

belvedere

**SAY IT WITH FLOWERS!  
VIENNESE FLOWER PAINTING FROM WALDMÜLLER  
TO KLIMT**

Orangery, Lower Belvedere  
22 June to 30 September 2018



Josef Nigg, Bunch of Flowers © Belvedere, Vienna

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Between the late eighteenth and the early twentieth centuries, the flower picture changed dramatically –from the opulent bouquet to the native thistle and edelweiss to Klimt’s sunflower. At the heart of this development was Vienna where flower painting achieved unrivalled diversity and significance. The Belvedere’s exhibition is the first comprehensive show about Viennese flower painting in the nineteenth century.

Based on around one hundred works, the show demonstrates the profound changes in the period between the French Revolution and the First World War. *“The theory underpinning the exhibition is that flower pictures reveal much more than the history of artistic styles. They tell of social change, the delight in exotic plants and native Alpine flora, the splendour of the Ringstrasse era and the fragility of humankind,”* said Stella Rollig, CEO of the Belvedere.

Alongside paintings and drawings, porcelain and sculpture, contemporary artworks by de Rooij and Gerhard Richter also feature in the show.

The origins of Viennese flower painting are to be found in the Dutch Golden Age, prominently represented in the exhibition by the works of Jan van Huysum and Rachel Ruysch. It experienced its first heyday in Vienna during the Biedermeier period, characterized by opulent flower arrangements. Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller was the greatest painter in this era and, although his interest in flower painting was merely peripheral, he was a vital influence. During this period women artists like Pauline von Koudelka-Schmerling and Rosalia Amon also made a name for themselves as flower painters.

*“Waldmüller engaged with flower painting for scarcely more than a decade and yet he was highly innovative in this genre, too. He created both small-scale ‘modest’ still lifes composed of a few flowers as well as opulent paintings, in which magnificent silver vessels compete with the flowers. These approaches were a source of inspiration, particularly in the work of Rosalia Amon,”* said curator Rolf Johannsen.

Around the middle of the century, Viennese flower painting faced a crisis. The Biedermeier style had seen its day. The 1848 Revolution, which resulted in fundamental social change,

dealt the final blow. It needed a fresh start and this occurred in the 1880s, heralding the second heyday of Viennese flower painting. This was driven almost entirely by women artists, with Olga Wisinger-Florian and Marie Egner deserving special mention. In around 1900, both artists managed to merge the flower piece and the landscape to create the “floral landscape”. Wisinger-Florian was known most for her bunches of wildflowers, a marketable motif that was also painted by Marie Egner and Tina Blau. But this cannot hide the fact that women had a fundamental disadvantage compared to their male colleagues. They were still excluded from art academies and depended on private tuition, on teachers and mentors such as Emil Jakob Schindler. In the mid-1880s Schindler started gathering a group of artists at Plankenberg Castle, a mansion in Lower Austria. Along with the above-mentioned artists, this group also included Theodor von Hörmann and Carl Moll.

The foundation of the Secession in 1897 and the Wiener Werkstätte in 1903 heralded the true arrival of modernism in the Austrian capital. Exhibitions of international modern art were staged at the Galerie Miethke, for example a presentation of Van Gogh’s works in 1906 that had a great impact. In subsequent years, Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele engaged with the sunflower as a subject, resulting in unique interpretations. Klimt’s *Sunflower* of 1907/08 is now considered one of the masterpieces of the era.

*Bouquet V* by Willem de Rooij is one of the two contemporary artworks in the exhibition. The bouquet was arranged especially for this show and can be seen in its interpretation for the Belvedere. It represents the artist’s plea to acknowledge social diversity and equality. As the second contemporary work, Gerhard Richter’s tulip picture demonstrates that flower painting is more current than ever.

The exhibition includes works by Jan van Huysum, Rachel Ruysch, Josef Klieber, Joseph Nigg, Franz Xaver Petter, Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller, Pauline von Koudelka-Schmerling, Rosalia Amon, Anton Romako, Hans Makart, Olga Wisinger-Florian, Tina Blau, Carl Schuch, Marie Egner, Gustav Klimt, Koloman Moser, Michael Powolny, Egon Schiele, Gerhard Richter, and Willem de Rooij.

Free press images can be downloaded for media coverage of the exhibition at the following link: [www.belvedere.at/presse](http://www.belvedere.at/presse).

A PDF of the exhibition catalogue is available on request: [presse@belvedere.at](mailto:presse@belvedere.at)

#VienneseFlowerPainting

## ARTISTS IN THE EXHIBITION

Willem van Aelst

Rosalia Amon

Tina Blau

Marie Olga Brand-Krieghammer

Eugène Delacroix (ab 28. Juli)

Johann Baptist Drechsler

Marie Egner

Carl Borromäus Fruwirth

Joseph Geyer

Franz Xaver Gruber

David Heschler

Theodor von Hörmann

Jan van Huysum

Josef Klieber

Gustav Klimt

Johann Knapp

Pauline von Koudelka-Schmerling

Andreas Lach

Josef Lauer

Hans Makart

Carl Moll

Koloman Moser

Johann Michael Neder

Joseph Nigg

Gérard van Opstal (Nachahmer)

Franz Xaver Petter

Theodor Josef Petter

Michael Powolny

Franz Michael Siegmund von Purgau d. Ä.

Gerhard Richter

Anton Romako

Willem de Rooij

Rachel Ruysch

Egon Schiele

Carl Schuch

Joseph Schuster

Daniel Seghers

Franz Werner Tamm

*Unknown greek vase painter*

Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller

Olga Wisinger-Florian

Leopold Zinnögger

## GENERAL INFORMATIONEN

<b>Exhibition title</b>	<b>Say it with Flowers! Viennese Flower Painting from Waldmüller to Klimt</b>
<b>Exhibition duration</b>	22 June to 30 September 2018
<b>Venue</b>	Orangery, Lower Belvedere
<b>Exhibits</b>	99
<b>Curator</b>	Rolf Johannsen
<b>Catalogue</b>	<i>Say it with Flowers! Viennese Flower Painting from Waldmüller to Klimt</i> Editors: Stella Rollig, Rolf H. Johannsen Authors: Rainald Franz, Marianne & Gerbert Frodl, Alexander Giese, Rolf H. Johannsen, Axel Köhne, Stephan Koja, Andrea Polaschegg, Stella Rollig, Franz Smola Graphic design: Christian Schienerl published by Prestel Verlag; 232 pages; 235 x 300 mm, 185 pictures German and English Edition ISBN 978-3-903114-60-9 (German Museum Edition) ISBN 978-3-903114-61-6 (English Museum Edition) EUR 32,-
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