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Ken Forster

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TILES & STYLES JUGENDSTIL & SECESSION

*Art Nouveau and Arts & Crafts Design in German and
Central European Decorative Tiles, 1895-1935*

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Ken Forster : Tiles Styles, Jugendstil Secession: Art Nouveau and Arts Crafts Design in German and Central European Decorative Tiles, 1895-1935 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Tiles Styles, Jugendstil Secession: Art Nouveau and Arts Crafts Design in German and Central European Decorative Tiles, 1895-1935:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Lovely, Elegant, ComprehensiveBy David WinebergArt Nouveau is

my period. It was the last time that form mattered over function, before mass production took over from artistic exuberance. My own collection ran to several hundred objects. *Tiles and Styles* is an extremely well organized colorful compendium focused on tiles – wall, floor, stove and furniture, as well as ceramic trays. Forster has chosen a lovely selection in full color, and displayed them in his pages differently and pleasantly, some big, some small, interrupting the text and making for a variety of layouts. The book is a pleasure and a comprehensive reference. He has chapters on the styles, which were dramatically different in every country, biographies of the artists, and examinations of the very different production techniques employed by the very large number of factories making tiles. He describes (but does not show) their makers' marks on the backs of tiles. There are a couple of issues with the book. I am disappointed there are no examples of the fantastic designs of the Glasgow School he describes, though I understand his focus is continental. The difference is so dramatic it would have been worth cheating a little. And I can't imagine why he would repeat photos of tiles when there are so many thousands to choose from. There are probably a dozen photos he has used at least twice. My heartfelt thanks to Ken Forster; I am grateful *Tiles and Styles* was not around when I was collecting tiles and trays, discovering all this for myself. It would most certainly have freed me to obsessive buying of these stunningly bright, dramatic and still avant-garde pieces. David Wineberg

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Resource

By Talvi

What we have with this book is a thoroughly researched look at primarily Jugendstil and Secession art movements in Central Europe (in Germany and Austria, respectively) closely related to Art Nouveau in France and Arts and Crafts in England. The focus is on decorative tiles - from heating stoves to plaques, serving trays to floor tiles. Although the book is copiously adorned with color photographs of the tiles, it is the research and knowledge accompanying the images that provide true utility. The book breaks down as follows: Introduction; Section One (tile information, floor tiles, cement floor tiles, stove tiles, tiles with special uses, artistic tiles and plaques, wall tiles); Section Two (art nouveau and arts and crafts design in German and Central European Ceramic Tiles, the styles, the tiles, the manufacturers, designers, comparative consideration of English, Belgian, and Dutch tile production); Bibliography; Appendices, Index. As can be seen from the above list, the breadth and depth of the knowledge is impressive. Whether looking up information on a specific designer, a manufacturer, or a style, the book provides all the information needed. The regions covered are: German Jugendstil, Austrian Secessionist, Hungarian Secessionist, and Bohemian/Moravian Secessionist. Correspondingly, manufacturers from Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia, Moravia are also exhaustively cataloged with background information. To provide reference, discussions about English, Scottish, Dutch, French, and Belgian tiles/styles are also included. Adding to the utility is information about tile definitions, usage, history, manufacture, style, patterns motifs, installation design, and decorating techniques. It makes researching easy - whether one is holding a radiator cover tile or concrete floor piece. If I have one nitpick, it's that the tiles are photographed individually and subsequently there are few tile patterns shown. We're given verbal indication of how the tile would have been used but it would also have been just as useful to see the pattern as a whole. The genius of some tiles is how they stack together to create a unique pattern; that is sadly missing from this book. *Tiles Styles* is a lovingly compiled, beautifully illustrated, and well researched resource on middle European tiles. Suitable for art historians, decorators, researchers, or those who love the designs from the period. Reviewed from an advance reader copy provided by the publisher.

This book looks at decorative tiles manufactured in Germany, Austria, Hungary and Bohemia/Moravia/Czechoslovakia in the years between 1895 and 1935. These ceramic tiles, used primarily on walls, floors, and stoves, but also furniture, trays and more, were an affordable decor element that made art accessible to many. They would also turn out to be some of the best examples of the Jugendstil and Secession movements in design: Both were variations of international art nouveau and rejected the conservative aesthetics of mainstream art. In Part I of the book, the author places these movements within the context of art history, then explores the history of the tiles. In Part II, a broad look is taken at arts and crafts and art nouveau tiles, including influences from other Western and Central European nations. With almost 600 color photos of tiles, this book will appeal to art historians, decorative arts aficionados, and anyone who appreciates beautiful, inspirational design.

About the Author Ken Forster is a professional antiquarian, design historian, collector, and lecturer, specializing for over forty years in the applied arts and styles of decoration of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Europe and the United States.