

Gustav Klimt

A black and white portrait of Gustav Klimt, showing him from the chest up. He has a full, dark beard and mustache, and his hair is dark and slightly wavy. He is looking off to the right with a serious expression. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a white shirt with a high collar. The background is a plain, light color.

Belvedere Museum
and Art Gallery

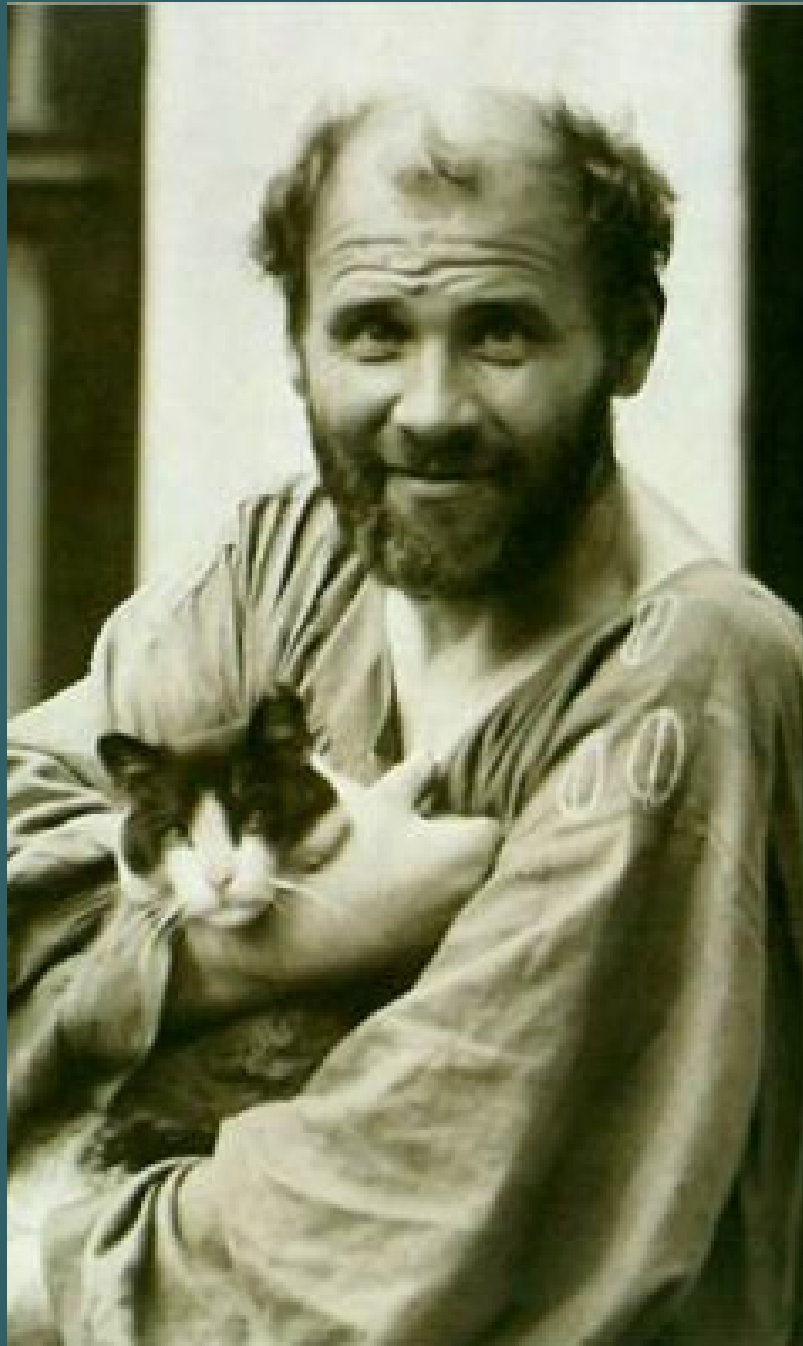
Gustav Klimt

Born on July 14, 1862 in Baumgarten, Gustav was second of seven children of a conscientious engraver and carver. Gustav and his family were poor, so they didn't stay in one place for a long time, the Klimt family was constantly in pursuit of progressively cheaper accommodations. In 1873 The Klimts situation had gotten worse for them due to the economic crisis while in Austria. Klimt's father had no income for some time, which made it hard on the family.

Gustav entered the school at the age of fourteen. For seven years Klimt attended school with his brother Ernest and Franz Matsch. While at school Klimt and his brother learned diverse techniques, from mosaics to fresco. Gustav was so talented that his professors let him and his brothers work on their own projects. Klimt's style during this time was considered as hyper realistic, inspired by the work of Hans Makart, who was a famous painter of that time.

While Klimt was getting dressed in his room on January 11, 1918, Klimt suffered a stroke. It was something he had feared all his life. And although not serious, the stroke paralyzed the right side of his body, including his right hand which he used for painting, but it did not deprive him of the power of speech.

After Klimt's death, at least 14 people came forth and claimed to be his natural children. At least three of these children had been recognized by Klimt himself during his lifetime: Gustav Ucicky, son of Maria Ucicka, a washerwoman from Prague who had modeled for Klimt, and Gustav and Otto Zimmermann, sons of Mizzi Zimmermann, a model.



1898 Pallas Athene

Gustav Klimt was a prominent Austrian symbolist from the turn of the 20th century. His work remains widely popular almost a century after his death, due as much to its sensuality and eroticism as to the fact that his vision remains vibrant and relevant even in today's highly visual and media-drenched society.

Mythological imagery was a frequent topic of Klimt's oeuvre. I find the glaring eyes and stiff, powerful stance of his Athena to be quite compelling. I love the juxtaposition of the classical Greek figure in the background with the vaguely Asiatic face on her breastplate.

This picture portrays the Greek goddess whom the Secession adopted as their protectress. She holds the naked figure of victory in her hand while the head of the Medusa on her golden breastplate sticks out her tongue at the artist's opponents.

1902 Beethoven Frieze

Gustav Klimt's 1902 frieze is based on Richard Wagner's interpretation of the 9th Symphony by Ludwig van Beethoven, celebrating humankind's yearning for happiness. The 34-meter long wall painting shows humanity struggling to overcome hostile forces such as sickness, madness, wantonness, and intemperance, and finally finding eternal bliss in art. The singing angels and the lovers embracing in the final section of the fresco refer to the symphony's closing choir and Friedrich Schiller's famous ode To Joy: "This kiss to the whole world!"



Klimt's 'Golden Phase' was marked by positive critical reaction and success. Many of his paintings from this period used gold leaf

1905 Palais Stoclet

Gustav Klimt 'Stoclet Fries', 1905 'Tree of Life' detail right The Stoclet Frieze is a series of three mosaics created by Austrian painter Gustav Klimt for a 1905-1911 commission for the Palais Stoclet in Brussels. The panels depict swirling Tree of life|Trees of life, a standing female figure and an embracing couple. The mosaics are spread across three walls of the Palais' dining room.



Reclining semi-nude (Study for "Water Serpents II", 1st state)

Gustav Klimt Timeline



1862
Gustav was born in Baumgarten a suburb to the south-west of Vienna



1879
Klimt, together with his brother ernst and Franz Marsch, begins to work on comercia projects



1883
The only in oil paint executed study of a female nude by Klimt.



1898
Klimt became one of the founding members and president of the Wiener Sezession



1908
The Kiss, was painted by the Austrian Symbolist painter Gustav Klimt, the highpoint of his Golden Period



1918
Gustav Died due to a stroke. Gustav is now resting at Hietzinger Cemetery, Vienna, Austria



1876
Klimt enrolled at the Vienna School of Arts and Crafts



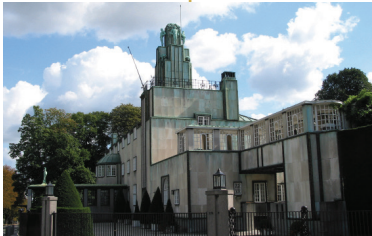
1880
Klimt very precisely studies the male nudes' muscles by accurately shadowing the light on the skin.



1892
Klimt starts friendship with Emilie Flöge



1902
In 1902, Klimt painted the Beethoven Frieze for the 14th Vienna Secessionist exhibition,



1909
Klimt starts work at the Stoclet Palace



1911
In 1911 his painting Death and Life received first prize in the world exhibitions in Rome.

1907-08 The Kiss

The eroticism and richly decorative treatment of the subject is highly characteristic of the work of Klimt's Golden Period. Closely related to parts of the Beethoven and Stoclet Friezes, this, the most celebrated of all the artist's paintings, seems to embody Klimt's belief in the transforming power not only of sexual love but also art.



Klimt depicts Judith as a femme fatale. She looks down on the viewer, her mouth voluptuously open and with her right hand she strokes the hair of Holofernes.



1911 Death and Life

Gustav Klimt 'Stoclet Fries', 1905 'Tree of Life' detail right The Stoclet Frieze is a series of three mosaics created by Austrian painter Gustav Klimt for a 1905-1911 commission for the Palais Stoclet in Brussels. The panels depict swirling Tree of life/Trees of life, a standing female figure and an embracing couple. The mosaics are spread across three walls of the Palais' dining room. In 1911 his painting Death and Life received first prize in the world exhibitions in Rome. In 1915 his mother Anna died.



The church was painted from a point of view in Malcesine, near the Villa Gruber in Dossodi Ferri on the peninsula Val di Sogno and Klimt used a telescope.

1905 Klimt and Emilie

Klimt took regular walks, rowed, sailed, made excursions in his motorboat and took photographs of Emilie in her specially designed summer dresses. As he worked and relaxed in his home, Klimt normally wore sandals and a long robe with no undergarments. His simple life was somewhat cloistered, devoted to his art and family and little else except the Secessionist Movement, and he avoided café society and other artists socially.



Klimt and Flöge at Lake Attersee with Fritz Paulik



Belvedere Museum

The two Belvedere palaces were built in the early eighteenth century by the famous Baroque architect Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt to be used as the summer residence of Prince Eugene of Savoy (1663–1736). One of Europe's most stunning Baroque landmarks, this ensemble – comprising the Upper and Lower Belvedere and an extensive garden – is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Today the Belvedere houses the greatest collection of Austrian art dating from the Middle Ages to the present day, complemented by the work of international artists such as Claude Monet, Vincent van Gogh, and Max Beckmann.

Highlights from the holdings Vienna 1880–1914 are the world's largest collection of Gustav Klimt's paintings (including the famous golden Art Nouveau icons the Kiss (Lovers) and Judith) and works by Egon Schiele and Oskar Kokoschka. Key works of French Impressionism and the greatest collection of Viennese Biedermeier art are further attractions on display at the Upper Belvedere.



belvedere

Contact

Mon – Fri
(except on holidays)
9 am to 5 pm

Phone +43 1 795 57-134
Fax +43 1 795 57-136

E-Mail public@belvedere.at

Bookings

Please book your tour at least
one week in advance. You
can postpone or cancel your
tour free of charge up to two
working days prior to your
booked visit.