

The Beginnings and Development of the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna.

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The Beginnings and Development of the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna

Beatrix Darmstaedter

Abstract

The Collection of Historic Musical Instruments of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (KHM) was founded during the First World War when the inventories of the collections owned by Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Este (1863-1914) went to the Imperial museum in Vienna after his assassination. From 1916/17 on, the renowned art historian Julius von Schlosser (1866-1938) and his successor, Hermann Julius Hermann (1869-1953), organized one of the most important collections and exhibitions exclusively dedicated to musical instruments. They assembled valuable items from the 16th century that had belonged to Archduke Ferdinand II's (1529-1595) Cabinet of Curiosities, objects collected by members of the Obizzi dynasty in the castle of Catajo, and recently acquired historical instruments connected with the Viennese tradition of instrument making. In 1920, Schlosser wrote his fundamental catalogue on the newly established collection that is considered to be the first systematical and scientific publication on historic musical instruments in Austria. During the following years, he strove towards amplifying the inventory and expanding the exhibition. He transferred precious items originally belonging to the movables depot of the erstwhile court (Hofmobiliendepot) and instruments left in former imperial residences, such as the castle of Laxenburg. The contribution reviews previously unpublished archived sources documenting the early history of the collection and broaches the issue of the extended

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exhibition in the 1920s, discusses the thematic orientations of the collection and the principles in museum didactic that consequently arose. Moreover, the position of the collection and its policy in the context of other museums with similar emphases at that time will be analyzed.

La collezione di strumenti musicali antichi del Kunsthistorisches Museum a Vienna (KHM) é stata fondata durante la prima guerra mondiale quando l'inventario delle collezioni dell'Arciduca Francesco Ferdinando d'Asburgo-Este (1863-1914) è stato portato, dopo la sua uccisione, al museo imperiale a Vienna. Dal 1916/17 in poi il famoso storico dell'arte Julius von Schlosser (1866-1938) e il suo successore Hermann Julius Hermann (1869-1953) hanno organizzato una delle più importanti collezioni e esibizioni dedicata esclusivamente a strumenti musicali antichi. Hanno assemblato strumenti preziosi del XVI secolo che facevano parte della stanza delle curiosità dell'Arciduca Ferdinando II (1529- 1595), oggetti raccolti da membri della dinastia Obizzi nel castello di Catajo e oggetti recentemente acquisiti legati alla tradizione Viennese di costruzione di strumenti musicali. Nel 1920 Schlosser ha scritto un catalogo completo della nuova collezione che è considerato la prima pubblicazione sistematica e scientifica di strumenti musicali antichi in Austria. Negli anni successivi Schlosser ha cercato di allargare l'inventario di oggetti e la collezione, che si è inoltre arricchita di preziosi esemplari originariamente situati nel Deposito imperiale di mobili di corte (Hofmobiliendepot) e di strumenti musicali abbandonati nelle residenze imperiali come il castello di Laxenburg. Il contributo esamina fonti inedite che documentano la prima storia della collezione, affronta il tema dell'esposizione ampliata del 1920, discute l'orientamento tematico della collezione e i principi di didattica museale che ne risultarono. Inoltre, il contributo esamina la posizione della collezione e la sua strategia nel contesto di altri musei con la stessa tematica.

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