" (*Stilreinheit*)...and rediscovered as a wonderful decorative model'.²⁰³ His new principles of lettering were intended to mark the end of the separate, disassociated existence of letters and picture on the page. Instead the letters themselves would become picture, or would form a synthesis with the picture in 'a more spontaneous and (historically) unfettered course, dwelling on the importance of the organic development of lettering'.²⁰⁴

In a seemingly spontaneous response to the liberation of lettering from '*Stilreinheit*', the principles of Larisch's new codification of lettering as art form became an essential defining characteristic of *Flächenkunst*. This new freedom was evidenced everywhere: in Roller's first cover for *Ver Sacrum* and in Klimt's famous 'Minotaur' poster for the first Secession exhibition (1898), where the idiosyncratic lettering in a block delineated at the feet of the goddess Athena appeared as if carved by hand.²⁰⁵ The defining features were characterised by compression of space, and the use of colour to create the negative or positive element against dark or light background, as if something had been cut out from the surface of the page. Light appeared to emanate from the 'empty' letters, in contrast to the concentrated darkness and saturated dense colours of the surface. Indeed in the slim booklet-style catalogue for the Ninth Secession Exhibition, the handmade paper of the cover designed by Hoffmann carried an elaborately enigmatic cut-out, the twisted form of the initials of the featured artist, Giovanni Segantini, surrounded by an outline circle of tiny punched holes. In creating flatness, it seems, the Secession artists in the graphic

²⁰⁰ 'In einem Worte müssen die Buchstaben gleich weit von einander entfernt erscheinen'. Ibid, 7

²⁰¹ 'Nach dem aufgestellten Grundsatz müssen also z. B. in dem Worte (example in text) die *Flächeninhalte der Hintergrundausschnitte... einander gleich sein*'. Larisch, Ibid, 9, my emphasis.

²⁰² Larisch, Ibid, 9.

²⁰³ 'Es erscheint für die Zierschrift von guter Vorbedeutung, dass die Moderne, obwohl sie sich von dem verhängnisvollen Begriff "*Stilreinheit*" – der in unserem Jahrhundert gewiss für viele künstlerische Schöpfungen eine Fessel war, befreit hat, doch zuer ornamentaler Grösse emporstrebt und den Buchstaben als gut verwendbares dekoratives Motiv wieder erkannt hat.'

Larisch, Ibid, 37.

²⁰⁴ Höllcher, *Rudolf von Larisch*, 39.

²⁰⁵ 'Theseus and the Minotaur', reproduced Vergo, *Art in Vienna*, 28, et al.

field searched for a way to describe the implied three-dimensionality of form, the space not occupied, but suggested by the negative-positive forms created on the surface.²⁰⁶

Larisch had codified new lettering types and, paradoxically, liberated lettering to create a new art of synthesis with the materials of the graphic arts. In issue one of *Ver Sacrum* in 1903, its last year of its publication, this felicitous development was celebrated by Roller's design for the calendar page for the month of February.[1.30] It consisted only of the appropriate lettering spelling the days of the week in a newly invented typeface, printed in metallic ink, which added 'the sparkle of silver', as Crane had prescribed.²⁰⁷ Like a child's stencil, the letters playfully mutated into the smiling features of face-like forms.

Secession interest in *Flächenkunst* extended from the pages of *Ver Sacrum* to the didactic practices of the Secession professors at the *Kunstgewerbeschule*. In an article in *Kunst und Kunsthandwerk* in 1899, Ludwig Hevesi, reporting on Josef Hoffmann's new teaching methods, described Viennese 'surface ornament', and its future direction:

One starts with the simplest and rises to the complex....Rings, discs, frames, through which we test the impulse of construction, or surfaces as they overlap within each other in a Japanese style...symmetrically-composed ornament, *rhythmically dispersed in the space*, which takes shape from the element of line.²⁰⁸

Hevesi noted the influence of Japanese style in Hoffmann's teaching, as he had similarly observed in the caricature of Roller.

In 1900, *Flächenkunst* was established institutionally with the publication of *Die Fläche* (1900-1901) by Roller and his colleagues. Self-styled as 'Designs for Decorative Art', *Die Fläche* (1901-2) was a highly coloured and finished experimental showcase for 'posters and book art; foreword, endpapers and covers; menu cards, illustrations, black-white art, textiles, patterns, ornamental forms, lettering, monograms, etc, etc', establishing through the presentation of its progenitors' and their students' work, a Viennese interpretation of

²⁰⁶ See Fritz Schmalenbach, *Jugendstil: Ein Betrag zu Theorie und Geschichte der Flächenkunst* (Würzburg: Konrad Triltisch, 1935), for a detailed exposition of the concerns of *Flächenkunst* in art-nouveau, and this concept in particular. Also referred to in Henry R Hope, 'Review', Peter Selz and Mildred Constantine (eds), *Art Nouveau: Art and Design at the Turn of the Century* (New York: MOMA, 1959); Also Frisch, for reference to 'the primacy of the dynamic flowing line; flatness or two-dimensionality (*Jugendstil* has been called *Flächenkunst*),' 'Music and Jugendstil', 140; See Bisanz Prakken, who states that the protagonists of Secessionist *Flächenkunst* were Moser, Hoffmann and Olbrich, and describes Moser's 'Negativform', *Heiliger Frühling*, 109.

²⁰⁷ Crane, *Illustration of Books*, 38. Calendar page reproduced Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum*, 211.

²⁰⁸ Hevesi, 'From the Viennese Art Scene: Josef Hoffmann', in *Kunst und Kunsthandwerk*, 2 (1899), 233-248, cited P. Noever (ed), *Verborgene Impressionen – Hidden Impressions: Japonismus in Wien 1870-1930* (Wien: Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst, 1990), 61.

this newly redefined tributary of the decorative arts.²⁰⁹ It gave no editorial commentary, but let the visual material stand alone. The artist and art critic, Josef August Lux, introducing the first edition of *Die Fläche* in 1901, claimed the art form as the artistic progeny of the Viennese School, and a vital new style in the decorative arts to compete with Paris:

Book decoration used to be unclear, the poster was simply content with an announcement (rather than image or picture), the script (or lettering) lacked any individual emotion... people who have been accustomed for decades to choose their patterns from Paris, will now demand the Viennese style, which is here revealed in its strongest and most refined form.²¹⁰

Lux described the principles of this new art form:

Patterns for textiles, coloured paper etc... are easily recognizable as principles of modern flat ornament (*Flächendekoration*). One should recall that the ornament originally emanated from the human body as well as from living organic creatures. It (must) have a deeper symbolic or allegoric meaning if it is to *properly enliven empty surfaces*... only the "Moderne" has managed to return to this fountain... this joy manifests in our freshly awakened demand for coloured paper and stencils.²¹¹

Later, in 1909, under the directorship of Alfred Roller, the *Kunstgewerbeschule* opened a series of classes devoted to drawing.²¹² In the archives of the Applied Arts School in Vienna may be found a copy of a pamphlet titled *The Unofficial and Miscellaneous Announcements of the School*, 1909, which reported on these new classes for the year, including a special class for *Flachornamentik*, or the art of 'flat ornament'.²¹³ It was open to both men and women, and for artists of fine, applied and graphic arts. *Flächenkunst* and its offshoots embraced all of the artistic disciplines, it seemed.

Flächenkunst did not simply emerge from the fertile territory of the founding of the Secession. Levetus, in the 1914 special edition of *The Studio* described the Vienna Secession's art as a revival with an imperial genealogy.²¹⁴ Through the patronage and encouragement of the Empress Maria Theresa in the eighteenth century, the art of the book enjoyed a new renaissance in Viennese cultural life, for 'she granted many privileges to the makers of books and set great value on volumes which were real works

²⁰⁹ Felician von Myrbach, Josef Hoffmann, Koloman Moser, AR (eds). *Die Fläche: Entwürfe für decorative Malerei, Placate* (etc) (Wien: Anton Schroll, 1901, 1902).

²¹⁰ Cited Elizabeth Frottier, 'Development of Ornament and *Flächenkunst* around turn-of-the-century Vienna', trans. Norber Neurnbecker, in *Verborgene Impressionen – Hidden Impressions*, 107-114 (111).

²¹¹ Cited Frottier, *Ibid*, 111.

²¹² Centralblatt f.d. Gewerbe- und Kunstgewerbeschule, 'Die offenen Zeichensäle an der Kunstgewerbeschule in Wien von Director Alfred Roller', in *Nichtamtlicher Teil. Schul- und Sonstige Nachrichten*, XXIX, 1909, 237-239 (237), (UAKW).

²¹³ *Nichtamtlicher Teil. Schul- und Sonstige Nachrichten*, 237.

²¹⁴ A S Levetus, 'The Art of the Book', 213.

of art'.²¹⁵ During the second half of the eighteenth century 'new types were invented...the paper was of the best quality, the endpapers reached the highest standard'.²¹⁶ The founding of the Imperial *Lehr und Versuchsanstalt für graphische Kunst*, an institution for teaching and experimentation in the graphic arts, in 1899, announced a second revival. Imperial Austria had established a precedent.²¹⁷

The art form of 'the flat panel' and the squareform were inextricably linked in the writings of Klinger and Crane, and in notions about *Flächenkunst*. Hoffmann also wrote, of his search for a de-historicised language of art: 'I am particularly interested in the square, and in the use of black and white as dominant colours...these clear elements have never appeared in earlier styles'.²¹⁸ The uncharacteristically square format of *Ver Sacrum* amongst its peer periodicals is examined here.

Part 5: *Ver Sacrum* and its defining squareform

Ver Sacrum, like the extraordinary set pieces which were created by the collaborative efforts of the Secession designers in the mutable spaces of the *Secession Haus*, famously designed in the form of a Greek cross, had an exceptional framework. The squareform was distinctively the space and format which *Ver Sacrum* occupied amongst its peer art periodicals of the time.²¹⁹ Less a periodical in any conventional sense, which might imply the regular appearance of certain subject matter or features over time, or the more conventional and consistent use of column width and placement of images, rather *Ver Sacrum* was idiosyncratic and wilful.

A series of dissonant yet beautiful pieces of graphic art, enclosed within and making full use of the squareform space, the covers expanded from issue one to issue twenty-four like a series of collectable artworks which could perhaps be framed and hung together in one of the interiors which Hoffmann and Moser designed in the new suburb of *Hohe Warte*. Indeed, following the precedent of George Hirth, publisher of the Munich Secession periodical *Jugend* (1896-1911) who printed and made available for sale the artist-designed title pages of each number, unique artworks by Secession members published in *Ver Sacrum* were also re-printed and offered for sale.²²⁰ Each cover played

²¹⁵ A S Levetus, *Ibid*, 213.

²¹⁶ A S Levetus, *Ibid*, 213.

²¹⁷ Printing techniques in Austria were also advanced by the later nineteenth century. See Koschatsky who describes the successes of the Vienna Poster Printing works at the *Exhibition du Livre*, 1884, *Ornamental Posters*, 12.

²¹⁸ Cited in Stephen Tschudi Madsen, *Sources of Art Nouveau* (New York: Da Cape, 1956), 401.

²¹⁹ See Bisanz-Prakken, *Frühling*, 15, also Bisanz-Prakken, 'Das Quadrat in der *Flächenkunst der Wiener Secession*' in *Alte und Moderne Kunst*, 27, (January 1982), 40-46.

²²⁰ Nebehay, *Gustav Klimt: From Drawing to Painting*, (ff 2), 59. *Jugend* was also published 1931-38.

freely with the lettering for the words *Ver Sacrum* and its placement on the page, a variation on the motivic imprint established firstly by Alfred Roller.

Similarly, the squareform appeared to lend the interior spaces of the periodical and the artists who contributed a freedom to experiment, and at times, to create a single, startling moment seemingly without announcement or preparation. For example, the December issue in 1899, devoted to the poetry and drawings of Secession artist Ernst Stöhr, was entirely given over to black and white, not just for the sake of reprographic efficiency, but as dominant tones used with the same intensity as colour. Drawings were reduced to abstract line, geometric zig-zags, or simple flowing curves. Such exceptional interventions were noted by Walter Crane in 1901: '*Ver Sacrum*, the journal of the Secession artists of Vienna gives evidence of considerable daring and resource in black and white drawing'.²²¹

The square format was explored and invigorated in architecture and in painting as well as through the pages of *Ver Sacrum*. Rough sketches by Roller and Klimt for the *Secession Haus* were circulated at the various Secession committee meetings in 1897. [1.31] Each impression clearly showed squareform blocks, in severe and precise symmetry, either side of the recessed entrance to a pavilion-style building. In 1898-9 Klimt produced the first of his resolutely square landscapes, an avant-garde strategy departing from academic convention.²²² The squareform directs attention to the decorative effect of the densely covered, painterly surface, extended across the canvas to the edges of the close fitting square frames. The landscapes of Klimt are noted for their evocation of a prevailing atmosphere, at a stage removed from reality.

Like the *Secession Haus*, the squareform of *Ver Sacrum* appeared to lend the Secession designers the freedom to 'create something new', as Richard Wagner had urged his successors.²²³ Semper's *Prolegomena* stressed the value of these simple forms as 'completely self-contained...indifferent to the external world'.²²⁴ Such perfect forms emanated from the mineral world: polygons, stars, composite forms, such as snowflakes which 'rule undisturbed and all embracing, indifferent to the outside world, rejecting all external influences...most perfectly expressed...In their strict regularity and all-embracing enclosure...they are omni-directional, and therefore non-directional'.²²⁵ Semper illustrated

²²¹ Walter Crane, *The Decorative Illustration of Books* (London: George Bell, 1901), 266. This 2nd edition was updated with comments on various German-language art periodicals, including *Jugend* and *Ver Sacrum*.

²²² Anthea Callen, *The Art of Impressionism: Painting Technique and the Making of Modernity*, (Yale: London, 2000), 21.

²²³ Stewart Spencer and B Millington (eds), *Richard Wagner Selected Letters* (London, 1987), 269, cited in Glauert, *Hugo Wolf*, 16.

²²⁴ Semper, *Style*, 83.

²²⁵ Semper, *Style*, 84.

his point by laying out six such forms in black, squareform panels. Amongst these simple forms, the square had particular characteristics:

A perfect square would be in this respect *completely neutral*; the proportional development of a square is *without expression* unless subdivisions and patterns are added to give it the required character and *thus force it out of its passivity* ... patterns should intersect the neutral square so that each division created on its surface as well as the system of divisions as a whole, will *meet the conditions of proportion and symmetry*. (In this way), the design ceases to be neutral.²²⁶

The Secession designers seemed to take particular satisfaction in 'forcing page spaces from their passivity', with decoration and illustrations, while observing a set of rules, seemingly hidden from view, to meet conditions of proportion and symmetry.²²⁷ The emergence of this design idiom may be found in concentrated form, in Roller's cover with its dialectic between surface space, flatness and decorative form, and in a small contribution the designer made to page eight of the same first issue. [1.32]

The surface of the top half of the page, a figural and simplified expanse of berries on the branches, attributed to Hoffmann, was figured in line only, without shading. It is carefully curtailed at the edges by an invisible line which governs the outside edges of the text below. The fruiting branches frame a squareform panel, bearing the name of the 'Vereinigung Bildender Künstler Österreichs' in brown, with the word Secession below, in a linear panel which extends into the branches above, in continuous linear form.

The text, an elegiac polemic by Hermann Bahr on the founding of the Secession, is divided into two wide columns, and with the Hoffmann drawing above, forms a squareform in the centre of the page. Roller's small intervention was printed in black on white, and uses the issue's signature third colour of sienna brown. Four squareform vignettes were placed integrally within the text on the page. Each vignette appeared to capture a vestigial element from nature: a section of a butterfly wing; the outline of a seed head; the imprint left by a feather. Yet they are abstract in form. Wagner's description of *mythos*, the essential underpinning and driving force of art, was 'the essence, its correspondence with wide-reaching content, which will manifest itself in utmost concentration'.²²⁸ This, it seemed, was the essence of Roller's contribution.

The title of the Secession periodical increasingly became the immanent sign of the Secession. The source for its insistent use in their art world, from posters to the fascia of the *Secession Haus*, was not arbitrary. It can be traced through Roller's notes of the 1897 meetings of the Secession, and the design competition held to determine the style of the periodical. The note dated March 19th reads 'on the letterhead as well as the posters, the

²²⁶ Semper, *Ibid*, 124, 125, my italics.

²²⁷ Also Crane, *Illustration of Books*, 302.

²²⁸ WOMAD, 90.

words "ver sacrum" are to appear each time as a *motto*'.²²⁹ Typically, it was used in other spaces of art without reference to the periodical itself. In Alfred Roller's poster, the statement 'Ver Sacrum II Jahr' (*Ver Sacrum* Year II) appeared to announce a new era. In this unfettered context, it recorded a different concept of time and space, celebrating time with the founding of the Secession, and its new spaces of art in the medium of the poster itself. In the final part of this chapter, the art world enclosed within the spaces of *Ver Sacrum* in its first year of publication, and an exceptional issue published in December 1901, a nominated turning-point in Secession art and design, are analysed to consider differing notions of time and space, and their aesthetic impact on the reader.

Part 6: Time and space in *Ver Sacrum*, 1898, 1901

The reader's relationship with a periodical is a celebration of temporal anarchy in which, as Robert Escarpit describes, the reader may dictate her own journey through the pages, the place and space in which the periodical is viewed.²³⁰ Each reader will see differently the juxtaposition of images, or the flux of ideas. Yet Roller's letter to Gustav Klimt inferred that the experience of reading *Ver Sacrum* would be more like a visit to an exhibition. The reader would see the periodical not as a familiar series of reassuring and regular monthly features, as in other art and design periodicals, but as a visit to a different world altogether.²³¹ The disposition of designed elements would be carefully manipulated through the pages to contest notions of familiarity and reality. Each issue would establish its own particular notion of time and space.

This effect, in the contained spaces of the periodical, was prefigured in Wagner's description of the role of art which was to remove its audience from the realities of everyday life. Art should 'draw together not only the actions (of ordinary life), which would have only come to pass...in a widespread space',²³² but also the condensation of normal space and time, to create an effect which is 'neither in time nor space, but in the expression'.²³³ The image, created by the artist in condensed and strengthened form, would seem both 'wondrous and...the most intelligible representation of reality'.²³⁴ In these conditions, 'nature's essence is not distorted, but is merely ...gathered into one

²²⁹ Pausch, *Gründung*, 61, also Pausch, 'Kolo Moser and the Founding of the Secession', S. Tretter (ed), *Koloman Moser*, 60, 61.

²³⁰ See Escarpit, *The Book Revolution* (originally *La Revolution du Livre*), (London: Harrap with UNESCO, 1966), for an affecting account of the relationship of the reader to the book, 19-20.

²³¹ Reed, *The Popular Magazine*, for a brief discussion of Fetinger's Theory of Cognitive Dissonance and the relationship of the reader and the author's text, 11.

²³² WOMAD, 192.

²³³ WOMAD, 230, RW's emphasis.

²³⁴ WOMAD, 192-193. The world 'representment' is used.

lucid image'.²³⁵ The *mythos* was 'that "moment" of the whole artwork which conditioned its very essence', the moment of lucidity.²³⁶

Similarly, Semper described a defining moment of lucidity: the recognition of the essence of the design form as a primeval trace, uncorrupted with the accretions of later use. They were 'old motifs, discernable in very new form...derived from the most ancient traditions'.²³⁷ Semper described the urge to plunder the aesthetic riches of previous times as a deliberate strategy. 'Nothing is arbitrary; everything is conditioned by circumstances and relations'.²³⁸ 'We may search amongst monumental traces,' Semper stated, 'for certain basic forms or types of art that in some cases can be clearly and distinctly seen, but in others only dimly so...but they are always the same'.²³⁹

In a somewhat compact description of a new set of relations between the artwork and its audience, Semper described the necessary conditions of formal beauty, and a fourth dimension, linked to space. The three necessary conditions of formal beauty were 'symmetry, proportionality and direction'.²⁴⁰ To this Semper added 'a *homogenous* property', which he likened to 'a fourth spatial dimension'.²⁴¹ This 'fourth spatial dimension', was 'impossible to imagine',²⁴² yet seemed to find its resolution in his observation that 'the observer has to imagine himself at the centre of relations...its nature is *enclosure*'.²⁴³

The defining characteristic of the first year's issues of *Ver Sacrum* was this more theatrical experience in which the boundaries between real and imaginary worlds were dissolved in favour of an aesthetic experience. Roller's second cover of the year for the August issue seemed to announce this intent with an abstracted stencil design of leaves. [1.33] The leaves seem fossilised in the surface of the page. The space at the centre of the cover was left empty, animated only by the rhythm of the lettering. The design gives no indication as to the contents of the issue on the inside pages.

Ornamental forms and book decoration, complete in their own right, like found objects, were placed on the pages of this issue without rational context. Articles were laid out on the spaces of the page to comply with a distinctive, yet constantly changing set of unspoken conventions dictating layout, always serving the determining squareform of the periodical. [1.34] Studies for furniture designs were reduced to flatness and linearity and

²³⁵ WOMAD, 193.

²³⁶ WOMAD, 'Myth represents a concentration of motives', 193.

²³⁷ Semper, *Style*, 72.

²³⁸ Semper, *Ibid*, 72.

²³⁹ Semper, *Ibid*, 10, author's emphasis.

²⁴⁰ Semper, *Ibid*, 83.

²⁴¹ Semper, *Ibid*, 83, author's emphasis.

²⁴² Semper, *Ibid*, 83.

²⁴³ Semper, *Ibid*, 86, author's emphasis.

appeared to float in space, with little or no contextual detail. Fantasy architectural studies, anthropomorphic in form, were placed in the same page space as Adolf Loos' famous *Ringstrasse* critique, the mood of the image contrasting with the language of polemic. [1.35] The language of Loos' article seemed neutralised by the wide columns of the text and the surrounding space which was given equal importance.

Colour reproductions were strategically placed throughout. Stylised landscapes in brilliant, jewel-like colours gave views onto familiar yet distanced worlds. This effect was enhanced by the page space surrounding the image, or in this example, by the defining synecdoche of Japanese-style pillar-like forms. [1.36] Distinctive *Flächenkunst*, distinguished by dense black patterning insistently punctuated the page, its tiger-like form sounding a strangely discordant note. [1.37] A poem, self-reflexively titled *Ver Sacrum* was dramatically framed with vitalist flowers. This poem and its framing appears to bear no relation to the form and style of the rest of the issue. Its difference is enhanced by the use of the coated surface paper, which reflected light. [1.38] A decorative motif on the last page provided the final, delicate underlining, leaving a last lingering echo rather than the silence of empty space, an effect preferred in book art by Walter Crane.²⁴⁴ The editor's vision appeared to prevail. Consonance of space and dissonance of imagery liberated the imagination of the reader from the more rigid convention of text with related images.

By 1901, *Ver Sacrum* had been reduced in size, and two issues a month were produced. This smaller format seemed to encourage an increasing emphasis on a single subject. However, the December 1901 issue, entirely devoted to the publication of *Lieder* (songs) composed or arranged by living musicians, was exceptional in the life of *Ver Sacrum* and possibly amongst other art periodicals of its time.²⁴⁵ Each *Lied*, or monodrama, was given an individual decorative frame designed by notable Secession artists, two of which were Roller's, on facing pages. [1.39] Roller had attended the *Gymnasium* in *Brünn* where, typically, like other of his colleagues in Vienna, he would have received a musical education to a high standard as a matter of course.²⁴⁶ The Secession designers did not draw their framing designs in isolation but rather designed for each individual song, demonstrating an appreciation for the musical notation as well as the poetry.

The production of the *Lieder* issue coincided with another musical event in the Secession art world, the preparation for the fourteenth Secession exhibition featuring Max Klinger's *Beethoven* monument. The production of the monument had been delayed and Klinger

²⁴⁴ Crane, *Illustration of Books*, 301.

²⁴⁵ See Bonnie H Miller, 'Magazine Music of the Jugendstil and Expressionist Movements', *Periodica Musica*, V IX, 1991, 1-13 (3-8) for analysis of this issue as exceptional, and tables annotating 'Jugendstil' composers and 'little magazines'. Miller has also privately recorded the *Ver Sacrum* *Lieder*.

²⁴⁶ Manfred Wagner, personal interview, Universität für Angewandte Kunst, Vienna, February 26th, 2008.

had written to Roller from Paris in September 1901 to explain his difficulties.²⁴⁷ However, the plans for the exhibition to open in April 1902 were already in train. The publication of the music issue of *Ver Sacrum* and the conception for the exhibition overlapped in time and space. They also shared a similar artistic concern: the persistent stress on musical ideas conveyed through a visual aesthetic. Trevor Fawcett, writing in 1976 on *fin-de-siècle art* periodicals, reflected on the singular characteristics of *Ver Sacrum*:

Reaction to visual anarchy came with *the through-composed periodical*...more than a simple harmony of text and illustration...it meant a periodical with a complex message of design, covetable for its own sake...only in *Ver Sacrum*, that exquisite product of the Vienna Secession is it fully realised.²⁴⁸

As established above, the term through-composition, is particular to music. In Klinger's text it had been transposed to describe an ideal in the visual arts. In most definitions, Wagner's music dramas 'with their large scale continuous structures and *motivic* cross-references' are described as the archetypal examples of through-composition in operatic form.²⁴⁹ The *Lieder* issue was through-composed in black and silver throughout, its 'continuous structure', with a different design motif for each song.

It is likely that the December 1901 issue was conceived as a Christmas gift for the readers of *Ver Sacrum* to enjoy both visually and aurally. It carried no editorial or other material. It may have been seen as something other, perhaps equivalent to the single issues devoted to the work of an individual artist which Roller had described in one of his 1897 notes on the Secession intent for *Ver Sacrum*. Josef Reiter (1862-1939) the Austrian composer, was appointed as musical editor, his task to acquire and select the musical material.

Most of the composers featured in the issue have since disappeared, with the notable exception of the Viennese *Lieder* composer, Hugo Wolf (1860-1903). In parallel time with the formation of the Secession, the debates surrounding Hugo Wolf as the progenitor of Wagner's legacy and the notion of the *Lied* as a small *Gesamtkunstwerk* had gained important currency. These debates were reported in the *Bayreuther Blätter*, the Wagner Society newspaper which was widely circulated in Vienna.²⁵⁰ Styled 'the Wagner of the *Lied*', Wolf contributed the most musically distinguished of the eleven songs, '*Anakreons Grab*' (Anacreon's Grave). Set to Goethe's poem, it is brief, intense and elegiac.²⁵¹

There is a pleasing synchronicity in the notion of the small *Gesamtkunstwerk*, in which music and words were concentrated into the space of a few brief moments in time, and

²⁴⁷ MK: AR, (AM47.402RO), ÖTM, also Baker:Pausch, *Archiv*, 87,

²⁴⁸ Fawcett, 'Illustration and Design', 57.

²⁴⁹ Rumbold, 'Through-composed', 434.

²⁵⁰ Glauert, citing *Bayreuther Blätter*, 1897, *Hugo Wolf*, 32.

²⁵¹ Glauert, *Hugo Wolf*, 32.

the graphic art world of *Ver Sacrum*, its book art, and the disposition of space, decorative art and text through its pages. Serendipitously, Rudolf von Larisch, a progenitor of Secession *Flächenkunst*, enjoyed a close friendship and correspondence with Hugo Wolf, from the early 1890s.²⁵² 'Small things can also enchant us', the opening title of Hugo Wolf's last major songbook, may also read like a declaration of intent for the book decoration of the Secession.²⁵³

Hugo Wolf's intense musical relationship with Wagner's legacy was shared with other composers featured in the *Ver Sacrum Lieder* issue. The composer of 'Siehst du den Stern' ('Do you See the Star'), the song illustrated by Roller, had also composed a symphonic poem, *Wieland der Schmied*, ('Wieland the Blacksmith'), which drew on Wagner's unrealised opera scheme (1849) of the same name.²⁵⁴ Similarly, the songs commonly shared the poetic concerns of late Romantic art and literature: sleep as a metaphor for death; death and the notion of the eternal; night as a metaphor for eternal sleep, and the loneliness of the soul.²⁵⁵ Musically, the *Lieder* exhibit a certain melancholy decadence; Wagnerian-like harmonies associated with his music drama, *Tristan und Isolde*, the 'Tristan chord' of delayed resolution, and a shimmering effect.²⁵⁶ This effect was reciprocated visually in the use of metallic silver ink as a decorative device, drawing attention to the surface of each page.

The framing design for *Kleinstadt Idyll*, ('Small Town Idyll'), on the first page by Josef Hoffmann, was the most abstract of the issue. [1.40] Little, if anything, of the meaning of the words of the poem was reflected in the design, neither 'the slumbering market place' with its 'fountain in the centre', or 'the houses, long ruined ... in deep sleep'. The phrase, 'a piece of heaven and the sickle moon', may be indicated in the silver squareforms intersected by a diagonal.²⁵⁷ There is a note-like formation to the design form, a rhythmic insistency in its repetitive phrasing.

For *Siehst du den Stern*, ('Do you See the Star'), Alfred Roller used the distinctive knotted form for the rising motif which ascends, energetically, from the base line of the design to form the 'S' of the first word of the title. [1.50] The stylised figures below the *Lied*, supported by the curve of a sweeping line, seem unaware that their stars 'have already

²⁵² See Heinrich Werner (ed), *Hugo Wolf in Perchtoldsdorf: Persönliche Erinnerungen nebst den Briefen des Meisters an seine Freunde Dr M Haberlant, Rudolf von Larisch* (Regensburg: Deutsche Musikbücherei, 1925).

²⁵³ Glauert, who suggests this applies to the oeuvre of Wolf, *Hugo Wolf*, 32.

²⁵⁴ Siegmund von Hausegger (1872-1948). See RWPW, 'Wieland der Schmied', VI, 215-265.

²⁵⁵ See appendix A, for translations of these four songs; appendix B for a private recording of songs.

²⁵⁶ Author, 'Aural and Visual Spaces of Music', with Glauert, Shaw-Miller, Royal Academy of Music, London, October 10th, 2008.

²⁵⁷ See appendix A.

fallen into ashes', that their light is 'what is and is not'.²⁵⁸ Life, energetically represented in the rising motif on the left, exerts a tension with the horizontal curve. Roller's preoccupation with stars was not limited to this drawing. They remained a persistent *Leitmotif* in his work, as displayed both in his mural *Sinking Night* (*Sinkende Nacht*), and the poster he designed for the *Beethoven* exhibition.

The design for *Einsamkeit*, ('Loneliness') evokes the words from the song, in the phrase 'the road (which) stretches away empty of people'.²⁵⁹ It creates an atmosphere which expands its meaning through a more extensive graphic landscape. [1.42] The design represents naturalism on the opening left-hand page, and a retreat from naturalism in the reduced lines and geometric forms on the right. It evokes the debate described by Walter Frisch on these two seemingly opposing drives which emerged in German culture in the 1890s, and in Secession art as a dissonance in the landscape. Wagner, as a 'naturalist and a non-naturalist' was seen as its archetype.²⁶⁰ Similarly, surprising dissonances and abrupt mood changes are exhibited in the reduced and condensed spaces of the music of the *Lied*.²⁶¹

Stylised wings in heavy black with white, designed to cradle Wolf's *Anacreon's Grab* sweep upwards in the most dramatic gesture of the eleven songs. [1.43] The artist resisted the temptation figuratively to depict more obvious motifs of the blooming rose and the entwined vine in the opening words of Goethe's poem. Instead, the framing design evokes a description of Wagner's music by the philosopher Ehrenfels, and its special powers as 'the art which is able to awaken that life of impulse and drives which slumbers half in the unconscious and to capture it in firm shapes'.²⁶² The outspread wings bear the spirit of the poet *Anacreon* heavenwards. In this brief, timeless moment Secession graphic art seemed poised in contemplation of a move towards an abstract realm indicated by the border of empty, silvered semaphores.

The framing devices for each song exhibited musicality and musical form. The dominant design forms were sweeping, curving lines; the measured dialogue between line and empty space; the insistent use of repetitive, outline shapes which were subtly modulated as they increased, and then decreased in number or emphasis through the design on the page; the progression of repetitive abstract motifs through time as well as space. Each of the drawings integrated the words and lettering of the song title into the design, in a synthesis of word and line. Empty or 'silent' page space was used as an active element in their composition.

²⁵⁸ See appendix A.

²⁵⁹ Appendix A.

²⁶⁰ Frisch, citing the philosopher, Ehrenfels, and his article 'Freie Bühne', 1891 on Wagner, *German Modernism*, 49-51.

²⁶¹ Hear Appendix B.

²⁶² Ehrenfels, cited Frisch, *German Modernism*, 50.

The idea, of ending the year's issues of *Ver Sacrum* with songs, richly elaborated in a metallic finish, emphasised an evocation of time and space at the start and at the end of the year. For January 1901, the Secessionists produced a special calendar issue, a common Viennese tradition in periodical and newspaper publishing. It was richly elaborated with gold, black and white. The issue opened on a dramatic illustration for January by Gustav Klimt. [1.44] In the sparest of lines figures representing youth, age, and time eternal, the snake with its tail in his mouth, commented on time and the progression of time. Roller's December illustration, a male figure on the deck of a ship was distinctively *Tristan*-like in its medievalist style and composition. [1.45] A golden sunset added dazzle to the sea. It was appropriately titled '*Dank und Lebwohl*', ('thanks and farewell'), resonating with the more famous and extended 'Farewell' in Wagner's music drama.²⁶³

On each page, the printed gold surface reflected light. Where metallic ink was used intensively, such as in the gilded, wheat-field landscape for August, it appeared to hint at hidden depths which the eye could not penetrate. In both the calendar and the *Lieder* issue, the insistence on the same, highly distinctive effects of metallic inks with white and black throughout, gave the coherence of through-composition. The two issues imply and represent the reader's journey through time and space. They appeared to draw their inspiration from the twin drives of Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* and the essential characteristics of art as a union of Apollonian and Dionysian forces, respectively control and intellect on the one hand, and unfettered emotion represented by music on the other. The design elements exerted a controlling force on music, effecting a synthesis of the two.²⁶⁴

Nietzsche's characterisation of the debt owed to great art for the essential synthesis of Apollonian and Dionysian drives has continued to resound into the twentieth century and beyond. His notion of *Schein*, defined as the world of appearance or '*semblance*' has had far less exposure in art and design discourse.²⁶⁵ Yet it seems to have particular pertinence to Vienna and to Secession art, which is rich with Nietzsche's 'golden light of Apollo', in its use of gold and other precious surfaces, no less so than in the calendar and music issues of *Ver Sacrum* in 1901.²⁶⁶ An almost untranslatable term, *Schein* also had its roots in Greek theatre and performance, as Geuss describes: 'the words and stage actions... deflect and dilute the impact of that reality, making it tolerable to humans. They

²⁶³ Isolde's farewell to Tristan, the 'love-death' (*Liebestod*), *Tristan und Isolde*, Act Three.

²⁶⁴ Nietzsche, *Birth of Tragedy*, (1999).

²⁶⁵ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 26, 119 and various others.

²⁶⁶ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 120.

do this by constructing a realm...of *Schein* (semblance).²⁶⁷ Nietzsche described the realm of *Schein* as essential and ideal:

Every human being is fully an artist when creating the worlds of dream (not as an escape, but a necessary part of life), and the lovely *semblance* of dream is the father of all the arts of image-making, including, an important half of poetry... Yet even while this dream-reality is most alive, we nevertheless retain a pervasive sense that it is *semblance* (*Schein*).²⁶⁸

Gold and silver finishes reflect light, resist penetration, yet also reflect back some trace or essence of the real world. Thus they contribute to ambiguity, and the shifting of planes between what is real and what is not. This effect, of 'dissolving reality', a term used by Bouillon in his analysis of the artworks in the 1902 *Beethoven* exhibition, which as the next chapter describes, gleamed with precious finishes, challenges the boundaries between abstraction and representation.²⁶⁹ Nietzsche's approbation of this realm of *Schein* may cast another light on the often critical commentary associated with the excesses of the decorative art of the Secession.²⁷⁰

Musical composition does not require a performance in order to exist. An imagined sound may appear real in the mind. The score is sufficient to prove its existence.²⁷¹ The *Lieder issue* of *Ver Sacrum* was intended for performance by the patrons, friends and followers of the Secession in the music rooms of their private houses. However, the notation was printed in rather reduced form, and the words were almost illegible.

Like Roller's note, which recorded the editorial intent for *Ver Sacrum* that poetry and prose should not be excluded provided they were linked with art, ideally illustrated, the issue reflected its primary concern for the visual effect, rather than the integrity of the musical notation. Music appeared to inspire the decorative elements, and a sustained example of *Flächenkunst* through its pages. In the world of music, convergent concerns for the role of ornament in performance and the important relationship between 'foreground and background' were also reflected in the theories of Viennese formalist Heinrich Schenker (1868-1935).²⁷² Semper, however, suggested that decorative forms themselves evoked musical ideas:

Nature's creative law...gleams through the real world in the rhythmical sequence of space and time movements, in wreaths, a string of pearls, scrolls,

²⁶⁷ Geuss, 'Introduction', *The Birth of Tragedy*, vii-xxx (xx).

²⁶⁸ Nietzsche, 'The Dionysiac World View', 119, author's italics.

²⁶⁹ Bouillon, *Klimt: Beethoven*, 13.

²⁷⁰ Richard H Weisberg, 'De Man Missing Nietzsche: Hinzugedichtet Revisited' in Clayton Koelb (ed), *Nietzsche as Postmodernist, essays pro and contra* (New York: State University of New York, 1990), 118.

²⁷¹ After Heinrich Schenker, *The Art of Performance*, Herbert Esser (ed), trans. Irene Schreier-Scott (Oxford: Oxford University, 2000), 3.

²⁷² For Schenker's interests in musical formalism, see *The Art of Performance*, (2000).

the rhythmic tones attending on them...these are the beginnings out of which music ... grew.²⁷³

Even without the benefit of a live performance, the pages of this issue of *Ver Sacrum*, it seems, would still sound.²⁷⁴ Space, like the pauses and silences in the *Lieder*, was deliberately employed in their composition, an integral element of the design. A small *Gesamtkunstwerk* was created, its visual effect the dominant aesthetic.

Conclusion – *Ver Sacrum* as ‘a space for art’

Roller's cover for the first issue of *Ver Sacrum* and the materials of the graphic arts which he employed defined space itself as a material of art in its own right. Space was given value as an essential element in the overall artwork. The empty spaces of the pages of *Ver Sacrum* were mutable, a place for freedom of expression and experimentation in the Secession search for a new language of art in the two-dimensional medium and beyond. In the making of *Ver Sacrum*, Roller exhibited a Wagnerian impulse for synthesis in the graphic arts. This new language emerged in *Flächenkunst*, defined and practised by Roller and his Secession colleagues in the interior spaces of *Ver Sacrum* but also beyond its bounds in their productive transfer of ideas more widely in the applied arts, and its teaching practices.

The spaces of *Ver Sacrum* were nevertheless bounded and controlled through their defining squareform. The square, neutral in its characteristics provided the fruitful ground for the emerging new concerns of the editor to see the periodical as a creative space through which the reader's aesthetic journey or visit could be contrived. The notion of artistic collaboration, in this, the most condensed of the Secession art spaces exemplified a Wagnerian principle, contiguously with the second space of their art, the *Secession Haus*. Endowed with metaphysical ideas, the epithet *Ver Sacrum* transcended the spaces of the periodical to become its motto and the immanent sign of the Secession. From the *Lieder* issue of December 1901, and its musical spaces, Roller proceeded to another, similarly musical space, the fourteenth Secession *Beethoven* exhibition, which opened four months later, in April 1902. This second musical space is the subject of the next chapter.

²⁷³ Semper, *Style*, 82, author's italics.

²⁷⁴ See also Shaw-Miller, *Sighting Music* (Chichester: Pallant House, 2007), 1-4.

CHAPTER TWO – ALFRED ROLLER AND THE SPACES OF THE SECESSION HAUS

Introduction

It has been anticipated that more and more, as the artists express it, “*Flächenkunst*” will be superseded by “*Raumkunst*” (an art of interior space); it has been foreseen that it will be necessary to change the work, almost like magic, at a stroke and to be able to adapt it to each new purpose.¹

Two paintings by the Italian artist, Giovanni Segantini (1858-1899), *Die Wollüstige* (1896-7), ('The Lustful Mother'), and *Die Schlechte Mütter* (1895) ('The Disgraced Mother'), were reproduced without comment, and without decoration, on facing pages in the May issue of *Ver Sacrum*, 1899. [2.1] The two works depict Segantini's 'Mothers' in melancholic, desolate night scenes, emptied of colour apart from *chiaroscuro* in luminous tones of blue on white, conflating the principles of drawing with painting, an effect which was heightened in reproduction.² The images float on the otherwise empty spaces of the page. They invite the reader to an act of private contemplation, suggesting a ritualistic engagement with the text.

The same works were exhibited in the Ninth Secession exhibition which opened for six weeks from January 1901, in a retrospective of the artist's work. The interior spaces of the *Secession Haus* were designed by Alfred Roller. The unencumbered and empty pages of *Ver Sacrum* appeared to have been the inspiration for the exhibition spaces which he designed. The photograph reproduced in a later issue of *Ver Sacrum* shows the Segantini paintings hung in a single line on the uncluttered spaces of the wall. [2.2]

As the preceding chapter has established, in the ephemeral two-dimensional spaces of *Ver Sacrum*, Roller had invoked a synthesis of form, space and word to create a decorative statement of significance to the developing aesthetic of the Secession, in their search for a new language in the graphic arts. He had demonstrated an appreciation of the importance of the dialectic between 'empty and full spaces' within the framework of the surface of the page.³ This chapter sets out to establish in what ways Roller's concerns for 'empty and full spaces', were transferred to the three-dimensional spaces of the *Secession Haus*, and another 'new formation in the making', in Semper's words.⁴

¹ Hermann Bahr, 'dass immer mehr, wie die Künstler es ausdrücken: die "Flächenkunst" von der "Raumkunst" verdrängt wird, es ist vorgesehen worden, wenn es notwendig wird, sofort das Werk, wie durch einen Zauber, auf einen Schlag verändern und jeder neuen Forderung wieder anpassen zu können.', 'Meister Olbrich,' (November, 1898), *Secession*, (Wien: Wiener Verlag, 1901).

² Segantini's original paintings use predominantly tones of blue and white to denote night, and are small, intimate works intended for close observation.

³ Hevesi, 'Ver Sacrum', AJS, 7.

⁴ Semper, *Style*, 71.

In the field of museum and exhibition display during the later nineteenth century, European museum directors continued with the convention of layered and stacked display strategies until a turning point around 1900.⁵ From the first Secession exhibition in Vienna's *Gartenbau*, in 1898, and the opening of Olbrich's *Secession Haus* in November 1898, the Secession designers had approached their Exhibition programme with different intent. The internal spaces of the *Secession Haus* were re-designed and reconstructed for each exhibition, providing the designers with a wonderful freedom to experiment and an element of surprise, as Hermann Bahr commented.⁶ Indeed, the Vienna Secession exhibition design practices 'preceded those of museum director Hugo von Tschudi's single-line displays for the Berlin *Nationalgalerie*, 1908, and architect Peter Behrens' design for the Centenary Exhibition of German Arts, 1906', as Charlotte Klonk has observed.⁷

This impetus for change, heralded by the so-called German Museum Reform Movement at the turn of the century, was in its turn invigorated by Secession practice.⁸ A German critic cited by Robert Jensen noted in 1896, 'without question, the most important thing primarily owed to Secessionism was the form of the small elite exhibition'.⁹ In Vienna changes were apparent in the permanent collections of the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* from the first decades of the twentieth century.¹⁰ However, Vienna's only official exhibiting body, the *Künstlerhaus (Genossenschaft bildender Künstler Wiens)*, from which the Secession had broken away in 1897, continued with its crowded displays, its society events such as the staging of balls and its intensely commercial or 'bazaar-like' atmosphere, at the expense of new art and the visitor experience.¹¹ At the turn of the century, the aesthetics of periodical design were undergoing change. Similarly, museum

⁵ See Charlotte Klonk 'Patterns of Attention: From Shop Windows to Gallery Rooms in Early Twentieth Century Berlin', in *Art History* 28, 4, September, 2005, 479-484, also illustration of the *Städtischen Kunstinstitut Frankfurt*, 1905, which shows a single line of paintings, suffused with light from above. Klonk refers to the Vienna Secession exhibitions as arbiters of new exhibition design strategies, 478.

⁶ Hermann Bahr, 'Meister Olbrich,' *Secession*, (Wien: Wiener Verlag, 1901), trans. in Ian Latham, *Joseph Maria Olbrich* (London: Academy, 1980), 26.

⁷ Charlotte Klonk, 'Patterns of Attention', 478. Also see similar accounts of the change in design strategies in Klonk, 'Mounting Vision: Charles Eastlake and the National Gallery of London', in *The Art Bulletin*, V82, 2, June 2000, 331-347; for an account of the German Museum Reform movement, and a parallel case study on the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, see Julia Noordegraaf, *Strategies of Display: Museum Presentation in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Visual Culture*, (Rotterdam, NAI, 2004).

⁸ See also Alexis Joachimides, *Die Museumsreformbewegung in Deutschland und die Entstehung des modernen Museums 1880-1940* (Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, 2001), for account of the practices of the Vienna Secession and their contribution to the German museum reform movement, 114.

⁹ Cited Robert Jensen, 'A Matter of Professionalism: Marketing Identity in Fin-de-Siecle Vienna', in Beller (ed), *Rethinking Vienna*, 200.

¹⁰ See Beatrix Kriller, Georg Kugler, *Die Architektur und Ausstattung: Idee und Wirklichkeit des Gesamtkunstwerkes* (Wien: Brandstätter, 1991), for detailed account of the interior decoration and display strategies of the *Kunsthistorisches Museum*, 1873-1910, 266 for typical hang, 1910.

¹¹ Topp, *Architecture and Truth*, 30-34, also for the citation of Hermann Bahr who called the *Künstlerhaus* 'a market place, a bazaar', 34.

display practices were at a turning point as Roller and his colleagues experimented with the realisation of a new setting for each of their three annual Secession exhibitions from 1898 to 1905. Rather than rely simply on issues of a clarification of display, however, their concerns were for an isolated aesthetic, separate from 'daily life and...a silent retreat for the soul', as Hermann Bahr romantically described it in 1898.¹²

The Fourteenth *Beethoven* exhibition which was staged from April 15th to June 25th 1902 forms the main subject of this chapter. As recent historiography has shown, any account of Secession exhibitions for the period 1898 to 1902 would be incomplete without reference to this exceptional event.¹³ This account is no different in this respect. The *Beethoven* exhibition has been seen as the apotheosis of the Secession ambitions to create an experience denoted as *Tempelkunst* (literally 'temple art'), inspired by Wagner's ideas which were invoked in the *Beethoven* Secession exhibition catalogue.¹⁴ In this account, letters to Roller from Max Klinger, the progenitor of the central work of art for the *Beethoven* exhibition, and from Josef Hoffmann, the designer of the interior spaces, shortly before its opening, provide evidence of the significant role Roller played in the staging of the *Beethoven* as well as the Segantini exhibition.¹⁵

In the shadow of the *Beethoven* exhibition, Roller's 1901 exhibition has received little critical engagement. Yet Alfred Roller's memorial to the artist Giovanni Segantini set a precedent for Secession exhibition display. Bouillon has described it as 'lighter and highly theatrical', while Vergo and others have acknowledged it as a breakthrough in exhibition design, and Roller responsible for 'ruthlessly eliminating conventional distractions, achieving for the first time a clarity of spatial organisation which was to distinguish all later shows'.¹⁶ In her 1991 survey of Secession exhibitions, Sabine Forsthuber provides a detailed account of Roller's internal construction, and the placement of the exhibits.¹⁷ This account argues that the structures and aesthetics created by Roller for the Segantini exhibition exemplified notions of *Stimmung*, the term used by Wagner to denote a sustained atmosphere through the creation of a unified or through-composed work of art. It was described by Ludwig Hevesi in one of his three 1901 reviews of the exhibition, as 'a Segantini Temple', prefiguring the more significant Secession fourteenth *Beethoven* exhibition.¹⁸ The common concerns of both exhibitions will be explored as themes through this chapter.

¹² Cited in Topp, *Architecture and Truth*, 56.

¹³ Bouillon, *Klimt: Beethoven*; Vergo, *Art in Vienna*; Bisanz-Prakken, *Heiliger Frühling*. The *Beethoven* exhibition was a central focus of 'Gustav Klimt: Painting, Design and Modern Life', Tate Liverpool, 2008.

¹⁴ VBKÖ, *Max Klinger: Beethoven XIV Kunstausstellung*, (Wien: Gustav Roeder, 1902), 20

¹⁵ Unpublished letters, ÖTM, also Baker: Pausch, *Das Archiv*, nos 409, 87; 411, 88; 287, 64.

¹⁶ Vergo, *Art in Vienna*, 156; Bouillon, *Klimt: Beethoven*, 11.

¹⁷ Sabine Forsthuber, *Moderne Raumkunst: Wiener Ausstellungen von 1898 bis 1914* (Wien: Picus, 1991), 56-58.

¹⁸ Hevesi, 'Aus der Sezession, Segantini', (17 January 1901), AJS, 300.

The previous chapter established the influence of Leipzig artist, Max Klinger on the art world of the Secession from 1899 and the Fifth Secession exhibition devoted to drawing. Similarly, in this account of the art of exhibition display, it is argued that Klinger's importance extends beyond his contribution of the central, monumental sculpture of the figure of *Beethoven* for the 1902 Exhibition. The notion of *Raumkunst*, translated variously as 'an art of space' or 'spatial art', described by Max Klinger in *Painting and Drawing*, (1891), and the manner and form of his aesthetic output, were also influential on the Secession and the design of their exhibitions. Like the 1899 Secession Exhibition catalogue, the catalogue for the 1902 *Beethoven* exhibition drew directly on Klinger's text, invoking not the spirit of drawing and its related art forms, but Klinger's vision of *Raumkunst* as a Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk* of the plastic and fine arts, a denoted space at the service of 'a concerted interplay of the visual arts'.¹⁹

Klinger's *Raumkunst* was not Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, but Klinger invoked Wagner's ideas in order to establish the paradigm for his own. This chapter considers these competing and complementary ideas. The phrase 'a Wagnerian tendency' in this chapter is to denote that artists such as Klinger and Ernst Stöhr have drawn on ideas which emanated from Wagner, or which are similar to those of Wagner's, but which have been transposed to another aesthetic field, and to another time. In this process they may lose some essential meaning from Wagner's original ideas in order to gain others. Nonetheless, they are determined by the principles of an ideal: the greater expressiveness derived from the transformation of one art into a greater, expanded art form through its union with others, and with the notion of 'space' as a material of art in its own right. Indeed, it is possible that Klinger's term evolved to distinguish notions of the visual arts *Gesamtkunstwerk* from Wagner's musical *Gesamtkunstwerk*, implicitly acknowledging painting as *Raumkunst*, the spatial art, and music as '*Zeitkunst*,' (the temporal art).²⁰

In his analysis of the 1902 *Beethoven* exhibition, Bouillon draws attention to the foreword in the *Beethoven* Exhibition catalogue which was written by Ernst Stöhr.²¹ Stöhr defined the intention of the *Beethoven Exhibition* in terms of a version of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* which privileged the notions of space:

A unified ensemble in which paintings and sculptures would be at the service of the space (Bouillon's translation of *Raumidee*), to submit the parts to the idea of

¹⁹ Klinger, *Painting and Drawing*, 16, 33.

²⁰ After Lessing's definition of poetry as the temporal art and painting, the spatial art, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laokoön: Oder, über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie* (1766); Lessing, *Laokoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* trans. E A McCormick, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1984), also see Adorno's use of *Raumkunst* and *Zeitkunst* to define art and music, 'On Some Relationships', 66-67.

²¹ Bouillon, *Klimt: Beethoven*, 12.

the whole by obeying the inexorable logic imposed by intensification of the spatial character (*Raumcharakter*), and *holding firm to a single guiding idea*.²²

This appears to draw on Wagner's ideas embodied in the '*The Art-work of the Future*'.²³ So, for example, Stöhr's 'unified ensemble', is derived from Wagner's ideas of 'the great United Art-work, which must gather up each branch of the art to use it as a mean'.²⁴ Stöhr uses the phrase 'a single guiding idea'. Wagner, amongst the lengthy discursive descriptions of the unity of the arts, stated 'only that art variety which *wills the common art-work*, reaches therewith the highest fill (fulfilment) of its own particular nature'.²⁵ Stöhr's version of Wagner's ideas was not a replica of Wagner's. Stöhr's 'unified ensemble' does not stress the importance Wagner placed on the individual art and its own 'native truth and beauty', coming together in strength to form a greater entity.²⁶ Through the Secession lens, Wagner's meaning was modulated, at one remove from the world of the lyric arts, and indeed several removes from the world of exhibition design. This was clearly not one of Wagner's aesthetic concerns. He renounced 'all appear(ances) of the Art-work...in the public show...and consequently he himself quits publicity in so far as it is ruled by fashion'.²⁷

There is another important secondary difference here. In Stöhr's version of the exhibition as *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the overriding principles were governed by another entity, that of 'space' embodied in the terms '*Raumidee*' and '*Raumcharakter*', and the objects of the plastic arts, 'painting and sculpture...at the service of space'.²⁸ As this chapter describes, for the Secession version of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, transposed to exhibition spaces for art, Stöhr was influenced by other prevailing ideas.

Finally, Wagner did convey his view of what *The Artwork of the Future*, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* was not. It was not, as Shaw-Miller describes, simply the co-existence of different art forms in the same *locus*.²⁹ Wagner wrote:

He who can only conceive the combination of all the arts into the Artwork as though one meant, for example, that in a picture-gallery and amidst a row of statues, a romance of Goethe's should be read aloud while a symphony of

²² Bouillon, *Klimt:Beethoven*, 12, my italics.

²³ RWPW, VI, *The Art-work of the Future*, see also Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds*, 36-42.

²⁴ RWPW, VI, 88.

²⁵ RWPW, VI, 49.

²⁶ RWPW, VI, 87. Stöhr's term is more likely have emerged from theories in the applied arts advocated by designer Henry van de Velde whose room designs were featured in Secession exhibitions.

²⁷ RWPW, VI, who uses the phrase 'all *appearing* (appearances) of the Art-work upon the surface of this present (somewhat cryptic), ie in the public show', 88.

²⁸ Stöhr, cited Bouillon, *Ibid*, 12.

²⁹ Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds of Music*, 49.

Beethoven's was being played, such a man does rightly enough to insist upon the severance of the arts.³⁰

This description, presciently written some fifty years before the event of the Secession *Beethoven Exhibition* in 1902, the Secession '*Gesamtkunstwerk*', could either be taken to mean that the possible model for the Secession's exhibition was indeed Wagner's, and its fulfilment in Wagner's ideas of a *Gesamtkunstwerk* or that it was a contestation of the essence and idea of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and its repudiation. The *Beethoven Exhibition* is the central study of this chapter. In the meantime, these questions are left open.

Part 1: Alfred Roller, Secession exhibition designer

In the preceding chapter, the particular strengths Roller brought to his role as editor and contributor of *Ver Sacrum* were characterised through the attributes bestowed on him by Ludwig Hevesi as 'realist and stylist at the same time'.³¹ Moving from the realm of *Flächenkunst* to the *Secession Haus*, Roller brought similar characteristics to his involvement as designer of exhibition spaces. He was one of the eight members of the Secession building committee, with Gustav Klimt, Carl Moll, and Koloman Moser, whose purpose was to turn plans and applications into a reality, from 1896 onwards.³² Indicative of his involvement in the design of the building is the evidence from his working notebooks that he, like Klimt, could not resist sketching a drawing for the front of the building.³³

Working contemporaneously as one of three organising editors on the committee formed to launch *Ver Sacrum*, Roller was clearly also deeply involved in the Exhibition programme. He wrote the foreword to the catalogue of the First Secession Exhibition, which took place in March 1898 at the *Gartenbau*, stating their aims and aspirations.³⁴ In the same year, in 1898, Roller worked with several of the Secession designers, and others, notably the architect Otto Wagner, to design the *Jubiläumsausstellung*, the Emperor's Jubilee exhibition in the *Prater*. In 1897, Roller was commissioned by the Minister of Culture to design a mosaic on the subject of the *Sermon on the Mount*, for the rebuilding of the *Breitenfelder Kirche* in Vienna, which is still extant.³⁵ [2.3] The central design, a half-lunette, formed part of the wall decoration above the internal entrance door of the central room (*Mittelsaal*) of the Fourth Secession Exhibition, from March to May

³⁰ RWPW, VII, 121, also (* ff.) where Wagner defines this as not '“the united artwork”', Wagner's emphasis, cited Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds of Music*, 49.

³¹ Hevesi, ANW, 264.

³² Forsthuber, *Moderne Raumkunst*, 21.

³³ Pausch, *Gründung*, 20, 81. See [1.31]

³⁴ *Katalog der I Kunstausstellung* (Wien: Otto Maass, 1898), 3-5.

³⁵ *Katalog der III Ausstellung der VBKÖ*, (Wien, 1899), 17.

1899, designed overall by Joseph Maria Olbrich.³⁶ A brief description may serve to illustrate the importance assigned to surface and to depth through the positioning of specific artworks such as Roller's in the spaces of the *Secession Haus*.

Roller's mosaic scheme, in its half-lunette form was inserted into the existing semi-circular architectonic reveal framing the doorway into the middle room (*Mittelsaal*) from the entrance hall. [2.4] Unlike its unremarkable placement above the entrance of the heavy, neo-Renaissance brick-built *Breitenfelder* church, in the setting of the *Secession Haus*, Roller's design appears as something other. The scheme owed its formal concerns to Byzantine art: the hieratic profiles of the figures processing horizontally across the work, the lack of perspective or delineation between foreground and background. Integrated in the curved architectonic spaces of the *Secession Haus*, the religious subject of the mosaic is secondary to its colour and form as part of a complete design, an intriguing series of semi-circular surfaces and shallow space.

In its new location, it appeared like an artwork created for the contemporary world of the Secession, emphasised by the formalised, repetitive whiplash motif, the decorative wall pattern surrounding the design, which acts as the recessed border, and the upward, vitalist curve of the plaster wall relief framing the mosaic. The classical and religious elements of the mosaic, the sweeping upward curve of a semi-circle of *putti*, either side of the Christ figure and the flattened and repeating angels, are drawn into dialectic play with architectonic elements surrounding them, turning a religious subject into a decorative panel. Roller's design seemed to reflect the stress placed by Richard Wagner on the importance of simplification and compression in art. 'Just as the human form is the most comprehensible, so will the essence of natural form become comprehensible only through condensation to human form of *the essence of natural phenomena* (in myth)', and their reduction to 'the most succinct of shapes...plain, succinct and plastic-shaping'.³⁷ In the spaces of the *Secession Haus*, rather than above the entrance to the church, Roller's part-design became an integrated whole.

Teaching practices:

Roller's first complete composition in exhibition design was the Ninth Secession Winter exhibition which took place from 13th January until 28th February 1901. By then, Alfred Roller, who had been teaching drawing at the *Kunstgewerbeschule* was about to be appointed Professor of figurative drawing, a position he took up on March 1st 1901.³⁸ Although a subject of some debate, it was Roller, rather than the younger art teacher,

³⁶ Photograph reproduced VBKÖ, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 4, year 2, (February 1899), 15, also Forsthuber, *Die Moderne Raumkunst*, 39.

³⁷ WOMAD, 88-89.

³⁸ AR started teaching at *Kunstgewerbeschule*, 1899, appointed Professor on 1 March 1901.

Oskar Kokoschka, who introduced the idea that life classes should mean just that. Roller devised the method of live-action drawing in 1901. It was intended, according to a 1905 article in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* cited by Jane Kallir, 'to transform motion by capturing the moving model with rhythmic strokes – to create an impression with simple means, not tiresome rendering of details, but the essentials of appearance'.³⁹ The models moved in the spaces of the studio: the students sketched as they moved. Roller insisted that life drawing should form a mandatory part of the applied arts curriculum. His insistence on this innovative method ensured that the students should render impressions of bodies in movement, through space, capturing the essence of form, rather than form in all its exactitude, a practice he continued as Director, and head of costume design at the *Kunstgewerbeschule* in 1909.⁴⁰ L v d l w g v c

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² B u l o n *K l m t : B e e t h o v* 2
 R o b r t W a s s e n b e g e *V i e n n S c e s s i n* (L o n d o n : A d m y , 1997 , 61
⁴ B i a n z - P r k k e ' S c h ü s l p r o n p r k t c h e n w i g e d k i c h e n F r g e u n d z w f l l o
 a u c h f ü r d i e u m ü b g f n d e n t h t r h n (E f f k t a n w c h *F r ü h l i g* 26

On page seventy-three of the Secession catalogue, Roller's name is invoked as the Organising President under whose control the Exhibition artists contributed various works of art.⁴⁵ On page seventy-nine he is attributed with the design of the poster, derived from his mural design, *Der Sinkende Nacht*, (Sinking Night), for the central room, and for the ninety-page catalogue.⁴⁶ The catalogue, an exceptional work of graphic art, exemplified some of the defining characteristics of Secession *Flächenkunst*, and the important principles of their art world, no less in the use of a small, square format to define and frame the engravings which were enclosed within its pages, and which gave their appearance, each framed in an identical space, such impact. Quietly announcing the details of the exhibition on its plain cover, the inside pages unexpectedly revealed a different mood. It was through-composed using a single saturated colour in intense saffron with black, its square format lending impact and coherence throughout. Each of the artists responsible for 'wall art and plastic decoration' was given equal billing. A stylised, abstracted squareform seal or insignia representing their initials, together with a brief description, the lettering beautifully proportioned, played its role as an integral element of the overall aesthetic effect. This set-piece had few, if any, precedents in Vienna's graphic arts at this time.

Roller's accreditations and attributions serve further to emphasise the designer's aesthetic fluidity, from two-dimensional design, the two dimensions of catalogue and poster art to the three-dimensional spaces and surfaces of the interior of the *Secession Haus*. Indeed, this transition appears to have been a conscious concern of the Secession. As Hermann Bahr described, in his review of the opening of the *Secession Haus* in November 1898: 'it has been anticipated that more and more, as the artists express it, "*Flächenkunst*" will be superseded by "*Raumkunst*".'⁴⁷ Bahr's description suggested that the artists of the Secession were using these terms freely. By 1900, Hevesi's lavish tribute to the architectural achievements of Josef Maria Olbrich resulted in the epithet of '*Raumpoet*' ('Poet of Space'), and the art of building ('*Baukunst*'), elevated to the notion of '*Raumkunst*'.⁴⁸ Roller's various concerns, both aesthetic and organisational described here draw attention to the less-celebrated spaces of the 1901 exhibition, and indeed the less-celebrated spaces of the 1902 *Beethoven* exhibition for which he was responsible: the supporting two-dimensional artworks and murals as well as the central monument, their framing and surface effects.

⁴⁵ VBKÖ, 'Verzeichnis der Aussteller: Die XIV Ausstellung der Verienigung wurde im Sinne des 17 unserer Geschäftsordnung veranstaltet von einer Mitgliedergruppe, zu der sich unter Vorsitz von Alfred Roller folgende Künstler vereinigten', *Klinger:Beethoven*, 73.

⁴⁶ AR is also attributed with 'Einladung', invitations to the event. AR was indeed a very busy man.

⁴⁷ Bahr, 'Meister Olbrich', *Secession*, 61.

⁴⁸ Hevesi, 'Als Architekt ist Olbrich vor allem Raumpoet', 'Einleitung zu Olbrichs "Ideen"', *AJS*, 209.

One further space for art occupied Roller contiguously with his concerns for *Ver Sacrum* and the design of exhibitions in the *Secession Haus*. By 1902, the year of the *Beethoven* Exhibition, Roller was on the verge of taking up his official position as Mahler's set designer at the Vienna Court Opera.⁴⁹ He was working directly with Mahler on new designs for Wagner's music drama, *Tristan und Isolde*, while the *Beethoven* exhibition was in progress. In June 1902, the third month of the exhibition, Mahler was corresponding with Roller in enthusiastic tones not only about his sketches, but also his three-dimensional stage models (*Bühnenmodelle*) for the forthcoming production of *Tristan und Isolde*.⁵⁰

These parallel events show that Roller's aptitude for conceptualising art forms for stage spaces, free and 'empty', constrained only by the framing device of proscenium arch, did not flower simply in the moment Mahler invited him to design for the stage. Rather, he had already developed his practice in the unconstrained spaces of the *Secession Haus*. Similarly, the elision of Roller's roles, as exhibition and stage designer notably for the works of Wagner in partnership with Gustav Mahler and as the Chairman of the Committee which oversaw the execution of the *Beethoven* Exhibition, draws attention to the parallels and connections which may be made between Wagnerian ideas of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the world of the theatre at the turn of the century, and the *Secession's* exhibition programme at this time.

The spaces of the stage, as well as the *Secession Haus* held their fascination not just for Roller, but also for other *Secession* artists. His colleague and friend, the designer Koloman Moser (1868-1918), had produced a painted set-design intended, it is thought, for a performance of Isadora Duncan in 1901, while he too was still deeply involved with the design of *Secession* exhibitions. His design visualised the performer as an essential element of the setting.⁵¹ Following the building of the *Secession Haus*, and his involvement in the interior design of the first and third *Secession* Exhibitions, the architect Josef Maria Olbrich left Vienna in 1901 and went on to design what have been termed the theatrical spaces of Peter Behrens' artistic settlement in Darmstadt, Germany.⁵²

Against this background, Vienna as a city was given to the dramatisation of the events of public life through exhibitions and parades, famously designed and orchestrated by the celebrated Austrian history painter Hans Makart (1880-1884), 'the cynosure of a

⁴⁹ Officially appointed in June 1903.

⁵⁰ Baker: Pausch, GM to AR, (AM 47.465 RO, AM 47.466 RO), *Archiv*, 100.

⁵¹ Reproduced Tretter (ed), *Koloman Moser*, 371. See also sketches for *Er und Sie* by Georges Courteline, c. 1901, 379; abstracted set designs for *Der Bergsee*, Julius Bittner, c. 1910, 382-383. Anecdotal evidence suggests Moser was called in by the Vienna *Hofoper* at the same time as AR.

⁵² Stanford Anderson. 'Peter Behrens Highest Kultur Symbol, the Theater' in *Perspecta, Theater, Theatricality and Architecture*, Yale School of Architecture, V26, 1990, 103-134.

metropolis', in the years preceding the Secession.⁵³ No less significant in the public's imagination were events at Vienna's theatres and its opera house. As Stefan Zweig described, 'everyone met in the theatre and at the great festivities such as the Flower parade in the *Prater*...In the Vienna Opera nothing was overlooked...every flat note remarked on'.⁵⁴ Within weeks of Mahler's appointment at the Court Opera in 1897, his interpretation of performances of Beethoven's symphonies, as well as his reforms of performance practice in Wagner's music dramas, had been placed at the centre of Vienna's celebrated musical life and its cultural controversies.⁵⁵

The first exhibition in the new *Secession Haus* in November 1898, its interior spaces designed by Koloman Moser, Josef Hoffmann and Adolf Böhm, featured works of Gustav Klimt, including his *Pallas Athene*. It was an immediate success, with over 56,000 visitors. It was 'so full (on the private opening day) you could scarcely see the pictures', and attracted a 'gratifying three thousand...the police had to cordon off the building', as the nineteen-year-old Alma Schindler confided to her diary on November 16th 1898.⁵⁶

Part 2: The enduring legacy of the *Beethoven* exhibition (1902)

May this exhibition be an act of homage to MAX KLINGER who both *through his creative activity, and through his writings*, has illuminated our whole view of Art.⁵⁷

Max Klinger's contribution to the fourteenth Secession exhibition, commonly known as the *Beethoven* exhibition, is extensively covered in accounts of the aesthetic concerns of the Vienna Secession. This was the Secession's most celebrated exhibition at the time of its inception, and has remained so subsequently. It has become an essential focus in Secession historiography notably, but not exclusively, through the work of Bisanz-Prakken, Bouillon and Vergo.⁵⁸ Bisanz-Prakken and Bouillon draw attention to Wagner's interpretation of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in their readings of Klimt's frieze explicated in the Secession catalogue as a series of mythic ideas inspired directly by Beethoven. Bisanz-Prakken describes the exhibition as 'the idea of a *Gesamtkunstwerk*...a Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk* which even compelled the participation of the visitor', suggesting an element of control over the audience experience. Her account briefly refers

⁵³ William M Johnston, *The Austrian Mind: An Intellectual and Social History 1848-1938* (London: University of California, 1983), 142.

⁵⁴ Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday* (London: University of Nebraska, 1964), 18-19.

⁵⁵ HLG, *Mahler V 2*, 64-96.

⁵⁶ Mahler-Werfel, *Diaries*, 68.

⁵⁷ Ernest Stöhr, 'Und so mag diese Ausstellung eine Huldigung für MAX KLINGER sein, der durch seine schöpferische Tätigkeit wie auch durch das Wort Klarheit in unsere Kunstanschauungen gebracht hat'. *Max Klinger: Beethoven XIV Kunstausstellung*, 12.

⁵⁸ Bisanz-Prakken, 'The Beethoven Exhibition of the Secession, and the Younger Viennese Tradition of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*', in Erika Nielsen (ed). *Focus on Vienna 1900: Change and Continuity in Literature, Music, art and Intellectual History*, Houston German Studies 4 (München: Wilhelm Fink, 1982); Bouillon, *Klimt: Beethoven*; Vergo, *Art in Vienna*.

to 'Klinger's emphasis on the spiritual significance of space... the total effect in a new *Raumkunst*'.⁵⁹ Bouillon alone emphasises Wagner's crucial importance in Vienna as 'a rallying point for modernists', and brings together the figures of Wagner, Beethoven, Klinger, Mahler, Klimt and Roller into the same discursive space.⁶⁰ His focus is the analysis of Klimt's frieze, which Bouillon invests with the sounds and silences of musical form. Neither account explores Klinger's ideas further.

This brief preliminary account is intended to situate the importance of Max Klinger to Secession exhibition aesthetics, and to evoke the challenges of analysing an event which exists mainly through the atmosphere of its prevailing reputation. The *Beethoven Exhibition*, Max Klinger's *Beethoven* monument, an extraordinary white marble figure enthroned in sculptured bronze (and termed *Denkmal*, for monument, rather than sculpture), Gustav Klimt's celebrated *Beethoven Frieze* together with the accompanying and subsequent evocative and detailed commentary, continue to act powerfully on the imagination, and to challenge exegesis.⁶¹

The descriptions and analysis of the exhibition have explored its inner mysteries, and the stated intention of the Secession to renew the spiritual in art through the creation of an experience defined as *Tempelkunst*, literally temple art, a term used in the *Beethoven* catalogue to describe the aspirations of Hoffman's interior design.⁶² Commentators have remarked on the particular individual features of Josef Hoffmann's *sopraporta* and the first appearance of abstraction in Viennese design.⁶³ The event was staged in an all-white environment, probably the first time artworks were exhibited in this way in Europe, with colour- tones throughout kept to a minimum, as Hevesi described.⁶⁴

Such accounts celebrate the unique theme of the exhibition, a devotion to the composer Beethoven, but perhaps even more importantly, the fact that the exhibition had such a theme, a unique exploration of one idea. Habituated as we are now to the themed exhibition, such an event was extraordinary at the time. Most importantly, the accounts of the exhibition have situated it as a profoundly important exemplar of the Wagnerian

⁵⁹ Bisanz-Prakken, 'The Beethoven Exhibition', 146, 148.

⁶⁰ Bouillon, *Klimt:Beethoven*, 28.

⁶¹ See Lisa Forman, 'Gustav Klimt and the Precedent of Ancient Greece' in *The Art Bulletin*, V72, No 2, 1990, 310-326; Claire A P Willson, 'Klimt's Beethoven Frieze: Goethe, *Tempelkunst* and the Fulfilment of wishes', in *Art History*, V 19 no 1, March 1996, 44-73.

⁶² Ernst Stöhr, 'Alle diese Forderungen waren bei Aufgaben der Monumentalkunst gestellt und das Höchste und Beste, was die Menschen zu allen Zeiten bieten konnten, entwickelte sich daran; die Tempelkunst.' *Klinger:Beethoven*, 10. This term is defined in the final section of this chapter.

⁶³ See Bisanz-Prakken, *Frühling*, 17-18, et al.

⁶⁴ Hevesi, 'Sezession', AJS, 390. Klonk states that the Centenary Exhibition of German Art, 1906, was the first time pictures were shown in a museum in an all-white environment, (which suggests the even earlier 14th Secession exhibition was the first), 'Patterns of Attention', 482. Contemporary reports describe the walls as white or yellowish. Analysis of the photographs reveals the walls as beige, the carpet greyish, Hans Hollein, Catherine Cook (eds), *Vienna Dream and Reality* Architectural Design Profile 61, *Architectural Design* V 55, no 11/12, 1986, 6.

Gesamtkunstwerk in Secession art. These accounts rely on Gustav Mahler's musical intervention at the private opening of the exhibition, and his performance of Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy' arranged for wind band to complete the fulfilment of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* legacy of its period, place and time, transmuted to another space, outside of the world of music drama.⁶⁵ Certainly, its devotion to aesthetic and spiritual content to elevate the experience of the exhibition beyond the quotidian underlined this as an exceptional event.

The continuing fascination with the *Beethoven* Exhibition is also due to the elusive nature of any analysis of art objects and an event which, like a stage performance, no longer exists and whose experience will always remain elusive and illusory. As an ephemeral event this exhibition, like Baudelaire's modernity, was fleeting and contingent yet has left an enduring legacy. This auratic effect might be defined as 'after-hearing' (*Nachhören*), meaning a resonance or reverberation which sounds down through the years. As Frisch describes, citing Adorno's use of the term, it denotes an aura apparent to 'those who surrender to the echo of music rather than music itself'.⁶⁶ The challenge of exegesis lies within the record of the few photographs taken at the time; the re-creation of the event from carefully constructed archival analysis; extensive interpretations of the Klimt frieze which was restored and returned to the *Secession Haus* in 1986.

This analysis of Roller's 1901 exhibition and the *Beethoven* exhibition relies similarly on the often reproduced photographic evidence which first appeared in *Ver Sacrum* and in the case of the Beethoven exhibition, an extensive review by Joseph August Lux in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, in 1902.⁶⁷ These photographs show the empty rooms, without visitors.[2.6] In the account which follows, contemporary commentary is used to provide an evocation of the visitor experience.⁶⁸ The aim of this thesis is not to challenge the extensive analysis of the Beethoven exhibition but rather to follow the contiguous aesthetic concerns of Alfred Roller, which may also be further illuminated by the ideas of Max Klinger. The account which follows re-evaluates the contribution of the Leipzig-born artist, not just as the single most important contributor to the *Beethoven* exhibition, but as a greater influence overall on the Secession in their endeavour to use the medium of the exhibition for new aesthetic freedoms, design and form.

As the quotation from the encomium in the *Klinger:Beethoven* Secession catalogue indicates, the exhibition was at least as important a tribute to Max Klinger's art and ideas, as it was to the supra-inspiration of the idea of the composer Beethoven (whose mythic

⁶⁵ Amongst many, see HLG, *Mahler* V2, 508-515.

⁶⁶ See Frisch, after Adorno, who describes this affect in the music of Parsifal and 'those who surrender to the echo of music rather than the music itself', *German Modernism*, 34.

⁶⁷ Joseph August Lux, 'XIV Kunst-Ausstellung der VBKÖ: Klinger's Beethoven und die Moderne Raum-Kunst', in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, X, I (1902), 475-482.

⁶⁸ Alma Mahler-Werfel, *Diaires*, 366, also Hevesi, 'Sezession', *AJS*, 385-394.

presence, perhaps even more than his music had penetrated Viennese cultural life). The exhibition was equally an homage to Beethoven and 'an act of homage to MAX KLINGER who both *through his creative activity, and through his writings*, has illuminated our whole view of art'.⁶⁹ This tribute to Klinger may well have been simply a courtesy to an already celebrated artist, who allowed his Beethoven monument its first showing in Vienna. Yet this reference to the *Klinger:Beethoven Exhibition* is used here advisedly. The double-billing of artist and subject is significant.

Although the exhibition is commonly referred to in secondary accounts as 'The Beethoven Exhibition', ('*Die Beethovenausstellung*'), it was titled 'Max Klinger Beethoven exhibition' (*Max Klinger Beethoven XIV Ausstellung der Vereinigung Bildender Künstler Österreichs Secession*), on the cover of the exhibition catalogue, and as *Klinger Beethoven exhibition*, on the poster, both of which were designed by Alfred Roller. The homage to Klinger's ideas and his writings is further reflected in the catalogue itself. Six of the pages, as well as the foreword are devoted to an explication of *Raumkunst* from *Painting and Drawing* (1891).⁷⁰ For emphasis, the text was highlighted and illuminated in the catalogue with decorated letters and a geometric or chequerboard squareform background at the head of each paragraph.⁷¹ [2.7]

Klinger's theory of *Raumkunst* may already have been a present interest of the Secession before the 1902 exhibition, influencing their strategies of display inside the *Secession Haus*. The third Secession exhibition which took place from January 12th, 1899 for six weeks featured Klinger's painting, *Christ on Olympus* (1897), which is over nine metres long, as the central exhibit. The cover of the Secession exhibition catalogue, in striking emerald green and white, pictured Olbrich's drawing of a seemingly weightless *Secession Haus* above the main billing, 'Max Klinger, *Christus im Olympus*'. The plan of the exhibition at the beginning of the catalogue shows the placement of Klinger's painting on the rear wall in a semi-enclosed space denoted as the 'Klinger Room'.⁷² An extract from an account of the painting by the German art historian Paul Kühn (1866-1912), writer of one of the earliest interpretative monographs on Klinger (1907) described the work as 'a new German monumental and spatial art (*Raumkunst*)'.⁷³ An introduction to Klinger's painting by Kühn appeared on pages thirteen to fifteen of this earlier catalogue. The concept of *Raumkunst* is referred to, unmediated in the *Klinger:Beethoven*

⁶⁹ Stöhr, *Klinger:Beethoven*, 12.

⁷⁰ 'Aus Klingers Schrift *Malerei und Zeichnung*', *Max Klinger:Beethoven*, 15-20.

⁷¹ The conventional term 'exhibition catalogue' does not apply to the Secession. For comparison see *Offizieller Katalog der Internationalen Kunstausstellung des Vereins bildender Künstler München* (München:Bruckmann, 1902), which only lists exhibits with reproductions in black and white.

⁷² *Secession III Kunstausstellung Max Klinger: Christus im Olymp*, November-December, (Wien, 1899), 2.

⁷³ Paul Kühn, *Max Klinger*, (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1907), 358, my translation.

catalogue. It appeared to emanate directly from Klinger's essay, rather than any other source.⁷⁴

Part 3: Max Klinger, *Raumkunst* and the unity of space

This concerted interplay of all the visual arts corresponds to what Wagner was striving for and attained in his music dramas. However, we have not achieved this yet.⁷⁵

The use of the term *Raumkunst* features several times in the treatise. Yet like Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, whose ideas Klinger is inextricably associated with in all accounts of his art and life, it has not been extensively explored in accounts of Secession aesthetics.⁷⁶ Bouillon translates Klinger's *Raumkunst* as 'the totality of space', a seeming conflation of the term *Raumkunst*, an 'art of space' with Wagner's 'total work of art'.⁷⁷ Forsthuber's discourse on Secession Exhibitions from 1898-1914 is titled *Moderne Raumkunst*.⁷⁸ Forsthuber makes no connection with Max Klinger's theories, but rather relates *Moderne Raumkunst* to the emergence of the art of the modern exhibition, and the usage of the term *Raumkunst*, which 'became uniquely synonymous with the organisation of "1900" Secession exhibitions'.⁷⁹

Indeed, the extensive review of the 1902 exhibition by Joseph August Lux, published in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, was titled 'Klinger's Beethoven und Die Moderne Raumkunst', associating the term inextricably with the modern in exhibition design and the characteristics of this particular exhibition: 'notably those who aim for a sacred atmosphere, exemplified by *Tempelkunst*'.⁸⁰ Thus Klinger's *Raumkunst*, which drew its inspiration from Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, was very swiftly, in its turn, modulated in intent and meaning, and placed at one further stage removed from Klinger's own ideas.

In Pendleton Streicher's account which concentrates on Klinger's explication of the status of drawing, Klinger's *Raumkunst* is defined as 'the unity of architecture, painting and

⁷⁴ See also Mallgrave and Eleftherios Ikononou (eds), *Empathy Form and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873-1893* (Santa Monica, Ca: Getty Centre, 1994) for the theories of August Schmarsow (1853-1936) who gained the art-history chair at Leipzig in 1893, defining concepts of space in relation to the human subject using a repertoire of terms centred on *Raum*, 387. Klinger's notion of *Raumkunst* and the Secession enthusiasm for the concept appears to be part of an unfolding story, not an isolated event.

⁷⁵ MKPD, 16 also *Klinger: Beethoven Catalogue*, 'Die Malerei ist durchaus in drei Kategorien zu teilen, also Bild-, als Dekorations- und als Raumkunst wecheselt sie ihre Ästhetik', 18.

⁷⁶ See Franz Servaes, *Max Klinger mit Vielen Vollbildern* (Berlin: Brandussche, 1907); Dieter Gleisberg (ed). *Max Klinger 1857-1920*, (Leipzig: Heydt-Museum Wuppertal, 1992).

⁷⁷ Bouillon, 12.

⁷⁸ Forsthuber, *Moderne Raumkunst*.

⁷⁹ Forsthuber, *Moderne Raumkunst*, 7.

⁸⁰ Joseph August Lux, 'Namentlich bei jenen, welche Weihe-Stimmung bezwecken, wie bei der Tempel-kunst', in 'Klinger's Beethoven und die Moderne Raum-Kunst', *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, X, I, 475-482.

sculpture'; Klinger's use of the term *Raummalerei* as 'the artistic unity of space', and his text as a manifesto for polychrome sculpture and the *Gesamtkunstwerk*.⁸¹ *Raumkunst* itself is distinguished from '*Bildkunst*', easel picture, and '*Dekorationkunst*', mural painting, as 'the unity of architecture, painting and sculpture'.⁸² The meaning of *Raumkunst*, and its translation into English has resisted explication. Like Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, it rests on interpretation and reinterpretation. Klinger's *Raumkunst* addressed the visual, not the dramatic arts, as did Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, yet it exhibits a Wagnerian tendency to synthesis as an aesthetic aspiration. The literal translations of the term *Raumkunst* do not seem to do justice to Max Klinger's hypothesis, or as importantly what it may have signified to the Secession.

Klinger's ideas are suggestive of his own overlapping practices, in drawing, painting, and sculpture from 1878 until 1891, when he published his essay.⁸³ From 1898, he increasingly devoted his energies to sculpture, and particularly to realising his *Beethoven*, a work over which, unlike most sculptors of the day, he retained absolute control, (a determination he shared with Rodin).⁸⁴ Significantly, for an understanding of *Raumkunst*, this aesthetic continuum was 'interrupted' in 1883 by a private commission for a Berlin lawyer, an aesthetic programme for the vestibule of his Villa Albers. Klinger created a complete, integrated interior scheme, including large-scale wall paintings, marble busts, and painted effects (1883-87). At the time he engaged in a lively correspondence with the lawyer, the ideas for which acted as a prelude to his 1891 essay.⁸⁵ His profound commitment to Wagner's ideas and his music, as well as that of other composers (notably Brahms and his cycle of drawings, *Brahmsphantsie*) inspired both his writing and his work.⁸⁶ This underlying aesthetic surfaces from time to time in the essay, although there is no overt expression of the desire for the plastic arts and music to find their fulfilment in union. Instead he searched for a total effect of the visual arts. As Kühn wrote in 1907:

Klinger's life can be said to be a process of *visually* realising (monumental art), using noble materials: for it is one thing to dream up a festive *Raumkunst*, and another to actualise it by working the materials in ways which were individual to himself.⁸⁷

In Klinger's text, the term *Raumkunst* appeared subtly to change in meaning and form. It

⁸¹ Pendleton Streicher, 'Max Klinger's *Malerei und Zeichnung*', 233, 234.

⁸² Pendleton Streicher, *Ibid*, 235.

⁸³ Barbara John, 'Max Klinger – An Introduction', Jonathan Watkins (ed) *Max Klinger* (Cat.) (Birmingham: Ikon Gallery, 2005), 14.

⁸⁴ John, *Max Klinger*, 16.

⁸⁵ John, quoting from a letter from Max Klinger to Julius Albers, 14 February 1885, Archives of the *Museum der bildenden Künste*, Leipzig ff 4, 'Max Klinger-An Introduction', 17.

⁸⁶ Dietluf Sander describes Klinger's regard for Wagner's music dramas, and his idea of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, 'Neben Beethoven war für Klinger ausserdem gerade Richard Wagner der Inbegriff des Künstlergenies', *Max Klinger 1857-1920* (Leipzig, 1992), 333.

⁸⁷ Kühn, *Max Klinger*, 359, my italics.

was malleable and unstable. It attached to, and expanded the meaning of easel painting which had its own particular magic, its purpose to enhance the mimetic realisation of 'any aspect of the physical world... and achieve calm through perfection of form, colour and atmosphere'.⁸⁸ Where 'coloured sculptures come into play', *Raumkunst* acquired further significance.⁸⁹ The idea of *Raumkunst* appeared to move, unfettered, through the spaces of Klinger's imagination and thoughts on art, the liberated spaces of the mind which he referred to in connection with the art of drawing. Rather as the design ideas of Secession artists moved easily from one medium to another, and one space to another, the two-dimensional pages of the *Ver Sacrum*, Secession exhibition catalogues and posters, and the staging of exhibitions in the three-dimensional spaces of the *Secession Haus*, so Klinger's term attached itself to paintings, sculpture and the metaphysical world of the imagination. In Klinger's text, painting, rather than drawing, led directly to the world of *Raumkunst*:

Painting can in fact be divided into three categories, and its aesthetics change depending on whether it is the medium for a *picture*, *ornamentation* or *Raumkunst*... Particularly in this last category, it has much in common with drawing.⁹⁰

In this passage three notions of space are described: firstly, an illusionary space within a picture; secondly, the physical surrounding of and the expansion of the picture through ornamentation, and thirdly, *Raumkunst*, the physical space in which the picture resides. In this last category, *Raumkunst*, the picture shared common characteristics with drawing. In other words, it was invested with the spirit of the imaginative world and a freer relationship with the representable world. *Raumkunst*, like drawing, endowed the imagination free rein, 'such that *it must create the space around it*'.⁹¹

If we consider the language of painting, it seems to us the most perfect expression of the joy of life...it loves beauty for its own sake and strives for beauty even in ugliness of the mundane or the depths of tragedy...It is the glorification, the triumph of the world.⁹²

Yet to fulfil this ideal, 'the perfect expression of the joy of life', painting needed another dimension. Painting was the authentic art of colour, and colour was essential to an art of space, specifically a space Klinger describes as *Raumausschmückung*, the decorative interior space: 'Light, colour and form are absolutely the only ground from which any

⁸⁸ MKPD, 13,14.

⁸⁹ MKPD, 16.

⁹⁰ MKPD, 13. See also '*Die Malerei ist durchaus in drei Kategorien zu teilen, als Bild-, als Dekorations- und als Raumkunst wechselt sie ihre Ästhetik*, Max Klinger, *Malerei und Zeichnung* (MKMZ), (Leipzig: Arthur Georgi), 15.

⁹¹ MKPD, 20, my italics.

⁹² MKPD, 19.

picture, any *decorative interior (Raumausschmückung)* should spring'.⁹³ Painting was the mimetic art par excellence. 'Everything visible is cloaked in the magic of individual lives... it endows pleasure without (the spectator) having to give'.⁹⁴ Ultimately, his three monumental paintings reached out to the spectator, 'without the spectator having to give', beyond the constraints of the conventions of easel painting and frame in scale and size, and through the addition of massive sculptured framing devices. Kühn provided contemporary evidence of the Wagnerian tendency which these works of Klinger evoked:

Klinger's paintings of figures ('The Judgement of Paris', and 'Christ on Olympus'), demand a space which harmonises with them. The strict architectonic structure of their composition, the connection to the architecture of the frame (*Rahmenarchitektur*), the pedestal which supports it, and the plastic figures turn them into an (integrated) part of a *Gesamtkunstwerkes*, of architecture, painting, and the plastic art.⁹⁵

Klinger returns to the notion of *Raumkunst* not in relation to the autonomous powers of painting, which 'embraced the whole of the visible world',⁹⁶ but rather the 'different artistic or, rather, aesthetic requirements concerning the integrity of the picture (which) change significantly in ornamentation and *Raumkunst*'.⁹⁷ Here Klinger placed greater stress on the unity of painting with its surroundings. 'In both cases (ornamentation and *Raumkunst*) it is not only the individual work of art that should affect us, but also *the artistic unity of the space*'.⁹⁸ Ornamentation referred to the plastic, architectonic frames he constructed for his monumental paintings, in which sculptures half-emerged from the solid surround, and other contrapuntal scenes, of hellish worlds in contrast to the light-filled canvases, were enacted. He qualified this statement with an interpretation of the notion of space, 'that is to say, the surroundings of the picture'.⁹⁹ It was the space surrounding the picture which Klinger appears to endow with an aesthetic life of its own, and a unifying effect. Indeed he appears to insist on the importance of the unity between forms of art in 'space', a dialectic between space and the art objects in space – his phrase is 'reciprocal relations', taking precedence over the autonomy of painting.

In both cases it is necessary that there should be an intellectual connection with the purpose and significance of the space, and since this cannot happen without *reciprocal relations*, the self-contained integrity of the representation is no longer at issue.¹⁰⁰

⁹³ MKPD, 27. See also MKMZ, '*Licht, Farbe und Form sind unbedingt der einzige Boden, von dem aus sich jedes Bild, jede Raumausschmückung entwickeln soll.*', 41. Clearly *Raumkunst* is not simply a 'decorative interior', for which he uses another term.

⁹⁴ MKPD, 14.

⁹⁵ Kühn, *Max Klinger*, 358, my translation. The plastic figures emerge, or erupt, Rodin-like, from the surface of the surrounding gold, richly-articulated, massive frames.

⁹⁶ MKPD, 13.

⁹⁷ MKMZ, 17. The 1899 edition does not use the word '*Raumkunst*' here as does the translation, but instead '*Raummalerei*'.

⁹⁸ MKPD, 14.

⁹⁹ MKPD, 14.

¹⁰⁰ MKPD, 14, implying a dialectical relationship between painting and space.

This somewhat cryptically-worded comment appeared to mean that his view of the autonomy of painting was no longer at issue. Exact form and colour were less important than atmosphere and expressiveness. His ideal lay in his expanded vision for painting and the plastic arts in *Raumkunst*, that painting would enjoin with other art forms *in reciprocal relations*, as they did in his exceptional canvases. Klinger's concerns with painting, and its relationship with *Raumkunst*, 'a reciprocal relationship', changed the role of painting from an autonomous art form, to something other, something closer to drawing which had the power to represent the spaces of the imagination and fantasy. Space was denoted both as a physical entity, in different and mutable states, and equally a metaphysical concern. He continued to expand on these themes, moving from the concerns of *Raumkunst* and its stress on the framed physical picture and its surrounding space, to a fourth dimension. This fourth dimension accessed the spiritual and intellectual concerns of art, the 'significantly greater *spiritual and intellectual* demands placed on painting in the case of *Raumkunst*'.¹⁰¹

In this third and perhaps most significant reference to *Raumkunst* in the context of Secession exhibition design, Klinger described what appeared to be the rules to meet the '*intellectual and spiritual*' demands of *Raumkunst*. Several ideas were woven together, difficult to extricate, and which in any case do not stand alone. Yet, they point to the ideas which infused the Secession design of the *Klinger: Beethoven* exhibition: the spaces *in* painting, the spaces around painting, the dynamic of sculpture and mural, and the requirement for a monumental space.

The first of these ideas relates to the demands of *Raumkunst* on painting, 'the unity of the space and the impact of its significance demand that the artist abandons the so-compelling natural laws of form and colour in favour of a purely poetic utilisation'.¹⁰² It is a plea not for mimesis, as before, but for its abandonment in favour of some other more abstract form of expression inherent in poetry. Klinger used the paradigm of the 'depictions of air and landscape in Signorelli's wonderful chapel in Orvieto, or the Giotto paintings'.¹⁰³ This suggests his concerns for certain spaces within a painting, defined by the painterly depictions of landscape and the materialisation of air. The passage from which this reference is drawn might have acted as a template for the *Klinger: Beethoven* exhibition:

One need but compare the depictions of *the air and landscape* in Signorelli's wonderful chapel in Orvieto, or *in the paintings* of Giotto...the austerity and deliberate unnaturalness, which at first almost repels us, turn out in closer examination to raise the figures in their frescoes *high above the sea of ordinary*

¹⁰¹ MKPD, 15.

¹⁰² MKPD, 15.

¹⁰³ MKPD, 15.

*mortals. We no longer see the contingency of the world... it is here in Raumkunst that coloured sculptures... should come into play. In every monumental space, we feel the need for plastic works in the purely architectural lower realms... these works, in the form of corroborative characters and matching groups form a bridge to the flights of fancy in the upper reaches of the room.*¹⁰⁴

Klinger sought unnaturalness, or dissonance, 'which at first almost repels us' in his own art. The spiritual and intellectual demands of *Raumkunst* required both art forms – painting and sculpture – anchoring the notion of space, solidified in plastic art, to the ground. In the spaces of the chapels, the figures in the frescoes have in their turn acquired a universal power, raised above *the sea of ordinary mortals*. Klinger's injunction prefigures the placement of Gustav Klimt's *Beethoven* frieze situated above the heads of the spectators in the spaces of the *Secession Haus*; the relationship between the placement of Klimt's frieze, the silent, questioning, empty spaces below and the Secession notion of *Tempelkunst*. As Klinger declared, 'the master builder knew how to create space and light for the painter and knew not to spoil the sculptor's spaces with too many embellishments... Sacred and secular buildings alike offered endless opportunities'.¹⁰⁵

Klinger's reference to Wagner's ideas proceeds immediately from his discussion of *Raumkunst*: the 'unity of space'; the depictions of 'air and the landscape' in Signorelli's chapel; the significance of sculptures 'in every monumental space'.¹⁰⁶ He states: 'This concerted interplay of all the visual arts corresponds to what Wagner was striving for and attained in his music drama'.¹⁰⁷ These words and Klinger's stress on the poet and the musician, representatives of the beauty and tragedy of existence recall Wagner's own from *The Artwork of the Future*:

The 'ideal expression of art', brought together 'the sounding forth of song, dancers and the rhythm of the dance, the scenic trappings of the stage' and 'the words of the poet inspired too by Dionysus...concentrated them all into one focus and brought forth the highest conceivable form of art, that of drama'.¹⁰⁸

Like Wagner, Klinger takes issue with Lessing's argument in favour of the separation of the arts embodied in his essay *Laocoön: On the Limits of Painting and Poetry*, 1766.¹⁰⁹ Like Wagner, Klinger's ideas are predicated on a Greek ideal, yet he places a different emphasis on his aesthetic concerns for classical art as a model. He argues against 'false

¹⁰⁴ MKPD, 15-16

¹⁰⁵ MKPD, 31.

¹⁰⁶ MKPD, 15, 16.

¹⁰⁷ MKPD, 16.

¹⁰⁸ WOMAD, 77,78.

¹⁰⁹ MKPD, 19 referring to Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laokoön* (1766), also *Laocöon: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* trans. E A McCormick (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1984).

Hellenism', reflecting the aesthetic debates of his contemporaries, and his own case for colour in sculpture:

Now it only needed the great revolution – false Hellenism and the colourless new art,¹¹⁰ imitating that of the ancients – for the one time *Gesamtkunst* to disintegrate entirely... We have the art of building and of sculpture, painting and reproductive arts, decorative and specialised arts. What we lack is the great, unified expression of our view of life. *We have arts, but no Art.*¹¹¹

This argument, a plea for the unity of the arts, towards the end of the essay, clearly summoned the spirit of Wagner, and indeed that of Nietzsche. Klinger's narrative used the metaphor of music and the importance of poetry, respectively the Dionysian and Apollonian drives described by Wagner, for his ideas both of the coming-together of arts, and of their distinct differences:

Every material has its own spirit and its own poetry which reinforce the character of the composition, and are themselves irreplaceable...like the character of a piece of music (which) resides in the intended key and is obscured if transposed into another.¹¹²

Wagner's description of *mythos*, as 'the stuff of drama, the essence, its correspondence with wide-reaching content, which will manifest itself in utmost concentration',¹¹³ was echoed in Klinger's statement 'the most powerful emotions can be compressed into the most confined spaces'.¹¹⁴ Finally, Klinger used terms which were associated with the performance of Wagner's music dramas, to convey the importance of through-composition and its effect, *Stimmung*:

The value of such a work of art – self contained, as it should be – resides in the *through-composition* of form, colour, atmosphere (*Stimmung*) and expression. Every subject treated in such a way that it meets these requirements *is a work of art*...the very unusual advantages of each one of the four conditions can compensate for deficiencies in the others; an idea (not direct representation), can never do this, unless it enjoys the full protection of those conditions.¹¹⁵

In summation, it is likely that the meaning of Klinger's ideas may always remain enigmatic. Yet there is no doubt that space, in Klinger's terms, had an intellectual life of its own, and that 'the transformation of a space into a work of art' was a 'most noble

¹¹⁰ Klinger's advocacy of colour in sculpture (polylithic sculpture) may have been driven by self-interest, but also relates to the debate propounded by Gottfried Semper, '*Vorläufige Bemerkungen über bemalte Architectur und Plastik bei den Alten*' (1834) ('Preliminary remarks on polychrome architecture and sculpture in antiquity'), published following Semper's visit to sights in *Paestum*, Sicily, and Greece, see Schafter, *The Order of Ornament*, 41.

¹¹¹ MKPD, 33, my italics.

¹¹² MKPD, 12.

¹¹³ WOMAD, 90.

¹¹⁴ MKPD, 22.

¹¹⁵ MKPD, 17.

task'.¹¹⁶ The Vienna Secession appeared enthusiastically to appropriate this notion for their own art world.

Clearly Klinger's essay predates the German terms associated with *Raumkunst* such as *Raumkünstler* (interior designer), which emerged in the field of interior design in the early 1900s.¹¹⁷ Klinger's notion of *Raumkunst* evolved as he fulfilled his commission for Julius Albers, eight years before he wrote his essay. Kühn recognised this connection: 'the Vestibule for the *Villa Albers* constituted the individual stages on the way to this hotly pursued goal'.¹¹⁸ Klinger was striving for an aesthetic effect which was governed by the internal architectural framework. The space referred to as the vestibule was not characterised by any specific domestic use – it was a liminal space, between the entrance and Salon. His series of painted canvases appeared to transcend later manifestations of *Wiener Werkstätte* and other domestic interiors styled as *Gesamtkunstwerke*, striving for co-ordination of every element. Rather, Klinger created an illusionary, fictive space as an entire world drawing on various rich iconographies, a marvellous world into which the visitor or spectator entered, and paused. A description of these studies, which were later featured in Roller's 1901 exhibition, follows. [2.8]

Klinger's 'sun-filled painted canvases, notable for their bright palette', and for the effects of light and atmosphere, featured mythical creatures: centaurs, tritons, nereids and other decorative elements in pastoral landscapes.¹¹⁹ The paintings were set into the architectural features of the interconnecting spaces. Architectural and plastic features have been added by Klinger in the frieze on the horizontal plane below the ceiling, to integrate paintings with the internal structures. Two of Klinger's coloured sculptural busts on pedestals gaze at each other across the space of the entrance. In this setting in the *Villa Albers*, there are no exterior windows in sight. Natural light falls from the glass panel in the ceiling. It replicates, on a small scale, nineteenth-century museum gallery design which favoured diffused light from overhead glass structures.

The physical, structural elements of the interior walls were transformed in a concentrated dramaturgy with a panoramic vision into some other, mythic world. Here, as Klinger describes, 'the integration of individual decorative pictures into the architecture...their close affinity with ornamentation – propels them into allegory, an area where the ingenious representation of ideas resides'.¹²⁰ In this private interior space, created some

¹¹⁶ MKPD, 31.

¹¹⁷ See for example *Farbige Raumkunst* the interior decoration magazine, published J Hoffmann, Stuttgart and various, (1900-1942).

¹¹⁸ Kühn, *Max Klinger*, 363.

¹¹⁹ Pendleton Streicher, 'Max Klinger's *Malerei und Zeichnung*', 231.

¹²⁰ MKPD, 15.

years before the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, Klinger's *Raumkunst* was capable of 'dissolving reality'. Here, in this concentrated, illusory space, 'time becomes space'.¹²¹

Did Klinger's essay refer overtly to the art of exhibition display in connection with *Raumkunst*, a term which quickly became associated with the art of the modern exhibition in the 1902 issue of *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*? He did make a statement on the importance of presenting his work for public view: 'If I cannot present work to the public, there can be no reason for making it'.¹²² However, his overriding imperative was the fusion of space, applied and fine arts to fulfil the highest aspirations of art. Klinger's *Raumkunst* was intended to be transformational:

On the basis that architecture, painting and sculpture *certainly had to be interconnected*, that each needed the others in order to rise to the greatest heights, the most noble task was the transformation of a *space into a work of art*... Each (art form) – knowing where and to what end he was to expend his energies – *avoided stealing space and air from the other* by indulging in trivialities.¹²³

To design an exhibition in which each artwork avoids 'stealing space and air from the other', the Secession needed an exceptional framework, and an exceptional space. The section which follows is an introduction to the *Secession Haus* designed by Josef Maria Olbrich, the first important commission in his own right following his work with Otto Wagner on the Vienna *Stadtbahn* from 1894.¹²⁴ Most accounts of the *Secession Haus* have focused on the external design of the building. The architect's intentions for the interior spaces and the audience's experience have been given less attention.

Part 4: The *Secession Haus*, an exceptional framework for the display of art:

As we have seen, the squareform was uncharacteristically the space which *Ver Sacrum* occupied amongst its peer art periodicals of the time. This uncharacteristic framework appeared to lend the interior spaces of *Ver Sacrum*, and the Secession designers, a freedom to experiment, and at times to create an extraordinary page, or single, surprising event. Similarly, the *Secession Haus* designed by Josef Maria Olbrich exemplified the same freedoms for the design of exhibition spaces, which was equally treated as an art in its own right. Like the artists of original book decorations on the pages *Ver Sacrum*, the designers of each exhibition, working usually in collaboration, were identified and

¹²¹ Often-cited phrase ('zum Raum wird hier die Zeit'), from Wagner's *Parsifal* (1882) to denote the notion of timeless time, see for example Ryan Minor, 'Wagner's last chorus: Consecrating space and spectatorship in *Parsifal*', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 17, 1, 2005, 1-36, (6).

¹²² MKPD, 38.

¹²³ MKPD, 31.

¹²⁴ See Topp, *Architecture and Truth*, for Olbrich's ideas, 'multiple truths', on the one hand to purpose and to modern life, and on the other, to utopian and spiritual notions of architecture and the display of art, 28-62.

attributed in the exhibition catalogues. Olbrich's *Secession Haus* similarly provided an exceptional framework for their endeavours.

The radical nature of the design of the *Secession Haus* for its time and place can best be appreciated on foot, walking the spaces of the *Ringstrasse* between three of its art exhibiting buildings.¹²⁵ The *Genossenschaft bildender Künstler Wiens*, or *Künstlerhaus*, the official exhibiting body on the Karlsplatz was completed in the early stages of the *Ringstrasse* development in 1865-8 and echoed the 'elaborate new public complexes' of *Ringstrasse* architecture'.¹²⁶ The *Kunsthistorisches* Museum, designed by Semper and Karl von Hasenauer (1833-1894), the last of the monumental *Ringstrasse* buildings was completed in 1891, and the *Secession Haus*, Karlsplatz, just seven years later, in November 1898.

The massive and grandiose construction of Semper's heavily figured *Kunsthistorisches* Museum sits, like a Leviathan, revelling in its articulated ornamentation, imposing and above all weighted with greatness. The great medievalist carved wooden doors at the entrance presage the overwhelming effect on the visitor of the monumental, richly patterned marble entrance halls and heavily-figured central staircase, intended as Peter Haiko described, to 'lift the visitor from the trivial plane of reality (street level) into the 'high' sphere of art'.¹²⁷ The *Secession Haus* pavilion, offering ground level viewing only to its visitors may also be compared to the exhibiting spaces of the parent organisation from which it 'seceded', the neo-Renaissance palazzo-style *Künstlerhaus*, designed by August Weber. Amongst several contemporary critics, architect Camillo Sitte's comments are suggestive of the disorientating effect on Vienna's city-dwellers, an effect described more recently by Andreas Huyssen as 'the disturbance of vision'.¹²⁸ Rather than each building enhancing the other by skilful placement and harmonious composition, Sitte's comments highlighted their distinctively incoherent effect. Each one seemed 'to play a different melody in a different key...Unbearable, truly unbearable! Whose nerves would not be shattered by this!'¹²⁹

¹²⁵ For comparison with *Secession Haus* and *Secession* exhibition displays, see reproductions, Berlin Secession buildings and exhibitions, Werner Doede, *Die Berliner Secession: Berlin als Zentrum der deutschen Kunst von der Jahrhundertwende bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg* (Frankfurt: Propylaen, 1977), 17-26. Also see reproductions, German art exhibition at the Paris World's Fair, 1900, and the Berlin Nationalgalerie, c 1908, in Françoise Forster-Hahn 'Constructing New Histories: Nationalism in the Display of Art', in *Imagining Modern German Culture*, 71-89.

¹²⁶ Topp, *Architecture and Truth*, for a comparison, 28-62, ff, 183-192, (30).

¹²⁷ Peter Haiko, 'The Franz-Josef-Stadt Museum', Mallgrave (ed), *Otto Wagner, Issues and Debates: Reflections on the Raiment of Modernity*, (Santa Monica, Ca:Getty, 1988), 73.

¹²⁸ See Andreas Huyssen, 'The Disturbance of Vision in Vienna Modernism', *Modernism:Modernity*, 5:3, (1998), 33-47.

¹²⁹ Cited Julian Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1999), 17.

Unlike these individual, dissonantly-situated and monumental buildings, designed to express the power and grandeur of the Austro-Hungarian empire, the *Secession Haus* appears lighter, the scale more human.¹³⁰ It floats on its site and on the senses. It 'lacks corporeal existence', an effect of the flat whiteness of its fascia. It appears to melt into the surrounding air.¹³¹ On entering, the sense of lightness, space and simplicity of its interior is predominant, in contrast to the other museum and gallery spaces. Instead of the richness of light-reflecting marble, visitors were greeted by an entrance hall illuminated by the coloured light emanating from the great, circular glass window designed by Koloman Moser. It depicted the angel of art, 'Die Kunst', in intense blue, green and yellow.¹³² [2.9] The central exhibition hall is illuminated by diffused light from its five skylights, in comparison with the figured marbles, majestic and highly-decorated heights of the central hall of the *Kunsthistorisches* Museum or the series of fixed rooms or Salons of the *Künstlerhaus*.

The flatness and linearity of its exterior structures were well-conveyed by Joseph Maria Olbrich's poster design, a drawing of the fascia of the building, which also appeared on the front cover of *Ver Sacrum* in January 1899, and on early Secession Exhibition catalogues.¹³³ [2.10] It illustrates Secession talent for designing architectonic structures which mutated successfully to *Flächenkunst*, a feature of Secession architecture which was later criticised by Adolf Loos. Complaining of its lack of distinction between inside and outside, Loos stated that 'good architecture can be designed but not drawn'.¹³⁴ Nevertheless, while the realisations of the *Secession Haus* and Semper's *Kunsthistorisches* Museum are distant and dissonant in architectonic form, both buildings are of the same decade, and may have shared a similar intent, however differently executed. Inspired by a Wagnerian sense of the dramatic, Mallgrave describes Semper's deliberate and conscious desire to create a dramatic sense of theatre in its interior spaces:

with their dazzling and variegated surfaces, exaggerated rustication, spatially audacious public areas, all were devices intended specifically to astonish and to make the spectator aware of his presence within a larger communal ritual... The cavernous and sumptuous ascensions toward the domed sanctum of the *Kunsthistorisches* Museum in Vienna was a deliberate spatial exercise by Semper, and his sense for theatricality.¹³⁵

In his celebrated footnote from *Style*, Semper likened his *Bekleidung*, or dressing, to the mask of Greek dramatic tragedy:

¹³⁰ Topp, personal conversation, January 9th 2008.

¹³¹ After Beatriz Colomina, 'On Adolf Loos and Josef Hoffmann: Architecture in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in Max Rissalada (ed), *Raumplan versus Plan Libre: Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier (1919-1930)*, (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 71.

¹³² No longer in existence. See Tretter (ed), *Koloman Moser*, 133 for reproduction of design..

¹³³ The poster was purpose-designed to fit vertical panels on the *Secession Haus* doors, seen in an 1899 photograph, a rare sighting of a Secession poster in situ (Wienm Museum archives).

¹³⁴ Cited Colomina, 'On Adolf Loos', 69.

¹³⁵ Mallgrave, *Gottfried Semper: Architect of the Nineteenth Century* (London: Yale, 1996), 7.

I think that the dressing and the mask are as old as human civilisation, and the joy in both is identical with the joy in those things that drove men to be sculptors, painters, architects, poets, musicians, dramatists, in short, artists. Every artistic creation, every artistic pleasure presupposes a certain carnival spirit, or to express himself in a modern way.¹³⁶

So, while the *Secession Haus* was distinctively a rhetorical statement to both the *Kunsthistorisches* Museum and the neo-Renaissance *Künstlerhaus*, the notion of architecture as a theatrical space for the display of art, embodied by Semper's *Ringstrasse* buildings, was a familiar principle.¹³⁷ Rather than placing the richness of a lofty, densely-decorated dome in the interior of the building, as Semper had, the *Secession Haus* had its own spectacular gold dome on the outside of the building, famously made of open-work laurel leaves and berries in gold and *verdigris*. It was unseen from the interior of the building, but illuminated by electricity at night, 'shimmering mysteriously'.¹³⁸

Olbrich's *Secession Haus*, empty of any permanently fixed structural elements in the main exhibiting spaces on the ground floor, except for six slim columns, provided the first purpose-designed, unencumbered exhibition display space in Europe. In contrast, the Berlin Secession built two exhibiting houses or pavilions, in 1898, and 1905. The first was an all-white building with distinctive curvilinear structures, including a small, rounded tower, and an articulated entrance featuring a curvilinear relief. It bears some similarities to the all-white exterior of the *Secession Haus* with its emphasis on flat fascias, and decorative details which cleave to, and seem to emerge from the surface of the exterior walls. Nevertheless, both Berlin pavilions had conventional interiors with fixed walls, and rooms which flowed one from another, as the floor plans show.¹³⁹

While the internal spaces of the *Secession Haus* were open and mutable, they could not be called neutral. Instead, they were overlaid with a synthesis of mythic and modern aspirations proclaimed in its construction. This synthesis was reinforced by the words *Ver Sacrum*, a mythic reference floating in gold in distinctively contemporary lettering on the white surface of its façade, as if drawn from the cover of an issue of the periodical itself. The internal spaces, while mutable, had a distinctive framing structure and configuration.

The structure of the building, the famous 'Greek Cross' construction, and its white, temple-like architectonic façade, was based on Olbrich's profoundly-felt inspiration on sighting the Temple at Segesta, Sicily. This determined the frame of the space, and made an architectural statement in its own right, promising some greater, spiritual experience

¹³⁶ Semper, *Style*, (ff), 409, also Mallgrave, *Gottfried Semper: Architect*, 7, 300, for expansion.

¹³⁷ See Topp, *Secession Haus as rhetorical statement*, *Architecture and Truth*, 30.

¹³⁸ Cited Topp, *Architecture and Truth*, 42, from a contemporary report.

¹³⁹ See Doede, *Die Berliner Secession*, 17-26.

beyond the limits of its internal spaces. It was indeed designed as a 'space which will allow works of art to be shown to their greatest possible effect,' as Hermann Bahr declared in his article in *Die Zeit*, on the eve of the opening.¹⁴⁰

By the time the audience entered, the space had been carefully conceived, and re-conceived by Secession designers. Most particularly, the Secession intended to transform the interior through the juxtaposition and integration of different art forms, giving the total space a new sense of coherence. The symbolism of the three gorgon heads on the exterior fascia of the *Secession Haus* underlined the non-hierarchical representation of architecture, painting and sculpture, as equal art forms. For this purpose they needed to create the greatest possible flexibility, for paintings, drawings and sculpture, for the many objects of applied arts and crafts and the installation of complete room-sets, including the 'Ver Sacrum room', designed by Hoffmann for the first and subsequent exhibitions; for the display of architectural models, notably those of Otto Wagner; wall mosaics and murals. Indeed the three gorgons above the entrance seemed to promise more than a trinity of the arts, united inside the building. Their mask-like faces resembled the masks of comedy and tragedy, inferring that an element of theatre was to be performed within its interior spaces.

The utopian aims of the *Secession Haus* are often cited, as is the singular characteristic of its internal structure, the mutability of the space. The articulation of the interior spaces and the *intentions* for the audience experience are rarely described beyond the specificity of the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition. An article in *Ver Sacrum*, January, 1899, assumed to have been written by Josef Maria Olbrich, two months after the opening of the *Secession Haus*, is illuminating in this respect:

Function was the substantial influence on the arrangement of this building: to provide by the simplest means a useable structure... it was made spacious, correctly dimensioned in width and height, with exhibition rooms lying on one and the same level, for ease of orientation on a main axis, a heating and ventilation system designed to achieve equable comfortable temperature conditions, a lighting system arranged so that all parts of the exhibition rooms receive the same, even, steady light and to avoid appearance of reflections on the hung pictures... The partition between the six central supports can be adjusted over the whole area of the rooms.

For exhibitions of interior design, rooms are provided with side light... *The exterior is crystallised from all these requirements* and itself seeks to emphasise the solemn dignified definition of the building as a *home of art*. The white and gold formulated architecture is worked out in its overall form as well as in detail in relation to the large existing site area in front of the building.¹⁴¹

From these descriptions another perspective emerges, the perspective of the building having been created from the inside, outwards, as Olbrich described, 'the exterior is

¹⁴⁰ Cited Latham, *Josef Maria Olbrich*, 25.

¹⁴¹ Cited Latham, *Josef Maria Olbrich*, 25, 26.

crystallised from all these requirements'.¹⁴² This view was also embraced by Hermann Bahr in his May 1898 article, 'Architektur':

A building must be built from the inside out. The need of the occupant is the first consideration, that is where the building begins...What determines the windows? The room....They (the windows) are not there for the street to be looked at from the outside...but for the room, which needs light.¹⁴³

The atmosphere of 'otherness' conferred by its temple-like configuration and the aim to provide a liberating experience was declared in the building's emblematic credo, 'To Every Age its Art'. This notion of freedom from the burden of *Ringstrasse* Vienna was reinforced by its position on the site. It faced away from the *Ringstrasse* and the centre of the city, a zone which embraced art and its freedoms. The space could be transformed as Hermann Bahr described, like the spaces of a stage, to create spectacle and a sense of theatre for the audience. Hermann Bahr's commentary, written for *Die Zeit*, October 15th 1898 stressed three driving principles: the spiritual aspirations of the internal spaces, the comfort of the interior design and organisation of the space, and the sense of magic conferred on the audience experience:

Let's go inside. First we enter a room that seems solemn. One could compare it with a *Propylaeum*. It is thought of thus: as a vestibule in which *those entering shall feel cleansed from everyday cares and put aside the worries or moods of the common world*, and prepare themselves for thought, like as it were a *quiet seclusion of the soul*... This is no...palace, but a space which will allow works of art to be shown to their greatest possible effect.

The standards of lighting, soundness against stormy weather, the security of individual works are fulfilled here with unsurpassed wisdom. It hasn't been forgotten that our art will be otherwise unimpeded; it has been anticipated that more and more as the artists express it, *Flächenkunst will be superseded by Raumkunst*. it has been foreseen that it will be necessary to change the work, *like magic*, at a stroke and to be able to adapt again to each new challenge.¹⁴⁴

One further transformation in aesthetic thinking was expressed in Bahr's description: '*Flächenkunst will be superseded by Raumkunst*,' and by implication, the hanging of pictures transformed into some closer approximation of Klinger's *Raumkunst*, implicitly bringing together different art forms to create a greater experience. Transformed 'like magic', a sense of anticipation, and the element of surprise, must have been apparent to the many thousands of Secession exhibition spectators, through the changing nature and shape of each exhibition visited. These collaborative endeavours of the Secession designers exemplified Wagnerian ideals: 'All those men *who feel a common and collective Want* ("*gemeinshaftliche Noth*")'.¹⁴⁵ The deliberate theatricalisation of the

¹⁴² Latham, *Josef Maria Olbrich*, 26.

¹⁴³ Bahr, 'Architektur', (May 1898), *Secession*, 39; cited Topp, *Architecture and Truth*, 49.

¹⁴⁴ Latham, *Josef Maria Olbrich*, 26.

¹⁴⁵ RWPW, VI, 75, Wagner's italics.

Secession Haus spaces through display strategies which embraced 'the art of placement' are now examined.¹⁴⁶

The Secession intended to recreate the exhibition space for each of the three exhibitions they planned for each year, from 1898, alternating foreign artists' work with their own. Through the design, they determined the audience experience. Each Secession exhibition catalogue contained a plan of the exhibition which showed the changing layouts for each event. The prescribed path for the audience route was indicated by a dotted line around the new spaces. This was a point made most emphatically in the *Klinger:Beethoven* catalogue. [2.11] Two floor plans were featured, both noted in the index. The human scale of the building had other implications. Unlike other museum spaces, the *Secession Haus* experience was limited in time, like a theatre performance, by the scale, space and layout of the building, and the planned event of its internal constructions.

From 1899 and the Third Secession exhibition, the designers started to use the device of a focal point, or inner sanctum, directing spectator attention to a spectacular centrepiece. Such treatment was designed into the interior exhibition space by Josef Hoffmann for the central attraction of the Third Secession exhibition, 1899, and the staging of Klinger's *Christ on Olympus* (1897) in the '*Klinger-Saal*' as noted above. The painting featured Christian and classical figures processing across the luminous canvas, its heavenly scenes bright with sunlight, juxtaposed with figurative darkness in the hellish states represented in the richly-articulated framing. Sculptured figures emerging from the frame expanded the narrative of the canvas, and extended into space. It transformed the rear wall of the Secession building interior into an illusory, theatrical space. As Kühn commented of Klinger's monumental works, they 'demanded a space which would harmonise with them'.¹⁴⁷ The monumentality of these paintings, their syncretic subject matter, the synthesis of sculpture and painting was seen as fulfilling a particularly German 'longing' for 'spatial painting'.¹⁴⁸

The sense of theatre was heightened by the use of special lighting effects, 'a strong light from above...while the viewer stood in rather obscure light under a canopy', which marked out the approach to the painting for Secession visitors, in shadow and light.¹⁴⁹ Semi-isolated from the rest of the exhibits, the photograph shows other effects as well as lighting, which frame the space: the 'boundaries' which were punctuated and screened-off from the rest of the exhibition by a setting of laurel trees, in identical pots, alternating

¹⁴⁶ After Victoria Newhouse, *Art and the Power of Placement* (New York: Monacelli, 2005).

¹⁴⁷ Kühn, 'Klingers Figurengemälde verlangen einen Raum, der mit ihnen harmoniert.' *Max Klinger*, 358.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 'Eine Sehnsucht der Deutschen ist es geblieben, auf grossen Wandflächen, in weiten Räumen und im Anschluss an diese Architektur eine Raummalerie.' 360.

¹⁴⁹ Waissenberger, *Vienna Secession*, 44.

with small, bronze sculptures set on identical pedestals.¹⁵⁰ [2.12] The combination of placement, setting and the painting itself, a work capable of transporting the spectator from the real world to another mythic universe 'created a sensation' in Vienna at the time.¹⁵¹ The space was described later as *Rüheraum*, (peaceful room), by one of the exhibition critics.¹⁵²

Similarly, the interior spaces for the Eighth Secession exhibition from November to December 1900, were designed by Koloman Moser with a distinct and separate space for the installation of the strangely pale, attenuated *Five Kneeling Youths* by Belgian artist George Minne. This arresting group, a sculpture-turned-fountain, was positioned in a 'sacral' rotunda room, 'a devotional space' into which the spectators had to enter to view the exhibit. [2.13]

The presentation of single objects of art, in theatrical spaces-within-spaces, drew not on contemporary conventions of exhibition display, but rather may have emulated classical ideals in exhibition design. In her discourse on 'the power of placement' in exhibition spaces of the late nineteenth century, Victoria Newhouse traces the origins of the display of isolated and theatrical figures to antiquity.¹⁵³ In classical Greece, temple architecture was increasingly used for the theatrical placement of statues. 'Sculptures in fixed positions began to enjoy theatrical settings (such as) the showcasing of a single statue in a small temple...or the positioning of a statue at the end of an aisle'.¹⁵⁴

'Placement' affects perception and endows meaning which is not necessarily inherent in the art-work alone. The staging of a single work, dramatised by the use of fabric and other materials, or deliberately contrived settings and lighting resonant of the environment of the theatre stage, would draw attention in a different way to the object on display. The space was connoted as 'other'. By implicitly inviting the spectator to enter, pause and to remain stationary, the spectator becomes at least briefly, fixed in position like the audience in a theatre. The experience may become more ritualised, not only that of an individual experience of one person with a piece of art, but for a short time, a collective experience. The relations, between spectator and work of art, were changed in such spaces. Wagner described this effect, in his 1876 essay on theatre, as 'the room, made ready for no purpose other than his looking in'.¹⁵⁵ With such an effect, the scene 'is removed as it were, to the unapproachable world of dreams'.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁰ Reproduced Forsthuber, *Moderne Raumkunst*, 36.

¹⁵¹ Waissenberger, *Vienna Secession*, 46.

¹⁵² Forsthuber, *Moderne Raumkunst* 36.

¹⁵³ Newhouse, *Power of Placement*, 48-50.

¹⁵⁴ Newhouse, *Power of Placement*, 50.

¹⁵⁵ WOMAD, 'On the founding of the *Festspielhaus*' (1873), 366. The theatre opened on August 13 1876.

¹⁵⁶ WOMAD, 366.

In the *Secession Haus*, each exhibition experience, a narrative constructed by the designers, could be assimilated in one visit, with a prescribed start and an ending. Yet the experience was also timeless. The internal spaces were enclosed allowing little intrusion from the outside world. Cut off from the metropolis, the experience was elevated above life, as Bahr described. The audience's experience was paramount. Only one other building in the world of the arts in the late-nineteenth century had been created specifically at the service of its art, and with the primacy of the audience's experience in mind: Wagner's purpose-designed *Festspielhaus* in Bayreuth.¹⁵⁷ His was the first proscenium-arch theatre to give all spectators a clear view of the stage, his intent to provide 'a changed relation' of the audience with the performance on the stage.¹⁵⁸ These themes are explored in the final part of this chapter which examines different notions of time and space, and the role of the observer (who) 'must imagine himself at the centre of relations'.¹⁵⁹

Part 5: Time and Space in the Secession Haus

The design of the new *Secession Haus* was predicated on 'an ideal view of the role of art purified from the commercial concerns of the *Künstlerhaus*'.¹⁶⁰ The notion of purification extended to the way art was displayed in the new building. Roller's 1901 exhibition was the first of the Secession exhibitions to define a modernist tendency in exhibition display in two ways: a radical simplification of design, and greater emphasis on contemplative floor and wall space.¹⁶¹ The open floor spaces of Roller's central hall were without furniture or other distractions, unlike other of their exhibitions until this point. [2.14] In contrast, the Eighth exhibition designed by Moser, Hoffmann and Secession artist Leopold Bauer was devoted to European applied arts, including works of British designers Ashbee, Mackintosh and Macdonald. The central hall used domestic furniture and other similar effects to replicate the environment of the collector or art buyer's home.

Designed only two weeks before it was scheduled to open as a memorial to Giovanni Segantini, the interior structure declared its direct relationship with the syncretic architectural language of the *Secession Haus* itself. Roller devised a huge, vaulted octagon to form the central room, described by Hevesi as 'an early Christian chapel', and

¹⁵⁷ WOMAD, 364-369, for Wagner's description of the construction and changes he brought for the first time to theatre design.

¹⁵⁸ WOMAD, 366. See also Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art*, 22-46, for analysis of Wagner's ideas on and design for Bayreuth, and the 'total stage', also for a comparison with Crystal Palace.

¹⁵⁹ After Semper, *Style*, 86.

¹⁶⁰ Topp, *Architecture and Truth*, 34.

¹⁶¹ See Newhouse, on the Salon hang for which the main criterion was how many paintings could be squeezed onto the wall, with no regard for aesthetic compatibility, *Art of Placement*, 19. See Klonk for the change to very late 19th century practices of symmetry and space, 'Mounting Vision', 344.

'a fantasy created in the middle of the *Secession Haus*...one stands in a *Segantini-Temple*', as he declared.¹⁶² The vaulted spaces were lined with dark-grey fabric, an effect which prefigured his stage designs, where Roller used fabric to absorb light and frame the scene. Evoking an atmosphere of mourning, Hevesi recorded 'colourless colours of dust and ashes ... a harmony of many shades of grey'.¹⁶³

In the central hall eighteen of Segantini's works were installed, in a symmetrical hang, a single line of paintings at eye level, widely spaced, on the wall structures. In this same hall, the white casts of six of Rodin's monumental figure sculptures were placed on low plinths. These included *The Burghers of Calais* (1886-88), *The Age of Bronze* (1877) and *Eve* (1881). The photograph of this room shows the important central positioning of Segantini's '*The Disgraced Mother*', the painting originally reproduced in *Ver Sacrum* in 1899. To one side, and in front of the painting stands the figure of Rodin's *Eve*.

There appears little superficially which connects these two artists directly, except the time in which they lived.¹⁶⁴ This is not the place for an extensive exploration of the two artists' work. Yet it is the surface of their works which reveals a commonality of affect and purpose. If there is a single defining feature of Rodin's art, it was, Tucker states, drawing on Rodin's first essayist, Rainier Maria Rilke, a frequent contributor to *Ver Sacrum*, Rodin's 'affirmation of surface'.¹⁶⁵ As Rilke lyrically described in his 1903 account, 'Rodin had now discovered the fundamental element of his art, at it were: the germ of his world. *It was the surface* – this differently great surface, varied, accentuated, accurately measured, out of which everything must rise – which was from this moment the subject matter of his art'.¹⁶⁶ Dale Cleaver emphasises the spatial and temporal effects of Rodin's sculptural masses: '(the figures)...are kept loose and flowing, suggestive of skeletal protuberances, and tired, sagging flesh', a rhythmic fluidity implying life and expressive signs of age, and of time passing.¹⁶⁷

Segantini's preoccupation with the expressive emptiness of his landscapes and the effects of light led him to reject the highly finished canvas in favour of a painterly technique involving the application of densely-applied skeins of colour which were drawn across its surface. The textural threads of paint intensified its luminous qualities. His

¹⁶² Hevesi, 'Wenn man das mächtige Achteck betritt, das Rollers in Ravenna geschulte Phantasie diesmal in die Mitte des Sezessionshauses gestellt hat, steht man einem Segantini-Tempel, AJS, 300.

¹⁶³ Hevesi, AJS, 300.

¹⁶⁴ Hans A Lüthy suggests late-nineteenth century symbolist parallels between Segantini, Klinger, and Arnold Böcklin. See 'Book Reviews', in *The Art Bulletin*, V 69, No 2, June 1987, 307-311.

¹⁶⁵ William Tucker, *The Language of Sculpture*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1998), 146, based on a premise citing the essay by Rilke.

¹⁶⁶ Rilke, 'August Rodin', Albert Elsen (ed), *August Rodin, Reading on His Life and Work* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1965), 115.

¹⁶⁷ Dale Cleaver, 'The Concept of Time in Modern Sculpture', in *Art Journal*, XXII, 4, Summer, 1963, 232-236 + 245, (234).

purpose was to create a different notion of time and space: time unchanging, and a sense of space which 'shall contain in itself the different chords of the high Alps', as the artist described.¹⁶⁸ The aesthetics of Rodin and Segantini were indicative of art from 'outside' brought to Vienna by the Secession to broach the seemingly impervious spaces of Viennese culture.¹⁶⁹ The surface effects of their works were united in Roller's central room.

Roller's chapel-like construction in which the works of Segantini and Rodin were displayed featured three large, unadorned squareform openings, each like a simplified proscenium arch. Two of these opened onto Room III, with views of Segantini's elaborately framed triptych, 'Becoming-Being-Departing' (*Werden-Sein-Vergehen*) of 1899.¹⁷⁰ The central painting, 'Being', (235x403 cms) can be seen dominating the view through one of the proscenium-arch openings in the main room. The openings provided the spectator with a different perspective on the art beyond it, changing the impression of distance to bring the art object closer. Wagner poetically described the framing effect of the proscenium arch in his address on the founding of Bayreuth, as:

the apparent throwing-back of the scene, making the spectator *imagine it is quite far away*, though he still beholds it in all the *clearness of proximity*...the scene is removed, as it were, to the unapproachable world of dreams'.¹⁷¹

Hevesi, seemingly enthralled with this effect, reported that Segantini's painting glowed with the colours of its spectacular sunset, 'fervent and radiant....gold transformed into ether, everything shimmer and glimmer' (*Schimmer und Flimmer*).¹⁷²

A second semi-octagonal structure and a separate room housed the work of the third featured artist, Klinger's fourteen panoramic cyclical studies for the *Villa Albers* and his marble figures which were set on pedestals: 'Crouching Figure', (1901), a nude female, in contorted, kneeling position; *Assenjeff* (1900), the polyolithic portrait study of Klinger's mistress, her smooth, white upper torso emerging from a roughened block of figured marble. [2.15] The floor of Klinger's octagonal 'alcove' was laid with irregular, petal-shaped, felt cut-outs, fanning outwards from the octagonal alcove, in blue, green and white.¹⁷³ Hevesi seemed unsurprised by this change of mood devised by Roller:

¹⁶⁸ See Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, for an account of the composer's inspiration in Segantini's paintings, and this extract from the writings of Segantini, 76.

¹⁶⁹ The works of Klinger, Rodin and Segantini were featured in the first Secession exhibition in April 1898 and subsequently. The Secession raised the money to purchase one of Segantini's works for Vienna's publication collections.

¹⁷⁰ Hevesi, 'Die Ausstellung der Sezession', AJS, 299.

¹⁷¹ WOMAD, 366, my italics.

¹⁷² Hevesi, 'Aus der Sezession', AJS, 300.

¹⁷³ Reproduced Forsthuber, *Moderne Raumkunst*, 57.

These are the colours of Klinger's pictures and the wall which is continued on the ground, the white being particularly original, as if made of pieces of paper that have been left lying around, but which still have a sense of symmetry.¹⁷⁴

While retaining the integrity of the *Villa Albers* scheme, using niches and alcoves, Roller changed the setting of the works from the historicist, neo-classical spaces of the residence to a simpler setting, and another, more contemporary time and space. Drawing on the colours from Klinger's paintings, he used an arrangement which derived its inspiration from *Flächenkunst*. The exhibition plan printed in the exhibition catalogue, a slim publication with a translucent cover, shows three narrow openings from the foyer into the central room. The full effect of Roller's vaulted spaces would not have been apparent until the visitors had followed the prescribed route through one of the openings into the room.

Alma Schindler visited the Roller exhibition twice, and wrote about its impact in her diaries. She described it as 'monumental', as a 'true master-exhibition'.¹⁷⁵ She would have seen Segantini's paintings glowing against the neutral spaces of the walls, brilliantly alive, and remarked on one, predominantly silver-white, describing it as *Tristan*-like, 'but purified (ice-cold)'.¹⁷⁶ Segantini's 'The Wicked Mother' dominated one wall of Roller's central construction. The work is noted for its luminescence and sense of space, an effect enhanced by Segantini's thread-like painting technique.¹⁷⁷ Lifted off the floor by its plinth, the bowed figure of Rodin's *Eve* seemed to float in the space. The surface of Rodin's figure is uneven, troubled, as Rilke described, 'the entire body consist(ing) of scenes of her life'.¹⁷⁸

The dynamics of Roller's exhibition space were defined as much by the placement of sculptures as they were by Segantini's canvases. [2.16] As Tucker observed, in his description of Rodin's *Burghers of Calais*, sculpture brings further definition to space. It brings 'the power of gravity, the most distinctively realized of its structuring elements'.¹⁷⁹ Gravity 'unites sculpture and spectator in a common dependence on and resistance to the pull of the earth'.¹⁸⁰ Gravity in sculpture is the unseen tension, just as paintings camouflage, in the mystery of their art, the way in which light in colour enters the canvas. The play of light on sculpture is the play of real light on its elemental surfaces. Defining the spatial differences between sculpture and painting and their relationship with the

¹⁷⁴ Hevesi, *AJS*, 309.

¹⁷⁵ Mahler-Werfel, *Diaries*, 366, 375.

¹⁷⁶ Mahler-Werfel, *Diaries*, describing 'Love in the Spring of Life', ('Liebe an der Lebensquelle' 1898-9), 375. Also in this room Segantini's 'The Grison Costume', (*Die Graubünderin*), mentioned by Hevesi, a brilliant golden wheatfield with the brightly clad figure of a girl.

¹⁷⁷ Known as 'Divisionism'.

¹⁷⁸ Rilke, *Rodin*, 7.

¹⁷⁹ Tucker, *Sculpture*, 146.

¹⁸⁰ Tucker, *Sculpture*, 146.

spectator, Rilke, like Klinger, showed a new awareness of the importance of the space itself:

sculpture was a separate thing, as was the easel picture, but *it did not require a wall like a picture*...It was an object that could exist for itself alone... *about which one could walk and which one could look at from all sides*...yet it (also) had to become unimpeachable, sacrosanct, separated from the chance and time...It must be intercalated in the silent continuance of space and its great laws.¹⁸¹

Rilke described a complex series of spatial contingencies in the viewing of sculpture and its intercalation in the 'silent continuance of space'. This was the visitor experience evoked by Roller's exhibition. In Roller's temple-like spaces in the *Secession Haus*, the interplay of sculpture and painting suggests the visionary characteristics of Klinger's *Raumkunst* and the interplay of surfaces and depth in a defined space:

If we observe the treatment of space, as it has evolved since those days, we find ...the unfettered fantasy of ornament becoming well-ordered forms, space-conscious sculpture taking the form of free standing groups. Artists now started to seek the greatest development of their powers in individual works. Here the transition is not a synthesis in the coming together of different art forms, *but each individual art form absorbing something of what other forms were offering*.¹⁸²

Finally, in Hevesi's words, Roller had created an atmosphere of quiet contemplation in this through-composed space:

Professor Alfred Roller has managed to make a great impact using only simple means and materials. The large octagonal central room, which draws the observer's gaze onto Segantini's wonderful sunset, inspires a profound feeling of consecration ('*ein tiefes Gefühl der Weihe*').¹⁸³

In conclusion, Klinger's 1891 essay, *Painting and Drawing*, deals with the complex interplay of the plastic arts, their surfaces and depths, and their containment and display in space. The artworks in Roller's exhibition, Rodin's figures and Segantini's paintings exhibited common concerns in their stress on surface as well as the impression of depth. As Klinger described, 'every material has its own spirit and its own poetry which derives from its appearance and its own amenability'.¹⁸⁴ Yet he also wrote that 'it is not only the individual work of art that should affect us, but also the artistic unity of the space (that is to say the surroundings of the picture)'.¹⁸⁵ In *Raumkunst*, the space surrounding the artworks must be circumscribed in some way. Roller's carefully contrived spaces emphasised the empty or silent stretches of the floor space which resonated with 'an harmonious silence', the words Segantini used to describe the musical effects of his

¹⁸¹ Rilke, *Rodin*, 9.

¹⁸² MKPD, 32.

¹⁸³ Hevesi, AJS, 298.

¹⁸⁴ MKPD, 14.

¹⁸⁵ MKPD, 14.

landscapes.¹⁸⁶ The chapel-like setting evoked Klinger's *Raumkunst* ideas of the unifying effects of interior space on murals, frescoes and sculpture. Instead of frescoes, Roller had employed the colour- and light-filled paintings of Segantini, and for sculptures, Rodin's life-sized figures.

In the December 1901 Secession exhibition Roller placed the artworks of Segantini and Rodin in a space which differentiated the spectator experience from the everyday. The final part of the chapter examines notions of time and space, and their 'upheaval', as Wagner described of the potential of a dramatic performance, in the staging of the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition of 1902.¹⁸⁷ This analysis considers how Wagner's principles of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* were evinced by the Secession designers. These are defined firstly, as the overview of a single guiding idea and its controlling forces in Roller's creative partnership with Josef Hoffmann; secondly, the creation throughout the duration of the experience, of a prevailing atmosphere (*Stimmung*) and thirdly the dissolution of the boundaries between reality and illusion to create the effect of theatre.¹⁸⁸ Roller described this desired dramatic effect in his 1909 article on stage design for the Austrian music and theatre publication, *Der Merker*: 'Every...performance of a work of art must in some way be exceptional...It should *stand out from ordinary life, and project beyond it...* (it is) a view into another world'.¹⁸⁹ This account starts with an evocation of the event in its opening days.

Part 6: Time and space in the 1902 *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition

For twelve weeks from April 15th to June 27th 1902, something extraordinary happened in Vienna, witnessed by over fifty-five thousand people.¹⁹⁰ They were drawn to the *Secession Haus* to experience this exhibition, which was not quite an exhibition in the conventional sense. This was the first time in Europe that an art exhibition paid tribute, not to another artist, but to a composer, the mythic figure of Beethoven. It was also exceptional as the first art exhibition of the modern age to exhibit not a single painting or drawing, but rather only sculptures and importantly one central sculpture, a monumental representation of the composer. [2.17] This work was, in its turn, surrounded by murals and frescoes. A series of sculptured reliefs were set into square niches which regularly punctuated the surfaces of the temporary interior walls of the *Secession Haus*. [2.18]

¹⁸⁶ Eric Frederick Jensen, 'Webern and Segantini's *Trittico della Natura*', in *Musical Times*, V 130/1751, January, 1989, 15.

¹⁸⁷ WOMAD, 'the limitation of space and time... *are upheaved*', 231, my italics.

¹⁸⁸ WOMAD, 267.

¹⁸⁹ AR, 'Und jede gute Aufführung eines Kunstwerkes soll doch als etwas Ausserordentliches wirken. Ich meine, als etwas, das vom täglichen Leben absticht, darüber hinausgeraget.' 'Bühnenreform?' 194-197 (193-4) cited HLG, 946-950 (947), my italics.

¹⁹⁰ In comparison, Nordegraaf notes 20,000 visitors per year at the newly-refurbished Boymans Museum, Rotterdam, at the turn of the century, *Strategies of Display*, 58. The *Secession Haus* was open seven days a week from this exhibition from 09.00 to 19.00 each day.

These artworks, gleaming with the brilliance of enamel and jewelled surfaces, coloured glass, and flashes of gold, played a supporting role to Klinger's marble and bronze monument of Beethoven, with one exception. Gustav Klimt's celebrated *Beethoven* frieze created controversy as the exhibition opened. It moved through a series of narrative yet enigmatic scenes: a knight in shining armour, ancient hags and Gorgons; beasts, the mythical monster, *Typhoon*; hosts of angels and Klimt's embracing lovers. The narrative was interrupted by the silences of a series of seemingly inexplicable caesuras. The frieze was located across three adjoining walls in the first side room adjoining the central room housing Klinger's monument. The frieze was placed 'high above the heads of mortals', the words used by Max Klinger to describe his own ideal for *Raumkunst*.¹⁹¹ The exhibition catalogue stated that Klimt's frieze drew its inspiration from Schiller's words, famously 'This kiss for the whole world', (*Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!*), and the music of the last movement of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*.¹⁹²

The exhibition catalogue contained no reproduction of the Klinger Beethoven monument. Instead, its appearance in the exhibition was indicated on page forty-one, with the words 'finished on 25 March, 1902' (*Vollendet am 25 März, 1902*), proclaiming its novelty. The closeness of the relationship between Klinger and the Vienna Secession may be seen in a letter from Max Klinger in Paris to Alfred Roller dated September 22nd 1901. Klinger confirmed that he 'would gladly reserve you the first exhibition', and described the delays engendered by the complex design and finishing process of the work, particularly the bronze casting of the throne.¹⁹³ The letter provides further evidence of the keen anticipation which awaited the exhibition by the Secession, and possibly the public alike. The Viennese audience was the first to see Klinger's *Beethoven*.

The exhibition and its unique artworks achieved immediate notoriety. The review published in London's influential fine and applied arts review, *The Studio* stated:

The common topic of conversation in Vienna is Klinger's *Beethoven*, which is exhibited for the first time, for never has any work of art brought forth so much controversy and so many differences of opinion here... The whole impression ... so new, something to which we are so entirely unaccustomed even in thought, that the general impression is at first sight not an altogether harmonious one.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ MKPD, 15.

¹⁹² VBKÖ, *Max Klinger: Beethoven*, 26.

¹⁹³ MK:AR, Paris, 22nd September, 1901, ÖTM, (AM 47.402 RO), '*Gern reserviere ich Ihnen die erste Ausstellung*'. Also Baker: Pausch, *Archiv*, 87. For an account of Klinger's creation of the Beethoven monument, see Alessandra Comini, *The Changing Image of Beethoven: a Study in Mythmaking* (New York:Rizzoli, 1987), 397-398.

¹⁹⁴ Anon, 'Studio Talk', in Charles Holmes (ed), *The Studio*, 26, III, 1902, 141-142, my italics.. *The Studio* was influential and widely circulated amongst the middle-classes in Vienna as well as London.

In other words, the experience conveyed an unaccustomed dissonance, the shock of surprise, and a sense of unreality. The public encountered the previously unimagined, 'even in thought'.¹⁹⁵ Some of the Vienna press reacted rather differently. In keeping with another Viennese convention for satire and caricature, several newspapers featured amusing and derisory drawings of Klinger's seated *Beethoven*, notably *Der Flöh* (1869-1919) which addressed the figure's problematic realisation with a humorous depiction of Beethoven on the throne.¹⁹⁶ The explicit and implicit roles of Beethoven and the other musical progenitors of the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition are now briefly described.

As the extensive scholarship on Beethoven describes, from the moment of his death in Vienna in 1827, the figure of Beethoven was enshrined in myth.¹⁹⁷ Indeed the myth surrounding the composer particularly, but not exclusively in Vienna, became even greater than his music, which had lapsed somewhat in popularity. In particular, his later works often perplexed nineteenth-century audiences. The mythology surrounding Beethoven took various tropes at various times: artist as hero; suffering artist; artist as revolutionary; artist as redeemer and artist as spiritual leader. Perhaps somewhat overlooked has been the subtle nuance placed on the idea of Beethoven and the artist as revolutionary, in terms other than those implying social, moral and political revolution. David Dennis argues that Beethoven's music was seen as revolutionary, not just in the socio-political sense, but also by those who embraced progress and technological innovation.¹⁹⁸ In other words, Beethoven stood for modernity in its progressive form because of the sheer excitement, or 'rush' ('*Reizflut*'), of the structure of his music.¹⁹⁹

Wagner borrowed Beethoven's mantle and positioned himself as Beethoven's greater successor.²⁰⁰ Wagner's writings firstly connected his own influential ideas on the 'Art-work of the Future' with Beethoven's music. Beethoven in his turn was inscribed in Wagner's own mythology and his powerful ideas relating to the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Quoting Schiller and Beethoven's last movement of the *Ninth Symphony*, Wagner declared:

This was the word which Beethoven set as crown upon the forehead of his tone-creation; and this word was "*Rejoice!*"... With this word he cries to all men: "*This one kiss to all the world*", and *this Word* will be the language of the *Art-work of the Future*.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁵ 'Studio Talk', 141-142

¹⁹⁶ *Der Floh*, no 18, April 1902, 12.

¹⁹⁷ See William S Newman, 'The Beethoven Mystique in Romantic Art, Literature and Music in *The Music Quarterly*, V 69, Summer, 1984, 354-387; Comini, *The Changing Image of Beethoven*, 1987; David B Dennis, *Beethoven in German Politics 1870-1989* (London: Yale University, 1996); Maynard Solomon, *Late Beethoven: Music, Thought, Imagination* (London: University of California, 2003).

¹⁹⁸ Dennis, *Ibid*.

¹⁹⁹ Dennis, *Ibid*, 11, 12, relying on Ulrich Schmitt, *Revolution im Konzertsaal: Zur Beethoven-Rezeption im 19. Jahrhundert* (Main: Schott, 1990).

²⁰⁰ RWPW, 'Beethoven's "Heroic Symphony",' VIII 221-224.

²⁰¹ RWPW, VI, 126, Wagner's italics.

Wagner's later, highly influential 1870 'Beethoven' essay was written in celebration of the one-hundredth anniversary of the composer's birth.²⁰² Casting Beethoven as 'the great path-breaker in the wilderness of a paradise debased', Beethoven, the man, Wagner argued, had been ill-served by existing analysis, and his Ninth Symphony, misunderstood.²⁰³ Beethoven's greatness in music was equal to that of Goethe, Schiller and Shakespeare, in poetry. Like the great poets, Beethoven and his *Ninth Symphony* emulated the act of creation at the 'vanishing point... exactly at the spot where creation passes from a conscious to an unconscious act'.²⁰⁴ His music must be evaluated in ways more subtle: through an interpretative path which led back to the metaphysical ideas of Schopenhauer in *The World as Will and Representation* (1818).²⁰⁵ Wagner inscribed Beethoven as the first true exponent of a synthesis of Schopenhauer's idea of 'Music', ascribed 'a totally different' place in the hierarchy of the arts, and 'Poetry', whose sole material consisted of concepts, which must visualise 'the Idea'.²⁰⁶

By implication, Beethoven's greatness was to create a musical work which was no longer 'parcelled off in time and space', neither ascribing only to the characteristics of music and temporality, or solely to the visual, spatial world evoked by poetry.²⁰⁷ Instead, Beethoven's great gift was to take the 'illusory surface' (*Schein*) of the visual world and to 'lay bare the Idea (of music) concealed beneath'.²⁰⁸ Significantly for this analysis of the *Klinger: Beethoven* exhibition which follows, Wagner suggested that the synthesis of these two worlds, 'the sound-world' and 'the light-world', existed on the edge of dreams.²⁰⁹ Its creation (through the form of Wagner's new music drama) would invoke, in the audience, a 'devotional state' (*Andacht*).²¹⁰ On May 22nd 1872, Wagner marked the laying of the foundation stone at his *Festspielhaus* in Bayreuth, not with a performance of his own music, but instead with Beethoven's 'great Ninth Symphony'.²¹¹

²⁰² RW, 'Beethoven', *Actors and Singers*, trans. William Ashton Ellis (London: University of Nebraska, 1995), 57-126. For the significance of Wagner's 1870 essay on the reception of Beethoven's ideas and music on Gustav Mahler, and in Viennese cultural life, see Julian Johnson, *Mahler's Voices: Expression and Irony in the Songs and Symphonies* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2009), particularly 23-24; 235-236. See also Timothy W Hiles, 'Gustav Klimt's Beethoven Frieze' in Salim Kemal et al (eds), *Nietzsche, Philosophy and the Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1998), for further views on this argument, 162-186, (168).

²⁰³ RW, 'Beethoven', 126.

²⁰⁴ RW, *Ibid*, author paraphrasing 'that point itself becomes a vanishing one', 63.

²⁰⁵ A Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation, (Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung)*, VI, trans. E J Payne (Indiana Hills, Col: Falcon, 1958), particularly 255-258.

²⁰⁶ RW, *Ibid*, 65.

²⁰⁷ RW, *Ibid*, 70.

²⁰⁸ RW, *Ibid*, 70.

²⁰⁹ RW, *ibid*, 68, Wagner's emphasis.

²¹⁰ RW, *ibid*, 105.

²¹¹ W OMAD, 356.

The implicit sense of double-consciousness, or double-vision, Wagnerian ideas overlaid on Beethoven's, elided notions not only of Romantic ideals of heroism and spiritual leadership, but also of Beethoven and Wagner as modern and exciting (or disturbing, depending on the individual's views at the time).²¹² These ideas, given greater moment by Wagner's 1870 essay, it seemed, held a very present auratic power for the spectators, as well as the designers and artists, involved in the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition. In *fin-de-siècle* Vienna, Beethoven was Wagner's Beethoven.

As accounts of this exhibition also commonly describe, Gustav Mahler played a small but significant role at the private opening of the exhibition held 'unusually late on the afternoon of the April 14th 1902'.²¹³ Gustav Mahler did not just dominate the opera stage in Vienna from 1897. His interpretation of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* seen through the lens of Wagner's revitalising explication, experimented with different spatial effects.²¹⁴ The performance attracted enormous public interest, a great deal of hostile and some positive criticism.²¹⁵ It was described by one of the few favourable critics in terms which endowed it with a sacred mission: 'the hall was packed; the hall had been a *temple*, the massed audience a flock of *devout*, the performance a *sacred ceremony*'.²¹⁶ The notion of art as sacred, the place of art, in this case the concert hall, as its temple, and the audience, as its initiates was in the cultural air in Vienna. It was embodied in Olbrich's temple-like structure for the *Secession Haus*, and further reinforced by Hoffmann's interior design for the exhibition.

The timing of this exhibition was significant for Secession Chairman Roller, who played a role in its overall design which might now be described as its artistic direction. This was Roller's third pivotal role for the Secession following variously his concerns as organisation secretary, as overall editor of *Ver Sacrum*, and as exhibition designer of the aestheticised and contemplative space for the 1901 Segantini exhibition. Roller oversaw the organisation of the supporting artists' works which were transformed from woodcuts in the exhibition catalogue to three-dimensional reliefs and their setting in Hoffmann's interior construction.

The Secession catalogues from 1898 onwards had clearly announced the importance placed on the creative collaboration of one, two or more designers who were invested and credited with the role of overall design of their three annual exhibitions. With this, their most ambitious exhibition, a new collaborative force emerged. Josef Hoffmann,

²¹² Also fuelled by musical debates centred on the figure of Viennese musicologist and critic, Edward Hanslick (1825-1904), and his 'anti-Wagnerian' stance in favour of absolute rather than programme music.

²¹³ HLG, *Mahler*, V2, 513.

²¹⁴ HLG, *Mahler*, V2, 232-238.

²¹⁵ HLG, *Ibid*, 233.

²¹⁶ HLG, *Ibid*, 233. My italics.

denoted as 'artistic leader' (*Künstlerische Gesamtleitung*) and designer of the main rooms' (*Raumgestaltung der Hauptsäle*), wrote to Roller from *Der Kaiserhof Hotel*, Leipzig.²¹⁷ The letter, dated March 19th 1902, marked Hoffmann's first viewing of Klinger's monument in the artist's studio, just four weeks before the exhibition was due to open. Hoffmann stated 'the *Beethoven* is so overwhelmingly beautiful that I do not like to, I cannot even describe it'.²¹⁸ The *Beethoven* monument was beyond words, an aesthetic experience for which there was no language. Perhaps, like music or a theatrical performance, the work had to be experienced. Instead Hoffmann went on to comment on more practical details, that the sculpture weighed between five and seven thousand kilos, and he drew a small sketch in the letter to show the dimensions of the base, of 140 x 95 centimetres.²¹⁹

This extract suggests two important things about Roller's role as 'overall co-ordinator'. Firstly, Hoffmann assumed Roller would prize the extraordinary impact of Klinger's strange, original *Beethoven* and the metaphysical ideals around which they were designing the exhibition. Secondly, Hoffmann, the progenitor of the *Tempelkunst* interior, trusted Roller to help him realise his vision. How might they meet the practical considerations of placing the monumental art object at the centre of the *Secession Haus* to realise Hoffmann's conception for the framing spaces of the exhibition, a through-composed scheme which linked each of the three main areas? Hoffmann, it seemed, relied on Roller's talent as 'realist and stylist', to understand both the practical necessities and the aesthetic sensitivities and to bring the two together to realise his own, and the contributing artists' vision.

Max Klinger had exercised control over every facet of the artistic conception and production of the *Beethoven* monument.²²⁰ Its first exposure to the public, and the fulfilment of Klinger's ideals of *Raumkunst* lay not in the hands of the progenitor, but rather with Roller and Hoffmann. Theirs was the guiding force necessary to produce this exhibition, in which the interior design, the supporting and starring artworks were to be given a consistent treatment throughout. As the catalogue stated: 'All these demands were placed on the monumental task to create the most sublime, highest and best (art) which man could aspire to achieve, that of *Tempelkunst*.'²²¹ What may have been conveyed in the auratic term used with such conviction by the Secession?

²¹⁷ VBKÖ, *Klinger: Beethoven*, 12, 79; letter JH:AR, (AM46. 278 RO), Baker:Pausch, *Archiv*, 64

²¹⁸ Hoffmann, 'Der *Beethoven* ist so überwältigend schön, dass ich's gar nicht beschreiben mag', cited Baker:Pausch, *Archiv*, 12.

²¹⁹ JH:AR, (AM46. 278 RO).

²²⁰ Comini, *The Changing Face of Beethoven*, 397.

²²¹ VBKÖ, 'Alle Diese Forderungen warden bei Aufgaben der Monumentalkunst gestellt und das Höchste und Beste, was die Menschen zu allen Zeiten bieten konnten, entwickelte sich daran: die *Tempelkunst*', *Max Klinger: Beethoven*, 10, also similarly conveyed Lux, *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, 475-482.

While ritual and the spiritual in art were implicit in the term, *Tempelkunst* was contingent on various powerful influences. Firstly, as established above, classical temple form and its spiritual aesthetics were built into the structure and the stated ideals of the white and gold *Secession Haus* by Olbrich. Olbrich's own source of inspiration in the temple at Segesta was prefigured by Gottfried Semper, who chose Segesta as a paradigm for simple, squareform structures.²²² Semper had attributed the ancient source of gold decoration not only to Greek temple form, but also, from the writings of Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian, to the finishes used in the Jewish temple (AD2) in Jerusalem.²²³ Olbrich's building was frequently described as a 'temple of art' (*Kunsttempel*), by contemporary commentators as did Wilhelm Schölermann in an early issue of *Ver Sacrum* in 1898, even while it was still under construction.²²⁴

The ambition to create the conditions for a total work of art (*'dieses Gesamtwirken'*) predicated on Wagner's ideas had been embraced by the Secession.²²⁵ Wagner sustained and reinforced the notion of the Greek ideal, not in order to replicate the classical form but rather to use its inspiration for a new art. Wagner's writings addressed all the arts, including those of the architect:

Thus did the lyrist and the Tragedian command the Architect to build the artistic edifice which should answer their art in worthy manner...the Temples of the Gods, the Tragic theatres of the Folk.²²⁶

Such ideas inextricably linked the theatrical in art to the notion of the temple. Perhaps even more relevant were Wagner's ideas on theatre and theatre design, and specifically his *Festspielhaus*. Distancing the performance spaces for his art of music drama from 'cultural decadence' and devalued notions of nineteenth-century (French) opera and theatre, Wagner regarded his theatre as something other.²²⁷ Inspired by the principles of the Greek ideal, and the experience of a unified dramatic experience, the auditorium was ultimately designed to surround the audience, fixing them in position to intensify the relationship between audience and the drama on the stage.²²⁸ Wagner intended the *Festspielhaus* to be a revered site for art, requiring obeisance to the idea of (his) art necessitating a ritualistic journey or pilgrimage.²²⁹ The setting of the *Festspielhaus* would be 'far from the smoke...of our urban civilisation'.²³⁰ At the opening of the theatre in 1876,

²²² Semper, *Style*, 777.

²²³ Semper, *Style*, 292.

²²⁴ Schölermann, *Ver Sacrum*, February, 1898, who used 'Kunsttempel', 22-24.

²²⁵ VBKÖ, 'Dieses Gesamtwirken aller bildenden Künste entspricht dem, was Wagner in seinen musikalischen Dramen anstrebte und erreichte', *Klinger:Beethoven*, 20.

²²⁶ RWPW, VI, 158.

²²⁷ WOMAD, 37-74.

²²⁸ N Bowman, 'Investing a Theatrical Idea: Wagner's Festspielhaus', in *Education Theatre Journal*, 18, 4 Special International Theatre Issue, December 1966, 429-438.

²²⁹ WOMAD, 366.

²³⁰ Wagner's letter to Liszt, 1852, cited Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art*, 24.

he wrote: 'The temple will proclaim the inner spirit (of his art and the essential spirit of the German people), to the outer eye'.²³¹ In accordance, he famously described the staging of his final music drama, *Parsifal*, as a 'holy stage festival...hallowed for so sublime a rite'.²³² In Wagner's eyes, theatre, like the temple, was the new religion.

The mixing of spiritual ideas drawn from classical, Jewish and Christian sources in the one imaginative and physical space had its precedents in the Secession art world. Klinger's syncretic *Christ in Olympus* synthesised classical and Christian iconography, as did his *Beethoven* sculpture. The 'throne', cast in bronze, featured relief figures of Adam and Eve, the crucified Christ, and female forms representing ancient legends symbolising thirst, hunger and love. Hoffmann's *Tempelkunst* conception brought together similarly consonant and dissonant themes in the same space.

The idea that ancient Greece represented the highest form of culture, and fifth-century Attic tragedy its most perfect expression, was embedded in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music* (1871), which in its first edition was a tribute to Wagner. In his encomium Nietzsche acknowledged Wagner's 'magnificent celebratory essay on Beethoven'.²³³ Thus *The Birth of Tragedy* takes its stepping-off point from Wagner's tribute to Beethoven's work, the greatness of which rested on a synthesis of the rational and irrational forces of poetry and music. Nietzsche's thesis was lyrically posited in his argument that great art was characterised by the essential opposing forces of the Apollonian and Dionysian, representing the rational on the one hand, and the transgressive and unbounded on the other. In Attic Greece, the purest distillation of the Apollonian impulse was Greek epic poetry. Through its narrative, epic poetry assembled images of individual persons and events. Poetry was therefore closest to the art of image-creation. The Dionysian impulse was exemplified by 'quasi-orgiastic forms of music'.²³⁴

Nietzsche described these two opposing impulses as the Apollonian 'art of the Image-maker or sculptor (*Bildner*) and the imageless art of music which is that of Dionysos'.²³⁵ Nietzsche's project, following Schopenhauer and Wagner, was to instate a Dionysian interpretation of art in which the 'horror' of untrammelled confusion, represented by the unbounded Dionysian urge, was masked by its other, the Apollonian image of 'intense pleasure, wisdom and beauty'.²³⁶ While the Apollonian effect, as Shaw-Miller describes, 'creates the necessary distance to save us' from the worst excesses of the Dionysian, the

²³¹ WOMAD, 360.

²³² WOMAD, using 'Bühnenweihfestspiel (haus), 'Parsifal at Bayreuth' (1882), 369.

²³³ Nietzsche, *The Birth Tragedy*, 13.

²³⁴ R. Geuss, 'Introduction', *The Birth of Tragedy*, pp. vii-xxx (xi).

²³⁵ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 14.

²³⁶ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 17.

Dionysian impulse 'triumphs over Apollo', in the form of music.²³⁷ The Dionysian was to be found in its most celebratory form in Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*.²³⁸

The unmediated urges of Nietzsche's Dionysian impulse would ideally meet in the embodiment of the artist 'as imitator', an artist 'of both dream and intoxication at once'.²³⁹ The dream state, a significant force in Schopenhauer's writings, which was later emphasised in Wagner's 1870 'Beethoven' essay, becomes, in Nietzsche's work, the persistent motif of an art formed 'out of the spirit of music': the 'dream-image' (*Gleichnishaft*), or the 'semblance of semblance' (appearance).²⁴⁰ Music was made visible as a 'symbolic dream image'.²⁴¹

It has been argued that the Secession notion of *Tempelkunst* and the relationship between Klimt's *Beethoven Frieze*, Mahler's own music compositions, and Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, were bound together through their progenitors' devotion to the ideas of Nietzsche's opposing yet mutually interdependent forces, and their collective interest in the earlier work of Goethe's *Faust*.²⁴² Indeed, Nietzsche's words on Beethoven also appear explicitly to lay down a challenge to the artist to 'transform Beethoven's *Hymn to Joy* into a painting, placing no constraints on one's imagination'.²⁴³ This has been interpreted as the challenge with which Klimt engaged directly in his creation of the *Beethoven Frieze*.²⁴⁴

However, it is not the path of Nietzsche's ideas on the twin forces of Dionysus and Apollo, a recurrent theme in analysis of Viennese culture, but rather Nietzsche's theatrical realm of *Schein*, which appears to hold particular significance for Secession art. As the preceding chapter hypothesized, the *Lieder* issue of *Ver Sacrum*, December 1901, exhibited *Schein*. Saturated with the notion of star and moonlight in the musico-poetic content and the corresponding decorative element, the issue shimmered with use of metallic silver ink throughout. Its surfaces evaded penetration and reflected light. Similarly, this exhibition was singular in its effects: the interplay of two- and three-dimensional art objects with their stress on surface ornament and precious light-reflecting materials. *Schein* 'defines containment (of the Will) in the forms of time and space'.²⁴⁵ *Schein* evoked the dream-state.

²³⁷ Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds*, 43.

²³⁸ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 18.

²³⁹ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 19.

²⁴⁰ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 19, 26.

²⁴¹ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 30, author's emphasis.

²⁴² Willsdon, 'Klimt's Beethoven Frieze', 44-73.

²⁴³ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 18.

²⁴⁴ Hiles, 'Klimt's Beethoven Frieze', 169-170.

²⁴⁵ Nietzsche, 'The Dionysiac World View', (editors' definition), 156.

Nietzsche's *Schein* may be divined in art objects as the embodiment of 'the golden light of Apollo' and the essence of the theatrical in visual representation.²⁴⁶ Nietzsche refers to Apollo as 'the luminous one', ('*der Scheinende*'), who governs the inner world of fantasy.²⁴⁷ 'The lovely semblance of dream is the father of all arts of image-making... even while this dream-reality is most alive, we retain a pervasive sense that it is *semblance*'.²⁴⁸ Nietzsche suggested that the Greeks 'dreamed in a plastic way... with the logical causality of line and outline... and a sequence of scenes resembling their best bas-reliefs'.²⁴⁹

Nietzsche's words are suggestive of the Secession exhibition wall reliefs which had been through a process of transformation from *Flächenkunst* to *Raumkunst*, and set like *metopes* into the walls of the exhibition, projecting in space. Notable amongst them was 'a siren rising from the water, her eyes glistening with mother of pearl' by the artist Richard Lucksch.²⁵⁰ Ernst Stöhr's *Vanitas*, a graphic, spare sweep of lines, depicting the figure of a woman gazing into the eye sockets of a skull in Roller's catalogue, was positioned as a relief in the left hand aisle, or 'Klimt room' of the exhibition. [2.19] It seemed to draw its inspiration from Klimt's own imagery, the skull-like heads which accompany the *Furies*. The single, flowing line of the woodcut was transformed in its three-dimensional form to many. The face emerges from plaster ground, the surface partially coated with a beaten metal finish.²⁵¹ As one contemporary critic described, the effect of these supplementary artworks together with Klimt's frieze brought the audience to a hypnotic state in the presence of the *Beethoven* statue, 'prepared by an act of devotion'.²⁵² Nietzsche's writings appeared to prefigure the experience of a dissolving sense of reality:

As a block of marble, the statue is something very real, but the reality of the statue as a *dream figure* is the living person of the god ... (the artist), when he translates this image into marble, is playing with dream... Apollo is the god of dream-representation... he is the "luminous one" ('*der Scheinende*').²⁵³

Readers of this account should now imagine for a moment that we are amongst the thousand or so spectators who visited the *Klinger: Beethoven* exhibition every day, and followed the route prescribed in the catalogue. We are about to walk in to the presence of 'the luminous one... who reveals himself in brilliance'.²⁵⁴ It is a different experience to the one which might have been envisaged from the photographs published in *Deutsche*

²⁴⁶ Nietzsche, referring to the etymological root of Apollo, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 16.

²⁴⁷ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 16.

²⁴⁸ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 119.

²⁴⁹ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 19.

²⁵⁰ VBKÖ, *Klinger: Beethoven*, 5.

²⁵¹ VBKÖ, *Klinger: Beethoven*, 13.

²⁵² Willson, citing *Neue Freie Presse*, 'Klimt's Beethoven Frieze', ff, 71; Bouillon, *Klimt: Beethoven*, citing *Neue Freie Presse*, 18.

²⁵³ Nietzsche, 'Dionysiac World View', 119, 120.

²⁵⁴ Nietzsche, *Ibid*, 120.

Kunst und Dekoration which were empty of people.²⁵⁵ We enter the exhibition rooms from the light of the main entrance hall walking first through the internal doorways in to a narrow corridor leading to the left hand aisle. Through this first narrow corridor, darker than the spaces of the central hall beyond, we catch glimpses of Klinger's *Beethoven* and its surrounding decorative wall art, through three apertures. It is like catching sight of a great *Nike*, through the half-closed doors of a Greek temple.

Arriving in the 'Klimt room', we gaze upwards at the mysteries, shocks and ecstatic scenes of Klimt's frieze. [2.20] It is impossible not to follow its impenetrable trajectory along three of the four walls, walking through space and through time. The belt of the eunuch-like figure is encrusted with gold and brilliant blue stones. The embracing lovers, 'This Kiss for all the World' celebrates Beethoven's great work. Their figures are bound by the lightest threads of gold paint, their forms dissolve into one. The room is bathed in a golden glow from above. Decorative reliefs at eye level, each one different, depict a small, mysterious world, yet each one gleams with similar finishes. The artists are identified only with their stylised monograph. The art, it would seem, is more important here than the artist. Through large, square apertures cut into the walls to the right, Klinger's *Beethoven* can be viewed from our slightly elevated position.²⁵⁶ It is quite unlike any other sculpture or monument which has been seen before. Making our way towards the gateway with its gilded crossbars at the far end of the room we pass Max Klinger's small, sculptured bust which emerges seemingly from broken marble. Above the doorway, a relief of abstract, lozenge-like geometric shapes appears to suggest that Klimt's scenes have been replaced by a series of ciphers.

Descending steps into a darker space, we emerge into the brightness of the large central room, approaching Klinger's monument from behind, following the exhibition plan. The monument rests on a shallow octagonal plinth. [2.21] The heads of white marble *putti* extend outwards from the surfaces of the bronze throne, roughened like the surfaces of the walls which surround it. The marble figure of Beethoven emanates 'a quiet interplay of force...the rhythm of movement seems connected to colour, and in the gleaming lights, the interplay of reflexes in multi-coloured marble and stone, a symphony of colours interwoven with light'.²⁵⁷ It is completely still. It seems to stop time.²⁵⁸ Behind Klinger's monument, Roller's mosaic represents *Falling Night*. Across the spaces of the central hall is a second mural by the Secession artist Adolf Böhm, depicting *Dawning Day*. [2.22] The diffused light reflects on the marble, bronze and jewelled surfaces of the monument, and catches the details of the murals which gleam with gold, mother of pearl intarsia, coloured

²⁵⁵ Lux, 'Klinger's Beethoven und die Moderne Raum-Kunst', 475-482.

²⁵⁶ The floor in the Klimt room was slightly raised.

²⁵⁷ Kühn, *Max Klinger*, 368.

²⁵⁸ Also see Cleaver, 'The Concept of Time in Modern Sculpture', for a comparison between the 'livng' surfaces and effects of Rodin's work, and the 'time-suspended' works of Klinger, 235.

glass, and metal. Their glittering surfaces and simple, dense colours 'deflect and dilute the impact of reality'.²⁵⁹ The surface designs proclaim their illusory world. Roller's mural depicts the slumberous, winged maiden which appeared in his poster for the exhibition, here as a repeating, figural motif. [2.23]

At close view, a single line tracing the outline of each of the figures can be observed. The figures hold their rigid shape, like a chorus, caught in suspended animation. 'The chorus sets up its own hyper-reality, which nullifies the ordinary world of everyday experience'.²⁶⁰ Roller's stylised figures holding an empty, all-seeing globe turn into simplified and gleaming ciphers from a greater distance. The subject matter disappears and instead evokes a series of signs and symbols, a surface pattern of vertical motifs. The centre of the mosaic is figured with simplified stars. With its repetitive phrasing, the work seems unending and unresolved. Adherence to surface, and the simplification and reduction of form, reflect back to archaic figuration. Yet Roller's hieratic design, geometric in style, like the repetitive patterns seen recently in *Ver Sacrum*, is emphatically new.²⁶¹ The mural on the facing wall features a scattering of stars, a vertical fall of golden fire framed by two angels, supported below by a flattened wave-like curve. Time seems suspended in the central hall between *Rising Day* and *Falling Night*.²⁶² 'In this place, here time becomes space'.²⁶³

The hall is full of the low susurration of voices and the swish of silk from the gowns of fashionably-dressed women and a light, incessant sound of water falling in the fountains set into two semi-circular alcoves on either side of Roller's mural. Each alcove is guarded by hieratic, attenuated figures in bas-relief.²⁶⁴ There is something temple-like in these mysterious spaces. As the fountains play do we mistake our senses in this place, echoing the words of Wagner's *Tristan*, 'How do I hear the light?' ('*Wie hör ich das Licht?*').²⁶⁵ It is indeed, as Joseph August Lux described 'like some holy atmosphere evoked by temple-art'.²⁶⁶

²⁵⁹ Geuss, 'Introduction', *The Birth of Tragedy*, xx.

²⁶⁰ See Aaron Ridley, *Nietzsche on Art*, (London: Routledge, 2007), referring to the Apollonian realm, 15.

²⁶¹ Likeness of *Nef-She-Tefnut*, engraving, sarcophagus lid, Egyptian collection, Kunsthistorisches Museum, observed January 13th 2007, also noted Schafter, *Order of Ornament*, (ff), 247.

²⁶² Cleaver, 'The Concept of Time', 235.

²⁶³ Wagner, Act 1, *Parsifal* during transformative journey from profane to sacred regions, spoken by Guernemanz to Parsifal, cited various sources, see Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art*, 29.

²⁶⁴ 'Im rückwärtigen Teile des Saales zwei Brunnennischen mit plastischen Figuren aus blauem Stampfbeton, modelliert von Richard Luksch', VBKÖ, *Klinger: Beethoven*, 44.

²⁶⁵ Cited Patrick Carnegie, 'The Staging of "Tristan und Isolde": Landmarks along the Appian Way', Nicholas John (ed), *Tristan und Isolde: Richard Wagner, English National Opera Guide* (London: John Calder, 1981), 32.

²⁶⁶ Lux, *Deutsche Kunst*, 475.

In conclusion, the imagery of the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition was little-distant from Beethoven's musical world, a part of the mythicised Beethoven of romantic aesthetics, transfigured through time and transported to another space. As Maynard Solomon describes, starry heavens, images of nature animated by a numinous power and boundless yet active space were favoured Romantic images of Beethoven's himself.²⁶⁷ References to these themes are found in great profusion in Beethoven's works, famously in Schiller's poetry and the *Ninth Symphony*. Beethoven's 1820 *Lied*, 'Evening Song Beneath the Starry Heaven' contains words which were reflected in the titles of the two murals: 'When the sun sinks down and night descends...so great the soul feels, and from the dust breaks free'.²⁶⁸ In the pages of the catalogue, Secession artist Wilhelm List paid a subtle tribute to Beethoven's favoured imagery. His monograph was accompanied by a sketch of a few bars from Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*.²⁶⁹ [2.24]

Starry night skies quickly became emblematic of Roller's stage productions, firstly in his stage design paintings for the production of *Tristan und Isolde* which were realised in June 1902 during the last month of the exhibition. The stage designs indicate his intention to replace the Bayreuth convention of a leafy canopy in Act Two of Wagner's music drama with a starry night sky.²⁷⁰ In this respect Roller would realise the aspirations of the stage designer and theorist, Adolphe Appia (1862-1928), at a pivotal turning point in the history of stage design, as the following chapter will establish. Wagner's own writings on 'Stage Reform' heralded this later movement.²⁷¹ The stage-reform movement of the early twentieth century coincided with a similar movement in museum reform as established above. Both were concerned with the greater simplification of display and presentation.

Inside the *Secession Haus* during the weeks of this exhibition, external realities were suspended. Through its stress on Hoffmann's through-designed interior structure and the use of similar materials throughout, the *Tempelkunst* concept intensified the spectators' experience of the work. Roller and Hoffmann had set out to control the audience's experience. This is clear from the choreography of the audience through the exhibition spaces. As Hoffmann also declared in the exhibition catalogue, the audience would be 'prepared' for the experience of Klinger's *Beethoven* in the central hall, through various theatrical devices to enjoy its 'space and peace'.²⁷² The audience could see the *Beethoven* statue from the Klimt room, but could not approach it until they had completed the first part of their ritualistic passage through its spaces. The adherence to *Flächenkunst* in the form of murals and wall reliefs, freed tracts of open and

²⁶⁷ Solomon, *Late Beethoven*, 53.

²⁶⁸ Solomon, *Ibid*, 53.

²⁶⁹VBKÖ, *Max Klinger: Beethoven*, 52.

²⁷⁰ Carnegie, 'Designing Wagner', 53.

²⁷¹ Richard Wagner, 'Stage Reform', (1849); 'Nochmals Theatre-Reform', (1849), listed in Sadie (ed), *Dictionary of Music*, V26, 963.

²⁷²VBKÖ, *Max Klinger:Beethoven*, 24.

untrammelled floor space for the performance of an act of 'visual play' by the spectators, as Wagner described the theatrical experience, like actors in the spaces of a carefully decorated set.²⁷³ In the light of Nietzsche's theatrical realm of *Schein*, the gleaming surfaces of Secession art may be viewed as more than merely superficial decoration. Rather, the Secession created a total theatrical experience, a deliberate masking or deflection of reality, in order to reveal some deeper truths about the nature and experience of art.²⁷⁴ Their intention to destroy the artworks after the event supports this notion of a once-only theatrical experience.

Finally, the question remains of the celebrated intervention of the composer and conductor, Gustav Mahler, and the reputation of the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition as the apotheosis of the Secession's aspirations to create a Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Mahler's musical performance took place only once, at the private opening of *Exhibition* on the fourteenth of April, 1902, the day before the public opening.²⁷⁵ As Alma Mahler-Werfel described in her often-cited autobiography, the performance and the effect of the exhibition brought tears to the cheeks of Max Klinger.²⁷⁶ Certainly Max Klinger wrote to Roller in April 1902, thanking him warmly for his work on the exhibition, using the phrase '*ich schwärmte grad*' meaning 'rapturous appreciation'.²⁷⁷

However, only on this one occasion did Beethoven's music, Klinger's monument, the Secession art objects and the spatial experience of Hoffmann's *Tempelkunst* come together to create a unity of the arts, and a total experience which was greater than any single art object alone. The effect must have been glorious, for those privileged enough to see, and to hear even without voices, Schiller's poetry, or the full symphonic score. However, this thesis argues that musical form, sound and silence made their presence felt, heard and seen, in many different ways in the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition even without Mahler's direct contribution.

²⁷³ WOMAD, 369.

²⁷⁴ Geuss, 'Introduction', *Birth of Tragedy*, xx.

²⁷⁵ A version for wind and brass, see various accounts including HLG, *Mahler* V2, 512-513.

²⁷⁶ HLG, *Mahler* V2, 514.

²⁷⁷ MK:AR, (AM47401 RO), ÖTM, also Baker: Pausch, *Archiv*, 88.

Part 1: Tristan, Isolde and the spaces of the stage

The historic garb of opera, so rich in opportunities...is really the property of the Scenepainter and the Stage-tailor, and these two...have become the most important allies of the modern opera-composer...Had the musician not dissolved the whole drama, plot and characters into his music: and how should it stay beyond his power to turn into music...the drawings and colours of the painter and the tailor?¹

At some point in the months preceding Roller's February 1903 production of Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, his first at the Vienna Court Opera, he produced a series of nine drawings in dense black-and-white ink and pastel on board. [3.1] The series depicts the figures of Tristan and Isolde, either singly or together, in close embrace. Most striking for their wild, startling strangeness and drama are the representations of Isolde, particularly her figure depicted with hands outspread. [3.2] The drawing is neither a stage or costume design, although Roller created both, famously, for the 1903 production.² Rather, it appears as an expression of the persona of Isolde, a study in the psychological truth of the character, which draws out from the interior of the character a representation of the noumenal world in which she exists. Isolde has been transformed into the figure of woman as powerful, chthonic, a cipher, drawing energy from the universe. Stars stream from her hair in the black ground of the impression.

Below the image, and outside the frame, as he did for six of the drawings, Roller has written a phrase of musical notation from Wagner's music drama. In this case, it is accompanied by words from the text. The tiny musical fragment grounds Roller's impression of the characters in the profound aesthetic of Wagner's work. The musical phrase, with the words '*Frau Minne will: es werde Nacht*', ('Love's Goddess wishes it must be night'), is taken from Act Two, scene one, immediately preceding the symbolic extinguishing of the torch.³ It exemplifies Roller's practices which developed a new coherence in his contribution to the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition of 1902: the transformation of art into a greater expanded form through its union with others, and the transition from *Flächenkunst* to *Raumkunst*. The drawings hold firm to 'a single, guiding idea', in this case, the essence of Wagner's musical language as the inspiration for their

¹ RWPW, VII, 64, 65.

² For accounts of this production and its reception, See HLG, *Mahler*, V 2, 533-598; Millington and Spencer (eds), *Wagner in Performance*, 29-47; 48-59; Zychowicz, 'Reinventing the *Gesamtkunstwerk*', in *Tristania*, 85-110; Patrick Carnegy, *Wagner and the Art of Theatre* (London:Yale,2006), 135-208; Thursby, 'Mahler:Roller', 104-186.

³ Nicholas John (ed), *Tristan and Isolde: Richard Wagner*, 66.

visual representation.⁴ They have not yet been published in any previous book or article on Roller's work.⁵

In most accounts of Alfred Roller's stage design achievements, the February 1903 *Tristan und Isolde* at the Vienna Court Opera, his production *sui generis*, has been the starting point and the focus of accounts of his stage design work. This is not simply a matter of chronology. The production has been widely acknowledged as ground-breaking.⁶ It attested to the dramatic changes which Roller brought to the production qualities: firstly, to Wagner's music drama, and to other operatic works in collaboration with Gustav Mahler, notably those of Mozart, and secondly, from 1906, to productions of classical and contemporary works in the spoken-word theatre. As these accounts describe, Roller's major contribution to *Tristan und Isolde*, and other of his productions, relied on his invention of new effects using the relatively recently installed electrical lighting systems in theatres and opera houses across Europe.⁷

From the early 1880s, electricity had replaced various systems, including candle-lit footlights and central chandeliers, gas and kerosene lighting and the explosive 'ghost lights'.⁸ Other innovations had followed: the focusing of stage lights with mirrors and prisms; the first 'electric modern stage', a lighting scheme, with tracks and pathways for the movement of lighting equipment and rigs, introduced in Brünn, Roller's home city, Stuttgart, and Munich, in 1883, and then later the transformative Fortuny system of 1901, named after its textile-designer inventor. The skydome, or cyclorama, initially a system of

⁴VBKÖ, *Klinger:Beethoven*, 12.

⁵ Thursby suggests the undated drawings may have been developed by AR as 'audition materials' to present to GM, 'Mahler:Roller', 112. This claim is repeated in several papers, University Music Society, (Boston, USA, March 28th 2009, et al). No such claims are made here. However, there is a match not remarked on by Thursby between the distinctive ovaloid pattern on Tristan's cloak depicted in the drawings, and a photograph of Eric Schmedes, in the last act of the 1903 production (ÖTM), which indicates they were produced at the time of the production. The elision of AR's roles as designer of the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition of 1902, the production of his coloured stage-paintings for the first two acts of *Tristan und Isolde*, signed and dated 1902, provides this argument that AR transferred his aesthetics from the Secession to the stage. This case was first presented by the author, 'Alfred Roller and the Theatrical Moment in Exhibition Design: Revisiting the Beethoven Exhibition', Tenth Dorich House International Conference, Kingston, May 16th 2008. This chapter sets out to establish a continuity of aesthetic practices between the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition and *Tristan und Isolde* (1903), drawing on published and unpublished materials.

⁶ See HLG, *Mahler V2*, 571

⁷See James Laver, 'Continental Designers in the Theatre', in *The Studio Special* 86-87, 'Design in the Theatre' (London: The Studio, 1927-28), 21. For accounts of the development of lighting in theatre set design, see Kenneth MacGowan, *The Theatre of Tomorrow* (New York: Boni and Livericht, 1921); Lee Simonson, *The Stage is Set* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1932), 352-377; Lee Simonson, *The Art of Scenic Design: A Pictorial Analysis of Stage Stetting and its Relation to Theatrical Production* (New York: Harpers & Brothers, 1950), 19-50; Max Keller, *Light fantastic: The Art and Design of Stage Lighting* (London: Prestel, 1990); for a detailed historical and technical account, see Wolfgang Greisenegger and Tadeusz Krzeszowia, *Schein-Werfen: Theater Licht Technik* (Wien: ÖTM with Christian Brandstätter, 2009).

⁸An explosive mixture of flame, limestone and hydro-oxygen, first used in Covent Garden in 1837 which lit up the stage, but left a dark zone in the centre. See Greisenegger, *Schein-Werfen*, 67.

light reflected on bands of coloured silk, and then a shell-like structure which opened inwards, allowed for the projection of diffused lighting effects. These effects were suggestive, as James Laver, in a 1927 article in *The Studio* described, of 'infinite distance...an open sky'.⁹ This system, and others such as the revolving stage, was also developed fully in Germany at this time. The effect of electric light on conventional stage flats and backdrops painted to represent atmosphere, weather, and the three-dimensional perspective of rooms, houses, streets, landscapes and other settings rendered them even more 'flat' and artificial than had the unwavering flood of gas jet lighting, compared to candlelight.¹⁰

Roller was the first stage designer famously to orchestrate different, light-and-colour effects for each of the three acts of *Tristan und Isolde*, most notably deep violet for the 'transfigured night' of Act Two, and cold, silvery-grey, for Act Three to evoke death redemption and transfiguration.¹¹ To achieve these effects, a large cyclorama was purchased at the Vienna Court Opera in June 1902 for the new production.¹² Roller's breakthrough in stage design, to harness the new technology of electricity with which to illuminate Wagner's own text and the interior life of the protagonists, has been extensively described in other accounts and will not be expanded here.¹³

The 1903 production of *Tristan und Isolde* in Vienna marked the twentieth anniversary of Wagner's death. It is in this musical work where arguably Wagner's theories of drama find their most potent expression. Or as Adorno describes it, Wagner, 'with incomparable genius', created 'an almost perfect unity' between subjectivity and objectivity, 'the musical site of the phantasmagoria'.¹⁴ There is therefore a suggestive symmetry in this thesis that this particular work binds together composer Gustav Mahler, the music director of the Court Opera, Alfred Roller, Chairman of the Vienna Secession, and, indirectly, the Wagnerian stage theorist and designer, Adolphe Appia, in their concerns for a new musico-dramatic experience, at pivotal moments in their creative lives. This moment, the period between April 1902 and February 1903, and these three figures, played no small part in propelling the twentieth-century movement described as 'theatre reform', into existence. The term, 'theatre reform' described the modernisation of the art of stage design. It gained common currency in the first decade of the twentieth century, between the years of publication firstly of Appia's and then of Edward Gordon Craig's important

⁹ Laver, 'Continental Designers in the Theatre', 21.

¹⁰ Simonson, *The Art of Scenic Design*, 19-44.

¹¹ See HLG, *Mahler*, V2, for description of colour effects, 572-3.

¹² Baker, *Alfred Roller*, 52

¹³ See above, 120 (ff 2), also see Werkner, *Austrian Expressionism*, 175-180 and others for account of Schoenberg's minimalist *Gesamtkunstwerk*, 'Die Glückliche Hand' (1908-1913), its expressive use of colour and light widely thought to be inspired by AR's production.

¹⁴ Adorno, 'Ver une musique informelle', *Quasi un Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso, 1992), 306-307, also citing his earlier work, *In Search of Wagner*, 1981.

reforming theories.¹⁵ An extensive review in the Viennese art, design and interiors periodical, *Hohe Warte* in 1908, 'Modern Theatre Reform' ('*Moderne Theaterreform*') featuring several of Roller's stage-design paintings and groundplans, shows how quickly this term became associated with Roller's own endeavours.¹⁶

This work characterises certain principles of dramatic presentation which set it aside, not only from the operatic form of Wagner's peers and forebears, but also from Wagner's other music dramas.¹⁷ In *Tristan und Isolde*, 'the world is swept away', leaving only one thing left alive, 'yearning, yearning', as its composer described.¹⁸ The importance of the interiority of the work is its defining feature. As Appia simply described, in 1899, 'Wagner in *Tristan* allows us to share the emotional life of his hero much more completely and more intensely than in any other of his works', and possibly any other previous work on the operatic stage.¹⁹ Here was the ultimate challenge for the stage designer:

the members of the audience are spectators and (yet) at the same time remain blind supernumeraries. The fundamental principle on which the staging of *Tristan* is based is this: the audience must see the world of the protagonists as they themselves see it.²⁰

Roller's impressions of the protagonists, surrounded by nothing more than the effects of the swirl of the universe, convey their world as timeless, and removed from reality.²¹ They are not really here. They are elsewhere. Roller's stage design aesthetic, at the outset, was embedded in this injunction to enable the audience to see the world of the characters as they themselves saw it. In other words, his task was to bridge the physical and metaphysical distance between the performance on the stage, the essence of the work performed and staged, and the imaginations of the audience in the theatre.

¹⁵ RW used the term 'Stage Reform' in two articles published in 1849. It came into common use between 1890 and 1910. See Beacham, 'Introduction Adolphe Appia, 1862-1928', *Texts*, 1-14, also Appia, 'Ideas on a Reform of Our Mise en Scène', *Texts*, 59-65; AR, 'Stage Reform?' ('*Bühnenreform?*'), *Der Merker*, 1909; Edward Gordon Craig, *On the Art of the Theatre* (1911), (London: Heinemann, 1956). For an account of stage reform ideas pioneered by Georg Fuchs and Peter Behrens, see Stanford Anderson, 'Peter Behrens Highest Kultursymbol, the Theatre', *Perspekta*, V 26, *Theatre Theatricality and Architecture*, 1990, 103-134. For an Austrian perspective see Michael Cherlin, H Filipowicz and R L Rudolph (eds), *The Great Tradition and Its Legacy: the Evolution of Dramatic and Musical Theatre in Austria and Central Europe*, Austrian Studies Volume 4, (New York: Berghahn, 2003).

¹⁶ Max Littmann, 'Moderne Theaterreform', *Hohe Warte*, issue 13, IV, 1908, 193-207.

¹⁷ See for example Bryan Magee, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1997), 378-388; Thomas Grey, 'Magnificent Obsession: Tristan und Isolde as the Object of Musical Analysis' in Nikolaus Bacht (ed), *Music, Theatre and Politics in Germany* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 51-77.

¹⁸ RW, cited Osborne, *The Complete Operas*, 141.

¹⁹ Appia, 'Tristan und Isolde', trans. Lee Simonson, in WOMAD, 379.

²⁰ Appia, 'Tristan und Isolde', 379, 380.

²¹ See also Magee, *Schopenhauer*, 385.

Wagner defined this all-important transition, from the mythic, imaginary world of the work to the essential essence of its presentation on the stage, as dramatic truth. 'The shapes that had been in *mythos* merely as shapes of thought, were now presented in actual bodily portrayal by living men'.²² In this way, 'the artwork... steps from fantasy to reality'.²³ This transition, from fantasy to reality, stands behind the notion that the theatrical experience breaks down the boundaries between what is real and what is not real, to create the theatrical effect of 'dissolving reality'. The notion of 'dissolving reality' has been expressed in this thesis as different notions of time and space attendant on *Ver Sacrum* and the *Secession Haus* exhibitions.

The purpose here, as in the preceding two chapters, is in part to establish how the aesthetic spaces of the Secession owed their inspiration or influence to ideas derived from Wagner's notion of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or which represented the important conditions for the creation of a total work of art. These were characterised in Chapter two as three overriding principles: firstly, the overview of a single guiding creative idea and its controlling forces; secondly, the creation, throughout the duration of the experience of a prevailing or consistent atmosphere, or *Stimmung*, which Wagner described as 'a decisive mood', and thirdly that the theatrical experience breaks down the boundaries between what the real, and the imaginary - or in Wagner's words, to convey through the drama, the recognition of its essence or feeling.²⁴ These are the recurring themes of this third chapter, which is concerned with the third space transformed by Secession art practices, the spaces of the stage. In this chapter, greater stress is given to the notion of *Stimmung* and its manifestation in Roller's stage productions as an indicative sign of a newly realised space of art, between the action on the stage and the audience.

Roller's reputation as a stage designer in Vienna, particularly at the Court Opera, was established on the pivotal 1903 production of *Tristan und Isolde*. This reputation rested on his perceived achievement in the visual fulfilment of the Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Or, as Viennese music critics Max Kalbeck, the Wagnerian Theodor Helm and Julius Korngold had typically stated in their reviews of the production, Roller had 'elevated the status of opera to the *Gesamtkunstwerk*...while respecting Wagner's own precepts', and so successfully that one could 'see and touch the music'.²⁵ He had 'created stage pictures full of atmosphere', and 'painted Tristan music'.²⁶ This chapter is intended to illuminate the parallels and similarities across the spaces of art governed by Roller's pivotal roles, and to explore how he interpreted and put into practical action the defining

²² WOMAD, 89.

²³ WOMAD, 89.

²⁴ WOMAD, 267.

²⁵ HLG, *Mahler V2*, 579-580. HLG notes Kalbeck as a correspondent of the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, see ff 58, 27, and Helm as correspondent for *Musikalisches Wochenblatt*, ff166, 580.

²⁶ HLG, *Mahler V2*, Korngold, 580.

concerns of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* in his own chosen field of stage design. Like the preceding two Chapters, it also seeks to establish how Roller used the *Stoff* or materials at his command to achieve a complete composition.

These primary, archival materials are drawn from four of his stage productions: the stage-design paintings (1902), and the unpublished hand-drawn groundplan for *Tristan und Isolde* (1903); stage-design paintings for the 1904 production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*; the unpublished paintings for the 1905 production of Wagner's *Das Rheingold* (1903-4). Finally, a series of unpublished scene-by-scene vignettes for the 1909 production of Goethe's *Faust Part One*, staged at the Berlin *Deutsches Theater*, exceptional in form in the context of Roller's stage-design paintings. The materials have been chosen firstly to establish Roller's concern for the art of *Stimmung*, and secondly, for the manipulation of stage space through the scenic art of framing, and the concentration of the drama in the spaces of the stage. The stage productions they represent do not follow chronologically in the account below, but are used to illustrate these defining characteristics of Roller's aesthetic practices.

Art-historical accounts of Alfred Roller's contribution to the Secession do no more than briefly refer to his stage design aesthetics.²⁷ They do not directly connect Roller's aesthetics for the Secession with those he brought into practice at the Vienna Court Opera. Neither do they establish that his aesthetic practices in periodical and exhibition design were profoundly interconnected through Roller's concerns for space as a material of art in its own right. This chapter argues that the practices Roller brought to bear in the Secession's new spaces of art and his various pivotal roles for the Secession intersect and overlap with his official appointment, in June 1903, as head of stage design (*Leiter des Ausstattungswesens*) at the Vienna Court Opera. This account aims to establish how Roller's practices were evoked in the materials of Roller's art, illustrating the permeability of these spaces and the movement of ideas from one to another.

Various important musical and theatrical figures of Roller's period are referred to here to illuminate and provide a context for Roller's aesthetics of stage design. Adolphe Appia (1862-1928), who is widely acknowledged as having influenced Roller's stage design practices, takes on greater prominence. In the Roller archive, three warmly-worded letters from Appia to Roller in 1907 on the subject of Wagner's *Parsifal* bear witness to their mutual familiarity with each other's work. These letters have rarely been remarked upon.²⁸ The second of these letters includes an eight-page, handwritten account of Appia's scenic ideas for *Parsifal*, with reproductions of his stage design drawings. His

²⁷ Vergo's vignette on Roller referring to *Tristan und Isolde* suggests Vergo's view of Roller's Secession experience as important to the stage, *Art in Vienna*, 156-159.

²⁸ Baker:Pausch, *Archiv*, (AM47.008-09 RO), 15. Not referred to either by Manfred Wagner or Thursby.

detailed account appears to indicate Appia's confidence in Roller to devise a production 'Out of the Music', Appia's defining scenic imperative.²⁹

Part 2: Alfred Roller, from *Schriftführer* to *Leiter des Ausstattungswesens*

It is a commonly held view that Roller sprang unschooled into the role of stage designer in 1902-3 at the Vienna Court Opera, in collaboration with Gustav Mahler.³⁰ In extensive histories on Gustav Mahler, and on theatre design which examine Roller's opera achievements, this view has been partially tempered with references to Roller's distinctive Secession style (*Secessionstil*) which was invested in his designs for scenery, stage props and costumes. Roller was the 'Secession painter', who had 'long pondered the problems of stage design for operas'.³¹ Evidence of his early aspirations to work in theatre rely on an account of his childhood ambition, 'to be one of the people who worked backstage', drawing on anecdotes by Roller's first biographer, the Viennese playwright and theatre critic, Max Mell, from a slim volume published in 1922.³² Roller was 'an artist of rare insight whose inspired collaboration interpreted Mahler's musical reforms to make them convincing and intelligible'.³³ Roller's 'Secessionist delight in exuberantly decorative effects, his modernist approach and his Secession style...paved the way for important theatre work by, or inspired by other major figures in the history of twentieth century art'.³⁴ The intentions of the Secession, whose aims 'were to present art dramatically, as though staged', informed Roller's contribution.³⁵ The distinctive Secession style of Roller's casket of potions offered to *Isolde* in the first act of the music drama was much remarked on, and prefigured the work of the *Wiener Werkstätte*. [3.3] Yet stage, music and theatre design histories refer only indirectly to Roller's earlier artistic milieu.

It is true that Roller had no previous theatre design experience. Roller's various practices in the new spaces of art created by the Secession in 1898, the two-dimensional surface of their art periodical, *Ver Sacrum*, and the arena spaces of the *Secession Haus*, could not have completely prepared him for the vastness of the spaces of the Vienna Court Opera stage, one of the largest in Europe. Nevertheless he came to stage design with a set of aesthetic practices which informed his earlier years in three important and pivotal roles: Secession '*Schriftführer*' in 1897; overall editor of *Ver Sacrum* in its founding year

²⁹ Appia's diagram of the hierarchy of opera production titled 'Out of the Music (in the widest sense)', Appia, *Texts*, fig.7, 38.

³⁰ For a brief acknowledgement that AR's 'huge mural painting' for the *Klinger: Beethoven* exhibition anticipated his stage designs, see Carnegy, *Wagner and the Art of Theatre*, 163. For a summary account, see Pausch et al (eds), *Alfred Roller und seine Zeit*, 11-13.

³¹ HLG, *Mahler V2*, 560, also Greisnegger-Georgila, 'Mahler engaged Roller although he had scarcely any stage experience', 'From Stage Set to Symbolic Stage', 223.

³² Max Mell, *Alfred Roller*, 20.

³³ Heinrich Kralik, *The Vienna Opera*, trans. Richard Rickett (Vienna: Binder Rosenbaum, 1963), 69.

³⁴ Carnegy, 'Designing Wagner', 57, 58.

³⁵ K Ditzler, 'Gustav Mahler and the Vienna Court Opera', *IRASM* 29, 1, 1998, 24.

of 1898; Secession exhibition designer, often accredited with 'spatial arrangement,' in Secession catalogues, and ultimately Chairman of the organising committee and overall co-ordinator for the defining *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition. In each of these roles, Roller personified a turning-point from the convention of nineteenth-century craftsmanship or mechanic concerned solely with a singular expression of his craft, to an altogether different role. The same leap of imagination, to convey the essence of a work's significance through its presentation, brought Roller to the centre stage of the theatre reform movement in 1902.

There were at least one hundred and sixty Roller productions from 1903 until his death in 1935. Roller worked initially with Gustav Mahler, and subsequently with other leading figures in opera and the spoken-word theatre: with poet and playwright Hugo von Hofmannsthal; the opera composer Richard Strauss in partnership with von Hofmannsthal; with actor and theatre impresario Max Reinhardt in Vienna and Berlin, and with critic, writer, Secession supporter and playwright, Hermann Bahr, for the Burgtheater, Vienna. He produced stage and costume designs for the operas of Wagner, Mozart, Beethoven, Puccini, Verdi and Stravinsky; for the plays of Schiller, Sophocles, Aeschylus, Goethe, Calderon and of Shakespeare. Amongst them, famously, were many first performances, including Hugo Wolf's ill-fated *Der Corregidor* (1904); the first performance of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* in Vienna (1908), and Hofmannsthal's recapitulation of the medieval mystery play, 'Everyman' (*Jedermann*), (1911). Many of his first productions were enduring, notably the first performance of *Der Rosenkavalier*, (1911) at the Dresden Court Opera.³⁶ This too was presented by theatre director and impresario, Max Reinhardt, with whom Roller enjoyed a long and fruitful collaboration dating from 1906.³⁷

Der Rosenkavalier has a particular place in Vienna's operatic life, and in 'operatic modernism', a term coined and described by Schorske.³⁸ Based on a periodisation from the death of Wagner (1883) to 1930, Schorske notes the decade of 1890 as a supreme 'outburst of a particular modernist consciousness' marked by the Secession movements, particularly Vienna, and its dominant characteristic, the sense of renewal first indicated in

³⁶See AR, *Der Rosenkavalier: Figurinen von Alfred Roller* (Wien: Verlag Dr Richard Strauss, 1996), for folio of reproductions of stage, costume designs and groundplans.

³⁷AR first worked with Max Reinhardt on the first production of Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Oedipus and the Sphinx* (1906), at the *Deutsches Theater*, Berlin in 1906. See account below.

³⁸C E Schorske, 'Operatic Modernism', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* XXX VI:4, Spring 2006, 675-681. Schorske draws on Michael P Steinberg, 'The Politics and Aesthetics of Operatic Modernism', also *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 629-648, Ibid. For the significance of *Rosenkavalier* in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna, see Simon Williams, 'Der Rosenkavalier and the idea of Habsburg Austria', in S M Lodato, S Aspden and W Bernhardt (eds), *Word and Music Studies: Essays in Honor of Steven Paul Scher on Cultural Identity and the Musical Stage*, (New York: Rodopi, 2002), 263-275.

the title of *Ver Sacrum*.³⁹ *Der Rosenkavalier* similarly marks a defining moment which crystallised the notion of youth and its secession from the old order, rather than modernism defined as a rupture with historicism (or 'critical modernism', in Viennese culture).⁴⁰ The story of *Der Rosenkavalier* represents an alliance between the old (eighteenth century) aristocracy, and the new bourgeoisie, both modern and 'full of historical accretions'.⁴¹ Nostalgic in its mood, yet sharpened by the irrevocable passing of time and the prevailing notion of change, the work, and Roller's staging, as Schorske describes 'dramatised how a historicist survival, tempered by a modern musical idiom could be managed'.⁴²

As his stage painting shows, the frosted, silvery baroque-style of both sets and costumes reflected Strauss' own musical language for the work. [3.4] Yet his contribution extended beyond sets and costumes to the manipulation of stage space. Evan Baker reveals that Roller's detailed stage manual, produced at the request of Hofmannsthal and Strauss, and which included blocking details for the choreographic movement and placement of the singers on the stage, was ground-breaking for its time.⁴³ As Hofmannsthal confided during rehearsals, 'Everything has started to become more and more real; so human, so eighteenth-century, something I have never before seen on the stage before. Roller has created this for us'.⁴⁴ The production, in its *Rollerisch* essence, an epithet given to many of his presentations, prevails in opera houses today, as if Roller, through his concept, captured a frozen, timeless moment for all time.

Roller's contribution also included the reinvigoration of existing works, both on the opera and the spoken-word stages. Beethoven's *Fidelio*, 1904, after *Tristan und Isolde*, was the second landmark collaboration between Mahler and Roller. The reinvigoration process was initiated firstly, dramatically and musically, by alterations made by Mahler.⁴⁵ To give greater intensity to the dramatic intent, amongst many innovative lighting and setting changes in Roller's new staging, Beethoven's political prisoners emerged haltingly from below the stage, from the 'dark holes of the dungeon, one by one in small groups... blind and stumbling', into the light, for the first time.⁴⁶ Music critic Julius Korngold remarked that Roller's stage setting had 'entered into a symbolic relationship with two other mood-making elements (*Stimmungselemente*), action and music'.⁴⁷

³⁹ Schorske, 'Operatic Modernism', 676.

⁴⁰ Janik, 'Vienna 1900 Revisited', 32.

⁴¹ Schorske, 'Operatic Modernism', 677.

⁴² Schorske, 'Operatic Modernism', 677.

⁴³ For an account of the exceptional role played by AR see Evan Baker, 'Designing and Rehearsing *Der Rosenkavalier*: Alfred Roller and the staging of opera', *San Francisco Opera Season 2006-7* (San Francisco: San Francisco Opera Productions, 2006), 1-5.

⁴⁴ Cited Baker, 'Designing *Der Rosenkavalier*', 3.

⁴⁵ HLG, *Mahler V3*, 2-14, (2).

⁴⁶ HLG, *Mahler V3*, 4.

⁴⁷ HLG, *Mahler V3*, 12.

Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Richard Strauss and their collaborator Hermann Bahr also entrusted Roller with their earliest thoughts and plans on the founding of the Salzburg Festival in 1906.⁴⁸ In Roller's archives rests a typed document that enshrines the aims and justifies the purposes of the Salzburg Festival through a series of questions and answers about its role and place in the artistic life of Austria, and of Europe. It appears to be a document intended as a blueprint for public communication. Hofmannsthal, whose name is scribbled on the top right-hand corner in Roller's hand, may firstly have drafted the answers.⁴⁹ Given Roller's role as *Schriftführer* for the Secession, it is not unlikely that the two men worked on these statements together or that Roller collected together a consensus view and delivered a clear synthesis in written form. In these spaces of the stage, Roller would continue to demonstrate his ability to draw together 'the *view-in-common* of the essence of things', as Wagner described of the idealised dramatic experience.⁵⁰

Later, when invited to contribute his views for the layout of the new Salzburg *Festspielhaus* in 1919, Roller recommended, in very Wagnerian spirit, a two-thousand seater space 'without ornament, and coloured in very dark tones'.⁵¹ This view of a darker and radically simplified theatre had been prefigured in an earlier prescription for the potential for stage design of a more abstract nature. In 1863, Wagner had written of his ambition for a new theatre which would be as 'simple as possible, perhaps just of wood, with no other consideration but the suitability of its interior for the artistic purpose'.⁵²

Finally, in this summary account, Roller's production of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* in 1922 at the Vienna *Burghtheater* with Max Reinhardt was the first to realise the staging completely in stark black-and-white, as Roller's etchings (1921) clearly and dramatically demonstrate.[3.5] Transposing his practices in *Flächenkunst* to the stage, in these characterisations of the play, Roller graphically embodied the particular spirit encompassed by Shakespeare's bleak, denatured world of violence and death. If theatrical modernism depends for its definition in part on 'a harmonious relationship between foreground and background', theatre historian George Kernodle's distinction, and the dissolution of perspective in favour of compression of space, this production, with its exaggerated contrasts and suppression of modelling may stand as a signifier of such concerns.⁵³ The designs for *Coriolanus* graphically marked the transition of Roller's ideas

⁴⁸ Steinberg, *Austria as Theatre*, 43.

⁴⁹ It is believed that the answers were Hofmannsthal's, but this is not confirmed. The document is undated, source ÖTM.

⁵⁰ WOMAD, 89.

⁵¹ Steinberg, *Austria as Theatre*, 63.

⁵² Osborne, *The Complete Operas*, 186.

⁵³ George R Kernodle, 'Wagner, Appia and the Idea of Musical Design', *Educational Theatre Journal*, V6, 3, (October, 1964), 223-230 (225).

from *Flächenkunst* and *Raumkunst*, to 'eine *Rahmenkunst*', or 'an art of framing', the term Roller used in his 1909 *Der Merker* article on stage-reform to define the art of the stage designer.⁵⁴

The transition of Roller's aesthetics:

Wagner's ideas on the importance of the spatial dimension of the theatrical experience were made explicit in his account of the architecture and design of the Bayreuth *Festspielhaus* in 1876. The spaces of the stage as a dimension of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, lyrically described as 'the warm-life-blown framework of the Future Stage', were, rather, implicit.⁵⁵ Yet Roller came to the spaces of the stage with a pre-determined aesthetic, that space – surface space and arena space – was a material of art in its own right: permeable, mutable, and essential to the formation of new art forms.

As we have seen, Roller's April 1898 letter to Gustav Klimt, likening the spatial relationship of each issue of *Ver Sacrum* to an exhibition, showed that he envisaged the aesthetic ground on which he worked as permeable space which operated temporally and spatially as a series of scenes. Similarly, Roller's mosaic design for the Breitenfelder Church, transferred to the setting for the Fourth Secession Exhibition, showed his facility for the play of artworks in different yet inter-connecting spaces. The brief reprise below may show in what ways Roller transferred such tendencies from the new spaces of art designated by the Vienna Secession, to the Court Opera, and other stages and theatres beyond Vienna. The transition of Roller's ideas was exemplified in the motif of the star.

In the 1901 *Lieder* issue of *Ver Sacrum*, Alfred Roller's graphic art for '*Siehst du den Stern*' was saturated with the notion of starlight, reflected in the poetic content of the *Lied*, the corresponding musical structure, and the use of metallic silver ink throughout the issue. A certain ambiguity or dissonance existed between image, music and text: the figures appeared oblivious to the sentiment expressed in the words, and the fall of the musical cadence. Roller's cascade of stars, which drift across the embracing figures, were simple, solid forms, gleaming on the surface of the page with reflected light. Stars, which were amongst the most perfect composite forms, Gottfried Semper described, emanated from the mineral world. Semper stressed the importance of the principles of these simple geometric forms, describing them as self-contained.⁵⁶ Indifferent to the 'outside world', their surrounding decorative context, they transferred easily from one medium to another, crossing both time and space'.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ AR, 'Die Inszenierung ist doch durchaus eine Rahmenkunst', 'Bühnenreform?', *Der Merker*, I, 5, 10th December 1909, 193-197 (195).

⁵⁵ RWPW, VI, 141.

⁵⁶ Semper, *Style*, 83.

⁵⁷ Semper, *Style*, 84.

The motif of the star signified a trail of visual evidence, firstly from the realm of *Flächenkunst*, and the *Lieder* issue, and secondly to *Raumkunst*, and Roller's mural, 'Sinking Night', for the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition. The centre of Roller's mosaic was figured with simplified five-point linear star-shapes, each in a circle. The star design recalled hieratic forms, which had been transferred as the backdrop to a different temple-like space, Hoffmann's *Tempelkunst* interior.⁵⁸ The mural celebrated the idea of starlight and night in its design and title, and the point at which night is transformed into day. With its particular materials, however, another rhetorical level of meaning was added. The mosaic itself gleamed with light-reflective glass and gold to emulate Nietzsche's theatrical notion of *Schein*.

In February 1903 Roller's emblematic stars were found, most distinctively, exciting, overwhelming and, at the same time, annoying and disturbing by audiences and critics alike in the production of *Tristan und Isolde*.⁵⁹ [3.6] Roller invented a simple, new mechanism to convey the idea of starlight as 'real'. He used the materials of painting in a different way, promoting the surface of the canvas from passive backdrop or stage-flat to a more dynamic role. His star effects used electric light and canvas, described as a 'star (stage) drop', which featured cutouts of numerous starry holes, backlit by lighting instruments located behind the canvas.⁶⁰ This, together with generous use of light-absorbing black velvet, another of the materials commonly used by Roller in his stage constructions, created the effect of thousands of stars, glittering in the dark sky.

The effects returned in many other productions requiring the magic, atmospheric effect of a night sky, widely observed and commented on as a distinguishing feature of Roller's style. For Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, the *Tristan* 'drop' was re-appropriated. Lighting was similarly introduced into *The Magic Flute* (1906), with its famously starry firmament, the dwelling place of the *Queen of the Night*. In the spoken-word theatre, Roller's stars were in evidence for Hofmannsthal's first staging of his monumental play, *Oedipus and the Sphinx* (*Oedipus und der Sphinx* (1906), and the central character's 'gradual climb upwards towards the mysterious starlit night', and later for Max Reinhardt's productions of *Midsummer's Night Dream* (1916) and *Macbeth* (1920).⁶¹

⁵⁸ The star-forms and the outline of the female figure used by Roller is very similar to an Egyptian tomb engraving in the Kunsthistorisches Museum.

⁵⁹ HLG, *Mahler*, V2, 561-585.

⁶⁰ Baker, 'Alfred Roller's *Don Giovanni*', 93.

⁶¹ M Dietrich, 'Twentieth Century Innovations in Stage Design, Stage Machinery and Theatre Architecture in Austria, in *Innovations in Stage and Theatre Design: Papers of the 6th Congress* (NY: International Federation of Research, 1969), for an account of AR's singular contribution to *Oedipus and the Sphinx*, 95-125 (107).

The setting of a starry night in opera and the theatre was a common enough occurrence, but Roller brought a particular new magic to such starlit settings. Perhaps in order to emphasise his ability to treat the spaces of his art as permeable, mutable, and essential, Roller left this trail of stars as a signature. It fixed his work within romantic nineteenth-century artistic concerns and notions of the sublime. Yet at the same time it identified the star with Roller's subtle, nuanced stage effects of light and dark as a very modern intervention in stage lighting technology, never before seen in opera productions on a major stage in Europe.⁶² New technology was harnessed to evoke atmospheric effects, the 'fleeting and contingent'.⁶³ Or as Schorske defined 'aesthetic modernism' in opera, 'there was a way of *organising* opera...in a modernist mode', which was historically rooted yet which put the materials of operatic practice and production to invoke a modern sentiment, and a new relationship with the public.⁶⁴

Roller's star-filled night sky for *Tristan und Isolde*, and the 'gushing colours' of other new lighting effects made it possible for the audience to appreciate the strange dissonances of Wagner's poetic text, as well as those of the music. Notably, Tristan's cry, '*Wie hör ich das Licht*' ('How do I hear the light') was converted from a somewhat cryptic expression in Act Three, to something more meaningful, perhaps the effect of sensory 'correspondence' (after Baudelaire), which Wagner had intended.⁶⁵ Roller's use of subtle fluctuations in lighting, during this passage and throughout the work, expanded the meaning of music, drama and poetry. Lighting was an essential element of the work, reflective of its innermost dramatic drives. Gustav Schonaich of the *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 25th 1903, described this moment in Roller's production:

Professor Roller, who knows Wagner's work intimately has judged these effects and realised them with the finest artistic sense...Sensations derive from an intimate understanding of the mysterious interplay of allusions with the text.⁶⁶

Adorno observed, of Wagner's music, that 'the innermost structure, the quality that by analogy with the language of painting we might call its *peinture*, can be appreciated only by an ear that is willing to venture out into the unknown'.⁶⁷ By implication, the innermost structures of a musical work pertaining to its visualisation may only be appreciated by an eye that is willing to venture into the unknown. This ensuing account examines the impetus for change in the ways in which Wagner's music dramas, and theatrical works more broadly were presented. It seeks to establish in what ways Roller was willing 'to venture out into unknown aesthetic territories' to draw out the painterly qualities of music

⁶²See introduction to this Chapter Three, above.

⁶³After Baudelaire.

⁶⁴Schorske, 'Operatic Modernism', 677, 678, 681 (Schorske's italics).

⁶⁵See Zychowicz, 'Reinventing the *Gesamtkunstwerk*', 102.

⁶⁶Cited Kurt Blaukopf and Herta Blaukopf (eds), *Mahler, His Life, Work and World* trans. Paul Baker (London: Thames&Hudson, 2000), 165.

⁶⁷Adorno, 'Wagner's Relevance Today,' 321.

and poetry.⁶⁸ This account of Roller's fourth pivotal role argues that Roller became the stage designer whom Wagner wished for, but never had.

Part 3: Alfred Roller, the stage designer Wagner never had

In 1848, Richard Wagner wrote to his mentor, the composer and conductor Franz Liszt, during the first staging of his music drama *Lohengrin* in Dresden, with his concerns about the production. He referred to Eduard Genast, the incumbent stage designer at the Dresden Opera House:

(Eduard) Genast remained entirely on the proper standpoint of the stage manager who arranges things in a general way and leaves the individual actors to find out for themselves what concerns them... *I ask him now to interfere even there*...let him be the trustee of the infant actors. Call the whole personnel to a reading rehearsal, take the score...and explain to the singers the meaning of situations and their connections with the music bar by bar.⁶⁹

As Wagner's letter implies, nineteenth-century theatre lacked the central creative role it was to play in the twentieth century. Theatre producer Mike Ashman recounts that 'for much of the nineteenth century, production was a two-dimensional service...in the sense of an organised, dramaturgically related, rehearsed staging, (it) scarcely existed'.⁷⁰ There were no specialist theatre or opera directors in Wagner's world, and no overall control was vested in any one person, much to Wagner's lifelong disappointment, and despite his own efforts to act as progenitor of the text, conductor, stage designer, and *regisseur*, or rehearsal director. In other words, Wagner's stage manager remained a simple mechanic, concerned only with 'getting the work on stage'.⁷¹ These concerns of Wagner's had been prefigured in the writings of German architect, stage designer and artist August Wilhelm Schlegel in 1808. Recognising the shortcomings and disjunction between the operatic vision, the synthesis of orchestra and voice, and the stage presentation, Schlegel cogently and presciently stated:

Our system of decoration was properly invented for opera...It has several unavoidable defects. (These are) the *breaking of the lines* from every point of view but one; the disproportion of the player when he appears in the background against objects diminished in perspective; unfavourable lighting; the contact between the painted and actual lights and shades, the impossibility of narrowing the stage, and the overloading of the scene with superfluous objects.⁷²

Wagner called for continuous working collaboration between chief musical coach, conductor and producer, the latter to be appointed with 'a care entirely unknown as yet',

⁶⁸ Adorno, 'Wagner's Relevance Today', 321.

⁶⁹ RW cited by Ashman, 'Producing Wagner', 30.

⁷⁰ Ashman, 'Producing Wagner', 29.

⁷¹ Ashman, 'Producing Wagner', 29.

⁷² MacGowan, *The Theatre of Tomorrow*, 14.

to be 'an official of equal standing with the two other directors'.⁷³ As Wagner stated, in his essay, 'The Performing of *Tannhäuser*', from his third volume of writings, *Opera and Drama* (1852-1853):

I must now devote a few lines to the *Regisseur*, begging him to lay to heart what I have chiefly addressed to the Musical Director...nothing on the musical side can succeed at all unless the most punctilious carrying out of every scenic detail makes possible a general prospering of the dramatic whole.⁷⁴

This essay is significant in its insistence on an equal relationship between the music director and the *Regisseur*, or 'stage-director', as Wagner also described him. Wagner made it clear that he expected the *Regisseur*, and not the music director, to intervene directly with the actors. The *Regisseur* should direct them through 'the synchronisation of the scenic action in the most precise fashion with the orchestral accompaniment', rather than allow them to indulge in 'a piece of by-play which I have known to escape the attention of the spectator because it came too early or too late'. Wagner stated:

I therefore entreat the *Regisseur* to cast to the winds that indulgence too customarily shown to operatic favourites, which leaves them almost solely in the hands of the musical director...If this indulgence is applied to the present case, my work may as well be given up at once for lost.⁷⁵

This new imperative was given coherence and further definition, after Wagner's death, by the theories of Adolphe Appia. Inspired by his first Bayreuth experience of 1882, and what he perceived as the discontinuity between the musical expression and the visual manifestation of the music drama as the central issue, Appia defined the new role of a single creative force. He would later describe this role as 'the designer-director'.⁷⁶ Appia was responding directly to challenges laid down by Wagner in the ambitious staging of his music dramas. Newly reconceived mythic territories and landscapes, which were 'true for all time', where the dramas were played out in unfamiliar realms of time and space, were demanded by works such as the *Ring* tetralogy and *Tristan und Isolde*. Conventional, representative stage-settings consisting of flats and backdrops ignored Wagner's mythical suspension of time and place, in favour of exactitude: a forest as a forest, painted onto flats or backdrops.⁷⁷ A leap of imagination was required by the scenic designer to take the audience into new spaces hitherto unseen on the stage. Appia's theories reflect almost exactly, step by step, the solutions to the issues which Schlegel codified in the passage above, and which Wagner then articulated in his *Tannhäuser* essay. His writings, published in German in 1899, and in an article on lighting and staging

⁷³ Ashman, 'Producing Wagner', 30, glossing RWPW, V III, 193.

⁷⁴ RWPW, 'The Performing of *Tannhäuser*', V III, 191, 192.

⁷⁵ RWPW, V III, 192.

⁷⁶ Appia, 'Theatrical Experiences' (1921), *Texts*, 25.

⁷⁷ Although audiences were used to, and understood the visual signs of Renaissance perspective.

in the Viennese periodical, *Wiener Rundschau* in 1900, provide the context for Roller's emerging role.⁷⁸ A brief chronology is given here.

Through his friend and Wagnerite, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Appia, working in Geneva, sent his first stage design ideas conceived and written in 1892 on the staging of Wagner's *Ring*, to Cosima Wagner.⁷⁹ These remained unpublished until 1983, more than fifty years after his death.⁸⁰ His first small work, *La Mise en Scène du drame Wagnérien*, based on his *Ring* texts, in its original French, was published firstly in Paris, in 1895.⁸¹ His formative and most influential work in this early period, *Music and the Art of the Theatre* (*Die Musik und die Inszenierung*) was published firstly only in translation in German, in Munich in 1899, and with it, his detailed concept for *Tristan und Isolde*.⁸² His similarly detailed notes for the staging of *Parsifal*, produced during the period 1896-1904, were contained, together with three of his stage drawings, in his 1907 correspondence with Roller. Although there is no evidence before 1907 of Appia's direct influence on Roller, Roller's visual realisation of the production of *Tristan und Isolde* in February 1903 and its convergence in several respects with Appia's detailed scenic account for the staging of the work, published in 1899, suggests Roller's awareness of Appia's ideas.⁸³ Appia's theories have only been given prominence in theatre-design historiography since the second part of the twentieth century.

In his 1895 writings, Appia described the difficulties and challenges presented by Wagner's music dramas. There was only one way out from the impasse Wagner presented for the staging, 'to entrust to one sole person all the parts or elements of the representation'.⁸⁴ The stage designer's responsibility was the creation of 'a fusion of all the elements'.⁸⁵ In his 1899 text, *Music and the Art of the Theatre*, Appia went on to describe the characteristics of this new role in more explicit terms:

The person whom we call "director", instead of guiding the production according to long-established and fixed conventions as is currently the case, will assume, with the word-tone drama, the role of a despotic school-master as he presides over the elementary preparation of the staging. He artificially enforces the synthesis of the representative elements...at the expense of the actor, whose

⁷⁸ Thursby, citing Wolfgang Greisenegger, 'Alfred Roller: die prolongierte Reform', *Oper in Wien, 1900-1925* (Vienna: Döbbling, 1991), 130-140, 'Gustav Mahler: Alfred Roller', 11.

⁷⁹ Beacham, 'Appendix: Appia's commentary and Scenario for The Valkyre, Act III (1892)', *Texts*, 214. Stewart Chamberlain, married to RW's daughter, became an influential, anti-semitic, German nationalist propagandist.

⁸⁰ Adolphe Appia, *Adolphe Appia: Oeuvres complètes*, VI-IV, Marie L Bablet-Hahn (ed) (Lausanne: Société Suisse du Théâtre, 1983-1992).

⁸¹ Appia, *La Mise en Scène du drame Wagnérien* (Paris: Léon Chailley, 1895).

⁸² Appia, *Die Musik und die Inszenierung* (München: F Bruckmann, 1899); 'Tristan und Isolde', *WOMAD*, 391-355.

⁸³ See also Georgila-Greisenegger, 'From Stage Set to Symbolic Space', 223.

⁸⁴ Appia, 'c'est à confier à une seule personne la responsabilité de toute la partie représentative', *La Mise en Scène*, 26.

⁸⁵ Appia, 'un fusion de tous les éléments', *La Mise en Scène*, 22.

independence must be destroyed. The vital task of his direction will always be to convince the production personnel that only their mutual subordination can produce a result worthy of their efforts.⁸⁶

This controlling and somewhat despotic description appears extreme. Insistence on control even over the actors (or perhaps especially so), however, was the essence of Appia's insight, mirroring the passionate insistence of Wagner's earlier essay, with one significant difference. Appia dismissed Wagner's own stage directions as irrelevant, placing his faith in the work itself to provide the guide for its own staging, stating: 'the work itself (the manuscript), contains by definition its theatrical form, its projection into space'.⁸⁷ Instead, he insisted on a more direct relationship between *the intent* of the progenitor of the text, *through the medium of the text*, rather than through the progenitor's instructions. All components, including the actors and performers were to be at the service of the designer's interpretation of the work, or 'The Word-Tone Drama', as Appia described the Wagnerian music drama.⁸⁸ In a diagram, Appia identified four distinct elements of the word-tone drama: 'temporal'; 'spatial'; that which is 'expressed in the Score and the Libretto', and that which is 'expressed on the Stage'.⁸⁹

An indication that Roller quickly became the embodiment of Appia's 'despotic school-master', able to 'convince the production personnel' of the need to subordinate their ideas in the service of the work, was later made explicit in correspondence from playwright Hugo von Hofmannsthal to Alfred Roller, in January 1906. Rehearsals were in progress for the first production of Hofmannsthal's play, *Oedipus and the Sphinx*, directed by Max Reinhardt at the Deutsches Theater in Berlin. It was also Roller's first appointment for the spoken-word theatre, in collaboration with Reinhardt, and the start of a significant partnership with Hofmannsthal, and later Richard Strauss, culminating in the first performances of *Elektra* (1909) in Vienna and *Der Rosenkavalier* (1911) in Berlin. Hofmannsthal wrote to Roller somewhat despairingly: 'For me, everything is very, very bad when you don't come'.⁹⁰ His letter implied that Roller's role went beyond either of the two specific responsibilities as set and costume designer.

The rehearsals for Hofmannsthal's play coincided with an intensely productive period for Roller who was designing new sets and costumes for Gustav Mahler's Mozart anniversary season at the Vienna Court Opera. Their new production of *Don Giovanni* had premiered in December 1905. The '*Rollerisch*' innovation of 'towers' to frame the

⁸⁶ Appia, *Texts*, 41, my italics.

⁸⁷ Beacham, citing Appia, 'Introduction', *Texts*, 2.

⁸⁸ Appia, *Texts*, 38.

⁸⁹ Appia, *Texts*, 38. See also Wagner's own diagram, (1850) showing the relationship of words, music, poetry, myth and 'man', in his *Gesamtkunstwerk*, RWPW, VII, 2.

⁹⁰ HvH: AR, '*für mich ware es sehr sehr schmerzlich wenn Sie nicht kämen.*' (AM 47.300 R0), Baker:Pausch, *Archiv*, 11, Hofmannsthal's emphasis.

stage had met with controversy.⁹¹ Productions of *Così fan tutte*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and *Le Nozze de Figaro* followed between January and April 1906. Roller wrote to his future wife, Mileva: 'I am working very hard on the costings for *Figaro*, which should be performed in three weeks...Every moment is precious'.⁹² Roller's time was divided between the demands of the Vienna Court Opera and Hofmannsthal's new production in Berlin.

The ambitious production of *Oedipus and the Sphinx* may certainly have given rise to issues of staging, management and control. Describing one of the scenes to Mileva, Roller wrote that one hundred and fifty people, divided into twenty groups, were on the stage at one time. 'Sometimes verses...are spoken by all together, sometimes by individuals; sometimes they are accompanied by drums, sometimes by trombones, cellos...this has never been produced before'.⁹³ Hofmannsthal's letter requested Roller 'to intervene personally' in the preparation of the play, despairing of the hysterical temperament of one of the actors.⁹⁴ His words almost exactly echo those of Wagner's addressed to Franz Liszt, desiring the same intervention of Eduard Genast nearly sixty years earlier. Unlike the artist, sculptor or architect, Hofmannsthal, the playwright, ultimately had no control over the presentation of his own work on the stage. He had to surrender his work and its realisation to Reinhardt and the actors. Notwithstanding that the overall direction was in the hands of one of the greatest theatre directors of the early twentieth century, the 'High Priest of Theatricality', Hofmannsthal wished Roller to mediate between the director and the action on the stage.⁹⁵

Appia had described this distinction, between artist and playwright, in his founding theories of 1899. The artist 'observes the form of his work as it develops... (and) since its content is the same as its form, the object of expression and the means used to communicate it are in a sense the same. *This is not the situation for the dramatist*'.⁹⁶ To overcome this caesura, the newly-designated director would draw out the inner meaning of the work, and translate this into a new visual experience. In his turn, he would use the materials at his command to create this new visual world. This world, Appia described, would be given its 'wondrous unity...which enables us to live through seeing', by the use of light.⁹⁷ Released from its existence as the flickering gas light into new spaces and forms by advances in electrical systems, light would play a dynamic new part in 'the Art-work of the future'.

⁹¹Hevesi, ANW, 260.

⁹²AR:MR, 2.03.1906, cited M Wagner, *Alfred Roller*, 98.

⁹³Dietrich, 'Innovations in Stage Design', 107.

⁹⁴Baker: Pausch, *Archiv*, 11.

⁹⁵Martin Esslin, 'Max Reinhardt: High Priest of Theatricality', *The Drama Review: TDR*, V 21, 2, Theatricalism issue, (June 1977), 3-24.

⁹⁶Appia, *Texts*, 29.

⁹⁷Appia, *Texts*, 43.

This deliberate search for a new visual relationship between the audience and the performance on the stage suggests equally a consciousness of a new aesthetic dimension, the space *between* the performance and the audience. Semper had described this as a 'fourth spatial dimension... impossible to imagine',⁹⁸ in which 'the observer has to imagine himself at the centre of relations'.⁹⁹ 'Its nature is *enclosure*'.¹⁰⁰ In the art of theatre, Wagner denoted this space as 'the mystic gulf' (*'mystischer Abgrund'*).¹⁰¹ If the spaces of the stage were implicit in his writings on the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, they were made much more explicit in his conception for Bayreuth. Here, Wagner's visionary and affecting description of this newly-defined space was given a practical reality in the architectonic spaces of auditorium and stage.¹⁰² At Wagner's behest, the Bayreuth stage space was enormous, almost as large as the auditorium itself, which was the first famously to be darkened during the performance.¹⁰³

In his writings on 'the mystic gulf', Wagner recognised the importance of what happened in the almost indefinable, elusive spaces between the action on the stage and the audience. The space itself should also be marshalled in some way in the service of the drama. The 'empty space between the proscenium arch and the front row of seats... parted *reality from ideality*... the scenic picture melts into the truest effigy of life itself'.¹⁰⁴ In this space, music from the orchestra, now hidden below the level of the stage would rise, 'like vapours'.¹⁰⁵ This theatrical space of art would dissolve the boundaries between the real and the fictive. As Ned A Bowman suggested in 1966, Wagner's contribution to the conception of the spatial relationship between the performance and the audience should entitle him to a more significant place in theatre-design history.¹⁰⁶

Following Wagner, both Appia and Roller articulated their interest in this newly defined space between the performance of the work taking place on the stage, and its audience. In Appia's terms, Wagner's 'mystic gulf', became 'the drama of the imagination, (an unlimited space)'.¹⁰⁷ Roller, in his 1909 article on stage design, envisaged that the performance of a work of art, invested with new life, would 'stand out from ordinary life and project beyond it'.¹⁰⁸ Like other art forms at the turn-of-the-century, the theatrical artwork was governed by concerns for a greater self-reflexiveness, and its own

⁹⁸ Semper, *Style*, 83.

⁹⁹ Semper, *Ibid*, 86.

¹⁰⁰ Semper, *Ibid*, 86, author's italics.

¹⁰¹ WOMAD, 366. Also see Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art*, 30-32.

¹⁰² WOMAD, 367.

¹⁰³ Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art*, 30.

¹⁰⁴ WOMAD, 366.

¹⁰⁵ WOMAD, 366.

¹⁰⁶ Ned A Bowman, 'Investing a Theatrical Ideal; Wagner's Bayreuth Festspielhaus', *Educational Theatre Journal*, V 18, 4, Special International Theatre Issue, December, 1996 429-438.

¹⁰⁷ Appia, *Texts*, 45.

¹⁰⁸ Appia, *Texts*, 2; AR, 'Stage Reform?' cited HLG, *Mahler V3*, 947.

performativity. Charles Maier, writing on the Mahler:Roller partnership, described this new concern. He, amongst other commentators, places Roller at the centre of this 'remarkable era of theatre renewal in Europe', and amongst a roll-call of influential participants in theatre reform, including Mahler, Peter Behrens at Darmstadt, Appia and Edward Gordon Craig.¹⁰⁹ Maier describes 'a generation of celebrated performers, cabaret and new theatres, new journals devoted to music and theatre and manifestos about theatre reform', which attested to the 'extraordinary ferment' centred on theatrical performance.¹¹⁰

The aesthetic aims of those involved in this new artistic discipline, of the projection of the artwork in space, evoked more directly the point at which the imagination of the audience met the action on the stage. In the theatre, such aspirations were to follow in the footsteps of music, as elaborated by Schopenhauer in *The World as Will and Representation* (1818).¹¹¹ Music was 'by no means like the other arts, namely a copy of the Ideas, but a copy of the will itself'.¹¹² Music, alone among the arts, could access more directly the noumenal realm. Like music, theatre must follow in this path, dispensing with the historicist accretions of nineteenth-century stage presentation, which had acted as a barrier to a potentially more vivid encounter. It is no coincidence that Appia's imaginative vision was born in the melting-pot of an intense Wagnerian musical experience, and not the spoken-word theatre.¹¹³ His fellow pioneer in stage design reform, Edward Gordon Craig, regarded this distinction as Appia's distinguishing and defining characteristic.¹¹⁴ Equally, Roller's ideas were first inspired by and tested in the world of opera, and not the spoken-word theatre. In this enterprise, his ideas were initially governed by one of the greatest living exponents of musical performance, Wagner's 'embodiment' on earth, Gustav Mahler.

Roller practised his art, in preference to writing about it. However, similar sentiments surface in his stage design articles. In *Thespis Theaterbuch*, 1930, he wrote a description of the ideal state of the relationship of the audience with the performance.¹¹⁵ The article implies a singularity or oneness of the audience with the theatrical experience. Roller wrote: 'To experience (*erleben*) a work means to feel (*empfinden*) it as though one had created it oneself'.¹¹⁶ Roller, the realist, who used rather straightforward words to express

¹⁰⁹Maier, 'Mahler's Theatre', 70.

¹¹⁰Maier, *Ibid*, 70.

¹¹¹A Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, (*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*), VI, trans. E J Payne (Indiana Hills, Col: Falcon, 1958), particularly 255-258.

¹¹² Cited Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds*, 37, see also Schopenhauer, *The World as Will*, 257, Schopenhauer's italics.

¹¹³ Appia referred to Schopenhauer, *Die Musik und die Inszenierung*, 46.

¹¹⁴Beacham, 'Introduction', Part III, *Essays on the art of the theatre, Texts*, (ff3), 239, citing anecdote J Mercier, 'Adolphe Appia. The re-birth of dramatic art', *Theatre Arts Monthly*, 16, 8, 616-630 (628).

¹¹⁵AR, 'Bühne und Bühnenhandwerk', *Thespis Theaterbuch*, 1930, 145 cited HLG, *Mahler V2*, 569, also Kitzwegerer, 'Alfred Roller als Bühnenbildner', 75.

¹¹⁶ AR, 'Bühne und Bühnenhandwerk', 14, author's emphasis.

his ideas about stage design, used terms which may be familiar to scholars of Wagner's writings on opera and drama, and which Wagner used extensively to describe the desired musico-dramatic experience.¹¹⁷ *Empfinden*, from *Empfindung*, signifying emotion, sensation or perception is, like *Stimmung*, another word drawn from Wagner's writings which cannot be rendered exactly in English. It strictly means 'something found outside us, and taken into us'.¹¹⁸ Wagner used the term *Empfindungserscheinung* (appearance, manifestation of emotion) and described this as 'the bond between an absent and a present emotion, now struggling for enunciation'.¹¹⁹

Roller's idea, that the audience members would feel as though they had created the work itself, implies a state of absorption. The composer Anton Webern, who was greatly inspired by nature, and for whom musical ideas were evoked by the landscapes of Segantini, wrote of Roller's production of *Tristan und Isolde*: 'The second act décor is fascinating. A warm summer night, very dark blue, lit by the moon, breathes its magic onto your face'.¹²⁰ The 'mystic gulf' between stage and audience could be bridged, the bond between an absent and present emotion, enounced. Wagner described this experience: 'Between the spectator and the picture to be looked at, there is nothing plainly visible, merely a floating atmosphere (*Stimmung*), of distance'.¹²¹ *Stimmung*, 'the floating atmosphere between the spectator and the picture to be looked at' was a highly-prized aesthetic in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna.¹²² The term was inextricably linked to Roller's opera productions.

Part 4: The evocation of *Stimmung*

Roller's productions were seen distinctively as the outcome of his particular stage design aesthetics. Music critic Julius Korngold, writing the *Feuilleton* in the *Neue Freie Presse* in 1905, may stand here for several similar descriptions and responses to Roller productions, from *Tristan* onwards. Describing the production of *Don Giovanni* as a 'Rollerschen Don Juan', he wrote: 'A torch on the stage, lantern-light on the ground ... the light of dark night heavens conjures up *Stimmung*...that is Roller-like ('das ist rollerisch')'.¹²³

¹¹⁷ RWPW, 'Poetry and Tone in the Drama of the Future', VII, 238-350.

¹¹⁸ RWPW, VII, 327, also translator's note, 326.

¹¹⁹ RWPW, VII, 327.

¹²⁰ Cited HLG, *Mahler V2*, 582, recorded in Webern's private diary, 21 February, 1903. Also Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, for Webern's relationship with landscape and the inspiration drawn from Segantini's paintings, 72-78.

¹²¹ WOMAD, 366.

¹²² WOMAD, 366, also see Margaret Olin, 'Forms of Respect: Alois Riegl's Concept of Attentiveness', *The Art Journal*, V9, 2, 1989, for *Stimmung* 'a popular catchword', in Vienna, and reference to Riegl's essay based on a series of lectures on Dutch painting, '*Die Stimmung als Inhalt der modernen Kunst*' (1899), 285-299(293).

¹²³ Julius Korngold, 'Ein Fackel auf der Bühne... ein Laternschen auf dem Boden... die den Schein des hellen Nachthimmels durchlässt, zaubert Stimmung... hervor... Das ist Rollerisch',

The epithet, *Rollerisch*, was in its turn inextricably linked to critical recognition of the highly prized, yet ill-defined, and elusive accolade given to great dramatic performances: a particular *Stimmung*. This effect was, it would seem, newly conveyed by Roller's productions. Hevesi was enthusiastic about Roller's *Stimmung*. He saw it as a realisation of the visual unity required by Wagner, but which had never yet been achieved in the historicist productions at Bayreuth or in Vienna.¹²⁴ It has been argued here that Hevesi's reports on the first Roller production of *Die Walküre* with Mahler (1907) described Roller's work as stage designer in ways which suggested his familiarity with the specificity of Roller's style in his earlier spaces of art:

The re-styling of the stage design of Wagnerian operas is well on its way. Yesterday *Die Walküre* was performed for the first time in the *Rollerschen* way...To combine technical logic and artistic fantasy is no small artistic miracle in which modern art succeeds to a rather unexpected degree. Throughout the nineteenth century these two qualities were mutually exclusive, like fire and water....And within Alfred Roller they co-exist happily, as few other men of the new art. He is both realist and stylist at the same time.

The arbitrariness of which the artist (Roller) is accused cannot be sensed in the appropriate *Stimmung* for the essential things. After all, it might not be possible totally to overcome the difficulty of bringing across well such an enormous work of *Stimmung* as the "*Ring des Nibelungen*" in a repertoire theatre like our court opera, according to today's concept of *Stimmung*.¹²⁵

What was the fascination with Roller's productions which evoked this response? From Hevesi's account two defining characteristics emerge: Roller's realisation of *Stimmung*, a 'painterly atmosphere combined with technical logic and artistic fantasy', as well as his qualities as 'realist and stylist'.¹²⁶ These concerns suggest the recognition of a modern impulse in the assertion of an abstract, sensory experience, implied by the notion of *Stimmung*, harnessed to a new sense of reality. Hevesi ascribed these qualities to 'a *Rollerisch* staging' ('*Rollerschen Ausstattung*'), a self-styled shorthand for a synthesis of the materials of the performance.¹²⁷ So distinctive did this notion of a *Rollerisch* style become that other critics, less familiar with Roller's previous achievements, defined his productions as *Rollerisch*. The notion of Roller's *Stimmung* prompted critical acclaim and,

'Feuilleton: Court Operntheater (Inszenierung von "Don Giovanni")', *Neue Freie Press*, 22, (December 1905), 1-3 (2).

¹²⁴ Hevesi, 'II Die Walküre', (5 February 1907), ANW, 264-269.

¹²⁵ Hevesi, 'Die bühnenbildliche Neugestaltung der Wagnerschen Opern geht ihren Gang. Gestern ist die 'Walküre' zum ersten Male in der Rollerchen Form gegeben worden... Und in Alfred Roller treffen sie wie in wenigen Männern der Neukunst glücklich zusammen. Er ist der Realist und Stilist zugleich... Von der Willkürlichkeit, die dem Künstler von Gegnern vorgeworfen wird, ist in solchen für die szenengemasse Stimmung wichtigen Dingen nichts zu spüren... Die Schwierigkeit, ein ungeheueres Stimmungswerk wie der 'Ring des Nibelungen' auf einem Repertoiretheater wie unsere Hofoper nach heutigen Stimmungsbegriffen gut herauszubringen, ist vielleicht überhaupt nicht ganz zu überwinden', 'II Die Walküre', 264-265-6, see also 'Etwas Walküre III' (22 February, 1907), 269-174.

¹²⁶ Hevesi, 'Die Walküre', 265,6.

¹²⁷ Hevesi, ANW, 267.

sometimes, critical disapprobation.¹²⁸ Most were united in observing that the dramatic effects of light and dark, simultaneously created in the spaces of the stage, signified *Stimmung*. Light and dark effects, which appeared to dissolve the distances between stage and audience, heightened the sense that unreal stage productions became the reality for the duration of the performance.

This analysis of *Stimmung*, and Wagner's own use of the term which is embedded in his writings, *The Art-Work of the Future*, firstly seeks evidence in the visual aesthetics of Roller's art of stage design, and his paintings for *Das Rheingold* (1903).¹²⁹ It should be said that the paintings were not necessarily a direct representation of the set which was subsequently seen by the audience and critics.¹³⁰ Yet Roller's stage paintings were a very significant part of the 'hidden architecture' of his craft which brought 'the governing principles of the drama' to the surface, as he described of the role of the stage designer.¹³¹ The paintings may best cast light on the stage vision of the artist, and his reputation to create the elusive quality of *Stimmung*. These are analysed below.

The painting for this first scene of *Das Rheingold* is dated 1903, the year Roller staged *Tristan und Isolde*.¹³² [3.7] The timing indicated his impatience to work on a production of the *Ring*.¹³³ Roller titled the painting 'Das Gold beginnt zu verglänzen' (the gold begins to glisten), drawing on the directions given by Wagner. This event, the glistening of the gold, takes place following the opening musical sequence, the famous, primeval chords of E flat major, which rise organically from the depths of the orchestra, and after the Rhine Maidens have made their appearance. Yet Roller's painting, like many of his early scene-paintings, is empty of characters. Composed on board, the painting reveals an abstracted scene of the watery depths of the Rhine. A mass of rocks to the forefront of the painting, angular and stark, forge their way upwards from the murky, grey-brown river bed towards the surface. Wagner described 'a maze of jagged peaks... (to) mark the boundaries of the stage space'.¹³⁴

Even more dimly in the background, a second, archaic, block-like grey formation, rises from the bed of the river. The angular central rock is over-painted in horizontal, short brushstrokes of bright white-yellow, intensifying at the centre, indicating light glimmering in the depths. Further striations and impressionistic strokes of white and yellow, thinning and expanding their sphere of illumination as if disturbed by water, rise to the surface,

¹²⁸ HLG, *Mahler* V3, 587-591 for critical response to *Die Walküre*, 1907.

¹²⁹ Not staged until 1905.

¹³⁰ AR insisted his stage designs and paintings were not for public view.

¹³¹ AR, 'Bühne und Bühnenhandwerk', HLG, *Mahler* V2, 569.

¹³² Referred to as 'Mischtechnik' (mixed technique): watercolours, oils, charcoal, pastels, inks and other materials.

¹³³ AR confided he was relieved he and Mahler had not rushed into a production earlier.

¹³⁴ Cited in Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art*, 27.

which Roller has indicated by the lighter green of floating, sketchy, horizontal lines along the top edge of the painting. Strong, gestural strokes in charcoal across the whole of the work create the impression of the watery depths, and the visual continuum from the depths to the surface of the water. This is Wagner's 'briny deep at full flood'.¹³⁵

These gestural strokes in Roller's painting add a polyphonic effect: a layered, complex interplay of painterly elements, representing water, light, and mysterious depth.¹³⁶ The effects reflect the polyphonic texture of motion and rush which rises at this point from the orchestra, in flowing quavers and semiquavers.¹³⁷ The impression which the painting conveys is of floating or weightlessness, and of being drawn towards the light into an unknown territory. As Adorno described of Wagner's musical form, 'the feeling of abandoning *terra firma*, of drifting into the unknown, is what is exciting and also compelling about Wagner's music'.¹³⁸ Adorno suggested that Wagner 'sends roots into the air... his music floats as if held by the hand of a secret puppeteer... it has something static about it', and likened Wagner's static tendency to painting and drawing.¹³⁹ Such similar characteristics were exemplified in Roller's painting. The painting depicts a moment in time, suspended.

Similarly Roller's painting for *Rheingold* scene III, the subterranean caverns of *Nibelheim*, depicts not water, but earthbound depths. [3.8] They are transformed through the use of colour and the impression of light to a drama of black rock, over-painted with veil-like strokes of cobalt blue. Orange-pink hues, an abstraction perhaps of a synthesis of the fire represented by the figure of *Loge*, as he descends into the realm of the *Nibelheim* with *Wotan*, illuminate the depths and background of the scene.¹⁴⁰ Perspective is very much reduced, to present a shallow space. Roller's paintings are compressed and intense, concentrating on an essence of the primal elements of the scenes: water, light, fire and rock. He has captured an important *Leitmotif* of the whole work in these paintings: the gleam of gold, which haunts the drama and shadows the protagonists until the last scene of *The Ring*, when it is returned to the depths of the Rhine.

These two paintings may, in this sense, stand for the whole.¹⁴¹ Gold, and the play of light on the glittering, light-reflective surfaces of art objects, evoke Nietzsche's concept of *Schein*, the theatrical element which runs like a rich seam through Secession art, no

¹³⁵ Cited Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art*, 27.

¹³⁶ See Dömling, 'Reuniting the Arts' on the proclivity of art to aspire to musical form, 4.

¹³⁷ See Millington, 'Das Rheingold', in Sadie (ed), *The New Grove Opera*, V3, 1304.

¹³⁸ Adorno, 'Wagner's Relevance Today', 321.

¹³⁹ Adorno, *Ibid*, 323.

¹⁴⁰ For a description of this scene, Osborne, *The Complete Operas*, 194-195.

¹⁴¹ AR used the opening scene 'to evoke the opera's overall atmosphere, and symbolise the main themes of the plot', HLG, *Mahler* V3,79.

more so than in Roller and Hoffmann's staging of the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition.¹⁴² There, in the central hall of the *Secession Haus*, not only gold, but water, too, shimmered and flowed constantly from the niches, designed by the sculptor Richard Luksch, on either side of Roller's 'Sinking Night' mural.

A comparison with the Roller paintings can be made with landscape artist (not the Secession designer) Joseph Hoffmann's 1876 Bayreuth designs, which prevailed, closely preserved by the watchful eyes of Cosima Wagner, into the first decade of the twentieth century. Joseph Hoffmann (1831-1904) was commissioned by Wagner who took the unusual step of replacing the craftsman set-painter with a greater talent. Unlike the three-dimensional constructions which Roller intended for his production, using solid objects and masses for the rocks, the Hoffmann designs were realised as a series of painted flats. Hoffmann illustrated the whole scene in greater detail, depicting the impossibly fairy-like figures of the Rhine Maidens, leaping from underwater rock to underwater rock. His paintings used the fullest perspective in the tradition of classical landscape painting, a literal translation of the scene described by Wagner, rather than an impression of the atmosphere of the scene described by the work itself.¹⁴³ Nevertheless Hoffmann, too, indicated the effect of the watery depths by faint, wavering strokes across the whole of his drawing.

Musical terms to describe Roller's paintings are suggested by the formal characteristics of his works, and by reading these in parallel with interpretative texts on the formal concerns of Wagner's music. This surely would have been Roller's concern, too, during this process. As his black-and-white impression of *Isolde* showed above, he drew imaginative insights directly from Wagner's musico-poetic texts. The musicologist Wolfgang Dömling has described the proclivity of art to adopt musical ideas in the long nineteenth century. During this time, 'the role of music was of such importance that one could speak of the "musicalisation of painting". Composition, harmony, rhythm, polyphony were continually drawn into the discussion... music became a model for freeing painting from objects'.¹⁴⁴

Roller's abstracted stage-design paintings for *Das Rheingold* evoke *Stimmung*, the prevailing atmosphere of Wagner's music drama. As Wagner stated, 'all those minor historical details ... were quite unnecessary... a decisive *Stimmung* was to be given its full play'.¹⁴⁵ However, despite Wagner's use of the term, *Stimmung* is, strictly speaking, neither a musical nor a theatrical term.¹⁴⁶ As indicated by its frequent use in reports of the

¹⁴² Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, xx, xxi.

¹⁴³ See Richard Beacham, *Adolphe Appia: Theatre Artist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1987), for reproduction and comparison with Appia, 29, 31.

¹⁴⁴ Dömling, 'Reuniting the Arts', 4.

¹⁴⁵ RWPW, VI, 367.

¹⁴⁶ 'Stimmung, or "Mood" encountered in many music contexts', Stanley (ed), Grove, V 18, 147. Also Amanda Glauert, Julian Johnson personal conversations, 01.02.08; 10.06.09.

Mahler:Roller productions, the term held a particular significance for Viennese audiences and critics at the Court Opera. This cultural interest of Vienna and *Stimmung* is now considered.

Vienna and *Stimmung*:

In Vienna, in the 1890s and the first decade of the new century, the term *Stimmung* hovered in the cultural atmosphere. It was to be found not only in operatic and musical worlds. *Stimmung* was used to describe the writings of the literary *Jung Wien*, the poetry of Stefan George and Hugo von Hofmannsthal.¹⁴⁷ Hofmannsthal's early prose narratives progress through a series of intense, compressed, and rapidly changing images, like a series of richly detailed yet spare vignettes, sustained through time by an often mysterious atmosphere.¹⁴⁸ *Stimmung* was evoked by the musical poetic art of Schumann's *Lieder*, the composer seen to be the master of 'the continuous line', and by the art-world of the Secession, particularly the 1902 *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, as Hermann Bahr described.¹⁴⁹

In the world of the fine arts, and specifically landscape painting where it was connected to a particularly German sympathy, art historian and Professor at Vienna University, Aloïs Riegl, lectured on seventeenth-century Dutch landscapes and *Stimmung* in 1899. As cited by Olin, in Riegl's essay 'Mood as the Content of Modern Art' (*Die Stimmung als Inhalt der modernen Kunst*, 1899) he wrote in praise of the effects of *Stimmung*.¹⁵⁰ *Stimmung* evoked a 'sense of order and regularity above the chaos, of harmony beyond the dissonances, of peace beyond the bustle...It is composed of quiet and a view into the distance'.¹⁵¹ Writing in this essay of 'modern art' which exhibited 'the essence' of *Stimmung*, Riegl referred to the role of landscape in the paintings of Arnold Böcklin and Max Klinger.¹⁵² His views on this subject were, however, at times mistrustful of its theatrical propensity to absorb the audience into the art-work.¹⁵³ As he also stated, a 'full

¹⁴⁷ Hans-Georg von Arburg, 'A strange web of space and time: the function and make-up of *Stimmung* in the work of Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Aloïs Riegl' ('Ein sonderbares Gespinst von Raum und Zeit: Zur theoretischen Konstitution und Funktion von *Stimmung* um 1900 bei Aloïs Riegl und Hugo von Hofmannsthal'), Akten des Internationalen Kolloquiums am Deutschen Forum für Kunstgeschichte, 1-2 June 2007, Berlin.

¹⁴⁸ See Hofmannsthal, 'Tale of the 672nd Night' (1895), in *The Lord Chandos Letter and Other Writings*, trans. Joel Rotenberg (New York: NYRB, 2005), 15-33.

¹⁴⁹ Glauert, conversation, 17.04.09; Hermann Bahr refers to the *Stimmung* of the 1902 Klinger:Beethoven exhibition, *Buch der Jugend* (Leipzig: Heller, 1908), 33.

¹⁵⁰ Aloïs Riegl, 'Die Stimmung als Inhalt der Modernen Kunst', *Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Wien: Dr. Benno Filser, 1928), 28-42. See also Olin, 'Forms of Respect', 285-299.

¹⁵¹ Riegl, 'Diese Ahnung aber der Ordnung und Gesetzlichkeit über dem Chaos, der Harmonie über den Dissonanzen, der Ruhe über den Bewegungen ... Ihre Elemente sind Ruhe und Fernsicht'. *Die Stimmung*, 29, unpublished trans. Karl Johns, 2010.

¹⁵² Riegl, *Die Stimmung*, 36.

¹⁵³ Olin, 'Forms of Respect', 293, also ff. 72, 293.

dissolution of the object in the subject... would absolutely mean the end of the fine arts'.¹⁵⁴

In the context of late nineteenth-century German aesthetics, and the traversal of the idea of *Stimmung* across the arts at this time, Georg von Arburg has defined *Stimmung* as an evocation of 'a strange web of space and time... uniting harmony in dissonance'.¹⁵⁵

The term, *Stimmung*, has been most closely associated with Wagner's music dramas, and with the music of those composers, shadowed by the enormous impact of Wagner's works, who had no choice but to engage with Wagner's musical legacy. *Stimmung* was evoked by *Tristan und Isolde*, which, as discussed above, musically and dramatically conveys a prevailing sense of timelessness and of other-worldliness. Schoenberg's use of through-composition and the dramatic (if implicit) unity of poetry and music was achieved notably in his string sextet, *Verklärte Nacht*, (1899), (*Transfigured Night*), inspired by the poem of Richard Dehmel. This work has been described more recently as famous for 'its concentration of means and mood', in which different modes of musical thought meet in harmonious accord.¹⁵⁶

Most importantly, for the purposes of this thesis, Wagner himself made extensive use of the term, specifically in his early writings, to describe his breakthrough in operatic convention.¹⁵⁷ At times it is so specifically and frequently used that it appeared to serve Wagner's purpose, on the one hand, to define his aspirations for, and the essential qualities of music drama as *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and on the other, to shroud his process in mystery.¹⁵⁸ The notion of *Stimmung* is most often referred to in Wagner's curious open letter which forms part of his writings in 1851, 'A Communication to my Friends'.¹⁵⁹ The purpose of the communication, Wagner described in a letter to August Roedel, was to provide:

the preface to my three 'opera poems'... my great artistic undertaking, namely the completion of a poem consisting of three dramas and a separate prologue (*Das Rheingold*), which I will then set to music.¹⁶⁰

Wagner's writings on the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, *Stimmung*, and his vision for the *Ring* tetralogy coincided in time.

It is also notable that William Ashton-Ellis, who first translated Wagner's writings into English in 1892, left the word *Stimmung* in its untranslatable state throughout the text so

¹⁵⁴ Olin, 'Forms of Respect', 294, citing Riegl, 'Das holländische Gruppenportrait', 1902.

¹⁵⁵ Arburg, 'A strange web', 1.

¹⁵⁶ OW Neighbour, 'Schoenberg', in Sadie (ed), *New Grove*, V16, 709.

¹⁵⁷ WOMAD, 267.

¹⁵⁸ RWPW, VI, 325-326; 367-369.

¹⁵⁹ RW, *Richard Wagner's Letters to August Roeckel*, trans. Eleanor C Sellar (Bristol: J W Arrowsmith, 1897) 57.

¹⁶⁰ RW, *Richard Wagner's Letters*, 56.

as not to detract from 'its vital meaning'.¹⁶¹ This provides further support for its evocation of a suite of conceptual ideas, rather than just a single term, and licence for its 'infinitely subtle' interpretation, 'rich in gradation, light and shade'.¹⁶² This explication contends that Wagner used the term *Stimmung* as an expressive description of the *outcome* of his notion of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*.¹⁶³ The use here of the word 'outcome' is intended to convey the importance of the theatrical impact of the work, its material and metaphysical existence, 'its projection in space', and the necessity for it to 'stand out from ordinary life and project beyond it', as the new scenic experience was similarly described by Appia and Roller respectively.¹⁶⁴ *Stimmung* would bridge the physical and metaphysical spaces between the work taking place on the stage, and the audience's reception of it. It would dematerialise the seeming distances between the two. As Wagner described, in his important account of the transmission of his works, the scene 'is removed as it were, to the unapproachable world of dreams'.¹⁶⁵

Given its stress in his writings, it is perhaps surprising that there has been little investigation of the term in the hermeneutics of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*. However, Wagner's interest in the lyric theatre of the Greeks, as the model for his artwork of the future, may shed some further light on his use of the term to denote the effect of his music dramas. The philosopher, Leo Spitzer, in his *Prolegomena* on the subject provides a semantic introduction to its roots in ancient Greek, suggesting that *Stimmung* echoes its Greek origins, 'just as *ambiente* or *ambiance*, echo the ancient Greek *Periechon*... which suggests sympathy and harmony between the container and the contained'.¹⁶⁶ Spitzer's theory of *Stimmung* is underpinned by the notion of harmony in its musical sense. In this account of Wagnerian tendencies in Secession design, *Stimmung* has been denoted as the characterisation of one of three principles which represented the important conditions for the creation of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*.¹⁶⁷ An explication of Wagner's notion of *Stimmung* now follows.

The *Stimmung* of Wagner:

Wagner described the essential principles necessary for the creation of *Stimmung* in these terms:

¹⁶¹ Ashton-Ellis, 'Translator's Preface', RWPW, VII, xiii.

¹⁶² Carnegie, 'Designing Wagner', describing Appia's use of lighting, 53.

¹⁶³ RWPW, VI, 325-326.

¹⁶⁴ Appia, cited Beacham, 'Introduction: The First Wagnerian Period', *Texts*, 2; AR, 'Bühnenreform?', HLG, V3, 947.

¹⁶⁵ WOMAD, 353-376, (366).

¹⁶⁶ Glossed from various sources, see Leo Spitzer, *Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony: Prolegomena to an Interpretation of the Word 'Stimmung'*, Anna Granville Hatcher (ed), (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1963), 2.

¹⁶⁷ WOMAD, 'The Break with Operatic Convention', 267.

In the whole course of the drama I saw no possibility of division or demarcation other than the Acts in which the place or time, or the scenes in which the dramatis personae change. Moreover, the *plastic unity of the Mythic stuff* brought with it this advantage, that, in the arrangement of my scenes *all those minor details* which the modern playwright finds so indispensable for the elucidation of *involved historical occurrences were quite unnecessary*, and the whole strength of the portrayal could be concentrated upon a few weighty and decisive moments of development...On the working out of *each of these fewer scenes, a decisive Stimmung was to be given its full play.*¹⁶⁸

Later, in his writings on 'Future Music', ('*Zukunftsmusik*'), the composer gave a further characterisation of *Stimmung*, although it is not announced in this way. He stated:

My only care was...to exclude all useless details such as the intrigues one borrows from common life, and in return to develop more fully those traits which were to set in its proper light the characteristic colouring of the legendary stuff, since they seemed to me, all together, to coincide with the idiosyncrasy of the inner motives of actions; and to do this in such a way that that *Colour itself should be turned into Action.*¹⁶⁹

The 'exclusion of all useless detail' and Wagner's rejection of 'the realm of history...that detailed description and exhibition of historical convention', were fundamental principles of Wagner's break with operatic tradition.¹⁷⁰ These concerns have been somewhat overlooked as an important early indicator of the desired aesthetic conditions for the creation of a modern mode of expression, not only in opera but also in the plastic and applied arts. Such ideas were reflected in many of the important aesthetic writings of the later nineteenth century, and in the debates which swirled round Vienna's aesthetic circles concerning decoration and ornamentation in the plastic arts.

These often-paradoxical debates were exemplified by Otto Wagner's concise and important text, *Modern Architecture, a Guidebook to his Students (Moderne Architekturt)*, first published in 1892, and expanded in several subsequent editions.¹⁷¹ Wagner publicly disavowed eclectic, heavily decorated *Ringstrasse* architecture and historicist styles, in favour of an architecture fit for modern life, described as '*Nutzstil*' or 'utility style'.¹⁷² In the 1902 edition, the clarity of his message, printed in simple, short sentences, using capital letters to emphasise the polemic, was nevertheless beautifully punctuated with decorative motifs or vignettes, such as may have been found in the pages of *Ver Sacrum*. Richard Wagner's idea, 'the exclusion of all useless, or historic detail' has served in this account graphically to underline the defining features of the covers designed by Roller and Klimt for *Ver Sacrum* in 1898. Klimt's *Winged Tripod*, stripped of historicist

¹⁶⁸ RWPW, VI, 367.

¹⁶⁹ RWPW, VIII, 330, this author's emphasis.

¹⁷⁰ WOMAD, 266, 268.

¹⁷¹ Otto Wagner, *Moderne Architektur* (1896, 1898, 1902, 1914); *Modern Architecture: A Guidebook for His Students to This Field of Art* trans. Harry F Mallgrave (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Centre for Art and the Humanities with University of Chicago Press, 1988).

¹⁷² O Wagner, *Modern Architecture*, 9; Mallgrave, 'Introduction', *Modern Architecture*, 2.

references, left its auratic origins on the surface of the cover in essence only. 'The legend', Wagner stated, 'has the merit of seizing nothing...and of giving forth that content in a form peculiar to itself, of sharpest outline, swiftly understandable'.¹⁷³

To give even greater emphasis to *Stimmung*, Wagner further described a 'dominant chief-mood' ('*verwaltende Hauptstimmung*')

The whole building of my drama (would) *join itself* into one organic unity, fewer scenes, and situations which set the passing mood; *no mood could be permitted to be struck in any one of these scenes which did not stand in a weighty relation to the moods of all other scenes.*¹⁷⁴

Stimmung would bind together the individual elements into the whole. 'Each of these chief moods should gain a definite musical expression, a definite musical theme...a decisive or dominant chief-mood'.¹⁷⁵ Modestly, he explained in his writings:

The '*Stimmung*' which (my work) was at times so fortunate to arouse was so pregnant, so unaccustomed, so searching, that it was highly improbable that those who had experienced it most fully would place themselves in the way of its recurrence... the sudden *shock of this surprise*, and *its lasting after-effects* – which form the object of the artwork – constitute the elevating factor of any dramatic performance. A considerable period (must be) allowed to intervene (between such shocks).¹⁷⁶

The shock or surprise engendered in the reception of his works was essential in the theatrical experience, constituting its 'elevating factor'. Wagner discussed other operatic works (derisively, French operas) which, he claimed, had no *Stimmung*, or did not require *Stimmung* for their understanding, to compare them with the '*Stimmung*', or impact which his own works aroused. Wagner's *Stimmung*, he implied, was an immanent force, potentially overwhelming in the spaces of the opera house, with the power to 'dissolve reality', the boundaries between the real and the metaphysical world. Similarly, the critics of Roller's productions and their evocation of *Stimmung* had experienced shock, as well as pleasure.

The preceding Chapters have argued that the Secession privileged the idea of reinvention, if not shock, and the importance of surprise to create a sense of theatre, in their presentation of *Ver Sacrum*, and the staging of the Secession exhibitions. Such an experience, of space theatrically reinvented, culminated in the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition in 1902: its 'shock of surprise', the spectators' experience of their delayed arrival in the presence of Klinger's *Beethoven* monument in the central hall via the

¹⁷³ WOMAD, 268.

¹⁷⁴ RWPW VI, 369.

¹⁷⁵ WOMAD, 228.

¹⁷⁶ RWPW, VI, 326.

prescribed route and its 'lasting after-effects', or *Nachhören*, its particular theatrical qualities which have resonated down through the years.¹⁷⁷

The second premise for the evocation of *Stimmung* was described by Wagner as the time-space continuum of his work, using the terms 'impression', and 'expression' to describe the effect on the audience. He denoted a fourth thing, distinct from time and space, in the 'impression' made on us, the audience, and the mediating force which conveys the effect between the two:

In this unity of *expression*, a thing made ever present, where needful for an understanding of its "necessary" presence lies not in Time and space, but in the *impression* which is made on us within them...the limitations of time and space are upheaved...annihilated, through actuality of the drama.¹⁷⁸

In the singlest space, and the most compact time, one may spread out an action as completely discordant and disconnected...the unity of action...can only reveal itself through *one* thing intelligibly...neither in *time nor space*, but the *expression*.¹⁷⁹

Dissonant, or 'completely discordant and disconnected' images in *Ver Sacrum* resided in the same two-dimensional page space and still retained their integrity of design, provided a unity was sustained. *Stimmung* was evoked by the use of consistent colour and tone through an issue. For the duration of the work and the reader's engagement with it, *Stimmung* engendered an impression of timelessness, as Wagner defined, 'neither time nor space, but in the impression which is made on us'.¹⁸⁰

As this summation aims to establish, the notion of this elusively-defined term was central to Wagner's own ideas of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. *Stimmung* was Wagner's utopian ideal in the musico-dramatic experience, implicated in his use of the description, 'the art-work of the future'. *Stimmung* implied the synthesis of the visual, the poetic and the musical to create a prevailing and distinctive thematic mood. As Wagner stated, 'Each of these chief moods should gain a definite musical expression, a definite musical theme... a decisive or dominant chief-mood'.¹⁸¹ *Stimmung* implies some other element contained within 'the actuality of the drama', its mode of expression, or as Wagner suggested, 'the impression which is made on us'.¹⁸² Wagner was, however obscurely, discussing the reception of his works, and their impact on the audience. The audience at the centre of relations was a very present concern of Adolphe Appia and Alfred Roller in their visually expanded view of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, as the following analysis will establish.

¹⁷⁷ Frisch, *German Modernism*, 34.

¹⁷⁸ WOMAD, 230-231. 'Upheaved', in this translation, may also mean 'subverted', or 'overturned'.

¹⁷⁹ WOMAD, 230.

¹⁸⁰ WOMAD, 230.

¹⁸¹ WOMAD, 228.

¹⁸² WOMAD, 230.

The *Stimmung* of Appia and Roller:

Adolphe Appia's theories are integral to an understanding of Roller's intent in shaping modernist aesthetic practices in the staging of opera and the spoken-word theatre. Appia's stress on light as the new plastic dimension for the vivification of stage space has often been described as visionary. His detailed descriptions of 'active' and 'passive' light prefigured European practices, imagining new effects which were later achieved with the cyclorama and other technical advances. Appia did not, however, implement his own early Wagnerian stage design theories until 1924-25, by which time he had moved beyond the romantic roots of his earlier thinking.¹⁸³ Roller was the first stage designer to do so, if not in their fullest sense.¹⁸⁴

In *Music and the Art of the Theatre* Appia presented his case for a transformative presentation of Wagner's works:

The dramas of Richard Wagner have revealed to us a new dramatic form, and their marvellous beauty has convinced us that they are the most supreme example of this form. But in the discovery of this all powerful musical expression, the dramas have initiated us into the particular relations which exist between '*la durée musicale*', - offered to our ears (our hearing) - and the scenic space - where the drama unfolds before our eyes. We have experienced ... a sad/dreary discomfort ('*un malaise douloureux*'), coming from the loss of harmony between this temporal characteristic of music ('*cette durée*') and this space ('*cet espace*'). The cause of our impression may be found in the incompatibility between conventional scenic design, and the particular use of music in the drama.... This contested issue... requires a complete transformation in theatrical technique.¹⁸⁵

These views were based on the principle that Wagner's music drama itself encompassed not only the element of music and the passage of time in space, but by extension, the action, as a means of projecting the music, taking form in space. Stage space became the central concern. In this space conventional painted scenery acted as a barrier to the fulfilment of the drama. Appia described a caesura, or dissonance between the temporality of the musical line, and the visualisation in space. The music drama 'should present the spectator with nothing which does not belong to the space evoked by the poetic-musical text'.¹⁸⁶ Of the materials at his disposal, Appia privileged light and 'the mysterious affinity between music and light'.¹⁸⁷ New lighting techniques from electrified systems, Appia predicted, would replace the sky or other atmospheric effects painted

¹⁸³ Beacham, 'Introduction', *Texts*, 12.

¹⁸⁴ Appia's early stage-design impressions or drawings employed abstracted form to a far greater degree than those of AR.

¹⁸⁵ Catherine Lepdor and D. Gusian (eds), *Adolphe Appia ou le renouveau de l'esthétique théâtrale: dessins et esquisses de décors*, (Lausanne: Payot, 1992), author's translation, 8.

¹⁸⁶ Appia, *Texts*, 46.

¹⁸⁷ Appia, *Texts*, 51.

onto canvas drops, and instead meet a kind of resistance in solid objects, or 'practicables', constructed to create an abstracted simulacrum of the essential realities of the production.¹⁸⁸ These three-dimensional structures would represent the varied terrain of the forest, rocks and mountain peaks.

Appia's early illustrations for *Parsifal* (1896) which he sent to Roller in 1907, were not colour, but strange, mood-inducing monotone drawings, depicting an effect which he described in his 1899 text, as 'light-dark'.¹⁸⁹ [3.9] Surprisingly, they seem to emit a kind of translucent light of their own. Typically, the differentiated grey tones evoke a mysterious, deepening, transmutable space. The effects are strangely moving. They are similar to those of the Segantini paintings reproduced in monotone in the otherwise empty page spaces of *Ver Sacrum*. American theatre director and historian Lee Simonson, one of the first in her field to recognise the salience of Appia's contribution to modern practices, aptly described the light in Appia's first drawings as 'the night and morning of a First Day'.¹⁹⁰

The essence of Appia's notion of *Stimmung* was perhaps best exemplified by the passages on the effect of light and its other, shadow. Using the word 'atmosphere', ('*ambience*', occasionally '*Stimmung*' in the German edition), Appia described how shadow and light would become the new visual synthesis of two inextricably related elements. On his evocation of the sacred forest of Wagner's *Parsifal*, he wrote: 'lighting and the shadows it produces can suggest certain objects', immersing the setting 'in an atmosphere appropriate to them'.¹⁹¹ Light should be reduced to a few basic concepts, as he stated 'daylight suffuses the whole atmosphere, without obscuring our awareness of its direction. But the direction of light cannot be determined except by shadows'.¹⁹² To create *Stimmung*, paradoxically, Appia described shadow:

It is the quality of shadows which expresses the quality of light. Shadows are formed by means of the same light which suffuses the atmosphere. This all-powerful effect must be created through *chiaroscuro*, the more or less distinct shadow cast in a space which is already lit.¹⁹³

Or as Simonson described, 'the light that is important in the theatre, as Appia declares, is the light which casts shadows. It alone defines and reveals'.¹⁹⁴ Appia's words, and those of Simonson evoked Nietzsche's sentiment that 'the light-image...seemed to conceal as much as it revealed...the experience of being compelled to look, and at the same time to

¹⁸⁸ Appia, *Texts*, 4.

¹⁸⁹ Appia, *Texts*, 219.

¹⁹⁰ Simonson, *The Stage is Set*, 359, also cited Beacham, 'Introduction', *Texts*, 17-21,(17).

¹⁹¹ Appia, *Texts*, 18, 235, 50.

¹⁹² Appia, *Texts*, 52.

¹⁹³ Appia, *Texts*, 52.

¹⁹⁴ Simonson, *The Stage is Set*, 358.

go beyond looking'.¹⁹⁵ In Roller's earlier practices, the effects of light and shadow to define and reveal had already been brought into play in the *Secession Haus* to heighten the viewing experience, with the 1899 exhibition and its centrepiece, Klinger's painting, *Christ on Olympus*. The canopy and other carefully-positioned objects marked out the visitor's approach to the painting in shadow and light, evoking a peaceful space set apart from the rest of the exhibition. Similarly, at the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, certain areas of the exhibition space, particularly the passage from the prescribed entry point into the 'Klimt room' from the foyer, and from the 'Klimt room' to the central hall, suggested a similar transition.

Appia's notion of 'light-dark' was made more explicit in his Wagnerian scenic evocations (1892).¹⁹⁶ As he described Act III of *Die Walküre*, 'in order to emphasise the calm and serenity of the atmosphere, one ought to spread a little diffuse light...the shadow of the fir trees, which is painted shadow (should) be taken as real because of the diffuse light'.¹⁹⁷ 'Calm and serenity', were not the 'shock' of Wagner's *Stimmung*. Like Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, *Stimmung* was a mutable term, moving through time, space, and different art worlds to take on different meanings and effects. Appia's 'light-dark' would be manipulated as the plastic art of stage space. It would become the materialisation of a prevailing atmosphere or *Stimmung* in its diverse effects.

Between Appia's theories, his detailed written scenarios, and the resulting stage production at the Court Opera in 1905, at a stage removed from both, stand Roller's own stage-design impressions of *Das Rheingold*, Roller's painterly expression of *Stimmung*. They reflect Appia's own instructions for the set design of for *Das Rheingold*, which describe how 'one can give the impression of water through the sensation of depth by keeping the stage dim, filling the scene with a vague obscurity'.¹⁹⁸ Roller shaped his 'vague obscurity' with primal rock formations, and an abstracted space using gestural strokes to create a visual continuum. Appia had described this effect similarly in his instructions for *Die Walküre*, noting the important angularity of the rock against its surrounding, passive light:

The rocks should not rise up, but should be sliced through ... (to) provide a jutting profile against the sky...With the exception of the practicable of the summit itself, the setting is shallow. The distance from the curtain to the rear of the stage will be determined by the lighting.¹⁹⁹

The yellow painterly glimmers, indicating active light in Roller's painting, suggested the *Nibelung* gold, ever-present throughout Wagner's work. The gold stands for the

¹⁹⁵ Nietzsche, *Birth of Tragedy*, 112.

¹⁹⁶ Appia, 'The Walkyrie,' *Texts*, 219.

¹⁹⁷ Appia, *Ibid*, 219.

¹⁹⁸ Simonson, *The Stage is Set*, paraphrasing Appia, 360.

¹⁹⁹ Appia, *Texts*, 215.

essential and constant reminder of the work's inevitable end, which is predicated in the opening moments of *Rheingold*. Roller's paintings evoke the darkness of the curse which surrounds the gold, as well as the light of its redemption. As one critic described of his set design, it suggested the gold 'restored to Nature, and sunk again in the depths of the Rhine'.²⁰⁰

Stimmung may be defined not just by the materialisation of 'light-dark', but also in the judicious use of active and passive lighting, according to Appia, to denote 'two essential elements: movement and repose'.²⁰¹ 'In the first the role of light is active, and in the second it is of a *passive calmness*'.²⁰² Lighting should capture a moment in the day, the time, the weather, in other words the contingent, fleeting effects of the scene. Or as Appia described, 'everything should serve to create the most limpid sky possible, the sky must remain clear'.²⁰³ In contrast to his stage painting for scene one, Roller's stage-design painting for '*Das Rheingold*, Scene II' (1904) evoked Appia's 'passive calmness', and the qualities of *Stimmung* attributed to landscape painting by Riegl. [3.10]

Scene two opens on the slumbering gods bathed in sunlight. In Roller's painting the darkened and hermetic depths of the Rhine of his first scene-painting with their gestural, light-dark painterly effects, have been replaced by a landscape in a different mood. The mountainous panorama glows with ambient colour. The mountain plateau is covered in an impressionistic, verdant drift of green, yellow, and mauve-pink. It is framed, and given solidity and a sense of gravity on the left by a looming rock. Its shadows and crenellations are indicated by block-like forms and *passage*, the transition from one plane to another. It is cropped to the edge of the picture frame, or 'stage picture' for dramatic effect, to frame and concentrate the view.

The scene opens outwards, the picture plane a window onto a more distant horizon beyond the plateau. Three distinct areas have been created, in classic landscape convention. The mountain plateau, punctuated by angular folds of rock, slopes gently down from right the left. As the perspective deepen it ends in a mist of deep blue haze to indicate the distant waters of the Rhine. The isolated pine trees in the middle distance to the left, define the perspective. 'The branches of the fir trees throw a light shadow over all the setting...this painted shadow must be capable of becoming real'.²⁰⁴ The sky fills one third of the space. It is a shifting, translucent, castellated drift of pink clouds on a blue ground. The structure of clouds resembles the planarity of rock-like formation.

²⁰⁰ HLG, *Mahler V3*, 77-85.

²⁰¹ Appia, *Ibid*, 218.

²⁰² Appia, *Ibid*, 218.

²⁰³ Appia, *Ibid*, 218.

²⁰⁴ Appia, *Ibid*, 218.

To the informed eye, these block-like structures emerge from the massed effect on the left to indicate *Valhalla*, the newly constructed castle of the gods. The scene is tranquil, lying in the early light of morning or an eternal (or holy) spring, brought about in Wagner's music drama by the presence of *Freia* amongst the gods. The uninhibited use of deep pink, the intensity and translucency of blue, and blue with green, evoke a similar use of colour in the symbolist landscapes of Ferdinand Hodler who was exhibited by the Secession in 1904, and similar colouration, if not quite the painterly surface intensity, of Klimt's landscapes, notably 'Roses Under Trees' (1905).

'All becomes calm', Appia described of a scene from *Walküre*, 'and everything should serve to create the most limpid sky possible. The (lighting) projectors have nothing further to do but wait... The scenic picture should produce a feeling of calm satisfaction, and etch itself on to the mind as simple lines, recalled with pleasure'.²⁰⁵ Roller's panoramic setting for *Rheingold* Scene II appeared to engender a particular relationship between the mountain range resorts surrounding Vienna which he regularly painted, the resulting scene settings, and a 'feeling of calm satisfaction recalled with pleasure' by the Court Opera audiences, as well as his music director, Gustav Mahler.²⁰⁶ His affection for this further space suggests the productive transfer of ideas from one to another.

In common with many of his fellow Secession members and 'all Vienna', Roller spent weekends and summers in the mountains at Semmering, or walking in the Ladinien area of the Southern Tirol.²⁰⁷ Roller pursued his enthusiasm for the mountain landscape surrounding Vienna as a personal project, not only by walking through the landscapes, but also by painting them. The blurring of such distinctions between art and nature lent a symbiotic relationship to Roller's stage designs for the Court Opera, and the panoramic views which surrounded Vienna. Roller, it seems, started the stage designs for *Rheingold* and *Walküre* while on a round trip between Semmering, Colfusco and Torbole in July 1903. During the trip, he met with Gustav Mahler in the resort of Torbole when in all likelihood they discussed their plans for the forthcoming *Ring* productions. Roller's notebook records short entries for the dates of the trip, including '8-15 July in Torbole with M(ahler)'.²⁰⁸

Roller's stage paintings drew on the more distant spatial dimensions and undifferentiated timelessness of mountain landscapes, transforming space and place into something more 'Rollerisch'. In this way, Roller manipulated notions of time and space, drawing Semmering and the Tirol into Wagner's mythic world, and the spaces of the Court Opera,

²⁰⁵ Appia, *Texts*, 218.

²⁰⁶ Appia, *Texts*, 218.

²⁰⁷ Oskar Pausch, *Alfred Roller und Ladinien: mit einem Excurs: Alfred Roller, und Gustav Mahler in Sudtiröl* (Bozen: Micurà de Rü, Istitut Ladin, 2005).

²⁰⁸ Pausch, *Alfred Roller und Ladinien*, 73.

and similarly, transposing Wagner's mythic world to mountain landscapes characteristic of those which were familiar to Viennese audiences. Roller's mountain setting for scene two of *Rheingold*, in its 'quiet containment', recalled the 'broad outlook' of one of his landscape paintings, *Landschaft in Südtirol* (1891). [3.11] Its darkening rocks and ascending path lead to a luminescent blue sky. The Viennese essayist and café habitué, Peter Altenberg, writing on the production of *Rheingold*, described *Stimmung* as the blurring of boundaries and realities dissolved by the on-stage effects of Roller's sets:

Roller the painter had put prehistoric pines to the left...they too look down in quiet containment as the tragedy unfolds...Today, thanks to Roller the painter I have seen nature like a wise chorus follow the fate of its victims...The deep Rhine waters...the vaporous, misty valley of the Rhine embraced their wretched destinies.²⁰⁹

Altenberg's description of Roller's *Stimmung* evoked the notion of the absorption of audience into stage-landscape, and stage-landscape into the drama.

In the process of completing the *Ring* tetralogy, Wagner declared of *Rheingold* in a letter to a friend in January 1854:

I now realise myself how much the whole spirit and meaning of my poem is only made clear by the music. I cannot now, for my life, even look at the words without musical accompaniment...it has worked up to a perfect unity.²¹⁰

Similarly Appia and Roller preferred not to watch the music dramas of Wagner without expanding the experience through an imaginative visualisation of light, colour and shadow, the effect of *Stimmung*, in 'a perfect unity' with the work. Wagner hoped his vision for the staging of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* would be fulfilled by renowned landscape artists, rather than the conventional stage mechanic, the set painter. To this end Wagner famously (and unsuccessfully) approached artist Arnold Böcklin, whose own work, 'The Isle of the Dead' (1880), has been ascribed with Wagnerian symbolism. The work of the landscape painter in stage design was, Wagner described, a greatly expanded role:

Through him, his drawing, his colour, his glowing breadths of light...that which he has struggled to impart within the narrow frame of panel-pictures ...will now fill the ample framework of the Tragic-stage...Thus the illusion of plastic art will turn to truth in Drama...he becomes a *Poet*, and to be a poet, a *tone-artist*.²¹¹

Wagner's aspiration for the stage designer of the future, who would encompass the role of 'tone-artist' had to wait until new theories and practices were realised in the stage spaces of the Vienna Court Opera in 1903, the anniversary performance of *Tristan und Isolde* and the fulfilment of Roller's role as *Leiter des Ausstattungswesens*.

²⁰⁹ HLG, *Mahler V3*, 81, citing Peter Altenberg, *Das grosse Peter Altenberg Buch* (Zsolnay, Vienna, Hamburg, 1976), (ff) 310.

²¹⁰ RW, *Richard Wagner's Letters*, 108.

²¹¹ RWPW, VI, extracted 186,187,189.

In conclusion, this examination of the concept of *Stimmung* has revealed its centrality to Wagner's writings on the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. In these writings, Wagner appeared to denote an affecting new space of art, where the imaginary realities of the action on the stage were made more vividly present. This was the experience of Roller's productions, as Altenberg indicated in his 1903 review of *Tristan und Isolde*. *Das Rheingold*, the subject of Roller's stage-design paintings, was the first of Wagner's dramatic works to be written according to his theoretical principles of *The Art-Work of the Future*. The music drama represents the most rigorous application of these principles.²¹²

Roller's particular contribution as set designer of *Rheingold* indicates *Stimmung* as a central impulse of his aesthetic. This aesthetic was apparent in *Ver Sacrum* under his editorship, in the through-composition of surface space, colour and other materials of the graphic arts which were used to sustain its characteristic coherence. Similarly, Roller's propensity to conceptualise settings for theatrical spaces, free and 'empty', framed only by the proscenium arch, was prefigured in his role as exhibition designer. The *Secession Haus* provided a distinctive frame for the manipulation of its interior spaces for three exhibitions or productions each year. Roller and Hoffman brought this practice to a paradigmatic climax in the conception of the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition. Hoffmann's interior set, and Roller's coherent management of the artworks, effected a defining *Stimmung* evoking the spirit of *Tempelkunst*, throughout the through-composed spaces, and for the duration of the spectator experience. The framing of space was a defining aesthetic of the *Secession*. Roller brought these principles to the Vienna Court Opera, however reconceived. A brief comparison of these two spaces follows.

Part Five: Unique framing devices and the Vienna Court Opera

The uncharacteristic squareform of *Ver Sacrum*, Roller's first space of art, was neutral and unconstrained, and yet, paradoxically, controlled and consistent. It lent a freedom to experiment and to create singular events seemingly without precedent. The squareform worked as a rhetorical framing device for the columns of typography, also squareform in their presentation. Similarly, the *Secession Haus* was uniquely constructed to allow for the greatest possible freedoms and experimentation in interior construction and design: the erection of temporary constructions, such as walls on which to display art; the placement of furniture and 'props', seating areas, garden-like bowers, avenues of potted laurel trees. Proscenium arch-like structures set strategically into temporary interior walls, amongst other theatrical devices, brought new ways of anticipating, seeing and experiencing the exhibited artworks. These practices, too, lent an element of surprise as

²¹² See various, also Millington, 'Das Rheingold', Stanley Sadie (ed), *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera* (London: Macmillan, 1992), V3, 1307.

each exhibition was newly constructed, and the interior spaces of the *Secession Haus* each time presented as a different world.

A rather different 'framework' awaited Roller's venture into the Vienna Court Opera, which had been rebuilt and then opened in 1869 to a performance of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, an opera having particular, anthem-like significance in Vienna.²¹³ The Court Opera, a central, monumental construction of the *Ringstrasse* project designed by Van der Nüll and Sicardsburg in grandiloquent neo-Renaissance, style, contained one of the largest stages and auditoria in Europe.²¹⁴ It also held a significant place in Wagner's association with Vienna in the 1870s, and became, under Director Franz Jauner (1875-1880), the acknowledged operatic centre of the Wagner cult. Yet, while architecturally diametrically oppositional to Olbrich's white, temple-like *Secession Haus*, the two buildings shared some similar characteristics in their intent. Both buildings were singularly declamatory in their aspirations to unite the arts in one space. To this purpose, they shared certain defined spatial areas in common, even if on a different scale.²¹⁵

The *Secession Haus* was constructed on three levels. The public space, at ground level contained a galleried double-height foyer for circulation and two double-height doors leading to the exhibition gallery beyond. The 'backstage' area in this case was the lower ground level, for storage, construction of the exhibition sets, and the movement of artworks into and out of the *Haus*. During preparation for the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, the lower ground level was a veritable workshop, compared by one commentator to a scene from Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, and the enforced labour in the *Nibelung* underworld. A third level, the interior roofscape was accessible from stairways leading from the two side galleries or balconies in the entrance hall or foyer.²¹⁶ [3.12] The roofscape, a double height structure, contained the lighting for the exhibition spaces: the 'floor' of this interior space, constructed from glass tiles or panels, allowed the light from four sets of glass skylights to flood into the spaces of the gallery below.

The stage space of the Court Opera, framed only by the proscenium arch, and beyond this structure, the wings and the rear wall of the stage revealed the space which the

²¹³ The first opera to be performed at the opening of the Salzburg Festival and its re-opening after the second world war. See Steinberg, *Austria as Theatre*, 14.

²¹⁴ 90 feet wide, and including the backstage area 157 feet deep. It seated 2,324 (inc. to 3,100) (Paris Garnier, 2,200). It covered a total area of 28,565 square feet, on a site of 147,000 square feet compared to 118,000 square feet Paris Garnier, see Marcel Prawy, *The Vienna Opera* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1970), 24-37, plates 11/1- V/4 for account of construction and reception of new house, reproductions of the building, contemporary drawings of its interior, and the site, 32-33. Also see Heinrich Kralik, *The Vienna Opera* (London: Methuen, 1963), an affectionate chronicle of significant figures and productions.

²¹⁵ For analysis of *Ringstrasse* and competing concerns of Secession architecture, see Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, 24-115.

²¹⁶ The third level is still accessible from these points of access. These observations from published plans and viewing, Vienna, April 2008.

audience observed. Yet, like the *Secession Haus*, (and in common with other theatres at this time), at least two other spaces, each at least as large in scale, depth and width, existed in the world beyond the visible stage space.²¹⁷ The extensive below-stage area, another world of stagehands and workmen, was used for the construction, storage and movement onto the stage of scenery and props. Above the stage lies another, vast additional space for lighting equipment, walkways, backdrops, and other stage constructions.²¹⁸ The spaces of the stage itself were constrained only by the proscenium arch which is fixed, unchanging, and unchangeable. The stage space is mutable, limited at this time only by historical stage design convention and the expectations of the (debatedly) conservative audiences of Vienna, rather than other concerns.

Unlike the *Secession Haus*, where the spectators' path round each exhibition was constructed, and where they, like actors in their own production, could move at will, the opera house audience is fixed in its position. The task of the stage designer was to change the psychological barrier of fixity. The boundaries between the spectator's 'reference world', and the 'other world' on stage, 'could be violated', as theatre historian Ned Bowman described, and 'the spectator propelled into the spaces of the actor'.²¹⁹ To this end, the reconfiguration of the stage space was Roller's concern. However, the Vienna Court Opera held some particular challenges. A contemporary account of the opening of the new house described the distancing effect of the monumental spaces on the spectator: 'Everything in the new Opera House is too magnificent and splendid; without a telescope one hardly knows where one is: from the dizzy heights of the fourth gallery, even the most substantial soprano looks like a dwarf'.²²⁰ Wagner's own efforts to compensate for the distancing of the audience had resulted famously in the construction of secondary and tertiary proscenium arches at Bayreuth.²²¹ If the spaces of the Vienna Court Opera stage were to be wrought anew, and the spatial distance from stage to audience 'dissolved' in favour of a more intense theatrical experience, the stage required a unique, secondary framing device.

Although his concern for the framing of spaces for art in order to intensify the audience's experience was apparent in his *Secession* roles, Roller did not write about this scenic strategy until 1909 and his article for *Der Merker*. Nevertheless, Roller's paintings and groundplans for his productions from their earliest inception at the Vienna Court Opera reveal this as a distinguishing aesthetic of his art of stage design. Roller neither expected these materials to be seen by the performers or the audience, nor desired to have his stage paintings widely exhibited. Although several of his stage paintings were exhibited at

²¹⁷ WOMAD, 368.

²¹⁸ David Aronson, personal backstage tour, Vienna State Opera, December 12th 2008.

²¹⁹ Bowman, 'Investing a Theatrical Idea', 431.

²²⁰ Prawy, *The Vienna Opera*, caption, plate III/6, no source provided.

²²¹ WOMAD, 365.

the Secession *Kunstschau* of 1908, and appeared during his lifetime in print, he rejected the opportunity for their wider recognition as a contribution to modernism in stage design. Lee Simonson described how she approached Roller, 'the dean of Viennese stage designers', for materials for an international exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), New York, in 1932: 'He refused to lend his sketches, since he believed that the only place to exhibit stage settings is in the theatre'.²²²

Nevertheless, Roller's stage design materials reveal his own stated credo: 'The art of presentation is never an end in itself: (it is) an altogether secondary thing, ineluctably taking its principles and rules from the work itself'.²²³ Whilst the manipulation of light and colour played a significant role in Roller's evocation of *Stimmung*, Roller's total approach to stage design contributed to its effects. As Baker observed:

Most of the reviewers understood that (Roller's) towers set on both sides of the stage served to create a performance space... Indeed several reviewers realised that (these) stylish scenic devices... and his new uses of light were an attempt to create *Stimmung*, rather than create the picture through optical illusion.²²⁴

Music critic Max Kalbeck noted this specific connection in his review of Roller's 1906 production of 'The Magic Flute' (*Die Zauberflöte*), writing that 'his "wings and borders" were saturated with music, the colours of the atmosphere (*Stimmung*)', ... registering their surprising, amazing and sometimes disturbing effects'.²²⁵ It is to these materials which we now turn, firstly to illustrate Roller's art of framing, and secondly, his controlling vision through the manipulation of bodies in space.

Part 6: Into the 'mystic gulf': Roller's scenic art of framing

Stage design is nothing but *an art of framing (doch durchaus eine Rahmenkunst)*, never an end in itself: it is definitely a secondary element which can derive its principles and rules only from a particular work and which cannot obey any laws other than the very specific, often unique requirements of the work. Each work of art carries within itself the key to its own production.²²⁶

Roller's stage aesthetics, the 'hidden architecture' of his stage designs are examined here through the materials of his art as *Leiter des Ausstattungswesens*. Structures and other devices were created to focus and concentrate the stage space through a secondary framing of the stage, another level of framing inside the proscenium arch, the

²²² Simonson, *The Art of Scenic Design*, 35.

²²³ AR, *Der Merker*, 1909, cited HLG, *Mahler V2*, 947.

²²⁴ Baker, 'Alfred Roller's Don Giovanni', 119, my italics.

²²⁵ Max Kalbeck, *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 3.06.1906, cited Baker, *Ibid*, 139.

²²⁶ AR, 'Die Inszenierung ist doch durchaus eine Rahmenkunst, niemals Selbstzweck, eine durchaus sekundäre Sache, die ihre Gesetze und Regeln immer nur dem Werke entnehmen kann, um das es sich gerade handelt, und die kein anderes Gesetz haben kann, als die ganz besonderen, oft ganz einzig dastehenden Forderungen dieses Werkes zu erfüllen.' 'Bühnenreform?' ('Stage Reform?'), *Der Merker*, 1, 1909, 194-197 (195).

primary and fixed framing of the stage. Some of these examples have been greatly remarked on, most prodigiously, the *Rollertürme*, or Roller towers, for the first Mahler:Roller production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (1905). [3.13] These structures, and Roller's setting for the opera, attracted more critical acclaim, controversy and column inches than Mahler's musical interpretation. It remained, however, one of few operas for which they were used, although Roller made extensive use of *Rollertürme* in the spoken-word theatre to great effect, particularly in his 1920 production of *Macbeth* with Reinhardt.

Other such examples of secondary framing have gone unremarked. The Roller archives reveal a set of thirty-two vignettes prepared for his first production of *Faust Part One* in 1909.²²⁷ [3.14] These reduced sketches nevertheless narrated the thirty-two scenes of *Faust* in its completeness, scene by scene. They were produced in the same year in which Roller published his important article, 'Stage Reform?', for *Der Merker*. Returning to the same theme in an article in 1922, Roller wrote, 'the designer is only the servant of the work. He does not 'decorate', does not illustrate the stage happenings, but instead creates with the utmost restraint (*Selbstlosigkeit*) the indispensable frame for the work of art'.²²⁸

Roller's 'indispensable frame' did not appear directly to draw on Appia's theories. Appia saw the proscenium arch as barrier to the Greek ideal, declaring that 'the spatial significance of our theatre is curtailed by the frame of the proscenium arch... Consequently the drama of the imagination (an unlimited space) has no relationship to the roofed amphitheatre'.²²⁹ Instead, Roller's principles had greater resonance with those of Wagner in his design of the Bayreuth theatre. The effects of framing a space which was already framed, by the immovable structure of the proscenium arch, resulted in the structural device of multiple proscenium arches.²³⁰ Wagner described the effect on the occasion of the opening:

the proscenium, the actual framing of the scenic picture became the starting point of all further arrangements...inspired by the genius of the famous architect (who) framed in a second, a wider proscenium, from whose relation the narrower proscenium he anticipated (would create) the singular illusion of an apparent throwing back of the scene itself...this in turn gives rise to the illusion that the persons figuring upon the stage are of larger, superhuman stature.²³¹

In this way, Wagner suggested, the 'desired annihilation of the scale of distances' would be achieved, and along with it, the separation of the ideal world of the stage from the

²²⁷ AR archive, (HZ_HU 45381-3), ÖTM.

²²⁸ AR, 'Mahler und die Inszenierung', *Moderne Welt*, 3, 1922-23 cited HLG, Mahler V2, 569. from Kitzwegerer, 'Alfred Roller als Bühnenbildner', 43.

²²⁹ Appia, *Texts*, 44-45.

²³⁰ For an account of the effects of Wagner's design, see Carnegie, 'Designing Wagner', 50.

²³¹ WOMAD, 365-366. The architect is thought to be Semper and his design for the unrealised Munich Festival Theatre.

reality of the world of the spectators.²³² Roller's intent to frame stage spaces beyond the proscenium arch, was in evidence in his first production and the two stage paintings for Act One of *Tristan und Isolde*.²³³ [3.15]

The stage paintings note the duration of the act in the words 'Anfang' (beginning) and 'Ende'. The framing devices were shown as blank panels on either side of the stage set. These two panels, unlike the later 'Roller towers' were passive. Seemingly, they acted simply as devices for reducing further the width of the stage space. The scene is dominated by the heavy, orange-yellow hangings of Isolde's quarters below the deck of her ship. These generously billowing materials form a tent-like enclosure over the whole of the width of the stage, the highest point of which is off-centre. In this reduced version of stage space, the off-centred positioning of the hangings accentuates the 'realism' of the angle of the deck, which opens outwards, bringing the space of performance to the front of the stage. Roller's second scene painting, 'Ende', shows the hangings partially lifted to reveal part of the upper deck of the ship, the clear light of day, and to the right, a distant view of the sea as it meets the horizon.

Wagner had specified a tent-like structure on the foredeck of the ship. Yet the draperies were not simply stage accessories to decorate or dress the stage, nor simply to comply with Wagner's stage instruction. Roller's use of the fabric served several purposes, all of which intensified the essence of the music drama. The draperies indicate the sails of the ship, without the need to represent them. As Appia described, 'the ship is so clearly indicated by the score, that the heaping of nautical details...must seem like clumsy repetition'.²³⁴ Their use confines the stage space which is dramatically reduced, without the need for mimetic representation of other elements.²³⁵ This abstraction of form, through the use of tent-like fabric and the reduction of unnecessary detail, recalls the effect Roller achieved in his 1901 Segantini exhibition where the chapel-like interior space was lined in fabric.

Roller's stage-design painting shows the dramatically reduced stage depth. It reflects the enclosed atmosphere of the below-deck area, drawing on the prevailing atmosphere of the first scenes of the music drama and *Isolde*'s barely suppressed 'secret fury' at her enforced transportation to become the bride of *King Marke*. The yellow-orange draperies were seen at the time as 'menacing'.²³⁶ They concentrate the audience's view of the

²³² Cited Bowman, 'Investing a Theatrical Ideal', 434, also citing Alfred Newman, *The Life of Richard Wagner* V III (London:Cassell, 1933-47), 417.

²³³ Signed and dated 1902. Mahler wrote, June 20th 1902, of his delight 'with your colour sketches ('*Farbenskizzen*'), GM:AR, (AM47.466RO), also Baker:Pausch, *Das Archiv*, 100.

²³⁴ Appia, '*Tristan und Isolde*', WOMAD, 390.

²³⁵ See for comparison Millington, '*Tristan und Isolde*', *Dictionary of Opera*, V 4, 817 for reproduction of model of original production, Munich, June 1865.

²³⁶ HLG, *Mahler V2*, 572.

scene to express the resulting mood, the essence of *Isolde's* interior emotional life. As Appia described, in his detailed interpretation, 'Isolde fairly suffocates under the folds of her tent'.²³⁷ The progression between paintings reveals the passage of time, and the point at which the atmosphere and the action of the music drama shifts, from Isolde's relative isolation to reveal Tristan, the object of her fury and her desire, on the upper deck.

The simple idea of drawing-up the fabric changed the atmosphere yet dispensed with the need for further disruptive scene changes. The paintings clearly suggested the transition from containment to partial light. Roller illustrates two framing devices, the first a set of side panels, and the second, the fabric: the one, static and passive, the other, capable of movement which was integral to the development of the music drama itself. Appia described this effect: 'the curtains of Isolde's tent, in the most literal sense, constitute the boundary between the inner and outer drama of the play'.²³⁸

Framing Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, 1905:

Roller's most celebrated and controversial contribution to the framing of stage space was his '*Rollertürme*' for Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, presented in December 1905.²³⁹ The towers can be most clearly seen in Roller's vivid stage paintings for the first and second acts. [3.16] In the painting for Act One, scene four, four towers have been installed to the right and left of the stage. The left-hand towers clearly show the intended effects of light sources used from within the structure. These structural devices created the impression of interior illumination shining from a 'window' at night. They were an ingenious invention, used to great purpose to create different scenic effects throughout the opera, replacing the need for frequent changes of scene behind a closed curtain which had disrupted the time and space continuum of the work.²⁴⁰

Roller's towers were 'simple structures, (easily) movable...which, used either singly or combined in groups, created windows, balconies, doorways and gateways. Painted drops flew in and out between the towers'.²⁴¹ Or as Vana Greisenegger aptly describes them, they were constructed as 'disguised hollow prisms'.²⁴² Rather than passive structures either side of the stage for *Tristan und Isolde*, used to reduce the internal acting space, the *Don Giovanni* towers were an active part of the production. They offered greater opportunities to manipulate movement of the performers in and through the space. Baker's description provides further insights into the shaping, and internal framing of the volumetric spaces of the stage:

²³⁷ Appia, *Ibid*, 388.

²³⁸ Appia, *Ibid*, 389.

²³⁹ HLG, *Mahler V3*, 291-311 for details of the production and its reception.

²⁴⁰ Baker, *Ibid*, 4.

²⁴¹ Baker, *Ibid*, 3.

²⁴² Greisenegger-Georgila, 'From Stage Set to Symbolic Space', 225.

The *Peluche* (soft canvas drop) consisted of grey leg drops in front of the downstage towers, acting as an *adjustable second proscenium*...they were intended to mask the offstage sides of the towers. For this scene they were drawn back into the wings to reveal the windows (in the towers)...The lighting created a dark brooding, and dramatic atmosphere...The (remaining) entrances and exits of the performers were between the left towers...Entrances and exits were possible through the entire stage...offstage steps were erected to provide access to each tower for the performers.

Between the towers, curtains were hung to mask the exits leading offstage. For the balcony scene...the curtains in the window of the front right tower were opened, revealing a floor lamp illuminating the interior of the tower...Elvira appeared in the balcony windows of the front right tower (allowing Leporello to serenade her from below)...A painted drop of neutral grey, the same colours as the towers, with a 'double door', hung upstage of the towers.²⁴³

This excerpt describes several of Roller's effects, dependent on, and resulting from the structure of the *Rollertürme*. The facility for masking the extreme sides of the stage space so that entrances and exits could be camouflaged allowed the performers thus appear to inhabit the interior and exterior spaces of the set itself. The towers were used flexibly to create different indoor and outdoor lighting effects and the impression of interior architectonic spaces in which the out-of-sight action in Mozart's work could be more readily imagined. Different building levels were created through a seemingly logical structure.

Roller's hand-drawn groundplan for *Don Giovanni* reveals further insights into his intent for the production, and his stress on the management of on-stage movement across its surfaces and depths, through time and space. His detailed written instructions show his concern for the transition from one action to another: 'At the entrance of Masetto and Zerlina, the door is left completely open to enable Leporello to exit quickly...Masetto closes the doors. Then the upstage masking is to be struck'.²⁴⁴

The importance of these dramatic changes to the scene-setting and design to facilitate, for example, rapid and frequent 'entrances and exits', should not be underestimated in the context of the structure and essence of Mozart's opera. Simply put, the work, called a *dramma giocoso* (comic drama), is governed by a single, central philosophical idea, Don Giovanni's flouting of society in pursuit of sexual pleasure. This binds together what, in other ways, has been described as 'a disparate set of ambivalent scenes of comic, tragic and dramatic incidents'.²⁴⁵

The work is marked by rapid changes of mood, between murder, death, and ghostly incarnation to rape and seduction; from betrayal, anger and mockery to passion and joy.

²⁴³ Baker, *Ibid*, 97-102, my italics.

²⁴⁴ AR, groundplan for *Don Giovanni*, (HZ_HU), ÖTM.

²⁴⁵ Julian Rushton, 'Don Giovanni', Sadie (ed), *Dictionary of Opera* V I, 1206.

These changes are passed musically from aria to aria, ensemble to ensemble, and scene-to-scene in rapid succession. As David Cairns describes, 'the comic characters, no less than the serious are subject to the same overmastering force, so deeply interfused as to not be separable. To this end, there is no letting up'.²⁴⁶ The *Rollertürme*, and his various other constructions made possible by Roller's secondary framing, facilitated the movements, appearances and disappearances of the characters. They transformed the stage space to reflect the essence of the work: the quixotic passage of musical mood and scene.

This change of mood may be observed in Roller's stage paintings for Act Two. The towers to the left of this scene, grey and 'silent', play a supporting role. [3.17] When illuminated from the interior, they are transformed into active participation of the scene, conveying the unseen actions taking place in the interior spaces. In Act Two Leporello, Giovanni's servant, and Elvira, Giovanni's victim of seduction and betrayal, need shadows in which to hide, and Leporello, an escape. Roller's towers prevailed. Mid-way through the act, the complainants collectively gather on the stage to denounce *Giovanni*, the murderous betrayer. It is described as 'a scene of unreality...a huge ensemble of consternation, concentrated into a movement resembling a short finale'.²⁴⁷ The combination of towers, and the use of the background drop clearly show Roller's intended reduction of the performance space to project this intense ensemble to the front area of the stage, towards the audience.

For some, Roller's towers overly dominated the production and 'much less attention was given to the singing'.²⁴⁸ Two indicative reviews serve here as a brief intimation of their effect as the production opened. Max Graf described the carnival atmosphere of the second act: 'out of the windows of these towers drop down fiery red curtains... masked revellers filled the window spaces of the towers'.²⁴⁹ Ludwig Hevesi marked Roller's innovative use of door structures on the stage in Act Two, scene two, which relied on the towers and related 'drops' for their placement on the stage: 'In the twilight, a dark and immense square gateway...(There are) no embellishments, no structure, only a naked geometrical form. Then a gate opens, and a dazzling crack of light streaks through'.²⁵⁰ [3.17 as above]

Hevesi's description of Mozart's scene was precisely executed in Roller's scene painting. A shaft of brilliant blue light is revealed by the just-opened gate, austere coloured in neutral tones. Hevesi's graphic descriptions of naked, geometric form and the dazzling

²⁴⁶ David Cairns, *Mozart and his Operas* (London: Penguin, 2006), 144, my italics.

²⁴⁷ Rushton, 'Don Giovanni', 1205.

²⁴⁸ Baker, 'Alfred Roller's Don Giovanni', 3.

²⁴⁹ Baker, *Ibid*, citing Max Graf, *Neues Wiener Journal*, 22 December 1905, 99.

²⁵⁰ Baker, *Ibid*, citing Hevesi, *Fremdenblatt*, 22 December 1905, 101.

crack reads together with Roller's painting to insinuate what would have been conveyed wordlessly, yet expressively by Roller's staging. Roller's painting is a visual metaphor for the prevailing atmosphere from the opening scenes of Act One, which shadow Mozart's opera: rape, deceit, and Giovanni's murderous attack on the father of Anna, one of several objects of his passion.

Roller's towers, as he described in a late 1930 article in *Thespis Theaterbuch*, drew on the late-Renaissance tradition of the proscenium. He reflected on the importance of reconfiguring the stage space in a likeness of this model:

Situated behind the main curtain, it was part of the stage... it was also part of the auditorium and thus created an architectural link between the two. It was reserved for the solo actor, while the back of the stage was for sets, entries, dances and crowd scenes...What was *heard* was placed in front of what was seen...the Romantics did away with the proscenium, transplanting the actor from his ideal space, where anything or nothing may be represented, into the scenery itself.²⁵¹

Ironically, the most perceptive critics recognised Roller's contribution, suggesting that Roller's sets would have been better suited to the spoken-word theatre. The production was thought to suffer from the predominance of drama at the expense of music. Music critic Paul Stefan wrote: 'Don Juan is turned into a music drama, a realistic play, a conversational tragedy. Roller and Mahler wished to achieve symbolic distance, to render the work's true character as a 'tragedy of pleasure...transfigured by the music and played for a romantic post-Wagnerian audience'.²⁵² The musicological debate on the paradoxical character of Mozart's work, which moves between the comedic, the dramatic and profound, continues to the present day.²⁵³

Framing Goethe's *Faust* – Roller's 'filmic' interpretation:

Roller's first staging of Goethe's *Faust Part One* (1906), in collaboration with Max Reinhardt took place in 1909 at the *Deutsches Theater*, Berlin, the year in which he resumed his position at the Applied Arts School (*Kunstgewerbeschule*) on Mahler's departure for New York.²⁵⁴ The number of play copies of Goethe's *Faust* in Roller's archives attest to his fascination with the work.²⁵⁵ Goethe himself had executed several drawings for *Faust Part I*, not as 'illustrations', which he eschewed, but as sketches for a stage production planned to take place in 1812.²⁵⁶

²⁵¹ AR, 'Bühne and Bühnenhandwerk', *Thespis, Das Theaterbuch*, 1, 30, (1930) 137-145(137); HLG, *Mahler V3*, 292.

²⁵² Paul Stefan, *Das Grab in Wien* (Berlin:Reiss, 1913), 63 cited HLG, *Mahler V3*, 309-310.

²⁵³ See Cairns, *Mozart and his Operas*, 136-168.

²⁵⁴ AR presented *Faust II* in 1911.

²⁵⁵ AR archives, Autograph and Nachläss, ÖTM.

²⁵⁶ See Françoise Forster-Hahn, 'A Hero for all Seasons? Illustrations for Goethe's *Faust* and the Course of Modern German History', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, Issue 4, 1990, 511-536(512).

Goethe's *Faust*, a monumental, episodic work of over sixty different scenes, moves between heaven, a series of intimate and gothic interiors, countryside, town and the haunts of witches for the famous *Walpurgisnacht*. It is notoriously un-performable.²⁵⁷ Neil Flax describes this dilemma: the style of the two plays, particularly *Faust II*, has affinities with Baroque theatre, with its capability for frequent scene changes and magical transformations.²⁵⁸ Even so, it is argued, many of the stage effects of Goethe's conception would have been beyond its considerable stage machinery effects.²⁵⁹

In what ways did Roller approach the challenge faced by every stage designer in conceiving of the production for this relatively 'un-performable work'? Rather than creating separate stage-design paintings for each scene, Roller's miniaturised impressions were conceived of as a series. Twenty-seven vignettes were mounted on three boards. The vignettes were accompanied by a numbered key and Roller's handwritten notes briefly describing each scene. [3.18] In no other sequence of preparatory stage impressions did Roller's work so clearly demonstrate the stage designer's craft, to interpret the playwright's work and evoke the movement of the drama through time and space.²⁶⁰ Each vignette is a 'stage picture', the term given to the stage drawing which takes as its frame an impression of the space contained within the proscenium arch which is seen by the audience at curtain-up. In each scene Roller indicated a secondary framing device inside the proscenium arch.

The reduced and concentrated sketches have few, yet expressive lines, drawn mainly in black pencil. A blue pencil or crayon is used with black in various tonalities. Combined with the white surface of the paper, it indicates shadow and light. In scene one, 'Prologue in Heaven', (*Prolog in Himmel*), Roller's use of red pencil indicates the shafts of the sun, Goethe's 'sun (which resumes) its ancient song... though what its essence none can see', and a kind of super-, or hyper-reality surrounding the heavenly host.²⁶¹ In the final scene, red is used for a whorl of intensity in the gloom of the stone prison (*Kircher*), representing Gretchen's death and ascent into heaven. Each of the twenty-seven vignettes, despite or because of its size, reflects energy in its expressive intensity. A series of changing light and dark effects were marked, varying between dense night, the daylight of broad landscape scenes and various shades of *chiaroscuro* between.

²⁵⁷ A view expressed by Goethe, Paul Bishop (ed), *A Companion to Goethe's Faust Parts I and II* (Rochester, NY; Suffolk: Camden House, 2001), xxxvi.

²⁵⁸ Neil Flax, 'Goethe's Faust II and the Experimental Theatre of His Time', in *Comparative Literature*, 31:2 (Spring 1979), 154-166, for a summary of this debate.

²⁵⁹ Flax, 'Goethe's Faust', 154.

²⁶⁰ AR produced a similar storyboard for his production of *Macbeth* (1920), Wien Burg Theater. These too graphically show his use of towers and framing devices.

²⁶¹ Opening lines, *Faust I*, scene as indicated above, J W Goethe, *Faust Parts I and II*, trans. Robert David Macdonald (Birmingham: Oberon, 1988), 33.

In scene one, Roller has indicated the framing devices as two towers, in architectonic form, either side of the stage. Overall they reduce the stage space to half its original width. The towers are hatched grey in tone. They reveal, in dense black, the outline of a distant city at night, indicated by the church spire. The figure of Mephistopheles at the front stage is a small, darkly-scribbled presence. Floating above, half-way to the proscenium arch, against a deep blue ground, a cloud is indicated in black upon which float the angel host, wings clearly visible: Mephistopheles wagers God for the soul of *Faust*, in a vision of the world as theatre of life and death.

For the second scene in *Faust's* study, Roller's towers remain in position. A simple, narrow doorway has been let into the towers on either side (for the appearance of *Mephistopheles*). *Faust's* study at night is indicated as a lofty room. Roller achieved this effect, not with gothic-style interiors as Goethe had intended, but by a fall of dense gloom, indicated by the dark blue-black of the intensely-sketched interior space of the stage. This softens the effect of the dark which fills the empty stage space between the towers. In a small area, relieved of sketched lines and left white, to indicate the only illuminated area of the stage, the shape of *Faust's* large desk can be made out, dwarfed by the descending darkness. This is Roller's materialisation of *Stimmung*.

Goethe prescribed many exits and entrances in the space of one short scene, the comings and goings between both material, and immaterial characters, between real and less real worlds, between the poetic and the prosaic. These are the distinctive characteristics of Goethe's shifting, quixotic work.²⁶² The *Rollertürme* with their simple doorways, such as those for 'Faust's study', and 'Gretchen's room', allowed for such appearances and disappearances.

In several scenes, the framing devices are distinctively Roller's towers. In others, they appear as flat panels, reduced to more passive, seemingly two-dimensional structures. This is particularly marked in landscape scenes where the panels are either narrowed, giving an open aspect to the stage picture and a wider view onto a more distant world, or extended to concentrate the scene. In scene four, '*Unter den Linden*', a tree dominates the foreground and the performance space is greatly reduced. Scene five, '*Am Rast Stein*', reveals an untroubled landscape, distant and calm: a touch of red indicates an evening sunset. In contrast, Roller reduced the stage picture to half its depth for two interior scenes. This intervention of panels provides a domestic scale to '*Gretchens Stube*', scene eleven and '*Marthens Stube*', scene thirteen. [3.19]

²⁶² For an account of Goethe's *Faust* see Paul Bishop, 'Introduction: Reading Faust Today', *A Companion*, xiii-xliv.

In 1933, thirty-four years after his production with Alfred Roller at the *Deutsches Theater*, Max Reinhardt chose to overcome the difficulties of staging *Faust* in the spectacular natural setting of the *Felsenreitschule* (Rock Riding School), adjoining the Festival Theatre in Salzburg. He built his Faust city in an area which had been blasted out of the sheer rock of the mountainside, and which towered above the city itself.²⁶³ Using this natural backdrop, Reinhardt unified time, place and space by creating a multitude of narrow streets and houses rising above the setting of the drama's many domestic and outdoor scenes, gardens and street scenes, open countryside and forest. From the highest point above the action of the main scenes of the play, the opening 'Prologue from Heaven', with its multitude of angels, became spectacularly visible.²⁶⁴

In this first production with Reinhardt, in the confined and conventional stage of the Berlin *Deutsches Theater*, Roller appeared to conceive of *Faust I* in a more cinematic way. Presaging the filmic storyboard, Roller created this series of small, framed vignettes, the so-called 'stage pictures' revealed to the audience at curtain-up, as a way of visualising the sequencing in time, place and through the duration of the narrative.²⁶⁵ The views are those 'framed views' to be taken up by the watchful eye of the director, through the lens of the camera, and subsequently by the audience. Roller's acute consciousness of the need to transform the theatrical space for each production regardless of the constraints of using the same space for many different works is clearly in evidence in his 1909 stage reform article. As he stated, 'all of these works which came into being in such different circumstances are performed in the self-same theatrical space. Is it a wonder that the full justice is done to none of them?'²⁶⁶

The frame, in cinematic terms, as Michel Chion describes, is 'the visible, rectangular, delimited place, perceivable and present for the spectator...the frame thus affirms itself as a pre-existing container, there before the scene appears, and which can remain after the scene disappears', (in the mind of the audience).²⁶⁷ Roller's *Faust* vignettes cut from scene to scene, each scene acquiring its appropriate secondary framing, to present the audience with a panoramic or close-up view of the proceedings.²⁶⁸ Roller adjusted the stage space to render frequent transitions through space and time, from place to place, and from world to different world. Such structures provided the framework that Goethe, during the long gestation period of the work, did not create for the work itself. [3.20]

²⁶³ See Esslin, 'Max Reinhardt', 19, 20.

²⁶⁴ Esslin, 'Max Reinhardt', 19, 20.

²⁶⁵ It is not known if AR knew about the technical aspects of film-making, and unlikely that the AR circle would have included an early film-maker. However, he was clearly conscious of the medium, see his 1909 *Der Merker* article, stating 'Isn't a good film to be preferred to a bad performance of Schiller?' HLG, *Mahler V3*, 948.

²⁶⁶ AR, *Der Merker*, cited HLG, *Mahler V3*, 947.

²⁶⁷ Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* (New York: Columbia University, 1994), 66, 67.

²⁶⁸ Ritchie Robertson, 'Literary Techniques and Aesthetic texture in Faust', in Bishop (ed), *A Companion to Faust*, 1.

Neil Flax has argued that *Faust* (in particular *Faust II*) represented Goethe's 'visionary anticipation of a stagecraft that would only come into being in the future, or even of the cinema'.²⁶⁹ Despite their miniaturisation, with a few deft strokes, and with the aid of his continuously performing frames, Roller achieved a dramatic momentum for the work that was clearly indicated within the confines of his filmic storyboards. His stage-design paintings and vignettes, however, represented only one part of the materials of his art of stage design which were used to contribute to the effects of the performance, a *Rollerisch Stimmung*. No less significant were the groundplans which he devised.

Roller's groundplans - the movement of actors through time and space:

Simonson has described the particular qualities of the stage designer's imagination which must 'rely on his mind's eye, the ability not only to visualise his conception but to test it'.²⁷⁰ Analysis of Roller's working drawings and groundplans presents certain challenges. Some of the details, written in Roller's hand, were often abbreviated. They are difficult to decipher. Nevertheless, they provide evidence of Roller's determination to mobilise his art in favour of the prescribed movement of the artists in the spaces of the stage. As Greisenegger concurs, it is likely that Roller was one of the first stage designers in the production of opera to use groundplans as a material of his art for this purpose.²⁷¹ This account returns to 1903, and to Roller's groundplan for *Tristan und Isolde*. [3.21] This first production provides the opportunity to consider how his 'interference', as stage designer, as indicated by his groundplan, may have affected the outcome of the production in performance. As Simonson states, 'The plan, unseen by the audience, controls the pattern of movement by the performers', through time and space.²⁷²

Act Two of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* is situated at night in the garden in front of the castle of *King Marke*. Roller's groundplan, as distinct from the often-cited stage paintings of 1902, is dated 1903. The production opened on February 21st of that year: the dating suggests that Roller may have created it rather at the last minute. Unlike many of his later groundplans, which were sketched out on the large sheets of official Vienna Court Opera graph paper, imprinted with an outline of the stage, the *Tristan* plan uses faintly squared

²⁶⁹ Neil Flax, 'Goethe's *Faust II* and the Experimental Theatre of His Time', *Comparative Literature*, V31, 2, Spring 1979, 154-166 (155). See also Forster-Hahn, on Karl Hubbuch's 1922-24 portfolio of etchings for *Faust* which 'employed the technique of montage' and other characteristics of contemporary films, 'A hero for all seasons?', 524.

²⁷⁰ Simonson, *The Art of Scenic Design*, 35.

²⁷¹ Vana Greisenegger, personal conversation, ÖTM, January 17th 2007. There is no evidence that Anton Brioschi, AR's predecessor at the Court Opera produced groundplans.

²⁷² Simonson, *The Stage is Set*, 286.

paper, but is otherwise freehand. Roller had not yet been officially appointed to his new role which was formalised later that year, in June 1903.²⁷³

Act Two of *Tristan und Isolde* is the tumultuous love scene known as the *Liebesnacht*, ('Love's night'). During this scene their love remains physically unconsummated, yet is consummated at a metaphysical level. This Act dramatically called for, in Appia's words, a 'projected form of stage setting... a very restricted foreground'.²⁷⁴ Roller's plan is drawn in heavy black ink. It bears Roller's handwriting in the brief descriptions on the plan itself, and in a numbered key below the stage layout. The groundplan is dominated by an octagonal form in the centre, blocked-in with a Secession-style chequerboard design of black and white squares, to form the terrace in front of the castle. The octagonal area is edged by lines indicating a retaining wall, on five of its eight faces. The front face of the octagon opens onto the front of the stage, using the device of three shallow steps, either side of which are two low pilasters.

Roller intended that the entire action of the scene would take place in the enclosed, reduced, and concentrated space in front of the castle. The disposition of the castle set on one angled side of the octagon had the effect of projecting the space in which the performance took place, forwards. The groundplan makes it clear that the surrounding solid elements, so indicated, were to act as a framework to this central stage area.²⁷⁵ In the staging of the work, the octagonal terrace was slightly raised from the level of the stage, and retained Roller's distinctive *Flächenkunst* motif of black-and-white squares.²⁷⁶ The plan reveals the similarity of Roller's conception with Appia's precise set directions 'for this projected form of setting':

The terrace which cuts through the stage at an angle goes from stage left, meets the stage right flats which are further upstage and loses itself in the night of the backdrop. This terrace should be at least 2 metres higher than the stage floor. The left side of the terrace for about one third of the width should be bounded by the wall... the actual foreground in consequence is very restricted.²⁷⁷

The angularities indicated on the plan by Roller, effected by the use of the octagon as the centrepiece to the construction, had important implications which had been foreseen by Appia. Such a construct contested the prevailing convention which left the actors unnaturally facing forward at right-angles to, and against a background of receding, or

²⁷³ See Wolfgang Greisenegger, 'Alfred Roller: Neubedeutung des Szenischen Raumes', *Academia Scientiarum Hungaricae*, T. 31, 1:4, 271-281 for an account of this period. AR was still Professor at the *Kunstgewerbeschule*.

²⁷⁴ Appia, WOMAD, 382.

²⁷⁵ Greisenegger-Georgila, 'From Stage to Symbolic Space', describes the similarity of AR's design to the corresponding design of Appia (1896).

²⁷⁶ HLG, *Mahler V2*, 573.

²⁷⁷ Appia, 'Tristan und Isolde', WOMAD, 382.

multiple, parallel stage flats.²⁷⁸ In 1921, MacGowan succinctly and graphically described this dilemma as 'the conflict of the dead setting and the living actor...painted canvas against human flesh, a series of falsity layered onto falsity'.²⁷⁹

Instead, Roller's new sense of realism relied here on the construction of 'real' space for the terrace and garden. Similar concerns may be observed from the freehand groundplan drawing which Roller devised for the first act of *Tristan*. [3.22] The act takes place on the ship taking *Isolde* to *King Marke*. The disposition of the sloping deck was accentuated in the groundplan by the placement of a distinctive, patterned rug, and other props, also at an angle to the slope of the deck. Appia described this transition from the conventional use of flats to a physically-centred space, and the implications for the audience experience:

What might be termed the aesthetic activity of the spectator is misdirected by this process (of flats), *for we cannot take part in the work of art ... the area used by the actor is not at the centre of the setting... (rather) the setting must somehow emanate from the ground on which the actor stands.*²⁸⁰

The groundplan for Act Two offers up further evidence of Roller's attention to the detail which evoked a real, out of an unreal, world. The scattering of small marks to the front of the octagon, for example, is explained by Roller's note, '*dunkler Steinteppich*', carpet of dark stones, or 'scattered stones and the debris of the crumbling walls', as it was described in performance.²⁸¹ In the space inside the enclosure, Roller has roughly indicated trees in turquoise crayon, in plan form, indicated by his handwritten '*Bäume*'. Similarly, inked circlets indicate '*blühende Heckenrosen*', (flowering wild roses). To stage-right of the long, vertical flight of stairs, Roller's instructions indicate the castle's steeply falling, wooded slope. In the performance, 'behind a low wall decked with lilacs, violets and white roses, the garden, bathed in the moon's bluish light, sloped gently down to the sea'.²⁸² As noted above, Webern wrote affectingly of the atmosphere of a warm summer night which was evoked by these scenic effects.²⁸³

Roller's further instructions indicated by key numbers below the drawing, show that the steps have been specifically constructed to bring the two main protagonists to the centre

²⁷⁸ For accounts of the historical convention of stage flats and its problems see Appia, *Texts*, 46-51; Edward Gordon Craig, 'The artists of the theatre of the future', Franc Chamberlain (ed), *On the Art of the Theatre*, (London: Routledge, 2009[1911]); MacGowan, *The Theatre of Tomorrow*, 1921; Simonson, *The Art of Scenic Design*, 1951; Greisenegger-Georgila, *Theater von der Stange: Wiener Ausstattungskunst in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Wien: Böhlau, 1994), 28-30, Anton Brioschi's Court Opera set designs for *Tristan und Isolde* (1883), and *Tannhäuser* (1890).

²⁷⁹ MacGowan, *Theatre of Tomorrow*, 80.

²⁸⁰ Appia, *Texts*, 46, my italics.

²⁸¹ HLG, *Mahler V2*, 583.

²⁸² HLG, *Ibid*, 573.

²⁸³ HLG, *Ibid*, 582, Webern's diary, 21 February, 1903, the first night.

of the stage, separately from two different pathways. Number one, and the note '*Forte auftritt Isolde*', indicate Isolde descending from above. She joins Tristan, as he emerges from the concealed stairs to the right onto the restricted space of the octagon, indicated by number three, and the words '*Auftritt Tristan an dem*'. Roller's key number two marks the place on the front balustrade for '*der Fackel*', the important torch, which is extinguished when the lovers meet. As Appia described in his perceptive scenic analysis, when the torch is extinguished, 'Isolde nullifies inimical space. Time stops'.²⁸⁴

The essence of the *Liebesnacht* is the distance or the space between the protagonists, a distance which is obliterated only in the last passages of Act Three. As Karol Berger has remarked, 'these monologues are not events of action, but the ways in which the protagonists articulate their stories to each other'.²⁸⁵ Roller's plan is indicative and sketchy yet clearly crystallises the concentration of space in which the love scene, an enactment requiring little movement, and which is seemingly time-suspended, will take place.

Finally, further examination of Roller's handwritten instructions reveals his concern for the development of the scene, and certain interpretative effects, as well as the movement of the actors through the duration of the work, its musical time. The phrase, '*Einsam Wachend*' is the reference for key number six, and '*Sink Herneider*', key number seven. These libretto fragments are drawn from two sequential moments in the first half of the second act. Brangäne, Isolde's companion, keeping watch out of sight, sings a two-minute passage, '*Einsam Wachend in der Nacht*', ('Alone I watch in the night'), warning the lovers that night will soon end.²⁸⁶ '*O Sink herneider, Nacht der Liebe*' (Oh sink down upon us, night of love'), is a passage of four minutes during which the lovers praise the darkness which shuts out false appearances, and declare mutually that they feel secure in night's embrace.

Roller's placement of Brangäne for this musical passage was marked by the corresponding number six, upstage, at the top of the flight of the descending staircase. From this height the voice would have sounded at one remove, floating through space over the heads of the lovers.²⁸⁷ Roller's positioning would have represented a significant sonic improvement to the convention of an off-stage position, or hidden at stage level behind a flat.²⁸⁸ Roller had 'intervened' in the placement of the performers. This practice followed in the new, expanded role of stage designer desired firstly by Wagner, and later defined by Appia. His choreography of these positions moved the actors through the

²⁸⁴ Appia, '*Tristan und Isolde*', WOMAD, 380.

²⁸⁵ Karol Berger, '*Tristan und Isolde: Music Drama as Opera*', Institute of Musical Research, School of Advanced Study, University of London, 20th March, 2009.

²⁸⁶ Osborne, *The Complete Operas*, 147.

²⁸⁷ 'Brangäne's voice floats down as she keeps watch', Osborne, *The Complete Operas*, 147.

²⁸⁸ Uncorroborated.

spaces of the set, underpinning the intended passage of the protagonists through the time and space of the work itself. Roller drew directly on two significant passages of Wagner's work for its internal construction, ultimately to shape the action on the stage itself.

Roller's plan reflected the construct of 'real' space, in which the enactment of the music drama would have the effect of bringing the audience into a new relationship with the stage. The audience members were visited on the scene, both as observers and eavesdroppers. The art of arena space, or *Raumkunst*, the stage space, became, in Roller's plans, an active proponent of the design. As Roller wrote in his 1930 stage design article: 'the term *Bühnenbild* (stage picture), is only a poor stopgap. The stage does not provide a 'picture'; it provides spaces...vibrating with the rhythm of the play and performance, helping expression to become impression'.²⁸⁹

The groundplan for *Tristan und Isolde* was neither one of Roller's most elegant, nor does it show the integration of spotlight positions and lighting effects which were incorporated into his later plans. [3.23] For these further levels of sophistication, Roller's groundplans for *Das Rheingold* (1905), and *Götterdämmerung* (1909), provide a more complete picture. The groundplan for the opening scene of *Das Rheingold*, for example, used the wash of blue watercolour to indicate the area of the watery depths of the Rhine. Entrance and exits points for the gods, and for *Freia*, who is taken in payment for Valhalla and led off-stage by the giants, to await the redemption of the debt, are clearly marked. Set in to the watery blue area, the words *Erscheinung der Erda*, ('appearance of Erda'), marks the stage space where the earth goddess emerges from below-stage through the trapdoor, and from her eternal sleep in the depths, to warn *Wotan* of his forthcoming fate.²⁹⁰ 'Bogentheile,' ('spotlights'), are marked on the plan, numbered throughout, some indicating the colour they throw. Through a careful reading, Roller's subtly-indicated areas of colour-coded shading, his placement of spotlights, his detailed notes with numbered keys in precise and elegant hand, reveal how the inner workings or structures of the scene, the props and accessories, came to life. They show the emergence of Roller's new visual language of stage construction, the integration of lighting with structural elements, and the newly choreographed use of space.²⁹¹

However, despite its lack of refinement, this first groundplan for Act Two of *Tristan*, reveals much about Roller's intent for the production. It shows the placement of certain of the 'solid practicables', Appia's term, which denoted the sculptural, three-dimensional objects of the stage setting. It also indicates the actors' pathway from the realm of reality, off-stage, into the centre of the drama, the realm of unreality. In Mahler's earlier

²⁸⁹ AR, 'Bühne and Bühnenhandwerk', 1930, cited HLG, *Mahler* V2, 569; Kitzwegerer, 75.

²⁹⁰ As in *Fidelio*, this was another of AR's innovations in the use of below-stage space.

²⁹¹ Most of AR's Court Opera groundplans are in the possession of the Vienna State Opera.

production at the Vienna Court Opera of October 1898 (a month before the opening of the *Secession Haus*), the protagonists took up their positions on the stage by walking from the wings, to join each other on the stage, to simply hold hands and gaze at one another. The emotional force of the work was constrained by stage flats. In this, his first production, Roller initiated, as Appia described, 'a transcription of the requirements of the poetic-musical text', a new visual language of signs 'which implicitly but unambiguously conveys the essential effect of the actor's role in an inanimate setting'.²⁹²

In conclusion, the *Tristan* groundplan reveals certain characteristics of Roller's stage design aesthetics which drew on his previous spaces of art. Roller applied his skills in the art of placement to the animated figures of the performers, in place of the inanimate art objects in the *Secession Haus*. He brought these skills together with a consciousness of the art of moving bodies through space. These firstly informed his didactic practices at the *Kunstgewerbeschule*, and secondly, his concerns for the movement of spectators through the arena spaces of Secession exhibitions. Hevesi noted that following the staging of this *Tristan* in February 1903, Roller adopted the practice of building cardboard models of the theatre and sets to create a kind of scenic panopticon.²⁹³ Through holes in the walls, he could position himself in the place of the spectator, an all-seeing supernumerary, creating a fourth dimension, neither in the space, nor outside it.

In Wagner's music drama, Act Two of *Tristan und Isolde* is static. The lovers, impassioned, yet physically separate, profess their love through the space. The space divides, and then ultimately unites them. Roller's groundplan determined a specific and concentrated ground for the enactment of this dramatic paradox, with the potential for more naturalistic, spontaneous movements in the dynamic of their relationship to each other during the long duration of the act. The groundplan shows clearly how Roller created a framed space in which the essence of the drama could be enacted as a physical 'reality'. It was expressive of the scene, its musical and dramatic intent. By constricting the space, paradoxically Roller granted the actors greater freedom to convey the intense interiority of the work. One contemporary commentator observed Anna Mildenburg's economy of gesture in this performance of *Isolde*, 'movement(s) of inimitable expressivity...Every detail fitted into the whole and accorded, in absolutely masterful fashion, with the general conception'.²⁹⁴

Finally, the question remains as to whether the singers themselves felt they were able to give a performance more truly in the spirit of the role because of Roller's intervention, as

²⁹² Appia, *Texts*, 39.

²⁹³ Hevesi, 'In seinem grossen Arbeitssaal steht ein stattliches Modell des Zuschauerraumes und der Bühne', 'Die Walküre', ANW, 264.

²⁹⁴ Leonie Gombrich-Kock, 'Einige persönlich Erinnerungen an Anna Bahr-Mildenburg', unpublished manuscript, August, 1948, cited HLG, *Mahler V2*, 576.

this citation implies. The initial antipathy of Anna Mildenburg to many of Roller's new ideas has been well-documented, as has her subsequent fervent support of Roller's work. Anecdotal evidence of the Roller effect on her performance is provided here. It emanates, not from the 1903 *Tristan und Isolde*, but from Mildenburg's later experience in the role of Brünnhilde for the 1905 staging of *Die Walküre*. Instead of flats, Roller's 'solid practicables', strategically placed rocks and the mountain-plateau setting for Wagner's famous 'Ho-jo-to-ho' passage, evoked the mythic meeting place of the Walkürle sisters, somewhere between Valhalla and the earthly dwelling place of mortals. Mildenburg believed that Roller's set for Act Two was the first to comply with Wagner's instructions, which specified that Brünnhilde was to leap from rock to rock. Mildenburg recollected her transformative experience in a press interview in 1921:

At the beginning of *Walküre*, I had always imagined Brünnhilde, with her joyful, dashing childlike exuberance...continually leaping, more above than on the earth. This had been impossible in the previous set...Brünnhilde might just as well have sung, sitting on a bicycle (*sic*). Roller was fully of this opinion, and so were his Dolomites. At the first performance of the new production, as I was making my exit, I suddenly noticed a rocky eminence which I had previously avoided... in a flash I sized it up and all at once I had the idea of jumping over it. Never in my life had I risked a jump of this kind...and thus I jumped as *Brünnhilde* and landed successfully as Brünnhilde.

Backstage as Mildenburg, I was aghast. It had not been accomplished by my feet, but my thought!²⁹⁵

The groundplans, invisible and unseen by performers and audience alike, Roller's art of positioning and placement, and the hidden architecture of his stage aesthetics contributed to this outcome.

Part 7: Contiguous spaces – the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition and *Tristan*

As we have seen, the years 1902 to 1903 marked an important cross-over point for Roller, and his pivotal positions from Chairman of the Secession and the *Klinger:Beethoven* committee, to *Leiter des Ausstattungswesens* at the Vienna Court Opera. It is possible to identify a trail of contiguous aesthetic concerns from the arena spaces of the *Secession Haus*, to the spaces of the Court Opera stage. This may be defined as the transition from *Raumkunst* to *Zeitkunst*, evinced by Roller's concern for temporal as well as spatial relationships of the constituent parts of the art-work, which unfolded in time, out of the music.²⁹⁶ This trail is also made manifest in the materials of Roller's art.

²⁹⁵ HLG, *Mahler V3*, (ff 172), 586 citing Anna Bahr-Mildenburg, *Neue Freie Presse* 15 May 1921.

²⁹⁶ Adorno, 'On Some Relationships', 71-79.

The groundplan for Act Two of *Tristan und Isolde* reveals a detail which cannot be observed from Roller's stage paintings alone. The octagonal space Roller created for the protagonists' enactment of their interior drama is strikingly similar to the octagonal space devised to enclose Klinger's *Beethoven* monument, in the 1902 exhibition. This is clearly revealed in another groundplan, the floor-plans of the exhibition ('*Orientierungsplan*'), two versions of which appeared on pages four and five of the *Klinger:Beethoven* catalogue. [3.24] The octagonal plinth on which rests the monument, is also clearly revealed in photographs of the exhibition reprinted in the extended contemporary review in *Deutsches Kunst und Dekoration*, 1902.²⁹⁷

The exhibition floor-plan also indicates that the *Beethoven* monument was not intended to be located in the centre of the central hall. Instead it is 'upstage', its disposition in closer relationship with the background framing devices of the rear wall area of the *Tempelkunst* structure. Roller and Hoffmann had created a semi-enclosed, stage-like space, which can also be clearly observed from the exhibition floor plan. Roller's mural, 'Sinking Night', acted as the 'backdrop'. Indicated on either side are the semi-rotunda alcoves partially enclosing the hieratic figures used as decorative fountains. The spectators were directed in their path to walk in front of the statue, also clearly marked on the floor plan. From here they could experience the full effect of the stage-like setting, as they emerged from the relative darkness of the passage between the 'Klimt room' into the central sanctum, flooded with light from the roof-lights.

Views onto the monument were provided by the proscenium-arch-like openings let into the right-hand wall of the Klimt room. However, the moment of engagement with Klinger's *Beethoven* was delayed, spatially and temporally. The encounter was choreographed to intensify the visitor experience. Roller's *Tristan* groundplan denotes a prescribed path for the actors' entrances and exits. Their positions in the spaces of Roller's new stage landscape were designed to concentrate the essence of the action in performance.

These groundplans, Roller's primary texts, were an equivalent to musical scores or musical notation which act as the visualisation of the structure and logic of the music itself. They were his visual 'scores'.²⁹⁸ The groundplan drew on the essence of Wagner's work itself. Just as notation and the musical score is not the sounding of music itself, but a visual language of music, Roller's groundplans may be seen as a visual interpretation of the original work, in this case the music drama. They were not the performance, any more than the score itself is the music. They were not the scene itself, but rather its signs and signifiers existing in the partly-imagined, partly-material spaces that were Roller's

²⁹⁷Lux, 'XIV Kunst-Ausstellung', *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, X, I, 475-482.

²⁹⁸Also Vergo, 'Music and abstract painting: Kandinsky, Goethe and Schoenberg, *Towards a new Art: Essays on the Background to Abstract Art 1910-1920* (London: Tate, 1980), use of the term 'lighting score', for Kandinsky's synthetic stage composition, *Yellow Sound*, 44.

preserve, the spaces of mediation beyond the progenitor's work and the audience. They embodied, in their two-dimensional form, the characteristics of the management of the space, not the 'fullness of its (visual) identity'.²⁹⁹ Only in performance was the full visual effect played out, by the performers, their movement through the spaces of the stage, and their interaction with the audience.

In conclusion, as this chapter has established, Roller's *Rahmenkunst*, the art of framing, implying space as its central material, stands with other techniques of his art to engender *Stimmung*, challenging the boundaries between abstraction and representation, and between physical and imaginative spaces. The term *Rahmenkunst* like *Stimmung*, *Flächenkunst*, and *Raumkunst*, had no direct translation at the time Roller wrote his articles.³⁰⁰ If Roller had produced a significant theoretical text on theatre design, his theories and his practical application of *Rahmenkunst*, may well have joined *Flächenkunst*, the Secession's proclaimed 'art of surface spaces', and Klinger's theories of *Raumkunst*, the art of arena space, as the third essential critical concern for this thesis. Instead, this analysis provides further definition of Roller's already noted contributions to the art of scenic design. As a final brief tribute to Roller's stage design aesthetics, the words are Goethe's and *Faust*: '*Das is deine Welt! Das heisst eine Welt*'. ('That is your world! That is called a world').³⁰¹

²⁹⁹Shaw-Miller, *Sighting Music*, 2

³⁰⁰ No dictionary definition of the term found to date. Current references to *Rahmenkunst* appear in relation to retail outlets specialising in picture or photograph framing, various websites.

³⁰¹Cited Robertson, 'Literary Techniques and Aesthetic Texture in *Faust*', *Companion to Faust*, 1.

CONCLUSION

Carl Schorske defined the art of the Vienna Secession by reference to the *Secession Haus*, the only enduring monument to its achievements in early modernist art and design.¹ Its space had to be mutable, for this was the nature of modern life. Quoting *Ver Sacrum* contributor Wilhelm Schölermann writing in 1899, the mission of the Secession was to produce art in spaces which would mirror the transitory glimmerings of life, providing singular moments of quiet contemplation.² The enduring impact of the Vienna Secession and its discourse owes much to the symbol of coherence and artistic unity represented by the *Secession Haus*, and its architect Josef Maria Olbrich. The case has been made in this thesis that Alfred Roller was equally an architect of the defining art forms of the Vienna Secession in their productive spaces of art. Roller's Secession practices, possibly less tangible than those of his colleagues, but now no less discernable, transformed a third mutable space, that of the Vienna Court Opera stage.

This thesis set out to establish, through an examination of Alfred Roller's practices and concerns, how the concept of space informed and characterised the art of the Vienna Secession between 1897 and 1905. It has also sought to illuminate how Wagner's ideas of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* were exemplified in Roller's practices and through his practices, how these ideas shaped the art of the Secession. That Secession art productions have been singularly defined with the epithet of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, in contrast, for example, to the Munich and Berlin Secessions is not at issue. Significantly, the Vienna Secession and its defining contribution to early modernism did not rely on the accomplishments of any single artist alone. Alfred Roller's meticulous records of 1897 reveal significant decisions made in this formative year. These determined artistic policies, and an exceptional level of co-operation amongst Secession artists, designers and architects. The artists' meetings were managed and controlled not by its first Chairman, Gustav Klimt, but by Roller, acting as *Schriftführer*.

Thus two defining conditions for the creation of a *Gesamtkunstwerk* were in evidence in these nascent undertakings: a spirit of community, 'all of those men who feel a common and collective want', as Wagner described, and the controlling force necessary to bring together the materials of their art into a single, defining artistic production.³

The importance of Roller to scholarship does not lie primarily in his output as a significant designer of the Vienna Secession (although this could be said of his field of stage design). This study has revealed that his contribution to Viennese modernism lies in his

¹Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, 219.

²Schorske, *Ibid*, 219, citing Wilhelm Schölermann, 'Neue Wiener Architektur', *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* III (1898-99), 205-210.

³WOMAD, 85.

authorial voice as it was made manifest firstly through the roles he held, secondly through his manipulation of space as a material of his art, and thirdly, in his embodiment of Wagnerian ideals. In conclusion, a final set of vignettes on the sustained concerns of Roller's artistic life beyond the periodisation of this thesis provide the context for a characterisation of Roller's form of modernism in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna.

This thesis has primarily addressed the years of 1897-1905. This concentrated period has brought into sharper focus Roller's overlapping aesthetic practices. However, it seems that Roller continued to experiment with different spatial effects, and with the manipulation of space as a material of his art, long after the Secession had ceased to exist in its original Klimt grouping. The music critic, Paul Bechert, reported in 1929 on Roller's production of *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Salzburg Festival.⁴ Roller had replaced his own original stage-set for the palace of Baron von Faninal, with a rear wall made entirely of glass. Its transparency allowed for the simultaneous transmission of intrigue, and by-play, lightly 'pencilled-in' in by Strauss' music, yet essential to the unfolding of the main events. The illusory effect of interior and exterior space co-existed simultaneously within sight of the audience. The permeability of space was clearly demonstrated.⁵

Similarly Roller's interest in *Bekleidung*, or dressing, was sustained throughout his stage design career but also in another parallel field of endeavour, as director of the Vienna School of Applied Arts (*Kunstgewerbeschule*) (1911-1934). There are no copies of lecture plans or teaching materials for Roller's classes on costume design, although his methods can be seen through the eyes of his own students and their sketch books. This life-long concern is reflected in Roller's teaching interests listed in the 'Report on the School Year 1927/8'.⁶ As Principal of the School, he also gave twelve lectures on 'the meaning of clothing'.⁷ Faithful, it seems, to Semper's textile principle of 'making a virtue out of a necessity', Roller too was interested in the way in which, as Semper expressed it, the joining of originally discrete surfaces was to be found by deliberately stressing how the parts are connected 'toward a common end, all the more eloquently... unified'.⁸

In 1930, a book promoting the interests of Austrian applied arts provided a rare insight into Roller's design principles.⁹ Explicitly drawing together late-Romantic principles to foster beauty of form in everyday life, with the need to provide 'people today with a break in the everyday routine', Roller pleaded the case for a 'festive spirit', to be found equally

⁴ Paul Bechert, 'The Salzburg Festival', *Musical Times*, V70, 1040 (October 1, 1929), 941.

⁵ AR was intimately involved in the making of the film of *Der Rosenkavalier*, 1926.

⁶ 'Bericht über das Schuljahr 1927/8', *Kunstgewerbeschule des Österreichischen Museums für Kunst und Industrie*(Bundeslehranstalt), (Wien, 1927), 6-.

⁷ '12 Vorträge über "Sinn der Kleidung"', 'Bericht über das Schuljahr', 6.

⁸ Semper, *Style*, 154.

⁹ AR, 'Applied Art Schools', L W Rochowanski (ed), *Ein Führer durch das Österreichische Kunstgewerbe; Les Arts Decoratifs Autrichiens; Austrian Applied Arts* (Wien: Heinz, 1930), 342-343.

in the 'via triumphalis, the music room or (at) the dining table'.¹⁰ His stress on the festive to be evoked at the centre of, yet set apart from ordinary life was resonant both of Wagner's and of Semper's concerns. It carries a faint 'after-hearing' of *Tempelkunst*, and the theatrical experience of the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition. Roller's modern spirit was clearly vested in his late nineteenth-century Romantic roots, and the principles of beauty in new form, as he described, not a break with the past.

In this late reflection of Roller on the nature of art may lie an answer to the question of how best to characterise Roller's contribution to Viennese modernism.¹¹ As we have seen, in the field of opera, Schorske defined a modernist impulse rooted in late-nineteenth-century Romantic concerns as 'aesthetic modernism'. This was characterised as an affecting experience in the arts, quickened and invigorated with contemporary concerns and a modern interpretation. These qualities may be redefined in the notion of a *Rollerisch Stimmung*, acknowledged most publicly in his field of stage design, and yet shown in this thesis to have been sustained through his earlier and overlapping spaces of art, through the issues of *Ver Sacrum* and the two notable exhibitions in the *Secession Haus*. An evocation of *Stimmung*, as an effect of the aesthetic concerns of each of these separate art forms, resided in the practice described here in the musical term, through-composition.

The introduction to this thesis established that the concept of 'critical modernism', argued by Beller and Janik, contests Schorske's aestheticised paradigm. The critical modernists gathered round Karl Kraus, notably Adolf Loos, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Schoenberg, were united in their rejection of the decorative art of the Secession in all its manifestations in favour of 'truthfulness'.¹² Schorske acknowledged these oppositions in his term 'truth-speaking modernism'.¹³ These views tend to polarise the discourse on progenitors of cultural production in Vienna.

Instead this thesis suggests that Roller's proclivity as a 'realist and stylist', draws together seemingly opposing forces. For example, Schoenberg was devoted to the Mahler:Roller staging of the works of Wagner, Beethoven and Mozart at the Vienna Court Opera.¹⁴ In 1912, a carnival number of *Der Ruf* ('The Call'), published by the Vienna Academic Society, announced an evening of Schoenberg's music with lectures by playwright Egon

¹⁰ AR, 'Applied Art Schools', L W Rochowanski (ed), *ibid*, 342.

¹¹ Five years before Roller's death at age 72.

¹²Schorske's term. Also see Janik, 'Vienna 1900 Revisited', 40-41. The term 'ahistorical modernism' is used to describe Schorske's paradigm, see Beller, 'Introduction', 2-3. See also 'aesthetic modernism' used without stress, Mary Gluck, 'Afterthoughts about *Fin-de-Siècle* Vienna: The Problem of Aesthetic Culture in Central Europe', 267.

¹³Schorske, 'Operatic Modernism', 681.

¹⁴H H Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg, His Life, World and Work*, trans. H Searle (London: John Calder, 1977), 92-93.

Friedell, Alfred Roller and Schoenberg himself.¹⁵ Later, Schoenberg listed Roller with Kokoschka and Kandinsky as his preferred choices to design a film version of his minimalist *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the expressionist *Die Glückliche Hand* ('The Lucky Hand') (1913).¹⁶ Vienna is full of contradictions, as Roller himself declared in his foreword to *Aus der Wagner Schule* (1900).¹⁷ Despite its anti-Wagnerian stance, critical modernism has still been defined in terms of a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, with silence as the productive space at its centre.¹⁸

Nevertheless, Schorske's concept, 'aesthetic modernism', it seems, provides a useful perspective on Roller's aesthetic practices. Similarly, Roller is a useful figure through which to examine competing concerns of the modern in fin-de-siècle Vienna. Based on a model which firstly considered opera as its artistic locus, aesthetic modernism is concerned with the productive dialogue between the arts, rather than a signifier of their autonomous existence.¹⁹ As a concept derived from opera, performance space is also implicit. This thesis has sought to situate Roller as a significant force in its propagation in fin-de-siècle Vienna, rather than a figure on its margins.

Viennese modernism, Roller and space

This thesis has drawn Roller and his aesthetic concerns from the margins of Vienna cultural, art and design histories to a central position. From the vantage point of Roller's significant and overlapping positions as *Schriftführer*, overall editor of *Ver Sacrum*, artistic director of the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, and director of stage design, I have argued that a rather more panoramic view of the artistic productions of the Vienna Secession was evident than has hitherto been acknowledged. This view does not contest previous art and design analyses of Secession aesthetics as a story of two halves: a predominantly pluralistic tendency of symbolist and organic decoration, from which emerged a more geometric, abstract impulse. However, it has re-defined a focus on those unifying ideas of the Secession which signify, as Schorske describes, 'principles of coherence'.²⁰ These ideas have been revealed through Roller's practices in three spaces of art where may be observed a set of shared aesthetic concerns, which as Schorske

¹⁵ Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg*, 164.

¹⁶ Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg*, 189.

¹⁷ AR, 'Aus der Wagner-Schule', in *Die Schule Otto Wagners 1894-1912*, (ed), M Pozzetto (Wien: Schroll, 1980), 152-154, also cited Topp, *Architecture and Truth*, 1.

¹⁸ Janik, 'Vienna 1900 Revisited', 41.

¹⁹ Also Shaw-Miller, 'Modernist Music', Chapter 33, (ed), P. Brooker et al, *The Oxford Handbook of Modernisms*, (Oxford: Oxford University, pending October 2010), for two similar definitions based on a musical model, 'formal' or autonomous modernism, and 'contextual' or 'effectual modernism', which connects up the arts.

²⁰ Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, xxii.

also described, 'bind men together as culture-makers in a common social and temporal space'.²¹

In this examination, a repertoire of aesthetic terms has been revealed which were particular to the Vienna Secession. *Flächenkunst* and *Raumkunst* exemplify the stress on artistic freedom, in which concepts of space played a central role. This specific language entered or emerged from the art-world of the Secession in two ways: through the influence of another significant protagonist, as in the example of Max Klinger and *Raumkunst*, or in the case of *Flächenkunst* through a less singular path, the convergence of mutually-compatible ideas emanating from several sources in the applied arts. Alfred Roller and the Secession protagonists of *Flächenkunst* made no overt claim to the musical convergence of design and musical form. However, I have argued that the 1901 *Lieder* issue of *Ver Sacrum* proclaimed it in their practices.

The notions of *Flächenkunst* and *Raumkunst* were announced through another Secession-invented space of art, the production of a series of unique exhibition catalogues. The catalogues existed in a liminal space between the graphic art practices of six years' issues of *Ver Sacrum*, and the spaces of the *Secession Haus*, in an aesthetic dialogue with both. The *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition and its catalogue were the most vivid example of this productive aesthetic dialogue, and, I have argued, exceptional examples of through-composition in the applied arts.

In the previous literature, the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition has been justifiably seen as the high point of Secession art in the period described as their 'Holy Spring' (*Heiliger Frühling*). This thesis, through its emphasis on Alfred Roller, has posited that it should now be granted the accolade of a Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk*, regardless of Mahler's musical adjunct. I have argued that the 1902 exhibition may now also be seen in a dialectical relationship on the one hand with the *Flächenkunst* aesthetics of *Ver Sacrum*, and on the other, as the point at which Roller's ideas about the theatrical presentation of art intersect with the third, most culturally-pivotal space, the stage of the Vienna Court Opera. Each of these three spaces may be seen in the context of Roller's continuing and developing interest in concepts of space, its framing and manipulation.

Alfred Roller saw each of his chosen spaces of art as a discursive field. Perhaps surprisingly, the transition of aesthetic ideas from periodical page to theatre stage was not his preoccupation alone but seems rather to have been the province of the becoming stage-designer and a particular way of seeing the surface spaces of the page, as a 'stage picture'. Recent emphasis placed on the systematic research of modernist magazines in Europe has provided the source of some interesting new connections between

²¹ Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, xxii.

periodicals and modernist practices in other spaces of art.²² Olga Taxidou reports that the theatrical projects of both Edward Gordon Craig and Sergei Diaghilev started with the mastery of periodical page spaces.²³ Gordon Craig edited, wrote and published his quarterly periodical on the art of the theatre, *The Mask* (1908-29): Diaghilev edited the Russian journal, *Mir Isskustva* ('The World of Art') (1895-1904). Like Roller, both figures carried aesthetic ideas from page to stage, the one a testing ground for the other.²⁴ It may be speculated that an artist concerned with an innately theatrical view of art and its presentation sees a page as a space on which to determine the disposition of art forms, framed by a notional proscenium-arch.

Roller, space and the *Gesamtkunstwerk*

As the introduction to this thesis stated, ideas of space are in constant dialogue with notions of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Analysis of *Flächenkunst* and *Raumkunst* has revealed a similar symbiosis. *Flächenkunst* denoted a synthesis of graphic art forms and their materials on the surface of the page, which were brought together to create something other than the sum of their parts. This was made apparent to Hevesi by Roller's cover for the first issue of *Ver Sacrum*. The transformation of individual elements of lettering, form and space, and their merger into a third, defining term indicates the sign of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, in this case transposed to the graphic arts.²⁵

Similarly, the principles of *Raumkunst*, designated as the progeny of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* by Max Klinger, were employed to fulfil the ultimate aim of the Secession to create a *Gesamtkunstwerk* in the *Secession Haus*. This resulted in the paradigm of the 1902 *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition. In both spaces, the pages of *Ver Sacrum*, and the spaces of the *Secession Haus*, it has been argued that notions of time and space were dissipated in favour of an aestheticised experience. This thesis has employed Wagner's ideas, in a dialectical relationship with those of Semper, to underline the insistent impulse of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* in these art-forms.

In Roller's third space of the stage, the self-evident locus of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the effects of his practices were revealed in the notion of *Stimmung*, a dominant, yet little explored aspect of Wagner's writings on the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and on the nature of performance space. The deconstruction of Wagner's notion of *Stimmung*, through the

²² 'A Critical and Cultural History of The Modernist Magazine', AHRC-funded project, Universities of Sussex and de Montfort, 2006-2010.

²³ Olga Taxidou, 'A New Art of the Theatre: Gordon Craig's *The Mask* (1908-1929), and *The Marionette* (1918-19)', P Brooker, A Thacker (eds), *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, V1, 785-805.

²⁴ Taxidou, 'A New Art of the Theatre', 790.

²⁵ See Shaw-Miller for this defining characteristic of synthesis and the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, *Visible Deeds*, 13.

ideas of Appia and the visual reception of Wagner's music dramas has denoted the concept of a notional fourth space of art. This fourth space resides imaginatively and physically between the presentation of the artwork and its reception by the audience, in the case of the stage, in the fixed spaces of the auditorium. This new space conceptually is governed by notions of time and space as *Zeitkunst* (after Adorno).

This space was also named. Wagner referred to it as 'the mystic gulf'.²⁶ Wilson Smith argues that the *Festspielhaus* was an emphatic realisation of Wagner's theories because it demanded 'a radical reconception of performance...and spectatorship'.²⁷ Wagner's reconception of this relationship relied on the effects of framing, in fact multiple framing in the structural devices of several proscenium arches. Similarly, this thesis has sought to emphasise the importance placed by Roller and the Secession on the notion of framed spaces, realised later in Roller's term, *Rahmenkunst*. This notion appeared to provide a distinctive structure for their art, which paradoxically allowed for greater experimentation. The art of framing and its contingent art practices were concerned with the mastery of space. This is suggestive of another defining characteristic of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, noted by Shaw-Miller, 'to safeguard meaning and contain excess'.²⁸

The transmission of mood or feelings in the notion of *Stimmung* was seen to reside in the effect of Wagner's music dramas, but not exclusively so, in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna. I have proposed that it may also be traced in Nietzsche's writings to the notion of *Schein*.²⁹ Nietzsche's ideas in this thesis were used to cast a 'gleam of deeper meaning' on the effects of surface decoration in Secession art.³⁰ Nietzsche's notion of *Schein* points to a construction of the theatrical in art which invokes abstraction, and the convergence of art and musical ideas. It is also noteworthy that 'aesthetics of *Stimmung*' in *fin-de-siècle* literature, art and music is now the subject of new research.³¹

In view of its emphasis on the Vienna Secession, Roller's stage design practices in the spoken-word theatre, and a more extensive focus on his work for the opera stage, including its manifestation as a small *Gesamtkunstwerk* on the stage of the *Wiener Werkstätte*-designed *Cabaret Fledermaus* (1907-1913), have necessarily been left to one side.³² Further research into his practices in collaboration with Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Richard Strauss (notably, for example, in the first staging of the

²⁶ WOMAD, 'Bayreuth', 366. See also Matthew Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art*, 30-32.

²⁷ Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art*, 21. Wilson Smith does not refer to *Stimmung* in his work.

²⁸ Shaw-Miller, *Deeds of Music*, x.

²⁹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, xx, xxi.

³⁰ Shaw-Miller, *Deeds of Music*, 48.

³¹ See 'Ästhetiken der Stimmung zwischen Literaturen, Künsten und Wissenschaften', ('Aesthetics of *Stimmung* between literature, art and science'), International Conference, University of Lausanne, 6-8 May 2010.

³² See Michael Buhrs et al (eds), *Fledermaus Kabarett 1907 bis 1913* (Wien: Christian Brandstätter, 2008). Roller designed costumes and set for the singing Nagel sisters.

Expressionist opera, *Elektra* in Vienna in 1909), and his many productions with Max Reinhardt would contribute to the field of stage-design discourse which is almost silent on these subjects, and to an expanded view of modernist practices in *fin-de-siècle Vienna* and beyond.

Finally, in the Roller archives, a handmade folio-size folder bears the title, '7 Tage' written in black ink.³³ It contains, in Roller's hand, seven short poems. One of these, dated December 4th 1930 ('4.12.30') is titled 'Mondlicht', ('Moonlight'). This piece of serendipity traces a path of star-light back through the years to his first production of *Tristan und Isolde*, his mural for the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition and to the pages of *Ver Sacrum*. It provides the conclusion to this research. The poem, it seems, expresses Roller's aesthetic modernism better than any further words on the subject. Suggestively it concludes on a dissonant note.

'Moonlight'

Before going to bed
I look out of the window =
Doused by green light
Stand the walls of the houses
The moonlight touches me,
And carries away
The haste and toil of a man's day
Just as its light removes from the grey walls,
The hate and disgust that they hold.

Mondlicht

*Vor dem Schlafengehen
Tret ich ans Fenster =
Von grünem Lichte übergossen
Stehen die Häusermauren
Mich streift des Mondstrahls Licht
Und hebt hinweg
Die Hast und Mühe eines Menschentags,
So, wie sein Licht
Den grauen Mauern nimmt
Den Hass und Ekel,
Den sie Bergen.*

ENDS

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION:

1. During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification.
2. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

Diane V Silverthorne
February 2010.

³³ AR, *7 Tage*, (1930), unpublished, ÖTM.

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National Art Library, V&A, London: holdings of *Ver Sacrum* 1898-1903

APPENDICES

A Translations of *Lieder, Ver Sacrum*, Issue 24, Year 6 (December 1903)

Kleinstadt Idyll [Max Bruns]

Der Marktplatz ruht – Der Brunnen in der Mitte
Rauscht in der Sommernacht wie reifen Korn –
Von weitem hallen würdeschwere Schritte.
Und melancholisch ruft das Wächterhorn.

Der Nachtwind weht mit den Kastanienfächern
In tiefen Schlaf die Häuser, längst verwohnt –
Und zwischen wunderlichen Giebeldächern
Ein Stückchen Himmel und der Sichelmond.

Small Town Idyll

The market place slumbers – The fountain in the centre
Rustles in the summer night like ripened corn –
From afar echo stately footsteps,
And the melancholy sound of the watchman's horn.

The night wind flutters the chestnut fans
The houses, long ruined, lie in deep sleep –
And between wondrous gabled roofs
A piece of heaven and a sickle moon.

Siehst du den Stern [Gottfried Keller]

Siehst du den Stern im fernsten Blau,
Der flimmernd fast erbleicht?
Sein Licht braucht eine Ewigkeit
Bis es dein Aug' erreicht!

Vielleicht vor tausend Jahre schon
Zu Asche stob der Stern;
Und doch steht dort sein milder Schein
Noch immer still und fern.

Dem Wesen solchen Scheines gleicht,
Der ist und doch nicht ist,
O Lieb', dein anmuthvolles Sein,
Wenn du gestorben bist!

Do you see the star

Do you see the star in farthest blue,
That flickering almost fades away?
Its light needs an eternity
Before it reaches your eye!

Perhaps for a thousand years already
The star has fallen into ashes;
And yet there stands its gentle light
Still always peaceful and distant.

In nature this light is like,
What is and is not,
O Love, your charmed existence,
When you have died!

Einsamkeit [Hildegard Stradal]

Still liegt das weite Land in Einsamkeit
Und menschenleer zieht sich hindurch die Strasse.
Wasser zittert nur – wie stummes Lied,
–Gespenstisch leis' – des Mondeslicht, das blasse.

Und einsam schweigend geh' ich durch die Nacht,
Indess' – mein Auge sehnd trinkt die Weite,
Als stünde es in eines Zaubers Macht,
Dass du mir nahen könntest zum Geleite.

Loneliness

The distant land lies still in loneliness
The road stretches away empty of people.
Only water trembles – like a wordless song,
– As light as a ghost – of the pale moonshine.

And alone, silently I walk through the night,
While my eye yearningly drinks in the distance,
As though in a powerful magic,
You might come near to guide me.

Anacreons Grab (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

Wo die Rose hier blüht,
Wo Reben um Lorbeer sich schlingen,
Wo das Turtelchen lockt,
Wo sich das Grillchen ergötzt,
Welch ein grab ist hier,
Das alle Götter mit Leben
Schön bepflanzt und geziert?
Es ist Anacreons Ruh,
Frühling, Sommer und Herbst
Genoss der glückliche Dichter;
Vor dem Winter hat ihn
Endlich der Hügel geschützt.

Anacreon's Grave

Where the rose is in flower
Where vine interlaces with laurel,
Where the turtle dove calls,
Where the cricket rejoices,
Whose grave is this
That all the gods have decked with life
And beautiful plants?
It is Anacreon's resting place.
The happy poet savoured
Spring, summer and autumn;
This mound has at last
Protected him from winter.

Translations of *Kleinstadt Idyll*, *Siehst du den Stern*, *Einsamkeit*, courtesy Amanda Glauert, (October, 2008). Translation of *Anacreons Grab*, from Richard Stokes, Wigmore Hall 'Festival of Song', (7 December 2006).

B (presented separately)

'Four Songs from *Ver Sacrum*' (December 1901)

April Frederick, Soprano, Aya Kawabata, Piano

First performed Royal Academy of Music, October, 2008

DVD: Private recording, Royal Academy of Music, London, 27th November, 2008

Recording: Paul Silverthorne

**New Spaces of Art, Design and Performance:
Alfred Roller and the Vienna Secession 1897-1905**

Illustrations for a thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the Royal College of Art for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Diane V Silverthorne
February 2010

The Royal College of Art Department of History of Design
with Birkbeck School of Arts Department of History of Art and Screen
Media

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Abbreviations:

Alfred Roller	AR
Österreichisches Museum für angewandte Kunst	MAK
Österreichisches Theatrumuseum	ÖTM
Universität für angewandte Kunst Wien	
Sammlung	UAK
Vereinigung Bildender Künstler Österreichs ('Secession')	VBKÖ

Notes:

Unless otherwise stated, images from *Ver Sacrum* (1898-1903) were photographed by author from the complete set of copies held by the National Art Library, London. Front cover images of *Ver Sacrum* are taken from the *Secession Haus* photographic archive *Vereinigung bildender Künstler Wiener Secession Ausstellungshaus Archiv, 1897-2000* CD-ROM:Secession, 2000.

Contemporary photographs of the 14th Secession *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, 1902, emanate or are taken from the special edition of *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, 'XIV Ausstellung der VBKÖ, 5, X, (1902), unless otherwise stated.



All stage-design paintings and ground plans are courtesy Österreichisches Theatrumuseum, (ÖTM), Alfred Roller archives HZ_HU series, unless otherwise stated.

INTRODUCTION

[1] Sketch, 'Alfred Roller in the Café Sperl', 1895, Ludwig Sigmundt.

[2] Page from Roller's personal notebook, 25.2.1897, recording name of new organisation, styled "VBKÖ", source: ÖTM.

[3] Roller's impressions of Wagner's figures of *Tristan* and *Isolde*, black and white pen, ink and pastels, on paper, with hand-drawn musical excerpts, c. 1902-3, source: ÖTM.

[4] Vignettes *Katalog der I Kunstausstellung*, VBKÖ, Gartenbau, Wien (April 1898) (AR).

CHAPTER ONE

[1.1] Front cover, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 1, year 1, (January 1898), (AR).

[1.2] Front covers, *Ver Sacrum*, years 1 and 2 (1898, 1899).

[1.3] Front cover, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 21 (November 1901), (AR).

[1.4] Book decoration by Josef Hoffmann, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 1, year 1 (January 1898).

[1.5] See [1] above, sketch of Alfred Roller, Café Sperl, 1895.

- [1.6] Page from Roller's personal notebook, 27.7.1897, 'Protocol Meeting', Vienna Secession at the Hotel Victoria, (ÖTM).
- [1.7] Page from Roller's personal notebook, 28.6.1897, showing doodles, (ÖTM).
- [1.8] Photograph, Roller in studio, c.1900 with wall hanging, (ÖTM).
- [1.9] Roller's illustrations for 'Frühling in Österreichs', *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1898, (UAK).
- [1.10] Poster, Austrian Pensions Savings Institute, 1899, (AR).
- [1.11] 'Roller Der Grosze Schwung', or 'the sweeping line', caricature by Friedrich König, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 3, year 4 (March 1901).
- [1.12] Study for a romanesque pergola by Josef Maria Olbrich, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 1, year 1 (January 1898).
- [1.13] Cover design, PAN, Issue 1, Autumn-Winter, 1895-6, Josef Sattler (V&A Collections, London).
- [1.14] Book decoration by Josef Hoffmann, reproduction of painting by Friedrich König, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 2, year 1 (February 1898).
- [1.15] Architectural studies by Josef Hoffmann, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, year 1 (July 1898).
- [1.16] Book decoration by Josef Hoffmann, drawing, *Ver Sacrum*, Koloman Moser, *Ver Sacrum* issue 1, year 1 (January 1898).
- [1.17] Inside back cover, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 2, year 1 (February 1898).
- [1.18] Gustav Klimt, studies for intercolumnar paintings, *Kunsthistorisches Museum* (1890), *Ver Sacrum*, issue 3, year 1 (March 1898).
- [1.19] Gustav Klimt, *Nuda Veritas* and other illustrations in the Klimt issue, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 3, year 1 (March 1898).
- [1.20] Gustav Klimt, 'Tragedy', *Ver Sacrum*, issue 3, year 1 (March 1898).
- [1.21] The three gorgons above the entrance to the *Secession Haus* (author).
- [1.22] Front cover, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 3, year 1 (March 1898), Gustav Klimt.
- [1.23] Pattern-book design for embroidery (AR) (UAK).
- [1.24] Gustav Klimt, original book decoration, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 3, year 1 (March, 1898).
- [1.25] Otto Wagner, cover design, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 8, year 2 (August 1899).
- [1.26] Graphic motifs for interior design of Court Pavilion, Hietzing, by Otto Wagner, with photographs of interior areas, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 8, year 2 (August 1899).
- [1.27] Roller's poster for the Fourth Secession Exhibition 1899, also reproduced in single colour tones in *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, Year 2 (July 1899).
- [1.28] Hoffmann's repetitive motifs, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 8, year 1 (August/September, 1898)
- [1.29] Hoffmann's musical *Flächenkunst*, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, year 1 (July 1898).

[1.30] Calendar page for month of February, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 2, year 6 (January 1903) (AR).

[1.31] Sketches by Roller and Klimt for the façade of the *Secession Haus*, circulated at Secession meetings, 1897-8.

[1.32] Book decorations, Alfred Roller and Josef Hoffmann, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 1, year 1 (January 1898).

[1.33] Cover, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, year 1 (July 1898) (AR).

[1.34] Pages showing changing article layout *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, year 1 (July 1898).

[1.35] Architectural studies, Josef Hoffmann, in *Ver Sacrum*, Issue 7, year 1 (July 1898).

[1.36] Landscape paintings, Adolf Böhm, book decoration, Josef Maria Olbrich, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, year 1 (July 1898).

[1.37] 'Tiger Frieze' book decoration, Adolf Böhm, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, year 1 (July 1898).

[1.38] Poem, Ferdinand Saar, illustrated Josef Auchenteller, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, year 1 (July 1898).

[1.39] Inside pages of the *Lieder* issue, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 24, year 4 (December 1901).

[1.40] 'Kleinstadt Idyll', composed d'Albert, decorated Josef Hoffmann, *Lieder* issue, *Ver Sacrum*.

[1.41] 'Siehst du den Stern', composed von Hausegger, decorated Alfred Roller, *Lieder* issue, *Ver Sacrum*.

[1.42] 'Einsamkeit', composed Stradal, decorated Carl Müller, *Lieder* issue, *Ver Sacrum*.

[1.43] 'Anacreons Grab', composed Hugh Wolf, poem Goethe, decorated Leopold Bauer, *Lieder* issue, *Ver Sacrum*.

[1.44] Calendar issue, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 2, Year 4 (January 1901), illustration for month of January, Gustav Klimt.

[1.45] Calendar issue, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 2, year 4 (January 1901), illustration for month of December, (AR).

CHAPTER TWO

[2.1] Giovanni Segantini, 'Die wollüstige Mütter', 'Die schlechte Mütter', in *Ver Sacrum*, issue 5, year 2 (May 1899).

[2.2] Photographs of the 9th 'Rodin-Segantini' Secession exhibition designed by Alfred Roller, in *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, year 4 (July 1901).

[2.3] Mosaic, 'Sermon on the Mount' (1898), Alfred Roller, front fascia of the Breitenfelder Church, Vienna (author).

[2.4] View of 4th Secession exhibition, showing Roller's design for the Breitenfelder Church inset above the entrance to the central room, contemporary photograph.

[2.5] Pages from Roller's notebooks, showing thumbnail sketches of head-dresses and costumes (ÖTM).

[2.6] 14th Secession 'Beethoven' exhibition, April-June, 1902, contemporary photographs.

[2.7] Pages from the 14th Secession exhibition catalogue, *Max Klinger:Beethoven XIV VBKÖ Ausstellung* catalogue (1902).

[2.8] Max Klinger, studies for Villa Albers, Berlin-Steglitz (1883-1887).

[2.9] Photograph, entrance hall, Secession Haus, 1898 featuring Moser's stained glass panel.

[2.10] Josef Maria Olbrich, drawing of the Secession Haus, cover, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 1, year 2 (January, 1899).

[2.11] Floorplans, *Max Klinger:Beethoven XIV Exhibition, VBKÖ Ausstellung* catalogue, (1902).

[2.12] Hoffmann's interior design for the 'Klinger Room', ('Klinger Saal'), displaying 'Christ on Olympus' (1897), 3rd Secession exhibition, 1899, contemporary photograph.

[2.13] 'Kneeling Youths' fountain by George Minne, 8th Secession exhibition, contemporary photograph.

[2.14] Central room, the 'Segantini chapel', the 9th Secession 'Segantini-Rodin' exhibition, 1901, designed by Alfred Roller, contemporary photograph.

[2.15] The 'Klinger room', 9th Secession 'Segantini-Rodin' exhibition, contemporary photograph.

[2.16] View of the Rodin sculptures in the central room, 9th Secession 'Segantini-Rodin' exhibition, contemporary photograph.

[2.17] View of the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, 1902, third room overlooking the *Beethoven* sculpture, contemporary photograph.

[2.18] 'Beethoven Monument', ('Beethoven Denkmal'), Max Klinger, (1902).

[2.19] Wall reliefs or 'metopes', *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, contemporary photographs.

[2.20] The 'Klimt room', *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, contemporary photograph.

[2.21] The *Beethoven* monument, central room, *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, contemporary photograph.

[2.22] View from behind the *Beethoven* monument towards the facing mural, 'Dawning Day', *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, 1902, contemporary photograph.

[2.23] Design for 'winged maiden' mural, (AR), for *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition (ÖTM).

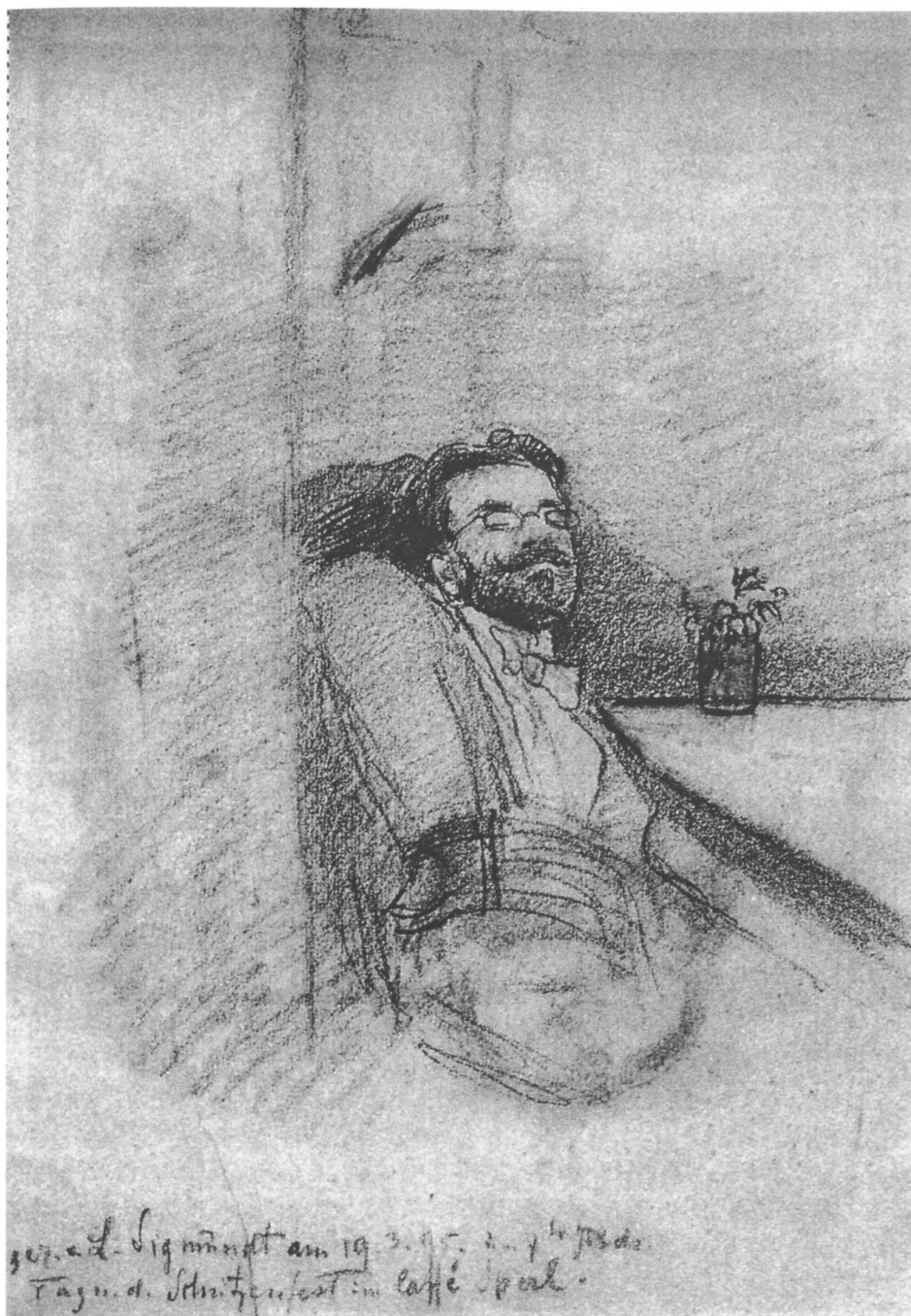
[2.24] Wilhelm List monograph with a tribute to Beethoven, *Max Klinger:Beethoven XIV Exhibition, VBKÖ Ausstellung* catalogue.

CHAPTER THREE

[3.1] Four impressions of the figures of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*, black and white pen, ink and pastels, on paper, with hand-drawn musical excerpts, (AR), c. 1902-3, source: ÖTM.

[3.2] Impression of *Isolde*, musical excerpt, 'Frau Minne will: es werde Nacht', (AR), Act Two, *Tristan and Isolde*, source: ÖTM.

- [3.3] Isolde's casket, Act One, *Tristan and Isolde*, Vienna Court Opera (1903), (Gustav Mahler: AR), production photograph (detail), source: ÖTM
- [3.4] Stage-design painting, 'Faninal Palace', *Der Rosenkavalier*, (AR), (Dresden Opera Theatre, 1911), source: ÖTM
- [3.5] Stage-design etchings, *Coriolanus*, Vienna Burgtheater, (AR, 1921), source: ÖTM.
- [3.6] Stage-design paintings 'Beginning and End', Act One, *Tristan and Isolde*, (AR, 1902), source: ÖTM.
- [3.7] Stage-design painting, scene 1, *Das Rheingold*, (AR, 1903), source: ÖTM
- [3.8] Stage-design painting (AR, 1903), scene 3, *Das Rheingold*, source: ÖTM
- [3.9] Stage-design impressions, *Parsifal*, (c. 1896), *Tristan and Isolde* (c. 1899), Adolphe Appia.
- [3.10] Stage-design painting (AR, 1904), scene 2, *Das Rheingold*, source: ÖTM
- [3.11] 'Landschaft in Südtirol', oil on canvas, (AR, 1891), in M. Wagner, *Alfred Roller in Seiner Zeit*, (Wien: Residenz, 1996), 119, source: ÖTM.
- [3.12] Interior roofscape of *Secession Haus*, Vienna, showing skylights, author photograph, 2008, author, courtesy Secession Haus.
- [3.13] Stage-design painting, *Don Giovanni*, Act One, scene 4, (AR, 1905), showing 'Roller Towers', source: ÖTM.
- [3.14] Stage-design vignettes, mounted on three boards, *Faust Part One*, (AR, 1906) source: ÖTM.
- [3.15] Stage-design paintings, 'Beginning and End', Acts One and Two, *Tristan and Isolde*, (AR, 1902), source: ÖTM,
- [3.16] Stage-design painting, *Don Giovanni*, Act One, scene 4, (AR, 1905), showing 'Roller's Towers', illuminated, source: ÖTM
- [3.17] Stage-design painting, *Don Giovanni*, Act Two, scene 2, source: ÖTM.
- [3.18] Stage-design vignettes, 'Erste Teil', Himmel ...', (AR, 1906), source ÖTM.
- [3.19] Stage-design vignettes, 'Erste Teil, Strasse, Gretchen's Stübe ...', source: ÖTM.
- [3.20] Stage-design vignettes, 'Erste Teil, showing 'Am Rast Stein', source: ÖTM.
- [3.21] Stage groundplan for Act Two, *Tristan and Isolde*, hand-drawn, ink on squared paper, (AR, 1903).
- [3.22] Stage groundplan for Act One, *Tristan and Isolde*, hand-drawn, pencil and ink on squared paper (AR, undated).
- [3.23] Stage groundplans for *Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung* (AR, 1905, 1909), hand-drawn and coloured, squared paper printed with Vienna Court Opera stage-plan, source: ÖTM
- [3.24] Contiguous spaces: stage groundplan for *Tristan and Isolde*, 1903; floor-plan for Fourteenth Secession '*Klinger:Beethoven*' exhibition, 1902.



[1] Alfred Roller in the Café Sperl (1895), Ludwig Sigmundt, (rep. Oskar Pausch, *Gründung und Baugeschichte der Wiener Secession* (Wien: Kunst und Kultur, 2006), 13

25.2.97.



Vorsitzender Bernatzke. Größtens 9hr.

Anwesend:

Hörpfeil, Engelh., Trupf, Hellmer, v. Okenfeld, Möhm, Friedrich, König, Lenz, Krämer, Bacher, Moll, Roller, Föhr, Olbrich, Nowak. (Tisch)

Bernatzke's Resümee - historische Darlegung.

1. P. d. Tagesordnung.

Namen "K. b. K. Ö." einstimmig angenommen.

Wahl - Diskussion. einstimm. Annahme

Bernatzke berichtet den Bericht über Bohlen & Möhm an.

Bericht über Boag, erstattet K.

Moll für Finanzierung. Verlesung des Beschlusses d. Th.

Bericht über den Stand der Finanzierung.

Constituierung

Der Comité in Wi. Resolutions einstimmig angenommen. Jahresanstellung. Bernatzke

Discussion Minister Dresden. Moll, Föhr, Okenfeld
Moll

Dem Geheimhaltig.

Bacher. Beschiebung der Wiener Fiest.?
v. Okenfeld pro domo.

Discussion.

Bernatzke. Architekten Bau. Olbrich. R.

" Geld. samm. d. m. Olbr. 1 Exemplar.

" Mitglied erhalte: Cyren Huchagen.

Juchmarische. Elliot

Hoffmann Berlin Cuzin

Lustig Prof. Friedrich ~~Bauer~~

Repin. Olahan

Harrison Sidney Paolo Michel

Jargent Schleewitz

Wranzowyn Bruno Lilliefor

Geklimb.

[2] Page from Roller's personal notebook, 25.2.1897, recording name of new organisation, "VBKÖ", listing potential foreign members, with doodles including a musical sign. (ÖTM)



[3] Impressions of *Tristan and Isolde*, black and white pen, ink and pastels, paper, with hand-drawn musical excerpts from Wagner's music drama, undated, Alfred Roller (ÖTM).



A. Roller.



A. Roller.



A. Roller.



A. Re

...beitern freien Zutritt zu allen von der
Vereinsleitung ausgerichteten Veranstaltungen.
§ 12. Mitglieder, welche sich durch drei auf
einander folgende Jahre an den künstlerischen
Leistungen der Vereinigung nicht beteiligt
haben, verlieren das active und passive Wahl-
recht bis zu ihrer oerterlichen Beteiligung.

III. Einnahmen und Ausgaben.

§ 13. Die Einnahmen der Vereinigung be-
stehen aus:
a) Mitgliedsbeiträgen; das sind die bei künstlerischen
Veranstaltungen erzielten Eintrittsgebühren;
b) dem 10% der Kaufsumme bei durch die
Vereinsleitung vermittelten Verkäufen;
c) Einnahmen, die aus Spenden, welche der
Vereinsleitung von Kunstfreunden zugewendet
werden.

§ 14. Der Reingewinn der von der Vereins-
leitung selbstständig veranstalteten Ausstellungen
geht nach Abzug eines Drittels für den Reserve-
fonds größtenteils zum Ankauf von in diesem
Zweck geeigneten Kunstwerken zu ver-
wenden. Diese Kunstwerke sind einer der in Wien
bestehenden öffentlichen Galerien geschenkwiese
überlassen.

IV. Innere Organisation.

§ 15. Die Beschlussfassung über Vereins-
angelegenheiten erfolgt durch:
a) die Generalversammlung;
b) die Leitungsverammlung;
c) den Ausschuss.

§ 16. Die Generalversammlung findet min-
destens einmal im Jahre statt; zu derselben laden
die Vorstandsmitglieder alle ordentlichen Mitglieder
ein. Sie findet in Wien lebendens zusammen zuver-
halten. Die ordentlichen Mitglieder als Delegierte; sie ist
zuständig bei Anwesenheit von mindestens
zwei Drittel aller in Wien anwesenden ordent-
lichen Mitglieder und fasst ihre Beschlüsse über
wichtige Punkte a), b), c), d) mit ab-
stimmender Mehrheit; mit Zweidrittel-Mehrheit; ihr
sind vorbehalten die Beschlüsse über:



- Falat Julian. Krakau. O. M.
191. Winter.
Pirner Maximilian. Prag. O. M.
192. Wollen und Können, eine Fabel.
Stöhr Ernst. Wien. O. M.
193. Auf der Brücke. Pastell.
194. Sommerabend, Pastell.
Martin Henry. Paris.
195. Studie.
196. Studie.
L'Hermite Léon Aug. Paris. C. M.
197. Das Gänsemädchen.
Klimt Gustav. Wien. O. M.
198. Der Blinde.
199. Pastellstudie.
200. Supraporta (für ein Musik-
zimmer).
201. Im Zwielecht.
202. Pastell.
L'Hermite Léon Aug. Paris. C. M.
203. Der Marktplatz.
Kollmann, Jules de. Paris.
204. La dame qui passe.
205. Portrait.
Strang William. London.
206. Der Steinbruch.
207. Die Lautenschlägerin.
208. Der Fischer.
209. Einsamkeit.
210. Die graue Stadt.



the calm expanse of an open landscape'

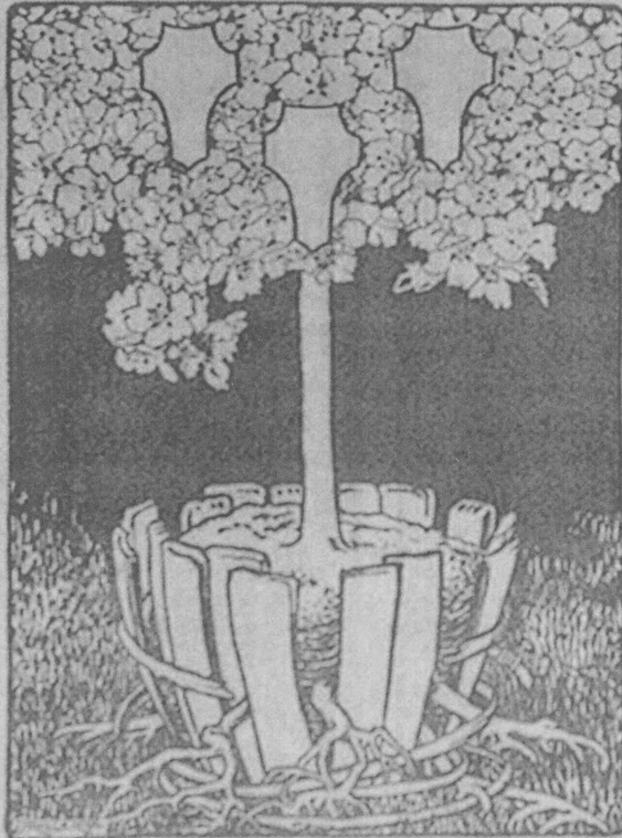
'the drama of a nightmarish vision'

[4] Vignettes by Alfred Roller, Katalog der I Kunstaussstellung VBKÖ, Gartenbau, Wien, April 1898, 15, 35.

I. Jahrg. Heft 1.

Einzelpreis 2 Kronen.

DER SACRUM



ORGAN DER
VEREINIGUNG
BILDENDER
KUNSTLER
ÖSTERREICHS.

JANUAR
1898.

JAHRLICH 12 HEFTE
IM ABONNEMENT 6 FL. 10 M.

Verlag Gerlach & Schenk, Wien, VII.

Alle Rechte vorbehalten.

[1.1] Front cover, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 1, year 1, (January 1898), Alfred Roller.

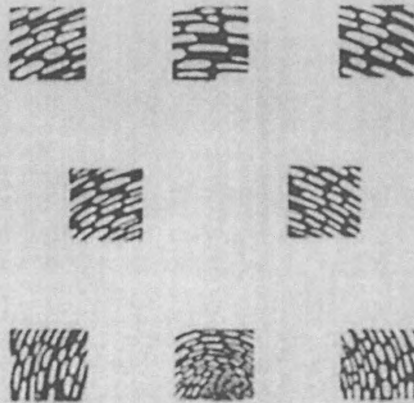
Source: Secession
Haus archive
photograph



[1.2] Front covers, *Ver Sacrum*, year 1 (January, February, March, April, July 1898); issue 2, Year 2 (February 1899); Alfred Roller, Koloman Moser, Gustav Klimt, unknown, Alfred Roller, Koloman Moser. Source: Secession Haus



MITTHEILUNGEN DER VEREINIGUNG
BILDENDER KÜNSTLER ÖSTERREICHS

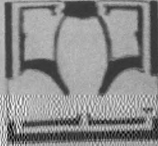


1901
HEFT 21

VER SACRUM

[1.3] Front cover, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 21
(November 1901), Alfred
Roller.

Source: *Secession Haus*
archive photograph.



Ver Sacrum
für 1. Jahrgang
des Jahres 1898

Die ehrwürdigen Stadtväter waren geschickte Leute, sie
schickten dann einen beider Vermittler zu den Secessionisten,
sagten ihnen viel und machten wenig zu und die Secession blieb
unverändert.

Wären aber eine große Gefahr dem Vaterlande drohte,
dann würde das gesamte Volk alles Lebende, das der Natur
gehört, bräuh, den Göttern als heilige Frühlingsgötter zu
VER SACRUM, und wenn die zu heiligen Frühlingsgöttern
erwachsen wären, dann zog die jugendliche Schar, selbst
in heiliger Frühlings, hinaus aus der alten Heimatstätte in die
weite, ein neues Gemeinwesen zu gründen aus eigener Kraft,
mit eigenen Zielen.

Und weil die Künstlerschar, welche sich freiwillig los-
gelöst hat aus allen Beziehungen, eine neue selbständige
Künstlervereinigung in Wien zu gründen, nicht darum aus
dem alten Verbands geschieden ist, weil sie irgendwelche
wirtschaftliche Begünstigungen anzustreben hätte, nicht zu
dem Zwecke, um mit Concurrenz zu drohen, um Zugestän-
nisse zu erhalten oder um sich durch einen modernen Man-
nisme Agrippa hinterdrein wieder beschützen zu lassen, hat
sie auch nicht durch den NAMEN „Secession“ an die Ur-
sachen, Ziele und den Ausgang der alten Secessionen plebis
entwachen wollen.

Wollt sie vielmehr nicht ihre persönlichen
Interessen, sondern die heilige Sache der Kunst
selbst hier gelüftet werden und zu nicht
weniger Begeisterung für diese Idee, nicht nur noch
zu nehmen bereit war und bereit ist, und nicht
will, als aus eigener Kraft über eigenen Ziele zu
reichen, darum hat sie sich unter dem Zeichen des
VER SACRUM gestellt. Der Geist der Jugend,
der den Frühlings durchweht, er hat sie zusammen-
geführt, der Geist der Jugend, durch welchen die
Gegenwart immer zur „Mutter“ wird, der die
weibliche Kraft ist der künstlerischen Schaffen, er
will auch diesen Namen, den Namen geben im
Sinne des VER SACRUM.

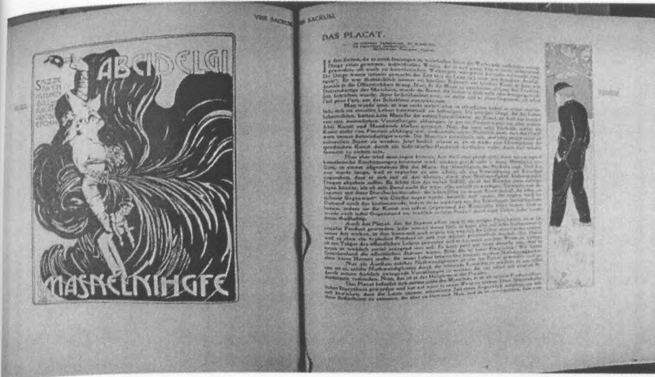
VER SACRUM

heilige Weiblichkeit, es ist ein gutes Wahr-
zeichen, unter dem der neue Künstlerverband
ein Leben mit der Entdeckung des ewigen Roms,
der Stadt der Kunst und der Kunst, wird es auch
zurückgehören auf den VER SACRUM.

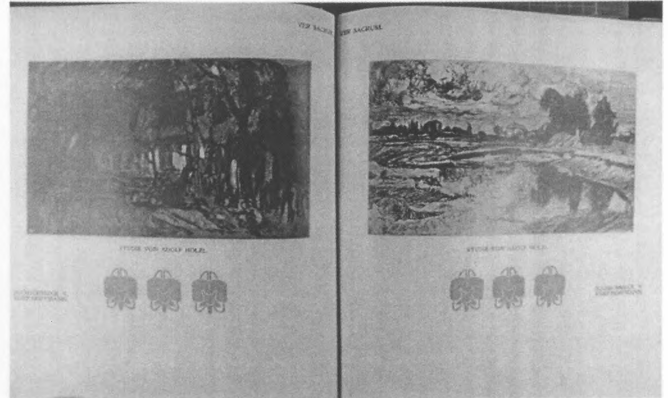
MAX HILFARD.



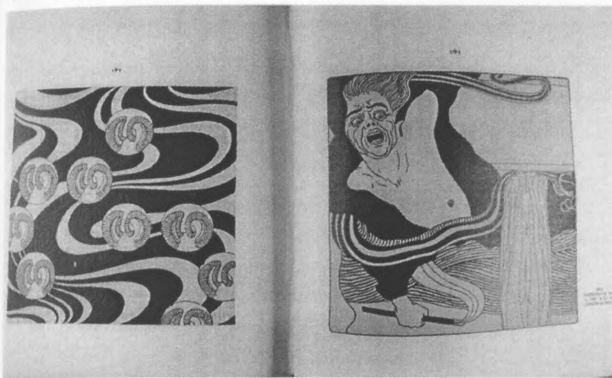
[1.4] 'Book Decoration' ('Buchschruck'), Josef Hoffmann, designed for Ver Sacrum, issue 1, (January 1898)



(a) Featuring poster design by Roller for special feature on posters.



(b) Featuring book decoration by Josef Hoffmann.



(c) Featuring Illustrations by Joseph Auenteller.



(d) Featuring 9th Secession exhibition poster design by Roller.

[1.4] Decorative and ornamental forms found in the pages of *Vers Sacrum*: book decoration, saturated and simple colours these pages from (a) and (b) Year 1, 1898; (c) and (d), issues from year 4, 1901.



[1.5] As for figure 1

Generalversammlung.

Bericht des Praes. — Roller

Statutenänderung — Roller

Mitgliederwerbung — Klimt, Verlesing

Bericht d. Bräut. — Moll.

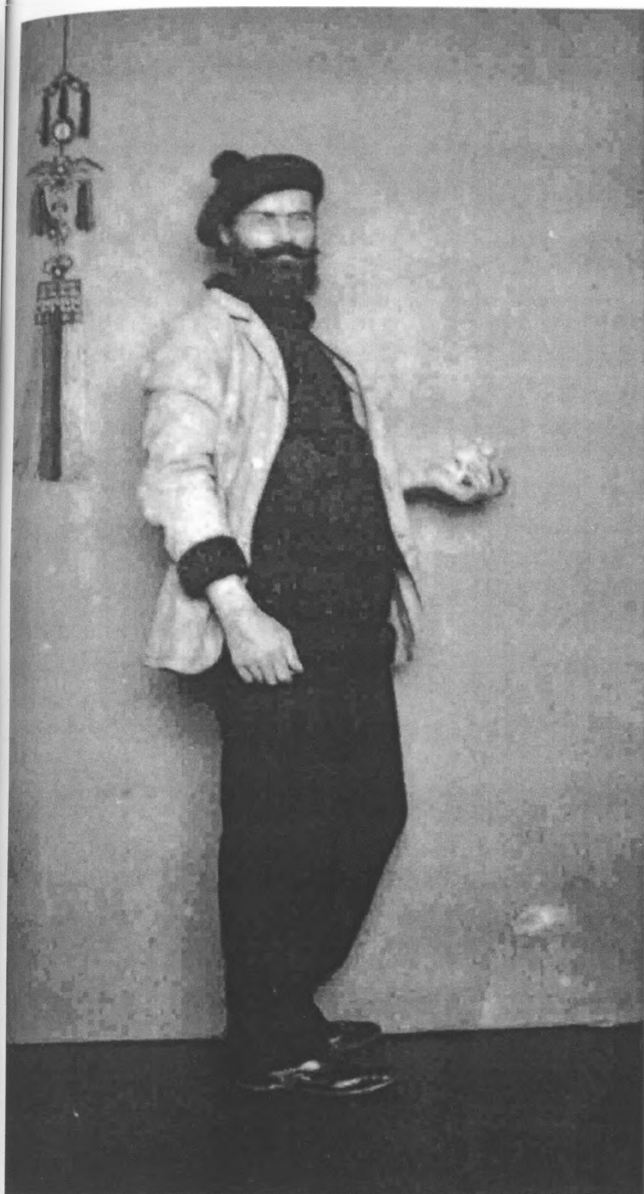
Erneute Feilbietung.

Generalversammlung vom 24.7.97 Hotel Victoria.

Präsenz: Klimt, König, König, Degenhart, Böhm, Olbrich, Mayreder, Moll, Hellner, Krömer, Zinglhart, Nyobach, Moser, Kersch, Roller. Nachbegrüßte 2 Aufgeführt die Dracsonglieder
Nun steht.

Roller erstattet den Geschäftsbericht den für Komit. genommen wird.
Roller berichtet über den Fortschritt der Praes. auf Statutenänderung und
Förderung der Mitgliederwerbung. Viel Statutenänderungsanträge werden
mit 9 Stimmen bei 22 Stimmzahl 2, 6, 7 der Geschäftsordnung

[1.6] Page from Roller's personal notebook, 27.7.1897, *Protokol* meeting, Vienna Secession at Hotel Victoria, Favoritenstrasse, attended by Moll, Klimt, Olbrich, König, Böhm, amongst others (ÖTM)



[1.8] Photograph, Alfred Roller in studio, c. 1900 with wall hanging. (UAK)



[1.9] Roller's giant flower-forms frame poetry by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, 'Frühling in Österreich', Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung, 1898 (supplement). (UAK)



Geistlichkeit.

W A G N E R.
 Das ist ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

S T R A U S S.
 Ich bin ein Mann, mein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

S T R A U S S.
 Ich bin ein Mann, mein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

W A G N E R.
 Das ist ein Mann, sein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

S T R A U S S.
 Ich bin ein Mann, mein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

S T R A U S S.
 Ich bin ein Mann, mein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

S T R A U S S.
 Ich bin ein Mann, mein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
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S T R A U S S.
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 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

S T R A U S S.
 Ich bin ein Mann, mein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

S T R A U S S.
 Ich bin ein Mann, mein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
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 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

S T R A U S S.
 Ich bin ein Mann, mein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

S T R A U S S.
 Ich bin ein Mann, mein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

S T R A U S S.
 Ich bin ein Mann, mein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

Der Kaiser von China

W A G N E R.
 Ich bin ein Mann, mein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

Perle auf ein kleines Kind

W A G N E R.
 Das ist ein Mann, sein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

Erdenpflanz.

W A G N E R.
 Das ist ein Mann, sein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

Die Glode.

W A G N E R.
 Das ist ein Mann, sein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist

Verblüht.

W A G N E R.
 Das ist ein Mann, sein Name
 ist Peter, heißt er, und er ist
 ein Mann, sein Name ist
 Peter, heißt er, und er ist



[1.10] Poster, Austrian Pensions Savings Institute, (*Altersversorgungsanstalt*), 1899, rep. Manfred Wagner, *Alfred Roller in Seiner Zeit*, 62.



[1.11] Roller, the 'Sweeping Line', ('*Der Grosze Schwung*'), Friedrich König, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 3, year 4 (1901), 62.



Ver Sacrum
für V. u. d. 1898
J. Olbrich

plebis. Die ehrwürdigen Stadtväter waren gescheite Leute, sie schickten dann einen biederen Vermittler zu den Secessionisten, versprachen viel und hielten wenig und die Secessio plebis war beendet.

Wenn aber eine grosse Gefahr dem Vaterlande drohte, dann weihte das gesammte Volk alles Lebende, das der nächste Frühling brachte, den Göttern als heilige Frühlingsspende VER SACRUM, und wenn die im heiligen Frühling Geborenen herangewachsen waren, dann zog die jugendliche Schar, selbst ein heiliger Frühling, hinaus aus der alten Heimatstätte in die Fremde, ein neues Gemeinwesen zu gründen aus eigener Kraft, mit eigenen Zielen.

Und weil die Künstlerschar, welche sich freiwillig losgelöst hat aus alten Beziehungen, eine neue selbständige Kunstervereinigung in Wien zu gründen, nicht darum aus dem alten Verbands geschieden ist, weil sie irgendwelche wirtschaftliche Begünstigungen anzustreben hätte, nicht zu dem Zwecke, um mit Concurrrenz zu drohen, um Zugeständnisse zu erhalten oder um sich durch einen modernen Menenius Agrippa hinterdrein wieder beschwatzen zu lassen, hat sie auch nicht durch den NAMEN „Secession“ an die Ursachen, Ziele und den Ausgang der alten Secessiones plebis erinnern wollen.

VER SACRUM.

Weil sie vielmehr nicht ihre persönlichen Interessen, sondern die heilige Sache der Kunst selbst für gefährdet erachtet hat und in wahrer Begeisterung für diese ideo Opfer auf sich zu nehmen bereit war und bereit ist, sind nicht will, als aus eigener Kraft ihre eigenen Ziele zu erreichen, darum hat sie sich unter das Zeichen des VER SACRUM gestellt. Der Geist der Jugend, der den Frühling durchweht, er hat sie zusammengeführt, der Geist der Jugend, durch welchen die Gegenwart immer zur „Moderne“ wird, der die treibende Kraft ist für künstlerischen Schaffen, er soll auch diesen Blättern den Namen geben im Sinnbilde des VER SACRUM.

VER SACRUM

heiliger Wehtruhling, es ist ein gutes Wahrzeichen, unter dem der neue Künstlerverband ins Leben tritt; die Entstehung des neuen Roms, der Stadt der Kunst und der Kunst, wird so auch zurückgeführt auf ein VER SACRUM.

MAX BURCKHARDT

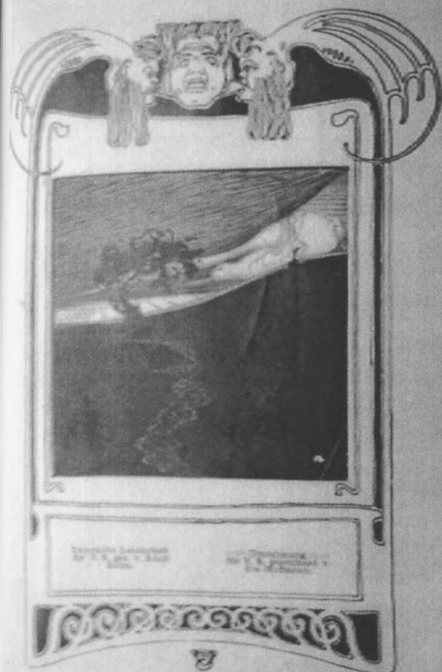


Ver Sacrum
für V. u. d. 1898
J. Olbrich

[1.12] Romanesque column, 'study for a pergola', Josef Maria Olbrich, Ver Sacrum, Issue 1 (January 1898), taking its inspiration from the Roman 'Ver Sacrum'.



[1.13] Front cover, PAN 1895-96,
Issue 1, Autumn/Winter, Josef
Sattler (V&A Collections, London).



Kunstverlag v. v. v.
No. 1. der Kunst.

AUSSTELLUNGSWESEN. * * *

KUNSTLEHRE. Nachden in heiligen Hellen
in der modernen „Weltanschauung“ der Kunst
zugelassen auch durch die Macht und Massen-
recht sprengt sich geistig. Inwiefern die neue
Idee endlich einen neuen Ausdruck findet. Von
manchen wird es gerade auch das „Lebendigste“ will-
kommen. Denn ganz allgemein kann man das an-
gegebene geistliche Problem von sich nicht ableiten.
Diesmal kam es zur Kunstausstellung und nicht ohne die
Zeichen der FARBEN LITHOGRAPHIE. Mit dem
Herausgeber des „Kunstverlag“ von Hannover in Deutsch-
land und der von Hannover in Deutschland angelegten
Platz und Lithographie-Ausstellung. Auch die Kunst-
Theorie Problem war die Sache, eingeleitet hat diese
Sonderausstellung allerdings nicht. Sie ist ein
wichtiges, aber es liegt sich bei der Arbeit. In-
wiefern man die Kunstausstellung, so dass die Kunst-
theorie nicht einseitig ist. Es ist ein Problem.
Es ist ein Problem, so ist es nicht, sondern
Namen. Kunstverlag, in einer Reihe sind GRAF
KALKREUTH mit Lithographie, Aquatinte und Re-
sourcen. Der Meister ist mit dem von Friedrich
in Dorn und Thiers geistig, in einer kleinen
Tafel. In der Kunstausstellung sind die Kunst-
theorie nicht einseitig ist. Es ist ein Problem.

[1.14] Book decoration by Josef Hoffmann, reproduction of painting by Friedrich König, Ver Sacrum, issue 2, Year 1, (February, 1898), 18-19.

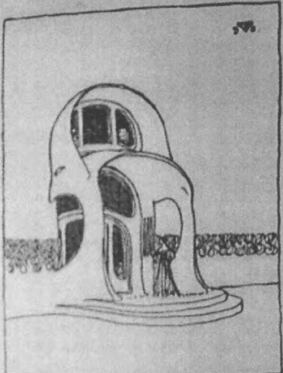
Zunächst ein ungeprüft interessantes Bild der Außenwelt, nicht nur weil es dann nicht mehr versteht, dass man sich die durchsichtigen Fensterbänke ohne Wahl überall anschaut.

Es gibt also ein Radikalmodell, das ein neues Haus unter allen Umständen aus dem Schablonencharakter herauslösen muss: man bringe aus Licht und Luft auf veränderten Wegen ins Haus — und die ästhetische Wirkung wird nicht ausbleiben.

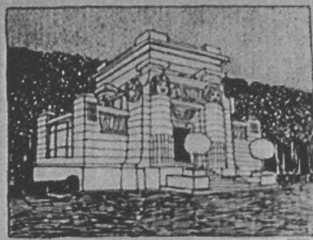
Man schaffe die durchsichtigen Fenster mindestens in Höhe 40 und erzeuge das Öffnen der Fenster durch Licht-Annenkungen.

Selbstverständlich kann eigentlich nur das höchste nach allen Seiten gründete Einzelhaus einen Anspruch auf architektonischen Wert erheben. Aber auch das Einzelhaus könnte durch eine Revolution im Fenster-Gestaltungsbereich ein künstlerisches Aussehen bekommen.

Manchmal müsste es bei allen Neubauteilen modifiziert werden, Licht und Luft auf veränderten Wegen ins Haus zu führen.



STUDIEN ZUR DECORATIVEN AUSGESTALTUNG EINES HAUSEINGANGES VON JOSEF HOFFMANN.



DIE POTEMKIN'SCHE STADT.

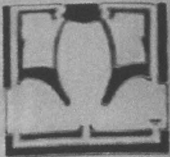
Wer kennt sie nicht, die Potemkin'schen Dörfer, die der schlasse Günstling Katharina in der Ukraine erbaut hatte? Dörfer aus Leinwand und Pappe, Dörfer, die die Aufgabe hatten, eine Einöde für die Augen ihrer kaiserlichen Majestät in eine blühende Landschaft zu verwandeln. Aber eine ganze Stadt soll der schlasse Minister fertig gebracht haben?

Das ist wohl auch nur in Russland möglich! Die Potemkin'sche Stadt, von der ich hier sprechen will, ist unser liches Wien selber. Eine schwere Anklage, deren Beweis mir wohl auch schwer gelingen wird. Denn ich brauche dazu Hörer von so sensitivem Rechtsgefühl, wie sie in unserer Stadt leider noch recht spärlich zu finden sind.

Wer sich für etwas Höheres ausgiebt, als er ist, ist ein Hochstapler und verfällt auch dann der allgemeinen Verachtung, wenn niemand dadurch geschädigt wurde. Wenn aber jemand diesen Effect durch falsche Steine und andere Imitationen zu erreichen sucht? Es gibt Länder, wo ihm das gleiche Schicksal zuteil werden würde. In Wien ist man aber noch nicht so weit. Nur ein kleiner Kreis hat das Gefühl, dass hier eine unmoralische Handlung, ein Schwund vorliegt. Und diesen Effect sucht man nicht nur durch die falsche Theorie, nicht nur durch die Wohnungslosigkeit, die sich aus lauter Imitationen zusammensetzt, sondern auch durch die Wohnung, durch das Wohngebäude zu erreichen.



[1.15] Architectural Studies, Josef Hoffmann, Ver Sacrum, Issue 7, 1898, conveying the most personal thoughts of the architect.



Druckwerk
für V. & G.
von Hoffmann

Die ehrwürdigen Stadtväter waren geschickte Leute, sie
schickten dann einen biederen Vermittler zu den Secessionisten,
sprachen viel und hielten wenig zu und die Secessio plebis
er beendet.
Wenn aber eine grosse Gefahr dem Vaterlande drohte,
dann wehrte das gesammte Volk alles Lebende, das der nächste
Frühling brachte, den Göttern als heilige Frühlingsopfer an
VER SACRUM, und wenn die im heiligen Frühling Geborenen
erwachsen waren, dann zog die jugendliche Schar, selbst
in heiliger Frühling, hinaus aus der alten Heimatstätte in die
Ferne, ein neues Gemeinwesen zu gründen aus eigener Kraft,
in eigenen Zielen.
Und weil die Künstlerschar, welche sich freiwillig los-
gelöst hat aus alten Beziehungen, eine neue selbständige
Kunstlervereinigung in Wien zu gründen, nicht darum aus
den alten Verbands geschieden ist, weil sie irgendwelche
wirtschaftliche Begünstigungen anzustreben hätte, nicht zu
dem Zwecke, um mit Concurrenz zu drohen, um Zugestän-
nisse zu erhalten oder um sich durch einen modernen Mä-
nnes Agrippa hinterdrein wieder beschützen zu lassen, hat
sie auch nicht durch den NAMEN „Secession“ an die Ur-
sachen, Ziele und den Ausgang der alten Secessiones plebis
erinnern wollen.

Weil sie wahrlich nicht ihre persönlichen
Interessen, sondern die heilige Sache der Kunst
selbst für gefährdet erachtet hat und in wahr-
voller Begeisterung für diese jedes Opfer auf sich
zu nehmen bereit war und bereit ist, und nichts
will, als aus eigener Kraft ihre eigenen Ziele er-
reichen, darum hat sie sich unter das Zeichen des
VER SACRUM gestellt. Der Geist der Jugend,
der den Frühling durchweht, er hat sie zusamen-
geführt, der Geist der Jugend, durch welchen die
Gegenwart immer zur „Moderne“ wird, der die
treibende Kraft ist für künstlerisches Schaffen, er
soll auch diesen Blättern den Namen geben im
Sinnbilde des VER SACRUM.

VER SACRUM

heiliger Weibsrühling, es ist ein gutes Wahr-
zeichen, unter dem der neue Künstlerverband
ins Leben tritt; die Einweihung des ewigen Rites,
der Stadt der Kunst und der Kunst, wird ja auch
zurückgeführt auf ein VER SACRUM.

MAX BURCKHARDT



Druckwerk
für V. & G.
von Hoffmann

[1.16] Opening pages 2 and 3 of *Ver Sacrum* issue 1, (January 1898)
featuring book decoration by Josef Hoffmann and Koloman Moser.

[1.17] Roller's role denoted as overall editor, un-numbered pages, inside covers, Ver Sacrum, Year 1 (1898).

GERLACH & SCHENK, Verlag für Kunstgewerbe,
 WIEN, VI., Mariahilferstrasse 51.

VER SACRUM
 ist das OFFICIELLE ORGAN der VEREINIGUNG
 BILDENDER KÜNSTLER ÖSTERREICHS und
 wird HERAUSGEGEBEN VON DERSELBEN.

LITERARISCHER BEIRATH: Hermann Bahr, Schriftsteller,
 Dr. Max Eugen Durchhard, Director des k. Hof Burgtheaters etc.
 SCHRIFTLICHE LEITUNG: WILHELM SCHLIERMANN,
 IV. BECHTENGASSE I. Sprechstunden: 2^{1/2} - 5 Uhr.

Für die Redaction verantwortlich: Alfred Roller, Akadem. Maler,
 III. Rennweg 33.
 ZUSCHRIFTEN für den ANGEHÖRIGEN an: HAASENSTEIN &
 VOLLEB OTTO MAASE, I. WALLFISCHGASSE 10.
 Cliches von Angerer & Göschl, XVII. 1.
 Druck von Philipp & Kramer, VII, Barnabiten-gasse 7 und 7a.
 SÄMMLICH IN WIEN.

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 stark, im Formate von 28', 130 cm., in Buch- und
 Farbendruck, auf feinstem Kunstdruckpapiere.

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**ABONNEMENTS NEHMEN ALLE BUCH- UND
 KUNSTHANDLUNGEN ENTGEGEN.**

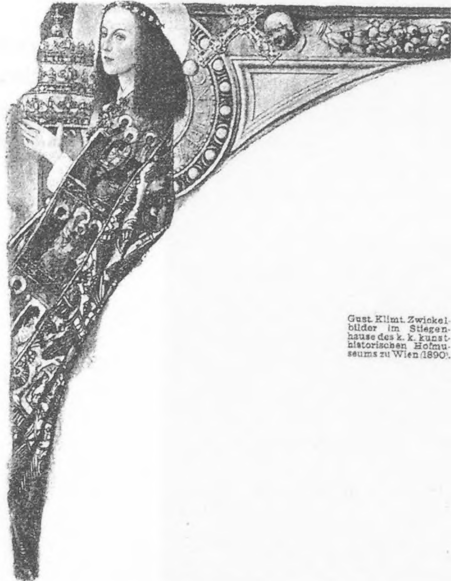
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Gust. Klimt. Zwickelbilder im Stiegenhause des k. k. kunsthistorischen Hofmuseums zu Wien 1890.



Gust. Klimt. Zwickelbilder im Stiegenhause des k. k. kunsthistorischen Hofmuseums zu Wien 1890.



was man bisher Kunst genannt habe, überlebt sei, dass der neue Stufe der Entwicklung, auf der man angelangt sei, auch eine neue Kunst entspreche, die naturgemäss allmählich entstehen müsse. Den Charakter dieser neuen Kunst zu bestimmen, sie zu verkündigen und mit herbeizuführen, deren triumphierenden Einzug vorzubereiten, war das Ziel, das er sich gesteckt hatte.

Die Kunst der Formen, das war seine Ansicht, hätte bei den Griechen ihren Höhepunkt erreicht. Vergebliches Bemühen sei es, jemals die Plastik wieder zu einer ähnlichen Höhe bringen zu wollen. Auch innerhalb der Malerei habe es eine Kunst der Formen gegeben, nämlich die

Historienmalerei, die den Gipfel zur Zeit der italienischen Renaissance erreicht habe. Der Neuzeit sei es vorbehalten, diejenige Art der Malerei zu entwickeln, die die Griechen kaum gekannt hätten, die mit der Renaissance erst ins Leben getreten sei: die Landschaft.

Und warum die Landschaft? Vielleicht, weil in ihr das blosse Phänomen eine so grosse Rolle spielt, hatte Wilhelm Schlegel gesagt: der Maler gibt der durchleuchteten Luft einen Körper und haucht ihm seine Seele ein. So philosophierte Runge: Zuerst sah man im Geiste, nämlich im Menschen, die Natur, jetzt sieht man umgekehrt den Geist in der Natur. Damals betrachtete man den Menschen

wie eine der vielen Gestaltungen der Naturkraft, seine Handlungen wie ein Wirken der Elemente, und diese Anschauung zeitigte das Historienmalerei. Dort kommt ja nicht das geheime Leben des inneren Menschen zur Geltung, sondern die grossen allgemeinen Strömungen, die uns als Massengeschöpf, als Naturwesen kennzeichnen. Michelangelo's jüngstes Gericht nennt er als das Höchste und Ausserste, was aus dieser Kunststrichtung hervorgegangen sei.

„Jetzt fällt der Stein,“ schreiet Runge in einem Briefe, „mehr auf das Gegentheil. Wie selbst die Philosophen dahin kommen, dass man alles nur aus sich heraus imaginiert, so sehen oder sollen wir sehen in jeder Blume den

lebendigen Geist, den der Mensch hineinlegt, und dadurch wird die Landschaft entstehen, denn alle Thiere und die Blumen sind nur Haib da, sobald der Mensch nicht das Beste dabei thut; so drängt der Mensch seine eigenen Gefühle den Gegenständen um sich her auf, und dadurch erlangt alles Bedeutung und Sprache. Wenn wir so in der ganzen Natur nur unser Leben sehen, so ist es klar, dass dann erst die rechte Landschaft entstehen muss, als völlig entgegengesetzt der menschlichen oder historischen Composition. Die Blumen, Bäume und Gestalten werden uns dann aufgehen und wir haben einen Schritt näher zur Farbe gethan. Die Farbe ist die letzte Kunst, die uns noch

[1.18] Gustav Klimt, Studies for Intercolumnar Paintings, Kunsthistorisches Museum (1890). In *Ver Sacrum* Issue 3 Year 1 (March, 1898)

[1.20] 'Tragedy', (*Allegorien Neue Folge*, Gerlach & Schenk), a contorted mask in hand, gazes challenging outwards. *Ver Sacrum*, Klimt issue, issue 3, year 1, (March 1898)

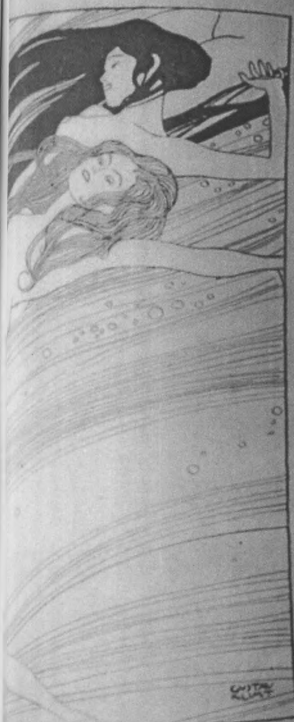


Fig. 1. 8. m.
T. Gust. Klimt

VER SACRUM



Oskar Klimt, *Das Allegorien*, Fund
Folge, Verlag von
Gerlach & Schenk.

SYMBOLISTIK
VOR HUNDERT JAHREN.

Alle heiligen Spiele der Kunst sind
nur ferne Nachbildungen von dem
übernatürlichen Spiel der Welt, dem
wag sich nicht bilden, den Kunst-
werk. Mit sicheren Worten. Alle
Schönheit ist Allegorie.
FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL.

Das ist ein noch
unvollständiges
Werk über die
Symbolik von
Dr. Robert Huch.

Können Sie ihm den Unterschied zwischen allegorischer und symbolischer Behandlung begrifflich machen. Ich schrieb Goethe an Schelling in Bezug auf einen jungen Maler, Namens Martin Wagner. „so sind Sie sein Wahlthäter, weil sich um diese Ase soviel dreht.“ Ob und wie Schelling das ausgeführt hat, weiß ich nicht zu sagen. Zwei Zeitgenossen aber, Tieck und der Ästhetiker Solger, welche ebenfalls über das Verhältnis dieser Begriffe viel nachgedacht hatten, kamen zu dem folgenden Schlusse: Der Punkt, wo Philosophie, Religion und Poesie sich berühren, ist die Mystik. Mystik, so könnte man etwa das was sie meinen, zutreffend ausdrücken, ist das unmittelbare Gefühl des Einsens mit der Welt und Gott. Kunst ist angewandte Mystik. Auf bewusst angewandter Mystik beruht die Allegorie, auf unbewusst angewandter die Symbolik. „Beide haben ihre Grenze,“ so heisst es in Solgers eigenen Worten. „wo die Allegorie in blossen Verstandespiel und die Symbolik in Nachahmung der Natur über-

geht.“ Zwischen diesen beiden äussersten Punkten geht dann in der That die Wellenbewegung der Kunst auf und nieder. Bemerkenswert ist, dass Solger keineswegs das Allegorische gänzlich verwerft. Wie sollte er auch, als Zögling der Romantiker, die der vom Bewusstsein geleiteten Kunst das Wort redeten, ist für die, das bewusst unbewusste Schaffen der Höhepunkt der Kunst war. Erst da, wo die Allegorie in Verstandespiel übergeht, verlässt sie das Gebiet der Kunst. So einfach und klar ist diese Fassung des Unterschiedes zwischen Allegorie und Symbolik ist, so schwierig ist doch die Anwendung im einzelnen Falle, ebenso schwierig, wie die unendlich vielen unendlich leinen Übergänge aus dem Unbewussten im Bewusstsein zu erkennen sind. Dass jeder grosse Künstler Symboliker gewesen sei und sein müsse, suchten die Romantiker, nach dieser Erklärung des Begriffes, häufig behaupten. Für den Materi-



[1.21] The three gorgons above entrance to the *Secession Haus*

VER SACRUM

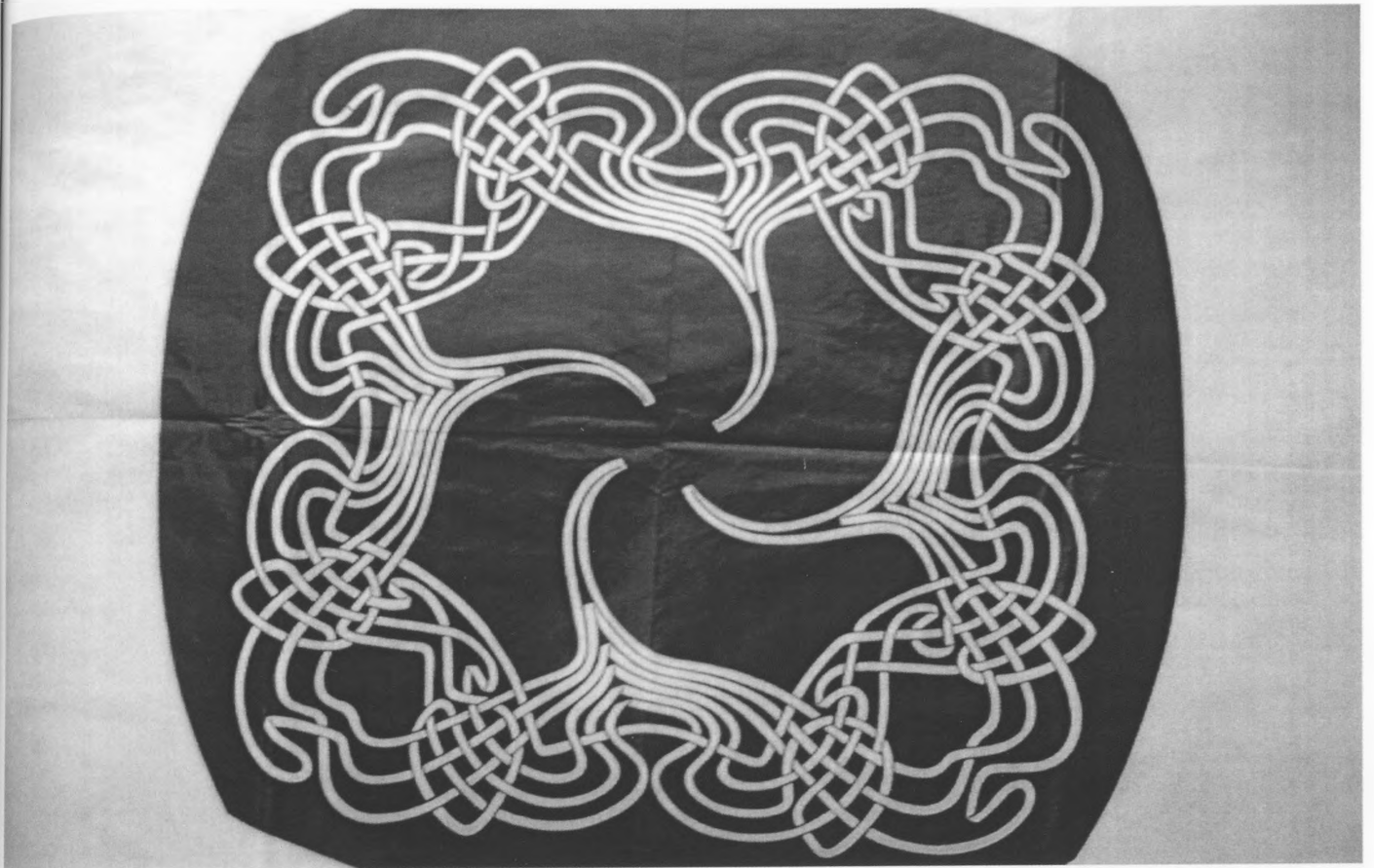
ORGAN DER
VEREINIGUNG
BILDENDER
KUNSTLER
ÖSTERREICHS
MÄRZ 1898
JAHRZEHFTE



[1.22] Front cover, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 3, Year 1 (March 1898), Gustav Klimt ('The Klimt issue')

Source:
Secession
Haus
photograph

[1.23] Pattern book design , ink on paper, by Alfred Roller, (hand-printed monogram, AR, in top right hand corner, and imprint of publishers not shown), (UAK)



[1.24] Klimt's initial 'G', with a scattering of stars, *Ver Sacrum*, Klimt issue, Issue 3, Year 1, (March, 1898)



dem diese Ehre zuteil wurde.

MITTHEILUNGEN DER VEREINIGUNG BILDENDER KÜNSTLER ÖSTERREICHS.

USTAV KLIMT, Präsident der Vereinigung, wurde seitens jenes Comites, das sich dieser Tage in London unter dem Vorsitze Mc Ned Whistlers zum Zwecke der Veranstaltung jährlicher internationaler Ausstellungen erlesener Kunstwerke gebildet hat, zum Ehrenmitgliede ernannt. Dem Comite gehören in der gleichen Eigenschaft die allerersten Künstler aller Nationen an und ist Klimt der einzige österreichische Künstler,

Zum ordentlichen Mitglied der Vereinigung wurde ernannt: Othmar Schimkowitz, Bildhauer, Wien.



Fotografie
für V. B. der V.
Gustav Klimt

er Eröffnungstermin unserer ersten Ausstellung steht so nahe, dass es angebracht erscheint, einige einleitende Worte zu sprechen. Zum erstenmale wird mit ihr in Wien der Versuch gemacht, dem Publicum eine Elite-Ausstellung speciell moderner Kunstwerke zu bieten. Die Absicht, solche kleine, gewählte Ausstellungen zu veranstalten, war einer der leitenden Gedanken bei Begründung unserer neuen Vereinigung. Auch die Pläne des Ausstellungsgebäudes, welches jetzt in Angriff genommen wird und das unser künftiges Heim werden soll, sind derart verfasst, dass Massenausstellungen in demselben überhaupt unmöglich sein werden. Denn wir und der künstlerisch gesinnte Theil des Publicums halten es einfach nicht mehr aus, durch Sale und Sale zu wandern, auf und nieder zu schauen und, durch den Wust von Mittelmässigem erdrückt, die Frische für den Genuss des wenigen Guten einzubüssen. Das soll und muss anders werden! Aber wie? Das Heil liegt hier nur im Radicalismus: die Ausstellungen müssen inhaltlich auf ein höheres Niveau gebracht werden. Unseren Statuten zufolge bildet DIE GESAMMTHEIT DER ORDENTLICHEN MITGLIEDER die Aufnahmsjury für die Ausstellungen. Diese Jury wird sich nun unentwegt das eine Ziel vor Augen halten müssen, nur dem Allerbesten und Allerwürdigsten den Weg zur Ausstellung zu öffnen. Die Ausstellungen, wie wir sie meinen, sollen nicht eine bequeme Gelegenheit sein für den Künstler, Rechenschaft abzulegen über die mehr oder minder erfolgreiche Arbeitsleistung seiner letzten Saison ■ jeder Aussteller soll vielmehr gezwungen sein, neben dem Besten, was geschaffen wurde, bestehen zu können; sie sollen mit einem Worte ABSOLUTE Kräfteproben sein.

VER SACRUM

PLAFOND D LOGGIA

ZEITSCHRIFT
D. VEREINIGUNG
BILD. KÜNSTLER ÖSTERREICHS

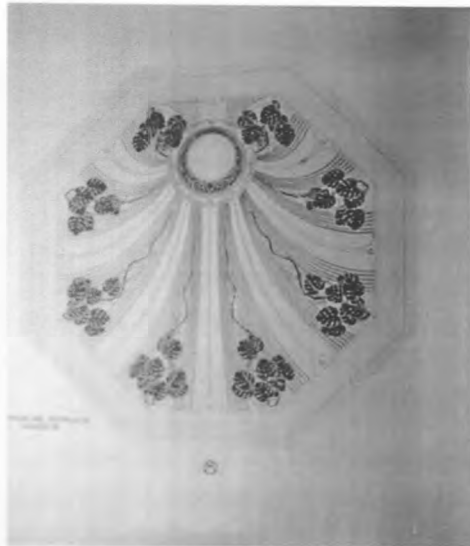
JÄHRLICH 12 HEFTE IM ABONNEMENT 9 FL. = 15 M. II. JAHRG. HEFT 8
VERLAG VON E. A. SEEMANN, LEIPZIG

ALLE RECHTE
VORBEHALTEN

[1.25]

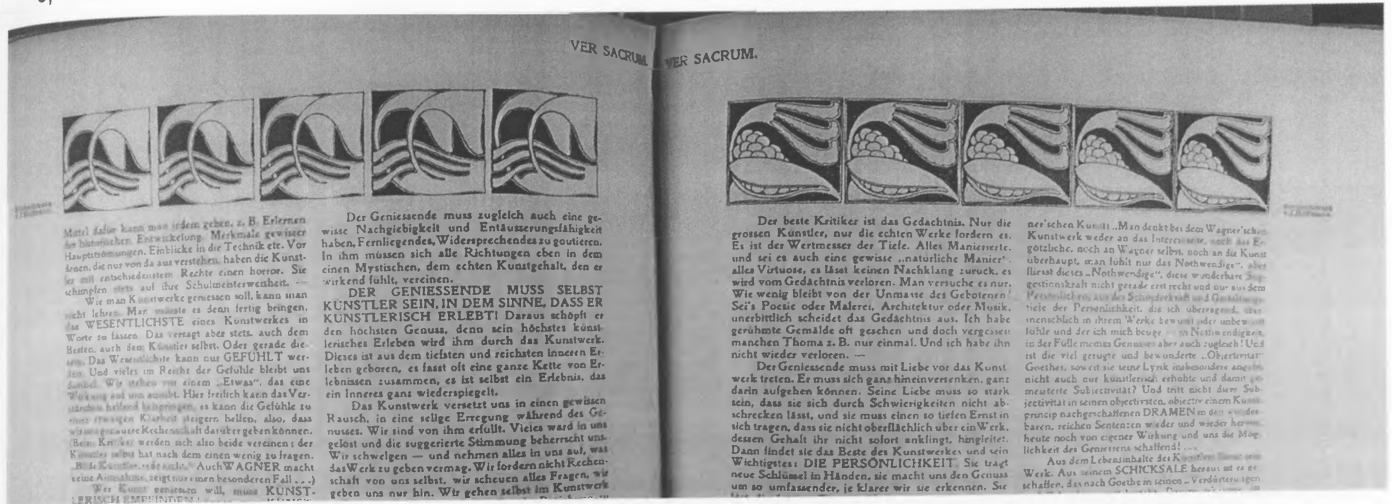
Cover, Otto Wagner, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 8, Year 2
(August 1899)

[1.26] Graphic motifs for interior design of Court Pavilion, Hietzing, with photographs of Court Pavilion, 1899. Illustrations and photographic images Ver Sacrum, Otto Wagner issue, issue 8, year 2 (August 1899)



[1.27] Roller's poster for the Fourth Secession exhibition, reproduced in *Ver Sacrum*, in monochrome tones of blue and white only, issue 7, year 2 (July 1899). Source: MAK Collections





Man! daher kann man irrtümlich, z. B. Erlernen der historischen Entwicklung, Merkmale gewisser Hauptstimmungen, Einblicke in die Technik etc. Verlangen, die nur von da aus verstehbar haben die Künstler mit entscheidendsten Rechte einen horror. Sie schimpfen stets auf ihre Schulmeisterweisheit. — Wie man Kunstwerke genießen soll, kann man nicht lehren. Man müsste es denn fertig bringen, das WESENTLICHSTE eines Kunstwerkes in Worte zu fassen. Das versagt aber stets auch dem Besten, auch dem Künstler selbst. Oder gerade dieses. Das Wesentlichste kann nur GEFÜHLT werden. Und vieles im Reiche der Gefühle bleibt uns dunkel. Wir stehen vor einem „Etwas“, das eine Wirkung auf uns ausübt. Hier freilich kann das Verständnis hilfreich hinzugehen, es kann die Gefühle zu einer etwasen Klarheit steigern, helfen, also, dass wir eine genauere Rechenschaft darüber geben können. (Beim Kritiken werden sich also beide vereinen: der Künstler selbst hat nach dem zinnen wenig zu fragen. „Bist du Künstler, oder nicht.“ Auch WAGNER macht seine Aussagen, sagt immer einen besonderen Fall...) Wer Kunst genießen will, muss KUNSTLERLICH empfinden.

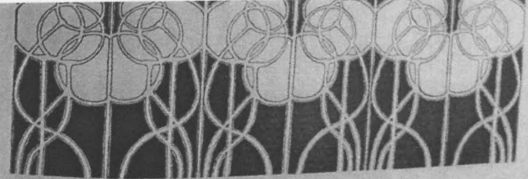
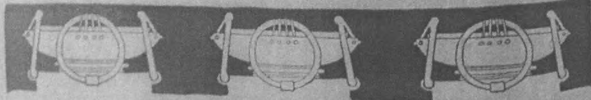
Der Genießende muss zugleich auch eine gewisse Nachgiebigkeit und Entäußerungsfähigkeit haben. Fernliegendes, Widersprechendes zu goutieren. In ihm müssen sich alle Richtungen eben in dem einen Mystischen, dem echten Kunstgehalt, den er wirkend fühlt, vereinigen. **DER GENIEßENDE MUSS SELBST KUNSTLERISCH ERLEBT!** Daraus schöpft er den höchsten Genuss, denn sein höchstes künstlerisches Erleben wird ihm durch das Kunstwerk. Dieses ist aus dem tiefsten und reichsten inneren Erleben geboren, es fasst oft eine ganze Kette von Erlebnissen zusammen, es ist selbst ein Erlebnis, das ein Inneres ganz wieder spiegelt. Das Kunstwerk versetzt uns in einen gewissen Rausch, in eine seltsame Erregung während des Genusses. Wir sind von ihm erfüllt. Vieles wird in uns gelöst und die suggerierte Stimmung beherrscht uns. Wir schweigen — und nehmen alles in uns auf, was das Werk zu geben vermag. Wir fordern nicht Rechenschaft von uns selbst, wir scheuen alles Fragen, wir geben uns nur hin. Wir gehen selbst im Kunstwerk



Der beste Kritiker ist das Gedächtnis. Nur die großen Künstler, nur die echten Werke fordern es. Er ist der Vermesser der Tiefe. Alles Manierierte, und sei es auch eine gewisse „natürliche Manier“, alles Virtuose, es lässt keinen Nachklang zurück, es wird vom Gedächtnis verloren. Man versuche es nur. Wie wenig bleibt von der Unmasse des Gebotenen! Sei's Poesie oder Malerei, Architektur oder Musik, gerühmte Gemälde oft gesehen und doch vergessen, manchen Thoma z. B. nur einmal. Und ich habe ihn nicht wieder verloren. — Der Genießende muss mit Liebe vor das Kunstwerk treten. Er muss sich ganz hineinversenken, ganz darin aufgehen können. Seine Liebe muss so stark sein, dass sie sich durch Schwierigkeiten nicht abschrecken lässt, und sie muss einen so tiefen Ernst in sich tragen, dass sie nicht oberflächlich über ein Werk, dessen Gehalt ihr nicht sofort anflingt, hingiehet. Dann findet sie das Beste des Kunstwerkes, und sein Wichtigstes: **DIE PERSONLICHKEIT.** Sie trägt neue Schlüssel in Händen, sie macht uns den Genuss um so umfassender, je klarer wir sie erkennen. Sie

ne'vehen Kunst. Man denkt bei dem Wagner'schen Kunstwerk weder an das Interessante, noch das Ergötzliche, noch an Wagner selbst, noch an die Kunst überhaupt, man fühlt nur das „Nothwendige“, aber dieses „Nothwendige“, diese wunderbare Suggestionskraft nicht gerade erst recht und nur aus dem Persönlichen, aus der Schönheit und dem Gehalt der Persönlichkeit, die sich überregnet, übermenschlich in ihrem Werke bewusst oder unbewusst fühlt und der ich mich beuge — in Nothwendigen, in der Fülle meines Genusses aber auch zugleich! Und ist die viel geprüfte und bewunderte „Oberkritik“ Goethe's, so wie sie sein Lyrik insbesondere angeht, nicht auch nur künstlerisch, erhalte und damit die meiste Subjektivität? Und tritt nicht diese Subjektivität in seinen objektiven, objective einem Kunstprinzip nachgeschalteten DRAMEN in ein wunderbares, reichen Sentenzen wieder und wieder heute noch von eigener Wirkung und uns die Möglichkeit des Genusses schaffend! — Aus dem Lebenshülle der Kunstwerke lässt sich Werk. Aus seinen SCHICKSALE heraus ist es schaffend, das nach Goethe im letzten. Verdächtigungen

Ring, Ausgang und Ende. Die Schlange, die sich in den Schwanz beißt. Aus diesem Ring werden wir in der Kunst nie kommen. Werden wir nie kommen WOLLEN. Es umschließt Gegenwart und Zukunft, um nicht von Zeit und Ereignissen zu reden. — Vermögen Lebensinhalte aus muss alle Kunst genossen werden, Jahre bringen ihn nicht, äußere Geschöschse



(Aus „Advent“, Verlag von P. Fritschhahn.)

WILHELM HOLZAMER.

4 PROKRÖTEN, 6 STÜCKE
VON I. STANISLAWSKI



BUCHSCHMUCK

Was verbindet die unter Buchschmuck? Schöne sein, wie die Frage erwidert, ist ein demnach be-
rechtigt. Jedoch bestimmt was Buchschmuck ist
und was nicht, werden nicht allein und vertrieben. Kunst
empfindung. Die Kunst ist es, die in der Regel in einer
speziellen Form zu sein pflegt, wie kann sie
sein. Es handelt sich um den Schmuck des Buches,
um Schmuck, was seine spezifische Zweck und Be-
deutung. Wir wollen unser Buch „schmücken“ — was
dann auf einen — damit es ein schönes „Bild“ machen,
schönere oder schlichtere die Zeit verbrachten, sondern auch
durch das kleine unsere Erleuchtung erhöhen. Die Kunst
ist es, die in dem unendlichen Möglichkeiten hervor-
zuheben, ganz allgemein von dem Schmuck Inhalt
durch den Schmuck können und sollen unsere Bücher
mit in diese vornehmlichen Teil unserer täglichen
Lebenswelt. Aber die Schönheit wirklich entstehen
wird in einer Form, die sie sehr angenehm gemacht
werden soll, die ist in ihrer ganzen Schönheit und Wärme
ist sich selbst zu zeigen, was ein allgemeines kleine
schonmalen Zapp unsere Zeit angeht. Kunst
gibt nicht alle allein in die Form der großen Materie
oder in die Kunstempfindung. Unsere Gegenwart ist in
Alles, was sie sein soll. Wir können es nicht, noch länger
ist sie eine Frage der allgemeinen Zeit. Sie können es nicht,
das können verbindet sie die Zeit unsere Mission und
die sind die Themen. Sie können es nicht, noch länger
sollen unsere Mission ganz ein demselben Verständnis
haben. Und schließlich, ist es unsere Verantwortung
Kunst und Schönheit selbst und bestimmt wird der sein.



der die bescheiden Einfluss gewährt. Denn die Kunst kommt
mit uns zu stehen, sondern uns zu prüfen! —
Ein Name eines Bücher gleich in gewisse Hinsicht —
einem Buch ohne Schmuck. Es ist frei, schön, unbedeu-
tend, gelöst. Wir können uns auch das Was ohne immer ohne
Buchschmuck gar nicht denken. Beim Buch — und wir
wollen nicht empfinden. Einen Hauptzweck des Büch-
schmuckes kann man jedoch die Bücher heute keineswegs
mit jedem Gewissen nennen. Dafür sind sie entweder zu
schön und leicht oder überhaupt ganz bunt und ge-
schmacklos geblendet. Man wart ist endlich bei der
geheimen Künste „Katholizismus und Dialektik“. Geht
man zu Gewand, das sie gut kleidet und dem Wesen
angenehm ist, geben wir ihnen wieder Wärme und Zu-
schwung für ihre Umhüllung. Wir können unsere alte
Büchschmuck gegen „dieser besten, sondern der Freund-
schaft schmerz abtragen.
Wir wollen aber unsere Bücher schmücken. Aber wie?
Die ist zunächst die Anwesenheit, der Inhalt. Von
ästhetischen Theorien des Buches gewahrt vielfach gerade
denn die größtmögliche Frucht für das Was den an-
nehmen Geschmack und der deutsche verschwinden Ein-
heitsgefühl der künstlerischen Geistes. Das ist der Buch-
schmuck notwendige MATERIAL (Leder, Blatt, Papier,
Metall) ist es wichtig, dass diese schon allein eine unbe-
grenzte heilige Perspektive für die kunsthandwerkliche
Praxis nach jeder Richtung hin sich öffnet. Wenn
unser Künstler und Handwerker — und nicht zuletzt
auch Dilettanten — sich die mannigfachen Anwesenheit
in unserer Zeit der Ausland gegeben hat (Frankreich,
England, die Niederlande und Skandinavien, vornehmlich
Niederlande), so kann die Kunst eine reiche und schöne
Materie machen, so kann die Kunst eine reiche und schöne
werden. Der Buchschmuck gewährt die dankbar entgegen-
nehmen und Forderung der modernen Form-
und Forderung.

VER SACRUM



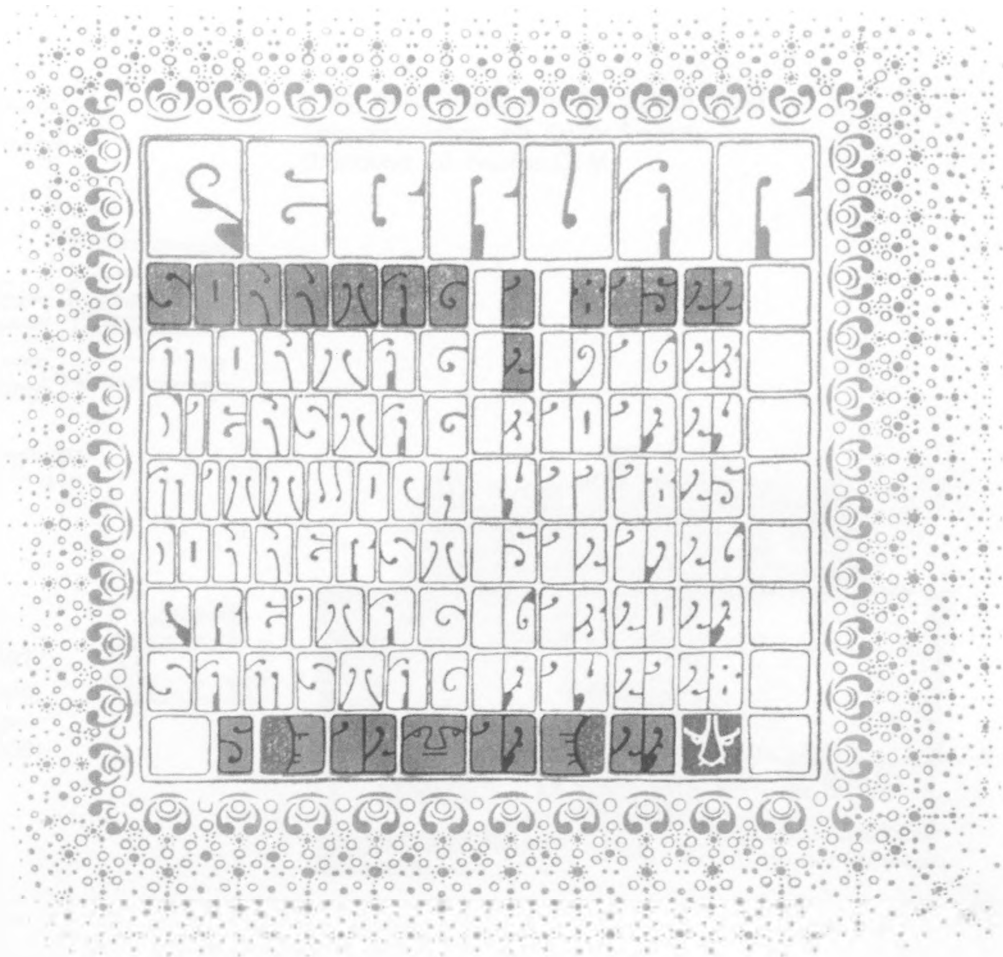
In unserer Beziehung zum Buchschmuck der alte Er-
leben, die Buchschmuck, die wiederum einige Jahre wie
den ist unter den Buchschmuck. Nach abstraktem
Zweck sollen diese Er leben, die um die Mitte des 19. Jahr-
hunderts zuerst in Deutschland eingeführt und meistens auf
die Besten des Buches beschränkt wurden, das eigen-
liche Buchschmuck auf das Buch beschränkt. Man suchte vor
dem Eigenen Zweck (Dokumentation
oder einer entsprechenden Beschriftung auf der Innenseite
des Buches zu erreichen. (Gibt hervor die von F. W. W. W.
bezeichnete Werk „Die deutsche Buchschmuck“)
Die moderne Er leben, wie sie beispielsweise Künstler
wie Klinge, Seifert, Pöschel, v. Schöner und andere
Büchschmuck geworden, suchen ist in einem Wesen
durch Form und Composition eine symbolische Beziehung
zum Charakter, in den persönlichen Lichter, zum
Bild oder zum Familienwappen der Buchschmuck
ausdrücken.
Eine wichtige und reiche, wenn auch nicht un-
vermeidliche Aufgabe des Buches bilden die künstlerischen
Vorsetzungen. Bei sämtlich haben die Geistes in diese
in einer Höhe des künstlerischen gebracht, die kann in
einem Buch, nicht in dieser Verbindung mit Text
schon dem eigentlichen Charakter des Buches in dieser
Verbindung. Das künstlerische Vorsetzungen bildet die
Darstellung von der Natur, der Menschheit des Buches die
Büchschmuck und Inhalt.
Wir sind in der Zeit von einer aber mit der eigentlichen
bezug in den Buchschmuck? Aufklärung gewagt nicht
Schönheit oder der Stilvollheit der von Gute kann.

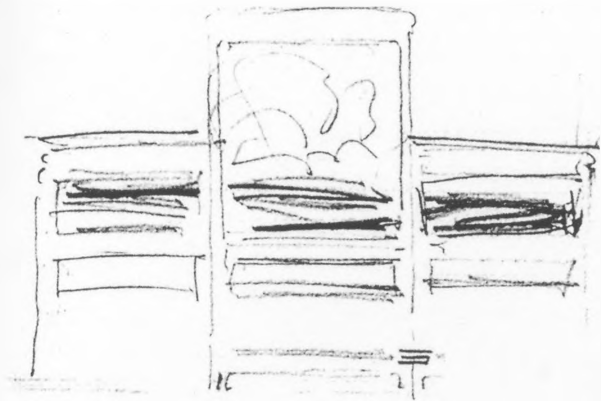
8 LETZTE SONNENSTRahlen, 6
STÜCKE VON I. STANISLAWSKI



Die Kunst verbindet sich selbst. Die Kunst
wird also von uns selbst von dem selbständigen Buch
ist die Schönheit bringen. Und die Schönheit? Die
wird, auf gewisse Zeiten langfristige überkommenen
Bücher oder Kunstschmuck und es ist notwendig
wird. Man nicht auch bei einem in Bezug der alten
ästhetischen Buchschmuck, die sich verbindet
in der ersten Darstellung der Kunstschmuck
und daher nicht die die positive Buchschmuck
dieser Art von Buchschmuck haben zum Buchschmuck
sowohl gesamten künstlerischen Beziehung und Inhalt
für lange Zeit die Buchschmuck eine wirklich hand-
liche Kunstschmuck Buchschmuck. Es wird Zeit,
die ein Buchschmuck, die Beziehung und es ist
verstand.
Sollen wir uns diese alle Methoden selbst wählen,
dann wir uns darüber klar werden, ist es Buchschmuck
„schmücken“ werden kann. Wir können eine Buchschmuck
schonmalen Zapp unser Buchschmuck, was ein
„Bild“ ist, wie Kunst, ist es notwendig für eine
bisher und schließlich eigenständigen Linie werden durch
eine „ästhetische Buchschmuck“, welche ein für sich
eine Erklärung bringen „schmücken“ von Kunstschmuck
sollen. Wir können uns selbst die Kunstschmuck
das nicht gelassen. Eine solche Darstellung kann
in einer ganz neuen, nicht selbst auf sich selbst. Es
braucht in der Kunst Vorsetzungen sind und dem
Dilettant. Diese Texte sind in unendlichen die eigene
Sprache, ohne Erklärung. Und es ist sich in einem
verständnis, mit demselben in einer und es erklären.
„Wie es gewahrt“ wird.
Wird aber bei all dem Künstler denken nicht
in einem in der Kunstschmuck der Kunstschmuck
der Teil der gesamten Buchschmuck, selbst, ist.

[1, 30] Roller's calendar page for February; silver, mauve on white, *Ver Sacrum*, Issue 2 (January) Year 6 (1903), (rep. Christian Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum* 1898-1903, 211)

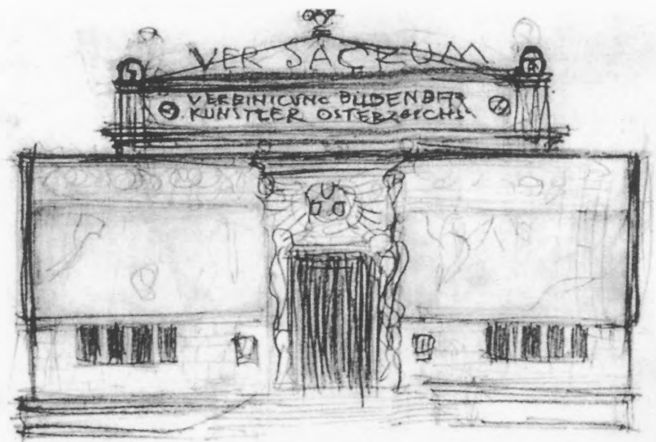




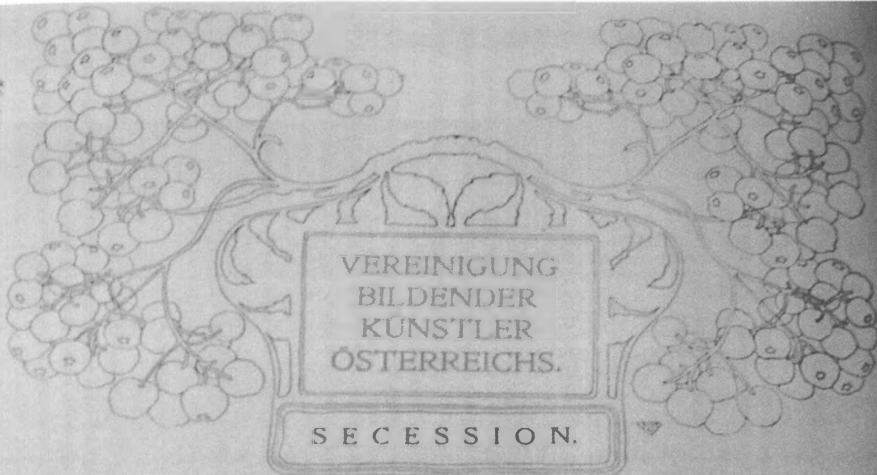
Klimt's *Secession Haus* sketch, 1897, rep. Tobias Natter and C Grunenberg, eds., Gustav Klimt: *Painting, Design and Modern Life* (London: Tate, 2008), 50. Source: Wien Museum



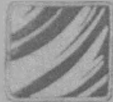
[1.31] Roller's sketch for the façade of the *Secession Haus*, rep. Oskar Pausch, *Gründung*, 20. Source: ÖTM



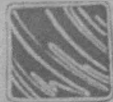
Hochschmuck
für V. B. ges.
v.
J. Hoffmann.



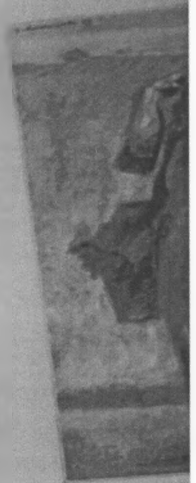
Immer wird mir eine Scene unvergesslich bleiben. Es ist jetzt fünf Jahre her, ich hatte damals in der „Deutschen Zeitung“ über das Elend unserer Kunst geklagt; an leiser Zustimmung fehlte es mir nicht, die sich freilich noch nicht unter die Leute traute. Da läutet es eines Tages bei mir, ich gehe öffnen und sehe vor der Thüre einen ungeduldigen Officier, den ich nicht kenne. Der Hauptmann, eine vehemente Natur von einer strengen und fast drohenden Art, mit unwirschigen Geberden, tritt ein, bestürmt mich gleich mit heftigen Reden und nun erfahre ich erst, dass er Theodor v. Hörmann ist, unser tapferer Hörmann, der uns seitdem entrissen worden ist. Er setzt sich zu mir und während er zornig, ungestum mit den grossen Händen fuchtelnd und seine trube Stimme heiser schreiend, die Ge-



nossenschaft schmäht, kann ich ihn betrachten: es ist etwas Wildes, Raufendes in seiner Weise, das doch mit seinen guten und herzlichen Augen nicht stimmt, und seine finstere, verächtliche Miene hat eine unbeschreibliche Müdigkeit und Trauer. Er steht auf und geht im Zimmer auf und ab, immer heftiger, erzählend, was er zu leiden hat, wie sie ihn hassen, die im Künstlerhaus, und dass ihnen nichts zu schlecht und zu gemein ist, um ihn zu krankem und zu bedrängen. Er thut mir wehe, den Schmerz des starken Mannes anzusehen. Ich frage endlich: „Aber was haben Sie den Leuten denn eigentlich gethan, dass sie Sie so hassen?“ Da lacht er höhnisch und grell auf: „Gethan? Ich denen? Haha! Ich möchte halt ein Künstler sein ≡ ja, ich bin so frech! Und das verzeihen Einem die nie! Da lassen sie



Hochschmuck für V.
3 ges v. Alf. Roller.



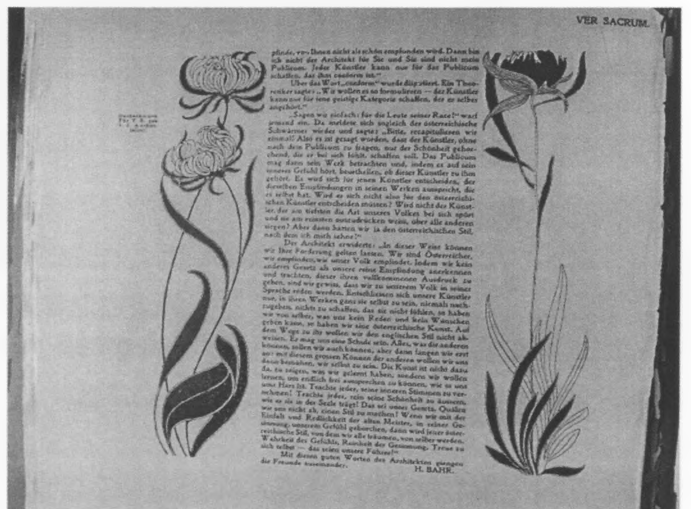
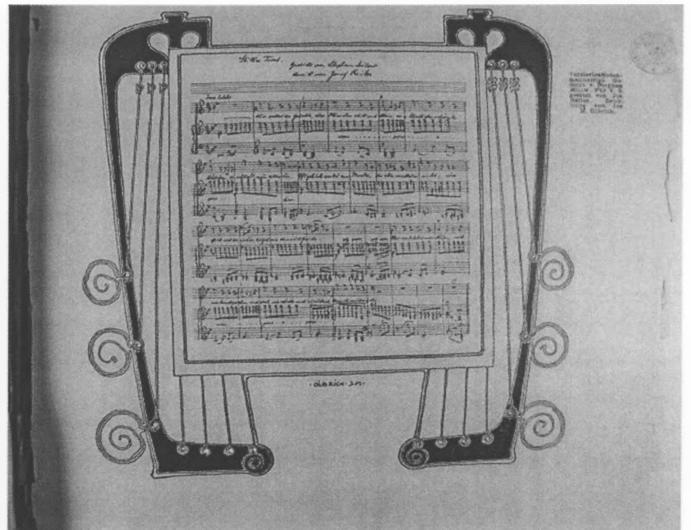
alle Hunde auf
Ich höre noch
seinem grossen
verfluchender E
hinter ihm: m
musste er mich
ist er gänzlich
Damals
unserer Jugend
sion“ eine güt
Pariser. —
In Mün
gewesen, mit
stellen. Das
bessere Form
Tradition

[1.32] Book decorations by Alfred Roller and Josef Hoffmann, *Ver Sacrum*, Issue 1 Year 1 (January 1898)

[1.33] Cover, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, Year 1 (July 1898)
 Alfred Roller. Source: Secession Haus



[1.34] Pages from issue 7, July 1898
 which comply with a constantly changing
 set of rules

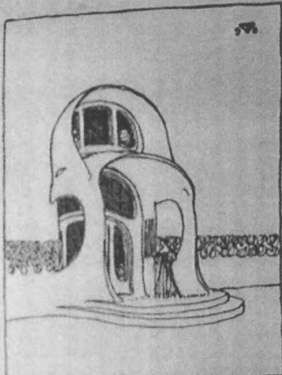


Zunächst ein sangesucht interessantes Bild der Außenwelt nicht nur weil es dann nicht mehr versteht, dass man sich für durchsichtigen Fensterscheiben ohne Wahl überall

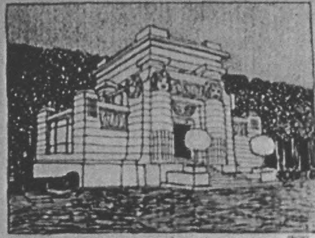
Es gibt also ein Radikalmittel, das ein neues Haus unter allen Umständen aus dem Sublimencharakter heraushebt, immer dann bringe nur Licht und Luft auf verschiedenen Wegen ins Haus — und die ästhetische Wirkung wird nicht ausbleiben.

Man schaffe die durchsichtigen Fenster mindestens mit Hilfe ab und ersetze das Öffnen der Fenster durch Luft-Austrittsöffnungen.

Selbstverständlich kann eigentlich nur das beste, auch nach allen Seiten gegliederte Einzelbau einen Anspruch auf architektonischen Wert erheben. Aber auch das würde durch eine Revolution im Fenster-Verhalten ein künstlerisches Aussehen bekommen. Jedenfalls müsste es bei allen Nacharbeiten modern werden, Licht und Luft auf verschiedenen Wegen ins Haus zu lassen.



STUDIEN ZUR DECORATIVEN AUSGESTALTUNG EINES HAUSEINGANGES VON JOSEF HOFFMANN.



DIE POTESKIN'SCHE STADT.

Wer kennt sie nicht, die Poteskin'schen Dörfer, die der schlauwe Günstling Katharina in der Ukraine erbaut hätte? Dörfer aus Leinwand und Papp, Dörfer, die die Aufgabe hatten, eine Einode für die Augen Ihrer kaiserlichen Majestät in eine blühende Landschaft zu verwandeln. Aber eine ganze Stadt soll der schlauwe Minister gar fertig gebracht haben?

Das ist wohl auch nur in Russland möglich!

Die Poteskin'sche Stadt, von der ich hier sprechen will, ist unser liebes Wien selber. Eine schwere Anklage, deren Beweis mir wohl auch schwer gelingen wird. Denn ich brauche dazu Höres von so sensitivem Rechtsgefühl, wie sie in unserer Stadt leider noch recht spärlich zu finden sind.

Wer sich für etwas Höheres ausgiebt, als er ist, ist ein Hochstapler und verfällt auch dann der allgemeinen Verachtung, wenn niemand dadurch geschädigt wurde. Wenn aber jemand diesen Effect durch falsche Steine und andere Imitationen zu erreichen sucht? Es gibt Länder, wo ihm das gleiche Schicksal zuteil werden würde. In Wien ist man aber noch nicht so weit. Nur ein kleiner Kreis hat das Gefühl, dass hier eine unmoralische Handlung, ein Schwund vorliegt. Und diesen Effect sucht man nicht nur durch die falsche Uebertreibung, nicht nur durch die Wohnungeinrichtung, die sich aus lauter Imitationen zusammensetzt, sondern auch durch die Wohnung, durch das Wohngebäude zu erreichen.



[1.35] Architectural Studies, Josef Hoffmann, 'Die Potemkin'sche Stadt' ('The Potemkin-like City') Adolf Loos, article, Ver Sacrum, Issue 7, Year 1 (July 1898)



Tigerfries (Entwurf v. Adolf Böhm.

DER ENGLISCHE STIL.

In einer Runde von Wiener Künstlern und Kunstfreunden wurde neulich über den englischen Stil discutirt. Wie sollen wir uns zu den Bemühungen des Hofraths Scala verhalten? In einer recht lebendigen, ja bald leidenschaftlichen Weise gieng das Gespräch hin und her. Wir wollen versuchen, in ein paar Sätzen die Meinungen anzugeben, die dabei laut geworden sind. Wie man sehen wird, wollen ja eigentlich alle dasselbe; es strebt ihm nur jeder auf seine Art nach. Man begann damit, dem Hofrath Scala gegen die Tapezierer recht zu geben. Es sei eine gute That, dass er die Herrschaft der paar grossen Tapezierer gebrochen habe. Gegen sie müsse man auf seiner Seite sein. Die Frage sei nur, ob uns viel geholfen werde, wenn unsere Handwerker nun anfangen, englische und amerikanische Möbel zu copieren, also doch noch immer nicht aufhören, wieder zu copieren.

Ein Fanatiker für den englischen Stil schilderte nun, wie dieser mit seiner grossen Sachlichkeit, die genaue Kenntniss des Materials verlangend und mit der feinsten Präcision das Bedürfnis befriedigend, die beste Schule sei; durch ihn würden wir erst wieder richtige Handwerker bekommen, und es sei der Handwerker, nicht der Künstler, der die Hauskunst ausüben solle. Diese Bemerkung wird mit Unwillen aufgenommen. Man mag das „Handwerker oder Künstler“ nicht gelten lassen, sondern „Handwerker und Künstler“. Jeder Künstler müsse auch ein gutes Stück Handwerker sein, jeder Handwerker soll zum Künstler erzogen werden.

Gegen den englischen Fanatiker erhob sich ein österreichischer Schwärmer: Keine deutsche Renaissance, aber auch keinen englischen Stil, beide sagen uns nichts, sondern einen Stil im Wohnen, der unserem Dialect im Reden, unserer Musik, unserem Tanzen entsprechen würde, einen österreichischen Stil! Wie soll der sein? Der Schwärmer gibt zu, das nicht zu wissen, nur zu fühlen; es lasse sich etwa durch die Worte Mozart, Grillparzer, Kahlenberg, Prater und Walzer umschreiben.

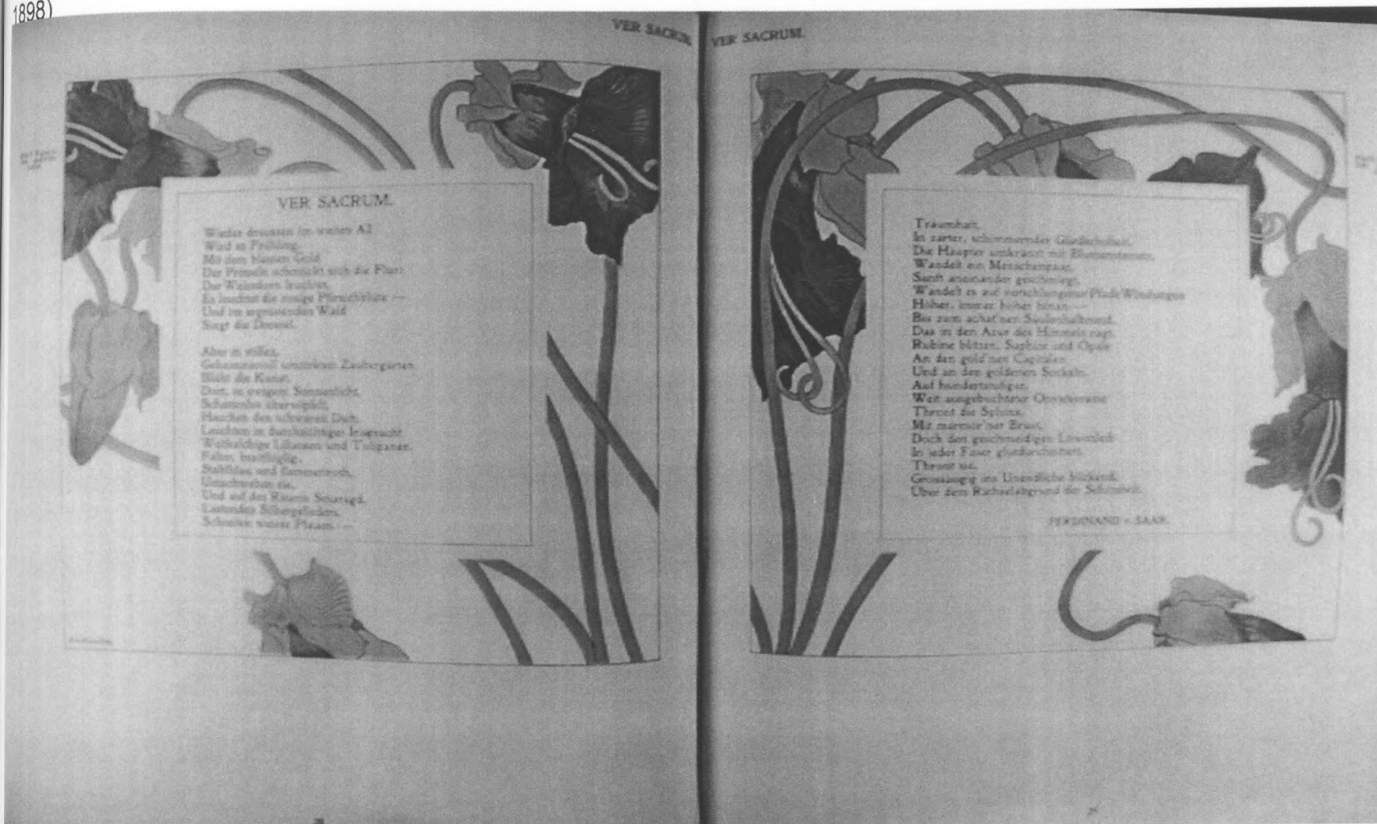
Indessen war ein thätiger Künstler ein bisschen ungeduldig geworden und rief aus: „Was englisch, was österreichisch! Der Künstler mache, was ihm gefällt, und mache es so, wie es ihm gefällt! Dieses ewige „du sollst“ — du sollst englisch sein, du sollst österreichisch sein — ist das Verderben der Künstler. Für den Künstler gibt es kein: Du sollst das! Er kann nicht schaffen, was er soll; es drängt ihn, zu schaffen, was er muss, nach seiner Natur muss. Man lasse mich doch machen, was ich empfinde! Man lasse mich doch bauen, wie es nach meinem Gefühl schon ist! Man lasse mich nach meinem inneren Gebote bauen! Das ist unser Unglück, dass wir das nicht dürfen, dass der Architekt gehindert wird, seiner Schönheit zu gehorchen, dass wir „auf Bestellung“ schaffen sollen! Solange die Maler beim Malen gefragt haben, was dem Publicum gefällt, haben sie schlecht gemalt. Künstler sind sie erst geworden, als sie angefangen haben, so zu malen, wie es ihnen selbst gefällt, aus ihrem Drange heraus, ohne nach dem Publicum zu fragen. Dann hat das Publicum auf einmal nach ihnen gefragt. Solange die Architekten beim Bauen fragen müssen, wie es das Publicum haben will, werden wir nichts leisten. Dass wir uns commandieren lassen sollen, ist unser Unglück, ob es jetzt zur „deutschen Renaissance“ oder zum englischen oder zu einem österreichischen Stil ist. Wir wollen nicht commandiert werden. Wir wollen jeder nach seinem individuellen Stile schaffen!“

Ein Vermittler erlaubte sich nun anzufragen, wie sich denn das mit dem Bedürfnisse des Publicums vertragen könne, das doch auch seinen Geschmack habe und nicht aufgeben wolle: „Ich will doch in meiner Wohnung wohnen. In meiner Wohnung, das heisst, sie soll so sein, wie ich es als schön empfinde. Sie aber, Herr Architekt, wollen nur etwas schaffen, das Sie als schön empfinden. Das wird dann eben Ihre Wohnung sein. Wenn Sie mir aber statt meiner Wohnung Ihre Wohnung geben, so werde ich nicht zufrieden sein.“

Der Architekt replicierte: „Dann gehören wir zwei eben nicht zusammen, wenn das, was ich als schön em-

[1.37] 'Tiger Frieze' book decoration, Adolf Böhm, 'Der englische Stil' ('The English Style'), article, Hermann Bahr, *Ver Sacrum*, Issue 7, Year 1 (July 1898).

[138] Poem, Ferdinand Saar, illustration Josef Auenteller, *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, Year 1 (July 1898)



VER SACRUM.

Wieder drücker im weiten A2
 Wied in Frühling,
 Mit dem Neuen wird
 Die Fremde schmückt sich die Flur:
 Der Walden leuchten
 Es leuchtet die zuge Pflanzwelt --
 Und im ergessenden Wald
 Singt die Lotos.

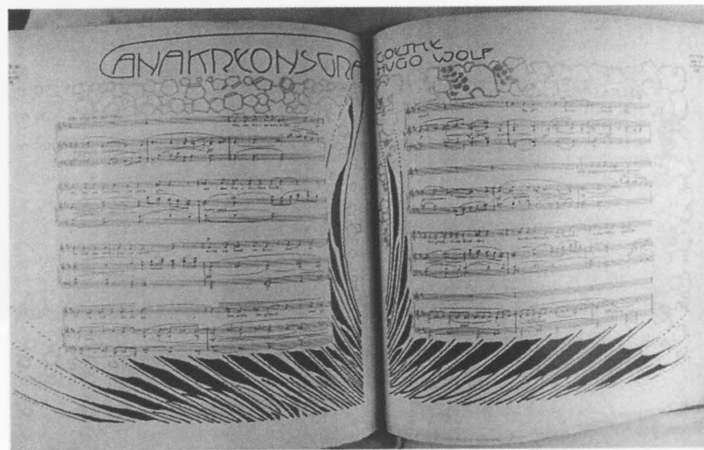
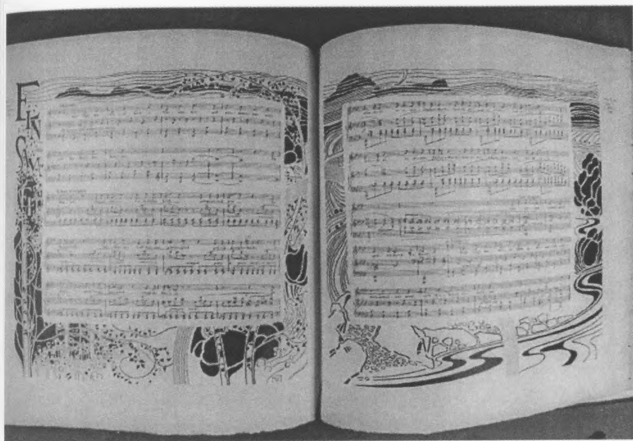
Aber in stillen,
 Gebirgsland umströmt Zaubergeran
 Blüht die Kette,
 Dort, so weiget Sonnenlicht,
 Schatteln überwieht,
 Huchen den schwarzen Doh,
 Leuchten in dunkelstigen Insekt
 Wohlbelagte Lilien und Tulpanen,
 Fahn beständige,
 Stille und Samenreich,
 Umarmen sie,
 Und auf der Rosen Stängel,
 Lebendes Silberglänzen,
 Schmeckt wasser Pflanz --

VER SACRUM.

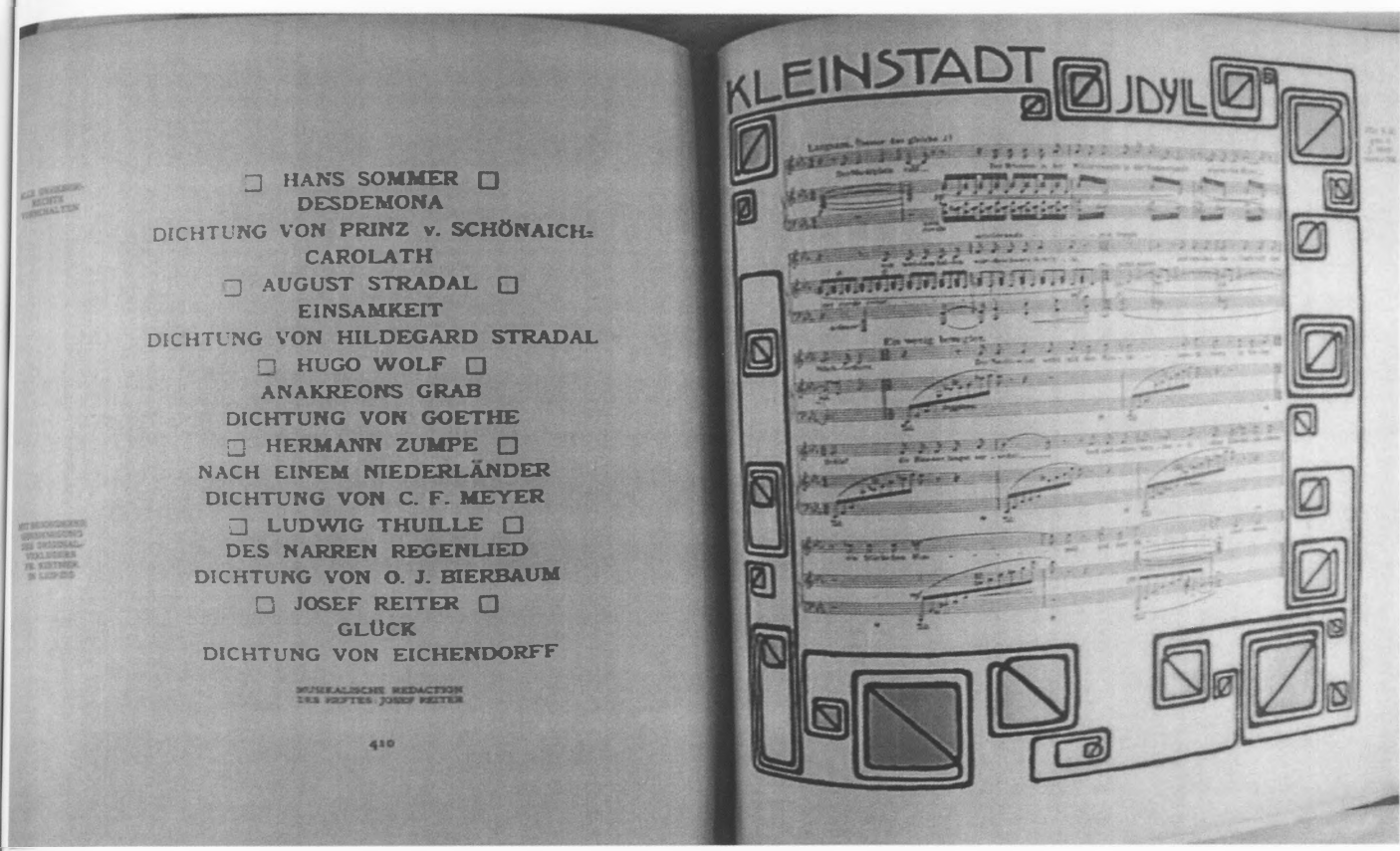
Traumbild,
 In zarter, schimmernder Glühelheit,
 Die Haupten umkrant mit Blumenstamm,
 Wandelt ein Menschenpaar,
 Sucht aneinander geschworen,
 Wandel es auf verschlungenen Pfad Windungen
 Höher, immer höher hinauf --
 Bis zum achtten Saubelkronen,
 Das in den Arce des Himmels ragt,
 Rubine blühen, Saphire und Opale
 An den goldnen Capülen,
 Und an den goldenen Sockeln,
 Auf hundertenigen,
 Wen ausgebreiteter Oberkronen
 Theoret die Spinn,
 Mit marmor her Zerst,
 Doch den geschmeidigen Linien
 In jeder Faser glühend,
 Theoret sie,
 Grossartig ins Unendliche Stückend,
 Über dem Racheblühen der Schminke.

FERDINAND - SAAR.

[1, 39] Inside pages of the Lieder issue, printed silver and black throughout *Ver Sacrum*, issue 24, Year 4 (December 1901).



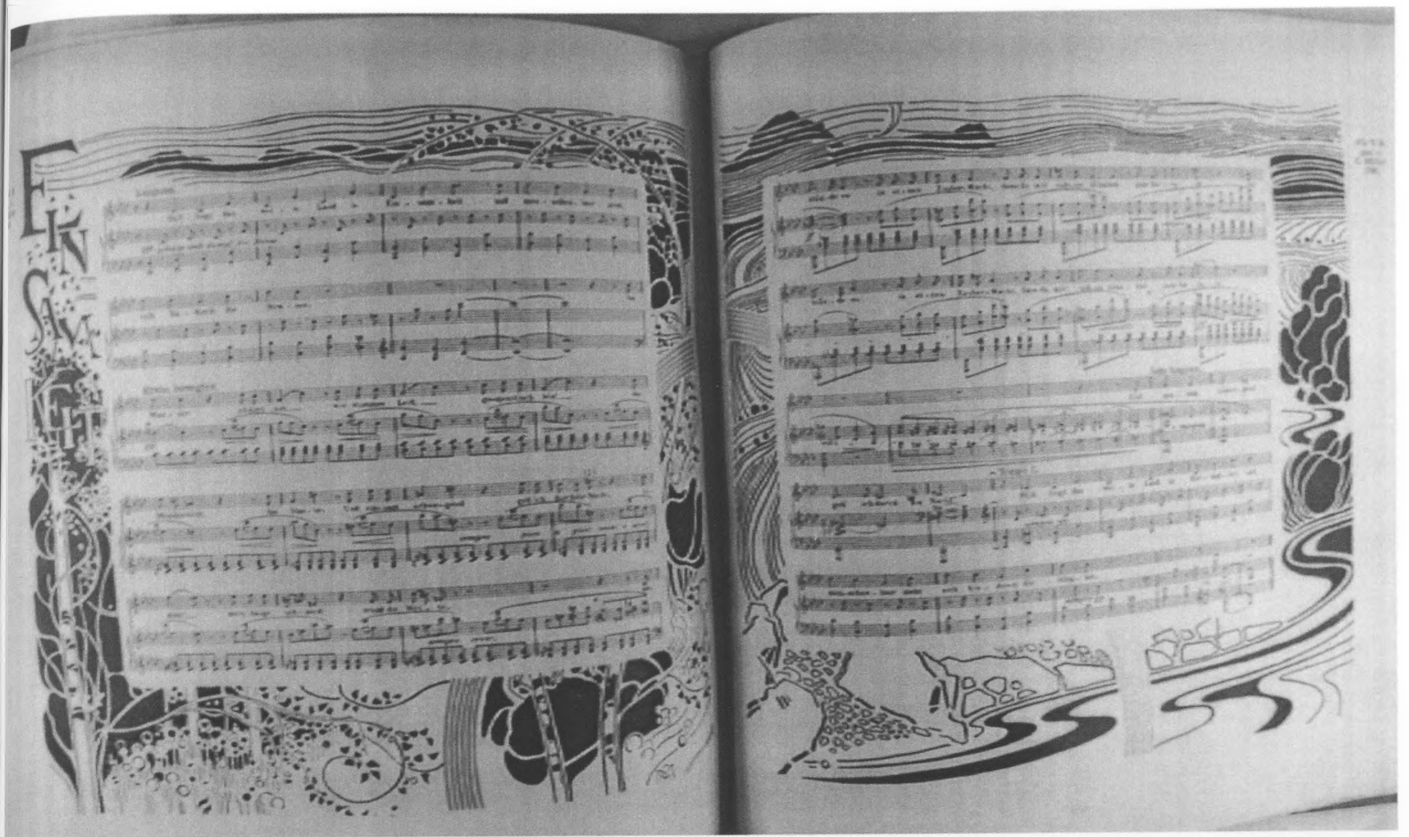
[1.40] 'Kleinstadt Idyll', composed d'Albert, decorated Josef Hoffmann



[1, 41] 'Siehst du den Stern', composed von Hausegger, decorated Alfred Roller; also facing page decorated Alfred Roller



[1.42] 'Einsamkeit', composed Stradal, decorated Carl Müller



[143] 'Anacreons Grab', composed Hugh Wolf, poem Goethe, decorated Leopold Bauer.

ANAKREONS GRAB

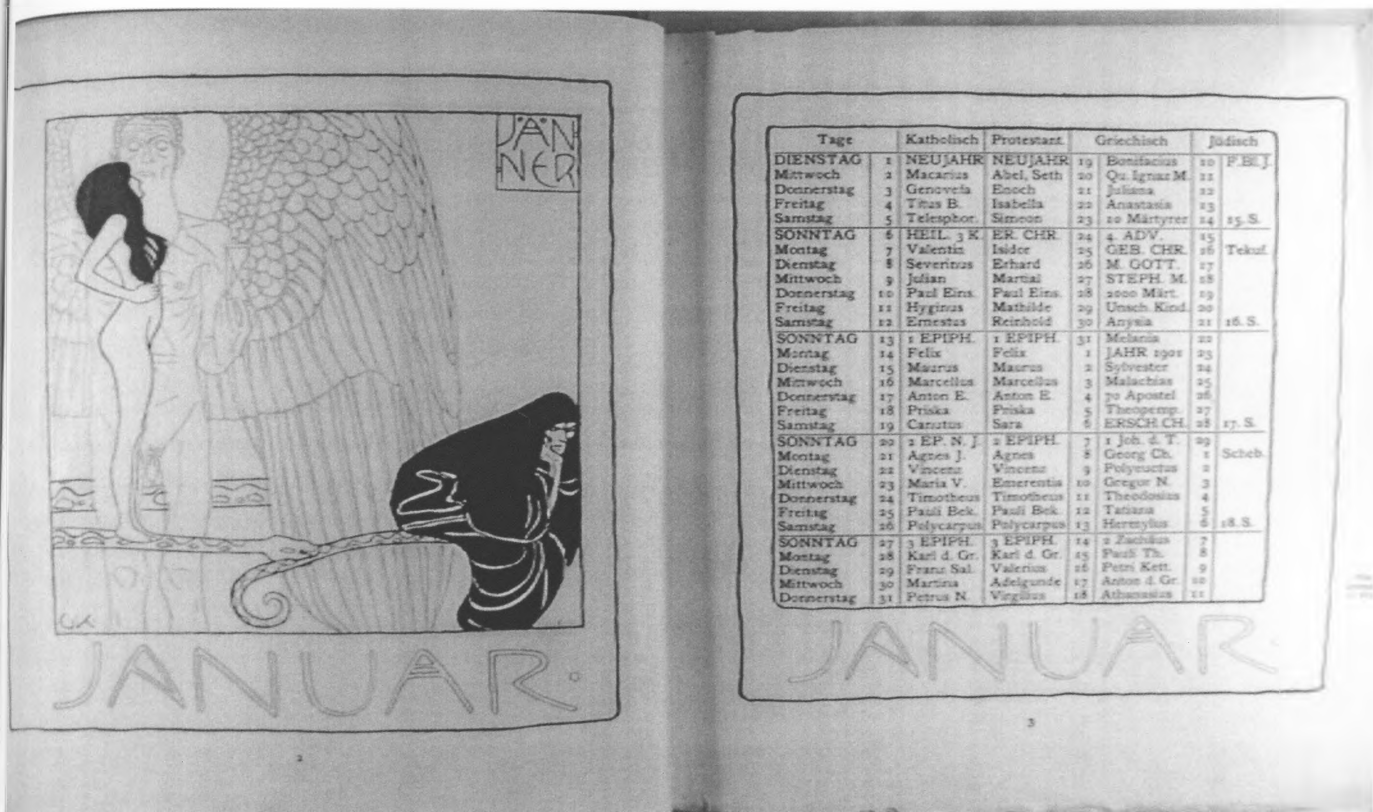
sehr langsam und ruhig.
Wo die Ro- se hier blüht,
Wo ein von Lor-beer sich schla- gen,
wo das Tor- tel-chen lockt,
wo sich das Grill-chen er- götzt,
weh! ein Grab ist hier, das
ich mit Lu-
ben schön be- gänzt und ge-
dient

GOETHE HUGO WOLF

Es ist A- na- cre- on
Pflü- gel- schenke und Her- den ge-
der Glück- liche Dich- ter,
vor dem Wä- der- lein die and- eren Hä- gel ge-
dient

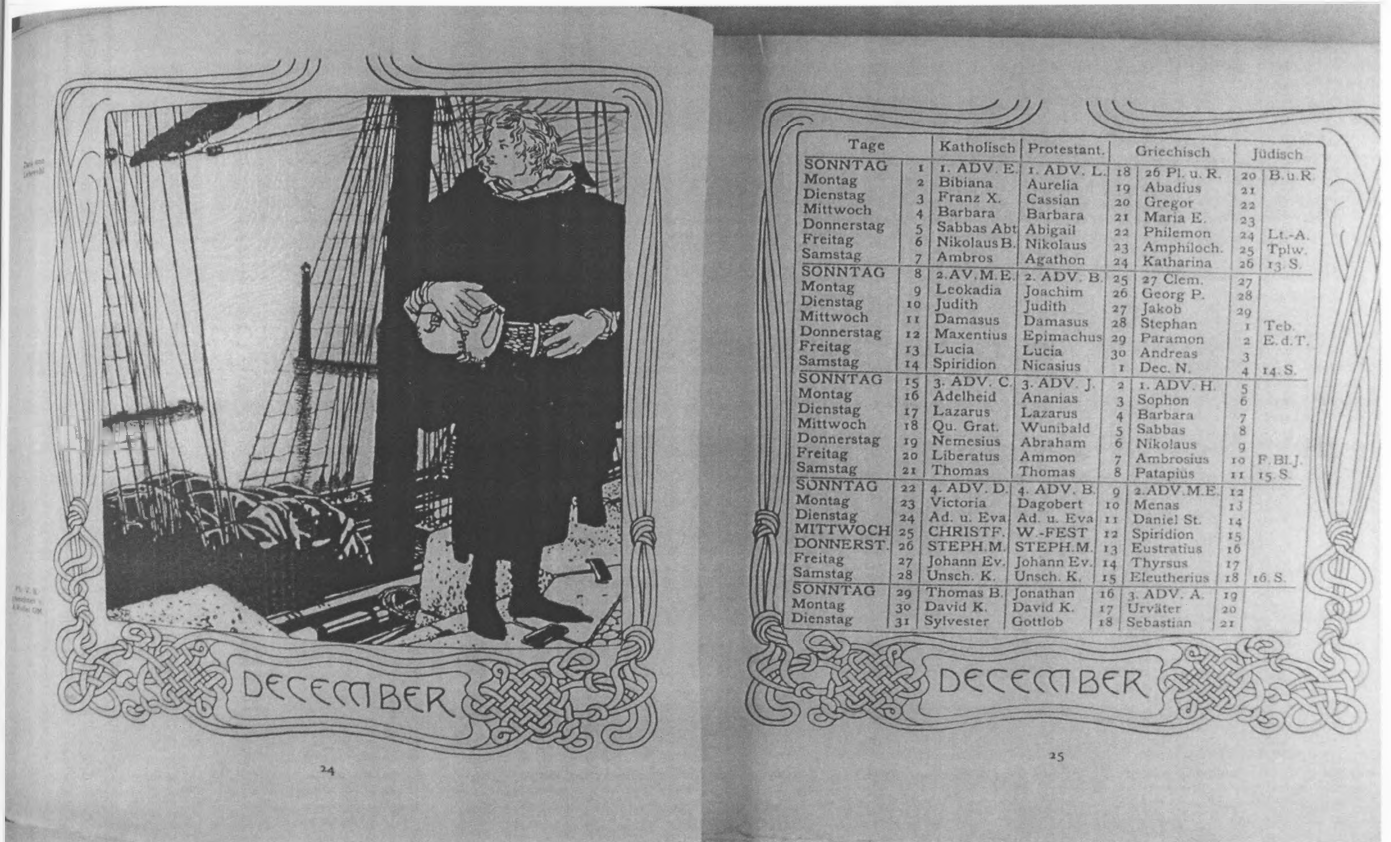
FIG. 143
20. 1.
L. Bauer
1906

[1.44] Calendar issue, *Ver Sacrum* Issue 1, Year 6 (January 1901), illustration for January, Gustav Klimt.

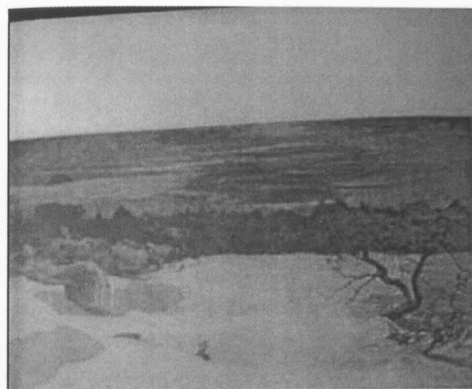


Tage	Katholisch	Protestant	Griechisch	Jüdisch
DIENSTAG 1	NEUJAHR	NEUJAHR	Bonifacius	10 F. B. J.
Mittwoch 2	Macarius	Abel, Seth	Qu. Ignac M.	11
Donnerstag 3	Genoveva	Enoch	Juliana	12
Freitag 4	Titus B.	Isabella	Anastasia	13
Samstag 5	Telephor	Simeon	12 Märtyrer	14 15 S.
SONNTAG 6	HEIL. 3 K.	ER. CHR.	4. ADV.	15
Montag 7	Valentin	Isidor	GEB. CHR.	16 Tekuf
Dienstag 8	Severinus	Erhard	M. GOTT.	17
Mittwoch 9	Judas	Martial	STEPH. M.	18
Donnerstag 10	Paul Eins.	Paul Eins.	1200 Mirt.	19
Freitag 11	Hyginus	Mathilde	Unsch. Kind.	20
Samstag 12	Ernestus	Reinhold	Annyla	21 16 S.
SONNTAG 13	1 EPIPH.	1 EPIPH.	McLania	22
Montag 14	Felix	Felix	1 JAHR 1901	23
Dienstag 15	Maurus	Maurus	Sylvester	24
Mittwoch 16	Marcellus	Marcellus	Malachias	25
Donnerstag 17	Anton E.	Anton E.	70 Apostel	26
Freitag 18	Priska	Priska	Theopomp.	27
Samstag 19	Carotus	Sara	ERSCHE. CH.	28 17 S.
SONNTAG 20	1 EP. N. J.	1 EPIPH.	1 Joh. d. T.	29
Montag 21	Agnes J.	Agnes	Georg Ch.	1 Scheb.
Dienstag 22	Vincenz	Vincenz	Polyucrus	2
Mittwoch 23	Maria V.	Emerentis	Gregor N.	3
Donnerstag 24	Timotheus	Timotheus	Theodosius	4
Freitag 25	Pauli Bek.	Pauli Bek.	Tatiana	5
Samstag 26	Polycarpus	Polycarpus	Herrnylus	6 18 S.
SONNTAG 27	3 EPIPH.	3 EPIPH.	2 Zacharias	7
Montag 28	Karl d. Gr.	Karl d. Gr.	Paul Th.	8
Dienstag 29	Franz Sal.	Valerius	Peter Kett.	9
Mittwoch 30	Martina	Adelgunde	Anton d. Gr.	10
Donnerstag 31	Petrus N.	Virgilius	Athanasius	11

[1,45] Ver Sacrum calendar issue, January 1901, illustration for December, Alfred Roller.



Tage	Katholisch	Protestant.	Griechisch	Jüdisch
SONNTAG	1. ADV. E.	1. ADV. L.	18	26 Pl. u. R.
Montag	2 Bibiana	Aurelia	19	Abadius
Dienstag	3 Franz X.	Cassian	20	Gregor
Mittwoch	4 Barbara	Barbara	21	Maria E.
Donnerstag	5 Sabbas Abt.	Abigail	22	Philemon
Freitag	6 Nikolaus B.	Nikolaus	23	Amphiloeh.
Samstag	7 Ambros	Agathon	24	Katharina
SONNTAG	8 2. ADV. M. E.	2. ADV. B.	25	27 Clem.
Montag	9 Leokadia	Joachim	26	Georg P.
Dienstag	10 Judith	Judith	27	Jakob
Mittwoch	11 Damasus	Damasus	28	Stephan
Donnerstag	12 Maxentius	Epimachus	29	Paramon
Freitag	13 Lucia	Lucia	30	Andreas
Samstag	14 Spiridion	Nicasius	1	Dec. N.
SONNTAG	15 3. ADV. C.	3. ADV. J.	2	1. ADV. H.
Montag	16 Adelheid	Ananias	3	Sophon
Dienstag	17 Lazarus	Lazarus	4	Barbara
Mittwoch	18 Qu. Grat.	Wunibald	5	Sabbar
Donnerstag	19 Nemesius	Abraham	6	Nikolaus
Freitag	20 Liberatus	Ammon	7	Ambrosius
Samstag	21 Thomas	Thomas	8	Patapius
SONNTAG	22 4. ADV. D.	4. ADV. B.	9	2. ADV. M. E.
Montag	23 Victoria	Dagobert	10	Menas
Dienstag	24 Ad. u. Eva	Ad. u. Eva	11	Daniel St.
MITTWOCHE	25 CHRISTF.	W.-FEST	12	Spiridion
DONNERST.	26 STEPH. M.	STEPH. M.	13	Eustratius
Freitag	27 Johann Ev.	Johann Ev.	14	Thyrus
Samstag	28 Unsch. K.	Unsch. K.	15	Eleutherius
SONNTAG	29 Thomas B.	Jonathan	16	3. ADV. A.
Montag	30 David K.	David K.	17	Urväter
Dienstag	31 Sylvester	Gottlob	18	Sebastian



GIOVANNI SEGANTINI
DIE WOLLÜSTIGE.

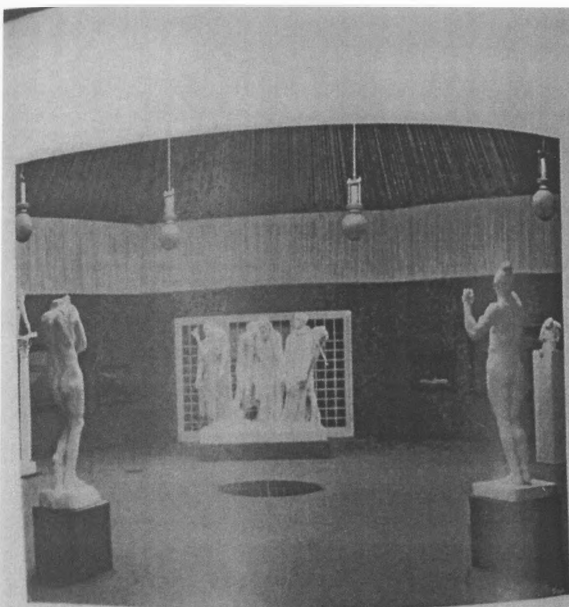
19



GIOVANNI SEGANTINI
SCHLECHTE MÜTTER.

20

[2. 1] Two paintings by Giovanni Segantini, 'Die wollüstige Mütter', 'Die schlechte Mütter', in *Ver Sacrum*, issue 5, Year 2 (May 1899).



IX. AUSSTELLUNG
© HAUPTSAAL ©
RODIN-SEGANTINI
RAUMGESTALTUNG
VON A. ROLLER OM.

76



IX. AUSSTELLUNG
© HAUPTSAAL ©
RODIN-SEGANTINI
RAUMGESTALTUNG
VON A. ROLLER OM.

77

[2.2] Photographs of the ninth 'Rodin-Segantini' Secession exhibition designed by Alfred Roller, in *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, (July 1901). The central room with single-line display of Segantini paintings, page 77.



[2.3] Front fascia, Breitenfelder church, Vienna, with mosaic above entrance designed by Alfred Roller, 1898, (author).

Verbindungen werden
 ... das viele neue Ideen giebt.
 Schrift, Litteratur, Industrie
 nehmen ungeheuren Auf-
 schwung. Der Buddhismus
 dringt ein. Priester
 ziehen von Stadt zu
 Stadt, zugleich als Träger
 der Kunst und Wissen-
 schaft.

Die erste japanische
 Malerschule ist daher
 die **BUDDHISTISCHE**.
 Ihre Denkmäler zeigen
 die Erhabenheit, Ruhe
 und Ziele dieser Reli-
 gion. Sorgfältige Tech-
 nik, Pracht des Beiwerks,
 tiefe Inbrunst der Auf-
 fassung zeichnen diese
 Epoche aus.

Es folgt das Zeitalter
 der Ritterlichkeit, des
 Adels und der Könige.
 Revolutionen zerreißen
 das Land. Die Epen-
 bildung setzt ein. Ihr Re-
 präsentant ist die **TOSA-
 SCHULE**; als Kunst der
 hohen Gesellschaft ver-
 leugert sie nie den vor-
 nehmen nationalen Cha-
 rakter, nie die Gross-
 artigkeit der Haltung.

Die dritte Periode
 setzt mit der **KANO-
 SCHULE** ein. Von China
 kommen bedeutende An-
 regungen, wiewohl

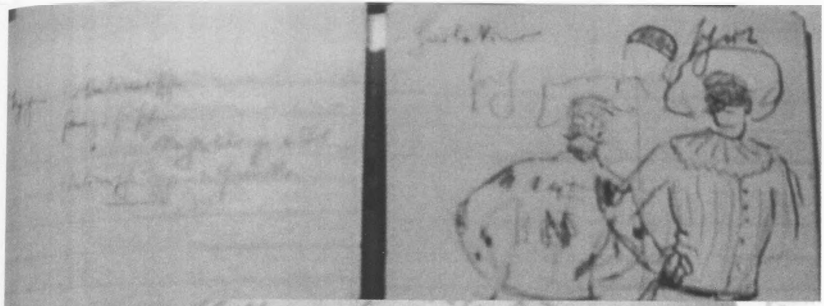
Landes man überhaupt in
 Japan viele Verehrung
 will der erste Maler gewesen sein,
 die alten Meister studiert. Der
 Masanobu (1424-1520) stellt die
 Verbindung von chinesischem und japa-
 nischem dar. Der berühmteste Vertreter
 ist Mutonabu, der Sohn des Vorigen
 der besondern Landschaft Hervor-
 ragende Kano-Schule vertritt die Schwarz-
 braune Bewegung von Schwarz-Braun.



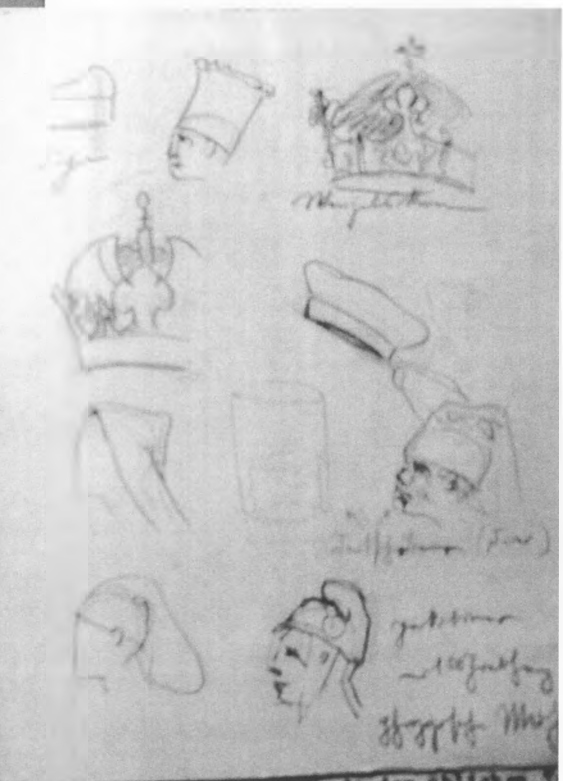
KINGAN-GREIFTE
 DES MITTEL-
 RAUMES MIT
 DEM ENTWURF
 ZU EINEM MO-
 SAIKOSCHÄLDE
 „BERGEBRUCH“
 VON ALFRED
 ROLLER.

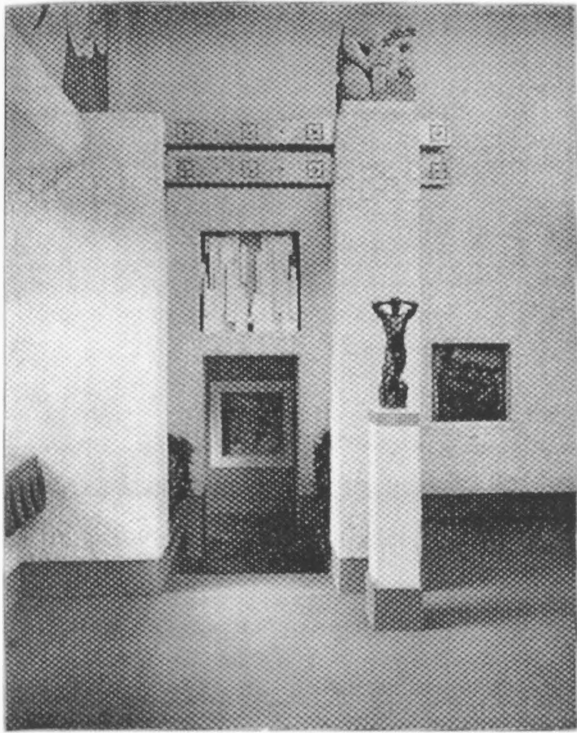
IV. AUSSTELLUNG DER VEREINIGUNG BILDENDER
 KÜNSTLER ÖSTERREICHS.

[2.4] Photograph, 4th Secession exhibition, showing Roller's design for the Breitenfelder Church, inset above the entrance to the central room, in Ver Sacrum, (May 1901).

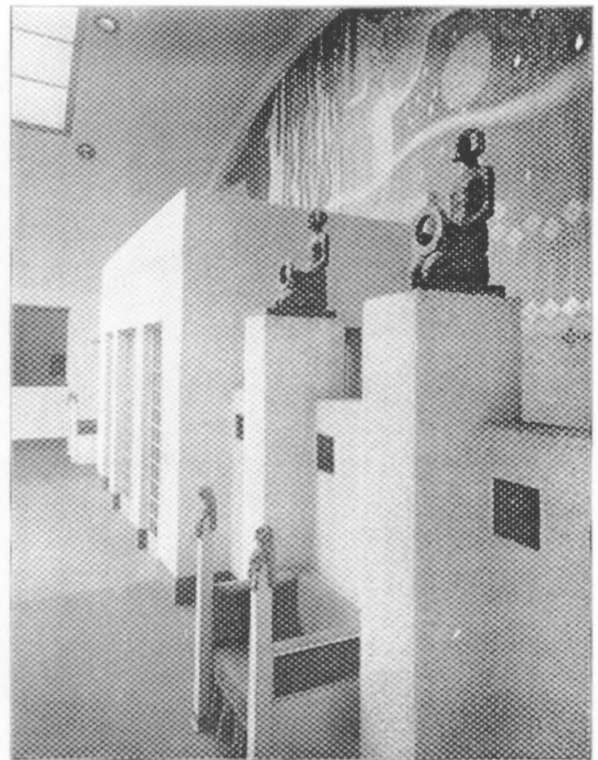


[2.5] Roller's notebooks showing costume and headdress sketches (ÖTM).





XIV. AUSSTELLUNG DER WIENER 'SECESSION' 1902.
RECHTE SEITEN-SAAL.
PORTAL VON JOSEF HOFFMANN - PFEILER-GRUPPUNG VON EDUARD SACHER.



XIV. AUSSTELLUNG DER WIENER 'SECESSION' 1902.
MITTEL-Raum
PFEILER-GRUPPUNG, KRANZ-TRÄGERINNEN VON EDUARD SACHER.

[2.6] 14th Secession 'Beethoven' exhibition,
April-June 1902, contemporary photographs,
Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration, X, I, 1902

teile nur immer notwendiger sich herausstellen und damit würde der Weg zur Stilbildung, d. h. das Ablassen vom Unwesentlichen, von Naturkünstelei sich eröffnen. Nichts verleidet mehr zum Zuviel, zur Übertreibung der Technik, als das schrille Weiß eines Materials. Durch künstliche Behandlung, durch Aufsuchen der einzelnen Zufälligkeiten im Gegenstand sucht der Bildhauer seinerseits zu einer Farbigkeit im einheitlichen Ton zu gelangen; meist auf Kosten seiner plastischen Empfindung.

DIESES GESAMTWIRKEN aller bildenden Künste entspricht dem, was Wagner in seinen musikalischen Dramen anstrebte und erreichte. Wir besitzen jenes noch nicht, und das, was davon aus vergangenen großen Epochen uns überkommen ist, haben anders denkende Zeiten meist verstümmelt oder zerrissen.

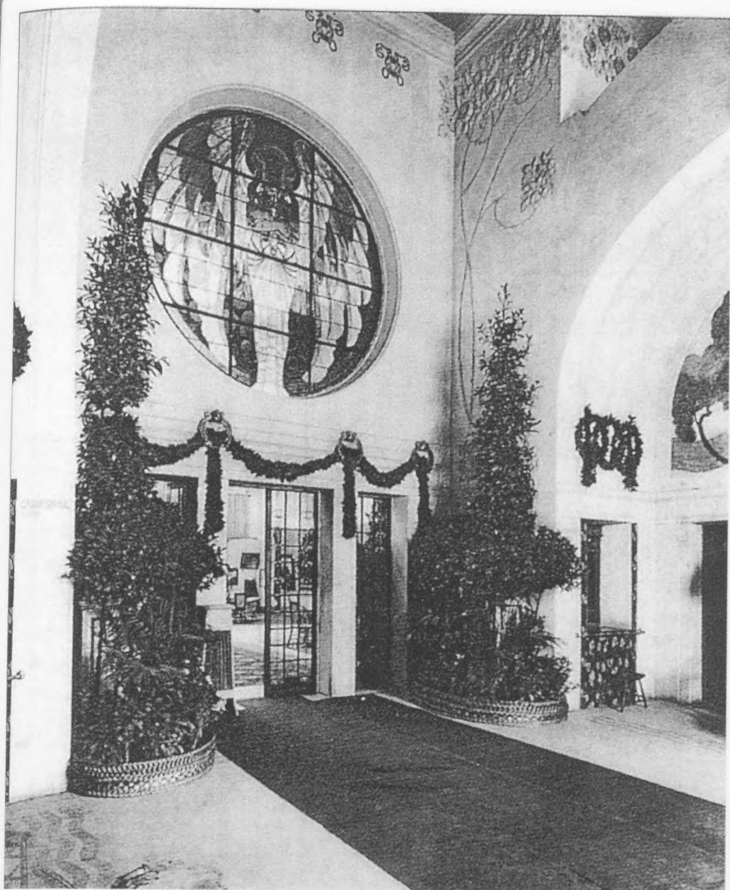


ORIGINAL-HOLZSCHNITT VON F. VON MYRBACH OM. BEETHOFEN-MONUMENT IN HEILIGENSTADT, WIEN.

[2.7] Pages from the *Max Klinger: Beethoven* exhibition catalogue, showing excerpts from Klinger's text, 'Malerei und Zeichnung' ('Painting and Drawing'), *Max Klinger: Beethoven XIV Ausstellung VBKÖ*, pages 2, 3, in facsimile ed., *Max Klinger: Beethoven XIV Ausstellung* (Wien: Wiener Bibliophilen, 1979).



[2.8] Max Klinger, studies for Villa Albers vestibule, Berlin (1883-1887), later featured in the 9th 'Rodin-Segantini' Secession exhibition, designed by Alfred Roller, in *Max Klinger 1857-1920*, ed. by Dieter Gleisberg et al, (1992), 239; inset photograph, Villa Albers, Berlin Steglitz, also in *Max Klinger 1857-1920*, 374, (courtesy Dieter Kluge, Espenhain).

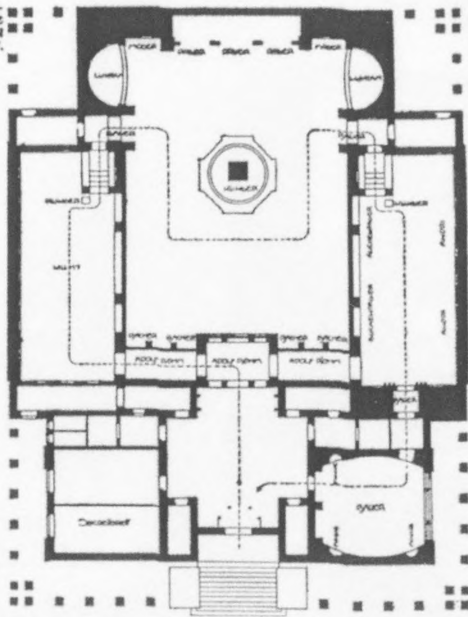


[2.9] Entrance hall, Secession Haus, featuring Moser's stained glass panel, view from entrance towards exhibition spaces through glass doors, 1898, and design, Koloman Moser for glass panel, in Bisanz-Prakken, *Heiliger Frühling*, 99, 107, (Moser 'Angel', courtesy MAK).

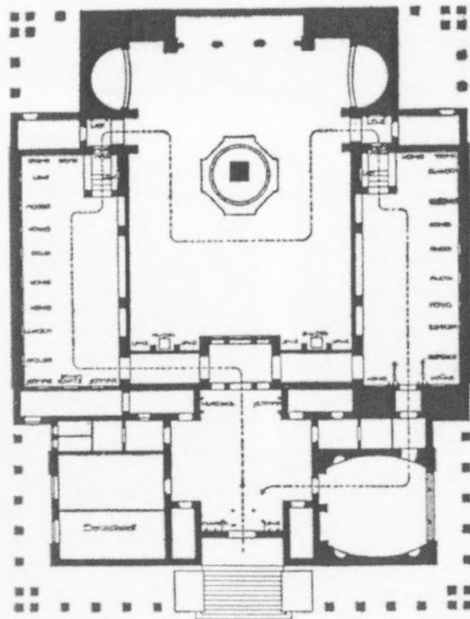


[2.10] Olbrich drawing of the Secession Haus, cover, Ver Sacrum, issue 1, year 2, (1899). (NAL, damaged).

ORIENTIERUNGS-
PLAN FÜR DIE
WANDMALEREIEN
UND PLASTIKEN.



ORIENTIERUNGS-
PLAN FÜR DIE IN
DIE WAND EIN-
GESETZTEN
SCHMUCKTAFELN.



[2.11] Floorplans, Max Klinger: *Beethoven XIV Exhibition*, *VBKÖ Ausstellung* catalogue, 1902, pages 2, 3, in facsimile ed. (Wien: Wiener Bibliophilen, 1979).



[2.12] Hoffman's interior design for the 'Klinger Room' ('Klinger Saal'), , displaying 'Christ on Olympus', (1897), 3rd Secession exhibition, 1899, photograph in Bisanz-Prakken, *Heiliger Fruhling*,



[2.13] 'Five Kneeling Youths' fountain, by George Minne, installed in a distinctive space, 8th Secession exhibition, 1900, designed by Koloman Moser, photograph in Bisanz-Prakken, *Heiliger Frühling*, 23



[2.14] Roller's vaulted central room, the 'Segantini Temple', for the 9th Secession 'Rodin-Segantini' exhibition, 1901, designed by Alfred Roller. Segantini's painting, 'Being' (*Sein*), remarked on by Hevesi, can be seen through the left-hand arch.



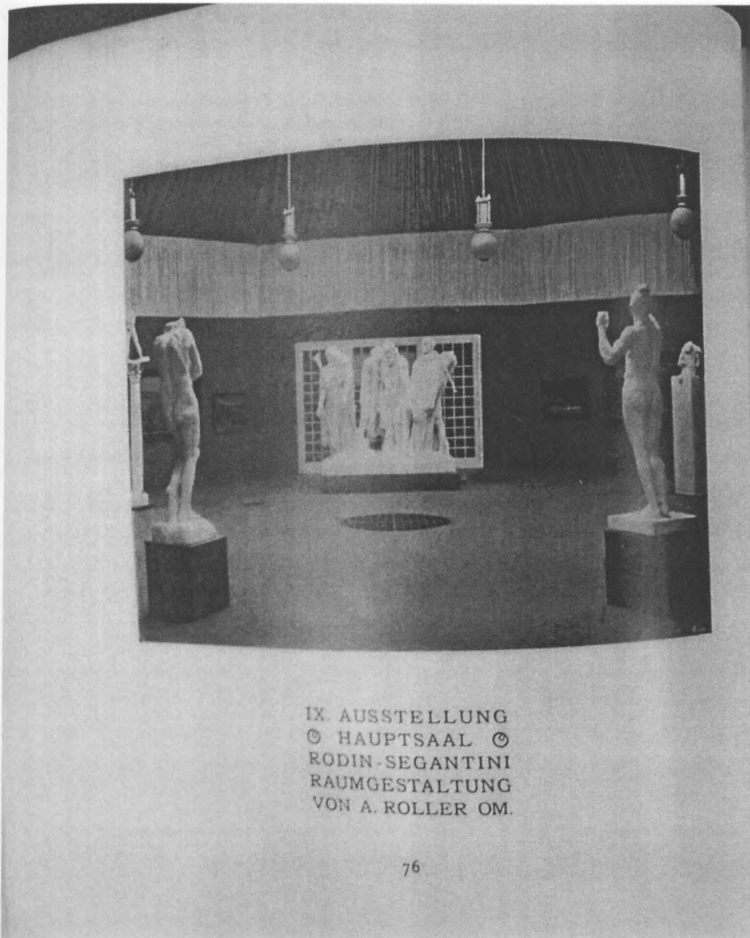
© NEUNTE ©
 AUSSTELLUNG
 KLINGER-SAAL
 RAUMGESTAL-
 TUNG VON ©
 A. KOLLER OM.



Fig. V. 8, 201-1
 K. Moser OM.

ZUR IX. Ausstellung drängen sich mir, wenn ich so den leer begeisterten oder nichtig tadelnden Leuten zuhören muss, einige Bemerkungen auf, die mir wichtig scheinen. Es kommt mir nämlich vor, dass man den eigentlichen Sinn unserer „Secession“ noch immer verkennt und deshalb noch immer kein richtiges Verhältnis zu ihrem Wirken finden kann. Um ihn aber darzulegen, werde ich freilich zuerst ein wenig ausholen müssen. © ©
 © Das Merkwürdigste in unserem Lande ist doch die Differenz zwischen seinen Kräften und ihren Leistungen. Wir dürfen wohl von uns sagen, dass wir an Talenten heute auf keinem Gebiete hinter den anderen Nationen zurückbleiben. Wir müssen aber auch sagen, dass wir an Leistungen auf allen Gebieten von den anderen beschämt werden. Betrachten wir die Begabungen, die sich in den letzten hundert Jahren bei uns gezeigt haben, in der Politik.

[2.15] The Klinger room, a semi-octagonal structure, displaying the Villa Albers studies. The floor was laid with petal-shaped cut-outs, 9th Secession exhibition, photograph in *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7, 1901.



[2.16]The interplay of sculpture and painting in Roller's 'temple-like' spaces, 9th Secession 'Rodin-Segantini' exhibition, photograph in *Ver Sacrum*, issue 7 (July 1901).



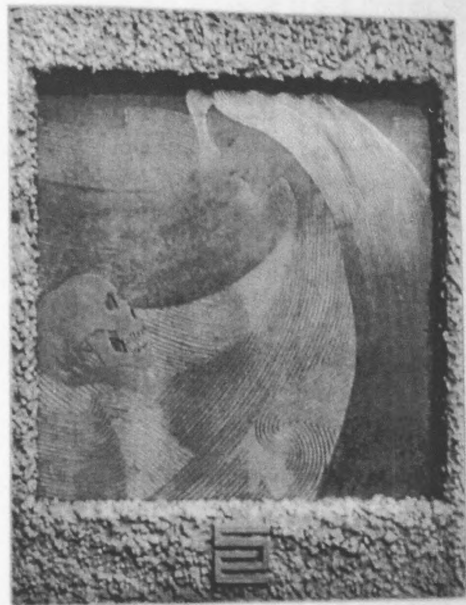
[2.17] A view of the *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, right-hand, or third, room, with square apertures onto the central hall housing the *Beethoven* sculpture, showing murals and sculptured reliefs



[2.18] The public encountered the previously unimagined: Max Klinger, 'Beethoven Monument', ('Beethoven Denkmal'), 1902, (rep. in *Max Klinger 1857-1920*, ed. by Dieter Gleisberg et al, (1992), page).



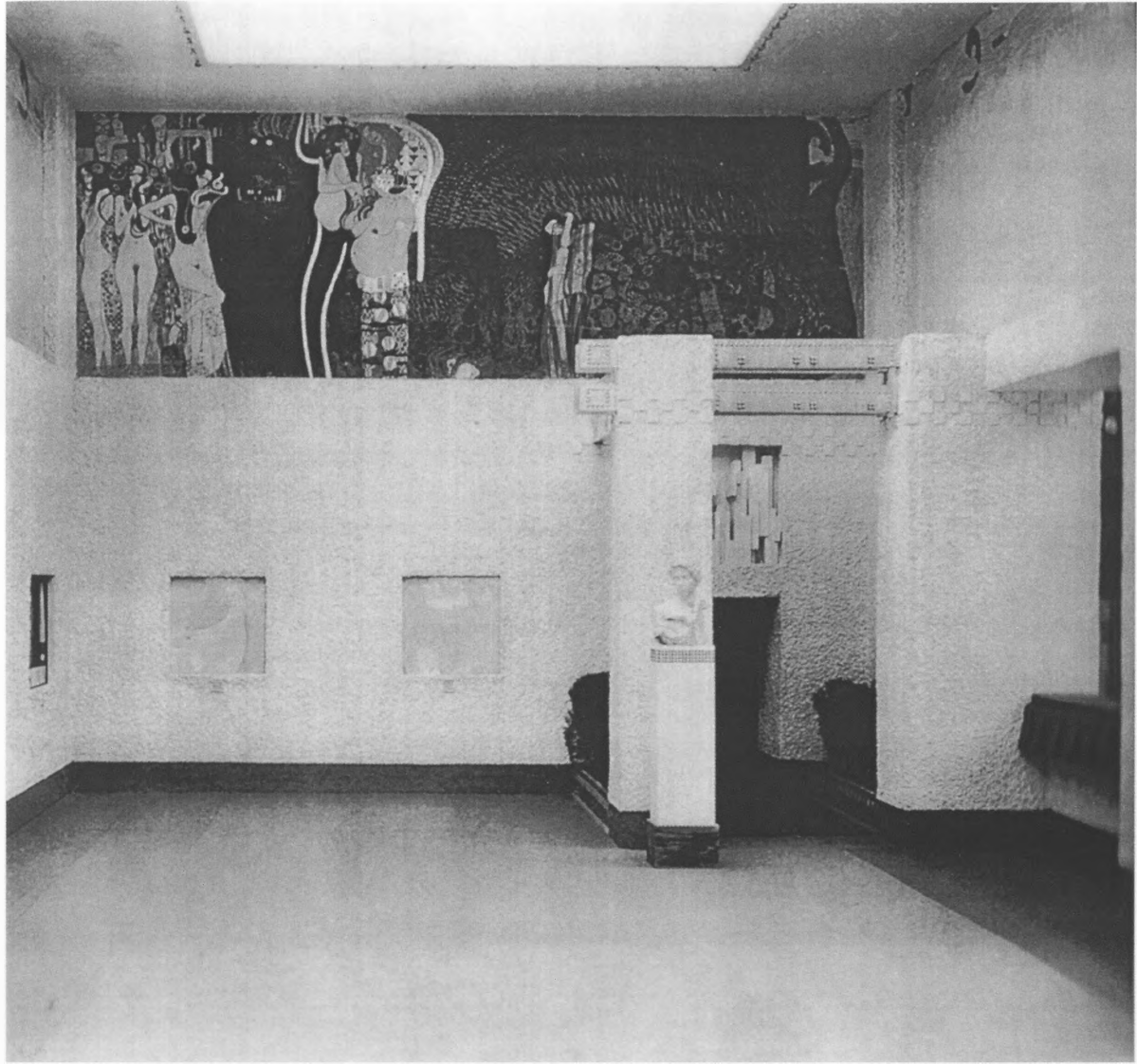
XIV. AUSSTELLUNG DER WIENER SECESSION 1902.
ERNST STÖHR: «VANITAS». RELIEF IN BRONZEFARBENEM GIPS.
INSTAURIERTE AUS BEWAHRTEM ORIGINAL.



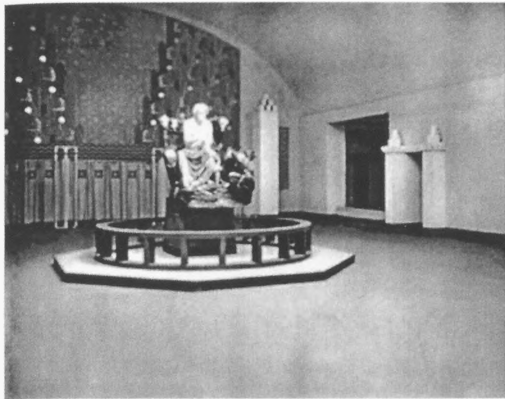
XIV. AUSSTELLUNG DER WIENER SECESSION 1902.
ERNST STÖHR: «WIEB». GIPSFARBENES ORIGINAL.

[2.19] Nietzsche's words are suggestive of the Secession exhibition wall reliefs.

Contemporary photographs: 'Vanitas' by Ernst Stöhr (left-hand page), rep. in 'XIV Ausstellung der VBKÖ, Secession Wien', *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, 5, 10 (July 1902).



[2.20] The 'Klimt room', *Klinger: Beethoven* exhibition, 1902, contemporary photograph.

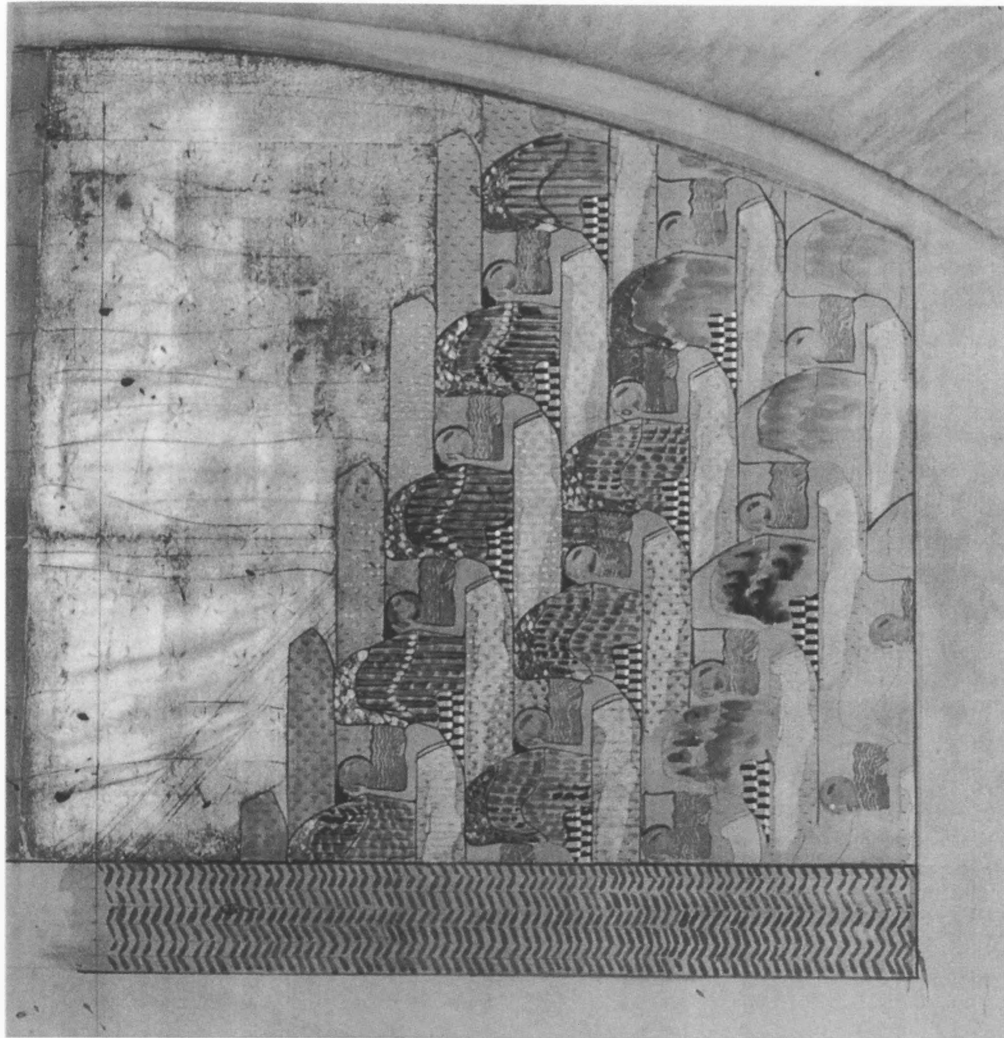


[2.21] The *Klinger:Beethoven* monument, central room, *Klinger:Beethoven* exhibition, 1902, (inset showing octagonal dias), contemporary photographs, *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* X, (July, 1902).





[2.22] View from behind the *Beethoven* monument to the second mural, 'Dawning Day', facing 'Sinking Night', by Alfred Roller, behind monument, contemporary photograph.



[2.23] Design for
'winged maiden'
mural, Alfred
Roller for
Klinger:Beethoven
exhibition, 1902.
Source:ÖTM.

Rechter Seitensaal.



Endigung des gemauerten Pfeilers beim Eingang:
RUDOLF BACHER OM.
Mörtelschnitt.

[2.24] Page 20, Max Klinger: Beethoven catalogue, Wilhelm List monograph with a tribute to Beethoven, an excerpt from Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata'.

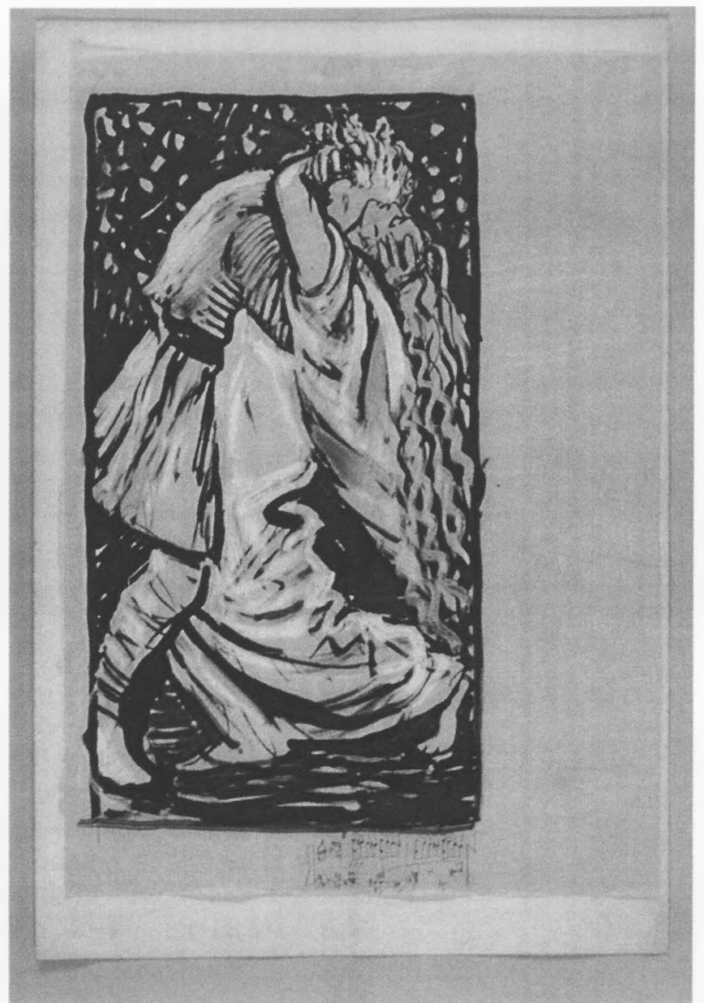
Im rechten Seitensaal sind folgende Schmuckplatten in die Wand eingesetzt: Beim Eingange an der Stiegenwange:



ADAGIO SUSTENUTO



WILHELM LIST OM. Bemalter u. vergoldeter Stuck.



[3.1] Impressions of the figures of *Tristan and Isolde*, black and white pen, ink and pastels, paper mounted on board, series of nine, c. 1902-1903, (AR), (ÖTM). Musical excerpts are from Act Two. The first, the phrase 'Frau Minne will...'; the second, two bars immediately before their dialogue, 'Bist du Mein...'. (see Thursby, 'Gustav Mahler: Alfred Roller', 118-131 for analysis of musical fragments).



$\frac{4}{4}$ - 5 | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

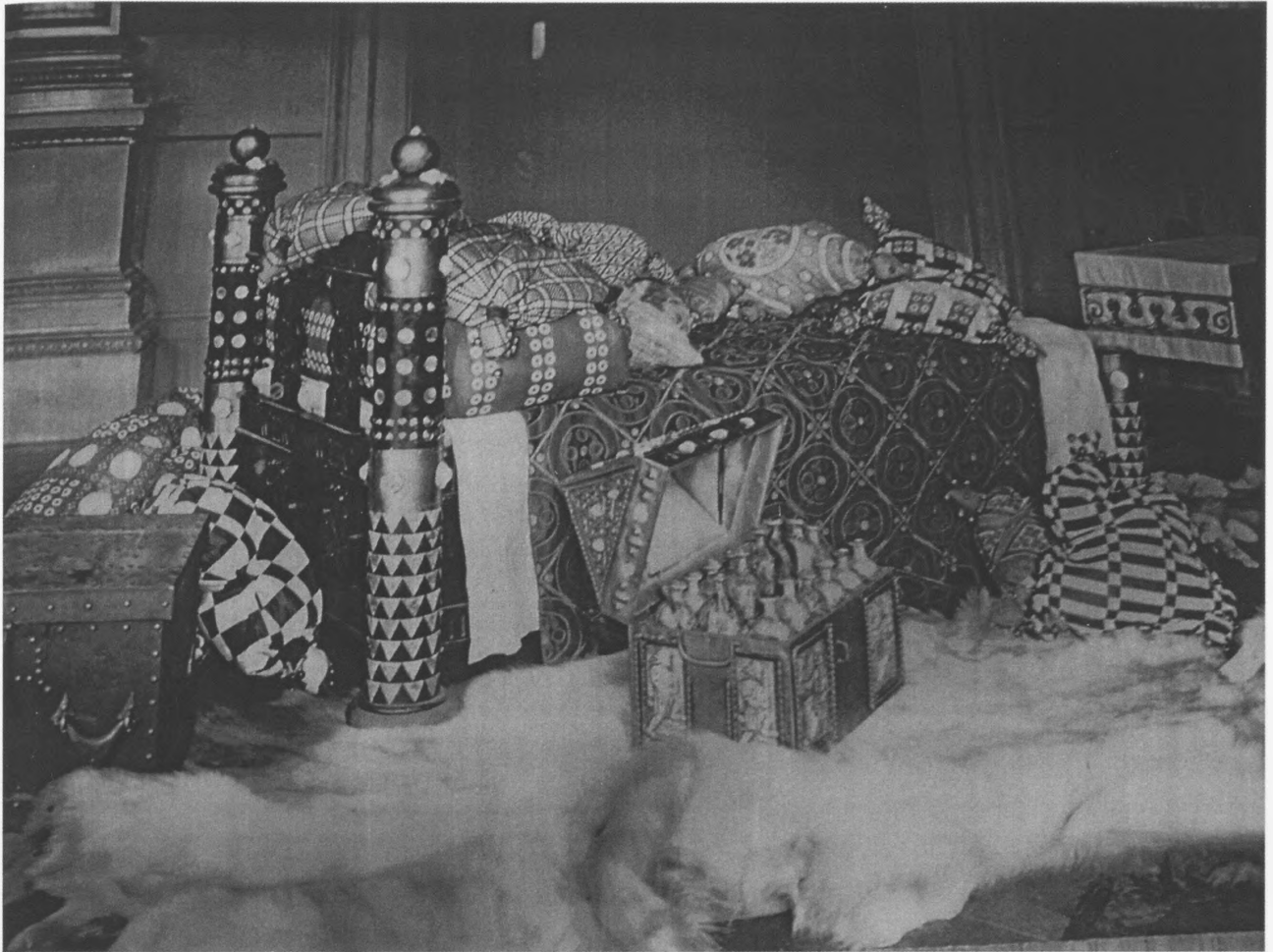


$\frac{2}{2}$ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

[3.1] Impressions of the figures of *Tristan and Isolde*, black and white pen, ink and pastels, paper mounted on board, with musical excerpts, series of nine, AR, c 1902 -1903, Act One, *Tristan and Isolde* (ÖTM)



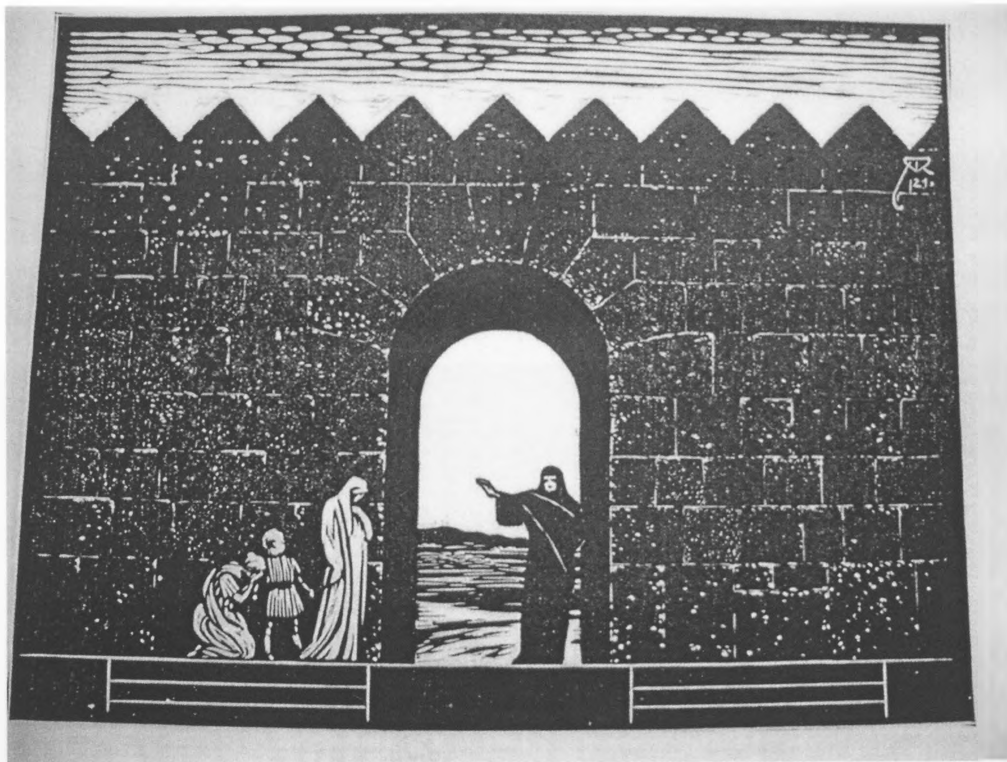
[3.2] Impression of Isolde, 'Frau Minne, will...', Act Two, *Tristan and Isolde*, AR, c. 1902-3, (OTM).



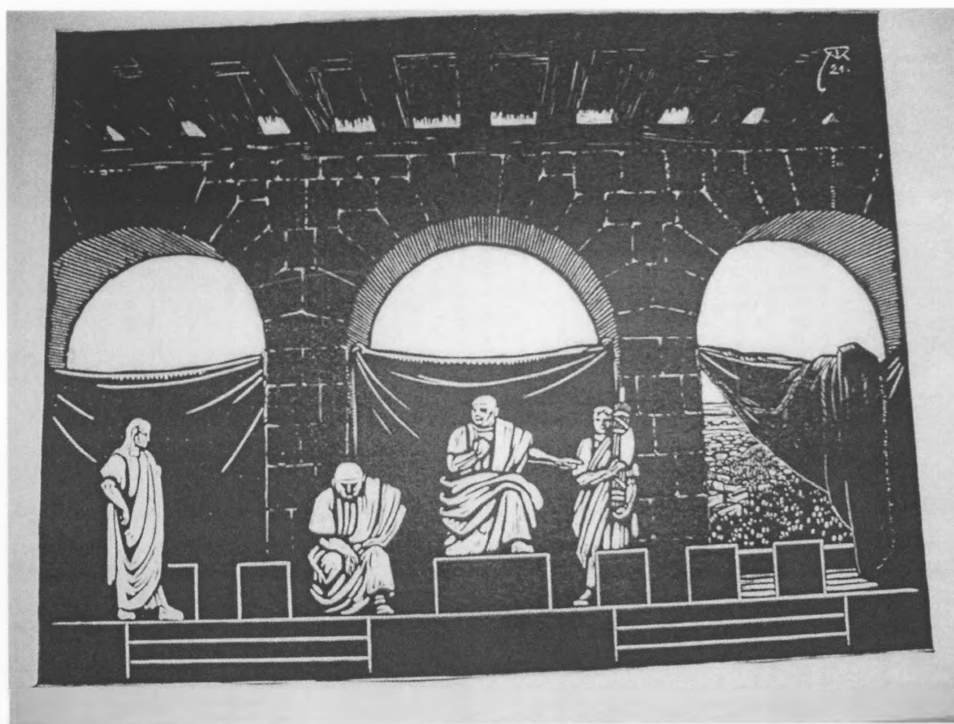
[3.3] Photograph (detail), Act 1, *Tristan and Isolde*, 1903 production, Gustav Mahler:AR, Vienna Court Opera showing Isolde's casket and other scenic accessories in distinctive Roller-style prefiguring the Wiener Werkstätte (ÖTM photographic archive).



[3.4] Stage-design painting, 'Faninal Palace', Act One, *Der Rosenkavalier* (AR), ÖTM.



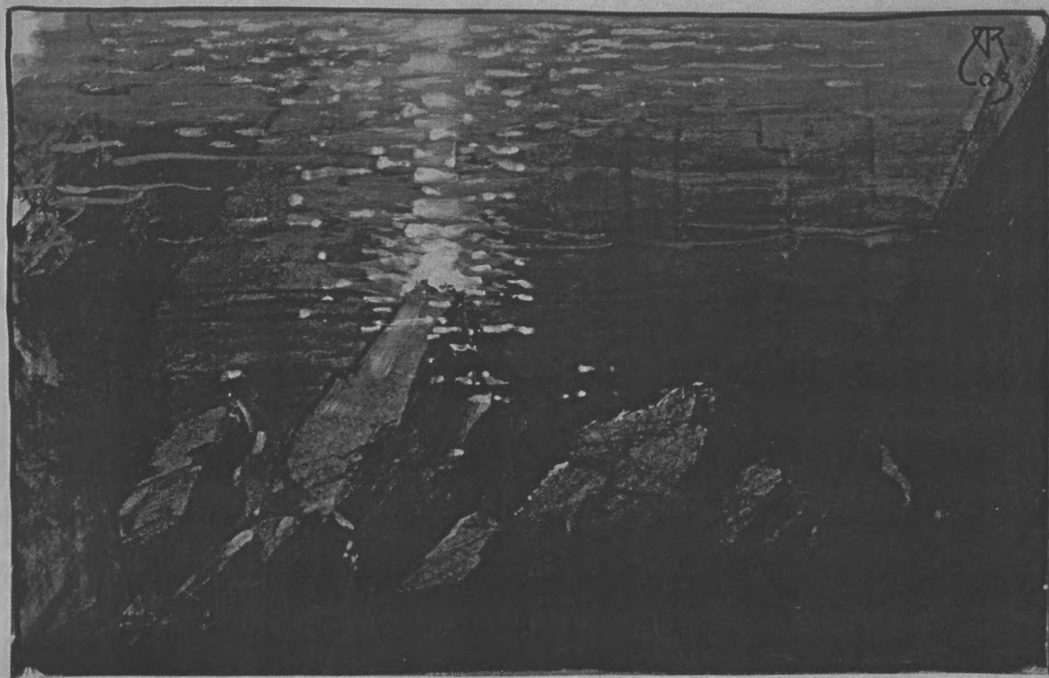
[3.5] Stage-design etchings, *Coriolanus*, AR (1921).



[3.5] Stage-design etchings, *Coriolanus*, AR (1921).

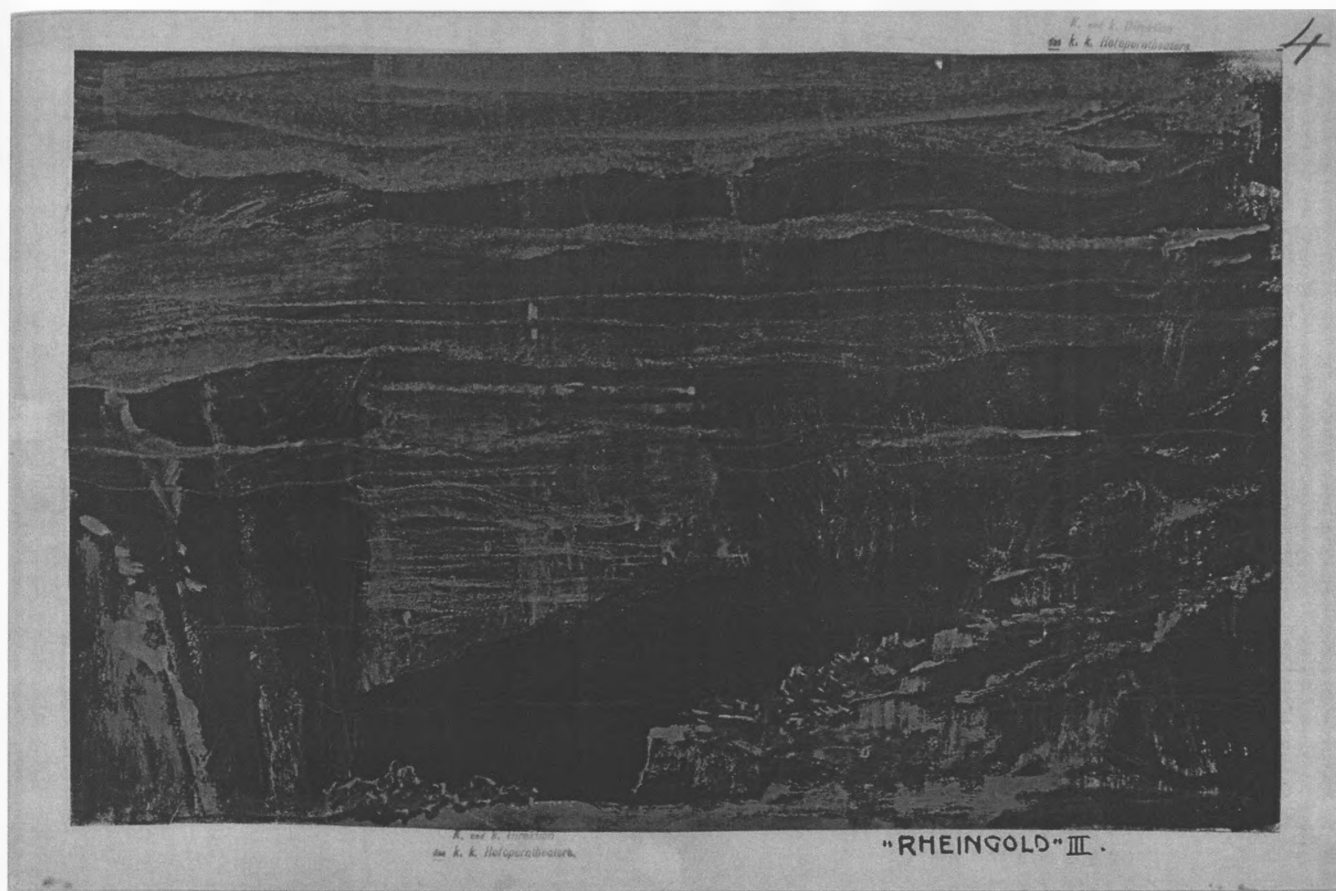


36] Stage-design paintings, 'Beginning and End', Act Two, *Tristan and Isolde*, AR (1902).

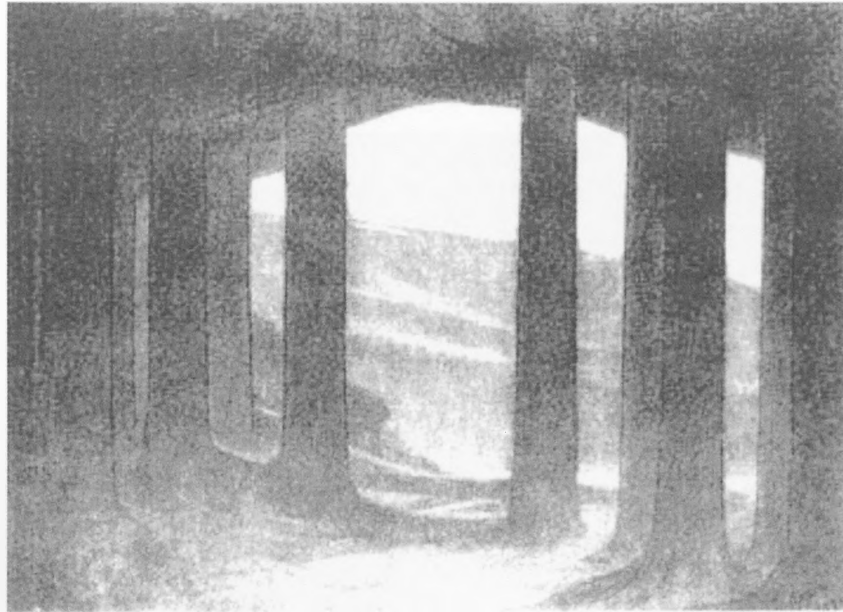


DAS GOLD BEGINNT ZU ERGLÄNZEN. "RHEINGOLD" I.

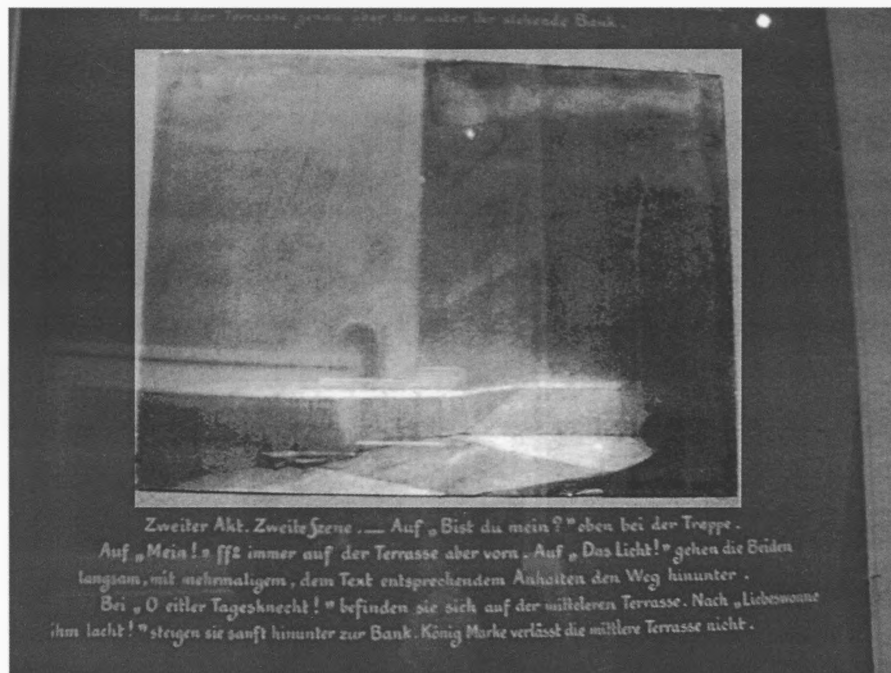
[3.7] Stage-design painting, 'Das gold beginnt zu erglänzen', scene 1, *Das Rheingold*, AR, (1903).



[3.8] Stage-design painting, scene 3, *Das Rheingold*, AR (1903).



[3.9] 'Parsifal', stage-design impression, Adolphe Appia (c.1896);



[3.9] *Tristan und Isolde*, Act Two, stage design impression, Adolphe Appia, c. 1899 (author's photograph, Scénographie et modernité: dessins du Genevois Adolphe Appia (1862-1928), Maison Tavel, Geneva, June-August 2008

H. v. K. Direktor
des k. k. Hofoperntheaters...

2

AR
04



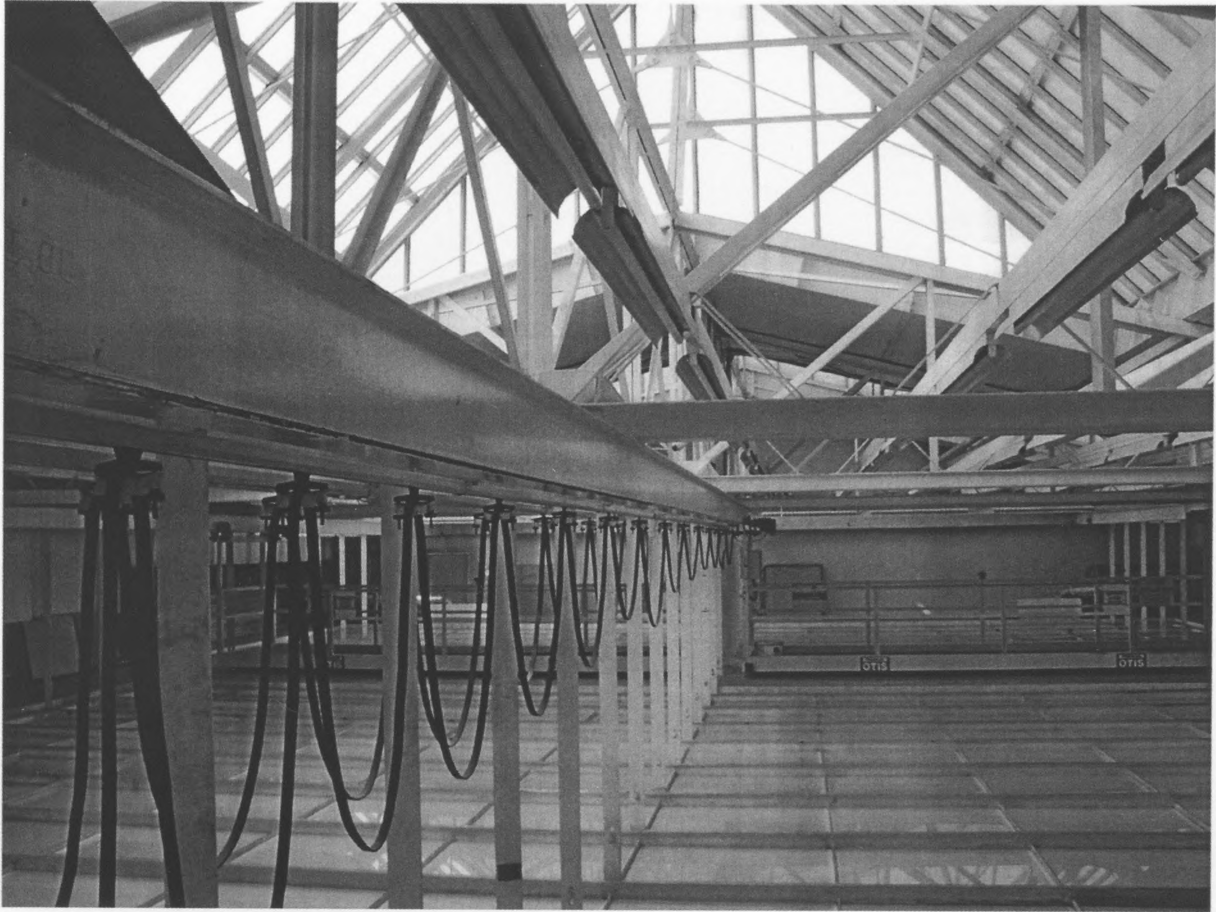
K. v. K. Direktor
des k. k. Hofoperntheaters.

„RHEINGOLD“ I.

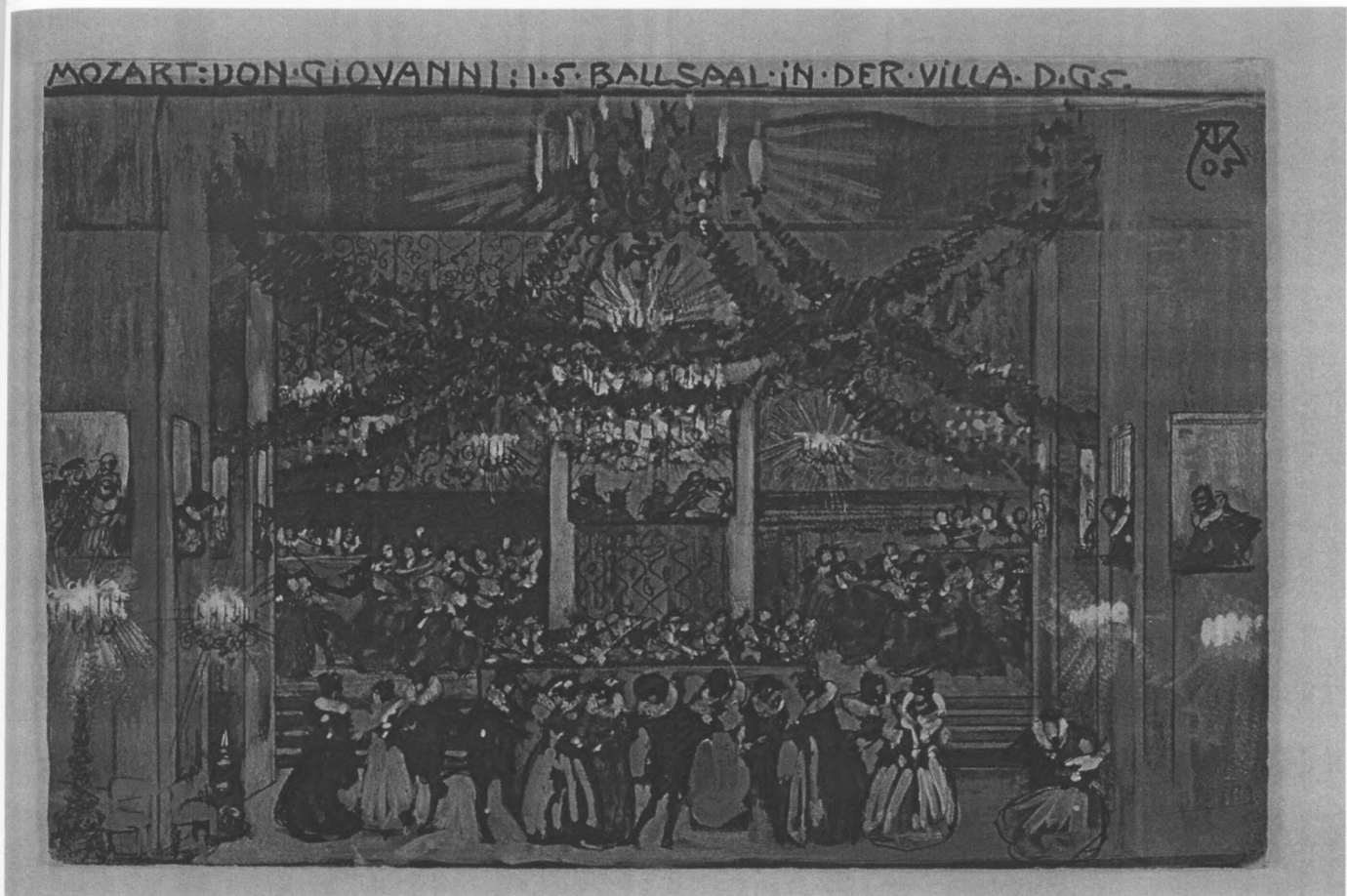
[3.10] Stage-design painting, scene 2, *Das Rheingold*, AR, (1904).



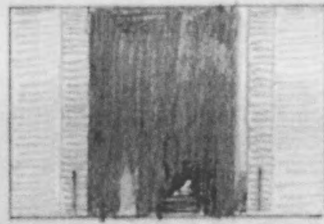
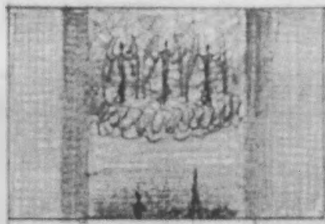
[3.11] 'Landschaft in Südtirol', AR, 1891, oil on canvas, rep. M Wagner, *Alfred Roller* (1996), 119, source: ÖTM



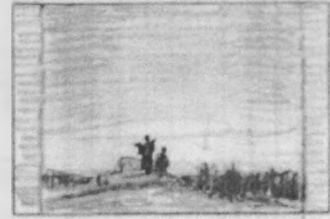
[3.12] Interior roofscape of *Secession Haus*, Vienna, showing skylights, author photograph, 2008, courtesy Secession Haus.



[3.13] Stage-design painting (AR, 1905), *Don Giovanni*, Act One, scene 5, showing 'Roller's Towers', illuminated, source: ÖTM



GOETHE
 FAUST-I.
 1.
 HIMMEL-FAUST-
 STUBE-SPAZIER-
 GANG-AUERBACH-
 KELLER-HEXENK:



F. d.



1	Großg im Himmel	120	Feilen sind
2	Faustzimmer Nacht	480	
	Vor dem Tor		⌘
3	Sandtröge	100	
	Verwandlung	50	
4	Unter der Linde	62	
	Verwandlung	11	
5	Am Raab-Stein	180	
6	Faustzimmer, Nacht	380	⌘
7	Städtische Tag	570	
8	Auerbacher Keller	300	?
9	Hexenküche	300	?

1.	Aufzug sind	3000 Feilen
2.	"	1372 "
3.	"	900 ?

[3.14 a, b, c] Stage-design vignettes, mounted on three boards, (AR, 1906), Faust Part One, source: ÖTM.

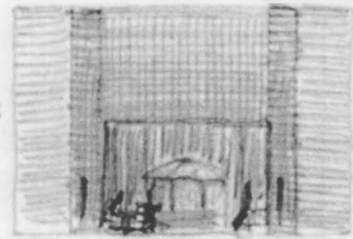


STRASSE



Gretchen

ST.



Marthe

ST

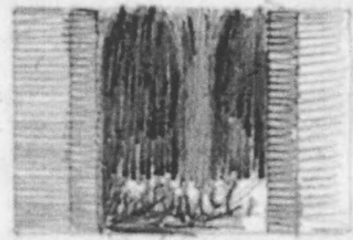


GARTEN

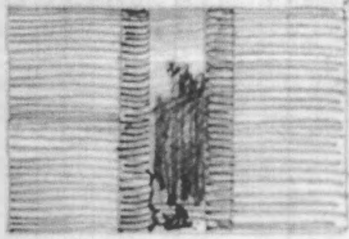


Wald & Höhle

9 St.
9 St.
9 St.
1 St.



Dom



Zwinger

GOETHE · FAUST · DER TRAG: ERSTER · TEIL.

2. STRASSE - GRETCHENS · STU-
BE - MARTHENS · STUBE -
- MARTHENS · GARTEN - WALD
UND · HÖHLE - ZWINGER -
DOM.

10	Strasse (Achtzig Jahre Straßenscene)	76	Zeilen sind
11	Gretchenstube (Achtzig Jahre Gretchenstube)	154	
12	Strassenabgang (Achtzig Jahre Straßenscene)	62	
13	Marthens Stube (Achtzig Jahre Marthensstube)	170	
14	Strasse (Abgang) (Achtzig Jahre Straßenscene)	50	
15	Garten (Achtzig Jahre Garten)	200	
16	Wald & Höhle (Achtzig Jahre Wald & Höhle)	170	
17	Gretchenstube (Achtzig Jahre Gretchenstube)	36	

18	Garten (Achtzig Jahre Garten)	140	Zeilen sind
19	Strasse (Dom) (Achtzig Jahre Straßenscene)	50	
20	Zwinger (Achtzig Jahre Zwinger)	33	
21	Strasse, Nacht (Achtzig Jahre Straßenscene)	170	
22	Dom (Achtzig Jahre Dom)	60	



Waldstück mit einer Bergwand
- im Mittelgrund ein großer Baum



Im Wald eine Bergwand
- im Mittelgrund ein großer Baum



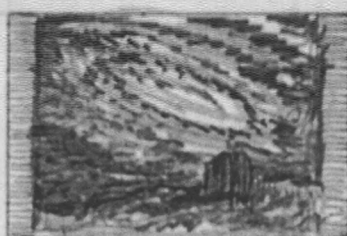
Ein weites Tal
- im Vordergrund ein großer Baum



Ein weites Tal
- im Vordergrund ein großer Baum



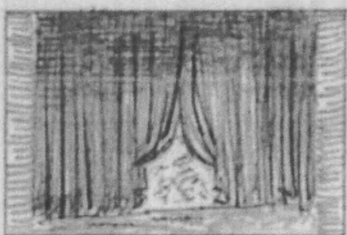
Ein weites Tal
- im Vordergrund ein großer Baum



Ein weites Tal
- im Vordergrund ein großer Baum



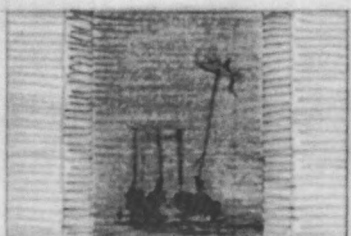
Ein weites Tal
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Ein weites Tal
- im Vordergrund ein großer Baum



Ein weites Tal
- im Vordergrund ein großer Baum



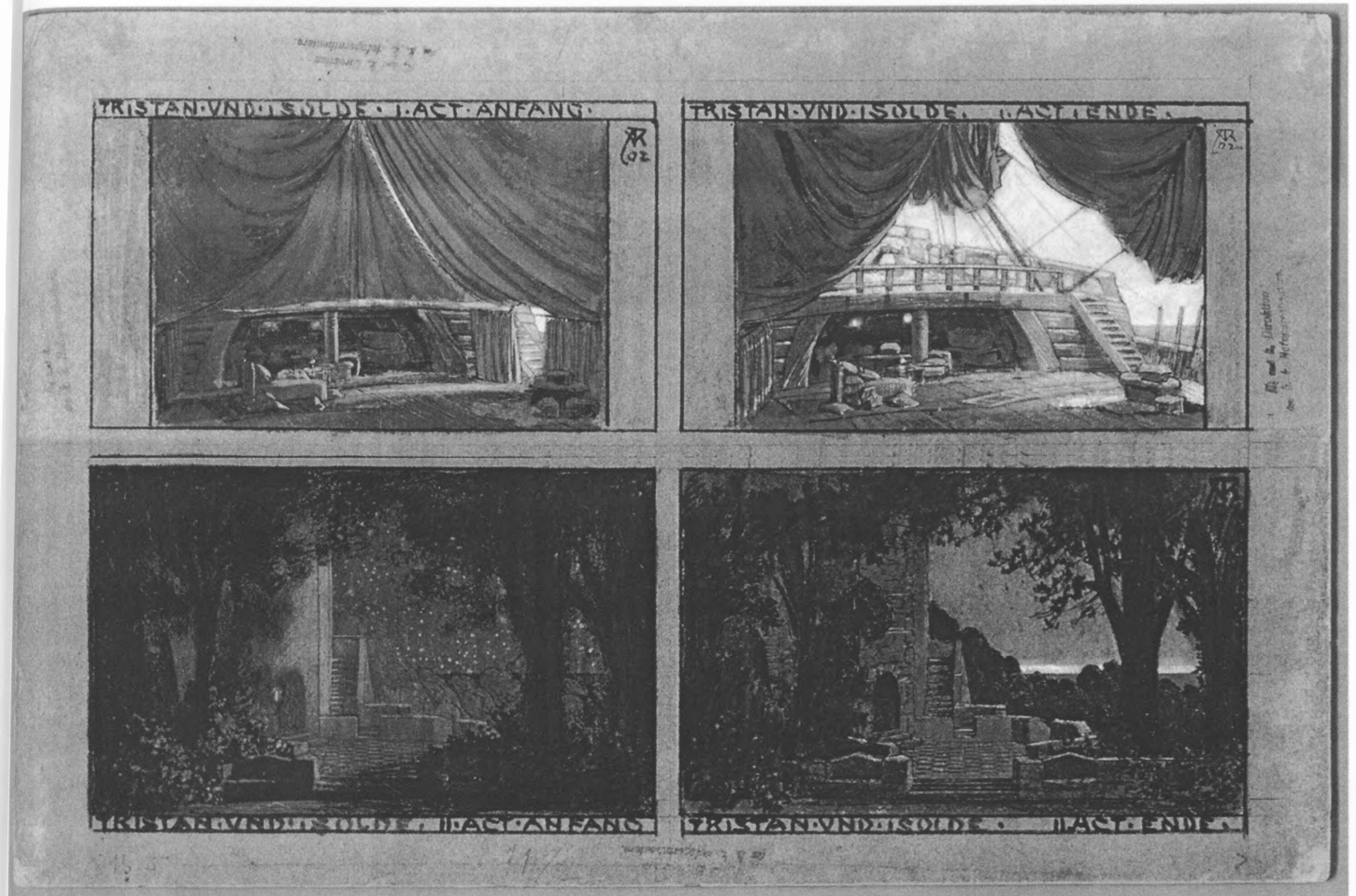
Ein weites Tal
- im Vordergrund ein großer Baum



Ein weites Tal
- im Vordergrund ein großer Baum

GOETHE
FAUST I.
WALPURGIS =
NACHT 1 - 8
FELD/RÜBER
TAG - RABEN =
STEIN-KERKER

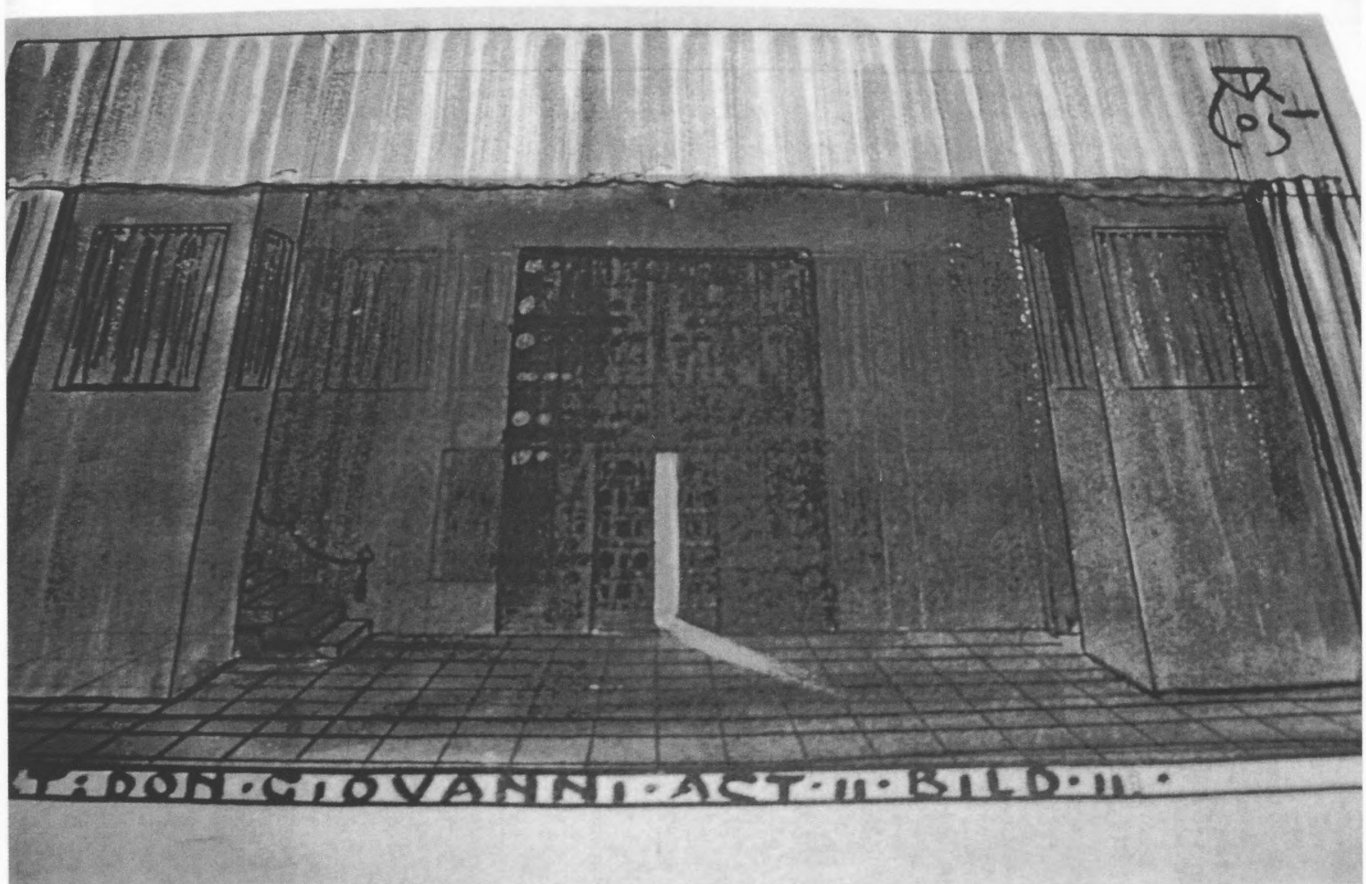
23 bis 30 Walpurgisnacht 600² feilen stud
31 Trüber Tag - Feld 70
32 Rabenstern 4 Φ
33 Kerker 230



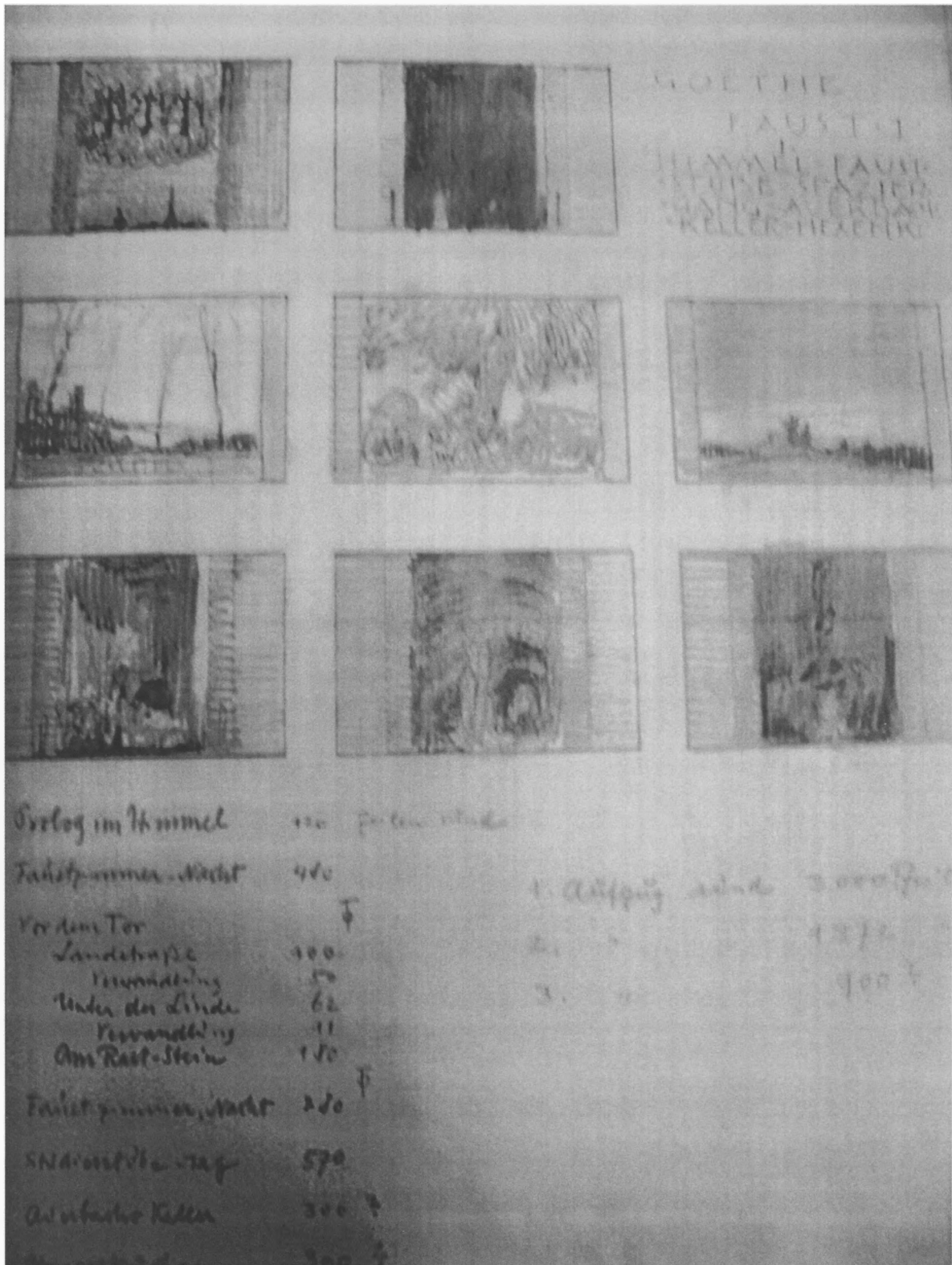
[3.15] Stage-design paintings (AR, 1902), 'Beginning and End',
Acts One and Two, Tristan and Isolde, source: ÖTM



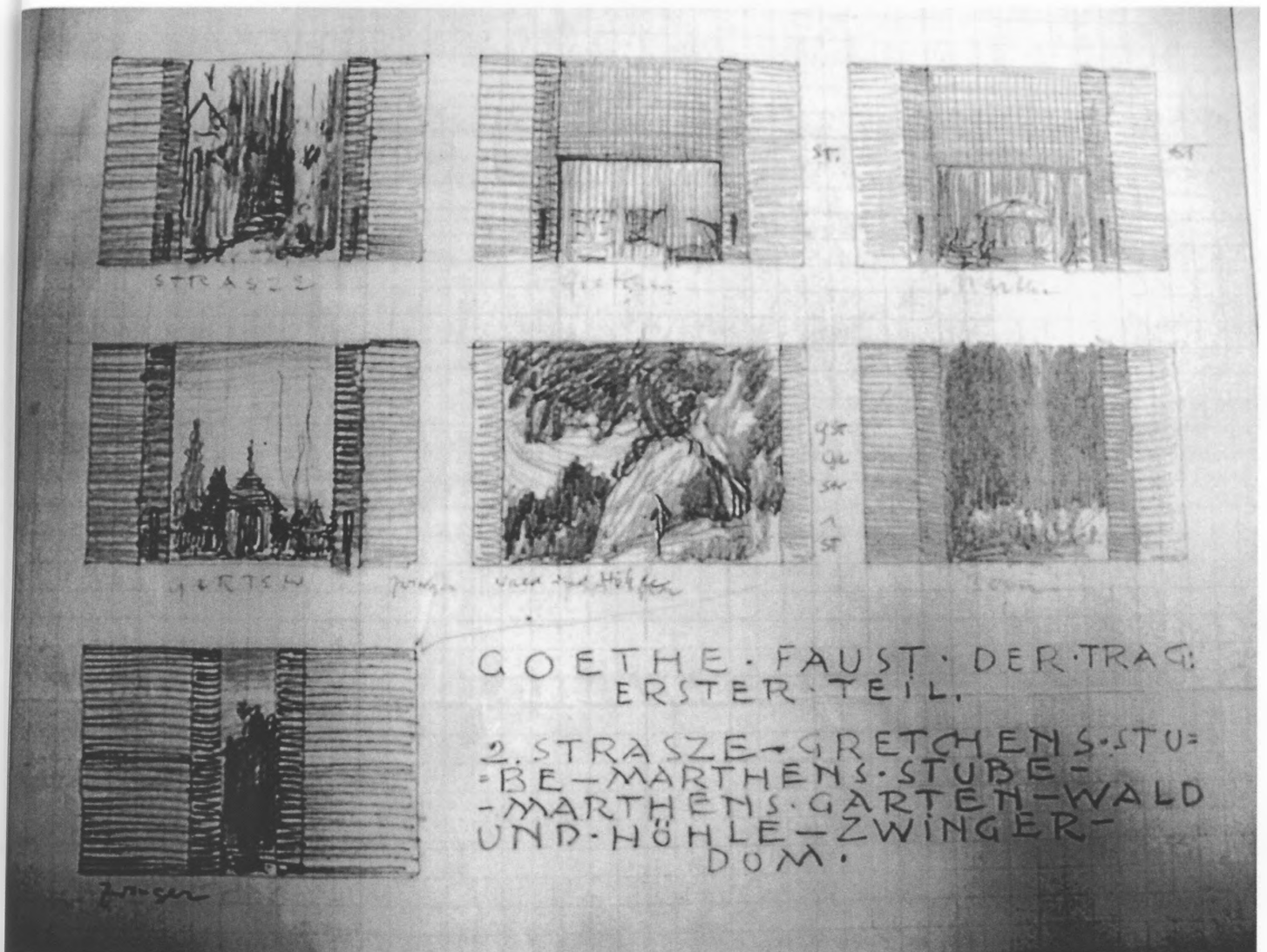
[3.16] Stage-design painting, Don Giovanni, Act One, scene 4, AR, 1905, showing 'Roller Towers', source: ÖTM.



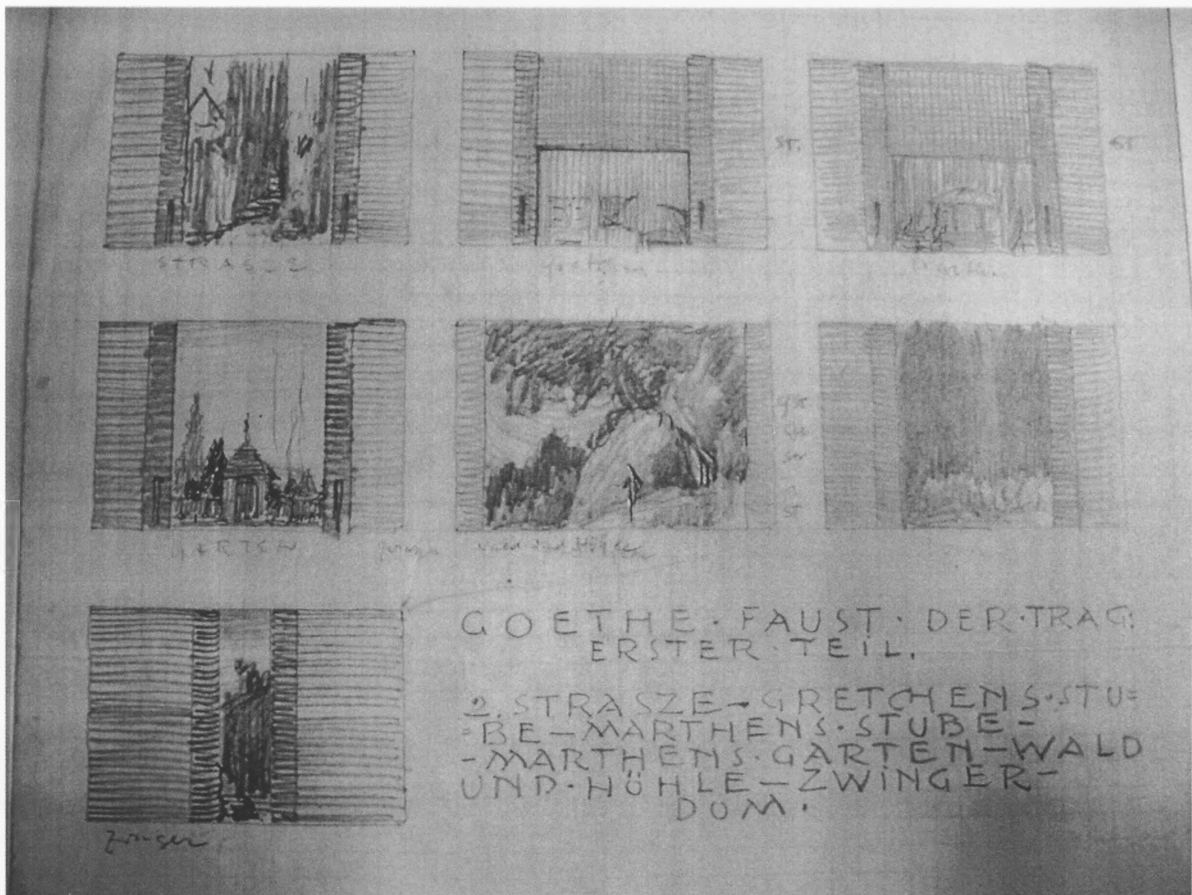
[3.17] 'Then a gate opens and a dazzling crack of light streaks through' (Ludwig Hevesi). Stage-design painting (AR, 1905), *Don Giovanni*, Act Two, scene 2, source: ÖTM.



[3.18] Stage-design vignettes, (AR, 1906), 'Erste Teil', Prolog in Himmel ...', (author photograph), source ÖTM.



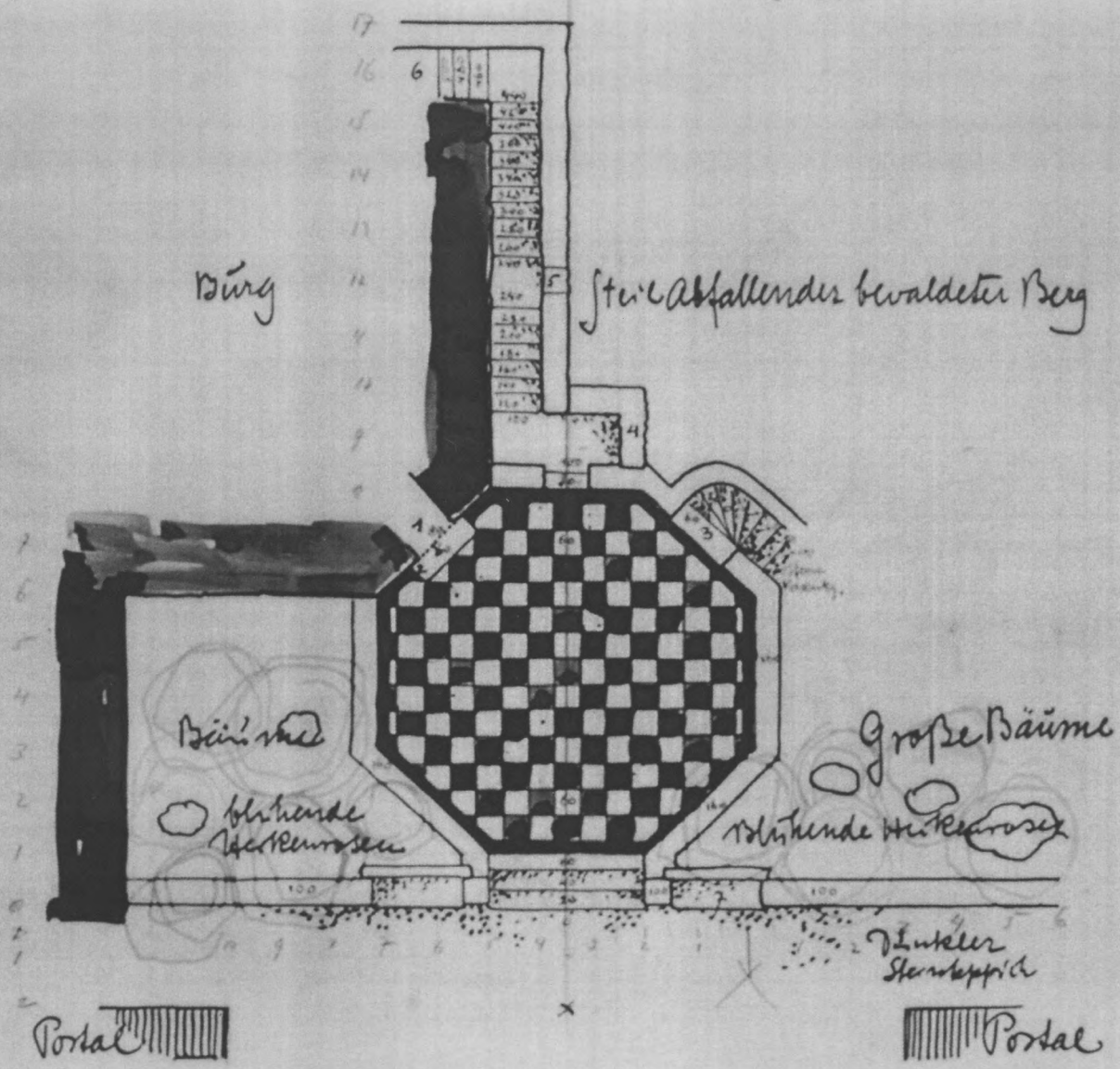
[3.19] Stage-design vignettes, Goethe Faust, 'Erste Teil, Strasse, Gretchen's Stube ...', AR, 1906 (author photograph) source: ÖTM.



[3.20] Stage-design vignettes, Goethe Faust, 'Erste Teil, showing 'Am Rast Stein', AR 1906, (author's photograph), source: ÖTM.

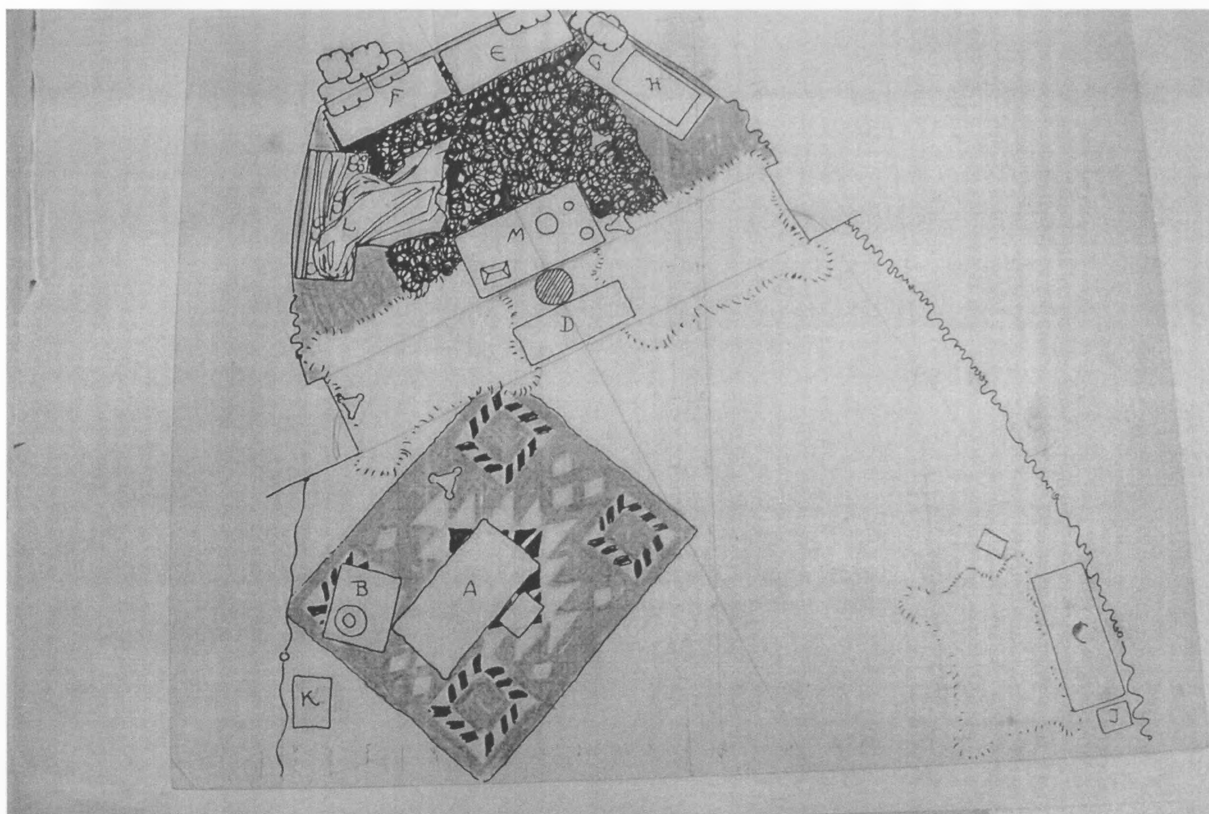
Tristan, 2. Aufzug. Wien 1903. Roller. 1cm = 1m

Streu-Pindhorizont
Nur



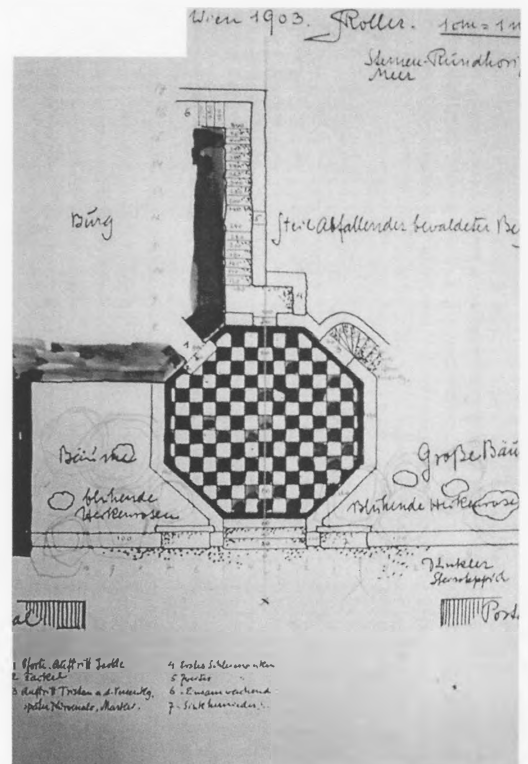
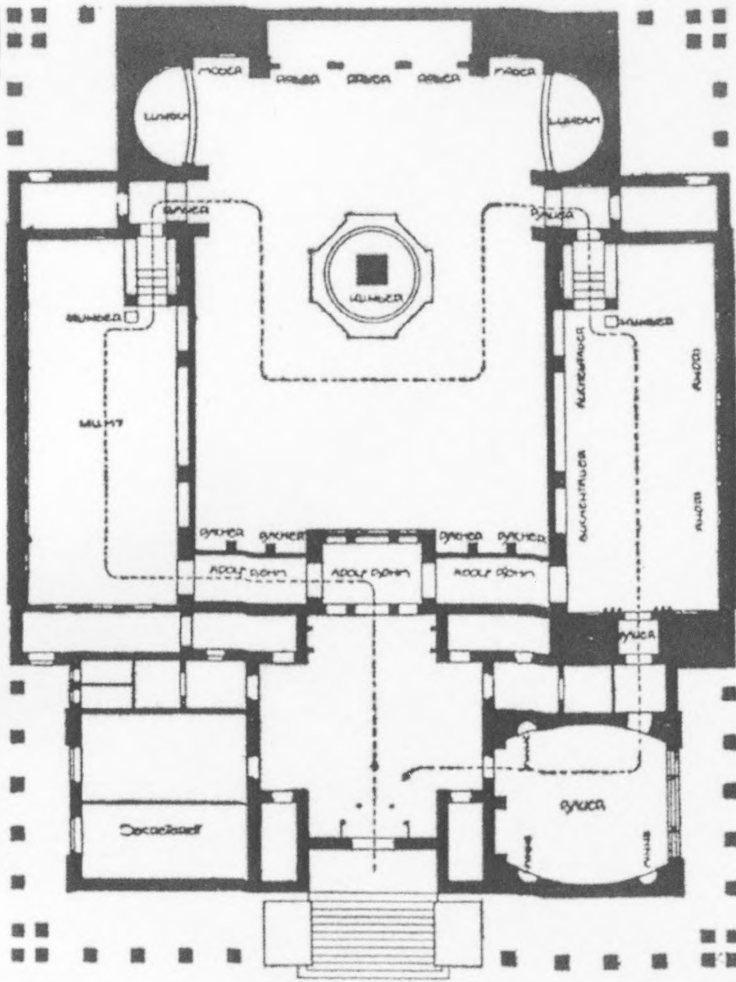
- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Hofe. Austritt Isolle | 4. Erstes Schloßwinkeln |
| 2. Fackel | 5. Fackel |
| 3. Austritt Tristan a. d. Fensterlg.
später Kronleuchte, Markier. | 6. Ensemble vordend ... |
| | 7. Sitzkissen vordend ... |

[3.21] Stage groundplan for Act Two, Tristan and Isolde, hand-drawn, ink on squared paper, (AR, 1903).



[3.22] Stage groundplan for Act One, *Tristan and Isolde*, hand-drawn, pencil and ink on squared paper (AR, undated).

ORIENTIERUNGS-
PLAN FÜR DIE
WANDMALEREIEN
UND PLASTIKEN.



[3.24] Contiguous spaces: stage groundplan for *Tristan and Isolde*, 1903; floor-plan for Fourteenth Secession 'Klinger: Beethoven' exhibition, 1902, showing octagon dais for Klinger Beethoven monument, and octagon garden area to concentrate the movement of Tristan and Isolde for the love scene, Act Two.