

The Biedermeier A Triumph of Simplicity in a complex Time

Date/Time	Thursday, 16 th July 11.00-16.30	Price	£44 Member £54 Non-Member
Venue	Online	Lecturer	Thomas Abbott

Often misunderstood, the Biedermeier in its basic ideology is an unified aesthetic system, which materially and visually communicates the needs and political situations of an immediate post-Napoleonic societal and political reorganisation. On the one hand, the Biedermeier in art, architecture, decorative arts, literature and music is retrospective - finding identity, social cohesion, and inspiration in the perceived and real artistic and architectural achievements of the medieval and renaissance. On the other hand, the Biedermeier whose book-ends can be considered to be 1815 to 1848 is a renewal of all arts through a designed simplicity, an art reflective of life eschewing ornament and ostentation.

Until relatively recently, the Biedermeier was less favourably received. Recent re-evaluations however have disclosed the fundamental principles of the Biedermeier: simplicity of design, subject matter, beauty of material, and durability. Utilising these principles, the artists and architects of the Biedermeier created an aesthetic system which to this day is reflected in art, architecture, and the decorative arts. In other words, though a historic aesthetic and time period, the Biedermeier should be considered as a precursor or instigator of the modern.

Lecture 1: The Biedermeier. The who, what, where, and why of the Biedermeier.

Lecture 2: Designed Simplicity: The Furniture and other decorative arts of Europe 1815-1848. From Josef Ulrich Danhauser in Vienna to Karl Friedrich Schinkel in Berlin.

Lecture 3: Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller and the Others. Painting at the Time of the Biedermeier. (Carl Spitzweg, Moritz von Schwind)

Lecture 4: Other Arts and Aspects: Sculpture and Architecture within the Biedermeier.

Lecturer

Thomas Abbott is an independent art and architectural historian, who has lived in Berlin for over thirty years. Born in the United States, he graduated in Psychology and Art History from Minnesota and continued his studies at the Louvre School of Art History in Paris. He has regularly devised and led cultural tours for leading specialist travel companies and societies including the London Art History Society. His expertise in art and architectural history ranges from the medieval to the current and encompasses garden history and the musical heritage of Germany.