Koloman Moser, who was born in Vienna in 1868 and signed most of his work as “Kolo”, was one of the driving forces behind this publication, chairing, it was probably at Moser’s suggestion.

He was one of the founding members of the Vienna Secession, for which he designed an official letterhead and logo. When Secession members decided, during the group’s first general meeting, to launch their own magazine, it was probably at Moser’s suggestion.

Quand, durant la primera reunió general del grup, els membres de la Secession van decidir llançar una revista pròpia, el candidat ideal per dissenyar els bitllets de banc i els segells emesos pel Govern austriac-hongarès. Va entendre que la publicitat servia com a vehicle per fer arribar les aspiracions del moviment al públic general, majoritàriament va atraure l’interès d’una elit de lectors. Tanmateix, de la seva intenció de ser artista fins que no va haver aprovat l’originalitat de les solucions van decidir llançar una revista pròpia, per a la qual va dissenyar una capçalera per a cartes i un logotip. Quan, durant la primera reunió general del grup, els membres de la Secession van decidir llançar una revista pròpia, l’artista propi, Stefan Sacrama, va ser simplement per iniciativa de Moser, que fou una de les forces al capdavant d’aquesta publicació, va presidir el comité encarregat de produïn-la i va col·laborar amb cent quaranta obres al llarg dels sis anys d’existència de la revista. Malgrat les esperances del comité, que la publicitat servia com a vehicle per fer arribar les aspiracions del moviment al públic general, majoritàriament va atraure l’interès d’una elit de lectors. Tanmateix, de la seva intenció de ser artista fins que no va haver aprovat l’originalitat de les solucions van decidir llançar una revista pròpia, per a la qual va dissenyar una capçalera per a cartes i un logotip. Quan, durant la primera reunió general del grup, els membres de la Secession van decidir llançar una revista pròpia, l’artista propi, Stefan Sacrama, va ser simplement per iniciativa de Moser, que fou una de les forces al capdavant d’aquesta publicació, va presidir el comité encarregat de produïn-la i va col·laborar amb cent quaranta obres al llarg dels sis anys d’existència de la revista.

The Tireless Seeker for Total Art

Koloman Moser was an artist of wide-ranging talents and thus, more than almost any of his peers, he was ideally equipped to shape the development of the Gesamtkunstwerk, or “total work of art”, created by artists and designers in Vienna around 1900. In all the disciplines he practised, whether graphic design, interior design, the decorative arts or painting, Moser created outstanding works characterised by his markedly punctiform language.

Moser, who was born in Vienna in 1868 and signed most of his work as “Kolo”, took drawing lessons while still a schoolboy, without telling his parents, and did not inform them of his intention to become an artist until he had passed the entrance examination to Vienna’s art school, the Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, in 1885. His parents, who were initially sceptical, supported his ambitions, but following the death of his father, Moser was forced to finance his studies by working as an illustrator for local magazines. This venture proved so successful that he was soon supplying drawings to clients in Germany as well as Austria.

From that point on, Moser established an increasing number of contacts in the art world, forging friendships with Gustav Klimt and the architect Josef Hoffmann. He became a founding member and leading proponent of the Vienna Secession, for which he designed an official letterhead and logo. When Secession members decided, during the group’s first general meeting, to launch their own magazine, Ver Sacram, it was probably at Moser’s suggestion. He was one of the driving forces behind this publication, chairing it was probably at Moser’s suggestion. He was one of the driving forces behind this publication, chairing a weekly which was regarded as the most innovative periodical in Europe.

Unfortunately, forty years pass quickly, and the only way to prolong them is to work hard all your life.”

Koloman Moser, 1917

a weekly which was regarded as the most innovative periodical in Europe.

Stefan Kutzenberger
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Un artista polifacètic i de gran enginy creatiu

L’única manera de prolongar-los és treballant dur tota la vida."

Koloman Moser, 1917

“Malauradament, quaranta anys passen de pressa, i l’unica manera de prolongar-los és treballant dur tota la vida.”

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Pel que fa a la Secession, Kolo Moser va produir dissenys avantguardistes en consens amb l’espai arquitectònic per a les exposicions més vistes que va organitzar el grup. En una època en què el concepte del comissari d’exposicions encara no existia, Moser treballava meticulosament per trobar la millor ubicació per a cada quadre, decorava les parets per crear ambients i efectes i dissenyava peces de mobiliari especials per a cada exposició, com les anomenades butaques Purkersdorf per a la mostra de Gustav Klimt de 1903. L’exposició de Ferdinand Hodler de 1904 fou un èxit rotund en gran mesura gràcies a les arts decoratives de qualitat, cosa que acabaria portant Moser a fundar els Wiener Werkstätte (Tallers Vienesos) el 1903, amb l’arquitecte Josef Hoffmann i l’industrial Fritz Waerndorfer. L’objectiu d’aquest col·lectiu d’artistes visuals era integrar l’art i el disseny d’una manera organitzada. Seguint els exemples d’Escòcia i Anglaterra, la taula va utilitzar els arts decoratius de les cotilles de la producció fàbrica i convertí la vida en una obra d’art mitjançant l’estetització dels objectes quotidians. Una de les primeres empreses que va aprofitar els talents de Moser va ser la manufactura tèxtil Johann Backhausen und Söhne. En només quatre anys, Moser va dissenyar entre tres-cents i quatre-cents estampats de teles i catifes nuades a mà.

Quan contemplam l’obra de Moser, resulta sorprenent observar la gran varietat de materials que va integrar en els seus dissenys, així com l’existència del seu enigme. El desitg d’imbruèr d’art cada aspecte de la vida es va anar estendent cada vegada més i va comportar un augment de la demanda d’arts decoratives de qualitat, cosa que acabaria portant Moser a fundar els Wiener Werkstätte (Tallers Vienesos) el 1903, amb l’arquitecte Josef Hoffmann i l’industrial Fritz Waerndorfer. L’objectiu d’aquest col·lectiu d’artistes visuals era integrar l’art i el disseny d’una manera organitzada. Seguint els exemples d’Escòcia i Anglaterra, la taula va utilitzar els arts decoratius de les cotilles de la producció fàbrica i convertí la vida en una obra d’art mitjançant l’estetització dels objectes quotidians. Una de les primeres empreses que va aprofitar els talents de Moser va ser la manufactura tèxtil Johann Backhausen und Söhne. En només quatre anys, Moser va dissenyar entre tres-cents i quatre-cents estampats de teles i catifes nuades a mà.

Koloman Moser fou considerat, amb raó, un “artista-mil”, ja que no tenia rivals amb raó, un “artista-mil”, ja que no tenia rivals. El seu mobiliari per a interiors privats i per a pisos senyors va ser especialment ben acollit. En el seu intent de “dar l’art a la vida”, va col·laborar amb l’arquitecte Josef Hoffmann, que compartia idees similars. Quan contemplam l’obra de Moser, resulta sorprenent observar la gran varietat de materials que va integrar en els seus dissenys, així com l’existència del seu enigme. El desitg d’imbruèr d’art cada aspecte de la vida es va anar estendent cada vegada més i va comportar un augment de la demanda d’arts decoratives de qualitat, cosa que acabaria portant Moser a fundar els Wiener Werkstätte (Tallers Vienesos) el 1903, amb l’arquitecte Josef Hoffmann i l’industrial Fritz Waerndorfer. L’objectiu d’aquest col·lectiu d’artistes visuals era integrar l’art i el disseny d’una manera organitzada. Seguint els exemples d’Escòcia i Anglaterra, la taula va utilitzar els arts decoratius de les cotilles de la producció fàbrica i convertí la vida en una obra d’art mitjançant l’estetització dels objectes quotidians. Una de les primeres empreses que va aprofitar els talents de Moser va ser la manufactura tèxtil Johann Backhausen und Söhne. En només quatre anys, Moser va dissenyar entre tres-cents i quatre-cents estampats de teles i catifes nuades a mà.

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When we consider Moser’s work, it is astonishing to observe the sheer variety of materials he integrated into his designs, as well as his obvious ingenuity. The desire to imbue every aspect of life with art spread to an ever-larger proportion of the population and led to an increase in demand for high-quality decorative arts, eventually prompting Moser to found the Wiener Werkstätte (Vienna Workshop) in 1903, together with the architect Josef Hoffmann and the industrialist Fritz Waerndorfer. The aim of this collective of visual artists was to integrate art and design in an organised way. Inspired by examples in Scotland and England, the aim was to liberate the decorative arts from the constraints of factory production and to turn life into a work of art through the aestheticisation of everyday objects. One of the first companies that made use of Moser’s talents was the textile manufacturer Johann Backhausen und Söhne. In just four years, Moser designed between 300 and 400 fabric patterns and hand-knotted rugs.

Lacquered maple bench with velvet seat, produced by the Wiener Werkstätte in 1904 for Margarete Hellmann
Banc d’acer lacat i seients de vellut. Produït pel Wiener Werkstätte el 1904 per a Margarete Hellmann

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At the same time, he also turned increasingly to decorative arts. A set of glassware designed by Kolo Moser and Joseph Maria Olbrich was awarded the bronze medal at the 1900 World’s Fair in Paris. With irrepressible creativity, he produced a rich profusion of designs for everyday objects, such as glasses, vases, dinner services, small metal baskets and candlesticks, as well as fabrics and wallpaper. His furniture for private interiors and entire apartments was particularly well received. In his pursuit of “bringing art into life” he collaborated with the like-minded architect Josef Hoffmann.

Lake Wolfgang with High Horizon, oil on canvas, ca. 1913
Llac Wolfgang amb horitzó alt, oli sobre tela, ca. 1913

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Koloman Moser was referred to, with good reason, as a Tausendkünstler, literally a “thousand-artist”, as he was virtually unrivalled in terms of versatility and productivity. He used a wide variety of materials with endless imagination and immense virtuosity. Moser ascribed his own creative ability to the fact that from an early age he had been able to watch the craftsmen at work at the workshops and craft facilities of the Vienna Gymnasiurn Theresianum, where his father worked as a concierge.

In 1905, Kolo Moser married the artist Ditha Mautner von Markhof, who came from a famous brewing family. At this stage of his life, personal happiness was accompanied by professional difficulties. The multi-talented Moser’s most important official commission in Vienna was to provide stained-glass windows and mosaic decorations for the Roman Catholic Kirche am Steinhof (Church of St. Leopold), a project by architect Otto Wagner (see Coup de Fouet No 27). By combining the stained-glass technique with reflective gold and opalescent glass he achieved a particularly strong painterly effect in the windows. Work on this project, however, turned out to be increasingly difficult, because his conception of the figures, especially the angels’ heads, was considered too modern and unfit for a church.
to Protestantism in preparation for his upcoming marriage, the scandal was complete and his commission was withdrawn. In 1907, Koloman Moser left the Wiener Werkstätte after differences with the industrialist Fritz Waerndorfer. He now turned to the theatre, creating unprecedented atmospheric effects by using flowing fabric and coloured lighting. Once again, as in the early days of his artistic career, he began to devote himself increasingly to painting. While staying at the summer house of his wife’s family in the Semmering area in Styria he was often inspired by the surrounding mountain scenery. His goal was to let viewers walk through the picture with their eyes. Moser allowed himself a fresh start. At first, his accurate rendering of colour and motif seemed to mark a shift from his Secessionist phase. He went on to investigate the findings of colour theory, and this led him to new forms of expression. Between 1907 and 1916 he produced portraits and landscapes in unnaturalistic colour schemes. Here Moser used bold, contrasting colours as a result of his intensive investigation into avant-garde colour and perception theories, in which he was especially fascinated by the work of Swiss painter Ferdinand Hodler.

Koloman Moser died of cancer on 18 October 1918. Right to the end, he continued working tirelessly, driven by inexhaustible creative energy. He remained a seeker, whose journey ended too soon.