The Lowenfeld Collection was donated by the heirs of Dr. Berthold Lowenfeld (1901-1994). Dr. Lowenfeld was born and raised in Vienna, Austria, and, by the time he emigrated in 1938, had become a friend of the literati who would later be known as the Viennese Modernists. In the United States, Dr. Lowenfeld became a key researcher with the American Foundation for the Blind and, from 1949 to his retirement in 1964, was the Superintendent of the California School for the Blind. For further information on Dr. Lowenfeld's long and notable career, please see his bio on the American Printing House for the Blind website.

Dr. Lowenfeld's library includes first editions of the works of early twentieth-century modernists such as Stefan Zweig, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Arthur Schnitzler, Peter Altenberg, Richard Beer-Hofmann and Robert Musil. Included as well are the collected works of Goethe, Heinrich Heine, Nestroy, Thomas Mann and Rainer-Marie Rilke. The highlight of the collection is the complete 37-year run of Karl Kraus' satirical journal Die Fackel, as well as first editions of the works Kraus chose to publish in collections.

The Lowenfeld Collection came to the Department of Germanics in 1995 through the efforts of Dr. Lowenfeld's nephew, F. Anthony Placzek. Tony continues to support the collection through his Placzek Family Foundation. With this support, the Department was able to hire a librarian, Kris Unsworth, who catalogued the works and brought the library facilities up to archival standards. Both the collection and the continued generosity of the Placzek Family Foundation enhance one of the Department's major research and teaching strengths, namely the study of early twentieth century literary and cultural movements.

Department of Germanics
University of Washington
Denny Hall 360