

# Raja Schwahn-Reichmann

## Dancing Dog by Raja Schwahn-Reichmann

Once upon a time, there was a creature that appeared at feasts and made people wild – “Der Tanzlaubenhund” or “Dancing dog,” as we call him. Sometimes he would remain hidden, but at other times he lets himself be seen...

“Normally, he lies under a bench and watches people, but sometimes he appears dancing on his hind legs. He can drive you mad, or make you passionate and wild with his evil eye... And so a peaceful feast can turn into a cruel fight or a destructive orgy,” says Raja Schwahn-Reichmann about this malicious figure from Swiss fairy tales.

He is described as a dog who is as tall as a man, with only one eye as big as a plate shining upon his forehead. In his tangible form, he reminds us of another scary creature from our world - the Tasmanian Devil.

The figure of the dog is black. It is made of painted wood, but it's his “magical” eye that draws one's attention - the big glass eye stares deep inside you. Under his feet are scattered pieces of colorful glass of mysterious origin.

## Biographical notes

Raja Schwahn-Reichmann was born in Vienna in the district of Leopoldstadt, where she lives and works. She studied at the Academy of Fine Arts (graphic, conservation and technology), learned all traditional techniques like oil, wall painting, tempera, miniature, historical polychromy of sculptures, gilding, concerned with costume history, the conservation of archaeological and ethnological objects but also architecture and monument protection. She graduated there in the domain of paper and parchment.

For several years she taught historical art techniques, painting and drawing for conservators. Her special artistic interest lies in history baroque interior designs and the connection between painting and architecture.

Her painting is widely inspired by antique and baroque iconography. This also means to show the paintings not like an exhibition but during a feast, for example for Dionysus. All visitors, which shall be styled supported by the artist, become part of the Dionysium, that is like a “time sculpture.” To direct the feast she paints mostly life-sized figures as cut out silhouettes (inspired by baroque Chantournés) which also carry candles to create the festive room.

Starting from the spatial idea of the paintings: Design of the “Au-Theater,” a stage for the visitor center at the National Park Donauauen. Setting for the baroque feast for the Festival Palace Schloss Hof on the occasion of its opening (Documentary “Prince Eugene's Miracle Garden – The reincarnation of the baroque garden of Schloß Hof,” Interspot 2005). Overall design of the Life Ball 2014 with the motto “Garden of Earthly Delights.”

Schwahn-Reichmann was also founder of “The Josefinian Committee for Enjoyment,” which fought for the preservation of historic gardens at the Augartenspitz, part of the baroque Viennese Augarten.

## Key areas of training

- Care and preservation of monuments
- Photo restoration
- Artistic sculptural work
- Relief
- Wall and panel painting
- Chantourné painting in all techniques

## Lectures

- Costume History & costumes (University of Applied Arts Vienna)
- Historic art techniques in theory and practice (Academy of Fine Arts)

## Clients and Projects

- Omnia Vincit Amor: Collection of chandeliers in cooperation with lasvit, presented at the Milan Design Week 2016 in Palazzo Serbelloni
- Painting by Raja Schwahn-Reichmann was and is shown, inter alia, at:
- Vienna City Festival, Wiener Lustspielhaus, Baroque festivities at Schloss Hof, annual Christmas market in St. Gilgen, Long Night of Museums
- Equipment for the film “The Three Musketeers” (1993) with, amongst others, Kiefer Sutherland and Charlie Sheen
- Storyboards for Austrian films
- 2009 awarded with the Premio Mantegna, Italy
- Participation in music videos with facilities & paintings or as contributors
- Staging of vintage fashion shows from the estate of author and collector Elfriede Gerstl
- Production stage and costumes for the Vienna Life Ball on “Elements” (water) and “Garden of Earthly Delights”
- Sculptural works, ceramics, reliefs, objects like the design of a whole indoor pool in the Swiss mountains
- Ceramic design for walls in the tradition of baroque azulejos
- Wall paintings

## **Further enquiries:**

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