

Media Contact:
Meg Floryan
Head of Marketing + PR
mfloryan@thewolf.fiu.edu | 305.535.2622



The Wolfsonian
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

1001 Washington Avenue
Miami Beach, FL 33139

T 305.531.1001 F 305.531.2133

wolfsonian.org



The Wolfsonian–FIU Celebrates Past and Present Austrian Design for Fall/Art Basel Miami Beach 2017

Julius Klinger: Posters for a Modern Age (Oct 6, 2017–Apr 1, 2018),
*the first U.S. solo exhibition devoted to the designer,
places Klinger's commissions in dialogue with work by other artists*

Double Vision,
*a coinciding contemporary installation by Austrian design studio Seite Zwei,
transforms the museum's lobby and façade with Klinger-inspired typefaces and graphics*

MIAMI BEACH (July 31, 2017) — On October 6, 2017, The Wolfsonian–Florida International University unveils a pair of graphic-design presentations, historic and contemporary, under the shared theme of “identity.” Centered on the work of Julius Klinger, a pioneering graphic artist of the early 20th century, the suite is grounded by the first U.S. solo show devoted to the designer, *Julius Klinger: Posters for a Modern Age*. The retrospective marks a unique opportunity for visitors to experience so much of Klinger’s work in one place—over 100 posters, prints, drawings, and book illustrations from his prolific career, along with items of decorative art by other Viennese designers selected chiefly from The Wolfsonian’s collection. The transformative designs reveal his knack for infusing beautiful imagery with wit and an astute marketing sensibility.

Complementing *Julius Klinger* is *Double Vision*, a two-part contemporary installation by Vienna-based design studio Seite Zwei that nods to the artist’s lasting influence through Klinger-inspired

graphics on the Wolfsonian façade and in its lobby. The site-specific intervention—which incorporates perception-shifting lenticular prints—dissects the “graphic DNA” of Klinger’s work, activating the museum with typefaces, abstract forms, and bold color schemes. Both projects delve into issues of dual identities in graphic design (the client’s, and the artist’s) and will be of special focus for Miami Art Week 2017. They will remain on view through April 1, 2018.

“The art of persuasion is a key interest of The Wolfsonian, and Klinger was a master,” said Wolfsonian director Tim Rodgers. “Through his compelling graphic work and Seite Zwei’s imaginative reinterpretation, our visitors will consider the power of design in affecting change, often by using tactics still employed by advertisers, corporations, and brand influencers today. Together, these shows are the perfect backdrop for Art Basel Miami Beach, when the attention of the entire art world homes in on design.”

Klinger (1876–1942) was born in Vienna to a Jewish family and established his reputation as a prominent graphic artist, illustrator, typographer, and writer closely associated with the Vienna Secession art movement and Jugendstil, the German variant of Art Nouveau. Working in Austria, Germany, and briefly the United States, Klinger helped create or modernize the image and identities of countless clients ranging from theaters and cabarets, art manufacturers, and commercial companies to public agencies over the course of three decades. After the Nazis’ annexation of Austria in 1938 and the outbreak of the Second World War, he was killed in 1942 at an extermination camp near Minsk.



“We cherish a presumptuous hope: that perhaps in roughly fifty or a hundred years, our works may stand as forceful cultural documents of how the merchant advertised his wares at the start of the twentieth century.”
– Julius Klinger

Central to *Julius Klinger* are the strong, striking graphic elements that became his signature style and reflect his direct approach to communication: bold color; minimalist, clear visuals stripped of unnecessary detail; and linear compositions influenced by Japanese prints and calligraphy. Klinger distinguished commercial art, serving a client’s goals and messages, from fine art, which he argued prioritized self-expression—a trajectory that paved the way for the emergence of “Reklamekunst” (advertising art) and graphic design as specialized fields.

Works on view at The Wolfsonian include:

- A poster for *Lustige Blätter* [Funny Pages], a leading satirical magazine, that features fishing centaurs in a fantasy scene (1909);
- A poster for Hollerbaum und Schmidt (1910), in which Klinger amusingly advertised the Berlin printer’s services through his own self-portrait;

- A poster for Münchener Faschings-Redoute [Munich Carnival Ball], designed for the city's carnival season (1914);
- A poster for TABU (1919) that showcases Klinger's skill in using graphic line to define the identity for the cigarette-paper company;
- Intricate illustrations for *Die aegyptische Helene* [The Egyptian Helena], a book based on Richard Strauss' opera (c. 1928); and
- An announcement for a ten-week course on advanced poster design led by Klinger at The New School, New York, proudly proclaiming him "Europe's most prominent poster artist" (1932).

Select objects by Klinger will be placed in dialogue with works in a variety of media by other artists of the time, including Josef Hoffmann, Gustav Klimt, and Dagobert Peche. These ancillary objects provide greater context and depth to the motivations behind Klinger's trademark style and design choices.

"Klinger was a designer whose work resonates today for its charm, flair, humor, and variety," said Jeremy Aynsley, guest curator and professor of design history at the University of Brighton. "He was an outstanding draughtsman who captured the elegance of the times in his posters, yet also made strongly satirical images that engaged with the issues of the day."



In their contemporary response, *Double Vision*, Seite Zwei constructs a Klinger-esque landscape in the Wolfsonian lobby that captures the dual nature of graphic identity—how it expresses both the client's brand and the designer's individual creativity. Lenticular prints speak to this dualism by interlacing images that change based on viewing angle, giving the appearance of animation. The dynamic effect challenges visitors to recognize the layered meanings in the simplest of images. On the museum's exterior, lettering inspired by Klinger's advertisements for TABU announces Klinger's name as at the heart of the season.

The studio explains, "Looking back at Klinger's work, it is evident that in order to have a lasting effect on the development of design and culture, one should not only be able to create, but more importantly reflect and be aware of the state of one's craft and its cultural context. Here in Austria and around the world, Klinger's stamp on graphic design is undeniable."

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Support

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Double Vision is made possible by Dr. David and Linda Frankel and the Austrian Cultural Forum.

About Julius Klinger

Julius Klinger (1876–1942), born in Dornbach near Vienna, was a poster designer and graphic artist. Klinger studied at the Technologisches Gewerbemuseum in Vienna. In 1895, he worked for the Vienna fashion magazine *Wiener Mode*. Associated with both the Vienna Secession and Jugendstil at the turn of the twentieth century, he moved briefly to Munich (1896), where he worked for the *Meggendorfer Blätter* and other art journals, before he moved to Berlin (1897), where he made his name as a poster designer for the art printer Hollerbaum und Schmidt. From 1897 to 1902 he collaborated on several magazines including *Lustige Blätter*. Returning to Vienna in 1915 for service in the First World War, he established a studio with a group of younger designers that together became known as “the Klinger School.” Klinger introduced himself to an American public in 1923, when he arranged for the publication of the profusely illustrated volume *Poster Art in Vienna* from Chicago. His first visit to the United States was in December 1928, when he was invited as artistic advisor at Mac Manus Inc., a subsidiary to General Motors in Detroit. He returned for a second visit in 1932 to deliver a class in Advanced Poster Design at the New School, New York, by then billed as “Europe’s most prominent poster artist.” In the final years of the designer’s life, Klinger, an assimilated Jew, was banned from working in public. He and his wife Emilie were transported to an extermination camp in Maly Trostenets near Minsk, where they were killed on June 9, 1942.

About Seite Zwei

Founded in 2011 by Stefan Mayer & Christian Begusch, the Vienna-based design studio Seite Zwei develops concepts and projects for individuals, institutions and products both cultural and commercial. Building their work on strong visual ideas, the studio’s output ranges from books and magazines, to identities, installations and branded spaces. By cultivating a content-driven design approach, Seite Zwei seeks an ongoing exchange with its clients and collaborators, resulting in long-lasting relationships and collaborations and a steady progress for both its clients and the studio itself.

About The Wolfsonian–Florida International University

The Wolfsonian–FIU is a museum, library, and research center that uses objects to illustrate the persuasive power of art and design, to explore what it means to be modern, and to tell the story of social, historical, and technological changes that have transformed our world. The collection comprises approximately 180,000 objects dating from 1850 to 1950—the height of the Industrial Revolution through the aftermath of the Second World War—in a variety of media including furniture; industrial-design objects; works in glass, ceramics, and metal; rare books; periodicals; ephemera; works on paper; paintings; textiles; and medals.

The Wolfsonian is located at 1001 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, FL. Admission is \$10 for adults; \$5 for seniors, students, and children age 6–12; and free for Wolfsonian members, State University System of Florida staff and students with ID, and children under six. The museum is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, 10am–6pm; Friday, 10am–9pm; Sunday, noon–6pm; and is closed on Wednesday. Contact us at 305.531.1001 or visit us online at wolfsonian.org for further information.

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About Florida International University

Florida International University is classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as R1: Doctoral Universities - Highest Research Activity and recognized as a Carnegie engaged university. It is a public research university with colleges and schools that offers 196 bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral programs in fields such as engineering, computer science, international relations, architecture, law and medicine. As one of South Florida’s anchor institutions, FIU contributes almost \$9 billion each year to the local economy. FIU is Worlds Ahead in finding solutions to the most challenging problems of our time.

FIU emphasizes research as a major component of its mission. FIU has awarded more than 220,000 degrees and enrolls more than 54,000 students in two campuses and three centers including FIU Downtown on Brickell, FIU@I-75, and the Miami Beach Urban Studios. FIU's Medina Aquarius Program houses the Aquarius Reef Base, a unique underwater research facility in the Florida Keys. FIU also supports artistic and cultural engagement through its three museums: Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum, The Wolfsonian–FIU, and The Jewish Museum of Florida–FIU. FIU is a member of Conference USA and more than 400 student-athletes participating in 18 sports. For more information about FIU, visit fiu.edu.