



Vase

Johann Loetz Witwe

Not on display

Title/Description: Vase

Artist/Maker: Johann Loetz Witwe (Manufacturer)

Born: 1900 c.

Object Type: Glassware, Metalware, Vase

Materials: Glass, Pewter

Technique: Blow moulding, Metalworking

Measurements: h. 216 x w. 125 x w. 125 mm

Accession Number: 21062

Production Place: Czech Republic, Klášterský Mlýn

School/Style: Art Nouveau

Credit Line: Donated by Sir Colin and Lady Anderson, 1978

This Art Nouveau iridescent vase with pewter mount has been attributed to the Bohemian glass manufacturer Johann Loetz Witwe. The vessel has been blow-moulded to create a swollen cylindrical form, which narrows at the foot and neck. At the base, spiral ridges in the glass create a ripple effect, which enhances the dream-like distortion of the vase's swirling colours.

Glass threads in purple, pale green and cream have been drawn in different directions to produce a marbled effect that resembles the wavy decoration of Loetz's 'Phaenomen' (Phenomenon) designs. [1]

Pulled into three points at the rim, the mouth of the vessel is ornamented with a pewter collar that extends outwards as three tripod handles that project over the shoulder of the vase. Elaborate mounts were incorporated into Loetz's 'Papillon', 'Pampas' and 'Phaenomen' ranges.

The angular lines of the pewter mount references the Celtic-inspired interiors of Vienna Secessionist architect, Joseph Hoffmann (1870-1956), and the Glasgow School's Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928). At the turn of the 20th century, the Austrian firm E. Bakalowits Söhne commissioned works from Loetz's 'Phaenomen' range, which were sold with patinated bronze and pewter mounts.

Austrian-born, Loetz (?-1844) founded the Loetz glassworks in 1840 in Klostermühle, Bohemia (now Klášterský mlýn, Czech Republic). [2] From 1879, under the direction of Max Ritter von Spaun, the company produced historical designs inspired by Roman excavated glass and art glass, which emulated hard stones such as onyx and intarsia. [3]

Bohemian glass from this period adapted to the Art Nouveau style, manufacturing iridescent and acid-etched glass that emulated the commercially successful glassware of Émile Gallé and Louis Comfort Tiffany. Loetz worked with the avant-garde designers, Josef Hoffmann, Koloman Moser and Marie Kirschner to produce new and exciting work. [4]

Around 1851, Loetz' widow, Susanne, received ownership of the company and renamed the glassworks Johann Loetz Witwe (meaning 'Widow Johann Loetz'). [5]

Vanessa Tothill, January 2021

[1] <https://www.loetz.com/decors-a-z/phaenomen-genres> [accessed 20 January 2021]. Rival Bohemian glass manufacturer, Wilhelm Kralik Sohn, produced similar works in this type of marbled glass.

[2] <https://hickmet.com/blogs/newsfeed/know-your-artists-johann-loetz>

[accessed 26 November 2020]

[3] Paul Greenhalgh, ed., *Art Nouveau, 1890-1914* (London: V&A Publications, 2000), p. 215.

[4] Greenhalgh, pp. 215-16.

[5] <https://hickmet.com/blogs/newsfeed/know-your-artists-johann-loetz>

[accessed 26 November 2020]

Further Reading

Amaya, Mario, *Art Nouveau* (London: Dutton Vista, 1966)

Geitner, Amanda and Emma Hazell, ed., *The Anderson Collection of Art Nouveau* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2003)

Greenhalgh, Paul, ed., *Art Nouveau, 1890-1914* (London: V&A Publications, 2000)

Greenhalgh, Paul, ed., *The Nature of Dreams: England and the Formation of Art Nouveau* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2020)
