

A Rediscovered Set of Five Philatelic Allegorical Watercolor Panels by Alois Ludwig, 1898-1902

An extraordinary series of five original watercolor and gouache panels (each with 90 x 160mm outlined border on 8" by 11" light cream colored panel with dark gray matt surround), each signed with the monogram "A.L." and dated between 1898 and 1902, each built around a decorative composition into which genuine period postage stamps have been mounted as the central element.

The artist: Each panel bears the monogram "A.L." Comparison of style, period, and monogram supports attribution to Alois Ludwig (1872-1969), the Austrian architect trained under Otto Wagner at the Vienna Academy, active in the Vienna Secession circle and subsequently in Dusseldorf (1900-1903). The panels were previously incorrectly attributed in print to "Anton Rauda" due to the mis-reading of the artist's cipher.

Provenance: The set is ex Col. Edward H.R. Green collection that was sold in a series of sales in the 1940s. In 1996 they were sold at Christies with the "Rule Britannia" panel was illustrated on the back cover of the catalog. The set was recently acquired directly from the estate of the original 1996 purchaser by Richard Frajola, LLC.

Condition: Several of the gray matts have minor edge and corner flaking of the gray but the images are fresh and bright. All of the stamps which are pasted onto the panels are genuine unused with the exception of a Queensland stamp that has a light fiscal cancel. The Penny Black has full margins and appears to be completely sound.

Remarks: This is a unique surviving example of a decorative philatelic art commission incorporating genuine classic era rarities, executed by an identifiable and documented artist over a five-year span (1898-1902). The set was dispersed into an unrecognized, undervalued group lot in 1996 and has now been reunited and correctly described and attributed for the first time. The five panels are shown at full size on the pages that follow.



"Erste Briefmarke" (1902, The "First Postage Stamp")

A winged *putto* bearing drapery amid oak and laurel branches, centered on a genuine unused Great Britain 1840 One Penny Black, the earliest adhesive postage stamp in the world.



"Rule Britannia!" (1899)

A painted globe flanked by continental ribbon banners, populated with ten Victorian colonial definitives including South Australia, Victoria, Great Britain, Canada, St. Vincent, Sierra Leone, Natal, Ceylon, and India.



"Geometr. Formen" (1899, Geometric Forms)

Six genuine stamps of unusual shape, including the Newfoundland triangular 3d and pence-issue 5d, Peru's shield-shaped postage due, El Salvador, Canada's 1897 Jubilee issue, and a hexagonal telegraph stamp.



"Kronen" (1902, Crowns)

Seven stamps united by a royal-crown motif, including Papal States, Denmark, Portuguese India, British Columbia, Fiji, Brazil, and Hungary.



"Her Gracious Majesty" (1902)

Eight genuine Victoria-head definitives from British North American provinces and the colonies of Grenada, Bahamas, and Queensland.

