



Prague 1900: Poetry and ecstasy

Michael Huig

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This lavishly illustrated book introduces the world of fin-de-siècle Prague. Around 1900, city's artists and artisans began to develop a particular ornamental language inspired by the contemporary revival of Czech culture and influenced by Art Nouveau, Jugendstil, and the Vienna Secession. To begin with, lyricism and poetic symbolism dominated the visual arts. Jan Preisler, one of the most important figures of the time, created sensual paintings and sculptures based on themes connected to the writings of such Czech authors as Zeyer and Brezina. Other artists such as Koblíha and Hlaváček focused on turbulent forms, dramatic expressions of torment, and the macabre. In the applied arts, exuberant floral and vegetal motifs were gradually transformed into geometric patterns.

Prague 1900 charts the effects of the emergence of modernism and the search for Czech national identity in both the fine and the applied arts, as well as in architecture, music, and literature. The book also includes a wealth of illustrations of interiors, architectural and sculptural details and documentary photographs. Biographies of the most important artists are provided, as well as a full chronology of artists and events.

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