

# EDITORIAL

Since its founding in 2023, the *Belvedere Research Journal* has continued to deepen scholarly exchange across Central Europe and to highlight new perspectives on its visual culture. Our third issue reflects this commitment by presenting five contributions on nineteenth- and twentieth-century art: two longer, peer-reviewed Research Articles and three Discoveries reviewed by the editorial team. Each article encourages readers to reflect on questions of representation, identity, and the interplay between political and artistic conditions in the region.

Both Research Articles center on artistic practices in Vienna around 1900, but they take very different approaches. In the first article, “Diplomatic Art History,” Thomas Moser turns to diplomatic architecture to explore how national identity was negotiated and displayed in foreign cultural environments. Focusing on the conflict-ridden construction of the first purpose-built French embassy in Habsburg Vienna—a project initiated in 1901—Moser traces the tensions between state architect Georges Chedanne, the ministries, and the ambassadors regarding the optimal representation of France in Vienna. While Chedanne aimed to create a modern Gesamtkunstwerk blending Art Nouveau and Eclecticism, the Foreign Office insisted on a confident representation of the Third French Republic. Moser argues that it was precisely this tension between artistic ambition and political authority that fundamentally shaped the embassy’s architecture and interior design.

The second article, “From Masks to Modernism,” discusses a key figure of Austrian Modernism: Egon Schiele. His early Expressionist portraits and self-portraits, characterized by expressive countenances and gestures, have been the focus of scholarship on the artist for half a century. In his article, Christian Bauer argues that theatrical phenomena, rather than psychological introspection, provided a crucial impetus for Schiele’s early Expressionism and for a young generation of artists in early twentieth-century Vienna. In this context, Bauer identifies Schiele’s friend, the artist Erwin Osen, who had a strong theater background, as a central source of inspiration for Schiele’s work. The article productively contributes to ongoing debates within Schiele scholarship, including those invigorated by Laura Feurle in our previous issue.

The three essays in this issue’s “Discoveries” section offer microhistorical insights—detailed analyses of specific works or artists—that have broader relevance. Arranged chronologically, the first article, “Calm Before the Storm?” by Anna-Marie Kroupová,

Thomas Zimmer, and Karl Klaus Körner, examines two seascapes (1846) from the Belvedere collection by the Trieste-born painter Lorenzo Valentino Butti. Through detailed archival and iconographic analyses, the coauthors fundamentally reevaluate works that were once considered relatively conventional Venetian scenes. The study not only proposes correcting the title and location of one of the paintings, but, more importantly, it also situates them as expressions of the Habsburg maritime ambitions in the nineteenth century.

The second essay, “Jewish Modernity in Multiplicity” by Julian Adoff, offers an insightful exploration of Maurycy Gottlieb, a Jewish/Polish artist whose self-portraits express a multifaceted, hybrid sense of self. Rather than choosing between his Polish and Jewish identities, Gottlieb—through his artwork—challenges the notion of a singular, uniform national identity in the late nineteenth century. Adoff demonstrates that multiple, intersecting national identities coexisted in the region at a time when nationalist movements strove for homogeneity. By focusing on Gottlieb’s dramatization of the self, the article resonates with the Schiele study on performance in this issue, thus pointing to a broader cultural pattern of how artists articulated their identities through visual expression.

The concluding article of this year’s issue, “Otto Hettner’s *Picknick* from 1906” by Kati Renner, argues for the long-overdue recognition of Otto Hettner, a Modernist painter, graphic artist, and influential art dealer whose oeuvre was decimated by war and confiscation. Central to the essay is the painting *Picknick* [Picnic] (1906), which was acquired by the Modern Gallery in 1911 (now the Belvedere). Through a detailed analysis, Renner reconstructs Hettner’s creative process, which was shaped by his multifaceted engagement with Impressionism, Symbolism, Expressionism, and monumental painting. She situates Hettner within the broader early Modernist movement and underscores his significance and contemporary recognition in Vienna, as evidenced by contemporary reviews.

The realization and continued online presence of the *Belvedere Research Journal* rely on the dedicated collaboration of numerous individuals and institutions, whom we thank sincerely. We are especially grateful to the authors for entrusting us with their research and for enriching this journal with their insightful contributions. Our appreciation extends as well to the anonymous reviewers, whose expertise has been invaluable in maintaining the journal’s scholarly rigor. Finally, we wish to acknowledge the editorial board for their ongoing guidance and support in selecting suitable reviewers.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the University Library of Heidelberg for their invaluable technical support, with special recognition to Maria Effinger, Bettina Müller, Frank Krabbes, Joshua Nicolaus, and Daniela Wolf, whose expertise played a crucial role in establishing the journal’s digital presence. Our gratitude also goes to Katharina Holas

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At their core, the five contributions in this issue are united by their engagement with the complexities of cultural production in Central Europe, specifically its entanglements with power, identity, and visibility. We hope that you find this issue engaging and inspiring and that it offers you both insight and enjoyment as you explore its content.



### The Editorial Team

Christian Huemer, Johanna Aufreiter, Anna-Marie Kroupová, Luisa Ziaja, Katarina Lozo

**Christian Huemer** has been director of the Belvedere Research Center since 2017. He studied art history in Vienna, Paris, and New York, where he gained his doctorate with a thesis titled "Paris–Vienna: Modern Art Markets and the Transmission of Culture (1873–1937)." From 2008 to 2017, he headed the Collecting and Provenance department at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles. His research focuses on the history of the international art market, French and Austrian Modernism, and digital art history. He also serves as editor-in-chief of the Brill series *Studies in the History of Collecting & Art Markets* and the *Belvedere Research Journal*.  

**Johanna Aufreiter** has been a research associate and scientific project coordinator at the Belvedere Research Center since 2018. She is a committee member for The Art Museum in the Digital Age, the annual Belvedere conference, as well as coeditor of the *Belvedere Research Journal*. She studied art history and German philology at the University of Graz. She was a university assistant in Graz and Vienna, heading the Laboratory for Cognitive Research in Art History at the University of Vienna from 2013 to 2017. Her research focuses on optical theories in the Middle Ages, empirical reception research, and digital art history.  

**Anna-Marie Kroupová** is a PhD candidate in cultural heritage studies at the University of Vienna and a research associate at the Belvedere, Vienna. Her PhD project, supervised by Professor Noémie Étienne, examines the lived experiences and artistic production of art students from the Global South in Czechoslovakia during the latter stages of the Cold War. She received her MA from the University of Vienna in 2021, winning the Sir Ernst Gombrich Talent Award for her thesis. She is also coeditor of the peer-reviewed *Belvedere Research Journal*.  

**Luisa Ziaja** is an art historian and serves as chief curator and head of collections at the Belvedere Museum Vienna. She is codirector of the postgraduate study program / ecm—educating, curating, making at the University of Applied Arts Vienna; a member of the University Council of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna; and part of expert juries and advisory boards. In her curatorial and discursive practice, she deals with the relationship between art, society, and politics (of history), as well as with the history and theory of museums and exhibitions. She is coeditor of the peer-reviewed *Belvedere Research Journal* and of numerous exhibition catalogs and anthologies, including the series *curating: ausstellungstheorie & praxis* published by Edition Angewandte.  

**Katarina Lozo** has been assistant curator for contemporary art and assistant to the chief curator at the Belvedere since 2024. She completed her studies in art history at the universities of Bonn and Leipzig and, from 2013 onward, worked as an assistant curator and research associate at the Albertinum of the Dresden State Art Collections, where she realized numerous exhibitions in the field of modern and contemporary art. From 2019 to 2022, as curator of the Schenkung Sammlung Hoffmann at the Dresden State Art Collections, she conceived and coordinated exhibitions and a program.



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*Issue 3 cover illustration:* Otto Hettner, *Picnic* (detail), 1906, oil on canvas, 63.5 × 80 cm. Belvedere, Vienna, inv. no. 1164 (Photo: Belvedere, Vienna).