



CULTURAL EVENTS

"JEWISH VIENNA" EXHIBIT TOURS CANADA

STAR RESEARCHER TO RETURN TO AUSTRIA

HEDY LAMARR COLLECTION TO MOVE TO VIENNA

50 YEARS OF AUSTRIAN IMMIGRATION TO CANADA

CO-OPERATION ON THE BASIS OF COMMON VALUES

CANADIAN ART STUDENTS RESPOND TO KLIMT AND SCHIELE

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Web sites on Austrian-Canadian affairs

- Austrian-Canadian Council
<http://www.trytel.com/~austcan/>
- Austrian Embassy, Ottawa
<http://www.austro.org/>
- Canadian Center for Austrian and Central European Studies
<http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/CCAUCES/>
- Austrian Trade Commission, Toronto
<http://www.austriantrade.org/>
- Canadian Embassy, Vienna
http://www.kanada.at/canadian_emb-menu-e.html

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From the editor's desk:

The year 2001 marked the 50th anniversary of the resumption of Austrian immigration to Canada, and *Oe Culture* devotes two contributions to recall this significant event in Austrian-Canadian history. But once in a while, people and objects return to Austria from Canada!

Canada attracted so many Austrian immigrants—and made them feel at home—because it was perceived as a land of opportunity, sharing many societal values with the *Heimat*. Today, Austrians and Canadians are once more reminded to be aware of these common values and to co-operate vigorously in bilateral affairs for our mutual benefit.

No *Oe Culture* could be complete without a strong cultural component. This time, we can report on a touring exhibition on "Jewish Vienna," on Canadian art students' responses to two famous Austrian painters, and on the long-awaited Czerny Festival to be held very soon.

Honouring distinguished service in Austrian-Canadian affairs is always a pleasant duty. For this reason, *Oe Culture* is delighted to report that many honours have been bestowed recently upon outstanding individuals.

Cover and photos in "Jewish Vienna" Exhibition" from *Das jüdische Wien* (Vienna: Pichler Verlag, 2000).

Austria... Österreich... Autriche

 CULTURE is published twice a year jointly by the Austrian Embassy, 445 Wilbrod Street, Ottawa, Ont., K1N 6M7 (Tel.: 613/ 789-1444, Fax: 613/789-3431) and the Austrian-Canadian Council, 1391 Cavendish Road, Ottawa, K1H 6B8 (Tel.: 613/521-3603).

 CULTURE est publié deux fois par an par l'Ambassade d'Autriche en collaboration avec le Conseil austro-canadien.

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Design/Maquette: HTL-Linz, Linz, Austria

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"JEWISH VIENNA" EXHIBIT TOURS CANADA

With the assistance of the Austrian Cultural Forum in Ottawa, a splendid new photographic exhibit on the history and culture of the Jews of Vienna went on a tour of Canada. The exhibition, entitled "Jewish Vienna," is the brainchild of the Hungarian-born photographer, János Kálmar, and the Austrian historian, Alfred Stalzer, who set themselves the ambitious task of tracing today's visible legacy of the Jews in Vienna. The exhibition of approximately fifty photographs opened its Canadian tour in early January at the University of Alberta under the aegis of the Canadian Centre for Austrian and Central European Studies. In mid-February, it moved to Winnipeg; other venues are still to be determined.

There are few European cities whose development is so closely linked with the history of the Jews of Europe as is the case with Vienna. The first Viennese Jew mentioned by name was a certain Shlom (ca. 1192/95), who was responsible for minting silver coins from the ransom obtained by Duke Leopold of Austria for the release of the captured Richard the Lion-Hearted of England. The medieval Jewish ghetto was located around the present-day Judenplatz, but Jews were a much-maligned minority in medieval Europe, and when Vienna's Jews were accused of assisting the Hussite rebellion in Bohe-

mia in 1420-21, it gave the authorities a pretext to expel or kill the entire community.

It was not until 150 years later that a few Jewish families began to settle in Vienna again, developing a new ghetto in what is now Vienna's Sec-



The Main Synagogue in Vienna's Seitenstettengasse.

ond District. By 1670, however, anti-Semitism reached such a point again that the Jews of Vienna were once more expelled. Because of their 'utility,' merchants and financiers were 'tol-



erated.' During the 17th century wars against the Turks and the French, famous Jewish financiers, such as Samuel Oppenheimer and Samson Wertheimer, became prominent and powerful figures at the Habsburg court. Small but significant Jewish commu-

nities grew up in most of the larger and economically most thriving urban centres of the Monarchy, and in 1772, when Austria acquired the provinces of Galicia and Bukovina as a result of the First Partition of Poland, the Jewish population of the Monarchy grew to well over 150,000.

Under the enlightened absolutist monarch Joseph II an Edict of Toleration was passed which allowed Jews to practice their religion freely, attend university and take up new professions. Joseph also obliged Jews to take up Western-style names, and made them subject to military draft. The freedom to settle where they wanted to,

however, was still limited. A schism began to form between the rich, 'tolerated' Jews and the non-tolerated ones who were forced to reside outside the city and had to earn their living as hawkers or street traders.

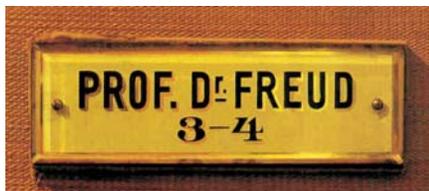
In the late 19th century, Jews increasingly served with distinction in the Habsburg army, and at the outbreak of the First World War they constituted a higher percentage of the Imperial Austro-Hungarian officer corps than in the military establishment of any other European power. The residences of wealthy and educated Jews became hubs of Vienna's salon life, and prosperous Jews built magnificent palaces for themselves on the famous Ringstrasse. The synagogue built in Vienna's Seitenstettengasse in

1824-26 by the architect Joseph Kornhäusel is one of the most significant neo-classical structures in Vienna, and people of Jewish origin left their mark in all artistic and scientific disciplines.



Close to the entrance of the old Jewish section in Vienna's Central Cemetery are the graves of Arthur Schnitzler and Friedrich Torberg, two major figures in Austrian literature.

Prominent Viennese Jews include Arthur Schnitzler, Karl Kraus, Gustav Mahler, Max Reinhardt, and



Sigmund Freud. Poorer Jews arriving in Vienna from other parts of the Monarchy, however, became targets for growing anti-semitism. The response to this baiting was Zionism, developed by the Viennese journalist Theodor Herzl. His idea of founding a Jewish state was welcomed with particular enthusiasm by the Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe.

In 1938, Austria was annexed to Hitler's Germany. Jews living in Aus-

tria were dispossessed, humiliated and excluded from business and education. By 1941 some 120,000 Jews had been forced to leave the country, and a further 65,000 were to be killed as victims of the Holocaust. At the end of the war in 1945, the Jewish population of Vienna amounted to a mere 1,500 people, but by 2000 this number had increased tenfold.



Students at the Vienna Yeshiva studying the Torah.

Since the 1980s this small but vital community has set up a number of schools, kindergartens and social amenities, and has become an important component of Vienna's new cultural mosaic. There are kosher butchers, caterers, and a Jewish supermarket, a book store, several organizations for high school and univer-



sity students, sports groups, prayer houses, and the Jewish Institute for Adult Education. In spite of the support offered by the City of Vienna and the Republic of Austria, these activities have been a great financial burden to the small Jewish community in

Vienna because it also maintains a retirement home and is responsible for the maintenance of some forty cemeteries in Vienna, Lower Austria, and the Burgenland.



The exhibition, "Jewish Vienna," seeks to capture some of the surviving traces of this history as well as some of the activities of the present community. Kálmar's poignant and beautiful images, which make up this exhibit, are also reproduced in the accompanying volume that serves as a catalogue. The volume is published by Pichler Verlag of Vienna under the title *Das Jüdische Wien*, with text by Alfred Stalzer. Captions to the pictures



are bilingual (German and English) and an English précis of the introductory text is included in the appendix. A limited number of this catalogue-volume is still available from the Canadian Centre for Austrian and Central European Studies.

Text abridged and supplemented from the exhibition catalogue by Franz A.J. Szabo.