

Art Nouveau - Fishy Business

(no not fakes!)

The German producers especially liked realistic images of fish on their Art Nouveau Pewter. Makers of pewterware such as Kayser and later Kayserzinn and also Osiris have used fish imagery on trays, coasters, jugs, vases, and more besides.

Herman Gradl (designing for Osiris before 1903 (?)) was best known for his grotesques and fish designs.

Maybe the Germans then had more fisherman, and more clubs for fishermen?

This short article is here simply to show some of the pieces that can be collected. As your writer does not fish, then the reader may identify for himself just what fish are portrayed.

It is attempted where possible to indicate a likely maker of the pewterware, though dating is simply a matter of perhaps 1895-1914 and that is taken as 'being likely'. One piece has the early J P Kayser (Eagle) mark on it - so that is perhaps at the earlier end of the time scale – the pre Kayserzinn Eagle mark was likely used in the period 1885 – 1895 and perhaps before 1890.

One or two pieces have appeared in other articles - well no apologies for that!

Enjoy.....



This a Kayserzinn piece number 4196 and measures 50cms wide by 25 cms deep.



This has no mark and measures 52cms wide by 32 cms deep – either by Gerhardi or Kayserzinn



Is this ugly? – someone might email to say what this is –

It has a mark in an oval of number 452 – made by Gerhardi (perhaps) c1900

This is size 69cms x 26.5cms



Large fish platter from J P Kayser who became Kayserzinn a few years into the 1900's. The two handles are in the form of a grotesque Poseidon or Neptune. This measures 23" long and 10" wide and is marked to the back with the Kayser eagle mark so 1885-1895 and likely pre 1890 – some loss to definition by polishing.



Looks like a Pike to this writer – is it? Smaller fish platter – size 44cms x 20cms– perhaps Kayserzinn about 1900



ART NOUVEAU PEWTER COASTER OR small SIDE PLATE PRODUCED DURING THE JUGENDSTIL DESIGN PERIOD OF THE EARLY 1900'S AND MADE BY THE WORLD FAMOUS KAYSERZINN FACTORY WHO EMPLOYED HUGO LEVEN AS CHIEF DESIGNER BUT THIS WAS PROBABLY DESIGNED BY PROFESSOR HERMANN GRADL. Size is 13.5cms diameter.



Not a fish with that webbed foot - but surely aquatic..... a card tray – a warning of the Lizard whose card is presented?

Said to be – a Card Tray showing salamander emerging from Pond

Maker – unknown



Above - Early art nouveau pewter fish platter from the Walter Scherf factory for their Osiris range of pewterware - designed by professor Hermann Gradl. It dates from around 1900. It has been polished throughout its life which has left it with signs of age and use, the surface of the pewter is grainy and pitted in some places but the low relief fishes and crab are still clearly visible still retaining their scale pattern and fins, the Osiris mark to the back is badly rubbed but easily identified by the distinctive shape of the punch used, it measure approximately 15"(38.5cm) across – see above



Unknown maker – a drink coaster – size about 13.5cms diameter.



Pretty but a determined (likely mid or later) 20th century **pin tray** no more than 10cm (4 inches) across.

Fairly worthless, - without value -, and unmarked - the pond border being more interesting than the 'cartoon' fish.....

Below - Kayserzinn – c1900 – about 15” length - marked



Below - Large Oval Platter – no mark but trying to be Kayserzinn – c1900 – 18.25” length
Not that nice, quickly done, squiggles for eyes, looks better below than when held. Likely a fake.



Fish Jug – by Kayserzinn – c1900 – 20cms tall



Apologies to lady fisherwomen for the previous male orientated script - and not intending to be patronising with this watering can for indoor small plants - which is a distinctly female piece - as against the bucket of water the male of the household might carry for the same purpose (humour - I hope!)

ART NOUVEAU PEWTER WATER JUG THIS PIECE IS ATTRIBUTED TO PROFESSOR HERMANN GRADL. FULLY MARKED TO THE BASE WITH THE KAYSERZINN MARK & DESIGN NUMBER 4205 IN THE CIRCULAR CARTOUCHE, STYLISED FISH AND WATER LILY BUDS, 8.5 INCHES (22CM) IN HEIGHT 32 cm (in overall length handle to spout end).



A flower stem for each throat? Osiris fish vase (Walter Scherf factory) designer Prof. Hermann Gradl circa 1903 - 32 cms tall - Mark - Osiris 517



17³/₄" (about 45cms) diameter repousse charger, with a rim width of 5" (56% broadness). Dated 1929 with the name *Hill Olsson* who may be the craft worker who made this special Art Deco period piece, decorating it with koi carp swimming among foliage. A superb decorative piece in excellent condition, with some wear to the rear of the rim.

We were unable to search the web and discover more about this maker – if you know about the artist we would be grateful for more information