



# 'Phänomen' vase

Johann Loetz Witwe

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**Not on display**

**Title/Description:** 'Phänomen' vase

**Artist/Maker:** Johann Loetz Witwe (Manufacturer)

**Born:** 1900 c.

**Object Type:** Vase

**Materials:** Glass

**Technique:** Blow moulding

**Measurements:** h. 229 x w. 155 x d. 155 mm

**Inscription:** Engraved

**Accession Number:** 21063

**Historic Period:** 20th century

**Production Place:** Czech Republic, Klášterský Mlýn

**School/Style:** Art Nouveau

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

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This iridescent glass Art Nouveau vase was produced by the Bohemian glass manufacturer Johann Loetz Witwe. The design was developed for Loetz Witwe's 'Phänomen' (Phenomenon) range and patented in 1898. The vase's bronze ground has been decorated with undulating combed trails of silver streaked with blue and violet. [1] These flowing integral patterns were created from hooking spun glass threads using the pulled feather technique. After the pattern was formed the glass was rolled on the marvering board; a process which pushed the surface decoration into the walls of the blown vessel. [2]

The vase has a diamond-shaped form that is broadest at the centre, tapering in both directions from the waist towards the everted foot and the circular rim. On the underside of the vessel's base is engraved the maker's mark: Loetz Austria.

Austrian-born, Loetz (?-1844) founded the Loetz glassworks in 1840 in Klostermühle, Bohemia (now

Klásterský mlýn, Czech Republic). [3] 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. [4]

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. [5]

Around 1851, Loetz' widow, Susanne, received ownership of the company and renamed the glassworks Johann Loetz Witwe (meaning 'Widow Johann Loetz'). [6]

Vanessa Tothill, January 2021

[1] <https://www.loetz.com/decors-a-z/phaenomen-genres/phaenomen-genres/pg-29> [accessed 15 January 2021], reference object Pattern Number II-195.

[2] <https://buffaloah.com/f/glos/lighting/hooked.html> [accessed 15 January 2021]

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

[accessed 26 November 2020]

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

[5] Greenhalgh, pp. 215-16.

[6] <https://hickmet.com/blogs/newsfeed/know-your-artists-johann-loetz> [accessed 26 November 2020]

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## 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)

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