

CITY OF WOMEN  
FEMALE ARTISTS FROM 1900 TO 1938

Lower Belvedere  
25 January to 19 May 2019



Helene Funke, *Nude Looking in the Mirror*, 1908-1910  
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At the beginning of the twentieth century, women were firmly anchored in Vienna's art scene. They exhibited on equal footing with Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele and made notable contributions to the era of Viennese Modernism. With the 1938 Anschluss (annexation), they were banished from art history and seemingly forgotten. *City of Women* takes an important step in bringing these artists back into focus and paying tribute to their enduringly impressive achievements.

According to Stella Rollig, artistic director of the Belvedere: *"The Belvedere is famous for its collection of works from the period of Viennese Modernism. It is therefore all the more important to me to make the forgotten female side of this epoch visible in its full dimension. The artists of those years were and still are a great inspiration, and their works have been wrongly ignored for almost a century."*

**With works by around sixty artists**, the show offers a comprehensive view of artistic creation by women as an essential part of Vienna's exhibition scene in the decades between 1900 and 1938. Chronologically following their biographies, it makes an impressive case for the extent to which classic modernity was shaped by female artists. Their works run the gamut of major movements manifested in the first half of the twentieth century, such as Atmospheric Impressionism, Secessionism, Expressionism, Kinetism, and New Objectivity. Broncia Koller-Pinell's work is particularly present throughout the show, acting as a common thread uniting the different developments. The artist, who had Jewish roots and died in 1934, contributed significantly to most of these art movements. Through historical photographs and documents

displayed in the Lower Belvedere, old haunts of Viennese Modernism, such as the Secession or the Miethke Gallery, are recalled, situating the women and their art within.

The exhibition's curator, Sabine Fellner, observed: *"In preparation for this exhibition, I embarked on a journey of discovery. Pictures of these great women were sometimes stored in attics or hidden in repositories without anyone's knowledge. We have brought an important page of art history back 'to light' in the truest sense of the word."*

## **Women in the Art World at the Turn of the Twentieth Century – Historical Overview**

**At the beginning of the twentieth century** women, step by step, claimed their place in the art world of Viennese Modernism. Artists such as Teresa Feodorowna Ries, Elena Luksch-Makowsky, Emilie Mediz-Pelikan, and Helene Funke managed to build careers that are remarkable even by today's standards. In a time marked by strictly binary gender stereotypes, they fought against great resistance. Still barred from entering the Academy of Fine Arts, and with scarce opportunity to exhibit their work, only a very few could afford expensive private lessons. Nevertheless, some succeeded in participating in exhibitions organized by the Künstlerhaus, the Secession, and the Hagenbund. They were, however, denied any regular membership to these associations. As a result, women joined together very early on to form their own associations, such as the Austrian Association of Women Artists (Vereinigung bildender Künstlerinnen Österreichs, or VBKÖ), which can be seen as the first strong feminist sign within their overall story. Purchases by the Staatsgalerie clearly demonstrated that unions such as this were successful.

**At the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s**, a level of emancipation had finally been reached, which, after the Second World War, had to be painstakingly regained. Women artists at that time had a clear presence within the exhibition scene and made up a visible part of the avant-garde. Where women had been initially relegated to the realms of floral or landscape

painting, by the turn of the century they had unearthed new topics and genres. Eventually it became socially recognized that women even painted nudes. Many women dealt with socio-critical issues and were extremely political in their works. The case of Stephanie Hollenstein is oddly curious: while her artistic oeuvre was very expressive and took radical steps toward equality, she nevertheless later endorsed National Socialism.

**The year 1938 signaled the end to women in art.** The Nazi regime and the Second World War meant that their work virtually disappeared from museums, galleries, and art history in general. Many were of Jewish descent and had to flee. Others were forced into exile by the collapsed art market and were never able to further their careers again. Only very few succeeded in gaining any sort of a foothold after emigration. These artists and their works were forgotten.

**It was not until the last few decades that this forgotten side of art history was reappraised.** The exhibition at hand is the most extensive presentation of art by the women of Viennese Modernism since the outbreak of the Second World War. Still only scratching the surface of the true achievements of these artists, the show is meant to provide the impetus for further scholarly engagement with this subject. Among the works shown are some that have not been seen for three generations.

## ARTISTS IN THE EXHIBITION

Ilse Bernheimer  
Camilla Birke  
Tina Blau  
Marie Olga Brand-Krieghammer  
Eugenie Breithut-Munk  
Maria Cyrenius  
Friedl Dicker  
Marie Egner  
Bettina Ehrlich-Bauer  
Gertrud Fischl  
Luise Fraenkel-Hahn  
Greta Freist  
Helene Funke  
Susanne Renate Granitsch  
Margarete Hamerschlag  
Fanny Harlfinger-Zakucka  
Hermine Heller-Ostersetzer  
Stephanie Hollenstein  
Johanna Kampmann-Freund  
Franziska Kantor  
Elisabeth Karlinsky  
Stefi Kiesler  
Erika Giovanna Klien  
Broncia Koller-Pinell  
Frida Konstantin-Lohwag  
Elza Kövesházi-Kalmár  
Leontine von Littrow  
Elena Luksch-Makowsky  
Mariette Lydis

Leontine Maneles  
Emilie Mediz-Pelikan  
Marie-Louise von Motesiczky  
Marie Müller  
Gertrud Nagel  
Fritzi Nechansky-Stotz  
Minka Podhajská  
Marianne Purtscher Baroness von  
Eschenburg  
Gertraud Reinberger-Brausewetter  
Lili Réthi  
Teresa Feodorowna Ries  
Mileva Roller  
Frieda Salvendy  
Marianne Saxl-Deutsch  
Emma Schlangenhäusen  
Anny Schröder-Ehrenfest  
Lilly Steiner  
Bertha Tarnóczy von Sprinzenberg  
Helene von Taussig  
Ilse Twardowski-Conrat  
My Ullmann  
Trude Waehner  
Olga Wisinger-Florian  
Grete Wolf-Krakauer  
Franziska Zach  
Maria Zeiller-Uchatius  
Nora von Zumbusch-Exner

## GENERAL INFORMATION

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Exhibition title        | <b>City of Women. Female Artists in Vienna from 1900 to 1938</b>  |
| Exhibition duration     | 25 January to 19 May 2019   |
| Venue                   | Lower Belvedere   |
| Exhibits                | 260   |
| Curator                 | Sabine Fellner  |
| Curatorial Assistant    | Katharina Lovecky   |
| Exhibition Architecture | Silvia Merlo  |
| Exhibition Management   | Tatjana Gawron  |
| Exhibition Graphics     | Monica Strinu   |
| Exhibition Catalogue    | <b><i>City of Women. Female Artists in Vienna from 1900 to 1938</i></b><br>Editors: Stella Rollig, Sabine Fellner<br>Authors: Silvie Aigner, Dieter Bogner, Sabine Fellner, Julie Johnson, Alexander Klee, Katharina Lovecky, Gabriela Nagler, Elisabeth Nowak-Thaller, Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber, Stella Rollig<br>Graphic Design: Atelier Liska Wesle<br>Prestel Verlag, München – London – New York<br>304 pages, 340 images, 24 × 31 cm<br>German & English Edition<br>ISBN 978-3-903114-67-8<br>EUR 36,- |
| Contact                 | Belvedere, Prinz Eugen-Straße 27, 1030 Wien<br>T +43 1 795 57-0<br><a href="http://www.belvedere.at">www.belvedere.at</a>   |
| Guided Tours            | T + 43 1 795 57-134   M <a href="mailto:public@belvedere.at">public@belvedere.at</a>  |
| Opening hours           | daily 10 am to 6 pm<br>Friday 10 am to 9 pm   |
| Regular Entry           | € 14,- (Lower Belvedere)  |
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Complimentary images can be downloaded for press purposes at [www.belvedere.at/press](http://www.belvedere.at/press).  
#CityofWomen