Guide to the Vienna : Theater Posters, 1839-1855

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Guide to the Vienna : Theater Posters, 1839-1855

Collection number: M1107

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Vienna : theater posters,
Date (inclusive): 1839-1855
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Abstract: This collection of posters documents the repertoire of important theaters in the suburbs of Vienna from Biedermeier to the Gründerzeit periods.
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None.
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Acquisition Information
Historical Note
Vienna, with its Opera and Burgtheater, has long been considered a theater capital of Europe, along with Paris, London, and later Berlin. This collection of posters documents the repertoire of important theaters in the suburbs of Vienna from Biedermeier to the Gründerzeit periods.

Even up to the 1850s and later the old popular plays and fairy-comedies by Schikaneder. Bäuerle, Gleich and Hensler were performed. Gradually they were replaced by the newer plays by Bauernfeld, F. Kaiser, A. Langer and Grillparzer (for example Ahnfrau). French vaudevilles were adapted, and then there were Nestroy's biting satires. In addition to plays by these writers, operas, ballets, pantomimes, and concerts were performed. All kinds of theater machinery and stage effects
were a major attraction at this time. Listed in the posters one can find the names of well-known actors and performers: M. Geistinger, A. Haitzinger, M. Korn, Nestroy, Pepita de Oliva, C. Treumann, and E. Tadolini; composers: A. Muller, J. Strauss, and especially Franz von Suppé and the names of theater entrepreneurs and directors like K. Carl and F. Pokorny.

Up to 1858, the city of Vienna (now 1. Bezirk) was surrounded by walls and ramparts against military invasion. Within the walls one found the prestigious Theater nächst der Burg (1741-1876), promoted by Joseph II to K.K. Hof- und Nationaltheater in 1776 (today the Burgtheater), and the Kärntnerthortheater (1709-1868, superseded by the Oper am Ring). In addition, there were performances at the Court, by Cesuits and other monastic orders, stagiones, etc.

Outside the walls, there were numerous theaters in the suburbs to be found also. The most famous were the Theater in der Leopoldstadt (later Carl-Theater), the Theater an der Wien, and the Theater in der Josefstadt. Both the Theater an der Wien and the Theater in der Josefstadt still play an important role in the theatrical life of Vienna today. Most of the posters in the collection cover performances at these three theaters. The smaller theaters, which existed in almost every suburb, were mostly summer theaters. They were connected to these three theaters by the directors or by members of the cast, which is also the ease with Pressburg and Badera.


**Theater in der Leopoldstadt / Odeon / Carl-Theater (Wien 2) 1781 - 1951**

The Theater in der Leopoldstadt opened in 1781. It soon became known as the 'Kasperletheater' (Punch-and-Judy-show), named after the performances of La Roche as Punch. For a time, musical comedies were played there (Salieri's Cosa Rara, 1787, which Mozart quoted in Don Giovanni, and Ditters von Dittersdorf's Doktor und Apotheker, 1789).

It became famous with its popular Viennese low comedies by Bäuerle, Gleich, Hensler (who was director from 1803/1816), Meisl and others. F. Raimund became an actor at the theater and his first plays were performed there. Under the director Karl Carl, 1838-1851 (who was also director of the Theater an der Wien from 1825 to 1848) the Theater in der Leopoldstadt became again a main attraction for the Viennese audience. The performances featured such popular actors as Carl, Nestroy, Scholz and Treumann, as well as Nestroy's satirical comedies.

When the old building was demolished in 1847, the cast played at the Odeon (Wien 2), the largest dance hall in Vienna at that time. The new Carl-Theater was designed by Van der Nüll and Siccardsburg, later the architects of the Oper am Ring. The new Carl-Theater opened in 1847. After Carl's death in 1854, J. Nestroy took over as director and managed the theater until 1860. During his time Offenbach operettas made their Viennese debut in the Carl-Theater, beginning in 1858. When Nestroy left, the heydays of the Viennese popular comedy had passed. After some interim, the Carl-Theater made a come-back with operettas for short periods. The theater was finally demolished in 1951.


**Theater an der Wien (Wien 6) 1801-1962**

It superseded the nearby Freihäusstheater (1787 - 1801), where many Mozart operas had their first performance, among them the Zauberflöte. Schikaneder, the director, commissioned the Theater an der Wien to be built. It opened in 1801. Beethoven's Fidelio was first performed there and Grillparzer's Ahnfrau as well as Kleist's Käthchen von Heilbronn. Lortzing's, Weber's, and the first Rossini operas were performed here.

Under the direction of Karl Carl (1825 - 1845) the theater became one of the leading popular theaters, with the actors Nestroy and Scholz. Many of Nestroy's plays were performed here. Under Franz Pokorny (1845 - 1850) Flotow's Alessandro Stradella inaugurated the tradition of light operas. The Theater an der Wien became the theater for operettas: from J. Strauss, Millöcker, up to Lehar, Kalman, and Oscar Straus. From 1945 to 1955 the Vienna Opera played here, until the Oper am Ring was rebuilt. Since then, the Theater an der Wien serves as Wiener Festspielhaus for operettas, musicals, and plays.


**Theater in der Josefstadt (Wien 8)**

Opened in 1788, the Theater in der Josefstadt frequently shared directors (Hensler from 1822-25, Carl from 1825-1828, and then Pokorny from 1837-1848) and casts (Raimund from 1814, W. Scholz and Nestroy) with the other two theaters. The repertoire changed with the directors, ranging with from an emphasis on Italian operas from 1832/1834, and again under Pokorny, to a variety of dramas and comedies at other times.
The old house was demolished in 1822 and the new theater was opened with Beethoven conducting the 'Consecration of the House', composed for this occasion. Later, the composers Kreutzer, Lortzing and Franz von Suppé were engaged at the Theater. Raimund's play Der Verschwender (with Raimund as Valentin) was first performed here in 1834.

From 1899 under Franz Jarno, the repertoire consisted mostly of modern plays. In 1923 Max Reinhardt took over and introduced his intimate Reinhardt style. Outstanding actors played even minor parts. Hofmannsthal's Der Schwierige premiered here in 1924. Since then sophisticated comedies and intimate dramas (Kammerspiele) have characterized the repertoire. The Theater in der Josefstadt today enjoys a reputation of one of the best theaters in Vienna.


Collection Scope and Content Summary
This collection of posters documents the repertoire of important theaters in the suburbs of Vienna from Biedermeier to the Gründerzeit periods.

Access Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.
Kärntnertortheater.
Theater in der Leopoldstadt.
Odeon Interimtheater.
Carl-Theater.
Theater an der Wien.
Theater in der Josefstadt.
Säale zum Grünenten Thor.
Theater in Meidling.
Theater in Gaudenzdorf.
Sommertheater Fünfhäus-Braunhirschenheater.
Arena in Hernals.
Theater in Oberdöbling.
Baden. Niederösterreich Theater.
Pressburg (Bratislava). Arena.
Graz, Steiermark, Ständ. Theater.
Theater--Austria--History--19th century.
Theatrical posters--Austria.
German, Swiss, Austrian collection.

Print Box 1, Folder 1
Kärntnertortheater (Wien I)1852
Physical Description: 1 poster

Print Box 1, Folder 2
Theater in der Leopoldstadt (Wien 2)1839 - 1847
Physical Description: 17 posters

Print Box 1, Folder 2
Odeon Interimtheater (Wien 2)1847
Physical Description: 1 poster

Print Box 1, Folder 2
Carl-Theater (Wien 2)1850 - 1854
Physical Description: 27 posters

Print Box 1, Folder 3
Theater an der Wien (Wien 6)1840 - 1855
Physical Description: 37 posters

Print Box 2, Folder 4
Theater in der Josefstadt (Wien 8)1840 - 1854
Physical Description: 23 posters
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