

Austrian Museum

Schönborn

of Folk Life

Garden Palace

and Folk Art





Main Entrance

Schönborn Garden Palace – Ground Floor

F o r e w o r d

The Schönborn Garden Palace in Vienna's 8th district of Josefstadt is a jewel of early 18th-century architecture. Back in the days of Count Friedrich Karl von Schönborn-Buchheim, for whom it was built, this elongated ensemble with its extensive garden complex signalled its owner's love of baroque magnificence and French garden design. Today's visitors, on the other hand, know and love this building as an oasis of culture and the culinary within a densely built-up urban area.

Since 1917, the Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art has been the tenant of the Garden Palace, which was designed by architect Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt. With its important collections from the former Habsburg Crown Lands and many other parts of Europe, it can be considered the largest museum of its kind in Austria. The museum has survived through the turbulent succession of historical eras since its establishment in 1895 by the Association for Folk Life and Folk Art (then and now known in German as the Verein für Volkskunde).

The "Bird of Self-Knowledge", chosen as the museum's logo in 1994, was a popular allegory during the baroque period. In terms of ethnology's development as an academic discipline, it alludes to the mission of recognising and researching everyday and socially relevant phenomena. It also symbolises the will to critically examine the attitudes of those protagonists who were responsible for the museum under various political systems.

Since 2013, the Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art has been headed by Matthias Beitzl. During this period, the opening of a passage from Laudongasse to the Schönbornpark represented an important step toward increasing the museum's visibility within Vienna. Parallel to this measure, an intense programme of events has broadened



Garden façade

Photokollektiv fischka / Kerzmar © Volkskundemuseum Wien

the circle of individuals who use the museum. And furthermore, other institutions' interest in conducting fascinating collaborative projects together with the Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art has likewise increased.

The museum's numerous visitors from Austria and abroad are interested in artefacts of folk culture and modern topics of European ethnology, as well as in the baroque museum building itself. And indeed, the very special history of the Schönborn Garden Palace is well worth being researched in detail. This scholarly task was undertaken by the art historians Fabio Gianesi and Sabine Paukner. They researched the historical data and collected extant visual material in various archives and libraries—for which I extend warm thanks on the museum's behalf.

This brochure was compiled as part of the bilateral EU project "Treasures from Central Europe. Culture Nature Music" under the auspices of the programme INTERREG SK-AT 2014-2020 and is available in three languages (German, Slovak, and English). It provides all those who are interested with a glimpse into the history of the Schönborn Garden Palace and the genesis of the Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art.

We thank you for your interest!

Claudia Peschel-Wacha
Deputy Director, project head



The passageway to Schönbornpark
Photo: Matthias Klos © Volkskundemuseum Wien

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Portrait of Count Friedrich Karl von Schönborn-Buchheim
Copperplate print, 1st half of the 18th century
ÖNB/Vienna

The Original Occupant

Count Friedrich Karl von Schönborn-Buchheim

The noble house of Schönborn, the lineage of which dates back to the 12th century, originated in present-day Germany's Westerwald region. Friedrich Karl von Schönborn was born in Mainz, in today's Rhineland-Palatinate, in 1674. He was one of fourteen children of Count Melchior Friedrich von Schönborn, Minister of State of the Electorate of Mainz, and Baroness Maria Sophia von Boyneburg. Friedrich Karl eventually rose to occupy high secular and ecclesiastical positions as Imperial Vice Chancellor in Vienna (1705–1734) and Prince-Bishop of Bamberg and Würzburg (1729–1746).

*Friedrich Karl's
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After having been appointed to his first church positions in Würzburg and Bamberg at a very young age, Friedrich Karl studied theology as well as law and also pursued philosophical studies in Würzburg, Mainz, Aschaffenburg, and Rome. He additionally went on a so-called grand tour (the educational journey typical for young men of his rank) to England and France, eventually completing his studies in Paris at the Sorbonne. Thereafter, he returned to his uncle Lothar Franz von Schönborn, Electoral Prince of Mainz and Prince-Bishop of Bamberg. Friedrich Karl then began his diplomatic career by going to Vienna in 1703/04 as an envoy of the Electorate of Mainz.

Lothar Franz, who had made a protégé of his favourite nephew Friedrich Karl, proceeded to secure him a position as travelling companion and cavalier of honour for future Emperor Joseph I. And in 1705, Joseph—by then emperor—appointed him Imperial Vice-Chancellor, for which reason Friedrich Karl was permitted to add the imperial eagle and the coat of arms of the Archduchy of Austria to his family coat of arms as an acknowledgement of his service. As a fiefdom, he was given the

County of Wolfsthal between Vienna and Preßburg (today's Bratislava) as well as the domains of Munkács and Szentmiklós in what was then Upper Hungary. He also acquired rich landholdings from the last descendants of the Austrian Counts of Buchheim (the fortress of Mühlberg and the domain of Göllersdorf) and the additional noble title of *Truchsess*. And ever since, this branch of the Schönborn family has also used the Buchheim coat of arms and the additional surname of Buchheim.

Friedrich Karl had a deep passion for building projects: the Schönborn Garden Palace, the urban palace of Schönborn-Batthyány, the State Chancellery (*Geheime Hofkanzlei*, today's Federal Chancellery Building) and the Imperial Chancellery Wing of the Hofburg in Vienna, the Blauer Hof (Blue Court) in Laxenburg, Schloss Schönborn near Göllersdorf, Schloss Weißenstein in Pommersfelden, the Würzburg Residence, Schloss Werneck in Lower Franconia, and many others. Friedrich Karl's enthusiasm for baroque architecture and garden design was one basis for his cordial relations with Prince Eugene of Savoy, through whom he became acquainted with the architect Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt. For Hildebrandt, this marked the beginning of many years of intensive work on buildings for the Schönborn family.

In 1746, Friedrich Karl died in Würzburg without issue, whereupon his brother Rudolph Franz Erwein founded the Franconian line of Schönborn-Wiesentheid. And by the end of the 18th century, the family had branched out into the three lines that exist today—one Austrian, one Bavarian, and one Bohemian.

A r c h i t e c t

Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt

Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt was born in Genoa in 1668. He was the son of a German officer who was stationed in Italy and had subsequently joined the Imperial Army. Hildebrandt first went to Rome to study with the architect Carlo Fontana. In 1695/96, following completion of his studies, he served as a fortifications engineer under Prince Eugene of Savoy in Piedmont. Hildebrandt then moved on with Eugene's troops to Vienna, and the Prince's patronage soon resulted in his frequent employment as an architect by the imperial aristocracy.

In 1699, Johann Lucas Hildebrandt applied to Emperor Leopold I for the post of Court Architect. One year later, he was appointed Imperial Court Engineer. 1706 saw him marry Francisca Geist, the daughter of a registrar at the Court Chancellery. Hildebrandt became head of the Imperial Court Construction Office in 1711, and he was raised to the nobility in 1720. His competitor at court was the architect Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach, who was 12 years his senior. In 1723, following Erlach's death, Hildebrandt was finally appointed to his desired office of First Architect to the Imperial Court.

*Hildebrandt's second
important client
was Imperial Vice-
Chancellor Count
Friedrich Karl von
Schönborn*

Hildebrandt's extensive activities as a builder ranged from the construction of representative palaces and sacred buildings to completion of the smallest assignments. His first important client, Prince Eugene of Savoy, initially employed him in Hungary to construct buildings including the Savoy Castle (also known as Savoy Mansion) in Ráckeve. Through Prince Eugene, he succeeded in expanding his circle of artistic activity east and south of Vienna. Hildebrandt's principal work is considered to be Eugene's Viennese summer residence—consisting of the Lower Belvedere (1714–1716) and the Upper Belvedere (1721–1723)



Portrait of Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt
Painting by Jacob van Schuppen, ca. 1720
Painting Collection, Wawel Royal Palace, Krakow

along with their extensive garden complex. Other buildings that he constructed for Prince Eugene include Schloss Hof in the Marchfeld region and (together with Fischer von Erlach) the Prince's Winter Palace in Vienna. Further important Viennese buildings by Hildebrandt include the aristocratic palaces of Starhemberg-Schönburg and Daun-Kinsky, as well as today's Palais Schwarzenberg and the churches Piaristenkirche and St. Peter. As an architect, he also drew up the plans for the remodelling of Mirabell Palace and the reconstruction of Göttweig Abbey.

Hildebrandt's second important client was Imperial Vice-Chancellor Count Friedrich Karl von Schönborn. And through Schönborn's family relations and political connections, Hildebrandt's artistic activities also extended into Bavaria and Franconia. Count Schönborn assigned him with the remodelling of his Viennese Garden Palace in 1706, with the expansion of the Blauer Hof (Blue Court) in Laxenburg in 1710, and with the expansion of his summer residence Schloss Schönborn near Göllersdorf in Lower Austria as well as with church construction projects for which he served as a patron. Friedrich Karl also recommended Hildebrandt to his uncle Lothar Franz von Schönborn, who involved him in projects including the construction of his palace in Pommersfelden. And when Friedrich Karl was himself appointed Bishop of Bamberg and Würzburg in 1729, Hildebrandt had a decisive influence on the construction of his Würzburg Residence. Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt died in Vienna in 1745 and is viewed as one of the most important architects and master builders of the baroque period.



Garden façade

From: Salomon Kleiner, *Wien von 1724 bis 1740*
ÖNB/Vienna, Cod.min.9/2, fol.101

Architectural History

When Count Friedrich Karl von Schönborn came to Vienna as Imperial Vice-Chancellor in 1705, he at first occupied an official residence in the Hofburg's Imperial Chancellery Wing. In 1683, with the Second Turkish Siege of Vienna having been lifted, the city's suburbs experienced a building boom. And in 1706, Friedrich Karl purchased from the Imperial Court Chamber and Privy Counsellor Johann Christoph Reichsritter von Forster a property in the suburb of Alservorstadt that had already been built upon. He then had architect Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt set about remodelling the existing complex. The most important construction measures necessary for its transformation into the envisioned Garden Palace were carried out in 1706/07. These were realised according to the architect's plans by Franz Jänggl, a middle-class master stonemason from Vienna. By 1715, Count Schönborn's total work of art—including the garden complex—was finished. And one year later, the English author Lady Montague wrote of this estate: "Count Schoenborn's villa is one of the most magnificent." Later on, in 1725, Count Schönborn enlarged his property towards the east by purchasing the adjacent estate of Imperial Army paymaster Wisendo von Wisenburg.

*"Count
Schoenborn's
villa is one
of the most
magnificent"*

Friedrich Karl had gotten to know the royal Château de Marly at Marly-le-Roi in 1698 during the initial phase of the period he spent in France as a student. Its main pavilion served as the model for the Schönborn Garden Palace's eleven-axis main façade. Hildebrandt accorded great weight to the façade's central avant-corps and added further architectonic accents including six colossal pillars with composite capitals, a stone portal with a balcony, and a coat-of-arms crowning the central pediment and rising up over the cornice. Finally, a balustrade topped by sculptures plus a high mansard roof served to make the building appear to be of even greater height.



Baroque Grand Staircase made of Kaiserstein limestone
Photo: Matthias Klos © Volkskundemuseum Wien

Hildebrandt accented the side facing the garden with an avant-corps topped by a balustrade at the roof level. This so-called “stairwell risalit” (*Treppenhausrisalit*) still houses the Grand Staircase that leads up from the vestibule to the first floor. In the corners of the garden façade, he placed two slim, domed towers that contained spiral staircases. Colossal double pilasters connected the building’s two stories,

The area now occupied by the museum café still exhibits traces of a tower and the original façade

and all free areas on the façade were decorated with ornamental masonry. Hildebrandt’s architecture makes a motion-filled, slender and delicate impression, with his painterly, three-dimensional ornamentation interacting with light and shadow to present a lively relief.

In the two façades’ present-day appearance, one can recognise several changes. The classicist-looking elements on the main façade, like the large triangular pediment with the pre-existing coat-of-arms of the Prince-Bishop and the smaller triangular window pediments, are generally attributed to Isidore Ganneval, also known as Canevale. The French architect probably created this façade décor during the 1760s. On the garden façade, a large, triangular central pediment with the Schönborn family coat of arms was added. And following the palace’s sale to the City of Vienna in 1862, the two staircase towers of the garden façade were removed and two shallow additions were added, effectively moving the central façade outward.

The area now occupied by the museum café still exhibits traces of a tower and the original façade. And as for the palace’s eastern wing, this was expanded in 1870 to border directly on Lange Gasse.

Furthermore, traces of structural elements that had existed even before the complex was remodelled by Count Schönborn can still be seen in the various cellars, in the west wing’s spiral staircase, and from inside the (in part) vaulted ground floor rooms in which the museum’s permanent collection is displayed.



Das bildere Zimmer von Holländischen Kapfern zu Wien in dem Garten La Stanza con quadri fiammi Pitture de Maestri Fiaminghi

Baroque Painting Gallery, *The Dutch Masters' Painting Gallery*
 (view eastward at left, view westward at right)

From: Salomon Kleiner, *Gräflich Schönbornsche Schlösser, Häuser,
 Gärten und Kirchen in Wien - Josefstadt. Würzburg 1731*
 Wienbibliothek im Rathaus

State Rooms

The detailed 1737 travelogue compiled by the architect Johann Jacob Küchel provides us with information on how the State Rooms at the Schönborn Garden Palace were originally arranged. Küchel took his nearly four-month journey at the behest of Count Friedrich Karl von Schönborn, by then Prince-Bishop of Bamberg and Würzburg. The architect had entered Schönborn's service in 1735 and was responsible for the Count's Bamberg construction activities, and his study tour took him from Bamberg to Munich and on to Vienna. Alongside military and ecclesiastical structures, he was interested above all in the secular architecture of rural and urban palaces and gardens.

The magnificent stuccoed ceiling with its finely swung golden strapwork was quite in keeping with early 18th-century fashions

Küchel's report on the Schönborn Garden Palace provides a detailed description concerning the arrangement of its rooms. The Grand Staircase, which is still present today, led from

the vestibule to the bel étage via both of its two sides. Arrived at the top, one entered the centrally positioned Great Hall. There was then a sequence of rooms to the west consisting of two antechambers, the Family Chamber with 16 portraits, and a smaller additional room. The second antechamber also provided access to the green Audience Chamber, from which one could continue to the Study next to the Painting Gallery, which was called the "Dutch Gallery" at the time. The magnificent stuccoed ceiling with its finely swung golden strapwork (referred to as *Bandlwerk*) was quite in keeping with early 18th-century fashions. And the walls here, which were covered in fine fabrics, were used by Count Schönborn to present his collection of paintings. Works by Dutch and German masters such as Brueghel and Dürer were hung in a very dense arrangement typical of the baroque era.

Next to the Painting Gallery was the shelf-lined Library. One wall of books featured a magnificent built-in, double-door cabinet containing a baroque home altar. When the double-doors were



A guided tour of the Garden Palace
Photo: kollektiv fischka / kramar © Volkskundemuseum Wien

closed, the room served secular purposes. Next came the large Parade and Mirror Hall, with the small Mirror Cabinet behind it. In keeping with the fashions of that period, valuable mirrors were used to make rooms seem larger, reflect light, and create optical illusions.

From the centrally located Great Hall on the first floor, the eastward sequence of rooms began with the Billiard Room, the magnificent Bedchamber, and the eight-cornered Porcelain Cabinet through which one could reach the Large Gallery. The Porcelain Cabinet was used to display an arrangement of precious Asian porcelain hung on the walls and placed on ledges below the ceiling. In the Large Gallery, Count Schönborn presented paintings, sculptures, and further rarities. This display of wealth served to reflect the owner's taste or "good *Gusto*", as Küchel wrote.

The State Rooms on the bel étage were richly decorated. Stuccoed ceilings and mouldings were for the most part done in gold leaf, and the windows as well as the doors were decorated with wood inlays. Still in existence today are the original stuccoed ceilings in the former Mirror Cabinet, the Parade Hall, and the Painting Gallery. The stucco motif of the magnificent ceiling decoration in the Painting Gallery show the four seasons as well as the four virtues and four principal arts. Of the Painting Gallery's original display items, only the eight paintings whose frames are installed in the walls, plus the original ceiling painting by Imperial Court Painter Peter Strudel von Strudenhoff, are still present. These rooms are now used by the museums administration and can be viewed on tours of the building.

Present-day museum visitors enter via the vestibule and ascend to the first floor via the baroque Grand Staircase, which features a richly ornamented balustrade adorned with putti, vases, and vines carved from *Kaiserstein* (a very hard limestone from the group of quarries around Kaisersteinbruch in the Leitha Mountains). The former State Rooms, which have since been altered greatly in terms of their dimensions, are now used for special exhibitions and various events.

From the centrally located Great Hall on the first floor, the eastward sequence of rooms began with the Billiard Room, the magnificent Bedchamber, and the eight-cornered Porcelain Cabinet



Former painting gallery now used by museum administration

Photo: Mattias Kios © voikskunademuseum i vte





Former Service Wing with inner courtyard

Photo: kollektiv fischka / kramar © Volkskundemuseum Wien

S e r v i c e W i n g

A building's size and magnificence demonstrated the rank and status of its owner. Its decoration and ornamentation made visible not only his wealth, but also his social position. Likewise part of the aristocratic world, however, were spaces for household activities as well as for stables, all of which needed to be appropriately equipped.

Therefore, the Schönborn Garden Palace featured a Service Wing next to its representative Main Courtyard. The coaches arriving in the Main Courtyard would access the Service Wing by turning into a barrel-vaulted entrance-way. The Service Wing occupied the western part of the property along with the adjoining kitchen garden and Orangerie. Vehicles used their own entrance to reach its inner courtyard. This area contained carriage bays for the coaches and richly appointed stables for the horses.

*The former
Service Wing
is the oldest part
of the palace*

This former Service Wing is the oldest part of the palace. The property's earliest known owner, the Imperial Court and Chamber Sculptor Peter Conchortz, was documented in 1647. Traces of pre-existing structures can still be seen today in various cellars, on the ground floor, and in the form of a connecting spiral staircase.

Next to the Service Wing's carriage entrance is a historic kitchen area on the ground floor. This room was probably already part of a small manor here during the late 16th century. Remodelling work in 1956 turned up remains of a fireplace with a two-storey chimney, which were removed. But still visible today is a vault over a square central pillar.

Count Schönborn's aristocratic household and garden facilities required numerous servants. The servant quarters were most probably on the ground floor. Extant plans show how the Service Wing used to be longer by several rooms, extending toward the kitchen garden.

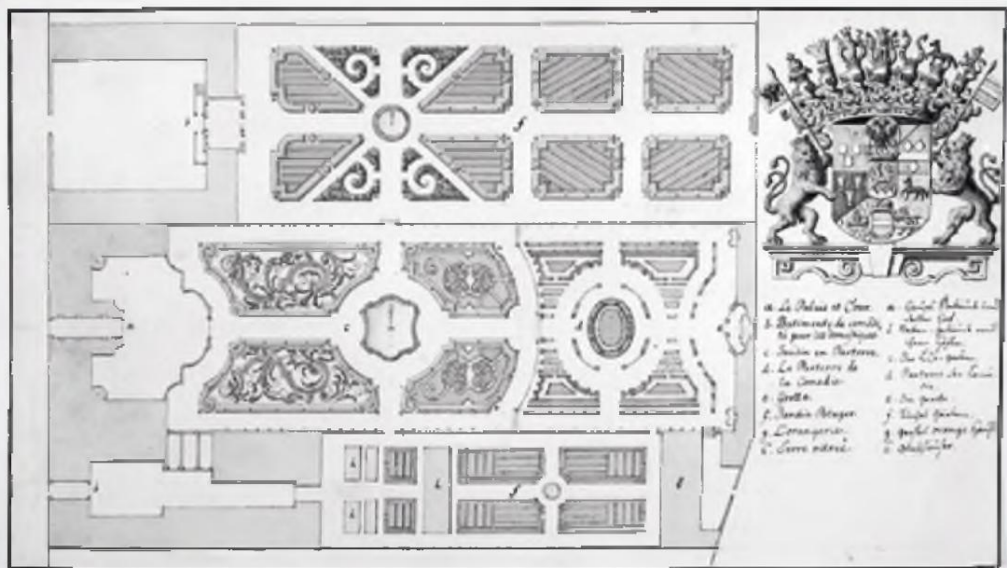


Photo collection in the inner courtyard basement
Photo: Matthias Klos © Volkskundemuseum Wien

A large room in the basement, from which a stairway leads to a small cellar, presents a mystery to us today. Three semi-circular, painted bays in the wall may have been niches for horse feeding troughs. A now-closed chimney, a water basin, and a stone work surface as well as the adjoining cellar storeroom, however, point more toward use as a kitchen. This space now houses the museum's collection of photographs.

A large room in the basement, from which a stairway leads to a small cellar, presents a mystery to us today

The former domestic rooms that enclose the inner courtyard have experienced major changes in terms of their dimensions. Today, they house a publicly accessible reference library with a reading room and stacks, an open kitchen, and activity spaces for the museum's Cultural Education Department, and they are also used as workshops, for storage, and for food preparation and various events.



Ground plan of the entire Schönborn estate
 From: Salomon Kleiner, Wien von 1724 bis 1740
 ÖNB/Vienna, Cod.min.9 /2, fol.99

Baroque Garden

In 1708, the Viennese architect Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt joined forces with Johann Kaspar Dietmann, the Court Gardener in Mainz, to plan a baroque pleasure garden according to French design principles. Their concept placed great emphasis on regularity and symmetry, with the complex they envisioned being structured into a specific sequence of garden areas designed for representation, for pleasurable strolls, and for use as settings for festivities.

In the immediate vicinity of the Palace was the so-called Parterre with its central pool and fountain. This terrace-like area was magnificently decorated and intended to be viewed from the *bel étage*, the building's splendid first floor. Artfully pruned boxwoods, hedges, colourful pebbles, and low-to-the-ground blooming plants served as lace-like ornamentation. And the various flower beds, for their part, were designed to draw the gaze to the palace's richly decorated garden façade and stucco-ornamented vestibule.

Extending behind the Parterre was the Bosquet (*Boskett*), a little wooded area with symmetrically arranged hedges and small trees. Two linden-lined avenues flanked this slightly elevated area of the garden and provided shade. In between, walls made of yew hedges formed so-called Cabinets (*Kabinette*) equipped with seating elements, thus serving as places to withdraw or meet. And since Count Schönborn was quite fond of Italian improvisational theatre, he had eight stone sculptures of stock *commedia dell'arte* characters placed at the Bosquet's centre.

This high-maintenance pleasure garden ended in an elongated garden wall fronted by arcades. These were topped with a balustrade featuring numerous sculptures. The garden wall was ornamented at its centre by a protruding structure with a single-walled, open-windowed

The complex was structured into a specific sequence of garden areas designed for representation, for pleasurable strolls, and for use as settings for festivities

upper storey topped by a gracefully swung pediment. Positioned in this upper storey's two side-openings were fountains that flanked a sculpture of a lion—the Schönborn family's heraldic animal—at the centre. Beneath all this, three protruding arches opened onto an interior space with a large wall fountain and cascade that was referred to as a grotto. It is written that Count Schönborn liked spending time here during the summer, since it was pleasantly cool.

For his fountains and the garden itself, the owner required large amounts of water. Since he owned springs in Ottakring, several kilometres away, he had the water he needed piped in from there. And in 1725, Schönborn enlarged his estate by acquiring the building next door: the little palace and garden of the Imperial Court War Paymaster Wisendo von Wisenburg. This building was eventually torn down during the 19th century so that Lange Gasse could be extended.

On the western side of the Garden Palace was the Service Wing, which included an interior courtyard. The kitchen garden behind it, which featured several greenhouses, was likewise symmetrical and adhered to a specific design. This area concluded with the so-called Orangerie, a building for non-hardy plants. Useful plants such as citrus trees were excellently suited to serving as representative objects, while they also satisfied the growing need for exotic fruits. The upper floor of the Orangerie was used to house the Count's guests. The second building with equally tall windows situated on the left at the far end of the overall garden complex, on the other hand, is known only from reports and engravings and not documented by any plans. It was evidently used to house birds, while its first floor likewise contained guest quarters. This copperplate engraving by Salomon Kleiner reproduced here shows an idealised view of the baroque garden that may not have conformed entirely to reality.



In the summertime, the Schönbornpark enlarges the Museum Garden
Photo: kollektiv fischka / kramar © Volkskundemuseum Wien

S c h ö n b o r n p a r k

The City of Vienna acquired the Schönborn estate on Laudongasse during its great phase of expansion. The suburbs were annexed, with the overall city being divided into municipal districts. During the mid-17th century, Laudongasse had still been known as “Hintere Alstergasse”.

The old garden paths take park visitors to the Park Gate of the Schönborn Garden Palace

In 1778, it was given the name “Herrn-Gasse”; at that point, it still belonged to the suburb of Alsergrund. Since 1862, it has been named for Field Marshal Baron Gideon Ernst von Laudon and been a part of Josefstadt, Vienna’s 8th district.

The 1863 administrative report by Vienna’s mayor at the time, Andreas Zelinka, emphasises the following objectives: the extension of Lange Gasse and the creation of a green recreational space for Josefstadt district’s residents. That same year saw an opening made between Floriangasse and recently renamed Laudongasse. In the process, an outbuilding of the Schönborn complex—the little palace that had belonged to the Imperial Army Paymaster Wisendo von Wisenburg—was razed along with its garden. The recovered area along the newly opened extension of Lange Gasse was used to build multi-storey apartment buildings. And the remaining garden area (around 10,000 m²) was opened to the general public as the Schönbornpark. Since then, this name has served as a lasting reminder of the man who built the adjacent palace—Count Friedrich Karl von Schönborn-Buchheim.

During World War II, the park’s western side saw the installation of an air raid shelter that now serves as a storage area for part of the museum’s extensive collections. The park itself is currently used in diverse ways for a range of cultural and athletic activities. But the old garden paths still take park visitors to the Park Gate of the Schönborn Garden Palace—and in 2014, a passage through the palace was opened so that, during museum hours, park visitors can use this passage through the palace’s main entrance free of charge to access the park from Laudongasse, as well.



Schönbornpark today
Photo: Matthias Klos © Volkskundemuseum Wien





Summer party in the Museum Garden

Photo: kollektiv fischka / kramar © Volkskundemuseum Wien

Museum Garden

When the city of Vienna acquired the Schönborn property and opened the Schönbornpark in 1862, the palace lost its large garden complex. The only green area left as part of the property was the former Main Courtyard. During the baroque era, this small area overlooked by the palace's representative garden façade had been the place where coaches had been, as is illustrated quite nicely in the engraving by Salomon Kleiner.

After the museum had taken up residence here in 1917, the remaining garden area was also used for museum exhibitions. And today, the garden remains an important part of the museum, being used for various events. The museum's Cultural Education Department runs educational programs here for visitors of all ages. Each summer, the Austrian

Each summer, the Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art invites the public to its summer party

Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art invites the public to its summer party—which also serves to kick off the annual open-air short film festival dotdotdot. And in pleasant weather, museum café guests enjoy food and drink here in this green urban oasis.



Garden of the Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art
Photo: Matthias Kios © volkskundemuseum.wien





Outer façade, ca. 1900
© Volkskundemuseum Wien

T e n a n t s

In 1734, Count Friedrich Karl von Schönborn-Buchheim resigned from his position as Imperial Vice-Chancellor in Vienna. He left the city and henceforth devoted himself to his position as Prince-Bishop of Bamberg and Würzburg. Prior to that, he had appointed Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt as General Inspector of all his estates. In 1740, Friedrich Karl had the city palace of the Batthyány family (now Palais Schönborn-Batthyány) on Renngasse purchased, to which the precious furniture and artworks from the Schönborn Garden Palace were then transferred. Thereafter, the Schönborn Garden Palace was let out to other noble families including the Counts of Sylva-Tarouca, Salm, and Wurmbrand.

By that time, the building looked much the worse for wear, for which reason locals referred to it as the Wanzenburg.

1820 saw Baron Johann Adam Wetzlar von Plankenstern move in along with his extensive gallery of paintings. In 1845, Baroness Amalia Pasqualati opened a private theatre here, which she received a concession to run publicly in 1860. The actor Julius Conradi then took over her theatre and added a theatre school in 1862. During that same year, the Schönborn estate was purchased by the City of Vienna. The baroque garden was designated a public park, and individual areas of the palace were made available to various further tenants. Restaurateur Joseph Benedikter opened a public house here; this *Bierhalle* hosted private celebrations, balls, and weddings. The former Schönborn Garden Palace was described around this time as a *Haus für Alles* (house for everything): a cooper and a casket maker opened up workshops, a democratic association held its meetings here, a gymnastics club trained in one of the halls, and new conscripts came here for their medical examinations once each year.

1870 saw the Garden Palace occupied by the newly founded Royal-Imperial Academy of Agriculture, which adapted the building for its own purposes and expanded the eastern wing out to the edge of Lange Gasse. Teaching began in 1872. When this institution moved



First-floor exhibition spaces
© www.detailsinn.at

out in 1896, the Garden Palace once again became available for a new use. By that time, the building looked much the worse for wear, for which reason locals referred to it as the *Wanzenburg* (Bedbug Castle). The Imperial-Royal Higher Regional Court of Vienna and the Imperial-Royal Viennese High Prosecutor's Office became the Garden Palace's next occupants in 1897. They were joined by various city offices, such as the one responsible for street cleaning, plus the militia Deutschmeister Schützenkorps.

*A cooper and a
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and a gymnastics
club trained in one
of the halls*

Following years of talks with the city government, the museum's founder and first director Michael Haberlandt was granted the Schönborn Garden Palace for use as a museum building. And it was in 1917 that the Museum of Austrian Ethnology, founded in 1895, finally moved in. At the time, the museum was still under the patronage of Charles I, Austria's last emperor, for which reason it was called the *Kaiser-Karl-Museum für österreichische Volkskunde* (Emperor Charles Museum of Austrian Ethnology) up to the end of the monarchy.

To this day, the Schönborn Garden Palace is owned by the City of Vienna. The Association for Folk Life and Folk Art is the tenant and uses the entire property for its museum and exhibitions.



Staff of the Emperor Charles Museum of Austrian Ethnology with
helpers (soldiers) during the move to the Schönborn Garden Palace.
Seated: Museum Director Michael Haberlandt; behind him at right:

Arthur Haberlandt, March 1918

© Volkskundemuseum Wien

The Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art

The Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art is the largest museum of its kind in Austria. The museum endeavours to reflect societal processes in its present-day collecting, preservation, research, and exhibiting activities. These centre on social and ethnic groups' past and present cultural expressions, and the museum's geographic emphasis is on the European cultural sphere.

It was Michael Haberlandt and Wilhelm Hein, two employees of the Prehistoric-Ethnographic Department of the Imperial-Royal Natural History Court Museum in Vienna, who founded what is now the Association for Folk Life and Folk Art in 1894. Prominent representatives of the House of Habsburg as well as further aristocratic families, bankers, and artists proceeded to lend their support to his association and its Museum of Austrian Ethnology (Museum für österreichische Volkskunde), which was founded in 1895. This museum's collection was conceived as a "monument to the multi-ethnic state", representing the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its ethnic groups. And in the interest of "ethnographic comparison", its collecting activities were expanded to encompass other European regions, as well. The museum's first exhibition took place in the main hall of the Old Stock Exchange on Vienna's Ring Road. In 1913, the decision was made to relocate to the baroque Schönborn Garden Palace—which the museum finally occupied in 1917. With the museum's substantive orientation having changed in the meantime due to the Habsburg Monarchy's collapse, its first permanent exhibition on Laudongasse finally opened in 1920.

*In keeping with
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perspective*

Upon the establishment of the Austro-Fascist corporatist state in 1933/34, those running the museum oriented themselves towards the cultural policy precepts of a specific "Austria-Ideology" (*Österreich-Ideologie*). And with the "annexation" (*Anschluss*) of Austria by the National Socialist German Reich in 1938, National Socialist ethnology—as it had been established



The Bird of Self-Knowledge as a motif for the
museum logo—a popular graphic realisation
of the saying *Take yourself by the nose*
Photo: Craig Dillon © Volkskundemuseum Wien

in Germany following 1933—came to play the role of an auxiliary discipline. It served goals relating to ideology and power politics, such as the reinforcement of “Teutonic-German Heritage”. Then-director Arthur Haberlandt therefore positioned the museum as a “House of the German People in the Danubian East”. The new political authorities devoted increased attention and financial support to the museum during the initial years of their dictatorship, and numerous ethnologists placed their research in the regime’s service.

In its present-day provenience research and restitution of stolen objects in keeping with the Austrian Art Restitution Act, the Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art collaborates closely with Austria’s Commission for Provenience Research. Since 2015, comprehensive work has been done to research the prior owners of those objects that have entered the museum’s collections since 1938, with wrongfully acquired objects being returned to their rightful owners.

During the period immediately following 1945, those in charge of the Austrian Museum of Ethnology once again trained their attention as researchers and exhibitors on elements of a specifically “Austrian identity”. The exhibitions of this period frequently included the word *Österreichisch* (Austrian) in their titles, as did publications in the field—such as the *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* (Austrian Journal of Ethnology), the newsletter *Volkskunde in Österreich* (Ethnology in Austria), and the *Österreichische Volkskundliche Bibliographie* (Austrian Ethnological Bibliography).

From 1966 to 2000, the Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art ran an annex at Schloss Gobelsburg in Lower Austria, and from 1966 to 2008 it showed a selection of religious folk art objects in the old pharmacy of the former Ursuline Abbey in Vienna. The year 1970 saw the creation of an additional annex with its own staff in the province of Burgenland that showed the museum’s extensive holdings of Eastern and South-Eastern European objects. This location—known as the *Ethnologisches Museum Schloss Kittsee*—was closed in 2008.

In keeping with the ideals of its founders, today’s Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art is committed to a European perspective. The past few decades have seen it once again implement this core outlook in large parts of its programme, with current exhibition formats and the permanent display collection featuring the Museum’s extensive and diverse holdings from across Europe.

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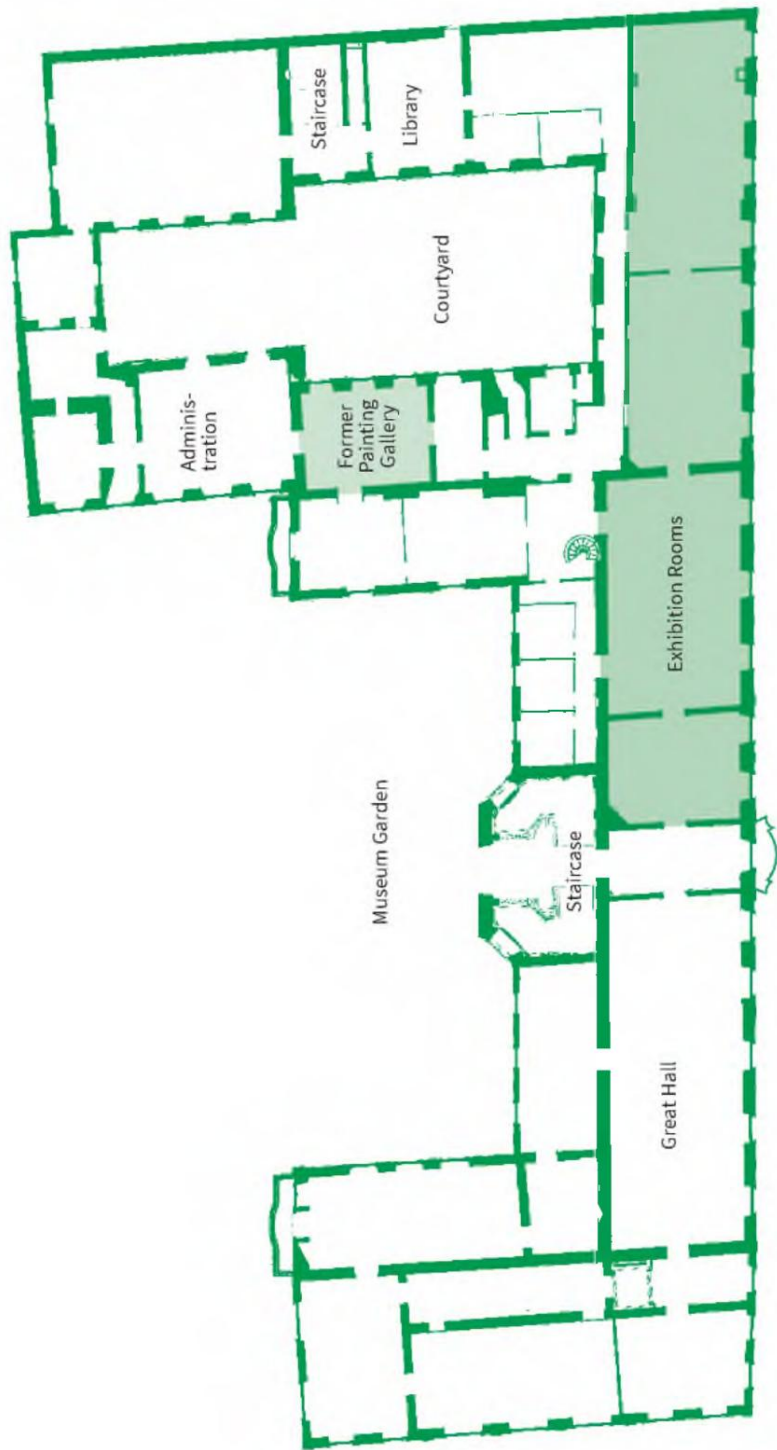
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