

# 2016

## 200 years of the Austrian National Bank



1€; 18.01.2016; 170,000; offset with applied gold foil; Herbert Wähler; ÖSD.

In 2016 it will be 200 years since the “privilegierte oesterreichische National-Bank” was founded as the domestic central bank. Austrian Post is recognising this anniversary by issuing a commemorative stamp. The main reason for establishing the bank at that time was to restore order to the Austrian monetary system, which had been destroyed by the Napoleonic Wars. Even before that, the Habsburgs had already experimented with commissioning an institution to issue paper money. The National Bank – the first governor of which was Count Adam Nemes – was accorded a uniquely privileged status: it had the exclusive right to issue banknotes. This first “banking privilege” was accorded to the institution in 1817, and the permanent board set up in 1818. The purpose was to ensure the smooth supply of money and credit. From its inception right through until today, the National Bank’s task has been to stabilise the currency – and to do this independently of the government, which is a right it has had to defend repeatedly, especially during the early years. In 1878 the National Bank of Austria became the Austro-Hungarian Bank, operating branches in all parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Its tasks included, among others, the introduction of the Krone in 1892, the new currency gradually replacing the Gulden.

When the monarchy fell, the National Bank of Austria was re-established in 1922, once again with the aim of stabilising the monetary situation and counteracting the post-war inflation. In 1925 the country was again given a new currency as the Schilling was brought in. During the time of the German Reich the independent institution was liquidated and all its stocks of gold and currency had to be sent to Berlin. However, in 1945 the National Bank of Austria was once more able to take up its former task, and the so-called “Schilling law” restored the Schilling as the legal tender of Austria. A truly definitive regulation was introduced with the Austrian State Treaty and the Nationalbank Act which followed in 1955.

With the introduction of the Euro as the new currency in 1999, the bank’s task of regulating monetary and currency policy may have been transferred to the European Central Bank, but the OeNB remains an integral component of the European system of central banks and continues to act on the basis of personal, financial and institutional independence. Today the main task for which the OeNB is responsible is the operational implementation of monetary policy within Austria. It contributes to maintaining stability in pricing and in the money and credit markets, manages currency reserves, processes payment transactions in Euro and supplies Austria’s population with secure cash. Since 1925 the National Bank of Austria has been housed in the impressive building on Otto-Wagner-Platz in Vienna’s Alsergrund district which is depicted on the commemorative stamp. In the foreground two figures from the relief at the main entrance can be seen: Mercury, the messenger of the gods and the god of commerce, and Fortuna, the goddess of fate and fortune.

## 120 years of ÖAMTC (Austrian Automobile, Motorbike and Touring Club)



68c; 20.01.2016; 250,000; offset; Cornelia Seirer/David Wuchte; Enschedé. **B**

This year the ÖAMTC (Österreichischer Automobil-, Motorrad- und Touringclub, Austrian Automobile, Motorbike and Touring Club) celebrates the 120th year of its existence. The Austrian Touring Club (ÖTC) was founded in 1896, followed by the Austrian Automobile Club (ÖAC) in 1898. In 1946 the two combined to become the ÖAMTC, which nowadays represents the interests of car drivers and (motor)cyclists and provides its members with many different services. Austrian Post is congratulating the club on this special anniversary by

issuing a commemorative stamp. Today the ÖAMTC has around two million members whom it helps keep on the road. Breakdown assistance has been available since 1954, and since 1986 the service can be reached from anywhere in Austria using the emergency number 120 – making the number 120 doubly significant for the club in 2016. Since the service was introduced, the “yellow angels” – a name derived from the yellow motorbikes with side-cars used by the first roadside assistants – have been indefatigable, and are now on the go around the clock to ensure the mobility of their members. In addition to technical centres, up-to-date traffic news, a travel agency, a range of insurance policies and countless technical services, the ÖAMTC also offers its members legal assistance in its 120 strategic points.

The ÖAMTC helicopter rescue service is of particular importance: the “Christophorus” helicopters have been in service since 1983 and have already saved many lives. With its breakdown and accident cover the club provides its members with numerous services in the event of accidents and other incidents at home or abroad, ensuring that they enjoy that “great feeling of being part of the club”. The legendary Marcus car depicted on the stamp is about the same age as the automobile club. Siegfried Marcus (1831–1898) was an automobile pioneer, an innovative inventor and a brilliant designer, who, in addition to his car, made numerous engines and other technical apparatus, tools and instruments. The second Marcus car from 1888/89 (the first vehicle is no longer in existence) is considered the oldest automobile in the world still in its original state and drivable, and is today protected as a national monument. The car had a single cylinder four-stroke petrol engine with a capacity of 1,570 cubic centimetres and an output of approximately 0.75 PS, enabling it to cover around six to eight kilometres per hour. The Marcus car has been owned by the ÖAMTC since 1898, and has been exhibited on loan by the Technisches Museum Vienna since 1915. In 2006 the museum and the ÖAMTC collaborated to build a replica of the car, which occasionally participates in classic car rallies. The design on the commemorative stamp, devised by designer David Wuchte, shows the legendary Marcus car compared to a transparent study of a modern vehicle, reflecting the enormous strides in technology that have been made in the 120 years since the founding of the ÖAMTC.

## Photographic art in Austria



68c; 28.01.2016; 250,000; offset; Dorothee Golz; Enschedé. **B**

For the series “Fotokunst Österreich” (Austrian Photographic Art) Austrian Post presents a work by the versatile artist Dorothee Golz. The commemorative stamp shows the image “Steeple-hat Woman”, one of Dorothee Golz's “digital paintings” which incorporate historical motifs into a contemporary setting.

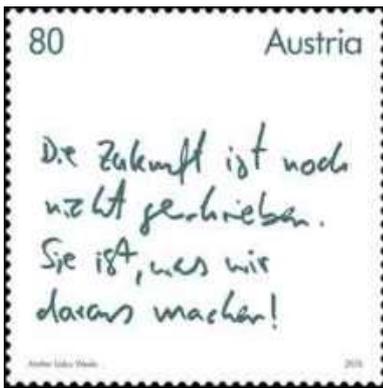
Dorothee Golz was born in Mühlheim an der Ruhr in Germany in 1960. In 1986 she graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Plastiques in Strasbourg, having studied cultural anthropology and art history in Freiburg in tandem. Since 1988 she has been living and working in Vienna. Her most important expressive media are photography, drawings and sculptural works. She achieved international recognition as a result of her participation in documenta X 1997, where her sculpture “Hohlwelt” (Hollow World) and her drawings were exhibited. This was followed by

solo and group exhibitions in Europe, Asia and the USA. In 2013 she was awarded the City of Vienna's Fine Arts Prize. In the same year her comprehensive oeuvre was featured in a retrospective in the Tyrolean Landesgalerie.

Since 2004 the artist has been working on digital paintings. For this she borrows portraits from their contextual and historical setting and brings them into the modern age. The painted face is reconstructed in its entirety using photographs and incorporated into a new setting, which has been planned to the last detail: the clothing, accessories, setting and body language all belong to the modern age and frame the “historic” facial features. Although the face is incorporated into the photograph in a harmonious way it still jars. Golz explains this as follows: “The fact that the faces retain their temporal distance is interesting in itself. Once again we bring all our knowledge and our cultural memory into play.” So she produces pictures of the face of a Madonna given a contemporary body and dressed in jeans, or Albrecht Dürer wearing a leather jacket while he and his girlfriend lean against a wall adorned with graffiti. Creating this kind of time-consuming projects can take as long as two years.

The face for the “Steeple-hat Woman”, which was created in 2005, was taken from the “Portrait of Maria Baroncelli” by Hans Memling, painted in 1470. Dorothee Golz shows the complex psyche that is hidden behind the face. “By reproducing the portrait and adding a contemporary posture to it, a self-aware, modern woman emerges, who appears to be glancing around at her surroundings with an amused look, and whom you can easily believe ready and able to throw off rapid-fire, quick-witted comments any time she likes.” Her other works, such as her sculptures, are often inspired by familiar every-day objects, yet seem surreal: a fur-covered coffee service, for example, or life-size interiors in transparent plastic bubbles.

## Faktor Zukunft



80c; 28.01.2016; 350,004 in blocks of 6; offset with blind embossing; Atelier Liska Wesle; Enschedé.

“Die Zukunft ist noch nicht geschrieben. Sie ist, was wir daraus machen!” (The future has not yet been written. It is what we make it!) This is the slogan with which the design team Anna Liska and Andreas Wesle won this year's stamp design competition, held by Austrian Post in collaboration with the daily newspaper “Die Presse”. This year's theme was “The Future Factor”: What is it that will define Austria as a successful location for business in the future? This was the question for which the creative participants had to come up with a design for a stamp which must be produced graphically, through illustration or typographically in a size of 35 millimetres by 35 millimetres.

5,000 Euro awaited the winner.

A spirit level hanging perpendicularly was one design; the motto “Schau' ma mal” (Let's just wait and see) arranged in front of mountain peaks another. The designs submitted also included eagles bearing a ski-jumper aloft, and speech bubbles, to remind us that dialogue is a means of resolving conflicts and problems. 96 designers took part in the competition, the only requirements being that they must be at least 18 years of age and were only allowed to submit one design each. Otherwise the competition was open to anyone with a creative urge. A preliminary panel comprising experts in graphics and communication as well as representatives from “die Presse” and Austrian Post selected 15 finalists, which were then showcased in the “Presse am Sonntag” and on the newspaper's website. The creative people behind the designs were also showcased, and a text explaining their design idea published.

Getting into the final required just that little bit more: “The message must still work in that critical small format,” said Jörg Pribil, Head of Philately at Austrian Post. For graphic designer Erwin K. Bauer (Buerobauer) this meant that the quality of the motif was demonstrated “by the graphic reduction”. Humour was also essential: “In times of crisis it is much easier to look ahead if you do it with humour, and design ideas which include an ironic wink to the viewer motivate us to do so. It was often the new, surprising take on everyday things that convinced us,” Bauer continued. On top of all that, the winning design should tell a story if it is to be well received by philatelists and stand up to closer scrutiny. “Above all else, philatelists play close attention to the details of the design,” said Jörg Pribil.

The winning design by Liska and Wesle shows the sentence quoted at the start of this article, printed white on white on the stamp using varnish. This symbolically makes the stamp a white (i.e. blank) page, and is intended to encourage everybody to get involved in helping to create the future, as the two artists explain. The Liska Wesle design studio works in Vienna and Berlin, providing graphic solutions in the art and culture sector. Its customers include Tanzquartier Wien, Secession Vienna, MUMOK Vienna, Kunstraum Niederösterreich, 21er Haus, “Spex” - the magazine for popular culture and many others.

## The Viennese trumpet



160c; 28.01.2016; 180,000; offset with varnish; Maria Schulz; ÖSD.

The trumpet belongs to the family of brass instruments, so called because they are made of metal. There are two methods of construction for trumpets, and the trumpet illustrated on this stamp is constructed according to the method used in Austria and Germany. It differs from the method used in the USA, for example, in the valves. The former type has rotary valves rather than Périnet valves, also known as piston valves. The valve

casings of the rotary valves are positioned in a different place to those for the Périnet valves, that is to say, the distance from the mouthpiece is different. Both this positioning and the type of valve makes the sound from Austrian and German trumpets different from that produced by the trumpets used in the rest of the world. Austrian trumpets are also more commonly used for classical music, Périnet trumpets for jazz. The valves play an important part in playing the trumpet: depressing the valve whilst blowing into the instrument causes the natural notes to be lowered by a semitone (second valve), two semitones (first valve) and three semitones (third valve), because when the valves are depressed the sound waves have to travel further through the tubing than when they are open.

So what is there specifically Viennese about these trumpets, if trumpets with rotary valves are also being produced in Germany? The difference is more to do with the acoustic style rather than the instrument itself. The “Institute of Acoustics” talks about a particular style of interpretation “which differs markedly from international norms in terms of the stylistic execution and the acoustic preferences”. This can be ascribed to an awareness of tradition among local instrumentalists: the Wiener Klangstil (Viennese sound style) came into being because Viennese musicians were not permitted to incorporate into their instrument-making techniques all those innovations which were introduced during the 19th century and which were supposed to increase the volume and make the instruments easier to play – Vienna always was different. So it is not simply a question of whether the tone colour you achieve with an Austrian trumpet is richer or poorer in partial tones, but whether the trumpets here or in the rest of the world sound lighter or darker, or whether you can achieve softer or clearer, more abrupt transitions between notes with them – all of that is what differentiates trumpets from the German-speaking regions in general from those produced anywhere else. More than that, however, it is about the traditional Viennese style of playing and about instrument manufacturers such as Lechner, Schagerl and Co, who are favoured by local musicians.

## UNICEF: a Fair Chance for Every Child



68c+2€32 surcharge; 18.02.2016; 250,000; offset; Karin Klier; Enschedé.

The United Nations Children's Fund (formerly UNICEF - *United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund*) was founded on 11th December 1946 to provide emergency aid to children in post-war Europe. With this commemorative stamp, Austrian Post is supporting UNICEF Austria - the 2.32 Euro premium will be used to support UNICEF's refugee aid projects in Syria and the surrounding area.

“If Europe is to have a future, something must be done about these children.” said Herbert Hoover, co-founder of UNICEF in 1946. He was referring to the countless children in Europe left suffering from malnutrition, tuberculosis, rickets or anaemia, with no warm clothes and often without a roof over their heads after the end of the Second World War. With the help of UNICEF these children were given clothing, food and medical aid - thereby ensuring the survival of many Austrian children too. In 1953 UNICEF was established as a permanent special organisation of the United Nations, and from that time on has intervened on behalf of children in need, mainly in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Health, nutrition, clean water, education, child protection and emergency aid, as well as helping people to help themselves, continue to be important aims for the organisation. In 1989 the UN convention on the Rights of the Child was brought in, bringing the needs and rights of children to the fore in all political and social decisions. Today UNICEF is active in 190 countries around the world. In 1962 UNICEF Austria was founded as part of the international UNICEF network; the association is funded entirely from donations and income generated by the sale of greetings cards.

Throughout the world there are now more crisis zones than ever before, where war, violence or natural disasters are forcing people to flee their homes. The majority of refugees stay in the countries bordering their homeland, and UNICEF supports them through the supply of food, clothing, medical stations, heating and emergency winter quarters. Never before have there been so many children among the refugees: more than half of all Syrian refugees are children. They are particularly at risk of becoming victims of violence, exploitation or abuse, and the traumatic experiences they have undergone at home and during their flight leave deep scars in their psyche. “A fair chance for every child” is what UNICEF demands: every child must have the chance of a life lived in safety in decent living conditions. This includes education, because that is the key to the future for these children. For this reason, UNICEF organises emergency schools and educational materials where they are needed, in order to give the children some stability and a sense of perspective in their lives.

70 years ago it was European children who benefited from the support provided by UNICEF. Today it is we who are called upon to support those in need - refugee children urgently need this aid.

## Fritzelack (“a spectacular fall”: classic trademarks series)



1€; 18.02.2016; 170,000; offset; Dieter Kraus; Enschedé.

A poor apprentice craftsman is left lying flat on his stomach, arms and legs outstretched: he has fallen over; he has done a “Fritzelack”. Tins roll away from him, and the red paint that has spilled out is making a large puddle on the floor in front of him, as well as leaving its mark on his nose and cheeks. The poor unfortunate has even lost one shoe.

The poor painter's apprentice has slipped on a freshly painted floor, because the image comes from an advertising poster for the company Fritze Lacke, which, so the advert tells us, makes the best floor coatings. The logo of this company with a long tradition behind it has become a common saying: in the local Viennese dialect to do a “Fritzelack” means to take a spectacular tumble of any kind. “Fritzelack” is even used in skiing to describe a fall by a skier who has lost control of his body, and

is left lying there like the craftsman on the poster that has been used as the design for this commemorative stamp, issued by Austrian Post as part of the “Klassische Markenzeichen” (classic trademarks) series.

The original poster was designed by the Austrian graphic artist Adolf Karpellus, who was born in Galicia in 1869, and by the turn of the century was a much sought after exponent of his craft. He studied at the academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and the Parisian Académie Julian, was a member of the Künstlerhaus and specialised in portraits, landscapes and still lifes, but was also highly sought after as a postcard designer, poster artist and illustrator. He became one of the early experts in poster design, which he had also studied in Paris. “Karpellus has an inexhaustible wealth of colourful ideas, which, without attracting attention by being obtrusive, nonetheless inspire a desire for a beautiful backdrop one minute or a salesman's goods the next”, wrote the collector and expert Ottokar Mascha in his work “Österreichische Plakatkunst” (Austrian Poster Art). His particular style of poster was obviously popular with many contractors, and Karpellus became an expert poster designer, receiving the commission to produce the advertisement for Fritze Lacke in 1908.

“Denn in Lacken ist bestimmt Fritze an der Spitze” (“When it comes to paint, Fritze is without doubt the best”) was one of the slogans used by this firm, which grew out of a company that was founded in 1876. Otto Fritze, who was born in Kleinhöfel in an area that now belongs to modern day Poland and moved to Vienna at the start of the 1870s, founded the company as the “Hetzendorfer Lack-, Farben- und Firniß-Fabrik O. Fritze”. Its products were dispatched to all parts of the empire. Even the imperial household used products manufactured by the company, which was later run by Otto Fritze's wife, then his sons, and which continued to be managed by his immediate descendants until as recently as the 1990s. Since 2012 Fritze Lacke has ceased to be an independent company, becoming part of the company Rembrandtin Farbexperte, but the circular “Fritzebub” trademark has been retained for many varieties of their products.

## Josef Ressel, inventor of the screw propeller



80c; 19.02.2016; 470,000 in blocks of 10; offset; David Gruber; Enschedé. **B**

From the “Österreichische Erfindungen” (Austrian Inventions) series, Austrian Post presents a great inventor who changed maritime technology for ever. Sadly, Josef Ressel was not able to profit from the international success of his ship’s propeller during his lifetime. Josef Ressel was born on 29th June 1793 in Chrudim in Bohemia. From 1812 onwards he studied technological subjects such as mechanics and hydraulics at the University of Vienna. However, when the “Polytechnische Institut”, later to become Vienna University of Technology, opened in 1815, he could not afford to continue his studies. Luckily a friend helped him win a scholarship and he was able to graduate from the Forestry Academy in Mariabrunn. From 1817 onwards he worked as a forester in Carniola, Ljubljana and finally in Trieste, where, as the Marine Forestry Officer, he managed the forests belonging to the imperial navy. He found his work unsatisfying and so began experimenting with all kinds of inventions. For

example, he developed a process to extract colourants, new methods for processing wood, a pneumatic dispatch system between Vienna and Trieste and a new ball-bearing – in total he was granted ten patents or so-called privileges.

However, he was particularly interested in developing a screw propeller for steam ships, which could then replace the previously used paddle steamers and even sailing ships. In 1827 he was awarded a “privilege” for his ship’s propeller, and had already started to test it by building a ship called the Civetta. After finally overcoming a number of difficulties, the first test voyage was made in 1829 and was primarily successful, although a pipe in the steam engine burst and the authorities refused to sanction further test voyages. Although his propeller had worked impeccably, Ressel’s competitors presented the test voyage in a very different light. As a result, Ressel lost his financial backing and had to try to market his invention himself. Acting in good faith himself, he ceded his plans to a French company, which proceeded to profit from them without passing any of the success and profit on to him. The propeller soon became standard throughout the world, but Ressel received no recognition for it. When the British government offered a prize of 20,000 pounds to the “true inventor” of the propeller, Ressel submitted his documents, but received no response. It was claimed that his submission had gone astray, and the prize was shared between four British applicants. Josef Ressel died on 9th October 1857 during a business trip to Ljubljana. Even if some question whether he was the sole inventor of the ship’s propeller – there were other similar inventions developed around that time – his influence on international shipping cannot be denied. In 1863 a monument was dedicated to him in the Resselpark in Vienna’s Karlsplatz, celebrating his invention.

## 4 centuries of the Austrian Archducal Crown



1€50; 04.03.2016; 170,000; offset; Gustav Assem; Enschedé.

In 2016 the actual crown of Austria will be 400 years old, and Austrian Post is celebrating this anniversary by issuing a commemorative stamp. Although called a hat, this is, in fact, the crown of the Archduchy of Austria and was intended as the visual representation of the Hapsburg's claim to power. In fact, it can be traced back even further than these four centuries in local history: in 1356 Emperor Charles V decreed how and by whom the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire was to be elected

in the future, as a result of which Austria's ruler, Rudolf IV, was passed over. As a countermeasure he presented the "Privilegium maius", which he claimed was drawn up by his father-in-law, Emperor Charles, but which was later proved to be a fake, in which he attempted to place himself on an equal footing with the Electors. At the same time he also designed his own coronet: the Archducal hat. However, it was only in 1453 that the privileges which Rudolf IV sought were conferred by Frederick III when he became the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, and the Duchy of Austria became an Archduchy. There are many dukes in the world, but archdukes can only be found in the lands which were ruled over by the Hapsburgs. By adding the prefix, they hoped to set themselves apart from the other imperial princes and to underscore the importance of their own dynasty.

The Austrian Archducal Hat, the symbol of the unity of the Austrian hereditary lands, has been preserved to this day. It is the centrepiece of the collection at Klosterneuburg Monastery, and symbolises the Archduchy of Austria, the heartland of the Hapsburg Empire. Archduke Maximilian III, the Regent of Tyrol and brother of Rudolf II, presented it to the monastery in 1616 as a consecration gift, and it was kept there together with the relic of the skull of Saint Leopold. It was believed that some divine power would thus be transferred to the ruler who was "crowned" with it. The Monastery's statute stipulates that the archducal coronet may only be removed from the monastery for very special occasions and for a maximum of 30 days, the main reason for its removal being the ceremony of Homage by the Estates for the accession of a new ruler. The penalty for breaching these conditions is excommunication. The last ceremony of Homage by the Estates was held in 1835 for Emperor Ferdinand I.

The last time that the coronet was removed from the monastery for an official occasion was the funeral of Empress Zita in 1989. As befits a symbol of absolute rule, which, furthermore, was intended as a counterpart to the Hungarian Holy Crown of St. Stephen and the Bohemian Crown of St. Wenceslas, the coronet is sumptuously crafted using exquisite materials such as enamel, precious stones, pearls, velvet and ermine. The coronet with its tines and crossed arches is set with rubies, emeralds, diamonds and pearls and is surmounted by a blue sapphire set in gold and a small golden cross. Neither the name of the craftsman responsible nor the place where it was made are known. From March to November 2016, Klosterneuburg Monastery is dedicating a special exhibition to the Austrian archducal hat.

## The 2016 Subscriber's Bonus Stamp, the Fire-Lily



Brilliant orange and opulent, they can be seen blooming in many gardens in the early summer - it is hard to believe that the fire lily (*Lilium bulbiferum*) can also be found growing wild in Austria. Austrian Post has chosen these brightly coloured lilies as the motif for the loyalty bonus stamp for 2015, and on 5 March 2016 expressed its thanks to its loyal customers with this colourful floral greeting. (The stamp is distributed in 2016 on the basis of one's purchases in 2015)

Lilies are among the most beautiful and the most varied flowers in the world. In addition to the many cultivated hybrid varieties, there are over 100 wild varieties which grow in the northern hemisphere in Asia, Europe and America. Here in Austria, too, we can find wild-growing lilies, such as the pink blossomed, turban-shaped Turk's cap lily or these blazing orange fire lilies. With a bit of luck the latter can be found in Alpine mountain pastures and on the fringes of forests in subalpine locations, and they are also at home in other southern and central European mountain ranges.

The fire lily grows to over a metre in height, with elongated leaves and up to five orange-red blooms on each stalk. As with all lilies, there is always an even arrangement of six sepals and six stamens. The sepals, which unlike other varieties of lily are only lightly bent, often have dark papillae and fine hairs. Unlike most other varieties of lily, the fire lily is not scented. It is mainly pollinated by butterflies. A particular characteristic of the fire lily is its ability to form so-called bulbils in the axils of the leaves. These are small bulbs which subsequently fall to the ground and thus ensure propagation. It is to these bulbils that the fire lily owes its Latin name *Lilium bulbiferum*.

The fire lily is frequently confused with the daylily, which has similar, likewise orange or yellow, blooms. However, the long, narrow leaves of the daylily do not, as in the fire lily, grow from the stem, but rather directly from the roots. What is more, daylilies do not actually belong to the lily family, but rather to the Xanthorrhoeaceae. Similarly, the lily which is so often used in heraldry is not actually a true lily, but rather an iris.

In the garden, fire lilies are easily cultivated in a sunny to semi-shaded spot and make no particular demands as to soil type. The bulbils can be left in the ground through the winter. With their big, flamboyant blooms, fire lilies are eye-catching in any flower bed. But it is not only in the garden that these blazing blooms create an opulent effect; they are perfect for bouquets too, and in the language of flowers the fire lily is - in keeping with its name - the symbol for passion.

## Centenary of death of Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach



1€60; 05.03.2016; 180,000; combination-printing; David Gruber; ÖSD. **B**

This year sees the hundredth anniversary of the death of one of the greatest female writers: Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach died on 12th March 1916 in Vienna at the age of 85. She left behind an impressive oeuvre, mostly comprising stories and novels. Austrian Post is honouring the great writer with a commemorative stamp. She was born 13th September 1830 as Baroness Marie Dubský at Zdislavice Castle near Kroměříž in Moravia. Her stepmother recognised the young girl's talent at an early age and encouraged it: Marie began writing stories whilst still a child, first in French and later in German. As a member of the nobility she had an insight into aristocratic circles, but was always interested in the "little people" and their fate, and justice was always important to her: "The right of the strongest is the strongest wrong."

At the age of 18 she married her cousin, Moritz von Ebner-Eschenbach, who was 15 years her senior, and a few years later the couple moved to Vienna. Marie first tried her hand as a playwright, but with only limited success, attracting mockery from many who envied her. In 1879 she trained as a clockmaker – which was highly unusual for that era – and a year later her story *Lotti, die Uhrmacherin* (Lotti, the Clockmaker) was published, to popular acclaim. She had found her genre.

This was followed by works in prose such as *Aphorismen*, *Glaubenlos*, the novel *Das Gemeindegeld* (Child of the Neighbourhood) and the *Dorf- und Schlossgeschichten* (Village and Castle Stories). The latter includes the world-famous story *Krambambuli*, which tells of a dog who perishes because of a conflict of loyalty to his old and new masters. Other novels, stories and novels in dialogue form followed, and Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach enjoyed great literary success. She was awarded the Austrian Cross of Honour for Science and Art, and in 1900 became the first woman to receive an honorary doctorate from the University of Vienna.

She died on 12th March 1916 in Vienna, thus sharing both the year of her birth and the year of her death with Emperor Franz Joseph. She was buried in the family vault of the Counts Dubský in Zdislavice. Her clock collection can still be admired to this day in the Clock Museum in Vienna. When she wrote her successful stories Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach was already about 50 years old. Throughout her entire life she remained sensible of the divide between rich and poor and of her social responsibilities: "To have and not to give is often worse than to steal." Her stories are highly detailed studies of her milieu. Set within both the castle and the village, and populated with lively characters, or deal with conflicts experienced by the human soul. Her wise but witty aphorisms are still much quoted.

## 125 years of the Kunsthistorisches Museum



1€; 08.03.2016; 170,000; offset; Anita Kern; Enschedé. B

Whether it be Caravaggio's "Madonna of the Rosary", Rubens' "The Fur", Raphael's "Madonna in the Meadow", Bruegel's "The Peasant Wedding", Arcimboldo's "Summer" or Vermeer's "The Art of Painting", the number of significant works of art housed in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, or KHM for short, is countless. The Kunstammer, which opened in 2013 following prolonged renovation work, and the Egyptian and Near Eastern and other collections also boast many treasures. In 2016 the museum, which is one of the most popular attractions in Vienna, will celebrate the 125th anniversary of its existence. Austrian Post is celebrating this special anniversary by issuing a

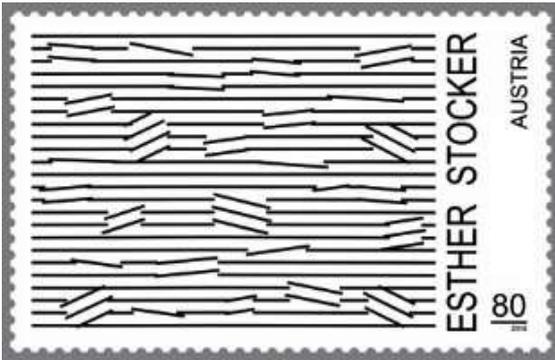
commemorative stamp.

On 17th October 1891 Emperor Franz Joseph I formally opened the newly constructed building which was to bring together the imperial collections and show them to the public. Since then the Kunsthistorisches Museum has been one of the most important museums in the world. The museum was designed by the architects Gottfried Semper and Carl von Hasenauer as part of the planning for the ring road, and building work started in 1871. The museum was initially called the Kunsthistorisches Hofmuseum, subsequently becoming the Kunsthistorisches Staatsmuseum Wien and finally acquiring its current name in 1921. Following the dispossession of the house of Hapsburg-Lorraine, the collections in the KHM passed into state ownership and underwent a reorganisation.

Whilst some works had to be handed over to successor states following the First World War, new ones from Jewish collections were added in the years between 1938 and 1945. The provenance of many of these is still being investigated in restitution procedures. It is not only the masterpieces on display at the KHM that constitute great art: Gustav and Ernst Klimt, Franz Matsch and Hans Makart, important artists of their day, were involved in the interior design. The design on this stamp, taken from high up on the north wall of the museum's stairwell, comes from Gustav Klimt, and is part of a cycle showing the history of the fine arts. The mural, entitled "Egypt", shows a female figure holding the Ankh, the Egyptian symbol of life, in her hand. She is standing in front of images of the gods Horus, and Thoth and of the vulture which symbolises the goddess Nekhbet.

The KHM today houses a picture gallery, the Egyptian and Near Eastern Collection, the Collection of Greek and Roman Antiquities, the Kustkammer Wien, the Coin Collection and a library. Over the years the space in the main building has been outgrown, meaning that parts of the collections have had to be transferred elsewhere. As a result, the Theater Museum, the Weltmuseum Wien, the Theseus Temple, the Carriage Museum and Schloss Ambras in Innsbruck now also belong to the Kunsthistorisches Museum. For this anniversary year, 2016, the KHM will be staging a special exhibition entitled "Feste Feiern" (Celebrating Special Events): between 8th March and 18th September works from the museum's collections which deal with feasts, coronations, balls, weddings, carnivals and the like will be on display. Furthermore, the KHM is offering visitors the opportunity to enjoy free entry on their birthday.

## Young art in Austria



80c; 16.03.2016; 250,000; offset; Esther Stocker/ Dieter Kraus; Enschedé.

Black and white grids and lines which frustrate the viewer's expectations through breaks and displacements - these are typical of Esther Stocker's work. The painter and installation artist, born in Schlanders in South Tirol in 1974, loves to create something predictable and then to break it apart, as in the unnamed work from 2015 which was used for this stamp in the "Junge Kunst in Österreich" (Young art in Austria) series. She often exhibits order in her works, only to break it

apart in the very next step. She uses this method in her painting as well as in her video works, room installations and her installations on façades. She is also interested in perceptions of art, which she challenges when she apparently imposes strict rules on her works, and then does not adhere to them herself.

From 1994 on Esther Stocker studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna under Eva Schlegel. She later continued her studies at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera in Milan and the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena in California. In 2001 Esther Stocker was awarded the Austrian State Scholarship for the Fine Arts. She has also received many awards, having been awarded both the Anton-Faistauer Prize and the Msgn. Otto Mauer Prize - one of the top prizes for the fine arts in Austria - as well as the City of Vienna's Fine Arts Prize and the Paul Flora Prize.

Her first solo exhibition was held in 1997 in the Galerie Trabant in Vienna. Galerie Krobath (VVimmer), which remains Stocker's home gallery, and the Antonio Ferrara Gallery in Reggio Emilia followed in 2001. Over the years more solo exhibitions have followed, such as those in the Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig in Vienna, in the Künstlerhaus Hanover, the Kunstraum Dornbirn, the Center for Contemporary Non-Objective Art in Brussels, in Museum 52 in London and many others. Esther Stocker has also participated in group exhibitions, in the Austrian Belvedere Gallery, for example, or in the Viennese Parliament building; in the Vasarely Museum in Budapest; in MUAC, Mexico City; in the 21er Haus in the Belvedere Palace; in the Austrian Cultural Forum, New York; in the Essl Museum in Klosterneuburg; in the Künstlerhaus Vienna; in the BA-CA Kunstforum and in the Secession, as well as at the Venice Biennale.

Nowadays she works in Vienna - and at the limits between painting, room and object. Her chosen colours are the non-colours black and white. So, for example, when she creates her grid structures on paper and folds them into huge bundles, then crumpling them, turning them into sculptures, she is exploring the possibilities of an abstract language of form on every level. She brings abstraction into the room. The limits between painting and installation are constantly shifting in her works, but a reference to the traditions of abstract art are a constant in her oeuvre, which simultaneously addresses the topics of order and chaos.

## Contemporary Art: Martha Jungwirth



1€; 16.03.2016; 170,000; offset; Regina Simon; Enschedé.

Rosita Desmoliano - that was the tender but ironic nickname given to Martha Jungwirth by her husband, art historian and director of the “20er-Haus” museum Alfred Schmeller, as she frequently, upon seeing works by the great masters, responded with “Des mol i a no!” (I am going to paint that too). Austrian Post is now dedicating a commemorative stamp to the distinguished artist, featuring an untitled work from 2013 taken from the “Fundraising” series.

Martha Jungwirth, who was born in Vienna in 1940, studied at the University of Applied Arts from 1956 to 1963, and was able to celebrate her first success in the 1960s, is something of a loner on the domestic art scene. And this despite participating in joint exhibitions entitled “Wirklichkeiten” (Realities) with Franz Ringel, Peter Pongratz, Wolfgang Herzig and others from 1968 onwards. The artists were, on the one hand, seen as a loose group, on the other, says Jungwirth herself, it was about “how each individual perceives the world - not about everyone pulling together”.

Whilst the other “Realities” artists wanted to present a contrast to the then predominating abstract art, and proclaimed their aim of promoting a socially relevant, more realistic style of painting, Jungwirth always worked at the limits between abstract and representational art. She consistently went her own way, which, to some extent, also revolved around the sociocultural environment of women. So, for example, she created her famous “Indesit Series” for the *documenta 6* in Kassel, in which she exhibited drawings of household equipment in a style reminiscent of x-rays. It was this series that gained Jungwirth her first international acclaim. However it was not only during this period, but also later in her career that everyday objects and situations proved sources of inspiration, and her works are always reflections on reality rather than reproductions of it.

Martha Jungwirth loves to experiment with colours, and her works are always highly energetic, regardless of whether she chooses to present their focus in a watercolour painting or working with oils or ink. She likes to allow the viewer to see traces of the painting process. She applies colour with élan, enjoying and often painting outdoors; in fact, as expert Florian Steininger once said, nature is literally transformed into atmosphere and painting tout court. Hans-Peter Wipplinger, who staged the first retrospective of Jungwirth's works in the Kunsthalle Krems put it in these terms: “Distinguished by their eruptive gestural stroke and strong colors, Jungwirth's characteristic compositions are poetic and dramatic notations of experiences, moods, and memories, abstracted to a degree that leaves room for a free flow of associations.” Martha Jungwirth, who lives and works in Vienna and Neumarkt an der Raab, was awarded the Austrian Cross of Honour for Science and Art in 2012; she also received the Theodore Körner Prize and the Joan Mirà Prize early in her career.

## Austrian sacred art: The Melk Cross



1€70; 17.03.2016; 180,000; combination-print; Peter Sinawebl; ÖSD. **B**

The Melk cross is considered the most precious treasure in Melk Abbey: it includes a fragment of wood which is supposed to have come from the cross of Jesus and is, consequently, one of the most precious relics in the Roman Catholic church. As part of its “Religious art in Austria” series, Austrian Post is presenting the Melk Cross on a special engraved stamp. The particle of the True Cross, as splinters from the cross of Jesus are called, was donated to the Babenbergs, who resided in Melk Abbey, in 1040 by Margrave Adalbert.

The Melk cross has had a chequered history. In 1169 it was stolen by a cleric and subsequently reappeared in Vienna’s Scottish Abbey. According to the legend, as the interested parties could not agree on who the cross now belonged to, the cross returned, as if of its own volition, to the abbot at Melk following a judgement by God. A boat with the cross on board miraculously sailed upstream along the Danube from Vienna, and the cross was thus eventually restored to Melk. In 1362 Duke Rudolf IV commissioned the current exquisite housing for the cross. Whilst this was being made, the valuable wooden fragment was stolen yet again, but this time the thief was caught and the relic returned to the Abbey.

The new housing was artistically fashioned from silver-gilt and richly decorated with precious stones, cameos, enamel and pearls by Viennese goldsmiths. The four evangelists are depicted at each end of the cross on the reverse, with the crucified Christ depicted in the centre. The back of the housing can be removed to reveal the fragment of the True Cross, for which reason the precious stones have been fashioned as screws. Melk was a centre of the Babenbergs’ power as early as A.D. 1000. Leopold II founded the abbey in 1089 and gave it to the order of Benedictine Monks, who still manage it today. Even in the 12th century the abbey had its own school and scriptorium, where valuable manuscripts were created. In 1297 fire destroyed the entire abbey, and for a long time afterwards it struggled to survive, eventually, however, becoming a centre for the counter-reformation.

During the 18th century, the abbey, which had previously only undergone essential repairs, was completely rebuilt under the direction of the Baroque architect Jakob Prandtauer. Artists such as Paul Troger and Johann Michael Rottmayr were responsible for the frescoes in the interior. Melk Abbey, prominently positioned on a mountain high above the banks of the Danube, thus became one of the most important Baroque buildings in Austria. The impressive Abbey library, with its ceiling fresco by Paul Troger, houses valuable manuscripts from the Middle Ages, including a fragment from a manuscript of the Song of the Nibelungs dating from the 13th century. Melk Abbey is also home to the tomb of St. Coloman.

## Motorcycles - Puch 125 LM



23.03.2016; 500,000; Offset; David Gruber; Enschedé

This commemorative stamp shows a motorbike from one of the most famous Austrian makers of cars, motorbikes and bicycles: a Puch 125 LM from 1923, the first year that this model was produced.

Gifted mechanic Johann Puch founded his first bicycle factory in Graz in 1890. The Puch “Styria” bicycles were a sales hit throughout Europe, and the financial success enabled Johann Puch to turn his attention to the new technology of petrol engines with his newly founded “Johann Puch - Erste steiermärkische Fahrrad-Fabriks AG” (First Styrian Cycle Factory AG). They soon produced the first motorised bicycles and the legendary Puch Voiturette, the first Puch car. As he had previously done with his bicycles, Johann Puch sent his motorbikes to international races, where they proved highly successful, earning them an outstanding reputation. The engines for them were also developed in the Puch workshop. From 1903 onwards motorised two-wheelers went into serial production, followed shortly afterwards by cars.

During the First World War Puch was a supplier for the Austro-Hungarian army. However, as a result of financial difficulties, after the war Puch was forced to merge with other companies, which led to the creation of “Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG” in 1934. Following several restructurings and divisions, the traditional Puch works in Graz are now owned by the automotive industry supplier Magna; bicycle production was transferred to Piaggio in 1987.

Production of cars and large four-stroke motorbikes was halted in 1917, with the company on the verge of liquidation. However, inspired by the Italian technician Giovanni Marcellino, they began to develop cheap, small two-wheeled vehicles for mass consumption, a so-called “people's motorbike” with a twin-piston two-stroke engine - the Puch 125 LM. Thanks to the torpedo shaped tank with the Puch logo, the 125 LM was quickly given the nickname “cigar or Zeppelin Puch”. Between 1923 and 1927, 2,500 Puch 125 LMs were produced; there was even a sports version and a special model for ladies. With an output of 2 hp and a two-speed gearbox, the 125 LM was able to reach speeds of up to 60 km/h. It did not have a kickstarter, and instead had to be push-started.

Puch motorbikes were highly successful right through until the 1950s, the mopeds in particular being a popular means of transport in the post-war years. The legendary Puch Maxi moped went into production in 1965, and its various models were a worldwide sales hit. The legendary small car, the Puch 500, was introduced in 1957, and remained in production until the 1970s. Puch brand bicycles, including E-bikes and the classic Waffenrad, continue to be produced today and are distributed by the Austrian Faber Company. However, the founder of the company did not live to see all of this: he died before the start of the war in 1914.

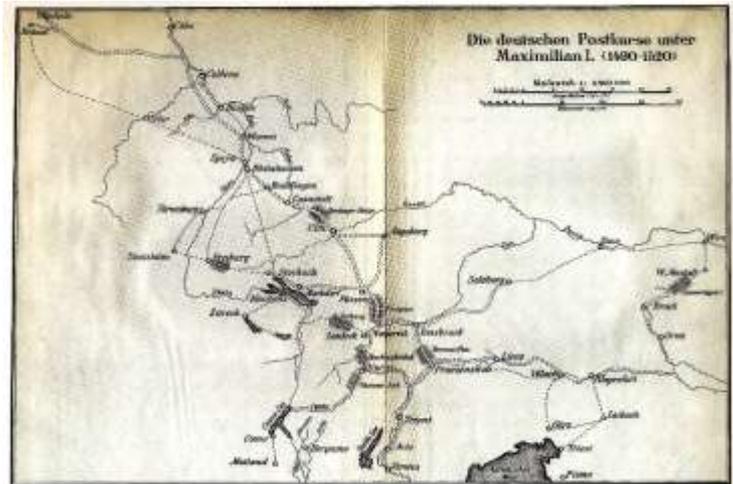
## 500 years of the 1516 postal treaty



The stamp's design shows a courier from the 16th century who is handing over a sealed missive. On the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the postal treaty of 1516, Austrian Post is issuing a commemorative stamp to celebrate this historic event. The history of the Austrian postal service starts with Maximilian I, who was the Duke of Burgundy, King of the Romans, Archduke of Austria and subsequently Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Maximilian chose Innsbruck as the site of his main residence and established a continuous courier service between it and the Burgundian Netherlands, where his young son Philip was growing up, and another to the French court, where his daughter lived. Janetto, Franz and Johann Baptista de Tasso, who later changed their names to "Taxis", were engaged to organise this postal service. The missives were transported by couriers on horseback, and the horses were changed at contractually agreed inns along the way.

Maximilian's son Philip, also known as Philip the Handsome, was Duke of Burgundy and later became the King of France. He appointed Franz Taxis – who had now been promoted to the nobility, becoming "von Taxis" – to the post of Master of the Post for Burgundy in 1501. In 1505 a postal treaty was signed which stipulated routes and transportation times, allowing 5½ days for the stretch between Brussels and Innsbruck, or 6½ days in winter, for example. Franz von Taxis was answerable "with life, limb and worldly goods" for the setting up of postal stations and for compliance with the regulations. Today he is considered the founder of the European postal service. After Philip's death Spain passed to his son Charles, who later became Emperor Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire.

In November 1516 Charles signed a new postal treaty with the two postmasters Franz and Johann Baptista von Taxis, which established new postal routes to Rome, Naples, and Burgos and set new transportation times. The couriers could only be used to convey royal missives; the conveyance of private letters was not permitted. Nobody was allowed to operate a postal service without the permission of the Postmaster General. This exclusive imperial postal service, with its headquarters in Brussels, enabled the Hapsburgs to communicate with allies and friends throughout a large portion of Europe in their Empire in which "the sun never sets". Only later did the transportation of private letters come to be tolerated and, eventually, officially sanctioned for economic reasons.



The postal treaties between the ruling household and the Taxis family were what enabled the house of Thurn and Taxis (as they were called after being promoted to the rank of count in 1650) to establish its monopoly in the historic postal service. Incidentally, the Italian name Tasso means badger, but by Germanising it they created the version Taxis. A badger is, however, included in the coat of arms of the Taxis family, which can be seen on the stamp.

Note: the above article covers some of the same ground as Ingerit Kuzych's "Before Lemberg: the development of the mail system in central Europe and the beginnings of the postal service in Lwow" which appeared in Austria 182 – and indeed "The Postal Service of the Thurn and Taxis Princes, Descendants of the Tasso Family" from Austria 145 (ex Bollettino Prefilatelico e Storico Postale issue 124). See also "500 Jahre Europäische Postverbindung: aus Österreichs Postgeschichte: ein Kaleidoskop". And even the APS book "The Story of the Austrian Post up to 1850"

## Classic Editions



220c+80c; 02.04.2016; 140,000 blocks of 2 stamps; Offset; Anita Kern; Enschedé.

With its new “Classic Editions” series, Austrian Post is dedicating itself to the history of the postage stamp and presenting classic stamps issued in the time of the monarchy. Here we present the first Austrian postage stamp, the so-called Austrian arms issue from the year 1850. The postal service as we know it today can essentially be traced back to Emperor Maximilian I, who, in 1490, commissioned the Taxis (later Thurn and Taxis) family with developing a postal network. Couriers on horseback initially delivered only royal missives, with the conveyance of private letters being

introduced at a later date. Over the course of the subsequent centuries mail coaches, ships and the railway were also used to transport the mail.

The fee for carrying a letter was paid by the recipient. The complicated and expensive accounting involved necessitated the introduction of a new system in which the costs were paid by the sender upon dispatching the letter. Following more or less unsuccessful trials with prepaid cancels, adhesive labels and postmarks, the first official postage stamp (the British “Penny Black”) was introduced in 1840. The invention of the stamp is credited to Sir Rowland Hill, who undertook a reform of the British postal service in 1839, but similar ideas had already been pursued by the President of the Imperial Chamber of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Laurenz Koshier (>>), and by the Scottish newspaper publisher James Chalmers.



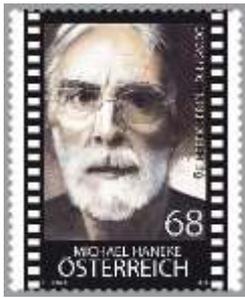
Ten years later, Austria finally began to issue its own. The first stamp issued by the Austrian Empire shows the Austrian coat of arms with the double-headed eagle. Stamps were issued in denominations of 1, 2, 3, 6 and 9 Kreuzer. The stamps for the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia, which also belonged to the Hapsburg Empire, bore the same design in the same colours, but with denominations of 5, 10, 15, 30 and 45 Centesimi. They were valid throughout Austria, whereas the Austrian edition could not be used in Lombardy and Venetia. The date of issue was 1st June 1850.

The stamps were originally printed on hand-made paper with a sheet watermark, but from 1854 onwards they were printed on machine-made, smooth paper with no watermark. At that time the stamps had no perforations, but were cut off the sheet – the first perforated postage stamps for Austria were the 1858 Franz Joseph issue, which succeeded the Austrian arms issue. There are many variations in the colour and quality of the Austrian arms issue, depending upon how carefully the stamp was cut from the sheet and the kind of paper and printing process used. As the first stamp to be issued by Austria, it is extremely popular with philatelists and collectors today. The mini sheet shows a 2 Kreuzer Austrian issue and a 15 Centesimi stamp from Lombardy-Venetia. The background is a 1 Kreuzer stamp, surrounded by blossoms and oak leaves, just as they are depicted on the stamps.

*The first issue is found with numerous variants, which delight (or infuriate) the collector.*

<p><i>The currency was 60kr = 1fl, but the available paper &amp; printing presses couldn't cope with 12x5 or 10x6 layouts. So they had to print 8x8, and use four “St Andrew's Crosses” to fill up the space. [Sometimes these are found used and cancelled as if they had been stamps!]</i></p>	<p><i>Labour was cheap but materials expensive; and the penalties for error severe. The printing shown at middle (and in B/W at right for clarity) was rejected, and the paper turned over and reprinted-on.</i></p>		

## Austrians in Hollywood - Michael Haneke



68c; 04.04.2016; 470,000 in minisheets of 10; Offset; Kirsten Lubach; Enschedé

As part of the “Österreicher in Hollywood” (Austrians in Hollywood) series, Austrian Post is dedicating a commemorative stamp to the outstanding artist Michael Haneke.

Concert pianist or conductor were the jobs which Michael Haneke flirted with in his early years. Now one of the best-known directors in the world, it is no accident that he finally went into the film industry: his father, Fritz Haneke, was a director and actor, and his mother, Beatrix von Degenschild, was also a thespian. Born on 23rd March 1942, by the age of 17 Michael Haneke dreamed of leaving his school days behind him and following in his parents' footsteps. He applied to the celebrated Max-Reinhardt Seminar, THE school for actors and directors in the German-speaking regions, but was turned down and so completed his secondary grammar-school education. He then studied philosophy, psychology and drama at the University of Vienna, but broke off his studies to take work as a dramatic adviser and editor in television. In the years he spent working at Südwestfunk he learned the craft of a film-maker from the ground up. During the 1970s he worked as a theatrical director and scriptwriter, working in Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, Hamburg, Munich and Vienna, among others.

His career as a film director was launched by films made for television such as “Lemminge” (Lemmings), “Variation”, and “Wer war Edgar Allan?” (Who was Edgar Allan?). His very first film for cinema made a name for Michael Haneke in the industry: “The Seventh Continent” earned him the bronze leopard at the Locarno International Film Festival. He gained even greater recognition with “Benny's Video”, for which he was also awarded the Vienna Film Prize. With films such as “Funny Games” and “Code Unknown”, in his frequently bleak works he continued to strive to break taboos in order to scrutinise human nature. It was “The Piano Teacher”, based on the novel by Elfriede Jelinek and starring Isabelle Huppert in the title role, that ultimately brought him great success, winning him the Grand Prize at the Cannes International Film Festival, which in the film industry is equivalent to elevation to the peerage.

It also earned him the German Film Prize for the category “Best Foreign Film”. It was followed by “Time of the Wolf” and “Cache”. With “The White Ribbon”, Haneke won the Palme d'Or for the best feature film at Cannes, also receiving Oscar and Golden Globe nominations. He finally won the best-known award in the international film industry for “Amour”, which was nominated for five Academy Awards. Recently Haneke, who has also been awarded the Billy Wilder Award for services to Austria as a film-making land, made an Officer of the French Legion of Honour, and has received honorary doctorates and numerous European Film Awards, has also made a name for himself as an operatic director. Haneke's films are not easy going, often centring around fear, threat and violence and with a somewhat disturbing element. His aim is to unsettle his audience and to make them think.

## Contemporary art in Austria - Erwin Bohatsch



80c; 04.04.2016; 250,000; Offset; Erwin Bohatsch / Regina Simon; ÖSD

Sounding out the limits of painting - that is one of Erwin Bohatsch's primary aims. The artist is one of the most important Austrian exponents of abstract art. Austrian Post is dedicating a commemorative stamp from the "Contemporary Art" series to him.

Erwin Bohatsch was born in 1951 in Mürzzuschlag. Between 1971 and 1976 he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts, where he now teaches. His artistic career started in the 1970s, and in the 1980s he attracted attention as he worked under the auspices of the "New Savages", but developed his own unique position. Like the "New Savages" he was interested in painting for its own sake, but over time the artistic process and the materiality of the works came to the fore.

Bohatsch's works are created by applying layers of colour as a varnish - that is to say, with the underlying colours showing through - one on top of the other. In places the colours below show through, in other places he creates a veil; the canvas frequently peers out, and the centre of the image is often left open. His works are also characterised by drips and paths of colour created by the spatula as well as clouds of colour and sharp contours. When several are hung alongside each other the works often appear to merge into an open ensemble, even though they are all each individual pieces.

Network and grid structures are also typical for Bohatsch, as are his expansive, expressive brush strokes. The artist moves between representational art and abstraction, between colour and non-colour, between line and area. As Florian Steininger, future director of the Kunsthalle Krems, wrote in an exposé on Bohatsch, he finds "new solutions for painting." He sees himself, as Steininger goes on to say, as "a painter, whose work is not subject to a straight-line, mono dimensional development." He produces "reductionist, monochrome works, which flirt at the limits of painting, alongside works which clearly distance themselves from pure, radical abstraction. He knows how to achieve bountiful artistic effects in apparently narrow contexts." For Bohatsch it is not about telling stories with his pictures. Rather, in his work he is seeking a new definition of painting.

The artist has been presented in solo exhibitions in numerous galleries and at the Secession Vienna, in MUMOK Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, in the Essl Museum in Klosterneuburg, at the Kunsthau Bregenz, the Liaunig Museum, at the Bank Austria Kunstforum and in other museums. He has been awarded the Otto Mauer Prize, a significant Austrian prize for contemporary art, and is a recipient of the City of Vienna's Fine Arts Prize. The work shown on this stamp comes from a group of new small works on paper. It was executed in acrylics, oils and graphite on paper and is untitled.

## 250 years of the Wiener Prater



80c; 09.04.2016; 250,000; Offset; Gustav Assem; Enschedé

In 1766 the people of Vienna were given a generous gift: Emperor Joseph II gave them the Prater as a recreational area. Its name can be traced much further back in history: in the 12th century, Duke Friedrich I bequeathed some grasslands to the de Prato family, who later changed the spelling of their name to Prater. Austrian Post is celebrating the anniversary of the Wiener Prater by issuing a commemorative stamp.

Until then the Prater had long been an imperial hunting ground and only the nobility were permitted to enter it; according to an imperial order “niemandt alß waß Cavaliers und Dames” (none but knights of the realm and ladies of the nobility) were to enter. Now all were permitted to walk in the grounds until the sun went down. The closing of the gates was announced every evening by three cannon shots. At the opening ceremony it was brought to Emperor Joseph II's attention that he would now have to mix with the common people, to which he is said to have replied, “If I wished only to associate with my equals, then the only place I could walk would be the Imperial crypt.”

In 1775 he went even further and had the fence around the park removed so that it became accessible at any time of day or night. Whilst the Kastanienallee (Chestnut Alley), now the Hauptallee (Main Alley), remained a meeting place for the higher echelons of society, and the area around the pleasure palace was used by them for excursions and walks, the Wurstelprater became an amusement park with attractions for the common people. First coffee houses opened, soon followed by carousels, gingerbread stands, bowling alleys, swings and much more. Curiosity cabinets and show booths were erected, and firework displays and major events were staged here.

At the same time it provided a new venue for performing the music of the day: Johann Strauss performed here, as did Joseph Lanner and Carl Michael Ziehrer. The name Wurstelprater can be traced back to those booths in which puppet shows were put on for the younger visitors, including, of course, stories with the ever-popular, clumsy Hanswurst. Although the Wurstelprater was subsequently renamed Volks-prater (People's Prater), it has unofficially retained its popular designation even today.

In 1873 a World Exhibition was held in the Prater at which 53,000 exhibitors took part, and the Rotunda was built. In 1895 the pleasure park “Venice in Vienna” was built, and this can probably be considered the first theme park in the world. The Italian city and its lagoons were recreated over an area of 50,000 square metres, enabling visitors to navigate canals and marvel at Venetian buildings. In 1897 the giant Ferris Wheel was added to the attractions. In 1938 the Prater passed into state ownership. During the Second World War the Wurstelprater was largely destroyed in air raids and by a fire in 1945, but was subsequently rebuilt. Even today the Prater, which was also the setting for the film “The Third Man”, continues to be an important recreational area for the city's inhabitants and visitors.

## Classical traditional costumes - Montafon



68c; 30.04.2016; 470,000 in minisheets of 10; Offset; Anita Kern; Enschedé

In Vorarlberg traditional costumes vary greatly by region. As part of its “Klassische Trachten” (classic traditional costumes) series, Austrian Post is presenting the traditional working garb of the Montafon, which is still worn unchanged to this day, and is one of the historic traditional costumes worn in the valley.

This so-called “Wärchtigjüpple” (workday dress), the everyday working garb of the ladies of the Montafon, impresses with its simplicity. Both the skirt and the bodice are made from a dark, plain-coloured worsted flannel or pure wool. The tightly fitted bodice is high-necked, but allows the lace (“Spitzle”) of the white blouse worn underneath to show at the neck. This “Hemdle” or blouse is made of linen, and the borders are decorated with hand-made lace or decorative stitching (“Bäumlestich”). A blue striped or plain-coloured cotton apron is worn over the skirt; a black striped silk apron creates a particularly fine effect. This is accompanied by black stockings and a cotton scarf. The latter is white with a scattered red or blue pattern and is folded into a triangle and worn around the neck.

The men's costume comprises black loden knee breeches, black woollen hose, a white shirt and a red waistcoat, called the “Lieble”. The “Tschopa”, a dark blue jacket with two rows of buttons at the back is worn over this. Particularly eye-catching is the headgear: a black top hat which is only found in the Montafon.

As for the traditional costume for festival days worn by the women of the Montafon, which dates back to the Baroque era, it is the embroidered stomacher which is laced into the front of the bodice and the elaborately decorated ribbons over the apron in its muted colours which are particularly eye-catching. The “Glöggli-Tschopa”, the short jacket, is accompanied by an otter skin hat, a “Mäßli” - a kind of brimless top hat - or a “Sanderhut”, a black straw hat with a bow. The term “Schlutta” describes a brocade jacket with delicate white lace at the collar. This costume for special days is completed by a red underskirt and red stockings, buckled shoes and a bow at the neck.

Unmarried girls in the Montafon wear a special outfit, called the “Schäppelmaigana”: The “libli” (bodice) with its embroidered stomacher is worn with a white blouse. The name comes from the “Schäppel”, the headgear: a small coronet of silver or gold filaments and coloured glass balls which is affixed to the head. The artistically embroidered ribbons are woven into the girls' plaited hair and hang down their backs to the ground. The Schäppel is only worn when the weather is good and with no outer wear over it.

These historic traditional costumes continue to be worn by numerous societies for traditional costumes, music and dance groups, with the Vorarlberger Landestrachtenverband supporting this tradition and ensuring that local traditions are maintained.

## Salzburg celebrates 200 years of being part of Austria



100c; 30.04.2016; 180,000; combination printing with Etch-Art by OeSD; Anita Kern; ÖSD.

In 2016 Salzburg will celebrate a very special anniversary: in May 1816 the Kingdom of Bavaria ceded Salzburg to the Hapsburgs, meaning that it has now been part of Austria for 200 years. The province is celebrating this event by putting on a special exhibition in the Salzburg Museum; Austrian Post is celebrating it by issuing a commemorative stamp.

The earliest evidence of human occupation in what is now the Salzburg region dates from the Stone Age. Until the 5th century A.D. the area was occupied by the Romans, and later by the Bajuwaren or Bavarians. During the 8th century Bishop Rupert of Worms - now the patron saint of Salzburg - built the church of St. Peter on the site of the current cathedral and founded St. Peter's Abbey and the Nonnberg Abbey convent. Salzburg soon became an archdiocese. Hohensalzburg Castle, which still sits high above the city on the Festungsberg, dates from the 11th century.

From the 14th century onwards, Salzburg was an independent prince-bishopric, the archbishops also being politically powerful princes. The province was made rich by salt and gold mining. At the time of the Counter-Reformation Prince Archbishop Wolf Dietrich von Raitenau (1559-1617) played an important part in Salzburg, and the buildings which he erected still characterise the city today: Salzburg Cathedral, the Residenzplatz and Mozartplatz can all be traced back to his plans, as can the Neue Residenz and Mirabell Palace.

At the end of the 18th century the city became the centre of the Enlightenment in southern Germany, this period including the creative outpouring of the great musical genius Mozart, who was born in Salzburg in 1756. Following the chaos of the Napoleonic Wars, the pronouncements of the Vienna Congress and the Treaty of Munich, both the city and the province were finally restored to Austria in 1816, and thus came under the dominion of the Hapsburgs.

The subject of the stamp is Prince Archbishop Wolf Dietrich von Raitenau's armour. The opulent suit of armour (at that time it was not uncommon for ecclesiastical dignitaries to possess such an item for ceremonial purposes) was made up of approximately 40 individual components, which could be combined accordingly, depending upon the type of tournament. Wolf Dietrich's armour shows no signs of wear and tear. It was probably made in Milan after his election in 1587, and is remarkable for the extravagant gilt and blackened etched decoration on all individual elements.

In the chaos of the early 19th century, when Salzburg was definitively ceded to Austria, the armour was broken up, and the individual components are now scattered across various collections in Germany, Russia and Great Britain. The engraved stamp depicts the body armour, helm and arm braces from the Bavarian National Museum in Munich, and the armour of the Prince Archbishop is also the centrepiece of the regional exhibition "Bishop. Emperor. Everyman. 200 years of Salzburg in Austria" which will be on show at the Salzburg Museum from 30th April to 30th October 2016 to celebrate this special anniversary year.

## Shrines of Europe – the Basilica of Mariazell



80c; 12.05.2016; 265,000; Offset; Marion Füllerer; Enschedé.

Many roads lead not only to Rome, but also to Mariazell. Austrian Post is dedicating a commemorative stamp to this, the most important pilgrimage site in Austria with the Basilica Mariä Geburt (Basilica of the Birth of the Virgin Mary). Mariazell has received the particular honour of being visited by the Pope, namely by Pope Johannes Paul II in 1983 and by Pope Benedict XVI in 2007. Since 2004 Mariazell has also been a member of the “Shrines of Europe” association, which also includes the European pilgrimage sites dedicated to the Virgin Mary Lourdes, Loreto, Fatima, Altötting and Cz9stochowa.

Mariazell boasts a long history and many legends. It is believed to have been founded on 21st December 1157, at which time a monk by the name of Magnus was charged with the spiritual care of the inhabitants of the region. On his journey he carried with him a statue of the Virgin Mary which he had carved out of lime wood. As legend has it, his path was blocked by a large rock, so he prayed to the Mother of God and the rock suddenly split apart leaving the way free. When he arrived at his destination, Magnus set his statue of the Virgin Mary on a tree stump and built a wooden chapel around it. Over time the town of Mariazell grew up around this “Cella Mariae”. According to the legend of Henry, the first church was built in around 1200 thanks to Henry Margrave of Moravia. The Margrave was suffering from gout, and in a dream St. Wenceslas told him that if he wished to be healed he should go to Mariazell and build a church there. The church also received a valuable painting of the Virgin Mary after King Louis I of Hungary appealed to “Our Lady at Mariazell” during a battle against the Turks and subsequently emerged victorious.

The place name derives from “Maria in der Zelle” (Mary in the cell) and was first mentioned in historical documents in 1243. In 1344 Mariazell was elevated to the status of a market town and was already known as a pilgrimage site during the 14th century. A Gothic church was erected in around 1370. During the Counter-Reformation the Hapsburg rulers made Mariazell a national shrine. The Gothic church was soon too small to cope with the flood of pilgrims, and so a Baroque extension was added in the 17th century. It is precisely this mixture of styles that gives the church, which was elevated to the status of a basilica in 1907, its particular character today.

The church has retained its colours of terracotta and white and has a Gothic central tower flanked by two Baroque towers. The Baroque high altar, which was consecrated in 1704, was designed by Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach. The statue of Mary from the legend of its founding is housed in the Gnadenkapelle side chapel. It is a 48-centimetre tall, late Romanesque statue of the Mother of God, the Magna Mater Austriae.

The municipality of Mariazell is located in Upper Styria. In addition to pilgrimages, the mountains invite visitors to enjoy the beautiful natural surroundings, whether for hiking in the summer or skiing on the Bürgeralpe in the winter. In terms of area, Mariazell is the largest municipality in Styria and one of the largest in the whole of Austria. It forms part of the Bruck an der Mur region and was elevated to the status of a city in 1948. At present around one million pilgrims visit Mariazell every year.

## EUROPA 2016 - Think Green



80c; 14.05.2016; 250,000; Offset; Doxia Sergidou / Regina Simon; Enschedé

EUROPE stamps are issued annually by European post offices, based on a theme which is relevant to all countries and selected by PostEurop. Since 1956 the aim has been to thereby underscore international cooperation and our common roots and cultures, as well as promoting philately. On the 60th anniversary, in 2016, the topic is “Ecology in Europe - Think Green”.

The word ecology is linked to a range of topics from environmental protection, air pollution, energy saving and renewable energy, biological farming and sustainability right through to ecological housekeeping, sorting waste and “eco-fashion” based on natural fibres and fair trade. “Think Green” is the buzzword: many private individuals, businessmen and women and organisations are attempting to do their bit for the environment and to make the world a “greener” place. Austrian Post is also active in this respect: as part of our “CO2 neutral delivery”, the delivery of all letters and items sent in the post within Austria is CO2 neutral. The basis for achieving this is avoiding emissions and improving efficiency - by optimising routes, for example.

In addition to this, Austrian Post relies on renewable energy: since 2012 it has exclusively used electricity generated from renewable energy sources, and even produces some of this in-house, through the photovoltaic plant on the Vienna-Inserzdorf mail centre, for example. Furthermore, with its 862 electric vehicles it now has the largest e-mobility fleet in Austria, and also supports national and international climate protection projects in the fields of energy efficiency, geothermal energy or sustainable forestry.

The subject for the 2016 EUROPE stamp was chosen by PostEurop from the 24 submissions to the design competition. Designer Doxia Sergidou designed it for the post office in Cyprus. Her aim was to show that the task of making our planet more ecological lies in our own hands - and this is symbolised in her design by a hand painting a green, vibrant landscape over the grey, dirty, industrial city on the left of the stamp. Human activities such as industry, traffic and energy production impact significantly upon our environment, whereas the use of renewable energies, such as wind power, and a more conscientious use of resources can have a positive effect. As a result, “Think Green” is important not only for current, but also for future generations.

By selecting this topic PostEurop is stressing Europe's responsibility in the field of supra-regional environmental protection. Pointing out the effects of human activities on the environment is an important aim of the European postal organisation, and this meaningful, internationally comprehensible, 60th anniversary issue EUROPE stamp should make that clear to the public.

## Postcrossing



80c; 21.05.2016; 250,000; Offset; Robert Sabolovic; Enschedé. (*It's an international postcard interchange club*)

Every postcard from a foreign land brings a little piece of the big, wide world to our letterbox. That was what Paulo Magalhães from Portugal thought, and that is why he founded the Postcrossing platform in 2005. Now Austrian Post is dedicating a commemorative stamp to this admirable project, which brings together postcard and stamp collectors from around the world.

From the start the aim of the project was to connect people around the world, irrespective of where they live, their age, gender, skin colour or beliefs, through real postcards - no electronic messages. Over the years the little idea has grown into a highly successful project, which is now being praised in the media and which currently has approximately 600,000 members in more than 200 different countries. To date more than 30 million picture postcards have been sent via the Postcrossing platform, having travelled a combined distance of an incredible 171 billion kilometres - and the figures increase with every hour that passes. Here in Austria, too, there are around 2,500 people who use this free service and have already sent more than 200,000 postcards to all of the participating countries. Even remote regions such as Nepal, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands are taking part in Postcrossing and even the Vatican has a few members.

The system is very simple: registered members are sent the postal address of another member at random, and send a picture postcard to that address. In return they receive a postcard from yet another member. The more postcards you send, the more you receive. In this way every trip to your letterbox becomes an exciting adventure: where will the next card come from? From Europe? From overseas? Perhaps it will come from some little island you have never even heard of.

Postcards from all around the world create a colourful panorama of different landscapes and cultures, whether they be of palm trees and sandy beaches, snow-covered mountain tops, historic buildings or just funny sayings or drawings. Furthermore, it gives stamp collectors a unique opportunity to add international and exotic rarities to their collection, and perhaps even to make contact with collectors in other countries. And who doesn't enjoy getting a friendly message - from someone you don't even know, sent from a foreign country on a colourful picture postcard? A postcard is simply more personal and more tangible than an electronic message via social media channels.

With this commemorative stamp we hope to make more people aware of this charming project. The red-white-red lettering on the stamp design symbolises Austria's participation in Postcrossing; in the background a stylised "postcard wall" shows the many picture postcards sent via Postcrossing.

## International day of U N peace-keeping troops



68c; 29.05.2016; Offset; Anita Kern; ÖSD

Every year, on 29th May, the United Nations honours those serving in peacekeeping operations and those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace. On the occasion of his year's day of remembrance, Austrian Post is issuing a commemorative stamp with a design showing UN soldiers from Austria raising the UN flag.

On 29th May 1948 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 50 (1948), in which it authorised setting up the first peacekeeping operation by the United Nations, and since 2002 the International Day of the United Nations Peacekeepers has been celebrated on 29th May in order to honour those men and women who are serving

or have served in peacekeeping operations for their high level of professionalism, commitment and courage. On this day, those who have lost their lives in the service of UN peacekeeping operations are posthumously awarded the United Nations' Dag Hammarskjöld medal.

The first operations involving UN Peacekeepers took place in 1948 in the Middle East; UNTSO, the United Nations organisation for supervising the truce between the Israeli and Arab warring factions, is still in operation today. Since then the UN Peacekeepers have taken part in 71 operations. Every deployment must be preceded by a resolution by the UN Security Council and must be agreed to by the countries involved or the parties in the conflict. To date more than 120 countries have been involved in the operations and more than 3,300 people have lost their lives as a result of them.

In 1960, during the Congo Crisis, that at the suggestion of the UN General Secretary Dag Hammarskjöld the peacekeeping troops first donned the now familiar blue helmets with the "UN" marking, and since that time they have been referred to as the "Blue Helmets". In 1988 the UN peacekeeping forces were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their commitment to maintaining world peace. Since that time the duties of the peacekeeping troops have been added to continuously. Whilst they were initially only involved in interstate conflicts, over time they have increasingly been deployed in civil wars and conflicts within a state.

The Blue Helmets' role is not a combat mission, but they are armed. Their tasks include monitoring ceasefires, protecting the civilian population, helping develop peace agreements, stabilising security, reorganising the military and police and monitoring the election and establishment of a democratic government. In addition to their work in many African, Southern and Central American and Asiatic regions, the UN Peacekeepers were and continue to be active in Europe in the conflicts in former Yugoslavia and its successor states and in Cyprus.

Austria also provides troops for peacekeeping operations: at the end of 2015, 188 members of the police force or military were in service with the UN. To date 44 Austrian Blue Helmets have lost their lives in peacekeeping operations.

## Classical traditional costumes - Schärding



68c; 29.05.2016; 470,000 in minisheets of 10; Offset; Anita Kern; Enschedé.

As part of its “Klassische Trachten” (classic traditional costumes) series, Austrian Post is presenting the summer costume of the Schärding district, which is still very new: this revised traditional costume was only approved in this style by the Heimatwerk for Upper Austria in 2003.

Like many others, this costume for everyday wear is made from cotton or linen, but has an unusual style and was designed as the summer costume for the Schärding region as part of a revival of national costumes in Upper Austria. The bodice is made of checked cotton or linen with a rounded neckline, and is fastened at the front by means of hooks. A bias-cut bib, which, like the neck and armholes, is finished with monochrome piping, is attached over the fastening. The sides of the back section are also bias-cut. The skirt, in a matching pattern or made from a matching monochrome linen or cotton, is hand-gathered and is pleated beneath the apron.

The colour of the cotton or linen apron is determined by the dress. If the bodice and skirt are checked, then a floral or monochrome apron is chosen, otherwise it can be striped or have a printed motif. A fine white, usually collarless, cotton blouse with puffed or three-quarter length sleeves is also worn as part of the summer costume. A kimono blouse can also be worn.

There has been a traditional costume for special days for Schärding since 1950, but the summer costume has only existed since 2003. The summer costume for the Schärding district was created as part of a revival of traditional costumes in Upper Austria, where, under the motto “Altes erhalten - Neues gestalten” (“Keep the old - bring in the new”), they are striving not only to retain the traditional costumes, but also to revive them and make them a part of current everyday life through sensitive reworking. As a result, every municipality in the Schärding district now has its own local traditional costume.

The municipalities of Schärding and Neuhaus am Inn and of Wernstein and Neuburg am Inn share a local costume, including this summer costume, which represents the Schärding district and was designed by the women of the Goldhaubengemeinschaft (an association dedicated to the preservation of local traditions) of the Unteres Innviertel region. A book cataloguing the local traditional costumes from this area has been published, showing not only the clothes themselves, but also suitable accessories, such as the “Handstiezel”, knitted or crocheted mitts which can be worn with the splendid Goldhauben dress.

However, it is not only matters relating to the revival of traditional costumes that keep the women of the Goldhauben-gemeinschaft busy; they also collect money for charity by selling Easter and Christmas cards and use it to support institutions such as Caritas, Licht ins Dunkel, the Kinderkrebshilfe children's cancer charity and many others.

## Schärding: 700 years a town



80c; 04.06.2016; 250,000; Offset; Karin Klier / Foto Andi Bruckner; Enschedé.

In 2016 Schärding is celebrating a round anniversary: exactly 700 years ago, in 1316, the little village in the Upper Austrian Innviertel was elevated to the status of a town. Austrian Post is congratulating it on this important anniversary by issuing a commemorative stamp.

Over 5,000 years ago the area of the Inn where the town currently stands was already being navigated by ships. Schärding was first mentioned in historical documents as *Scardinga* in 804. In 1248 the Bavarian Wittelsbachs became the rulers of the village, which gained considerable economic significance as a result of the trading of salt, ores and other goods via the Inn. In 1316 Schärding was finally granted its town charter. During the 15th century, under the rule of Louis VII, Duke of Bavaria (known as “der Bärtige”, “the Bearded”), the fortifications were significantly extended, with the medieval sections of the town wall and some gates, such as the Water and Linz gates, still standing today. In 1724 and again in 1779 the town was devastated by fire. In 1779, following the Bavarian War of Succession, Schärding passed from Bavaria to Austria. During the Napoleonic Wars the town was occupied by the French and suffered considerable damage. After the end of the war, and as a consequence of the resolutions passed in the Vienna Congress, Schärding definitively became part of the Hapsburg Empire in 1816.

Nowadays the town has around 5,000 inhabitants and is a member of the “Kleine historische Städte” (small historic towns) association. The typical buildings for the town date from the Baroque era. Many house fronts are built in the so-called Inn-Salzach style: false façades conceal the roof and turn the buildings into a closed row of houses. The colourful façades with the sweeping gables characterise the town's appearance to this day, with the Late Baroque Silberzeile, which is the subject for the stamp design, being particularly well-known. The different coloured façades can be traced back to the medieval guilds, each of which was assigned a particular colour e.g. blue for bakers, red for butchers.

Schärding was once known as a “beer town”. As part of its 1316 town charter Schärding was granted the right to brew beer, and more than a dozen breweries provided the inhabitants of the region with the hop-based beverage. The only remaining brewery, Baumgartner, has been in Schärding for more than 400 years, and until recently Kapsreiter beer was still brewed there. Schärding not only has a tradition of brewing beer, but also of cheese production: the famous brand of dairy products developed by the Schärding dairy association. To celebrate this centenary year the town of Schärding is organising a comprehensive programme of events under the heading “Die Barockstadt hat schwer was drauf!” (“The Baroque town has plenty to show off!”). At the “Jubiläums-Spectaculum” you can celebrate with the whole family at a medieval festival; the “Via Scardinga” follows a themed trail through the history of the town, and numerous exhibitions, concerts and special guided tours provide information and entertainment on various topics relating to the town, its past and its present.

## European Football Championship 2016



80c; 10.06.2016; 250,000; Offset; David Gruber; ÖSD

Finally, the time has come: Austria's national team has qualified for the final stages of a major event and, as a result, will be taking part in the European Championship in France in June (and possibly also in July). Austrian Post would like to congratulate the national team and is celebrating Austria's participation in

Euro 2016 with a commemorative stamp.

The last time that the Austrian national team took part in the final stages of the European Championship was eight years ago and actually had nothing to do with sporting achievement: in 2008, when Austria and Switzerland co-hosted the European Football Championship, both countries qualified automatically. Not that it went very well: following two defeats and a draw, Austria went out in the group stage. In 2012 - as on so many previous occasions - the national team did not even make it through qualification.

The best result ever achieved by the Austrian national team was third place in the World Cup in Switzerland in 1954. The final score in the quarter-final between Austria and Switzerland, the "Hitzeschlacht von Lausanne" (the heat battle of Lausanne), was 7:5, winning Austria a place in the semi-final. During the match the Austrian goalkeeper suffered from sunstroke, but the team was not allowed to bring on a substitute. As a result Switzerland quickly took the lead with a score of 0:3, but within ten minutes the Austrians converted the deficit into a 5:3 lead. This legendary match is still the highest scoring match in the World Cup finals to date.

But coming back to the present day, Austria's road to Euro 2016 was a rocky one. In 2014 the team just failed to qualify for the final stages of the World Cup in Brazil. However, national trainer Marcel Koller - a Swiss national - managed to lead his team through the Euro 2016 qualifying rounds as group leaders. For the first time ever, the national team succeeded in qualifying for the final stages of the European Championship by virtue of their sporting achievements and not courtesy of the rules. With nine wins and one draw, they even achieved the best match results of any group winner, with the exception of the footballing nation England. What is more, this match success catapulted the national team to 10th place in the FIFA world rankings, its best ever placing since this ranking was introduced.

In the first round of the final stages of the European Championships in France, Austria will meet Hungary, Poland and Iceland. The top two teams from each group and the four best third placed teams will go forward into the last sixteen and continue with the knock-out system, with the losing team being dropped after every match. The final will take place on 10th July. Regardless of how far the Austrian players manage to progress, the fans watching on their televisions at home and those who have been lucky enough to get tickets for the matches will, without doubt, live through every nail-biting minute with them, and hopefully be celebrating with them too.

## Pietà mit Kreuz - The world's first printed-on-glass stamp



€630; 10.06.2016; 140,000; silkscreen behind glass; Regina Simon / picture from Hinterglasmuseum at Sandl; Neue Wiener Porzellanmanufaktur Augarten GmbH & Co KG. Block Issue. **B**

With this glass stamp, Austrian Post is presenting a very special, exclusive stamp and once again showing a great deal of innovative spirit when it comes to stamp design – to date no stamp valid for franking has ever been made out of glass anywhere in the world. The glass stamp is 32x42mm and 2mm thick, and shows one of the famous “Sandlbilder”: a reverse-glass-painted Pietà from the Upper Austrian municipality of Sandl. In reverse glass painting the design is painted on the back of the glass, enabling the front to be cleaned easily, which was a big advantage in the smoke-filled farmhouse parlours of yesteryear. There is a long tradition of reverse glass painting in Sandl. This is because there were many glass works in the nearby Bohemian forests, from which sheets of glass could be acquired easily and cheaply. Glass painting provided peasant families with a welcome additional source of income; during the winter the whole family worked together to produce the mostly religious designs step by step, each member of the family having his or her own particular task e.g. painting in the outlines or filling in the coloured areas. The traditional design of the Pietà (also known as a Vesperbild in German) dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It shows the Virgin Mary weeping over the dead body of her crucified son, Jesus. She is usually depicted alone, cradling the body of her son in her arms.



The subject of the Mother of Sorrows probably came to Sandl via the devotional images which were supposed to remind believers of Christ's suffering. The reverse glass painting used in this glass stamp comes from the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The painters are unknown; as was usual, the work was a collaborative effort. Particularly noteworthy aspects are the bold colours and the expressive brush strokes, which strongly emphasise Mary's pain and Jesus' suffering. The seven swords in Mary's heart symbolise the seven sorrows of the Mater Dolorosa, the Mother of Sorrows, Mary, whilst the tendrils of flowers below the cross represent the hope which Jesus' sacrifice brings to all people.

The Viennese porcelain manufacturer Augarten is responsible for the time-consuming production of the glass stamp. Every glass blank will be hand-crafted, with all production following ecological principles. The design will be applied to the back of the glass by hand using non-fading pigments and a special silkscreen printing

process. The colours will then be heat-treated, thereby ensuring that the design is firmly bonded to the glass and giving the glass a particularly high tensile strength. The high quality, mostly hand-crafted production, the unusual material and the traditional, hand-painted design all make this stamp very special. Folk art and innovative production techniques will thus be combined to produce a very special miniature work of art.

*The stamp is presented in a cardboard 'wallet'. The face value of 6€30 is the postage on a Maxi International Economy Letter: ie a C4 envelope up to 20mm thick and not over 500 grams; eg a short book. The stamp is supplied affixed to a piece of card to stop it falling out of the wallet. I took the risk of breaking it, and tried to remove the stamp from its packaging. The stamp itself has a circular thing on the back, presumably a sticky pad with a silicone-paper cover. It is held on to the presentation card by two blobs at opposing corners of transparent silicone claggy-stuff, which usually peel off (or at least 95% does). So it could be used – if you dare!*

## Austrian Sculpture Park Museum Joanneum.



68

ÖSTERREICH

15.06.2016; 250;000; Offset; Marion Füllerer; Enschedé

The Austrian Sculpture Park in the Styrian town of Unterpremstätten, seven kilometres south of Graz, is a very special open air museum. Austrian Post is now featuring one of the works exhibited there, the concrete boat, on a commemorative stamp.

The idea of creating the Sculpture Park came from former ORF regional director Emil Breisach, who started exhibiting sculptural works by Austrian artists on the ORF site in Graz in 1981. The aim was to make contemporary sculptures accessible to the public outside the confines of a museum. In the year 2000 the International Garden Show, designed by Swiss landscape artist Dieter Kienast, was held in Unterpremstätten, and the venue proved to be perfect for use as a sculpture park. The Austrian Sculpture Park private foundation was set up, and the concept of an international sculpture park, designed by Christa Steinle and developed by Peter Weibel, was presented to the public in 2003.

In 2007 the running of the sculpture park was handed over to the Landesmuseum Joanneum. The collection of works by Austrian and international artists has since been continuously extended, accompanied by an academic discourse. Nowadays the park contains more than 70 sculptures over an area of around seven hectares, including works by Austrians Fritz Wotruba, Franz West, Erwin Wurm, Heimo Zobernig and Michael Kienzer, among others, and by international artists such as Nancy Rubins or Yoko Ono.

The “Betonboot” (concrete boat) by Graz artist Michael Schuster reflects its surroundings in object-like form. The boat appears to have been catapulted out of the nearby bathing lake and to have landed in the waves formed by the artificial hills of the surrounding area, which it thereby transforms into a part of the work of art itself. The sculptural representation of a real object - the boat - in cast concrete alludes to the function of the park as a show-place for sculptures. At the same time, the “stranded” work of art can also be seen as an ironic allusion to the sculpture park theme.

Since the 1970s Michael Schuster, who was born in 1956 in Graz, has been dealing with the issue of the perception or reproduction of reality in his media-reflective works, such as photo installations, light objects and media sculptures. In his photographic works he uses photography as a mirror and asks the fundamental question of whether the mirror tells the truth. Photography delivers an illusion of reality. The “Betonboot” is a reflection on location-specific factors and deals not only with the object itself, but also with how it is perceived and its position within its artificially created surroundings.

## Religious art in Austria - Madonna with Halo.



17.06.2016; 180,000; Kombinationsdruck, Offset-Stich (Etch-Art by OeSD); Peter Sinawehl; ÖSD.

The parish church in the Upper Austrian municipality of Steyr is home to some artistic and historically valuable glass windows. One of the most important of these is the Madonna with halo, which is now being presented by Austrian Post on an engraved stamp in the series “Sacred Art in Austria”.

Some of these glass windows date back to the Renaissance era; many of them hail from the 19th century, as is the case for the Neo-Gothic Lamberg window. At the start of the 19th century the parish church of Steyr had to hand some of its stained-glass windows panes over to the imperial master builders for use in the Franzensburg castle in Laxenburg. As a compensation, those window panes which were not needed for Laxenburg were subsequently returned, and these panes are now called the Laxenburg window. The stained-glass Madonna with halo was among those panes sent to Laxenburg, but was not needed there so, along with other stained-glass panels, it was sent to the Schlierbach glass works, where these panes were put into storage and almost forgotten. Only as a result of persistent enquiries on the part of the parish housekeeper Amata Grüner, who knew of the existence of the missing Madonna with halo, was the valuable stained-glass image finally found. In December 2014 it was returned to the parish church and was allocated its current position in the right-hand side aisle in the window above the gallery.

The stained-glass image dates from around 1520 and shows the Holy Mother Mary with a sceptre and crown set in a halo of sun's rays, cradling the Christ child in her arm. The folds and shading make her red robe and blue cloak appear truly three dimensional. The motif of the Mother of God with a halo has been known since the Middle Ages and can be found in manuscripts and illustrations such as those in the Benedictine Abbey of St Lambrecht. This depiction of Mary has its origins in the Book of Revelation, in which Mary is named as the woman whose son will rule and who “was caught up to God and to his throne”. Mary and her child thus became a symbol of hope for the people in times of trouble.

The parish church of Steyr that stands today dates from the 15th century and is built in the Gothic style. Hans Puchsbaum, the master builder responsible for St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, was in charge of the construction. During the 17th century the church was refurbished in the Baroque style to accord with the prevailing tastes at the time. Driven by the monument conservationist of the age, writer Adalbert Stifter, the house of God was remodelled in the Neo-Gothic style starting in 1853, involving the construction of a Neo-Gothic main altar, side altars and a new pulpit and the installation of countless new stained-glass windows. In 1885 the tower, which had been destroyed in a fire, was replaced by a Neo-Gothic pointed spire designed by the Viennese master cathedral builder Friedrich von Schmidt. Today the church is the most important sacred building in Steyr and is known for its architecture and its works of art far beyond the borders of Austria.

## Old masters - Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller.



1€60; 13.07.2016; 180,000; Kombinationsdruck, Offset-Stich (Etch-Art by OeSD); Dieter Kraus; ÖSD.

The Austrian painter Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller is considered the very epitome of an artist from the Biedermeier era. In his “Revival to New Life”, peasants welcome the tree’s new leaves as a sign of spring. Rural scenes filled with realism and attention to detail constitute the main body of his work, although social issues such as poverty or homelessness often lurk behind the apparently idyllic scenes. Austrian Post is celebrating the prominent painter with a commemorative stamp in the “Old Masters” series.

Waldmüller was born in 1793 in Vienna. At the tender age of just 14 he attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and earned his living as a portrait artist, drawing teacher and theatrical set designer. Over time he also began to paint landscapes and the genre paintings of everyday scenes for which he later became famous. He frequently travelled to Italy and to the Salzkammergut, where many of his most famous works were created. In 1829 he was appointed as curator of the painting collection and as a teacher by the Academy of Fine Arts, but his relationship with his employer soon turned sour: Waldmüller's ideas for educational reform and on the academic collection were repeatedly rejected. He was forbidden to give any further private lessons in his rooms at the Academy and his studio there was taken away from him. Following publication of yet another polemic paper, in 1857 he was forced to retire and found himself in ever worsening financial straits. Waldmüller died in 1865 in Hinterbrühl near Mödling.

His objective, naturalistic depictions were not always well received by his contemporaries. Still lifes, portraits, landscapes and, in particular, rural scenes filled with realism and attention to detail constitute the main body of his work, although social issues such as poverty or homelessness often lurk behind the apparently idyllic scenes. Light and its effect play a central role in his paintings and give them a radiant appeal. It was primarily abroad that Waldmüller found recognition as an artist, and he was able to sell some paintings at the Universal Exhibition in Paris and during a visit to Buckingham Palace. It was only long after his death that his works were rediscovered and their artistic importance recognised.

“Revival to New Life” was painted in 1852. Here, too, it is light and shadow that gives life to the painting: the gleaming sunlight makes the picture glow. Spring has arrived and everything is awakening to new life. This is reflected not only in the smiling faces of the people, but also in the blossoming nature that surrounds them: in the branches of the tree as they turn green or in the little bunch of flowers in the girl's hand. Despite their evident poverty, the people are clearly rejoicing in the old tree's recovery and this radiant spring day. Waldmüller characterises each individual in the picture with prodigious attention to detail: the clothing, the tree, the building - each one is meticulously depicted. The oil painting belongs to the Princely Collections of Liechtenstein

## Otto Wagner's 175th birthday.

1€70; 13.07.2016; 170,000; Offset; Anita Kern; Joh. Enschedé Stamps B.V. Otto Wagner's presence can still be discerned in the Viennese urban landscape! He is considered one of the most important exponents of the Jugendstil in Austria and as the forefather of New Objectivity (Neue Sachlichkeit). 2016 is the 175th anniversary of his birth.



Whether it be the Postal Savings Bank building, the Kirche am Steinhof church, the pavilion on the Karlsplatz or the buildings he designed for the Viennese light urban railway, Otto Wagner's presence can still be discerned in the Viennese urban landscape. He is considered one of the most important exponents of the Jugendstil in Austria and as the forefather of New Objectivity (Neue Sachlichkeit). 2016 and Austrian Post celebrated this stamp. The design for the stamp famous works: the Austro-Hungarian which was built between 1904 and Jugendstil buildings in the city. Otto outstanding pioneers of the early most influential architects of his time,



Born on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1841, it was always career in law, but at the age of 16 he Polytechnikum in Vienna, the and in Berlin, later also studying at the learned his craft working as a foreman Theophil Hansen and Ludwig Förster, at the same time being able to execute some of his own projects. During the 1870s and 1880s Wagner built a number of villas and apartment buildings, and competed in the tender process for major projects. His conclusive breakthrough came thanks to his plan for the general regulation of Vienna, an example of comprehensive urban planning.

intended that he should pursue a began studying architecture at the modern-day Technical University, Academy of Fine Arts. He also for prominent Ring architects, such as

From this point on he played a key role in developing the city's infrastructure. He was appointed to the Commission for the Development of the Vienna Urban Light Railway and for Regulating the Danube, and many of the archways in the city's urban railway and some underground and tram stations remind us of his work. The lock in the Vienna district of Nussdorf is also by him. In 1898/99 he built three houses on the Linke Wienzeile which are richly ornamented in the Jugendstil style.



With its gold-coloured dome, which can be seen from far and wide, the Kirche zum Heiligen Leopold, better known as the Kirche am Steinhof, is another of his famous works. Wagner's premise was to combine functionality and aesthetics. His aim was to extend the professional profile of the architect. So, for example, he also designed the interior of the Post Office Savings Bank building: the carpets, the lights, the door handles or the desks, they all came from the same source. Even though Wagner had achieved a certain distinction through his prominent buildings, his theoretical writings, his teaching and his urban planning, conservative circles continued to make his life difficult and put paid to many of his large-scale projects. Wagner was able to provide designs for the new Academy of Fine Arts, for the War Office, the Technical Museum, an Emperor Franz Joseph City Museum and much more, but these plans were thwarted. Otto Wagner died in 1918, the same year as Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele and Koloman Moser.

## Austrian wine regions - Central Burgenland.



80c; 16.07.2016; 470,000 also as minisheets-of-10; Offset; David Gruber; Enschedé.

In the “Austrian wine regions” series, Austrian Post is celebrating Central Burgenland, the region at the heart of Burgenland known as “Blaufränkisch land”. This grape variety accounts for around 7% of total wine production in Austria, and is thus the second most prolific red wine variety after Zweigelt. This late-ripening variety is grown not only in Burgenland, but also in the Lower Austrian wine producing region of Carnuntum. Blaufränkisch is a strong, earthy red wine with a typical bouquet. The wine is dark with a high tannin content. The stamp design shows the restored Koberdorf Castle, depicted in the centre of a red wine glass.

The wine producing centres of the region are the municipalities of Deutschkreutz, Horitschon, Lutzmannsburg and Neckenmarkt. The sandy and gravelly soils and, in particular, the heavy, deep loamy soil, can store large quantities of water and are thus ideal for cultivating Blaufränkisch varieties and also other red wine grape varieties such as Zweigelt, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. The climatic conditions are determined by the Bucklige Welt to the West, the Ödenburger Mountains in the North and the Günser Mountains in the South, whilst the warm, dry air of the Pannonian lowlands streams in from the East. The Central Burgenland wine-producing region with its gentle hills comprises around 2,117 hectares of arable land.

The Blaufränkisch grape variety accounts for around seven per cent of total wine production in Austria, and is thus the second most prolific red wine variety after Zweigelt. This late ripening variety is grown not only in Burgenland, but also in the Lower Austrian wine producing region Carnuntum. Blaufränkisch is an autochthone Austrian grape variety and was described as a valuable grape variety as early as the 18th century. The Zweigelt and Blauburger varieties, and some other new hybrid varieties, were produced by crossing Blaufränkisch with another grape variety.

Blaufränkisch is a strong, earthy red wine with a typical bouquet. The wine is dark with a high tannin content. The designation Mittelburgenland DAC (Districtus Austriae Controllatus) is used for three categories of high quality traditional Blaufränkisch wines which are typical of that region. Typical characteristics are aromas of blackberries, dark cherries and bilberries with spicy accents of herbs and mint and a juicy, prominent tannin core in the finish. The grape variety matures well: wines in the category DAC Reserve with a minimum alcohol content of 13 per cent by volume can be stored for up to 15 years. Blaufränkisch wines are often served with game dishes, lamb, steaks or strong cheeses.

The stamp design shows Koberdorf Castle, from the market town of Koberdorf in Central Burgenland, depicted in the centre of a red wine glass. The original fortress was first mentioned in the historic records in the 13th century. It was converted into a castle in around 1529, its defensive capabilities being extended at the same time. From the 18th century onward the building with its distinctive round tower increasingly fell into disrepair, and also suffered greatly as a result of fires, floods and at the hands of the soldiers who were quartered there. It was only in the 1960s, when the castle was bought by architect Martha Bolldorf-Reitstätter, that comprehensive restoration work was started: the carefully styled Knight's Hall is well worth seeing, for example. The castle is still owned by her family. Since 1972 it has also been the venue for the Koberdorf Castle theatrical performances.

## Historical postal vehicles: Postal worker with cycle.



100c; 25.08.2016; 140,000 single-stamp blocks; Offset; Regina Simon; Joh. Enschedé Stamps B.V

As part of the “Historical postal vehicles” series, the stamp design shows a postal worker from around 1900 on a tricycle, which long ago became a popular means of transport for delivering and collecting post within towns and cities.

The stamp design shows a postal worker from around 1900 on a tricycle. He is wearing a postal uniform with red cuffs and service badges on the collar, as well as a uniform cap. Between the rear wheels of the tricycle is a large box in the classic “postal yellow” colour for transporting the letters. Postal workers frequently used cycles as a means of transport when emptying postboxes and transporting the post they collected to the post offices where it was processed and distributed. At the start of the 20th century motorised cycles had started to be used, often, because of the large box required for transportation, multi-track vehicles. There have been postboxes in Austria since 1817, when the postage rate system was reorganised - at that time it was normal for the recipient to pay the postage fees. However, there were often problems, as senders frequently deposited items in postboxes for which they should have paid the fees themselves. In Austria the first stamps were not issued until 1850, but from this time on franking a letter became an uncomplicated affair and postboxes experienced a major revival.

The background design for the mini sheet shows an old view of Rennweg in Vienna, looking back towards the city from the level of the former state print works building. Behind the cycle one can make out the Baroque Salesianerinnenkirche church with its distinctive dome. There are a number of people under way on foot, and in the foreground a two-horse carriage, the typical means of transport for that era, can be seen.

Even today Austrian Post uses around 1,000 cycles, more than half of them being electric. As part of the “CO2 neutral delivery” initiative, Austrian Post has delivered all letters, parcels, magazines and advertising materials in a CO2-neutral way using “green logistics” since 2011. It also places considerable emphasis on energy efficiency, alternative energy sources and forms of transport and on climate protection projects. Building up our E-mobility fleet is an important step in this direction. What is more, when it comes to delivery, 20 per cent of all delivery areas are now catered for on foot or by bicycle.

The theme of the cycling postal worker was already depicted alongside a 9-Kreuzer postage stamp from 1850, the so-called coat of arms issue, on the commemorative stamp “Vienna invites you to WIPA 2000” issued in 1997, where it represented the characteristic postal vehicle of the end of the 19th century.

## Cars - Denzel WD Super 1300



100c; 26.08.2016; 170,000; Offset; David Gruber / Foto Wolfgang M. Buchta; Joh.Enschedé Stamps B.V

Wolfgang Denzel was an Austrian racing driver, car manufacturer and entrepreneur. One of the sports cars that he built himself is being presented by Austrian Post on a commemorative stamp from the “Cars” series. Born in 1908 in Graz, Denzel built his first motorcycle whilst still a trainee. In 1934 he laid the foundations for the company, which is still in operation today. He became the rep

for BMW vehicles in Carinthia and Styria, and later became BMW's general importer for the whole of Austria. His links to the BMW brand were also visible in his racing success: for example, he won the Bodensee-Plattensee marathon on a BMW motorbike, with a sensational lead of over five hours. Denzel was also successful as a racing car driver, later as an ocean-faring yachtsman, and even as a downhill skier.

In 1948, after the end of the war, he started on the construction of his own racing car, originally based on a VW Kübelwagen - often using wartime models which had subsequently been scrapped - and later using the chassis of a VW Beetle and a VW four-cylinder flat engine. From 1952 onwards he designed his own square tubular frame, with lightweight aluminium bodywork, subsequently replaced with solid steel. Denzel also overhauled and optimised the engines. Around 350 such Denzel sports cars were built, first roadsters and later also coupés. The brand was named “WD” after the constructor, later changing to “Denzel”. Wolfgang Denzel also enjoyed sporting success with his own sports cars.

The Denzel sports car was produced in the models “SerienSuper”, “Super” and “International”. It had a performance range of 52 to 80 hp. The “Super”, which is the model shown on the stamp, delivered 64 hp with a capacity of 1,290 cubic centimetres. The model shown on the stamp dates from the year 1959.

Denzel's experience with sports cars was an important factor in the decision by the financially challenged BMW group to enthusiastically embrace his design for the BMW 700 in 1958; the model went on to be BMW'S saviour and launched the company's success story. Starting in the 1960s, the Denzel company also began importing other brands of cars, including Volvo and Jaguar. Branches sprang up throughout Austria, and there are now 14 customer centres offering sales of new and used cars, repairs and financial services. In 2009 the various sections of the company were united under the umbrella of Wolfgang Denzel Holding AG.

In his final years Wolfgang Denzel's passion was ocean sailing - he built ocean-faring racing yachts and became world champion in the two-tonne class at the age of 70. In 1982 he was awarded the Decoration of Honour in Silver for his services to the Republic of Austria. He died in 1990.

## 100th anniversary of the death of Emperor Franz Joseph



80c; 27.08.2016; 250.000; Offset; David Gruber after a design by Koloman Moser; Enschedé.

The subject for the commemorative stamp to celebrate the 100th anniversary of his death is taken from one of the jubilee stamps designed by Koloman Moser in 1908 to celebrate 60 years of the Emperor's reign. On 21st November 1916, as the First World War raged throughout Europe and beyond, the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph I died of pneumonia in Schönbrunn Palace. He reached

the age of 86 and reigned for almost 68 years. The subject for the commemorative stamp to celebrate the 100th anniversary of his death is taken from one of the jubilee stamps designed by Koloman Moser in 1908 to celebrate 60 years of the Emperor's reign.

Franz Joseph was born on 18th August 1830, also in Schönbrunn Palace. During the year of revolution, 1848, his uncle, Ferdinand I, also known as "the Benign", abdicated and the 18-year-old Franz Joseph acceded to the imperial throne. In 1854 he married his cousin, Elisabeth of Bavaria, commonly known as Sisi, of the house of Wittelsbach, who was then just 16 years old. The marriage does not appear to have been particularly happy; Elisabeth was not happy in the strict Viennese court and spent as much time as she could away from it. Franz Joseph, on the other hand, is believed to have carried on affairs lasting many years with Anna Nahowski and with the actress Katharina Schratt.

The monarch suffered many cruel blows of fate: his brother Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, was shot there; the imperial couple's son, Crown Prince Rudolf, committed suicide together with his lover, Mary Vetsera, in 1889; and Empress Elisabeth was murdered in 1898, upon which Franz Joseph is reported to have said, "Mir bleibt doch nichts erspart auf dieser Welt." ("I am spared nothing in this world.") His mother, Princess Sophie Friederike of Bavaria, played an important role in the life of the man who was to become Emperor "by the grace of God". Even as a child Franz Joseph was raised and educated in readiness for his accession to the throne. He took on the position with considerable discipline and a strong sense of duty, and throughout his reign as monarch strove to hold together his multi-national state. However, he frequently failed to recognise the signs of the times until too late and failed to introduce many necessary reforms. Following the murder of the heir to the throne, Franz Ferdinand, in Sarajevo on 28th June 1914, he declared war on Serbia and so triggered the First World War, which is today considered the "primal catastrophe" of the 20th century.

Irrespective of the failures of both his domestic and foreign policies, the Emperor became a legend in his lifetime, as the symbol of an age long gone. He almost always wore his uniform in order to emphasise his solidarity with the army; his external appearance with his distinctive white sideburns was impressive; he was conservative and pragmatic and was considered a stoic. Under his reign the imperial city of Vienna experienced a cultural resurgence: the ring road was built and the Jugendstil blossomed. With his death – and he worked tirelessly right up until the day he died – an era finally came to an end. Two years later, with the end of the First World War, the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary foundered and the reign of the Hapsburg dynasty came to an end.

## Modern art in Austria - Koloman Moser – Lovers.



68c; 7 Sept 2016; 260,000; Offset; Regina Simon; Enschedé.

The lovers painted by Koloman Moser are simultaneously turned towards and away from one another. The man is looking up towards the sky, the woman glancing coquettishly over her shoulder. Is he embracing her, or holding her against her will? The oil painting that serves as the template for the commemorative stamp from the “Modern art in Austria” series, was created in 1913 by the Austrian artist, who also designed postage stamps.

Kolo Moser, born in 1868 in Vienna, was known as a “jack of all trades” as he was active in so many different artistic disciplines. Whether painting or handicrafts, making furniture, jewellery, vases or glasses, in keeping with the idea of a total work of art, an idea of which he was a pioneer, his influence permeated many branches, and Moser became a key figure in the emergence into the 20th century of Austrian art.

After completing his studies, he allied himself to the Siebenerklub (Club of Seven), a seed from which the Vienna Secession grew. When this was founded in 1897 he became one of the most important players on the contemporary art scene. The Secession building near Karlsplatz, which Moser helped design, is still standing today, and was dubbed the “Goldenes Krauthappel” (golden cabbage). It became a talking point, as well as reminding one of the innovations of the age. The secessionists soon experienced a real boom. Moser was one of their most important artists and was a leading figure in the design of the association's art journal, “Ver Sacrum”, the publication named after the “sacred Spring”.

However, he was also active outside of the Secession, and constantly sought individuality, which he finally found in the Wiener Werkstätte. The aim of the latter was to bring together different forms of handicrafts and to celebrate both the craftsman and the artist responsible for the design. According to the Wiener Werk-stätte's agenda, they started “from the purpose: serviceability is the primary criterion, our strengths should lie in good proportions and in good treatment of the materials”. Everything produced there was to be simple and functional, but the execution should be first class. “Draping reality in festive dress” was what mattered to Koloman Moser.

The Wiener Werkstätte created complete interiors, including the interior design of the Flöge fashion house, owned by Emilie Flöge, Gustav Klimt's muse, and the interior of the sanatorium in Purkersdorf. In addition to interiors based on Moser's designs, they also produced furniture, jewellery, leather and metal work, toys and book bindings. The exceptional level of quality was achieved by the craftsman and the designer working together. Even today furnishings by Moser and Josef Hoffmann are considered the epitome of design from that period and seen as prime examples of carefully styled living.

After leaving the Wiener Werkstätte, Koloman Moser concentrated on painting. Like Klimt, Schiele and Otto Wagner, he died in Vienna in the year 1918. He had had a significant influence on the art of his time.

## Austrian design - Lentia chair.



68c; 16 Sept 2016; 250,000; Offset; Robert Sabolovic; Enschedé.

Design is not a luxury. Design is an elementary component of every product and makes a decisive contribution to its success by motivating people to buy it and making use of the product pleasurable. It has a significant influence on the success of innovations which are released onto the market. Design is not just about novelty and external appearance. It is about creating new product values and how items are used, produced and communicated to the public. It is important to recognise that design is thus the decisive driving force in innovation. It is a fundamental component of product

development and production and has to bring value, quality and sense to our way of life; as such it shapes the world in which we live.

designaustria, a knowledge centre and interest organisation, is Austria's premier contact point for design. Founded in 1927, designaustria is Europe's third oldest design organisation, with a focus on representing Austrian designers, raising awareness of design and promoting dialogue between designers, the public, the economy and politics. designaustria strengthens awareness of design and makes clear the benefits of design to society and the economy through a range of activities. [www.designaustria.at](http://www.designaustria.at)

### LENTIA

Less a chair indulging in an eccentric lifestyle than a product dedicated to the lightness of being. LENTIA stands on solid wooden legs, whilst both the form and the weight of the laminated wooden seat and back are contrastingly light. In LENTIA, traditions of classic chair design and contemporary design melt and embrace each - which is why the stackable LENTIA was selected for the Austrian National Design Award 2013.

### Tischlerei Pühringer

The Pühringer carpentry workshop is a family business from the Mühlviertel which was founded in 1981. Klaus Pühringer is an enthusiastic master carpenter and runs his company with its 19 staff with enthusiasm and passion. It is the daily interaction with the working material wood, the understanding of design and collaboration with renowned but young designers that characterise the day-to-day work in the carpentry workshop and make the company so successful. Klaus Pühringer and his team know what they are doing - and are doing what they know. That is their recipe for success, and it will continue to set the tone for the company in the future. [www.puehringer.at](http://www.puehringer.at)

### MARCH GUT

Christoph March ("1983) and Marek Gut (\*1978) both studied industrial design at Linz. University of Art and Design. In 2010 they established the design studio MARCH GUT with its registered office in Linz. The two designers pursue an interdisciplinary and integrative approach based on close consultation with the customer and focused on the project and its users. Analytical in its methodology and keen to seek out new avenues, the studio's work is consistently function-oriented. MARCH GUT marries new technologies with a commitment to sustainability and resource conservation in its work. The ensuing insights and experience give rise to new developments of high aesthetic appeal in terms of both form and colour. Both designers prefer to work with natural materials and constantly strive to extend their limits. MARCH GUT is active in the fields of product and furniture design, and the creation and curation of exhibition facilities and interiors, including the Austria pavilion at the Milan Furniture Fair 2014, the Designsalon Linz 2014 and 2015, and the Salzburg Regional Exhibition 2016. [www.marchgut.com](http://www.marchgut.com)

*Text by Mag. Bettina Steindl & Prof. Severin Filek*

## Dirndl



6€30; 22 Sept 2016; 140,000; Silhouettenstickerei; single stamp designed and embroidered by Hämmerle & Vogel. In September, 6€30 was the postage on a C4-size letter up to 500 grams sent ‘economy’ to ‘rest of world’ eg USA.

Following on from last year’s Lederhosen stamp, this year we [*ie Austria Post*] are introducing yet another special innovation in the form of the corresponding outfit for women: the world’s first embroidered silhouette stamp in the traditional form of a dirndl. In some areas of Austria and southern Germany “dirndl” is used to designate a young girl, and it is almost certainly from this that the name for the dirndl dress was derived. Today’s dirndls often have little to do with the traditional regional costumes: short skirts, low-cut necklines, fancy lacing and bold colour combinations are not to be found in so-called historical traditional costumes. These are, rather, characterised by traditional colours and patterns specific to the region, and – at least in the case of working dress – simple cuts, as the dirndl was and still is worn as the daily working garb in many rural areas. For special occasions and public holidays there is a more elaborately designed and decorated traditional costume with embroidered ribbons and scarves, silk aprons, often

full-length skirts and matching headgear, such as the golden bonnets from Upper Austria.

The dirndl was for a long time considered old-fashioned and “fusty”, but in recent years it has become increasingly common to see women and men wearing traditional costume in urban areas too. This is probably largely connected to the rising popularity of “Wiesen” festivals, which, taking as the basis Munich’s Oktoberfest, have become increasingly widespread throughout the world. For these it is most often the modern version of the dirndl that is worn – as sexy and eye-catching as possible.

The dirndl stamp is particularly impressive in the method of production. The Vorarlberg company Hämmerle & Vogel, based in Lustenau and specialising in high-quality embroidery, is responsible for both the design and the manufacture. Each stamp is made from around 40 metres of thread in three colours. The embroidered silhouette, the different colours and the various stitches make the dirndl appear three-dimensional whilst at the same time creating a light and airy effect. You can even see the way the material drapes and folds. The dainty blouse is executed in off-white, as is the apron, using a different stitch. The red dirndl dress and the inscription “Austria”, also stitched in red, create a little red-white-red work of art. The bow on the apron and the denomination in green are particularly eye-catching.

Hämmerle & Vogel is a family-run firm from Vorarlberg with a long history, that has been producing embroidery for international customers including fashion houses such as Chanel, Marc Jacobs, Victoria’s Secret and Agent Provocateur for over 100 years. A total of 5.6 million metres of thread were used to make the dirndl stamps; each is made from around 40 metres of thread in three colours. Hämmerle & Vogel has already made several embroidered stamps for Austrian Post, including an Edelweiss, a gentian motif, and a petit-point embroidery.



## Danke



[68c]; 22 Sept 2016; 550,000; offset; Dieter Kraus; Enschedé. This is a definitive stamp not a commemorative. The nominal value is not printed, but it is valid for standard domestic delivery, which at the date of issue was 68 Eurocents

Say it with a stamp - this saying applies more than ever to the new greetings stamp issued by Austrian Post. There are various options to choose between on the stamp, and the sender can also write in what it is they wish to say thank you for: for a card, for greetings, for an invitation or a visit, or for something else entirely - just add a cross and fill it in.

The stamp also says “thank you” with the vibrant orange flower that greets the recipient cheerfully - a little floral thank you for a kind gesture. Orange is considered the colour of joy and conviviality, so what could be more fitting than this colour to express your gratitude? And with this stamp, writing thank you letters will cease to be an onerous duty and become a pleasure, whilst the recipient will know immediately upon seeing the stamp that someone has done something nice for him/her.

Whether it is after a birthday, a wedding or some other celebration, the thank you stamp makes it easy to express your thanks for presents and best wishes. Any host is sure to be delighted if a successful evening spent in good company is followed up by a thank you note with such a special stamp - it's a sure way to guarantee being invited to the next party!

The blank line on the stamp means there are no limits to the sender's fantasy: thank you for a pleasant evening, for your help, for your friendship, for the lovely photos, or for whatever else you want to say thank you for. A brief note or a postcard bearing a cheerful stamp with a personalised message - what a wonderful way to show that you have appreciated something.

The “thank you” greetings stamp is a definitive stamp which is available in all post office retail outlets. The nominal value is not printed on, but it is valid for standard domestic delivery, current value 0.68 Euro. 2013 saw the issue of a greetings stamp bearing the message “Alles Guter”, a charming way of delivering your good wishes. In the same way, the “thank you” stamp is more than just the postage paid; it delivers a message right away: “Thank you for having done something nice for me; I really appreciated it!”

## Churches in Austria: Maria Locherboden.



68c; 23 Sept 2016; 250,000; Kirsten Lubach; Offset; Enschedé.

A literally “wonderful” place set against the magnificent backdrop of the Mieminger mountain range is Maria Locherboden, a Neo-Gothic pilgrimage church and popular tourist destination in the Tirol near Mötztal and Stamm.

The pilgrimage site became known even beyond the borders of Austria thanks to two miraculous events. The first is the tale of a miner by the name of Thaman Kluibenschädl, who, so the story goes, was trapped in the gallery of the mine there in 1740, but was successfully rescued. It is said that, to give thanks for the fact that nothing had ever happened to him whilst digging in the mine, he hung a picture of the Virgin Mary over the mine entrance. This picture alone was enough to win Maria Locherboden local fame as a place of pilgrimage. In 1854 a new walkway to the extended mine entrance was built, and in 1860 a larger picture of the Madonna was installed. Initially the intention was to restore the original painting, but then a copy of Lucas Cranach's painting of Maria Hilf (Mary of Succour) was put up instead, and can still be seen hanging over the high altar in the church today.

However, Maria Locherboden became really famous after the terminally ill Maria Kalb from near Innsbruck was healed there. The legend tells that the young woman had already been given the last rites in 1871, when the Virgin Mary appeared to her and told her, “*You must seek me in the uplands and recite the rosary of my seven sorrows.*” Thereupon her brother took her to Mötztal and carried her to the entrance of the grotto, where she prayed and invoked holy Mary, the Mother of God. Suddenly she felt much stronger and healed, and was able to return to Mötztal without assistance. Maria Kalb is reported to have lived until 1925.

The number of pilgrims subsequently grew steadily, and the chapel of grace was built at the mine entrance. At the end of the 19th century work began on building a Neo-Gothic pilgrimage church on the hill above the chapel of grace, in order to cope with the flood of pilgrims. The master builder responsible was Heinrich Hörmann. In 1901 the church was consecrated, and it is claimed that mysterious lights appeared during the ceremony. Since the 1870s there has also been a Way of the Cross along the route from Mötztal to Locherboden.

With its altarpiece by Tirolean carver Josef Bachlechner, a new organ and a modern chapel, nowadays the church at Maria Locherboden is a popular destination for night-time pilgrimages. The walls and vaulted ceilings are adorned with ornamental and figurative paintings on the themes of Easter, Christmas, Corpus Christi and Whitsun and there are numerous portraits of citizens of Mötztal. The stained-glass windows are also worthy of note. Today Maria Locherboden is seen as a place of hope and succour, as many pilgrims take very seriously the text on a banner in the church: “This is the place where you should seek me”.

## Railways - Gleichenberg railway.



1€70; 7 Oct 2016; 180,000; Combinationsdruck, Etch-Art By OeSD; Peter Sinaweil; Österreichische Staatsdruckerei.

For the past 85 years the Styrian towns of Feldbach and Bad Gleichenberg have been linked by a standard-gauge electric railway. The Gleichenberg railway is now to be presented on a commemorative stamp from the “Railways” series.

In terms of distance, the line between the two towns is significantly longer than the road. This is because the railway line was designed to connect as many places as possible via the railway network: the single-track line covers approximately 21.2km and includes eleven stops between the two termini, with the journey lasting around 35 minutes. Trains travel between Feldbach and Bad Gleichenberg three or four times a day, transporting not only passengers but also goods, mostly of an agricultural nature or for use in forestry. The train line has gradients of up to 42 per mille, which makes it steeper than the Semmering railway and one of the steepest adhesion railways in Europe. It was originally operated using 1,500 volts of direct current, and nowadays runs on 1,800 volts. The numerous bends in the track and the many stops mean that the trains reach a maximum speed of just 40 km/h.

The railway line was originally planned at a much earlier date: a project of this type was considered as early as 1886, but it was not until the 1920s that construction work started. The line finally became operational on 15th June 1931. A planned extension of the line to Bad Radkersburg was never carried out. From the middle of the 20th century, buses and increasing use of private transport sent passenger numbers into a continuous decline, so that today the Gleichenberg railway's main role is as a tourist attraction. Along its route there are many attractions which are easily accessible using the train, one example being Styriassic Park, where visitors can immerse themselves in the history of the dinosaurs.

The train also offers a pleasant view over the beautiful surrounding countryside. The “Jungle Express”, as the railway is dubbed due to its route through valleys, forests and meadows, also offers special features for tourist such as culinary trips, the ability to take your bike with you or a “Sternderlzug” to the Advent market. You can also listen to the “Sounds of Nature” on the train if desired.

Today the Gleichenberg railway is operated by the Styrian provincial railway (Steiermärkischen Landesbahnen). One electric locomotive and two electric rail cars are in operation, all dating from the 1930s and having been lovingly restored. The design on the stamp shows the electric rail car ET 2 in Maierdorf station. In addition to the standard timetable, special excursions for works outings or special events are available. Many paths run alongside the railway inviting you to take a hike or go for a bike ride, so that you can then enjoy a comfortable ride home on the train with a clear conscience.

## Unsung heroes.



1€70; 12 Oct 2016; 170,000; Offset; Gustav Assem; Enschedé.

The stamp commemorates the dramatic operation in the last days of the war in the spring of 1945 to save from destruction valuable works of art which the Nazis had purloined and stored in the tunnels of the Altaussee salt mine. It shows the rescue of Michelangelo's Madonna of Bruges.

Not only Austria, but the whole world said thank you: in the last days of the war in the spring of 1945, courageous civilians undertook a dramatic operation to save from destruction valuable works of art which were being stored in the tunnels of the Altaussee salt mine. Austrian Post is saying thank you to the miners and all those who risked their lives in this operation with a commemorative stamp showing the rescue of Michelangelo's Madonna of Bruges.

Between 1943 and the end of the Second World War, Adolf Hitler had paintings, sculptures and other works of art that the National Socialist regime had acquired through various means stored in the secure and hidden tunnels of the mine. Some of the precious works of art were destined for the Führermuseum, which Hitler intended to establish in Linz. The works emanated not only from Austria, but from many other European countries, many of them from confiscated Jewish collections or from forced sales, others were simply acquired during raids on occupied areas.

World-famous paintings by artists such as Vermeer, Rembrandt, Titian, Raffael, da Vinci, Rubens and Brueghel were stored on rudimentary shelves in empty tunnels, often meagrely wrapped in sheets since packing materials were in short supply. One of the most valuable pieces was the Madonna of Bruges by Michelangelo, a marble sculpture that the Nazi troops had taken from the Church of Our Lady in Bruges - it was also intended for the Führermuseum. The 15th century Gent altar by Jan van Eyck was another famous work of art that was stolen and stored in the mine's tunnels. After the First World War, Germany had been forced to return some panels from this altar which it had acquired legally to Brussels in restitution, something Hitler wanted to put right by "reclaiming" it.

In the final phase of the war, in April 1945, when defeat was inevitable, the Gauleiter of Oberdonau (Upper Danube), August Eigruber, decided to ensure that the works of art did not, under any circumstances, fall into the hands of the victors. To this end he had eight 500 kg bombs brought to the tunnels so that he could destroy the works of art by blowing them up. This plan caused an outcry among both art experts and the miners, who feared for their mine and their way of life. Aided by SS officer Kaltenbrunner, the miners succeeded in removing the bombs from the tunnels and sealing the tunnel entrances by blowing them up. The US American "Monument Men", a special unit tasked with recovering art looted by the Nazis, was subsequently able to rescue the works of art and to return them to their owners, a historic event which has recently been immortalised by George Clooney in a Hollywood movie.

Even if we are no longer able to say with certainty exactly whom we have to thank for this rescue operation, the brave miners and their helpers who saved these valuable works of art from certain destruction are being commemorated in a special event in Altaussee.

## Classic Edition - Postage stamps of 1858.



2€20 plus 68c; 12 Oct 2016; 140,000; Offset; Anita Kern; Block issue; Enschedé

A new commemorative stamp from the “Classic Editions” series shows the stamps from the year 1858, the so-called Franz Josef issue, on which the head of the Emperor Franz Josef I is shown in silhouette turned to the left.

The history which led to the second issue of Austrian stamps is very interesting. The first Austrian stamps, the stamps issued in 1850, also known as the coat of arms issue, were, as is well known, issued

for the Austrian Empire, with an identical series for the Kingdom of Lombardy- Venetia. However, in May 1853 forgeries of the Lombardy- Venetia stamps suddenly appeared, the so-called “Verona Forgeries”. The forgers were quickly apprehended. The “Milano Forgeries” of 1857 subsequently led to the issue of new stamps, specifically the 1858 postage stamps which were relief printed and therefore more difficult to forge.

Apart from the printing process, another difference between these and the first Austrian stamps was that the 1858 postage stamps were the first stamps to be perforated, using sheet or harrow perforation. The stamps were printed on machine-made paper with no watermark. As with the previous issue, identical looking stamps were issued for the Austrian Empire with denominations of 2, 3, 5, 10 and 15 Kreuzer, and for Lombardy-Venetia in denominations of 2, 3, 5, 10 and 15 Soldi. The design of the tendrils around the Emperor's head varied for each different denomination.

In 1859 small details of the stamps' appearance were modified, and for this reason expert philatelists talk of type I from 1858 and type II from 1859 onwards. A significant means of differentiating between them is the bow at the back of the Emperor's head: in type I it is open and so shaped like a 3, but in type II it is closed and shaped like an 8. We can see this in the Franz Josef stamps depicted on the commemorative stamps: the red, Austrian 5 Kreuzer stamp is a type II, dating from the post 1859 period, whilst the black stamp issued for Lombardy-Venetia with a denomination of 3 Soldi is a type I from the year 1858. Lombardy was ceded to the French in 1857, although the Franz Josef stamps could still be used until 1859. In Austria the stamps were valid between 1858 and 1864, with the next issue in 1860 again showing the Emperor's head, although this time it is turned to the right.

The 1858 stamps are very popular with philatelists because of the wide variations in colour, printing and paper as well as the St. Andrew's crosses printed along the margins of the sheet in order to invalidate any “open” areas.

## 50 years of the Institute of High Energy Physics.



80c; 19 Oct 2016; 250,000; Offset; Dieter Kraus; Enschedé.

The Institute of High Energy Physics is Austria's largest centre for particle physics, and was founded in 1966 as one of the now 28 institutes of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The stamp shows a view of the inside of the CMS detector.

HEPHY was founded in 1966 as one of the now 28 institutes of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. At present around 70 staff are employed at the institute, dedicated not only to basic research, but also to educating the next generation of physicists.

HEPHY makes internationally significant key contributions to current topics in particle physics. Elementary particles such as quarks are components of atoms, and there are many other particles, such as leptons, gauge bosons and the Higgs-boson, which form the so-called standard model. However, a whole range of questions remain unanswered, such as the nature of dark matter, which makes up most of the material in the universe. Consequently, among other things, the particle physicists are seeking to gain valuable knowledge about the creation of the universe through the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) in CERN, the largest research centre for particle physics in the world located in Switzerland.

The Institute of High Energy Physics, which is located in Vienna's Margareten district, is involved in research into the smallest components of material and the forces acting between them. In order to be able to investigate the characteristics of the fundamental elementary particles, large accelerators and detectors are required. This is why the focus at the Viennese institute is on participation in international large-scale experiments. HEPHY is playing a key role in the experiments at CERN (Switzerland), KEK (Japan) and Gran Sasso (Italy), and is a founding member of the LHC CMS experiments in CERN. As a result, the institute has made a name for itself with its technical innovations, among other things. But it is not only with its internationally recognised expertise in the development of detectors and reconstruction algorithms that the HEPHY researchers have gained attention: the scientists also make a significant contribution to improving our understanding of nature through new theoretical methods and predictions of new models.

In addition to outstanding research and the training of students, HEPHY also regularly organises conferences, workshops and seminars for a specialist audience, as well as exhibitions and lectures for interested laypersons. The particle physicists also strive to create enthusiasm for research and technology in the next generation through special events for children and young people.

## Modern architecture in Austria - T-Center



80c; 19 Oct 2016; 250,000; Offset; Karin Klier; Enschedé.

A particularly eye-catching building stands on part of the grounds of the former abattoir on Vienna's Rennweg. It is the T-Center, one of the most important works of contemporary Austrian architecture, which is featured on a commemorative stamp from the "Modern Architecture in Austria" series. The T-Centre is the "flagship" of the telecommunications company T-Mobile Austria.

The planning for the T-Center was undertaken by architects Günther Domenig, Hermann Eisenköck and Herfried Peyker from the Graz-based architectural firm Architektur Consult ZT GmbH. Planning started in the year 2000, construction began two years later and was completed after a record-breaking mere 26 months. The T-Centre is the "flagship" of the telecommunications company T-Mobile Austria and its sister company T-Systems, and both its staff and others who rent premises within the building benefit from the many retail companies and service providers, such as restaurants, that are available on site. In total the building, which rises to a height of up to 60 metres, provides a usable floor area of 119,000 square meters and around 3,000 people work there.

The building is made up of four main elements: the pedestal section, the public zone at ground level, the wing and the tracts. The pedestal section houses those rooms for which access to daylight is unnecessary, such as garages, storerooms and the computer centre. Shops, cycle and footpaths are to be found in the public zone. Rising at an angle above the rest of the building, the large wing, with its transparent aluminium and glass façade, houses the offices of the main tenant and is accessed via a central foyer. The panel-clad tracts can be used as an extension of the core section or as independent, separate offices.

Courtesy of its horizontal orientation, the building creates the impression of a reclining sculpture, an "architectural wing-beat" as the architects put it. Taking account of urban planning parameters, a modern, dynamic, homogeneous structure was created that is intended to be a striking new landmark for the development zone of St. Marx. With its near central location, this district of the city, known as "Neu Marx", is becoming a modern business hub for media, research and technology. That this large site was once home to the cattle market and abattoir is called to mind by the now protected historic cattle hall, which was built at the end of the 19th century to plans by Rudolf Frey. The hall is one of the few buildings with a wrought-iron structure still standing today. It incorporates an area of around 20,000 square metres and is today used as the "Marx Halle" for events.

The striking architecture of the T-Center and the way it has been incorporated into its urban context have been celebrated by the award of the Otto Wagner Urban Development Prize (2004) and the Austrian State Prize for Architecture (2006) among others.

## Day of the Stamp.



2€88 + 1€44 surcharge “for philately”; 21 Oct 2016; 270,000; Offset; Anita Kern; ÖSD

Issued singly and in minisheets of 6. The 2016 issue presents the Steinamanger-Pinkafeld local railway, which from 1888 onwards provided a cross-border link between the towns of Szombathely in Hungary and Pinkafeld in Burgenland.

Nowadays the railway is known as the Pinkatal railway after the Pinkatal valley, through which much of the railway runs. The stretch from Szombathely via Rechnitz and Oberwart to Pinkafeld was ceremoniously opened on 16th December 1888. At that time Burgenland was part of “Western Hungary” and still belonged to the Hungarian part of the monarchy. After the First World War Burgenland was ceded to Austria in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye. In 1925 the line was extended from Pinkafeld via Pinggau as far as Friedberg in Styria, and connected to the Austrian railway system via the Wechselbahn.

When the Iron Curtain came down, after the end of the Second World War, the rails along the Hungarian stretch were dismantled during the 1950s and the line terminated at Rechnitz. Gradually more and more stretches of the line within Austria were retired as a result of structural changes. Passenger travel on the Oberwart-Friedberg section came to an end in 2011 and from that time on the 28km stretch has been used solely for the carriage of goods, primarily for the wood- and metal-working industries. The line is currently operated by the province of Burgenland. For some years now there have been discussions regarding resuming passenger transport and reintroducing cross-border travel to Hungary: the “GrenzBahn” project is intended to create a railway link between Austria and Hungary.

One side of the commemorative stamp shows the station at Pinkafeld. For a long time this district in southern Burgenland was known for its textiles industry; nowadays it is an important educational centre thanks to its HTL (vocational education and training college) and university. On the upper portion of the stamp you can see the station at Szombathely, which is a major transport hub. Among other things, several Raaberbahn lines converge here; Intercity trains depart from here to Budapest and Győr, as do express trains to Vienna. Szombathely is a medium-sized city in the west of Hungary which is home to industry and commerce in the electronics, automotive technology, wood and textile processing sectors. The two municipalities are symbolically linked by a 377 series steam locomotive, like the ones used in around 1900. The stamp issued for Postage Stamp Day 2016 has a nominal value of 2.88 Euro; the supplement of 1.44 Euro is to be used to promote philately.

## Wild animals and hunting – Badger.



1€60; 22 Oct 2016; 190,000; Offset-Stich (Etch-Art by OeSD); Kirsten Lubach; ÖSD

It is to the strikingly marked badger that this year's commemorative stamp in the “Wildlife and Hunting” series is dedicated. The European badger, with the Latin name *Meles meles*, is native throughout Europe and thus also in Austria, and can even be found in cities.

The entirely peaceable badger is a carnivore, and belongs to the family of mustelidae in the superfamily caniformia. This means that they are distantly related to dogs and bears, and also to seals. Badgers grow to around 90 centimetres in length and can weigh up to 15 kilograms, with the males being significantly heavier than the females. Their legs are rather short, which makes the animals appear quite stocky. The large paws with their long claws are ideally suited to digging. However, the most characteristic feature of the badger is its coat: the head is white with a black stripe running the length of the head on either side, from the snout past the eyes and into the neck, where it blends into the greyish-black fur on the back. Its ears are also edged with white.

Although they are carnivorous, badgers largely feed on plants. Fruit, roots, seeds, tubers, mushrooms, acorns and grain are supplemented with food of animal origin such as insects, earthworms, snails, eggs and the occasional small mammal. Badgers are social animals and live in large family groups in large badger setts which they have usually dug out themselves and which consist of numerous chambers and entrances. The “living quarters” are lined with fern and moss and they use small holes dug outside the sett as latrines. In spring, up to five young are born, which start life pure white and blind. Young males usually leave the sett during the autumn to seek out a territory of their own. Badgers hibernate during the winter and can live for up to 15 years.

The preferred habitat of these wild animals is hilly, wooded areas with plenty of shrubs and hedges, but also some open spaces such as fields. They are nocturnal animals which become active at twilight, but spend the day resting in their setts. Badgers are highly adaptable creatures and willingly find food sources in parks and gardens where they “harvest” vegetables, root through compost heaps and may even build a sett. They will settle in the outlying districts of large cities and can even be found in Vienna. In view of the damage they cause they are often unwelcome guests - they will even dig under garden sheds or patios. From 1st January to 31st May hunting, killing or driving out badgers is prohibited, and during this period of protection the sett, where the badgers give birth to and raise their young, must not be destroyed.

In the past shaving brushes were made from badger hair and in some places the meat was eaten. Grimbart - as the badger is called in German fables - was once regarded as important in healing: badger fat was used as an anti-inflammatory liniment for treating rheumatism and wounds.

## Catering with tradition - Gasthof Post, Lech.



68c; 7 Nov 2016; 250,000; Offset; Regina Simon / Foto: Matthias Forstner; Enschedé. *“The place where European nobility, Arabian sheikhs and successful businessmen and women let themselves be spoiled when they take a holiday in the luxurious winter sport resort of Lech; the hotel “Gasthof Post” is probably the best known hotel in the centre of the ski resort and is one of the most luxurious in the whole of Austria.”*

For more than 30 years the exclusive and historic hotel has also been a member of the illustrious “Relais & Châteaux” association, which unites fine hotels from around the world. Tradition is extremely important here, and the Moosbrugger family has been running the 5-star hotel since 1937. It is now run by the third generation, by Florian Moosbrugger, who has succeeded Franz and Kristl and Erich and Irma Moosbrugger, although Kristl continued to run the hotel alone after the death of her husband, and even became the first woman to earn the title “Hotelier of the Year”. During the 1930s the hotel offered 20 rooms, nowadays it has 46, plus two apartments and three suites.

A view over the peaceful gardens or the impressive mountain panorama suffices to set one dreaming. The building is still painted in the characteristic dusky pink, adorned with the wooden balconies that are typical for the region as well as alpine murals. Furnished with local antiques, the hotel has retained an unmistakable charm. It is said of the “Post” that here you can enjoy the comfortable atmosphere of a country inn, yet with all the amenities of a luxury hotel. The very special ambience is created by the combination of rustic charm, attention to detail and top-quality furnishings. Whether it be the 15-metre long heated outdoor pool, from which one can enjoy a view over the mountain panorama while swimming; the new bathhouse; the open fireplaces and tiled stoves in the suites; the generously appointed rooms with comfortable seating areas and bathtubs; the hotel's own sauna area with relaxations zones, gym and brine steam bath or the suites for cosmetic treatments and massages - here everyone is sure to find their own personal luxury, and all of this situated within botanic gardens.

For those who want to get active and do some sport, there are many possibilities, and not just in winter. In the summer you can join the tours led by the hotel's own guide, head off on a mountain bike, play golf and much more. For children there is a dedicated kids' pool with a water slide, a games room, full-day childcare, swings, a trampoline and trained entertainers. Connoisseurs are superbly provided for in the famous gourmet restaurants, where both refined dishes and traditional fare of the highest quality are served. Others will be sent into raptures by a look at the wine list. The uniqueness of the “Gasthof Post” has been attracting famous persons since the 1960s, among them Queen Juliana of the Netherlands, whose family still holidays here to this day, as do the Sheikh of Qatar and many well-known names from major industries.

## Christmas Puzzle.



68c+68c+80c+80c; 11.11.2016; 140,000; Offset; Dominik Gröstlinger; Block issue; Enschedé. The Christ-Child and Father Christmas deliver gifts to two children.

Every year at Christmas people ask themselves, “Will it be the Christ Child or Father Christmas who comes to us?” So who does being the presents? On this very special Christmas puzzle stamp the answer is very simple: both come along and do their “Christmas job” together - secretly watched by the children.

It is usually the Christ Child who delivers the gifts to Austrian homes at Christmas, flying - naturally without being seen - into the room in which the gifts are to be distributed, and there placing them under the Christmas tree. Nobody really knows exactly what the Christ Child

looks like, but we usually imagine it like a small angel, with blonde curls, in a white dress with little wings on its back. In fact, it is the reformer Martin Luther whom we have to thank for the Christ Child. In the past children received their presents from St. Nicholas on 6th December. However, Luther did not agree with the Catholic practice of venerating the saints - and that included St. Nicholas - and so “postponed” the giving of gifts to Christmas Eve, the feast of the holy Christ. Over time people came to associate this custom with the newborn Jesus Christ, whose birth was announced by an angel, and this is how the symbolic figure of the Christ Child who brings the gifts came into being.

However, for some decades now Father Christmas has increasingly been finding his way into our Christmas traditions, clearly reflecting the many American films and TV shows, which, during the Christmas period, are on almost non-stop, telling stories in which Santa Claus is the central figure. From the visual perspective, Father Christmas has absolutely nothing in common with the gentle Christ Child: he is an elderly man with a long white beard and a fat stomach, dressed in a red suit with a pointed hat. Despite his anything but athletic build, he distributes his presents by sliding down the chimney into the house. As a recompense, people put out milk and cookies for him - after all, Father Christmas' belly must be filled! He transports the presents on a sleigh pulled by reindeer, led by Rudolph with his red nose. Father Christmas can also trace his origins back to St. Nicholas, hence the name Santa Claus. European migrants took the custom to America, where the character was eventually given the appearance that we know today, not least as a result of an incredibly successful advertising campaign by a famous fizzy drinks manufacturer in the 1930s.

For children it really does not matter who brings the presents. And if the Christ Child and Father Christmas are working together, well, that is a particularly beautiful message for the feast of Christmas: working together makes things easier, and not just when distributing gifts! And just to make sure that sending out your Christmas post is even more fun, we have the Christmas puzzle stamp, so that you can give your Christmas greetings added creative flair.

## Christmas 2016 – Christmas bauble.



80c; 11 Nov 2016; 750,000; Offset; Anita Kern / Elapela; Cartor Security Printing.  
*“A graphically reduced, pictogram style presentation, which uses a clear language of imagery to fill with meaning the shape of a classic Christmas bauble.”*

Every year we decorate our Christmas trees with all kinds of glittery baubles, bells, figures and tinsel, in a rustic style with straw stars and nuts, or with sweet chocolate and meringue rings. Naturally we then add candles, or nowadays more usually electric tree lights, which make the tree sparkle.

A classic form of decoration for the Christmas tree is the bauble made of glass, or nowadays frequently made from less breakable plastic. The spherical shape of this kind of tree decoration is probably due to the fact that Christmas trees were originally mostly decorated with apples, nuts and delicate pastries - which, at that time, was an extravagant luxury for many people. It was during the mid-19th century, in the German town of Thüringen, that inventive glass blowers first made glass spheres to be hung on the tree as decorations. Originally the glass was mirrored using lead and zinc, later with silver nitrate. Nowadays high-quality glass Christmas baubles are still hand-blown, a very time-consuming handicraft which naturally entails a corresponding high price. They are often also painted or decorated with glitter. Other shapes such as animals, bells or angels are also made from glass by pressing the still hot, malleable glass balls into a shape. Cheaper baubles are manufactured on an industrial scale from glass or plastic.

When it comes to the colour, shape or decoration, nowadays there are no limits to what the imagination can produce. While valuable Christmas decorations were once passed down lovingly from generation to generation, nowadays many people have “Christmas sets” in various colours and styles to choose from, or simply buy new decorations every year, perhaps at a Christmas market, where the huge range of glittery Christmas decorations is almost overwhelming.

The design for the Christmas stamp shows a classically shaped Christmas bauble in the characteristic red of Christmas. However, this bauble is not made from glass, but is, rather, made up of many small images and motifs: stars, snowflakes, apples, animals, a snowman, a sledge, a sprig of mistletoe, a bell, a gift parcel, Christmas decorations, and, of course, the Christmas post, via which we can wish our loved ones a happy and peaceful Christmas - together all these things make up Christmas. A graphically reduced, pictogram style presentation, which uses a clear language of imagery to fill the shape of a classic Christmas bauble with meaning: the memories, wishes and traditions that we associate with Christmas. A particularly eye-catching feature is the stamp's denomination, which also forms the loop for hanging up the Christmas bauble. This modern Christmas stamp was designed by renowned designer Anita Kern.

## Christmas 2016 – Nativity, by the “Meister von Raigern”.



80c; 11 Nov 2016; 500,000; Offset; Dieter Kraus; Enschedé. The design is based on a 1425 painting in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. The stamp is issued in rolls of 50.

Lovingly she bends over her child, Mary the Mother of God. Her son lies before her; she kneels and folds her hands. The angels with their massive wings likewise worship the baby Jesus, whilst one of them conveys the good news to the shepherds by means of a banner. In the background the ox and the ass continue to eat in the straw-covered stable, which is illuminated by a bright star. This is a painting from the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna,

which is being used as the design for this commemorative stamp. It is called simply “The Nativity” and is attributed to an artist who is known as the Master of Raigern. Little is known about the latter, who was active in the first third of the 15th century in Southern Bohemia.

The Bohemian School is the name generally given in art history to a group of painters who were working in Bohemia at this time. It began to develop its own Gothic style of painting and made Prague and its surroundings a cultural centre, not least thanks to the patronage from the courts of Charles IV and Wenceslas IV. Numerous panel paintings and other works for churches and monasteries in the area were created. The aforementioned Master of Raigern, also known as the Master of the Raigern Altar, produced panel paintings which were highly influential for the period.

The painting “The Nativity”, which is from an altar retable, was painted in around 1425. The word altar retable is used to describe the altarpiece or back wall of an altar. The Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna also owns a second painting from the same altar retable by the Master of Raigern, which shows the embarkation of the bones of St. James the Great for Spain, and was painted in the same year. The image of “The Nativity” measures 81 by 75 centimetres and was acquired by the Austrian Gallery, generally known as the Belvedere, in 1910. In 1922 it passed into the ownership of the Kunsthistorisches Museum.

The viewer has the impression that the birth of Christ is here depicted in a particularly luminous manner. For one thing, the crib in which the baby Jesus is laying seems golden; for another, the sky is the same colour as the star, which can be seen from afar, and the halo around Mary and Jesus. The bi-coloured wings of the angels, bowing their heads before the newborn child, seem especially magnificent, as does Mary's long green robe. The baby Jesus himself is depicted in the nude. Even the shepherds are draped in cloth that seems to shine. Clearly the Master of Raigern wanted to depict this holy night as a particularly bright one. If the circumstances in which the baby Jesus was born were humble, the surroundings should be made to appear all the more dazzling.

## Air Police.



170c; 16 Nov 2016; 170,000; Offset; Robert Sabolovic / Stefanie Grüssl; Enschedé.

60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of airborne police. Beginning with search-and-rescue, they now cover all aspects of police & security work. The stamp shows a historic photograph of the helicopter Agusta Bell 47 G2 with an up-to-date photograph of a Eurocopter EC 135 P2+ multirole standard helicopter.

In March 1956 the first rescue operation in the alpine area was staged - this year Austria's Air Police is celebrating its 60th anniversary. In March 2016 the book "Flugpolizei in Österreich - einst und jetzt" ("Austria's Air Police - then and now") presented the history of the Air Police to the public. Austrian Post is congratulating them on this anniversary with a commemorative stamp.

After the signing of the Austrian State Treaty in 1955, the ban on flying was lifted and it was possible to establish the Air Police Department in the Federal Ministry for the Interior. In the beginning the focus was on rescue operations. Having started operations from 1956 by using aeroplanes, from the start of the 1960s use was increasingly made of helicopters. In 2001 responsibility for the air rescue and ambulance flights was transferred from the Federal Ministry for the Interior to a private air rescue association. Starting with rescue operations in the alpine area, within two decades so-called flight deployment sites had been set up throughout the whole of Austria, with crews and helicopters not only being used for rescue and assistance operations, but also to help uphold the law and maintain peace and security.

Special security operations are also undertaken in the field of the civil defence, supporting fire crews in fighting fires from the air for example, or in dealing with other natural catastrophes. In the course of assistance and rescue operations the air police still carry out rescues with ropes in challenging alpine terrain or search for missing persons. On the European level, participation in deployments as part of the bilateral police collaboration and the European border protection agency FRONTEX are becoming increasingly important.

The design of the commemorative stamp shows the same image that was depicted on the title page of the brochure celebrating the anniversary, "Flugpolizei in Österreich - einst und jetzt". Graphic designer Mag. Robert Sabolovic and photographer and member of staff of the Federal Ministry for Science, Research and the Economy Mag. Stefanie Grüssl created the design using historical records from the Federal Ministry for the Interior specially photographed for the purpose. By combining the two photographs, the design is supposed to present the time span of the 60-year history of Austria's Air Police in a visual way. For this, a historic photograph of the helicopter Agusta Bell 47 G2 was used alongside an up-to-date photograph of a Eurocopter EC 135 P2+ multirole standard helicopter.

## Christmas 2016 – Silent Night: the text.



68c; 25 Nov 2016; 2,350,000; Offset; Anita Kern; Cartor Security Printing. 2,350.000 in sets of 5

“Silent Night! Holy Night!” This Christmas carol, which is probably the best known in the world, originated from three tiny municipalities in the province of Salzburg. It was at Christmas in 1818 that the assistant priest Joseph Mohr came to the teacher Franz Xaver Gruber and asked him to compose a melody for his poem of the same name. However, Mohr did not write this in 1818, as was long believed to be the case, but in 1816, which is why the lyrics of this well-known carol are celebrating a special anniversary in 2016.

In 1816 Joseph Mohr was an assistant priest in Mariapfarr in the Lungau region, the municipality where the “holy child with the curly hair” is to be seen on an altar painting in the church, which was probably Mohr's inspiration for the famous line from the poem. Franz Xaver Gruber, in turn, was working as a teacher in Arnsdorf in 1818, and it was in the schoolhouse there that he created his composition. In his “Authentischen Veranlassung” (true reason) which is preserved to this day, Gruber himself described how Mohr approached him on 24th December 1818 and asked him to compose a song for two solo voices, choir and guitar. Gruber set to work that very evening, and then played the song to Mohr, who himself was very musical.

The two decided to give the inaugural performance that very same night. Some anecdotes tell that the positive, that is, a smaller version of the organ, in the parish church of St Nikola von Oberndorf was not working. This is supposed to be the reason why a song with a guitar accompaniment was needed so urgently and was composed by Gruber. Whether this really was the case or whether it is just one of the many romantic stories that one hears in connection with the song's composition - well, who knows?

When the now so famous Christmas carol was first performed on that Christmas Eve, it was Mohr and Gruber themselves who sang the solo parts. It is reported that the inaugural performance met with “general acclaim” from the people of Oberndorf. Following the reorganisation of the Congress of Vienna and the drawing of new borders along the Salzach, they were battling with uncertain times, which accorded well with the less well-known verses of the song. The song originally had six verses, although we now generally only sing three of these: the first, the second and what was originally the sixth verse. The Christmas carol subsequently became known worldwide, has been translated into many different languages and is now included in UNESCO'S intangible cultural heritage.

On this special anniversary of the poem “Silent Night! Holy Night!” a commemorative stamp is being issued showing an excerpt from a manuscript housed in the Salzburg Museum. Whilst this is not the original version of 1818, it is the only surviving copy of Silent Night written by Joseph Mohr. This handwritten copy including the text and melody is dated to 1824 and bears the simple title “Christmas Carol”.

## Christmas 2016 – Der holde Knabe im lockigen Haar.



68c; 25 Nov 2016; 2,000,000; Offset; Dieter Kraus; Enschedé. Sold in boxed rolls of 50.

The title means “The meek child with the curly hair” but is usually translated as “Holy infant so tender and mild”. Usually rendered as “Holy infant so tender and mild” in English - who is not familiar with these lines from the well-known Christmas carol “Silent Night! Holy Night!”?

In 1816 Joseph Mohr, who originally composed the text as a poem, was working as an assistant priest in Mariapfarr in Salzburg's Lungau district. Two years later the inaugural performance of “Silent Night! Holy Night!” was given by him and the teacher from Arnsdorf Franz Xaver Gruber, who composed the melody, on 24th December in Oberndorf.

However, Mohr had already written the text in 1816 in Mariapfarr. Here there are some panel paintings hanging in front of the altar in the parish church, one of which shows the baby Jesus with an exceptionally full head of hair. In this painting the three wise men are worshipping the newborn child and bringing him gifts. The impressive colours in the painting lend their garments a particularly opulent appearance. Joseph can be seen, almost hidden away in the background, whilst Mary humbly lowers her gaze and the baby Jesus is turned towards her.

Like the other seven panels, this painting, which may have been the source of inspiration for Joseph Mohr's famous lines from “Silent Night! Holy Night!” came from a Late Gothic high altar in the church. The paintings are arranged as a fixed winged panel, with an everyday and a feast day side. Nowadays the feast day side is permanently on display, with the homage of the three wise men being one of the images featured. All eight panel paintings show scenes taken from the life of Mary: the annunciation, her death, her coronation as well as the meeting at the Golden Gates, her birth, her visit to the Temple, her marriage and the homage from the three wise men. According to the church pamphlet (“Christliche Kunststätten Österreichs”), the paintings are accredited to an unknown Styrian master and date from around 1500, although a possible connection to the “Master of Mondsee” is also mentioned here. Other sources accredit the works to a master from the Danube School, and the names Erhard Attdorfer and Jörg and Erhard Breu are mentioned as the creators - as you can see, the painting's provenance cannot really be determined.

The pilgrimage church of Mariapfarr, the church of Our Lady, the oldest portions of which probably date from around 1220, was recently comprehensively renovated and now gleams with a new brilliance. At present a decision from the Vatican is pending as to whether it can be elevated to the status of a cathedral. Pilgrimages to this church have been known for many centuries; they are documented in written sources from the 14th century. Of particular importance are the richly carved St. Anne altar and the St George altar as well as the Roman and Gothic frescoes which were uncovered in 1946. The parish church of Mariapfarr is considered the original and mother parish of the Lungau region, as a result of which it is held in high esteem, and this is probably also why it has an unusually large number of relics, liturgical equipment and votive offerings.