



*(I bought – for example – a vintage car and began to restore it). The years went by until – in the mid-90s – I stumbled upon a book by the popular magician Wittus Witt at an exhibition about the art of magic in Eisenstadt. This book about collecting magical artefacts re-ignited an old passion of mine. From then on, collecting magic boxes became a great passion of mine that never ceased to fascinate me up until today.*

*At that time, I've already visited a special exhibition about magic boxes in Ingolstadt, where I even had the opportunity to meet my idol Mr. Witt in person – as I did years later at the dissolution of his private collection in Winterthur.*

*Meanwhile, I call over 3,000 different magic boxes my own. Every single magic box – whether ancient or modern – fascinates me in its very own way."*

Klaghofer is the CEO of his family's transport company that also is in construction business. Something that doesn't seem "magical" at all, as one could say. But it is this financial security that enables him to seriously concern himself with his hobby. Many a Sunday he spent at flea markets, looking for magic kits "Back in the day, you could get one for 10 or 20 Schillings". Today he is one of nearly two dozens of collectors of magic kits in the world. But it is a rather expensive hobby: "The maintenance costs for the museum alone are much higher than what I earn in admission fees" But: "Other people eat out every day, which is also expensive".

He rented a basement compartment in his apartment building and gradually turned it into his private museum – at his own expense.

*"In 2000, I stumbled upon a rare magic box on the French version of e-bay: wickedly expensive, costing about 12,000 Schilling (around € 900) at the time. Many friends deemed me to be insane, 'so much money for such trash'. Only my dear Mama said: 'If you want it, I'll order it for you – I wouldn't know what else to get you for Christmas anyway'. It was only with that magic box, I began to consider myself a serious collector".*

Come along with me and let us visit the realm of magic boxes – the visitation of the museum is an adventure of his own – through the main entrance of the town house you enter a classic Viennese patio. Iron steps lead you to a subjacent building. A former bakery, it was affectionately adapted by Klaghofer. You enter reception room with a small cloakroom, validating your ticket at the desk. At your left hand side, the show room opens up, filled with glass cabinets in thematic order.

Manfred Klaghofer is a charming man and with his endearingly impish smile, the true heart of the exhibition: Competent, passionate and – of course – a bit freaky. The tour, led by the host himself, brings the magic kits around you to life. Klaghofer tells us fascinating stories, accentuating them with small tricks performed with props from the kits.