WALL MIRROR JOSEF HOFFMANN MAX WELZ CA. 1930

Wall mirror, design by Josef Hoffmann, execution Max Welz for the Wiener Werkstätte, ca. 1930, linden wood, carved, gilt, mirror glass

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Designed by Josef Hoffmann for the Wiener Werkstätte around 1930 and executed by the renowned Viennese frame maker Max Welz, this mirror is an elegant example of Hoffmann's mature design vocabulary. The elongated, gilt limewood frame is crowned by a stylized vegetal finial, a restrained ornamental accent that reflects the architect's late style. [By this period, Hoffmann had distilled his formal language into a refined synthesis of classicism and modernism, combining balanced proportions and classical motifs with the clarity and functional sensibility that defined interwar design.]

The exceptional quality of the frame is owed to Max Welz, one of Vienna's foremost specialists in artistic framing and gilding. Trained as both a sculptor and a gilder, Welz established a flourishing workshop renowned for its outstanding craftsmanship. As a member—and from 1922, a board member—of the Österreichischer Werkbund, he maintained close ties with the leading figures of the Viennese avant-garde. His collaboration with the Wiener Werkstätte resulted in the execution of some of its most sophisticated frame designs, including works by Josef Hoffmann and Dagobert Peche. [At a time when industrial mass production increasingly dominated the decorative arts, Welz's workshop embodied the Werkbund's and the Wiener Werkstätte's commitment to uncompromising artisanal excellence, making him the ideal collaborator for their most ambitious designs.]

This mirror model was exhibited at the 1930 Werkbund Exhibition held at the Museum für Kunst und Industrie in Vienna, today the MAK – Museum of Applied Arts.

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