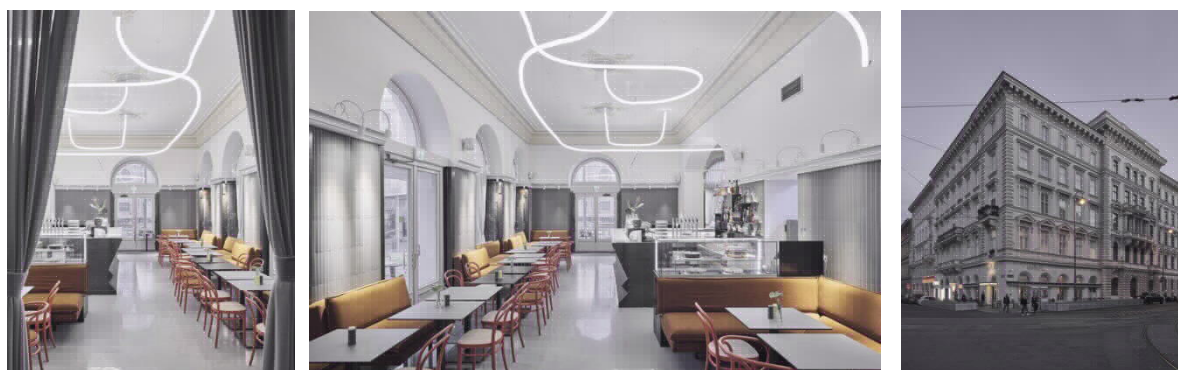


Press release  
Frankenberg, July 2022

## **World culture in Vienna: the historic Café Bellaria reinvents itself** Thonet bentwood classics create fresh colour accents in the newly renovated coffee house

**Café Bellaria has served as a meeting place for writers, card players and coffee connoisseurs from many different walks of life – art, culture, business and politics – since 1870. This makes it the oldest continuously running coffee house in Vienna. The interior design firm BÜRO KLK has taken this light, airy space in its fin de siècle building on Bellariastrasse and renovated it with great care, giving the coffee house a modern feel without compromising any of its heritage. It now features a monolithic lava-stone counter and a striking, curved light sculpture, but it's the iconic 209 and 214 bentwood chairs by Thonet in a rich coral red that really breathe new life into the space.**



Centrally located in Vienna between the MuseumsQuartier, the Volkstheater and Ringstrasse, Café Bellaria has been a favourite haunt of coffee connoisseurs, gourmets and bon vivants since 1870. BÜRO KLK's renovation of the fin de siècle building is in-keeping with the historical architecture of the area. To preserve the long-standing coffee house's authenticity and charm, the designers left the large arched windows and the five-meter-high dome in the foyer untouched. Their concept makes reference to the café's urban surroundings in terms of form and substance: the natural-stone counter, for example, is a nod to the basalt cladding on the "mumok" modern art museum around the corner. A contemporary light installation winds its way along the stucco-decorated ceiling and leads to the spectacular dome.

The Thonet 214 (previously No. 14) bentwood chairs in a chic coral red with Viennese canework seats bring together classic coffee house tradition and the sensibility of present day. This model, which became famous as a coffee house chair, is a genuinely iconic piece and to this day is regarded as the most successful industrially manufactured product in the world. This is the chair that marked the beginning of modern furniture. With its clear, minimalist aesthetics, this classic piece has been used in the most diverse settings for over 160 years. Today, the wood for the 214 is sourced from sustainably managed forests. Thanks to its exceptional quality and timeless aesthetics, it is also extremely long-lasting and easy to repair. The accompanying Thonet bentwood classic used in Café Bellaria's new interior design, the elegant 209, is also stained in coral red and its refined yet organic shape lends a sculptural effect to the room. The seat of this comfortable armchair has been upholstered in a copper-coloured velvet and the same fabric has been applied to the upholstered benches positioned along the grey tiled walls.

The monolithic counter made of glazed lava stone, which takes centre stage in the dining area, is both decorative and functional, and is complemented by black bar stools from Thonet's 118 H range. This contemporary design by Sebastian Herkner reflects the familiar shape of the archetypal Thonet bentwood chairs and can be used in a variety of restaurant settings thanks to its minimalist design

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and light, elegant shape. As a tribute to the history of the location, the seats of these bar stools also feature Viennese canework.

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We would appreciate receiving an author's copy in the event of publication.

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### **Thonet – future-oriented furniture design with a long tradition**

*The unique success story of Thonet began with the work of master carpenter Michael Thonet. Ever since he established his first workshop in Boppard on the River Rhine in 1819, the name Thonet has stood for high-quality, innovative and elegant furniture. The breakthrough came with the iconic chair No. 14, today known the world over as the Vienna Coffee House Chair: the pioneering technique of bending solid beechwood enabled the mass production of chairs for the first time. The second milestone in design history was the tubular steel furniture by the famous Bauhaus architects Mart Stam, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Marcel Breuer in the 1930s. During those pioneering years, Thonet was the world's largest producer of these tubular steel furniture designs, which are today considered timeless.*

*For the company today, the continuous process of innovation is the top priority, together with a focus on tradition and fine craftsmanship. Thonet's furniture designs originate both from its collaborations with renowned national and international creatives and from the in-house Thonet Design Team. Chief Executive Officer Brian Boyd and Creative Director Norbert Ruf manage the company from the corporate head office and production site in Frankenberg/Eder (Germany). Michael Thonet's fifth- and sixth-generation descendants are actively involved with the company's business as partners and sales representatives.*