

# 1948 // NATIONAL PROFILE AUSTRIA

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## LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IN 1948

In 1946, Austrian landscape architects set about establishing a new section of Garden Architects within the Association of Austrian Applied Artists (Ö.G.A) that would represent the profession. This was an attempt to reinitiate a professional body for landscape architecture in Austria after World War Two (WWII). The previous association, Vereinigung Österreichischer Gartenarchitekten (VÖGA), which had been founded in 1912, had been dissolved and incorporated into the Reichskammer der Bildenden Künste by the Nazis in 1938. Given that the association was so newly founded, the official invitation to the first International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) Congress was misdirected to the Austrian Chamber of Engineers, which appointed the architect Hanns Kunath as representative. After several detours, the invitation finally reached Franz Nothhacksberger, who was then Head of the Ö.G.A. and successfully managed to obtain a visa to travel to the United Kingdom in the remaining time. This was required because Austria was under allied administration until 1955.

Until well into the twentieth century, most Austrian landscape architects were trained at horticultural colleges. Franz Nothhacksberger graduated from the most renowned institution in the monarchy, located in Eisgrub (now Lednice in the Czech Republic). Academic courses for garden design at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU) in Vienna date back to the late 19th century with efforts to establish an academic education at BOKU being restarted in the late 1940s. However, it was not until the 1970s that a studium irregulare “Landscape Ecology and Landscape Design” was approved. This was later transformed into a trial study programme of the same name and finally, in 1991, into a full-fledged academic course.



**Hanns Kunath (1902–1979)** was a trained architect from the University of Technology in Graz. Kunath planned several housing estates for the municipality of Vienna. He was also responsible for a number of cooperative housing estates as well as administrative and religious buildings throughout Austria. Kunath was a member of the Vienna Künstlerhaus and the Austrian Chamber of Engineers. It was the Austrian Chamber of Engineers who proposed sending him to the IFLA congress in London in 1948. Kunath, being an architect and not a landscape architect, decided against attending the Cambridge meeting.<sup>3</sup>

**Alfred Auer (1922–2002)** was a landscape architect. According to Ö.G.A. archival documents, Franz Nothhacksberger was accompanied on his trip to the IFLA Congress in London by Alfred Auer, who like Nothhacksberger, had been trained at the horticultural college in Eisgrub. In 1941, right after graduation, Auer joined the Vienna Parks Department, where he later became its Head for twenty five years (1950–1975). Auer was engaged in professional associations and served as Vice-President of the Association of Austrian Garden and Landscape Architects Ö.G.A. from 1955 onwards. In 1974 he became President of the International Federation of Park and Recreation Administration (IFPRA).

## NOTABLE INDIVIDUALS

**Franz Nothhacksberger (1882–1952)** was trained at the horticultural school in Eisgrub and the Höhere Gartenbaulehranstalt Berlin Dahlem. He worked for more than thirty years in Germany and Egypt before settling in Vienna in 1936. He reportedly designed “hundreds of parks, gardens and sport fields in Austria, Germany, Czech-Slovakian Republic and Egypt”.<sup>1</sup> He was the first Head of the newly established Section of Garden Architects within the Association of Austrian Applied Artists Ö.G.A. from 1946–1948.

Nothhacksberger coupled the trip to the IFLA Congress in London in 1948, with a visit to the Netherlands, where Austrian landscape architects were bidding for a contract to rebuild Rotterdam. Documents imply that – due to time pressure and predominant economic interests – he did not travel on to Cambridge but returned to Rotterdam and thus forfeited Austria’s participation in the founding event of IFLA.<sup>2</sup> Suffering from a severe stroke, Nothhacksberger had to stop professional activities in September 1948.

1. Nothhacksberger, Fragebogen für die Aufnahme in die Berufsvereinigung der bildenden Künstler Österreichs, 9 February 1946. Archiv der Berufsvereinigung der bildenden Künstler Österreichs, Landesverband Wien/NÖ/Bgld, Schloss Schönbrunn, Ovalstiege 40, 1130 Vienna.

2. Notes of Informal Meeting held at Jesus College, Cambridge 14th August, 1948. (1948). [minutes] CIVA Brussels, IFLA Golden books, p.1

3. Notes of Informal Meeting held at Jesus College, Cambridge 14th August, 1948. (1948). [minutes] CIVA Brussels, IFLA Golden books, p.1

4. Die Gartenkunst 54.2 (1941): 23-33

5. Filipisky, K.P. (1949). Letter from Karl Paul Filipisky to the Section of Garden Architects Ö.G.A., 16 September. ÖGLA fonds, Archive of Austrian Landscape Architecture LArchiv, BOKU Vienna

6. Sektionsversammlung am 23.8.1948: Bericht über Ausstellung in Rotterdam. ÖGLA fonds, Archive of Austrian Landscape Architecture LArchiv, BOKU Vienna

7. Filipisky, K.P. (1949). Letter from Karl Paul Filipisky to the Section of Garden Architects Ö.G.A., 16 September. ÖGLA fonds, Archive of Austrian Landscape Architecture LArchiv, BOKU Vienna

8. Ihm, Der IS. [sic] “IFLA”-Congress in

Stockholm, Illustrierte Flora 76 (1953), issue 11, p. 140

9. L. M. [Ihm, Eduard Maria] (1953).

Internationaler Kongress der Garten- und Landschaftsarchitektur 1954 in Wien, Illustrierte Flora 76 (1953), issue 12, p. 151

10. Franz Nothhacksberger, 1938 (unknown), Archiv der Berufsvereinigung der bildenden Künstler Österreichs, Landesverband Wien/NÖ/Bgld, Schloss Schönbrunn, Ovalstiege 40, 1130 Vienna)

11. The opening of the IFLA congress in Vienna townhall, June 8-11, 1954 (Fayer-Schikola, Landscape Architecture 1954-55, vol. 45 (1): 31)

12. Eduard Maria Ihm, 1938 (unknown), Archiv der Berufsvereinigung der bildenden Künstler Österreichs, Landesverband Wien/NÖ/Bgld, Schloss Schönbrunn, Ovalstiege 40, 1130 Vienna)



12.

## IFLA CONFERENCE REPORTS



### **Eduard Maria Ihm (1904–1971)**

When Franz Nothhacksberger was struggling with the effects of a severe stroke, the landscape architects Eduard Maria Ihm and Karl Paul Filipisky took over his responsibilities. Eduard Maria Ihm established a design studio in Vienna in 1935 and taught garden design at several horticultural schools. In 1940, he represented the Ostmark at a meeting of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Gartenkunst DGfG and argued for establishing a secondary academic training institution within the Reich in Vienna.<sup>4</sup> Ihm followed Nothhacksberger as Head of Ö.G.A. in 1948. In 1953, when Austria was already a member of IFLA, Ihm who was then Head of the Vienna Cemetery Department, was enthusiastic about Austria hosting the 4th IFLA Congress the following year.

**Karl Paul Filipisky (1919–1976)** started his professional career as a garden designer in 1948 and became Head of the Parks Department in Graz in 1967. While Ihm headed the Association of Austrian Garden and Landscape Architects Ö.G.A., Filipisky, fifteen years his junior, became managing director of a competing professional association called KOLG. In 1970, when the two organisations fused, Filipisky was chosen as its first President. He regarded establishing national and international contacts as a top priority.<sup>5</sup>

Franz Nothhacksberger reported on the first IFLA congress in London: “The receptions held with prominent personalities of England gave valuable opportunities for a contact with the representatives of fourteen European and American countries. [...] Regarding

the purpose of close cooperation with the architectural community - Invitation of representatives of those architects who have already shown considerable understanding for gardening....D) To start correspondence with similar organizations in the other countries and exchange magazines, material, books, invitations, etc.”<sup>7</sup>

In 1952, Eduard M. Ihm, then Head of the Section of Garden Architects Ö.G.A., together with Alfred Auer and Karl Paul Filipisky, represented Austria at the IFLA congress in Stockholm. Back in Austria, Ihm was thrilled that, “The congress [in Stockholm] brought Austria a double success: firstly, the admission to the “INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS” (IFLA). Secondly, the decision was taken to hold the next IFLA Congress in Vienna in 1954. This decision met with enthusiastic approval by all congress participants”<sup>8</sup>

“Next year’s congress [titled “International Landscapes”, June 8-11, 1954] is all the more welcome because it will not only bring to Vienna the leading figures in the field of garden and landscape design, which is so important today, but will also give the general public an opportunity for the first time to gain an insight into the professional work of the garden and landscape architects of 25 nations”.<sup>9</sup>

the exhibition, it was clearly stated that the works of Austrian garden architects would have been among the first, if their participation had been possible (as is well known, the official invitation was misdirected by ministerial authorities, so that it did not come to the attention of the professional association in time)”.<sup>6</sup>

Karl Paul Filipisky attended the 54th Annual General Meeting of the German Society for Garden Art and Landscape Conservation and reported to the Section of Garden Architects Ö.G.A., that he met the Swedish landscape architect Edoard Jakobson, which:

“gives the possibility of establishing a connection with Sweden [...]. Inspired by the conditions in Germany, I now submit the following motions for the next Section [of the Austrian professional association] meeting in the interest of the development of Austrian horticulture and especially garden and landscape design: A) Immediate establishment of intensive relations for