

## Press information

# Art. Light. Freedom – Vienna Secession is brought to life with tunableWhite

**“To the age its art, to art its freedom” grandly adorns the main entrance. In striking capital letters. As it has done for more than one hundred years. And now the creative freedom associated with this place has become even greater. Throughout the building. Thanks to artificial light that replicates the quality of daylight. Or to be more precise, thanks to tunableWhite LED lighting solutions developed and realised by Zumtobel together with the architect Adolf Krischanitz.**

*Dornbirn, 13. March 2019* – It stands resplendent on the Karlsplatz square. Flanked by traffic on all sides, it still somehow manages to radiate a feeling of incredible serenity. White walls, golden ornaments – perhaps brighter now than ever before. Then there are the pale green inner sides of the bay leaves that perfectly come together to form a sphere on the roof. The Latin words “Ver Sacrum” (holy spring), the name of the official journal of the Union of Austrian Artists (*Die Vereinigung bildender Künstler Österreichs*) in the early years of the Secession, can be seen to the left of the front steps. Designed by architect Joseph Maria Olbrich and opened in 1898 as a showroom for the Union of Austrian Artists, the [Vienna Secession](#) (or *Wiener Secession*) is more than just a building. It is an architectural manifesto for Art Nouveau – or, as they call it in the German-speaking world, for the *Jugendstil*. For a return to the origins. For getting back to nature. And now, after a year of general refurbishment under the direction of the renowned Viennese architect [Adolf Krischanitz](#), the Wiener Secession is shining with fantastic new splendour.

The traffic noise stops almost as soon as the front door closes. Visitors first find themselves in an entrance hall defined by two lateral arch-shaped wall niches, where solemn tranquillity and glistening daylight characterise the space. But where does this light actually come from? Glance quickly upwards and no windows are immediately apparent. And that is just what Olbrich wanted. He has integrated daylight in a subtle way by adding two long wall openings over the arches, from which light pours out into the high room. Like a waterfall, you could say.

Visitors then experience space reduction realised to an absolute minimum in the large main exhibition room that directly adjoins the entrance hall. Right-angled, completely white and divided into a high middle zone and two lower peripheral areas. The space forms a neutral backdrop for the exhibits, enabling them to be shown off to their full effect. Under white glass ceilings. In daylight. In a room that is as bright as day. In fact, so much so that observers could almost be forgiven for thinking that they are standing outside. Indeed, presenting artworks under daylight conditions was one of Olbrich's core design ideas.

### **Pure light – almost as if the glass itself is shining**

As part of a previous set of renovations, fluorescent lamps were mounted on the steel roof construction above the glass ceiling to give the impression of daylight in the evening and during winter. Yet this solution had its limitations, delivering inefficient and unnaturally cold light from a series of clearly visible illuminated points on the opaque glass ceiling. During the latest general refurbishment, [Zumtobel](#) worked closely with the architects to develop a special lighting solution that uses [TECTON slim tunableWhite](#) LED luminaires to guarantee a pleasant, even illumination. Light that is pure. Light that makes it look like the glass itself is shining. Light that can be continuously adjusted between 3000 and 6000 K. And light that therefore mimics natural daylight. “Artificial light with daylight quality is actually better than daylight in exhibition spaces, because it enables us to create constant and calculable lighting situations – at any time,” explained Herwig Kempinger, President of the Vienna Secession. While [TECTON slim tunableWhite](#) LED luminaires present works of art in just the right light, the changeable light colours can also be utilised to provide atmospheric lighting for festive functions and special events. The lighting technology from the exhibition rooms has also been specified for the basement – the only difference being that the luminaires in the lower floor are mostly visible.

A series of flat, closely aligned vaulted ceilings help give the gallery its distinctive appearance. Painted in white to match the walls, these striking elements create an elegant wave effect above the heads of the visitors, bringing a certain dynamism to the otherwise restrained spaces. [LINARIA tunableWhite](#) LED light lines are mounted in tracks on the crest of the vaults, whose gentle curves also serve as reflectors. As an added bonus, [ARCOS tunableWhite](#) LED spotlights can be clicked into the tracks for even more flexibility.

### **Wide-area direct light creates an almost three-dimensional effect**

Another highlight of every visit is the Beethoven Frieze by Gustav Klimt. The painting, measuring 34 metres long and 2 metres high, deals with our desire for happiness and is the only artwork in an impressive high-ceilinged room. Spherical floating female figures, a golden knight, a gorilla-like giant. Matt colours combined with sparkling and shiny golden surfaces, buttons made of glass and mother-of-pearl, stained glass and mirrored panels. Without doubt one of the masterpieces of Viennese Art Nouveau. While [TECTON slim tunableWhite](#) LED luminaires – similar to those in the main exhibition room – emit light for the illuminated ceiling, [SUPERSYSTEM II](#) LED spotlights immerse the Beethoven Frieze for the first time ever in direct wide-area light, creating an almost three-dimensional effect. This kind of solution was not previously possible due to the heat generation and UV emissions of conventional luminaires. All the [tunableWhite](#) installations in the basement were added as part of the second construction phase, using luminaires that make the most of advanced technology to ensure completely flicker-free light in a colour temperature range of 2700 to 6500 K.

### ALVA spherical luminaires – discreet, yet very much in fashion

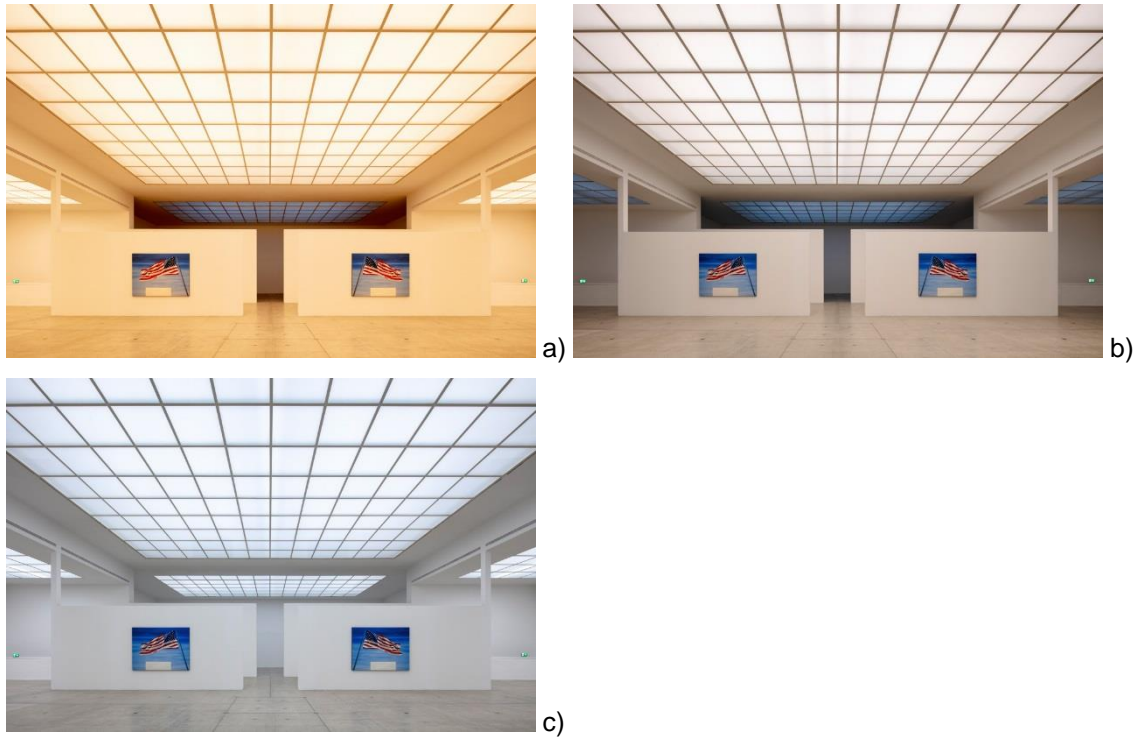
Before leaving the Vienna Secession, it is certainly worth making a short detour to the gift shop in a room just off the entrance hall. This is where visitors can pick up all kinds of souvenirs, posters and books – all illuminated by four [ALVA](#) LED pendant luminaires. Developed by Hermann Czech and Adolf Krischanitz in collaboration with Zumtobel as part of [the editions](#) special collection from the Austrian lighting specialist, these restrained fittings harmonise perfectly with the historic architecture. The luminous glass spheres deliver pleasant indirect illumination for gentle background lighting, while integrated LED downlights project vertical accents from above. “Previous spherical luminaires produced light that was too diffuse and generally insufficient. With the ALVA fitting, all three lighting effects can now be controlled independently of each other,” reported Adolf Krischanitz. Here, as everywhere else in the building, visitors experience the subtle functionality and agreeable atmosphere of lighting solutions that also offer artists and curators the greatest possible creative freedom – in fact, more freedom than ever before in this very special building.

#### Photo captions:

(Photo Credits: Zumtobel, Photography: Faruk Pinjo)



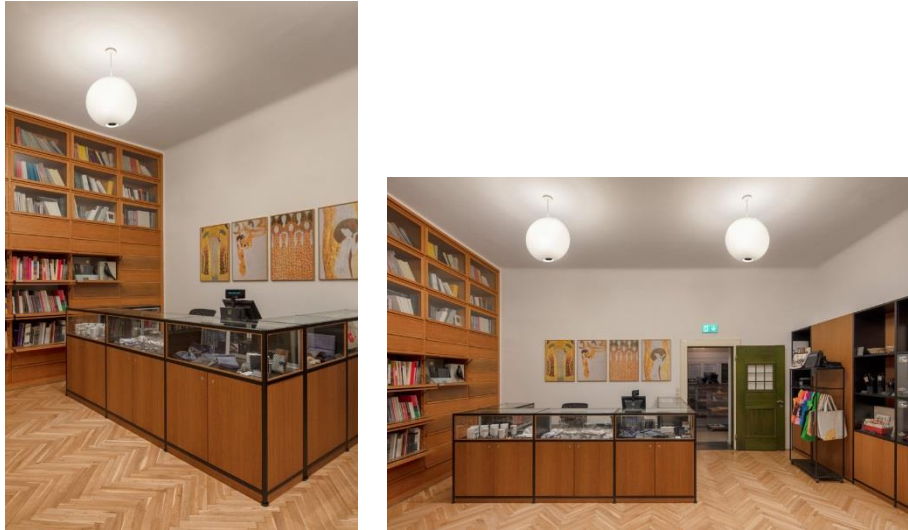
**Fig. 1:** It stands resplendent on the Karlsplatz square. Flanked by traffic on all sides, it still somehow manages to radiate a feeling of incredible serenity: the Vienna Secession. Perhaps brighter now than ever before – thanks to tunableWhite LED lighting solutions developed and realised by Zumtobel together with the architect Adolf Krischanitz.



**Fig. 2:** During the general refurbishment, Zumtobel developed a special lighting solution that uses TECTON slim tunableWhite LED luminaires to guarantee a pleasant, even illumination with e.g. 3000 K (a), 4000 K (b) or 6000 K (c). / Courtesy of Ed Ruscha und Gagosian



**Fig. 3:** While TECTON slim tunableWhite LED luminaires emit light for the ceiling in e.g. 3000 K (a), 4000 K (b), 6000 K (c), SUPERSYSTEM II LED spotlights immerse the Beethoven Frieze for the first time ever in direct wide-area light, creating an almost three-dimensional effect.



**Fig. 4:** Before leaving the Secession, it is certainly worth making a short detour to the gift close to the entrance hall, where visitors can pick up all kinds of souvenirs, posters and books. Illuminated by four ALVA LED pendant luminaires, developed by Hermann Czech and Adolf Krischanitz in collaboration with Zumtobel as part of *the editions* special collection.

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#### **About Zumtobel**

We are passionate about designing and producing the highest quality of light. Our work is driven by the knowledge that the right light can create the right environment for people to thrive when tailored to their individual needs. Guided by a unique design approach, we continuously push our boundaries in search for perfection through unique and timeless design. As we develop the next generation of lighting, we build on our family heritage to refine the aesthetics of light and shape the lighting of tomorrow. With a special blend of passion, grace and avant-garde ideas, we turn light in to an experience and remain committed to the goal of improving the quality of life through light. Zumtobel is a brand of the Zumtobel Group AG with its headquarters in Dornbirn, Vorarlberg (Austria).

**Zumtobel. The Light.**