

The Austrian Architects Set of 1934

Continuing the tradition of portraying famous Austrians, the Christmas Charity Set of 1934 was devoted to Austrian architects. A new designer was selected for both the designing and the engraving of this set - Hans Ranzoni the Younger, who was to produce many beautiful stamps for the Second Republic. He was born on 6th September 1896 in Vienna as the son of Professor Hans Ranzoni the Elder. In 1940 he married Edith Riedel who was also to design a set of stamps, in 1949. A set of five preparatory designs for this set by Hans Ranzoni is shown on page 36 of the "100 Jahr Österreichische Briefmarke" book. These have small but interesting differences from the actual set of six values which appeared on 2nd December 1934 and depict:

12g grey-black	Anton Pilgram with the Leopoldsberg in the background
24g violet	J.B. Fischer von Erlach and the Karlskirche, Vienna
30g scarlet	Jakob Prandtauer and the Abbey of Melk
40g brown	A.S. von Siccardsburg, E. van der Nüll and the Vienna Opera House
60g blue	H. von Ferstel and the Votivkirche, Vienna
64g green	Otto Wagner against the bridge of the Nussdorf Dam, Vienna

The stamps were recess printed at the State Printing Works on a yellowish Japan paper and line perforated 12½. Different catalogues list different occurrences of stamps imperf on one side, imperf all round, and pairs imperf between. It would be safe to expect all possible imperf varieties to reach the market eventually. The stamps were only sold in complete sets (70,000 sets recess-printed) at double the face value; the additional charge being devoted to general charitable purposes. They were valid until 31st March 1935. These are rather unusual corner pieces from the sheets.

