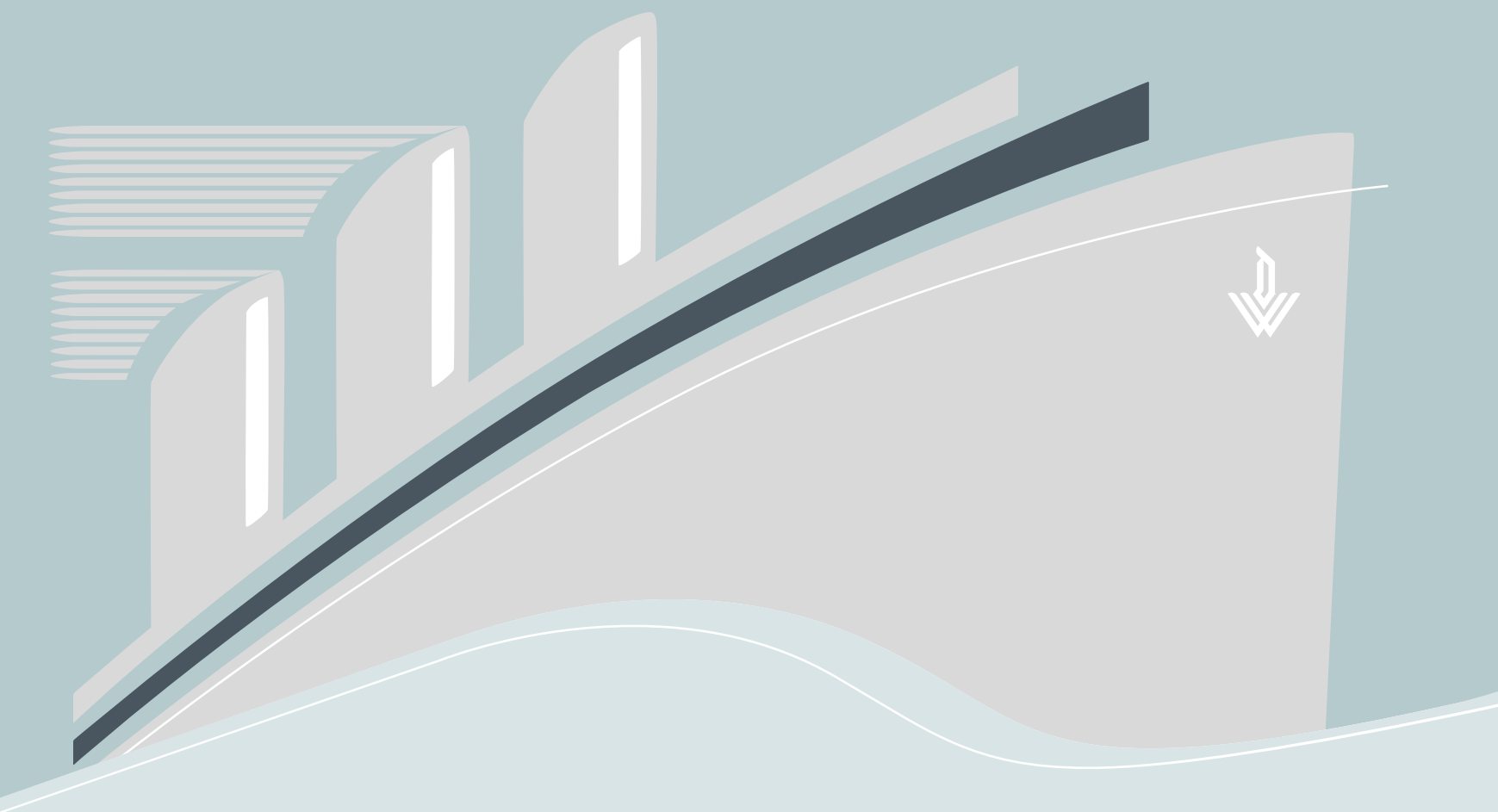


A CLASS OF THEIR OWN

HISTORICAL SHIP INTERIORS

BY DEUTSCHE WERKSTÄTTEN





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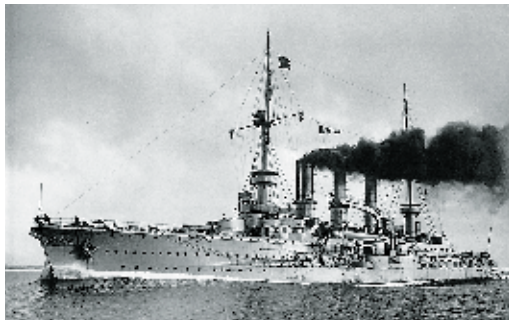
SANDSTEIN VERLAG

A CLASS OF THEIR OWN

HISTORICAL SHIP INTERIORS

BY DEUTSCHE WERKSTÄTTEN

WARSHIPS



PRINZ
ADALBERT
1904

RIVALRY AT SEA
ANNA FERRARI

OFFICERS' MESSES
AND CAPTAIN'S CABINS

KARL SCHMIDT
"HOW I CONQUERED
THE NAVY"

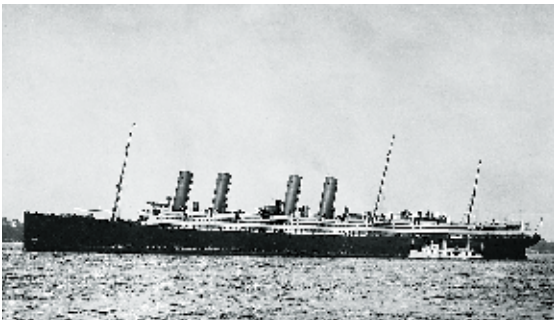


A SHOW OF
FORCE IN THE AGE
OF IMPERIALISM

DEUTSCHE
WERKSTÄTTEN
TULGA BEYERLE

PROLOGUE
FRITZ STRAUB

OCEAN GIANTS



RICHARD
RIEMERSCHMID

HISTORIC
ART JOURNALS

BIGGER,
FASTER,
MORE
EXTRAVAGANT

JOHANN
HEINRICH
BURCHARD
1914

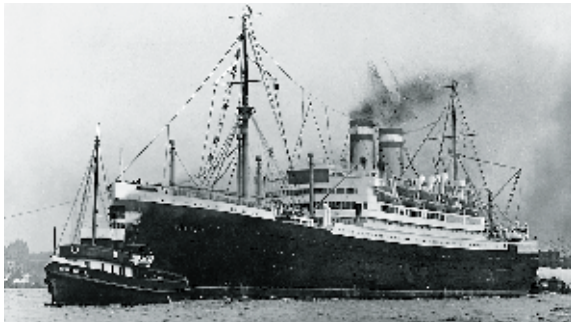
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CECILIE
1907

BERLIN
1905

DANZIG
1907



HAMBURG AMERICA LINE



DEUTSCHLAND
1924

HAMBURG
1926

NEW YORK
1927

MAGDALENA
AND
ORINOCO
1928



“MEIN FELD IST DIE WELT!”



KARL BERTSCH

PRESTIGE



BOISSEVAIN
1938

CORDILLERA
AND
CARIBIA
1933

EXPERTISE
AND
KNOW-HOW

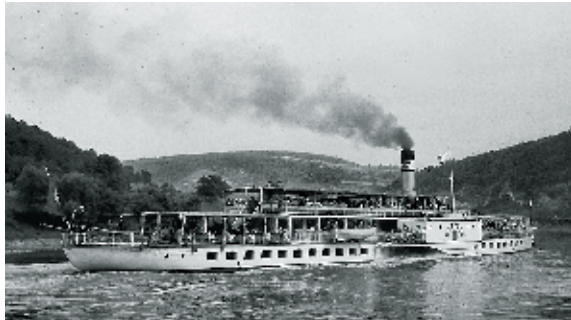
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1929

BRUNO PAUL

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PROLOGUE

**Fritz Straub | Managing Partner
Deutsche Werkstätten**



Deutsche Werkstätten is always good for a surprise. Back in 2016, we received a request from the world-renowned Victoria & Albert Museum in London, as they began preparing for an exhibition on the design elements of the great ocean liners. We knew, of course, that Deutsche Werkstätten had been involved in furnishing a few passenger steamships in the first half of the twentieth century. But as we took a closer look at the relevant literature as well as a diverse array of art journals from bygone years, we quickly realised we had underestimated the extent and the extraordinary quality of these projects. In the historical archives of Deutsche Werkstätten, which have been housed since 1999 in the Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden (Dresden State Archive), we also found numerous wonderfully preserved and often beautiful drafts and plans that vividly document the interiors of ships from that era. Probing further, we stumbled upon the collection of a former employee of Deutsche Werkstätten, who had served as a technical supervisor on some of these outfitting projects.

Even before wrapping up our research, we were able to collect a trove of information as well as illustrations and photos. As of this printing, we have confirmed that in the

years 1903 to 1907 Deutsche Werkstätten furnished about a dozen warships for the Imperial German Navy. Furthermore, between 1906 and 1938 the company fitted out at least 18 luxury ocean liners, including the *Kronprinzessin Cecilie* (1907), the *Bremen* (1929) and the *Wilhelm Gustloff* (1938). On top of these, Deutsche Werkstätten worked on the interiors of multiple large steamships for inland navigation, one of which, the *Leipzig* (1929), still sails today. Shortly after the Second World War, Deutsche Werkstätten received numerous commissions to refurbish former passenger ships. We have since uncovered five such projects.

Eventually, we circulated some of this information about our history of outfitting ships, including the occasional photo. Time and again, we were met with requests from colleagues, business partners and friends to print 'a little something' on the topic. Here is our answer! And I am very pleased to note that it has turned into more than just a *little* something.

I am equally pleased that Anna Ferrari, from the Victoria & Albert Museum, agreed to provide an introductory text on the international influence of German passenger ships and German design in the first half of the twentieth century.

Her text will transport you back into the dazzling era of the 'ocean giants'. Afterwards we will present – up close and personal – a number of historical examples of Deutsche Werkstätten's craftsmanship from that period.

My thanks also go to Tulga Beyerle, director of the Kunstgewerbemuseum (Museum of Decorative Arts) in Dresden, who has contributed an article on the artistic, cultural and historical significance of Deutsche Werkstätten and its collection. Furthermore, we have received support on this project from the Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden and the Deutsche Fotothek. I would like to take the opportunity to thank these organisations as well.

And to our readers: I hope you enjoy perusing these pages!

Yours,
Fritz Straub



RIVALRY AT SEA: THE INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCE OF GERMAN PASSENGER LINERS

Anna Ferrari

In 1898, the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Große* created a sensation when it became the fastest liner to cross the Atlantic. Completing the journey in five days and twenty hours, the German liner marked the end of Britain’s unrivalled domination of the transatlantic passenger route (Figure 1). Owned by the Bremen shipping company Norddeutscher Lloyd (NDL), the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Große* (1897) was the first German ship to win the Blue Riband, the unofficial and highly prestigious prize awarded to the fastest liner to cross between Europe and North America. The largest and most luxuriously appointed liner yet built, it was also a product of a German shipyard. It was a tangible symbol of Imperial Germany’s emergence as an economic and industrial power since the mid-nineteenth century. Those decades of rapid industrialisation witnessed the establishment of two liner companies that became the largest in Germany: the Hamburg-Amerikanische Packetfahrt-Actien-Gesellschaft (known in English as HAPAG or Hamburg America Line) in 1847 and NDL in 1856.

In the last years of the nineteenth century, the launch of the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Große* marked the beginning of an intense international rivalry between the British and German transatlantic shipping companies. Competition extended to the interior design of liners, with shipping lines seeking to surpass each other by offering increasingly luxurious rooms on board. Far more was at stake than just a prize. Capturing the Blue Riband was a question of national pride, as liners became floating national symbols. The idea that liners embodied their country was often made plain in the choice of patriotic names. This was especially true of the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Große* and successive German ships named after members of the imperial family. The largest machines ever built, liners were cast as symbols of national unity and pride for the new German state. Until the outbreak of the Second World War, German liners played a crucial role in the international transatlantic race, spurring a rivalry between companies and nations. HAPAG and NDL initially promoted historicism in the early years of the twentieth century, but they were also among the first shipping lines to invite modern designers to work on their liner interiors.

1

Kaiser Wilhelm der Große (1897)

Photographed c. 1900

Between 1898 and 1907, the Blue Riband remained in German hands, alternating between NDL and HAPAG. Both companies favoured interiors that harked back to aristocratic homes and appealed to the wealthy international first-class clientele. NDL launched a trio of large liners: the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* (1901), the *Kaiser Wilhelm II* (1903) and the *Kronprinzessin Cecilie* (1906), which featured historicist interiors, densely decorated with heavy gilt mouldings and ornaments. Johann Poppe, the Bremen architect responsible for the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Große's* interiors (Figure 2), was again employed to design public rooms on board the *Kronprinzessin Cecilie* in a Neo-Baroque style. At the same time, however, NDL also looked to progressive designers and ran a competition for the decoration of thirty first-class cabins on board the ship. The winners of the competition were Richard Riemerschmid, Bruno Paul and Joseph Maria Olbrich, who were soon to become founding members of the Deutscher Werkbund in 1907. This association of artists, designers, industrialists and merchants sought to improve the quality of German applied art and to replace period styles with products suited to modern life and modern German society. Riemerschmid's designs for the Imperial Suite on board the *Kronprinzessin Cecilie* were a stark contrast to Poppe's public rooms and exemplified the new approach to interiors. Panelled in light-coloured wood with a stylised vegetal motif and pared-down furniture, the suite was devoid of historical allusions or excessive, classical ornaments (Figure 3). Riemerschmid's designs were executed by the Dresdner Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst (now



***Kaiser Wilhelm der Große* (1897)**

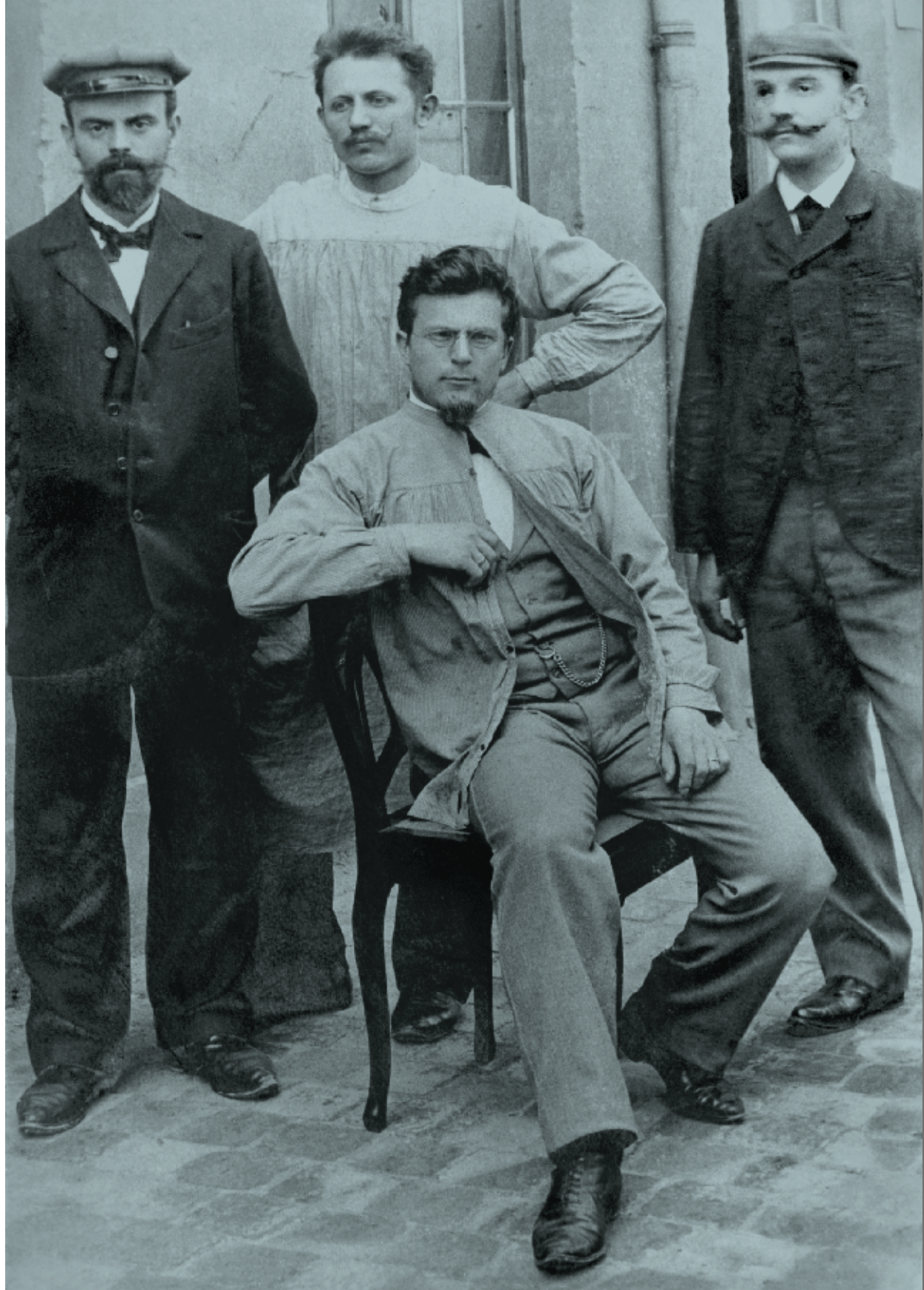
First-class smoking room

1

Karl Schmidt (front)

Founder of Deutsche Werkstätten

c. 1900



DEUTSCHE WERKSTÄTTEN OR: KARL SCHMIDT, THE VISIONARY FROM SAXONY

Tulga Beyerle

Karl Schmidt was, by birth as well as by training, a simple craftsman – yet at the same time he was a man of extraordinary curiosity, many interests and a great openness to the changing discussion surrounding the decorative arts at the end of the nineteenth century (Figure 1). The journeyman years that followed his carpentry apprenticeship offer proof of his drive to expand his education far beyond the borders of Saxony. The programmatic approach of the Dresdner Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst (founded in 1898, renamed ‘Deutschen Werkstätten für Handwerkskunst’ in 1907) was influenced by the English Arts and Crafts movement. Schmidt’s idea – to work with the best artists in the country, yet still produce affordable furniture – was visionary.

Schmidt had already broken away from the conventional commissioning process by 1899. In contrast to typical practice up to that point, which was to purchase designs from artists (or, in this case, designers and architects), Schmidt instead actively encouraged the professionals – women and men alike – to submit drafts for furniture and handicrafts, offering them a share of five to ten percent of the profit from

sales. This demonstrated his astounding feel for the spirit of the times and for the will to reform that was then asserting itself. These reforms included rethinking design, moving away from a historicising mishmash of styles, seeking out new forms and executing them in the highest quality. His proposal of cooperation as well as his network, which was already well activated at that time, produced from the very beginning a multitude of exceptional designs by the era’s best designers (Figure 2). In this sense, Karl Schmidt broke new ground in Germany and was soon enjoying international recognition and success. Günther von Pechmann, the first director of the Neue Sammlung in Munich, said the following, and not without reason: “Deutsche Werkstätten is one of the workshops that will always be mentioned when the talk turns to the age of great transformation in German decorative arts [...]”¹ It is therefore no accident that Karl Schmidt also played a decisive role in the founding of the Deutscher Werkbund in 1907.

Through Karl Schmidt's efforts and network, Dresden became a centre for the artistic and technological rejuvenation of interior design and the decorative arts movement. As a businessman, Schmidt understood the value of participating in the most important exhibitions and, accordingly, recruiting the best artists around. However, the innovations touched not only design aspects, but also the technological aspects of furniture production, such as with the development of blockboard. In addition, Schmidt had the farsighted idea of furnishing special showrooms to present a comprehensive range of interior décor. In these showrooms, and in vividly illustrated catalogues, customers could discover not only furniture but also tableware, soft furnishings and wallpaper. It is, therefore, not surprising that Schmidt – with his high standards for quality – began early on to produce wallpaper and textiles as well. The latter of these endeavours led to the 1923 founding of Dewetex (Deutsche Werkstätten Textilgesellschaft; Figure 3). It is interesting that despite its open-mindedness, its innovative courage and its drive towards a modern style of living, the company still sought balance by offering products tailored to the market. Deutsche Werkstätten was never as avant-garde as the Wiener Werkstätte (founded 1903, dissolved 1932) or as radical in its design ambitions as the Bauhaus (founded 1919, forced to disband in 1933 by Nazi

2

Living room furniture

Designed by Josef Maria Olbrich

1903



3

Textile sample

Designed by Josef Hillerbrand

c. 1930



repression), but it has always been able to reach a wide audience, and it has survived into the present day despite many crises, nationalisation during the time of the German Democratic Republic and reprivatation in 1992.

A milestone in Deutsche Werkstätten's history was the introduction of the so-called 'Maschinenmöbel' (machine-manufactured furniture) based on designs presented by Richard Riemerschmid at the Third German Decorative Arts Exhibition in Dresden in 1906 (Figure 4). This was in keeping with the desire to produce high-quality furniture that was still affordable for a large number of people.

OCEAN GIANTS

BIGGER, FASTER,
MORE EXTRAVAGANT

KRONPRINZESSIN CECILIE (1907)

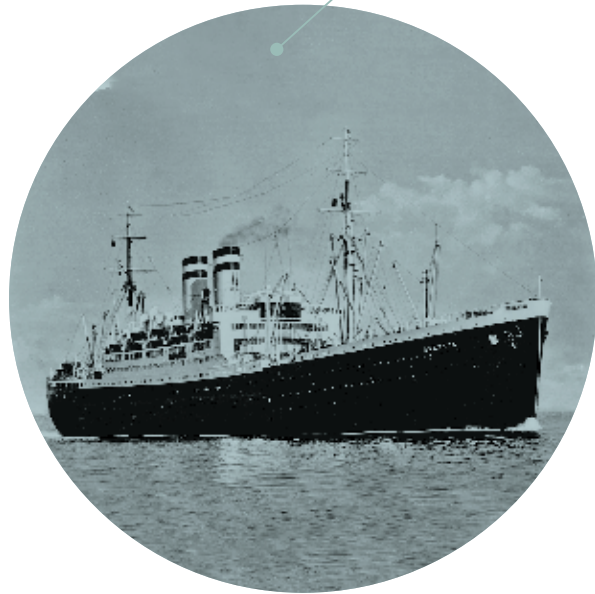
HISTORIC ART JOURNALS

JOHANN HEINRICH BURCHARD
(1914)



HAMBURG (1926)

HAPAG | Blohm & Voss (Hamburg) | 193.5 m



The *Hamburg*, similar to the *Deutschland*, was a passenger ship of the so-called 'Albert Ballin class', likewise sailing the North Atlantic route. She was later employed repeatedly and with great success as a cruise liner. During the Second World War the *Hamburg* operated as a transport and barracks ship, until an exploding mine caused her to capsize in March of 1945. When the war was over, the wreckage was refloated by the Soviet Union and repaired in various shipyards. The Soviets originally planned to turn her into a passenger ship, but in the end she became the *Yuri Dolgorukiy*, a mothership for whaling vessels. The former HAPAG steam liner served in this role in the Southern Ocean from 1960 to 1976.



Second-class ladies' lounge

Finished in flame birch wood



“To New York”
HAPAG poster, 1936



Deutsche Werkstätten furnished the ladies' lounge for the *Hamburg's* second-class passengers according to plans from Karl Bertsch. The work once again earned many compliments:

“The ladies’ lounge in second class – finished in flame birch wood and manufactured by Deutsche Werkstätten from Dresden-Hellerau – is so wonderful in its simplicity that one can practically say no first-class lounge could match it, much less surpass it.”

Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten 191 (17 August 1926)

Second-class ladies' lounge
Wall panelling with
intricate veneer work

NEW YORK (1927)

HAPAG | Blohm & Voss (Hamburg) | 193.5 m



On the *New York*, Deutsche Werkstätten fitted out not only the ladies' lounge – as they did on the *Hamburg* – but also the second-class dining hall. The quality of the work on the *New York*, carried out according to plans by Karl Bertsch, was widely praised:

“Accomplished in style and comforting effect, the interiors of the second class, which were executed entirely by Deutsche Werkstätten – with their wonderfully grained, warm walnut panelling on the tables and walls – are among the cosiest that today's interior design has achieved.”

Münchner Neueste Nachrichten 91 (3 April 1927)

The *New York*, built one year after the *Hamburg*, was practically identical to her sister in exterior construction and interior design. Like the *Hamburg*, she served as an ocean liner and a cruise ship, then had duties as a barracks vessel during the Second World War. In 1945, she was sunk off the coast of Kiel by American aerial bombardment. Her wreckage was later raised and towed to the United Kingdom to be scrapped.



New York

Workers painting the bow

c. 1925



Deutschland on Lake Constance

Maiden voyage on 4 June 1935



ON LAKES AND RIVERS

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Germany experienced a boom not only in the number of ships traversing the high seas, but also in the production of passenger vessels operating on lakes and rivers. Pleasure cruises were popular, especially on the Rhine, Danube, Elbe and Moselle rivers as well as on Lake Constance. The companies offering these trips took great care to reproduce, in their inland ships, at least a portion of the cosmopolitan charm offered onboard the imposing luxury ocean liners of the day. They thereby sought to distance themselves from the stereotype of inland steamships as second-class 'floating pubs'. The new passenger ships were certainly not comparable to the 'ocean giants' in size, though, with regard to interiors, some of them were able to hold their own. Older ships were often modernised at great expense.

Harbour in Lindau

c. 1936

LEIPZIG (1929)

Sächsisch-Böhmische Dampfschiffahrt | Laubegast Shipyard (Dresden) | 70.1 m



The Sächsische Dampfschiffahrt company, founded in 1836, owns the world's largest and oldest fleet of paddle steamers, which are powered by two parallel rotating paddle wheels. The *Leipzig*, built in 1929 and capable of carrying up to 1,500 passengers, is the youngest and also the largest of Sächsische Dampfschiffahrt's fleet. She originally sailed as a 'saloon steamer' on the Elbe. During the Second World War, the *Leipzig* was converted into a hospital ship and painted camouflage grey. She carried the wounded out of Dresden

following the devastating air raids in February 1945. A short time later she was badly damaged by an aerial bomb and had to undergo extensive repairs. As of 1947, the *Leipzig* once again sails the Elbe as a passenger ship, to the delight of her guests – including many day trippers and tourists.

Deutsche Werkstätten executed the interior furnishings for the public areas on the *Leipzig*, first class and second class alike. The plans were provided by the Munich architect Karl Bertsch, who designed the interiors of many ocean-going vessels as well.

Staircase

Waiter's work station





Public area

In 'tween decks

Leipzig

Moored on the Embankment

in Dresden, 1934

Deutsche Werkstätten fits out the largest and most stunning luxury yachts in the world today – picking up on a tradition that seemed almost forgotten for many years. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the company designed and produced some of the most cutting-edge interiors for German passenger ships, including extravagant ocean liners and large steamboats for inland navigation. The designs were supplied by artists and architects like Richard Riemerschmid, Adelbert Niemeyer, Karl Bertsch and Bruno Paul.

With historical photographs, plans and design drawings, this publication presents 20 such interiors, introduces the most important designers and provides information about all the ships known to date whose interiors were created by Deutsche Werkstätten.