



Vase

Wilhelm Kralik Sohn

Not on display

Title/Description: Vase

Artist/Maker: Wilhelm Kralik Sohn (Manufacturer)

Born: 1900 c.

Object Type: Glassware, Vase

Materials: Glass

Technique: Blow moulding

Measurements: h. 238 x w. 125 x w. 125 mm

Accession Number: 21061

Production Place: Czech Republic, Lenora

School/Style: Art Nouveau

Credit Line: Donated by Sir Colin and Lady Anderson, 1978

Blow moulded, this bottle-shaped vase in purple glass is decorated with criss-crossing iridescent spun threads. Possessing a square base with four indented faces, the walls of the vessel gradually taper inwards to create a short cylindrical neck with an everted, undulating rim.

Unlike the ornamental floral vessels for which the company is well known, this work by Wilhelm Kralik Sohn has a simple geometrical form and abstract linear decoration. Iridescent finishes, inspired by excavated ancient Roman, Syrian and Egyptian glass, had been popularised by Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) in his Favrite art glass ranges. [1] Competing glass manufacturers developed their own methods for producing surface iridescence and metallic lustres.

This vase was manufactured at the glasswork in Lenora, Southern Bohemian (present day Czech Republic) by Wilhelm Kralik Sohn. Founded by Josef Meyra in 1815, the glassworks passed through the family line to Wilhelm Kralik. After Wilhelm's death in 1877, the company was divided between his four sons. Heinrich (1840-1911) and Johann Kralik (no dates) operated the glassworks at Eleonorenhain and Ernstbrunn. These were amalgamated and renamed Wilhelm Kralik Sohn by Heinrich after Johann's retirement in around 1922. The other two sons, Hugo and Karl Kralik continued glass production under the name, Meyr's Neffe. [2]

Wilhelm Kralik Sohn's glass production imitated the commercially successful designs of Bohemian firm Loetz Witwe. This has led to the misattribution of many of Kralik's high-end works.

Vanessa Tothill, January 2021

[1] Vivienne Couldrey, *The Art of Louis Comfort Tiffany* (London: Quarto Publishing, 1989), pp. 41, 45.

[2] https://www.20thcenturyglass.com/glass_encyclopedia/bohemian_glass/kralikglass_home.htm [accessed 22 January 2021]; <https://www.bohaglass.co.uk/kralik-glass-pale-imitator/> [accessed 22 January 2021]

Further Reading

Amaya, Mario, *Art Nouveau* (London: Dutton Vista, 1966)

Couldrey, Vivienne, *The Art of Louis Comfort Tiffany* (London: Quarto Publishing, 1989)

Geitner, Amanda and Emma Hazell, ed., *The Anderson Collection of Art Nouveau* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2003)

Greenhalgh, Paul, ed., *Art Nouveau, 1890-1914* (London: V&A Publications, 2000)

Greenhalgh, Paul, ed., *The Nature of Dreams: England and the Formation of Art Nouveau* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2020)
