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## INTRODUCTION

Society has been under constant change since man developed art and language. However, changes have always taken place slowly with a close look at the direction in which the next steps should be taken. The development of a social group is often influenced by new ideas which were originally foreign to that group, and so take time to be accepted. The arguments that occur when a need for change is expressed is an important part of this process. The rejection of the principles of the past can be seen as a series of steps gradually drawing near to its point of destination (a break with tradition).

The art of Egon Schiele represents a small step in the huge developments that took place in Vienna in the early 1900's.

N.B. Many of the quotations are translated from articles, letters and books in German. In the notes I have stated my source. The original source is in brackets.

CHAPTER 1.



## SCHIELE'S SOCIAL AND ARTISTIC BACKGROUND

To understand the creative forces behind Schiele's work it is vital that one should understand what was happening in the city of Vienna before and during the artist's life.

Vienna was at the centre of a vast multi-racial Empire under the crown of the Habsburgs. By 1910, during the reign of Franz Joseph, the population was to reach two million.

"Vienna was the crossroads of Europe, it linked East and West and North and South. By train Trieste and Venice could be reached as easily as Prague and Cracow".<sup>1</sup>

However, the city seemed to wallow in its past history and tradition. As exemplified by the Ringstrasse which was built in the 1860's and was seen as the Empire's monument to itself. The buildings within the Ringstrasse were covered with false stucco designs, actually made of concrete, which intellectuals associated with the two faces of the city. The ring enclosed the old city from the new as fortifications had once done to protect from external forces. It was "a time capsule sealed against the world outside".<sup>2</sup>

This period is often regarded as degenerate. However, Frank Whitford notes that: "Victorian moral rectitude was preached as loudly here as it was in every other European city and people, especially male, were as energetic in the refusal to practice what they preached as in pretending to do so. Carefully educated middle-class daughters were closely guarded while their fathers were engineering themselves into a new affair or passing a few desperate moments with a whore in a separee or a seedy hotel bedroom".<sup>3</sup>

Within the realm there were rigid social divisions which people accepted as they were mostly opposed to change. They were obsessed with the values of their time and believed totally in the continuity of the State and the Empire. Zweig explains: "The rights granted to its citizens were enshrined in the acts of Parliament, the freely elected representatives of the people, every duty exactly defined . . . . . Everyone knew just what he possessed and what he would inherit; what was allowed and what was forbidden.

Everything had its norm. Its specific mass or gravity. The man of means could calculate exactly how much interest per annum his fortune would bring hi, the civil servant or officer with equal exactitude, the year in which he would gain promotion, and the year in which he would retire. Everything in this great realm had its fixed immovable place and in the highest place of all, the aged Emperor: but should he die, one knew (or thought one knew) that another would take his place, and nothing would change within this carefully planned order. Anything radical, anything violent seemed impossible in this age of reason".<sup>4</sup>

However there was rebellion within the ranks, not on the level of street fighting but at an intellectual level. Similar to the French Revolution the backbone of the revolutionaries came from the middle-classes, however, their pursuit was for artistic and scientific freedom. Was it not after all the age of the motor car, the zeppelin and the telephone. It was impossible, no matter how tempting, to hide in the past.

In Vienna, unlike in Britain and similar European countries, there was no heavy industry, and so there was no Industrial Revolution on the same scale as in these communities. So the revolution took place in the areas of philosophy, science, art and crafts. Indeed among the philosophers in Vienna at this time were Ernst Mach and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Within the area of music there was Arnold Schoenberg, Alan Berg and Anton Von Webern. These are just a few names out of many who were working on progressive ideas of varying importance. There were some more dubious ones "Adolf Hitler, Theodor Herzl, Josef Stalin and Leon Trotsky were all in Vienna at the same time working out their various theories in different cafes".<sup>5</sup> (Hitler was later to try and get a place at the Academy of Art. However, he failed.)

Freud too was in Vienna at this time. His aim: to search for a new definition for personality in a scientific way. However the lack of seriousness with which his work was looked at by some can be summed up by the words of Deputy Bielhawk, a good example of the anti-semitism rampant at the time: "Science is what one Jew copies from another".<sup>6</sup>

Freud had "uncovered layer after layer of preference and delusion, finally arriving at the sub-conscious where he believed, the root of all decisions and actions could be found - what ruled the sub-conscious for Freud was the libido. The desire for sexual gratifications which is present even in infant children and which, if repressed, leads to incalculable problems and psychic damage".<sup>7</sup> Other people studying sexual behaviour included Otto Weininger and Krafft Ebing who, in his time, was "wrongfully dismissed as a plagiarism of Freud".

Writers too were beginning to introduce sexual problems into plays and novels. An obvious example is Kokoschkas "Murder the hope of Women". Death was also a common theme. Some perhaps foreseeing the death of the Empire in symbolic form, Robert Snitzler: "They are surrounded by the intimidation that the end of their world is near - the end of this world is near". Other writers included in developing these ideas included Robert Musil who wrote "Young Torless" and Arthur Schnitzel.

Peter Vergo notes that in the 1900's German folk poems underwent a revival and credits this to "a certain brutally observed realism" which seems to have appealed to the avant-garde writers.

There were huge developments in the area of architecture, among the major names at the time were Josef Hoffman, Josef Olbrich and Otto Wagner. Olbrich was to design the Secession building.

However Vienna could not see, or would not see, what was happening within her walls; Friedlander explains:

"Vienna in the first decade of this century is one of the intellectual centres of the world, and she herself has no idea. Two or three thousand people write words and think thoughts which will overturn the world of the next generation. Vienna is oblivious. A tiny circle of men: writers, politicians, academics, journalists, artists and civil servants, lawyers and doctors, pre-occupied with the problems of the day whose thoughts will determine the future of civilisation. They are an island. No bridge unites them with the Viennese themselves. Only a small number of disciples - not schools - follow in their footsteps. The slumbering city vegetates in its own happy mediocrity and does not dream what great things are being thought and created in her midst".<sup>8</sup>

The Viennese did not see because they had no will to. Things were snug and happy, a disruption would only cause harm. Modern views meant doing away with old ones. Vienna treated some of her great innovators very badly. Indeed she often made life very miserable for them.

"Indeed it was true that professional jealousy, narrow-mindedness, the conservatism of the public and the press, combined to create a powerful, at times, almost irresistible force for reaction - powerful enough, at least to hound Mahler from his post as director of the Opera house, drive Schoenberg to the brink of starvation, force Klimt to retire from public life and cause Otto Wagners outstanding projects to remain as grandioz, unrealised dreams".<sup>9</sup>

Despite all this Vienna in one way or another was to produce many of the talented people who would excite new thoughts and manners of conveying them in the 20th Century.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ARTS

In 1897 the founding of the Secession marked the entrance of Austria into the ranks of the European avant-garde. It was developed by a frustrated group of artists and architects who disliked the manner in which Viennese society had cut itself off from mainstream developments in the rest of Europe. Their aim was to make the general public more aware of what was happening in the main cultural centres around Europe, increasing the understanding of their own works at home, and promoting an education of what was modern in art so that their subject matter and ideas would appear less confusing to the layman.

In 1908 as the first Kuntschau was opened the President, Gustav Klimt declared:

"We do not, obviously regard an exhibition as the ideal way of establishing contact between artist and public. For instance, the execution of large scale public commissions would be infinitely preferable for this purpose. But as long as the public continues to occupy itself with political and economic matters, exhibitions are the only means which remain open to us.

We do not belong to any association, any society, any union, we are united, not in any compulsory manner, simply for the purpose of this exhibition - united in the conviction that no aspect of human life is so trifling, so insignificant as not to offer scope for artistic endeavour.

That it is in vain that our opponents attempt to combat the modern movement in art, to declare it dead. For theirs is a struggle against growth, against becoming - against life itself. True, we who have toiled for weeks on end in preparing this exhibition will, once it is opened, separate and go our individual ways. But perhaps in the foreseeable future we shall find ourselves united again in some quite different association. Whatever the case, our trust is in each other, and I wish to thank all those concerned for their efforts, their cheerful sacrifice, their devotion. I thank too all our patrons and supporters who have enabled us to carry through this exhibition, and while inviting you, honoured guests, to undertake a tour of the building. I declare the Kuntschau of Vienna 1908 open".<sup>10</sup>

Klimt has sketched a few of the aims of the secession here - The secession building - the "cabbage" as it was nicknamed was to act as a monument to new ideas but also functioned as an ingenious exhibiting hall. The main aim was to halt cultural stagnation, the inclusion of the crafts was to give the whole concept wider appeal and acceptability.

Previous to this the Academy of Fine Art and the Kunstgenossenschaft (the exhibiting body) had had a virtual stranglehold on artistic life in Austria particularly in Vienna. Now young artists could see the works of fresh, young talent from abroad as well as the "modernists" in their own country.

The main rival to the above bodies was the Kunstgewerbeschule (1808) - the School of Applied Arts, which had ties with the South Kensington Museum in London. It became, within a short time, the centre for study of contemporary developments in English speaking countries. Kokoschka who was a student during the early 1900's described it as "one of the most important teaching establishments in Europe".<sup>11</sup> It is ironic that the young Egon Schiele would be sent from the Kunstgewerbeschule straight to the Academy. (This was not normal practice, Schiele was seen as a "Wunderkind"), because of his amazing talent. Here they were looking outwards, the Academy was still looking inwards.

The Secession on the whole made their ideas clear in many ways. One of their greatest endeavours was to produce a periodical which contained lost of vital information for those interested. It was called "Ver Sacrum" or "Sacred Spring" and Peter Vergo tells us that "both from an artistic and a literary standpoint it was one of the outstanding periodicals of its day".<sup>12</sup>

However, in a singular role as a painter and through his work it was Gustav Klimt who broke with tradition and the events that took place under his influence would greatly effect what the younger artists of the day could and would produce.

## KLIMT: THE SCANDALS

Klimt was born in 1862 and remained a huge influence on Schiele throughout his life. First as artist and father figure, later as a friend and advisor. He tended to hover between two styles described by Frank Whitford as a "kind of soft-focus impressionism and an altogether harder, more decorative approach, related to symbolism and Art Nouveau which he brought into his imaginative compositions".<sup>13</sup> He was defined as the father of Austrian modern painting and was shown, within his lifetime, in Paris, Rome and Venice which highlights his communication with other cultural centres.

Between 1886 and 1888 he was commissioned to paint ceilings in the Burgtheatre. The commission, a joint one with his brother Ernst, familiarised him with the problems of painting on a large scale. At the time he was greatly influenced by Makart.

In 1892 his brother died, and this event brought about a dramatic change in style which can be related to the showing in the 1890's of international artists, including such names as Aubrey Beardsley and James Whistler, and an artist from the Netherlands who had a profound influence on Klimt: Jan Toorop.

In 1893 the Ministry of Education asked Franz Matsch (who had already submitted an overall programme for the decoration), and Klimt, to prepare a study for the contour panel of the ceiling of the Great Hall, at the Heinrich von Ferstel's University building. It was understood that there would be a division of labour. Matsch would complete the centre-piece and a panel representing Theology, Klimt would execute the remaining three panels. There were also sixteen lunettes; Matsch was allocated six and Klimt ten. Both artists were asked, "within the limits of artistic freedom", to undertake any changes that might be necessary later so as to make the works comparable.

One of these paintings, Philosophy (PL.1) was shown at the Secession in March 1900 and is described thus by Richard Muther, a critic:

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"Here, Klimt has surpassed himself; the commission gave added strength to his inspiration. How early, how conveniently one might, in the event, have carried such a commission. The painter takes the treasury of classical forms, chooses one of the numerous female figures which, since the time of Raphael, have been decked with the label of Philosophy, alters it a little so as not to appear a mere copyist and has thus fulfilled his task to the satisfaction of all concerned. For works which take as their starting point the accepted, the classical, can be sure of success, despite the fact that their historical significance is nil. Klimt, on the other hand, has copied no one, has borrowed no antique mould. Out of his own, independent, pondering he has created a work in which the whole weight of thought, the whole colourist nervousness of our times is embodied. The Heavens open. Golden and silver stars twinkle. Points of light shimmer. Naked forms waft hither. The green mist gathers itself into tangible forms. A fiery head, wreathed in laurels, regards us with large earnest eyes. Science struggles to attain the source of Truth, which remains more the less the imponderable sphinx. We aspire to lift the veil, dare to take flight amidst the clouds, but the feeling of ignorance drags us back to earth".<sup>14</sup>

This view of philosophy and the pessimism expressed was not to everybody's taste. The painting gave occasion to a lot of criticism, mainly of a negative type. Karl Kraus wrote in his periodical in March ("Die Fackel" [The Torch]), "His painting is the delight of the colour blind, and all those who have no conception of philosophy applaud the profundity of his allegorical depiction".<sup>15</sup>

Klimt had broken with the bindings of tradition. He still had to complete other sections of the commissioned works. In Medicine, (PL.2) of 1901 he shows the suffering of the human race. The figures within the work portray the story of the bleak side of life. Birth, illness and death are all present in different forms. Medicine, herself is portrayed as if she is an ancient sorceress, an image that would have disturbed those in the university who saw themselves within the profession. However it was within artistic circles, that Klimt again caused an uproar. This was not an acceptable interpretation of the theme:



"Well, gentlemen, this is Medicine, Herr Klimt's latest work of genius ... Now I beg you to think of something sensible in front of this picture. I can't - the walls are turning, and my stomach too. Help, where's the exit? ... Thank God it has passed; Medicine has had its effect".<sup>16</sup>

In 1903 Jurispudence (PL.3) would have similar reviews. In this work the power of Justice is questioned. The many arms of the law are symbolised by an octopus. Though the man is unchained he seems powerless to move. Is he bound by his own guilt? The law makers look on unmoved by the plight they cause. I believe the painting is about the misuse of justice, or simply the misuse of power by those who are in control.

Arguments about the paintings went on for years and caused an advance in the division, which was already a large one, between the leading artistic groups in Vienna. They were rejected by the professors of the university and never hung in the state hall. By 1905 Klimt became disillusioned with the whole affair and withdrew the commission, returning the advance payment to the Ministry of Education.

Ironically despite the fuss made about the work in Vienna, "Philosophy" was to win an award in Paris, the "Grand Prix" when presented in the Austrian pavilion of the Exposition Universalle.

It is still common today that people may find it hard to become reputable at home, until they have "made it abroad". Klimt was well known, but his work was seen as degrading - that of a madman. Inevitably it was lack of foresight which led the Viennese to treat him so badly - not just criticism of his work but also personal criticism. It was this he disliked. They were oblivious to the admiration Klimt received from abroad: "Gustav Klimt is Viennese. One can see this clearly in his pictures: It is expressed by their wholly individual, Viennese feeling. But one can also tell that Klimt is Viennese from the fact that he is honoured throughout the world, and attacked only in Vienna".<sup>17</sup>

It is this idea of personal expression, of creating one's own world that was to be important in the development of expressionism. But putting aside traditional techniques and bringing in others learnt from new sources, for example - from Asiatic countries such as Japan and China, new horizons could be reached. This opening up of European cities to the cultures of the rest of the world can also make recording of influences hard. An artist can combine many images from different sources within one piece. Nowadays few of us are unaware of traditions and images outside our own culture. Our choice is to work within our own cultural heritage, outside it, or in a combination of the two.

Then the possibilities for development must have seemed limitless as these ideas were fresh and new. Klimt had done a lot to bring these ideas to Vienna. What he did for modern art in Austria was to open up a whole range of influences, materials, ideas for the next generation to exploit to their own ends.

Because of the amount of press coverage given to the Klimt affair, despite being at the Academy, Schiele's attention would have been brought to it. The manner in which Klimt suffered his critics would have appealed to the rebellious young man.

CHAPTER 2.

## SCHIELE AT THE ACADEMY

"The complaint of 1909 was that of 1809. The aims and methods of the Academy were hopelessly mired in the classical quicksand of Winckelmann's dictum, "It is easier to discover the beauty of Greek statues than the beauty of nature"."

Both the Nazarenes, who found fulfillment as "German Romans" in Italy, and the expressionists, who had for the most part remained at their battle post in Vienna, yearned for a revitalisation of art, which through the awareness of contemporary concerns, would shake off all foreign accents and emerge as an original, spiritual and natural expression. The urgent sense of spiritual purpose that characterised both groups can be seen in their self-portraits: The Nazarene Emil Janssen (1807-1845) (PL.4), and the expressionist Egon Schiele (1890-1918) (PL.5), gaze at and record the phenomenon of their exposed bodies with unflinching earnestness. It was not just the boxes but an almost fanatical solemnity that links across a century those young representatives of two Anti-Academy movements".<sup>18</sup>

AllessandraComini captures above some of the concerns that would force Schiele to resign from the Academy in 1909, and set up the Neukunstgruppe (among others who left with him were Anton Peschka his brother-in-law to be). They wanted to reject the hypocrisy and appearances condoned by the Academy for something new, discard the already decaying skin for a new one that could take on modern demands. The new skin would be termed "Expressionism". The reference to "boxes" occurs due to the fact that the same boxes (seats) had been used throughout the century that had passed and so had come to symbolise the timelessness of the problems within the Academy and within the city of Vienna itself.

In 1906 Schiele joined the Academy. Under the advice of Dr. Wolfgang Parker an Augustinian canon he had applied at the Kunstgewerbeschule, but had been set on immediately. Here he learned anatomy and increased his, at this time limited, technical ability. Later it also proved helpful in improving his military status.

Within the Academy there was a three year course to be completed before one could specialise in a particular area. In the first year anatomy and perspective drawing were studied; in the second, theory and style; and in the third, colour theory and chemistry. So although Schiele would leave early he had acquired most of the basic skills taught at most art schools in Europe previous to doing so.

Griepenkerl, one of Schiele's tutors, was extremely particular in emphasising the traditional values to which the modernists would object so strongly: the line of thought which caused Ludwig Heresi to comment "For two generations now, Nature has been posing as the artist's model. She is getting tired".<sup>19</sup>

Schiele's arrogance had incensed Griepenkerl even before they had met, he had seen one of Schiele's early self portraits Men with Red Hat (PL.6) which struck him as the last word in conceit.

Previously another young man had ruffled Griepenkerl's feathers. This man was Gerstl who had recently attended the Academy: "an extraordinary man of truly frightening ability",<sup>20</sup> he had paid no attention to the standards of technical excellence that his professor was so certain were necessary for the creation of art. Gerstl committed suicide at the age of twenty five and Griepenkerl was said to have seen this act of desperation as a "deformation of the Academy".

He had little time for Schiele, at one stage he declared "The devil has you into my classroom".<sup>21</sup>

Schiele resigned from the Academy as head of the Neukunstgruppe. They left a censor of thirteen questions, mainly directed at Griepenkerl which was a plea for a more open outlook towards modernism, against historicism.

It must be noted that within the Academy, Schiele would see some important works. The Academy had its own gallery and library. Here were works by Durer (Self Portrait 1503) - Works from the Bosch workshop, Hans Bekling Green, Lucas Cranach the Elder, Titian and Rubens and Self Portraits by Ferdinand Waldmuller, Josef Abel, a Van Dyck and a Barent Fabritius "Young Men in Shepherds Attire;" (PL.7).

Schiele, because of Academy rules, had to concentrate on drawing and produced some landscapes - see View of Trieste Harbour (PL.8). His grades were fairly average, probably a reflection of his wish to move on to other things.

## EARLY INFLUENCE OF KLIMT

While Schiele was still in the Academy, probably sometime in 1907, he met Klimt, probably in one of the cafe's which were centres for cultural activities. Each cafe was known for, and proud of a particular type of clientele. The cafe at the museum or 'Cafe Nihilism', as it was nicknamed, because of its lack of ornamentation, was a favourite of the artists of Vienna.

Schiele would have known that Klimt was keen on the development of Austrian art along modern lines, and that he had helped the young Kokoschka, finding him contacts and dealers. So he built up enough courage to visit the master and show him some drawings. The story goes that Schiele asked, "Do I have talent?" and the reply was, "Yes, much too much!".

Schiele was already discontent, but this meeting would heighten his self esteem, and he would leave the Academy, tired of the limits and restraints which are part of being involved in any academic training.

More like Klimt, Kraus and Loos "the older generation had not only failed to preserve the notion of an engaged art, but had even assisted through their support men like Kokoschka and Schiele in hastening its demise and encouraging the trend of atomisation and indifference that they all feared".<sup>22</sup>

They had done this unpurposefully and yet in a very practical manner by, for example, finding works for the young artists at the Wiener Werkstatte factory shop. Schiele learned how to design clothes here (he designed some of his own). He also designed women's shoes and some postcards. In the same year, 1909, he would exhibit in the second Kunstschau. This was an International event and included works by Van Gogh, Munch, Toorop and Minne.

A postcard portrays his sister Gerti, (PL.9), and shows the influence of Toulouse Lautrec. The direct, simplicity of the postcard, the emphasis of hands and face by the billowing form in the background, and use of line, all hark back to Lautrec; as seen by a drawing (also for a postcard) of two men standing on a pedestal, (PL.10), which relates more to the Jugendstil movement and the work of Aubrey Beardsley, (PL.11). Still the message is clear. Here we have two saints - or is it God and Jesus? The figures relate to those of Klimt and Schiele. The pedestal like shape lifts them above earthly things: the figure on the right is being shown something, a drawing perhaps, he raises

his hands in praise of the work. The drawing conveys the esteem in which he held Klimt and indeed his own self-esteem.

It is often interesting to see how similarly, or differently, artists treat a theme over a period of time. Van Gogh, Klimt and Schiele all painted the Sun Flower, (PL. 12, 13, 14). Klimt's and Schiele's works have the elongated stems that associate them with Art Nouveau. The plant is a symbol not only of the sun, but also of mortality. In Klimt's and in Schiele's work the plant is dying. The ornamental effect of Klimt is also typical of Schiele's work at this time. A. F. Seligmann notices this passing on of ideas, and problems, from one artistic generation to the next - (critic with the Neue Freie Presse). He comments on an exhibition of the Neukunstgruppe. He saw them as imitators of Klimt, Kokoschka and the French neo-impressionists.

"They are pre-occupied with purely ornamental problems, which are, in essence those of the applied arts: The representational aspect is kept purposely primitive, ugly or remains unintentionally dilettantish.

That the younger artists, under the pretext of seeking for a certain decorative effect, prefer to select obscene things and actions for their subject matter can hardly be held against them for they are simply following in the footsteps of those they imitate, some of whom are already "grand old men". Since they have at their disposal not merely walls and fences, but canvas and papers, they have understandably seized upon the idea of going through the crisis of puberty before an invited audience". He continues, interestingly enough prophesying an event to take place later in Schiele's life:

"Schiele, is certainly gifted. One can see a whole series of drawings and paintings by him - that is, the ones that don't offend our already much blunted public morals. How far his artistic talent will take him it is too early to say. But, if I'm not much mistaken, he might easily find himself presented with a nice little summons".<sup>23</sup>

Schiele at this stage had not completely found his own style and was still very much under the influence of Klimt, though he had cast aside the ideals of the Academy. He copied Klimt's work, as many others did, but this was a means to an end, rather than the end itself.



He copied Klimt's water snakes for example. Most of the similarities are in the figures themselves, and though decorative effects are used in the same luxuriant manner in which Klimt used them, Schiele was by no means an expert copier. He merely borrowed Klimt's techniques as means of developing his own.

In Woman with a Black Hat (PL. 15), and Dance (PL.16) we again see the similarities with Klimt's work, and in Dance particularly, the influence of Japanese art. In Woman with a Black Hat, the strange gesticulating hands are common to the development of Schiele's work. Use of hand gestures would be very important in later works.

Schiele's Dance of 1909, as Frank Whitford notes "is frankly based on Klimt's symbolic figure compositions: decorative, erotic, it is a mythological subject seen through the eyes of a Viennese aesthete". (Schiele would have been able to study Klimt's work in detail and the previous Kuntschoen).

Between 1909 and 1910, Schiele began to find his own style. We can see the beginnings of this in some portraits of Members of the Neukunstgruppe. At first glance the influence of Klimt is still obvious, as in the portrait of Hans Massman, (PL.17), where the figure is placed to the side sitting in a chair. The overall effect is similar. However, in this painting and one of Peschka, the clothing of the figures are made of a solid mass of colour. They exist apart from the ornamentation. "The search for psychological depth and new formal values" had begun. The emphasis of figure and an empty background was an important step.

This departure is more understandable with reference to the kind of ideas being thought at the time: Schoenberg: "Art belongs to the subconscious. One must express oneself directly. Not one's taste, or one's upbringing, or even, intelligence, knowledge or skill. Not all these acquired characteristics, but what is inborn and instinctive".<sup>24</sup>

It was Schiele's exhibitionist character that would be the key to his finding his own voice. Vienna was lost in the past; in Renaissance culture. It had grown up and got old, it must rejuvenate and revitalise itself and continue up a new spiral "that of the Angst ridden 20th Century, so different from the hedonistic, self-indulgent work of the late nineteenth century of which the art of Klimt was the gorgeous, quinti-essential and final manifestation".<sup>25</sup>

Comini notes that the pace was prepared and quickened to the "direct, unadorned representation of raw form of the expressionists by Loos and his essay of 1908, Ornament and Crime".<sup>26</sup>

Also because of developments in the art of photography there was no need to portray people as they looked. Now the artist had to penetrate the outer appearance, look inside, and try to express what psychology he saw. Kokoschka would shatter the outer membrane hitting right at the nerve of his sitters. Schiele shattered the facade of his public self, portraying himself in the mirror of his introspection.

In a Nude Self-Portrait of 1910 (PL.18), Schiele portrays himself as if emerging from a chrysalis. The linear decoration and the flatness still owe quite a lot to Klimt. However the difference is in the subject matter. Klimt never painted himself dressed or naked - he had no interest in his self-image. Indeed he always "retreated behind a style that was both contrived and impenetrable". However, Schiele gazes out from the canvas at us daringly. He sheds his old skin and emerges young, clean and fresh. His new subject emerges - himself and penetration of the psych in search of the soul. He would try and find visual equivalents for feelings. He was in search for the truth. It is probable that this is what he thought. His absorbance with self made him use his own image as the target of his own art.

Kandinsky had a similar goal but a very different way of reaching it: "artistic abstraction is tied up with mans apparently new capacity to break through the skin of nature and make contact with its essence and content".<sup>27</sup>

It is worthwhile at this stage to give a visual account of what Schiele looked like:

"I found a thin young man of more than average height and with an erect, unaffected posture. A pale but not sickly small face, great dark eyes and luxuriant dark hair which stood up from his head in uncontrolled long strands. His manner was a little shy, a little timid, and a little self-conscious. He did not speak much, but when one spoke to him, his face was illuminated by the glimmer of a quiet smile. The basic feature of his personality was seriousness, but not a gloomy, melancholy head-hanging kind. It was rather the quiet seriousness of a man absorbed by a spiritual mission ..... Schiele's nature was childlike (not childish)".<sup>28</sup>

It was this recognisable aspect of his character that Schiele was trying to destroy by showing his real desires and faults in an expressionistic manner. This is one of the issues on which he differed from Klimt (in his work).

"Why couldn't there be a large International Kunstschau in the Kunstlerhaus? I have told this to Klimt. For example: each artist has his own hall or his own room - Rodin, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Minne, the last ten years .... Klimt, Toorop, Schiele, Liebermann, Slerogt, Corinth, Mestrovic, etc. Only the fine arts: What an uproar for Vienna! Catastrophe!".<sup>29</sup>

The tradition of involving the crafts was one which Klimt and Hoffman as founders of the Secession would have held on to strongly. Comini sees this comment as "an accurate reflection of the demise of an older tradition and the coming of age of the new avant-garde".<sup>30</sup>

Though, as the "Silver Klimt" Schiele's work would resolve itself in similar ways to Klimts it was the rejection of ornament that was to make his work more powerful, direct and leave little need for explanation. The subject matter was obvious, the manner in which it was created simplified these things "as compared with Klimts shatter the illusion of sexes a romantic or sentimental dream".<sup>31</sup>

### Other Influences on Schiele's Early Work

Both Kokoschka and Schiele were fascinated by children, (PL. 19 and 20). They often used them as models. It may have been the innocence or, in, other cases, their streetwise nature which they found interesting. Their growing sexual awareness would have fascinated Schiele. Both portrayed the many images of youth with great ability, both were inspired by a Belgian sculptor.

Georgic Minne had a lasting effect on the expressionists. He was admired by Klimt, Kokoschka and Schiele. Works such as The Fountain of Youth, (PL.21), impressed the young artists.

Kokoschka recalls Minne's work, 50 years after seeing them. "A small marble figure by George Minne, shown at the second Kuntschoen, made a tremendous impression on me: Kneeling Boy, (PL.22). Minne must have had models as skinny as my circus children. I can see his 'Kneeling Boy', before me today, after fifty years .... It was from Minne that I took over the preference for the fleshless young gothic bodies. I was the first to show such models to students and to have them draw from them. For the rest the entire Vienna Kunstgewerbeschule was oriented towards ornament. Nothing but weeds and flowers and tendrils writhing about like worms".<sup>32</sup>

Schiele too removed any sign of plumpness from his figures they are all skin and bone. The energy from all the vessels within pour out from the picture creating human beings wrought with emotion.

We can see the influence of Lautrec in these works too and although he was not exhibited in the Kuntschoen he was popular and was shown at the Miethke gallery. The use of line, and in some studies, including the self-portraits - the manner in which the works almost verge on caricatures - are particularly reminiscent of the Frenchman. (PL.23).

Gerstl also influenced Schiele. Though in style there are few similarities it was the freedom with which the young artist used many different influences, one being expressionism and recreated them, in his own very individual flavour - see Self-Portrait laughing, (PL.24). For Kokoschka, Schiele and Gerstl "notwithstanding an attitude toward modernity that is artistically and personally anarchic. For them the contemporary world simply exists as they react as they see fit, creating their art on autonomous individuals".<sup>33</sup>

It was this emphasis of his individuality in style and in subject matter that would concern Schiele in the coming years.

CHAPTER 3.

## 1910-1911 - EMPHASIS ON INDIVIDUAL STYLE AND SUBJECT MATTER

Schiele was twenty and of remarkable maturity for such a young artist. He had studied and progressed through lessons learnt from other artists. The influence of impressionism and also symbolism, particularly, were of paramount importance in forthcoming years.

The self-portrait was a traditional European subject matter: Van Gogh and Durer had studied their own images. However, Schiele in his short lifetime created more self-portraits than Rembrandt, Corinth or Max Beckman. In Schiele's case the "mask" of clothing had also been removed. "Lack of ornamentation is a sign of spiritual health." <sup>33b</sup>

The idea of freedom from clothing is common to literature as well. For example, in "Young Torless" by Robert Musil.

"When he imagined the body free from clothes he found it impossible to allow the impression of quiet slimness to remain. Restless, turning movements immediately before his eye, a twisting of the limbs and a distortion of the spine of the kind one can see in the representations of martyrdom or in the grotesque presentations by performers at a fair". <sup>34</sup>

In 1897, Seganti, an artist with whom Schiele would have been familiar, painted "Evil Mothers", (PL.25). Here he, "employs the twisted forms that could be found in nature as the formal symbols of sin and suffering". <sup>35</sup>

In Schiele's work this body becomes a knarled trunk-like object, (PL.26). His gesturing arms (branches) pass on the message. His face expresses anguish or despair. Our eyes have nowhere else to look as the rest of the picture is a void. In some cases limbs are amputated, the effect being that we are forced to concentrate on the head and the body without the head - the nerve centre - (the Celts believed that the soul resided here) the body is helpless. Hands and other parts of the body could distract from the centre or soul, and are not presented so that we focus on the head.

Comini explains these pictures thus: "The emotion racked torso with its amputated arms and lower extremities is a shocking (and exhibitionist) pictorial punishment for the 'sin' of masturbation. Perhaps because venereal disease caused his fathers death, this then taboo activity both attracted and terrified the artist".<sup>36</sup>

However, Rodin too portrayed limbless figures which may have inspired some of these pieces. What punishment was this? The emphasis was on form and the concentration on details rather than the extremities of the body. So amputation can also be seen simply as a device, (PL.27).

"Schielen" in German means "to squint" and this pun on the artists name was often remarked upon by contemporary critics. "That just in our day and age an artist exists whose name is Schiele is probably no accident. He is still squinting at things which others already see. But squinting is exactly suitable to this particular artist".<sup>37</sup>

Schiele made use of hands to symbolise particular parts of the body and to convey messages. In "Melancholia" of 1910, (PL.28), he uses a "V" gesture which Comini has translated as a "secret signature". She also interprets it as being symbolic of the vulva. However it may also interconnect with both of the above interpretations where Schiele is mocking his critics and telling them to "fuck off". This is by no means a modern interpretation of the sign.

Ernst Mitsch notes, "the self portrait with the hand touching the cheek seems to conform to the iconographic tradition of "man of sorrows". "<sup>38</sup>

These works have close affinities with symbolism and it is interesting to note that similar hand gestures are used in works by Redon and Levy Dhurmus. The meaning, however, is suggested without the emphasis which is present in Schiele's work. In Redons work "both the subject, which stresses a concentration upon the usually unseen and unheard, and in its handling, which suggests more than it depicts, it is characteristic of the movement" (symbolism) whereas in Schieles work the meaning of what is depicted is easy to understand. (PL. 28 a & b)



In Levy Dhurmus work the figure is isolated by a costume with religious associations, again we associate that with the unknown, in this case he portrays a meditative silence which is also captured in Schiele's "Melancholia", (PL. 28).

From the dejected solitude of Melancholia, Schieles work expresses his total disillusion with his world, and he screams his frustration aloud in "Self-portrait with tooth", (PL. 29). Karl Kraus once described Vienna as "an isolation cell in which one is allowed to scream" and this idea of rejection and total isolation is present in this work. One is reminded of Munch's "Scream" of 1896, (PL.30), in which the inaudible - visual - scream fully expresses the angst of its portrayer. However the techniques used for self-expression by the individual artists are quite different. In Munch's work it is external forces, silhouetted figures in the background and swirling skies, which create the tensions bestowed upon the screaming figure. In Schiele's there is only emptiness around the figure, his fears come from within himself, internal forces are at work in his painting. However this kind of portrayal of oneself had been common to Vienna before. Franz Xavier Messerschmidt (1736-1783), (PL.31), had portrayed himself grimacing in the traditional form of the bust many many times and more recently Gerst had portrayed himself, it seems, on the brink of insanity in Self-portrait laughing, (PL. 24).

In a self-portrait of 1910, Drawing a Nude in Front of a Mirror, (PL.32) Schiele portrays himself at work. He is in the process of drawing his model. His eyes are directed at himself, while we are sitting in the position of the viewer, where Schiele would have been. There is an emphasis on the sexuality of the model created by the use of devices such as the placement of the hand on the hip, which draws attention to the pubic hair and the raised shoulder, which supports the head with its peacock-feathered hat. This is a far cry from the academic life drawing Schiele would have been prompted to produce in the Academy. He has taken the traditional theme of "artist and model" and introduced his own intensity and sexual curiosity to it.

This re-interpretation of particular themes was important to him and may be seen by the manner in which he would take ideas from others and re-use them to his own ends. The freedom with which he did this may be seen by his attitude towards art. In 1910 at the opening of the Neukunstgruppe show, he said: "Art is always the same thing: art. Therefore there is no "new art". But there are always new artists. Even a study by a new artist is always a work of art; it is a piece of himself that is alive. The new artist must be unconditionally himself; he must be a creator; without needing all the relics of tradition and the past, he must have himself, immediate and entire, the foundation on which he builds".<sup>39</sup>

What Schiele does when he takes a subject or theme which has previously concerned other artists is to translate and vary it, so that despite structure or content, it becomes his independent work and often bears only a small relevance to the composition or meaning of the original. For example, Schiele made two paintings with Munch's Puberty, (PL.33a) as their inherent influence. Though the portrait of Poldi Lodzinsky (PL.33b) does not diverge much from the theme of Munch's painting, in this case the young girl has the look of a wicked child. Her innocence is a facade which is given away by her devilish grin. There is a huge difference between this and Munch's work in which the unprotected naked girl is in awe of her approaching adolescence.

In a portrait of Edward Kosmak (PL.33c), as compared with the relaxed hands of the Lodzinsky portrait, Kosmak's hands are clamped together at full tension as if to crush something. The vertical line of the body leads us straight from hand to head where we find no relief from his bulging eyes. The vertical is emphasised by a horizontal line meeting around the pelvis of the sitter; the area of the groin. Is this man castrating himself by not showing his own sexuality? Or has Schiele conveyed his own self-image onto another man?

Schiele believed that he should be able to create what he wanted, it was his right as an artist, he should have special recognition. However his rejection of an "acceptable" manner of portraying the figure would soon lead him into trouble.

CHAPTER 4.

1911-1912. IMPRISONMENT. WAS SCHIELE CREATING PORNOGRAPHIC MATERIAL?

Prison Dairy, 1912:

"Have adults forgotten how corrupted, that is incited and aroused by the sex impulse, they themselves were as children? Have they forgotten the frightful passion that burned them while they were still children? I have not forgotten for I suffered terribly from it. And I believe that man must suffer from sexual torture as long as he is capable of sexual feelings".<sup>40</sup>

In 1911, Schiele was introduced to Wally Neuzil, previously a model of Klimt's who had "passed her on to the younger man"<sup>41</sup> (the verb being intentionally ambiguous - Frank Whitford notes that Klimt had a habit of sleeping with his models). After a short time she became devoted to Schiele, and besides modelling for him she helped with household chores and messages. She inspired the introspective Schiele in a manner which allowed him to convey his sexual feelings for her through his reaction to her image. However the works vary in temperament from the "warm sensuality" (PL.34)<sup>42a</sup> of women to a woman portrayed as a "mindless sexual beast" (PL.35)<sup>42b</sup>. The latter has a likeness to Schiele's portray of himself in bondage with his animal roots in Self-Portrait Masturbating of 1911, (PL.36).

Schiele, throughout a series of drawings produced during the year 1911, presents us with many aspects of sex which are uncommon to Klimt's work. Otto Beuesch notes: "What in Klimt is music of intoxicating sweetness and lyrical magic becomes in Schiele shrill, rough dissonances ... a demonic vision".<sup>43a</sup>

However, it must be noted that Schiele was not regarded by his friends as a practising eroticist, and the directness and forward nature of his work was not matched by his manner in public or in the company of friends: "In spite of his eroticism, Schiele was not depraved... What drove him to depict erotic scenes from time to time was perhaps the mystery of sex and the fear of loneliness which grew to terrifying proportions. The feeling of loneliness, for him a loneliness that was totally chilling, was in him from childhood onwards - inspite of his family, inspite of his gaiety when he was among friends".<sup>43b</sup>

It was common practice at this time for artists to produce semi-pornographic material for a ready market. Certainly some of the drawings which Schiele produced were to meet his financial needs. His need to create such work was not always that of an egotistical expressionistic artist it was also that of a man in debt being sought after by the bankers. This material was keenly sought after by collectors of 'erotic' art and would have been very lucrative for a young artist of Schiele's skill. However his more direct and honest pieces had no place in this market and he explains his reasons for their production thus: "Sometimes it tempted me down right irresistably to appear as a "Spiesserschreck" to express in word or action something which I know must have a strange, even repulsive effect on others ... my outward bearing does not agree with my inner needs".<sup>44</sup>

In effect, it is the repulsive nature of Schiele's work which differentiates him from other painters producing 'erotic' pictures in Vienna in the early 1900's. Schiele would have seen the work of Felician Rops a painter and illustrator who dealt with the problems of the erotic by poking fun and being sarcastic. The difference between the two, is that what in Rops is a whimsical look at others, in Schiele's work is a serious reflection of his feelings as presented by himself on others or on his own figure. However the use of shocking material was common to both:

"The affinity between the two artists is shown by effective use of clothes and accessories which reveal more than they hide, and so enhance erotic impact. However Schiele's eroticism has nothing in common with the sensual knowingness or spiciness of the "fin de siecle" instead it expresses human bondage and is to be understood as a burden that is painful to bear". (PL.37)<sup>45</sup> & (PL.38)

#### Imprisonment:

In 1911, Schiele moved to Kramau, his mother's hometown, where he found he was not made very welcome. He put this down to being "red", i.e. not going to church. But it is more likely it was the presence of Wally and so a young unmarried couple which would have disturbed the locals. Soon similar problems would be experienced when they moved to Neulengbach later in the year, but this would develop into a more serious saga.

In the seclusion of this country village he could develop themes which he had previously investigated. The idea of the Doppelganger, for example, took on different proportions and forms from his early double-self-image of 1910, "Self Seers", (PL.39). This theme was dominant in his paintings. The variety in which he portrayed double images means that they never lapsed into repetitive formation of his ideas.

During this period, he paints "Self-Portrait with Spread Fingers" (PL.40), which has close affinities with Gauguin's work "Self Portrait with Yellow Christ" (PL.41), Gauguin's use of a vase (head) to symbolise as Gauguin put it ... "it represents something like Gauguin the savage".<sup>46</sup> It reflects the darker side of human nature one's primitive self.

Gauguin painted himself both in the image of God and the image of the devil. In this case he simply associates himself with Christ, "he is both sufferer and creator".<sup>47</sup> This theme appealed to Schiele and developed it in such works as "The Hermits", in which he portrays himself and Klimt like saints against the powers that bore martyrdom upon them.

This interest in symbolism is also reflected in Schiele's painting "Room at Neulengbach" of 1911, (PL.42) which is a revised edition of Van Gogh's, "Bedroom of Arles, 1809", (PL.43). The organisation of elements within the room tell us more about the difference in character of the two artists rather than their likenesses, which lies mainly in their strong will for self-expression. Van Gogh's room is cluttered, disorganised and semi-chaotic in appearance. He seems to be trying to make some sense of the space by organising the elements within it. In Schieles, on the other hand, everything has a specific place. What occurs in both paintings is that both artists purposefully or unwittingly have portrayed their characters without any record of their figures being present. They have used objects to create a image of self. As "Van Gogh painted an old pair of shoes or a simple chair to suggest human misery and destitution"<sup>48</sup> so Schiele, would draw his prison cell door to represent freedom during his imprisonment.

On the 13th of April, 1911, Schiele was arrested. The charges against him were that he had shown pornographic material purposefully or unpurposefully to children and he was also accused of lewdness with them. Some of his drawings were confiscated and he was imprisoned.

This period had a profound effect upon Schiele. Only a few friends made any attempts to rescue him from the strong arms of the law. Wally was one of them "who captivated me and Herr Benesch".<sup>49</sup> Her kindness may have surprised Schiele as they had not known each other for a long period of time.

If we are to go by Schiele's account of the prison conditions at this time, it seems they were awful. Although on reading his prison diaries his accounts may seem to be melodramatic, conditions in a country prison at the beginning of the 20th Century could not have been very pleasant at all.

On the 18th of April, he wrote:

"I must live in my own excrement, breathe in my own poisonous fumes... I am unshaven. I cannot even wash properly... Yet I am a human being! I still am, although imprisoned. Does one not think that?"<sup>50</sup>

Schiele was in prison for twenty-four days and must have suffered terribly as he could see no reason for his imprisonment besides for the creation of art. However, Wally did her best to comfort him and managed to get him some materials, so he set to work painting still lifes and the interior of the prison. But the more important works of this period are of himself and his portrayal of himself as a martyr for a cause; the cause being art.

Prison diary, 24th of April:

"For my art and for my loved ones, I will endure".<sup>51</sup>

The above quote is also written on a drawing produced at the time in which he portrays himself unprotected against some unknown force, clawing at the air in resistance which is at the verge of breaking. He appears frightened and childlike (PL.44). He was soon released, but had yet to suffer more humiliation, at the hands of the judge, during his trial:

"The judge seized one of the confiscated drawings and solemnly set fire to it with a candle flame: Savonarola, Inquisition, the Middle Ages! Expugation, hypocrisy! Why don't people go into the museum and destroy the finest products of our artistic heritage? Whoever denies sexuality is not only an idiot but also insults his parents in a most despicable fashion".<sup>52</sup>

Schiele's case was an interesting one and although people may still find his work offensive it would be unlikely that he would be imprisoned for producing it. However, what Schiele had done in his time was to produce art that did not relate to what was deemed acceptable.

Allesandra Comini explains that the judge, "Dr. Stull was an avid collector of the Austrian artist, Franz Streicher (1814-53), who decorated Jesuit churches in the United States as well as in Austria. This artist was mentally unbalanced, and his paintings reveal a morbid pornographic mingling of religious and sexual elements done in a neo-Blake style".<sup>53</sup> So, we can understand, if not accept, the judge's case against Schiele's work and though Schiele was not heavily fined it was the symbolic condemnation of his art that he found most disturbing which is reasonable as he could not have seen it in the same light as the judge. Roessler explains the events aptly in his version of Schiele's Prison diaries: "Schiele's arrest now appears as that which in reality, it always was. The ill intended blunder of overly enthusiastic moral busybodies and the pitiful martyrdom of an artist who was misunderstood in his lifetime".<sup>54</sup>



CHAPTER 5.

## 1912-1914. DEVELOPMENT OF DOUBLE-IMAGE. PORTRAIT COMMISSIONS

Between 1912 and 1914 Schiele developed the double-portrait by extending the tensions of those he portrayed to new extremes. Some of these paintings in their basic structure have affinities with Klimt's Kiss (PL.45) of 1907-8. For example, Schiele's Cardinal and Nun (1912), (PL.46). However, the subject matter is certainly at variance between the two works. In Klimt's painting, the lovers are absorbed in each other, amidst all the splendour of their robes. We as onlookers are merely that; we have no part in the picture. But in Schiele's work our presence has disturbed those we encounter. We cannot avoid them with our eyes as the striking red of the Cardinal's gowns draws our attention quickly back to their figures, which are portrayed in a triangular format with their heads meeting at the top where our eyes dwell on their faces and their dismay at being found out.

The use of the double image goes right back to his portrayal of himself and Klimt in the Wienerwerkstatte drawing for a postcard. But it is the developments that take place within the are particularly the use of a pyramidal structure, that make these works an extremely worthwhile revision of old ideas for Schiele. He now combines tension of form and composition with the tension of the characters themselves. He described "Hermits", (PL.47) in a letter to Carl Reininghaus as "figures like a cloud of dust resembling the earth and seeking to grow, but forced to collapse impotently".<sup>55</sup> In the paintings at first glance the figures appear to be holding each other up and pictorially they are held up by the triangular shape on our left and beneath the right arm of Schiele's likeness, in reality there is nothing to hold them up, they are unbalanced and doomed to fall over.

Schiele also developed other recurring themes in his work such as Motherhood and the Family. 1911's Pregnant Woman and Death, (PL.48), a double self-portrait, in which Schiele portrays himself as both creative and destructive, progresses through 1913 in the form of the Holy Family (PL.49) and to 1918 in the form of the Family. The Holy Family also recalls an earlier work entitled "Birth of a Genius" (PL.50). Presumably the genius is Schiele himself.

After his trial in 1912, Schiele moved back to Vienna and acquired a studio at 161 Hauptstrasse Hietzinger. He had become somewhat downhearted and reclusive so Klimt introduced him to the industrialist August Lederer, who was a distillery owner with a large collection of Klimts work. This was a thoughtful move by the older artist and it had the desired effect as Schiele took an immediate liking to the Lederer family. He stayed with the family quite often and whilst out walking one day near the town of Gyor, he spotted a bridge "completely asiatic, as though chinese"<sup>56</sup> in nature. He painted the bridge and this work is quite different from anything else he painted - one thinks of chinese woodcuts, Miro and surrealism!

While at the Lederer household he made studies for a portrait of Erich Lederer, in which he brilliantly captures the adolescent youth of the young man. He described the youth who he drew and gave lessons to in a letter to Roessler. "The boy I am painting is 15 years old, with a long aristocratic face. He is a born painter, and draws also, like Beardsley; only he has never observed nature and that is his misfortune".<sup>57</sup> In the works which Schiele produced at this time the decorative quality of the background contrasts starkly with the simplicity with which the figure is portrayed. The dark mass of the figure is constructed from angular shapes, the triangular shape of the jutting arm dominates the piece. The arm acts like a barrier between us and Lederer. Elisebeth Lederer, whom Schiele also drew is also defended by this barrier, however she sits comfortably and quite naturally. She is youthful, beautiful and looks wide-eyed out at the world.

Heinrich Benesch was a civil servant, involved in the rail-service, with a modest income. Despite this, he became an avid collector of Schiele's works and a loyal friend. Schiele had stated in a letter to Roessler, during May of 1912 that he would give the pictures made during his imprisonment only to his closest friends. Benesch received two self-portraits and the interior entitled Door to the Open.<sup>58</sup> (PL.51).

During 1913 Schiele began studies for a life-size double-portrait of Heinrich and Otto Benesch (PL.52). Otto, the son, later gave a description of the artist producing some studies, which gives an interesting insight of the artist at work:

"The number of drawings which he made in preparation for a portrait was legion. I was frequently able to observe him at work, particularly when he was doing the life-size double-portrait of my father and me ... Schiele drew rapidly, the pencil slid across the white surface of the paper as if guided by the hand of a ghost, as if in a game, the position of the hand was at times that of the brush-handling of the East Asiatic painters. The eraser was not used - if the model changed position the new lines were placed next to the old with the same unerring sureness. Incessantly one sheet of paper after the other was placed on the board....

But how Schiele penetrated the model with his dark eyes! How the nerve and muscle were captured! Schiele never added colours to his drawings in front of the model, but always afterwards from a completely retained memory of the natural object".<sup>59</sup>

In the double-portrait of Heinrich and Otto, Schiele captures the relationship of father and son brilliantly. The father is protective of the son blocking us off with his outstretched arm. He will not be moved and looks at us defiantly. Schiele must have been fascinated by the relationship between the boy and the man because of the early death of his father. The painting depicts age trying to hold youth back from knowledge in the world of innocence.

Eva, Otto's wife, explained the relationship between father and son thus and remarks:

"Had Schiele - consciously or unconsciously - understood a deep psychological situation? Heinrich Benesch liked to dominate. The intellectual burgeoning of his son began to make him feel uneasy. Schiele recognised the gaze into the world of the mind beyond all external barriers already in the boy who was then seventeen and he expressed it in the portrait. It was a mortal world in which Otto Benesch quite naturally dominated".<sup>60</sup>

It is interesting to note that Schiele had the freedom to portray his patrons as he saw them and not as they necessarily might have wished. This was a recent development in terms of portraiture and the freedom given to the expressionists opened up many possibilities for future artists. If people wanted their portraits painted they should not expect a manicured version of themselves.

Schiele also painted a portrait of Frederike Beer (PL.53), at this time. She was a member of the Nouveau Rich - the Viennese Bourgeois who sought recognition by patronising young artists and the development of new ideas. It was also a way of gaining respectability. Beer was herself so involved in the buying of modern fashion that she once described herself as a "walking advertisement for Wiener Werkstatte".<sup>61</sup>

In this work Schiele seems to look down from above and is fascinated by the patterns on her dress and the handmade dolls from South America. Schiele was shown the dolls by Beer who thought they might interest him, he was delighted, decided to include them in the picture, and so asked her to lie down on the floor as he threw them on top of her. The pose is quite unusual as Schiele has not included any of the supports such as cushions - a similar unerring effect is caused, in the Hermits (PL.47). Because of this strange effect and the angle from which he had portrayed her "Schiele suggested when the portrait was finished that I hang it from the ceiling, and indeed I did for a while. Our maid went to the market a few days later and told everybody: "My mistress has been painted as though lying in a tomb". "<sup>62</sup>

It is ironic that Schiele would produce what obviously is a discussion piece for a keen supporter of the avant-garde seeking recognition of her social status. He probably enjoyed the risk taking element in producing this unusual portrait.

## CHAPTER 6.

"I intend to get married .... advantageously not to Wally".<sup>63</sup>

During the spring months of 1914 Schieles attention was brought to two attractive sisters living across the road from his studio. At first, with Wally as an unsuspecting accomplice, he would go on escapades with both sisters, such as, the cinema. Soon however, he began a more serious courtship with Edith. It is interesting that he should take someone from the protective background of the middle-classes, rather than the ambiguous background of Wally. Before the relationship developed too far, Edith wisely insisted that Wally must leave. Afterwards, at a meeting with Wally, Schiele suggested that he visited her each summer. She decided not to accept the offer. Schiele "was obviously disappointed. Wally thanked him for the kind thought ... and then departed, without tears, without pathos, without sentimentality".<sup>64</sup>

The artistic outcome of this event was the painting Death and the Maiden of 1915 (PL.54), which has been translated as a farewell to Wally. There are obvious affinities with Kokoschkas painting "The Storm of 1915" (PL.55), in which the artist portrays himself and his lover, Alma Mahler in the midst of a raging storm, which has obvious sexual implications. Despite the dangers around them the couple seem safe, the storm is over. However the relaxed figure of Mahler is strikingly different from Kokoschka's who looks forelorn; his hands grappling at air as if trying to hold on to something, these attributes suggest tension rather than relaxation.

In Schiele's work, there is no storm, all the psychological intensity comes from within the figures themselves. They gaze into a void - not at each other but into the uncertainty of the future also present in the Double-Portrait of the Benesch's. What comes across very strongly in this work is a great sense of loss. What we are seeing are the last clinging moments of two individuals who have gone through a lot together. Ironically the title suggests that renowned saying which is part of the wedding ceremony, "Till death do us part". Why does Schiele portray himself as death in this work?

Another painting from this period "Soaring" (PL.56), Comini suggests depicts the two directions in which he feels drawn. It may be presumed that he feels he must come back "down to earth" and so he decides on a more respectable affair than his previous one with Wally. His aim the protection and acceptability he would receive from others within a 'normal' marriage.

During 1914, Schiele discovered another medium with which he could portray himself in a new way. With the help of a friend, Anton Joseph Treka who was a sculptor, poet and painter he produced a series of self-portraits in the form of the photograph (PL.57). It is interesting to note that unlike his naked self-portraits these photographs show his outer appearance that of a handsome middle-class gentleman. He portrays here in the clearness of the photographic image the threads which he broke down in his paintings. During the previous year, 1913, he had had one man shows in Munich, Stuttgart, Hagan and Berlin and Alessandra Comini explains his outward bearing thus: "as portrait commissions and increased participation in European exhibitions began to lure him out of isolation, he again lived his pantomime and began to imitate in real life the confident image projected in the series of self-portrait photographs".<sup>65</sup>

Schiele also produced doll-like or human beings in works and the idea for this may have been his own or have been influenced by Kokoschkas painting of himself and a doll made in the likeness of Alma Mahler. Here we find the double-portrait again though this time the contrast is between the limpness and uncontrolled moments of the doll-like figure to those of the real figure. The doll representing, in its different forms, comfort, companionship or quite simply a plaything - a toy. However the doll can never return affection in the manner in which the human can. Be it by participation in sex or by other means. The doll image may also represent helplessness and dependence on others for care and attention.

During 1914, as was common, Schiele expressed his wishes to leave Vienna as he was weary of its pre-occupation with its past and the lack of support for the avant-garde movement.



"We must never wish to have the past back again, that would be a retreat. Therefore I don't want to stay here with you - but go to Berlin after the war and find the courage to live again".<sup>66</sup>

One finds the same kind of resignation in a letter from Kokoschka to Schiele, in reply to an invitation to exhibit in an exhibition of contemporary Austrian art:

"I will not take any part in any exhibition in Vienna, a decision by which I have abided for many years. Since there is no sign that the attitudes to my work in those circles that concern themselves with art has not improved, I have no desire to feel at home there, even with least important of my works, ever again".<sup>67</sup>

Schiele never left Austria as later unforeseeable events would not leave this choice open to him.

In 1915, during the last days of the month of May, Schiele was drafted into the army, despite previous rejections on the grounds of ill-health. On June 17th, he married Edith Harms and only four days later was called up for military service. It comes as a surprise that despite this he was represented at at least, four exhibitions during 1916. Two in Munich, one in the Goltz gallery, the other was a Secession show. One in Berlin and an exhibition of graphic art in Dresden.

In Spring, Schiele was posted to Muhling in lower Austria where he acted as prison clerk in a war camp for Russian officers. He drew some of these officers and manages to capture their plight and resignation. Schiele was lucky, one of his senior officers, one Karl Moser, realised his talent and "had a storeroom turned into a studio. When the weather was good Schiele painted there for a few hours a day".<sup>68</sup> He painted some landscapes which are of interest because of their shapes and structure. The work of Cezanne and later the cubists comes to mind when looking at these paintings of "Ruined Mill at Muhling" (PL.58) and View of Krumau (PL.59).

Marriage and his involvement with the army seems to have softened the intensity of his work. He had less time for his self-obsession. In Self-Portrait Squatting (PL.60), though he has portrayed himself with his trousers around his ankles, there is little shocking about the picture even the line is rounder and softer than before. He gazes out at us in a "weary acceptance of his own sexuality".<sup>69</sup>

In the same year, he also painted his wife's father, Johann Harms, (PL.61). Though the old man is at an impossible angle in which to sit comfortably, the effort of movement seems too much and he is near sleep despite this. The tension is created by the manner in which we anticipate his fall. He seems as if he will fall out of the canvas if not supported soon. This theme of falling hopelessly is common in Schiele's paintings.

During September, in a German periodical "Die Aktion", a special Egon Schiele issue was produced. Schiele had arrived very much in the European Art scene.

1917 was a very fruitful year for him despite the war. He was moved back to Vienna in January to the "Imperial and Royal Commissary for the Army in the Field" Within the army he was having an extraordinarily good time and obviously very happy, wrote to a friend, "I'm getting cigarettes, lard, sugar, coffee, etc. and I'm also enthusiastically testing varieties of schnaps".<sup>70</sup>

Also in terms of being exhibited and of sales of work things were looking good. He sold a series of drawing to a public museum (The Moderne Galerie), exhibited 19 drawings at the Austrian War Museum (Kriegsanstellung), and was also exhibited in what was a propoganda exercise by the Austro-Hungarian government - a show in Stockholm and Copenhagen. The aim was to show that their country was highly cultured and therefore it was worth fighting for it.

So during the last two years, Schiele was acknowledged as a leading expressionist painter in the art centres around Europe.

CHAPTER 7.

## 1918 THE YEAR OF DEATH

"1918, that annus terribilus which at last saw an end to the war but also death for hundreds of thousands of victims of starvation and disease, reaped a terrible harvest among the leading artists of the modern Viennese movement. At the beginning of the year, Klimt died from the after effects of a stroke. Wagner died in April from erisypelas, Moser in October from cancer of the jaw. Schiele died from Spanish influenza".<sup>71</sup>

Besides these natural causes, many of the younger avant-gardists had chosen to move to new settings. Mostly from small cities to larger ones and from "traditional cultural settings, such as Vienna and Rome to more modern settings such as Berlin and Milan".<sup>72</sup> This was the end of an era.

On the 6th February 1918, Klimt died from the influenza epidemic that would be responsible for more deaths than the war itself. In his last works, Klimt was developing a sense for geometric structure, as well as the more usual use of pattern, decoration and line, - this had come from Schiele - (See The Bride, (PL.62) and The Baby, (PL.63). Schiele sketched his old friend on his death bed. Klimt had paved the way for him, he was now the new leader of the avant-garde movement in painting in Vienna.

The forty-ninth exhibition of the Secession took place a month after Klimt's death. Amongst the pieces shown were works by Faistauer, Jungnickel, Merkel, Gutersloh, Melzer, Kubin and Peschka. Schiele exhibited 19 paintings, some watercolours and some drawings. Within the same year he was commissioned to make murals for the Burgtheatre and the prices of his drawings trebled.

In Arbeiter-Zeitung on 23rd March, Roessler wrote:

"Fate was decreed that he should become famous not merely notorious in his own lifetime. For Vienna an unthinkable occurrence".<sup>73</sup>

The Secession show included The Family, (PL.64), Recumbant Woman, (PL.65), and Death and the Maiden (PL.54). In Recumbant Woman the sexual intensity is familiar to Schiele but there is a softness which can also be found in the Embrace (PL.66), which is less a description of sex as an instinctive animalistic act and more an image of "human sexual love".<sup>74</sup>

It is one of the few pictures in which we as viewers are not acknowledged by those portrayed in the work. We observe them unnoticed. There is more of the guilt of "Cardinal and Nun" in this painting. The two are engrossed in each other. The painting portrays an intimate sexual relationship. We are in another world.

In The Family (PL.64), probably inspired by his wife's pregnancy, Schiele tries to look beyond his present situation and into that of the future with his wife and child. In this work the Man encircles the mother who, in turn protects the child. They are very much portrayed as a family group and the manner in which the figures are constructed confirms this, each one layered upwards and slightly backwards from the next. But the eyes of the individuals are gazing in the distance. Each person is in his or her own world. Could Schiele be trying to portray the detachment felt by some young couples when the attention is placed on the child and away from each other? On a more positive note the aggression and pessimism evident in his early works has given way to a more melancholy image.

"Here for the first time a human face looks out from one of Schiele's paintings. The woman's look is profoundly arresting. Her body is strongly built, the human organism is at work in her, her breast arches over a heart that beats. Which of his earlier pictures would ever have made one think of lungs and hearts? Here life has suddenly acquired force and built a body around itself which is capable of supporting a life, a body swelling with life, and organs from which the soul looks out mysteriously".<sup>75</sup>

Schiele's last work was a portrait of the painter Paris Von Guttersloh (PL.67). whose "dancing fool" of 1913 was one of the earliest manifestations of expressionism. The softness of the other works of 1918 is not found here. The confrontational aspect of the picture is emphasised by the centralisation of the sitter. The raised hands of the Guttersloh gesture at us. One as if to hold us back, the other to pull us in towards him. It is a powerful work which is filled with tension and portrays two contrasting sides of the sitter. Whether Schiele would have softened his brushstrokes as he built them up is impossible to say. The piece remained unfinished.

The first part of the book is devoted to a study of the life of the author, who was a prominent figure in the literary world of his time. The author's work is characterized by a deep understanding of human nature and a keen sense of social justice.

The second part of the book discusses the author's contributions to the field of literature. His works have inspired generations of readers and writers alike. The author's style is simple yet powerful, and his themes are timeless and universal.

The third part of the book explores the author's influence on the world of letters. His works have been translated into many languages and have been studied in schools and universities around the world. The author's legacy is a testament to the power of the written word.

### CHAPTER 8.

The fourth part of the book discusses the author's impact on the world of letters. His works have been translated into many languages and have been studied in schools and universities around the world. The author's legacy is a testament to the power of the written word.

The fifth part of the book discusses the author's impact on the world of letters. His works have been translated into many languages and have been studied in schools and universities around the world. The author's legacy is a testament to the power of the written word.

## Conclusion:

Within his short life Schiele's work had reached many European countries, and he had certainly reached the climax of his career in Austria after beating down the old walls of limited artistic expression.

The disciplines of marriage and of military service, even in a short period of time, had had the effect of making his work less direct and more obscure. In these two very different disciplines he found the respectability which often deprived people of (in his case cynicism), the creative forces which were the sources of their art. But it would be wrong to speculate on what he might have created if he had lived.

It is enough to say that Schiele laid bear his soul for us to see and in doing so leaves us to question some of the moralist Victorian principles on which we still base our society today. He created these works back in the early 1900's and I don't believe I'd be far wrong in saying that if they were brought to the National Gallery in Dublin they would still cause an outcry. On this level it is ironic that though Schiele felt it his duty to express his inner needs in such a way, other artists later in the 20th Century would manipulate their audience on the same basis but without the same moralistic view.

Schiele's scope for development was heightened by what had happened before him and the new ideology of his time. The turn of the century brought about frankness and an openness to other cultural influences and his work deeply reflected these things within the arts "the flowering of Austrian culture, first in the Secession and the Wiener Werkstatte and later in Expressionism is thereby seen as a coherent aesthetic development".<sup>76</sup> It is ironic that this bud would die from disease before it had time to blossom.

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- 1890 Born at Tulln in Austria, on June 12th.
- 1896 Attends local primary school.
- 1901 Further schooling in Krems.
- 1902-06 Attends school at Klosterneuburg near Vienna.  
Father suffers spells of insanity (syphilis).
- 1904 31st December, his father dies. His death is registered on  
1st of January, so that the family qualify for a larger pension.  
His uncle, Leopold Cziharzeic becomes his legal guardian.
- 1905 Ludwig K. Strauch, a well known local painter gives encouragement  
and tuition.
- 1906 Despite protests of guardian, his mother agrees to send him to  
the Academy. Family move to Vienna.
- 1907 Meets Klimt.
- 1908 First group show (Klosterneuburg). Produces works for Wiener  
Werkshatte.
- 1909 Exhibits four paintings in Vienna International Kunstsalon.  
Forms Neukunstgruppe.
- 1910 Series of psycho-sexual self-portraits. Portrait commissions.
- 1911 Studio at Kruman and later at Neulengbach. Exhibition at the  
"Kunstsalon Mietke" in Vienna.
- 1912 24 days imprisonment in Neulengbach for production of 'pornographic'  
work. Exhibited in Cologne.
- 1913 Contributed to "Die Action", Berlin periodical. Exhibited in Munich  
and the Folkswang Museum at Hagen.
- 1915 Marriage to Edith Harms. Drafted into army. One man show  
"Kunstsalon Arnot". Vienna.
- 1916 Duties at Mukling POW camp.
- 1917 Posted to Vienna on attachment with the War Museums.
- 1918 6th February - death of Gustav Klimt.  
Outstanding success in exhibition of Vienna Secession.  
28th October - wife dies of Spanish influenza.  
31st October - Schiele dies from the same epidemic.



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(Zweig "Die Welt Von Gestern, Frankfurt". p.14 (Vischer Verlag) 1970)
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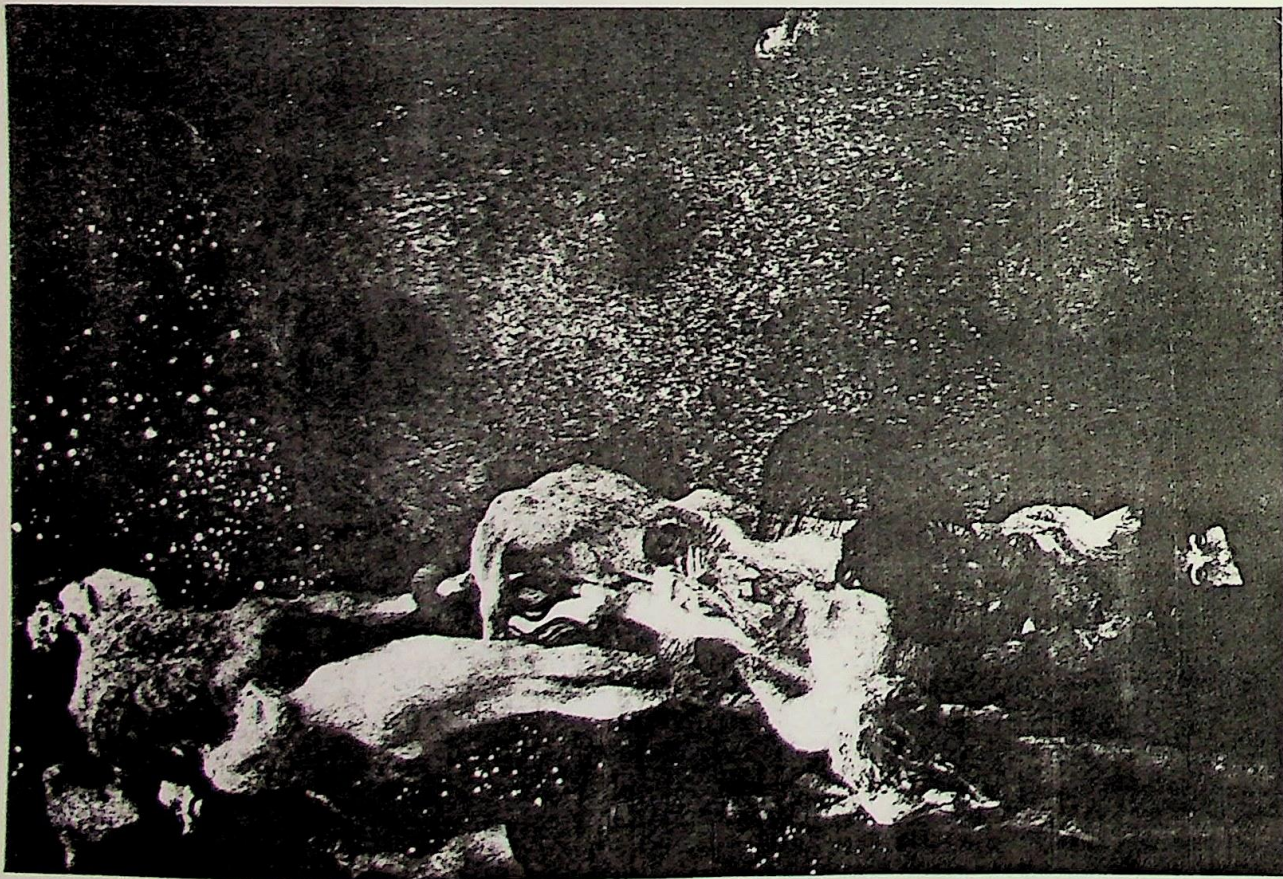
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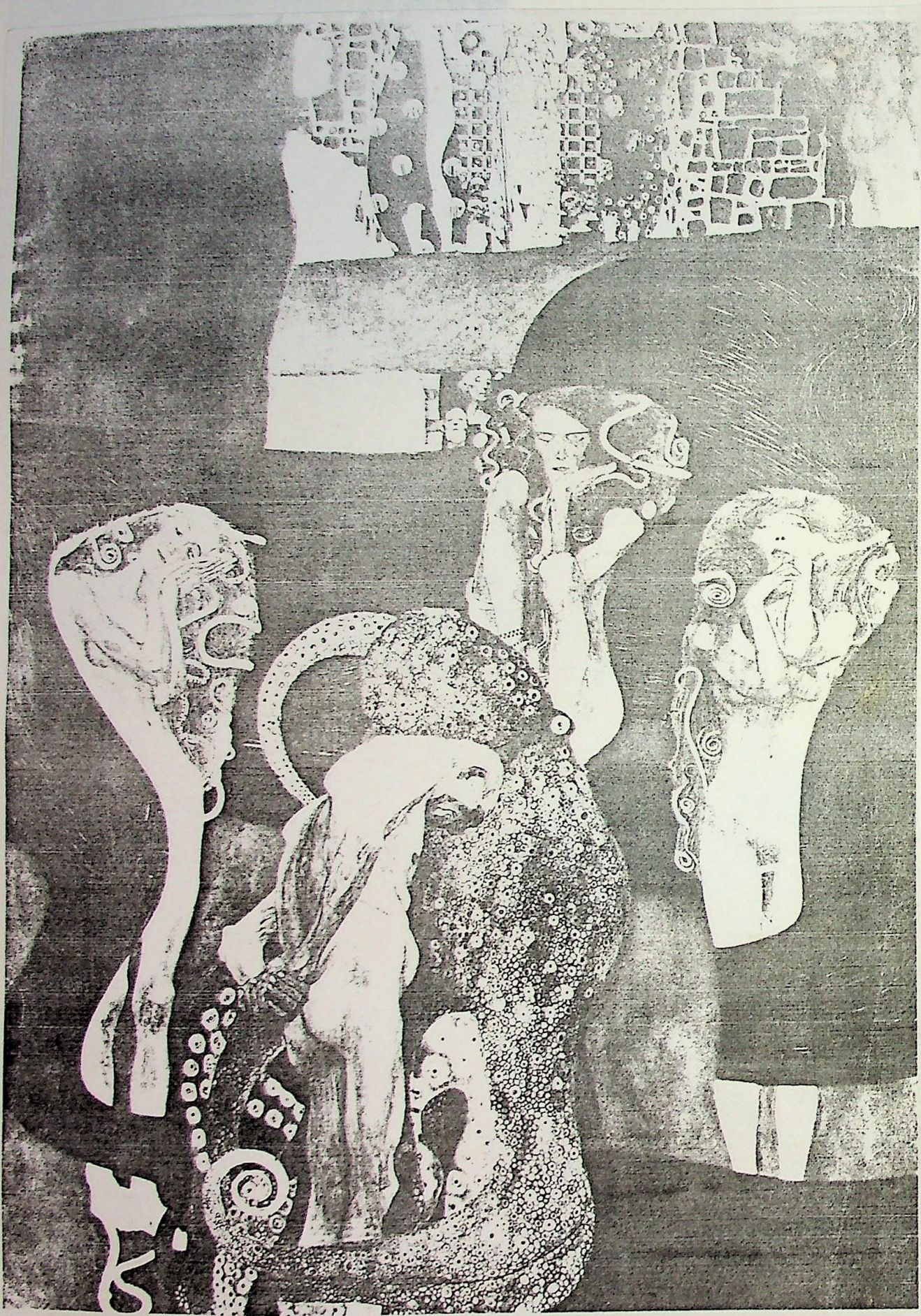
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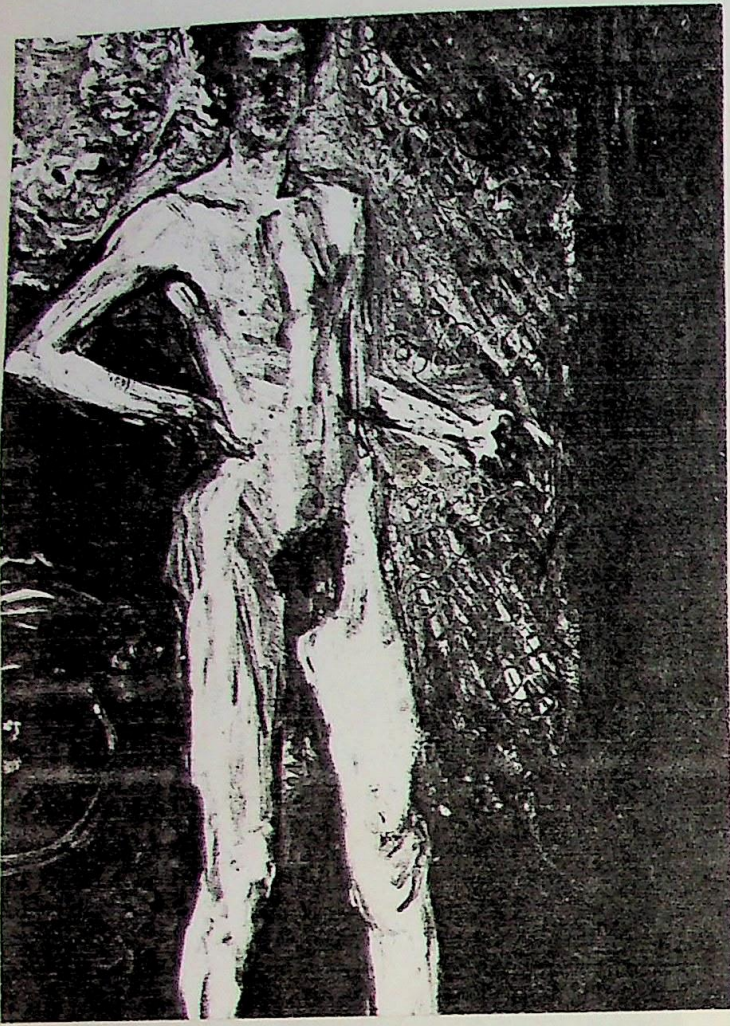
(Pl. 2.) Medicine by Klíort.



(Pl. 1.) Philosophy by Klíort.



(Pl. 3) Jurisprudence by Klimt.



(Pl. 4) Self-Portrait by Janssen.



(Pl. 5) Self-Portrait by Schiele.



(Pl. 6) Self-Portrait with hat by Schiele.



(Pl. 7) Self-Portrait by Fabritius.

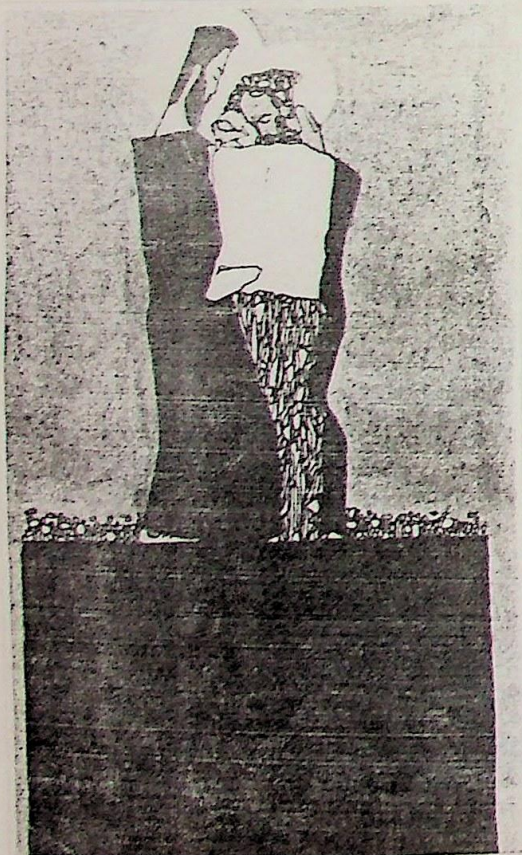


(Pl. 8) Trieste harbour by Schiele.





(Pl. 9) Forward design (Gerti) by Schiele



(Pl. 10) Two Men by Schiele



(Pl. 11) The Dancers Reward by Beardsley.



(P.12) Sunflowers by Van Gogh.



(P.13) Sunflowers by Klimt



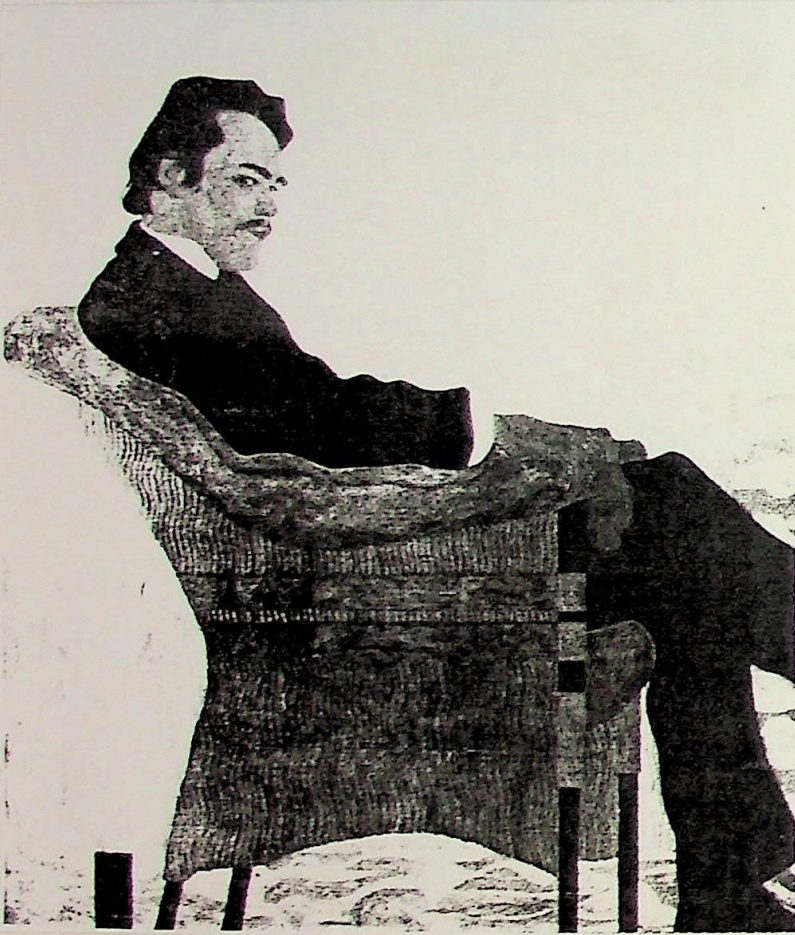
(P.14) Sunflowers by Schiele.



S.10

The scornful woman, I

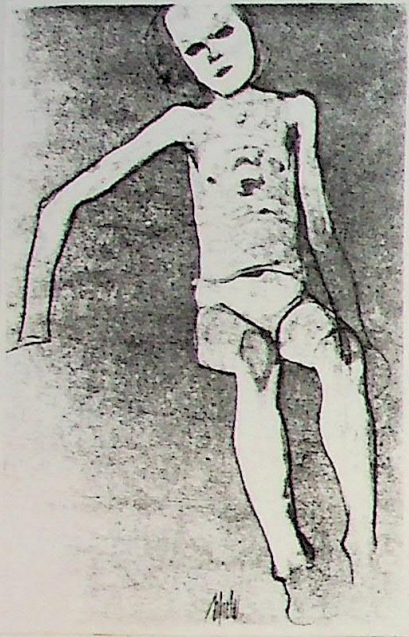
(Pl.15) Woman with black hat by Schiele.



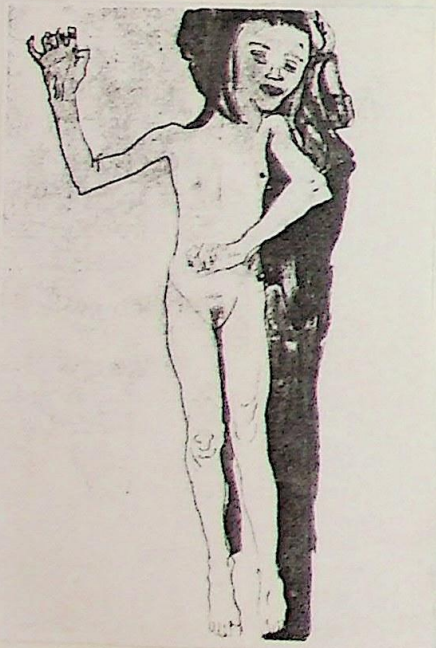
(Pl.16) Hans Massman by Schiele.



(Pl.17) Danae by Schiele.



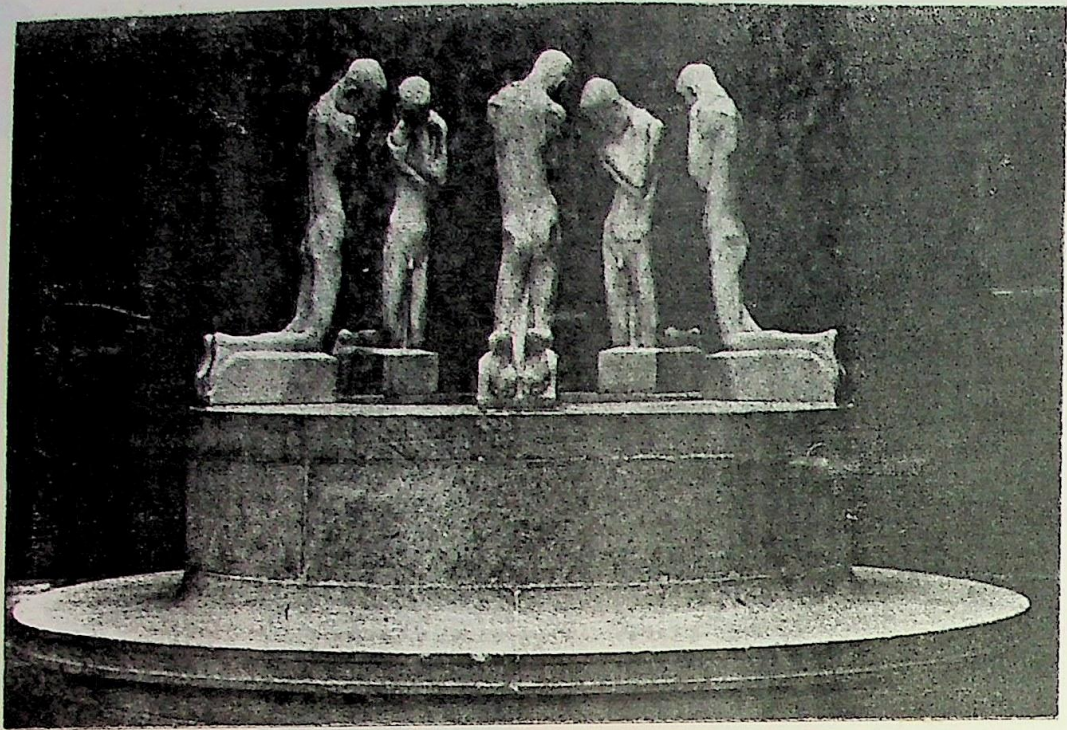
(91-19) Seated nude girl by Schiele.



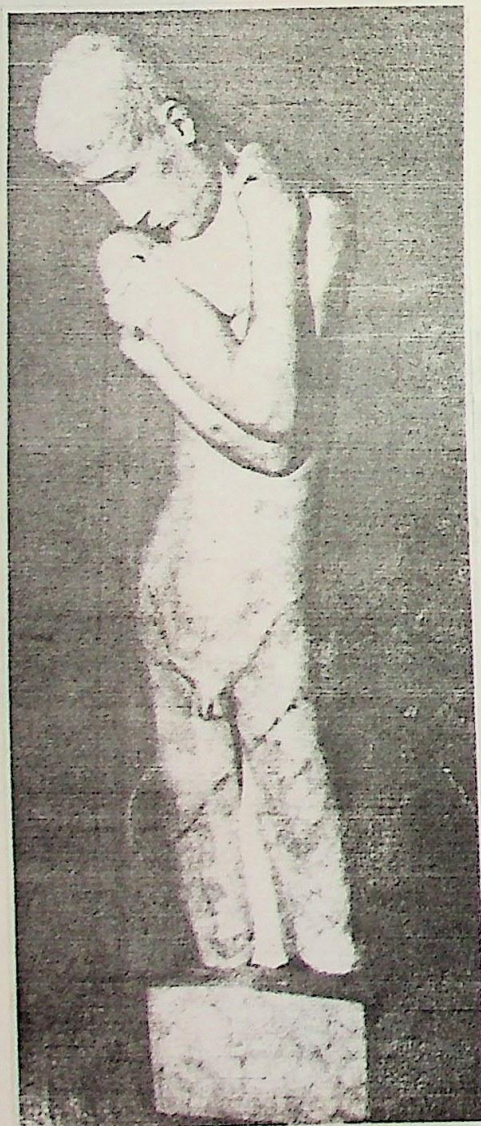
(91-20) The Junglers daughter by Kokoschka.



(91-18) Nude self-portrait by Schiele.



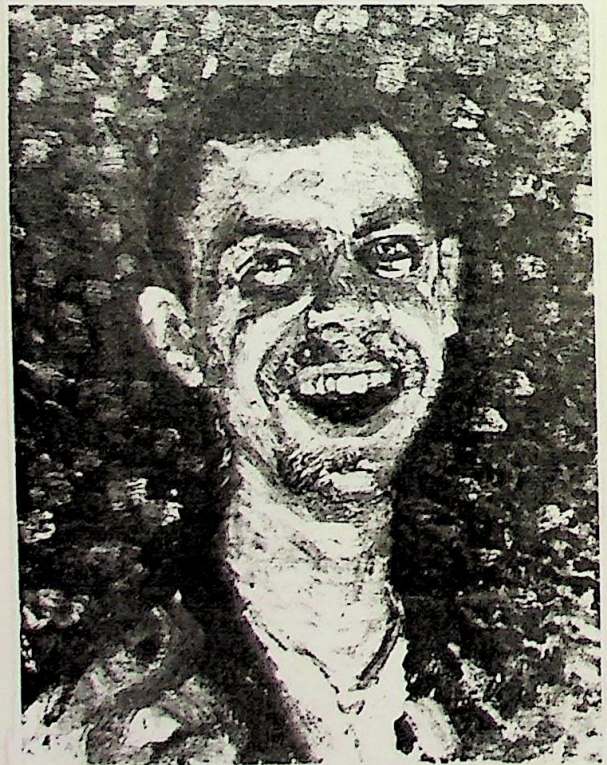
(Pl. 21) *Fountain of Youth* by George Minne.



(Pl. 22) *Kneeling* by Minne.



(11-25) Jeanne Avril by Lautrec.



(11-74) Self-Portrait Laughing by Gogh.



(91.75) Evil Mothers by Segantini.



S.10.

(91.76) Self-Portrait by Schiele.



(91.77) Femme Accroupie by Rodin.



(Pl. 28) Melancholia by Schiele.

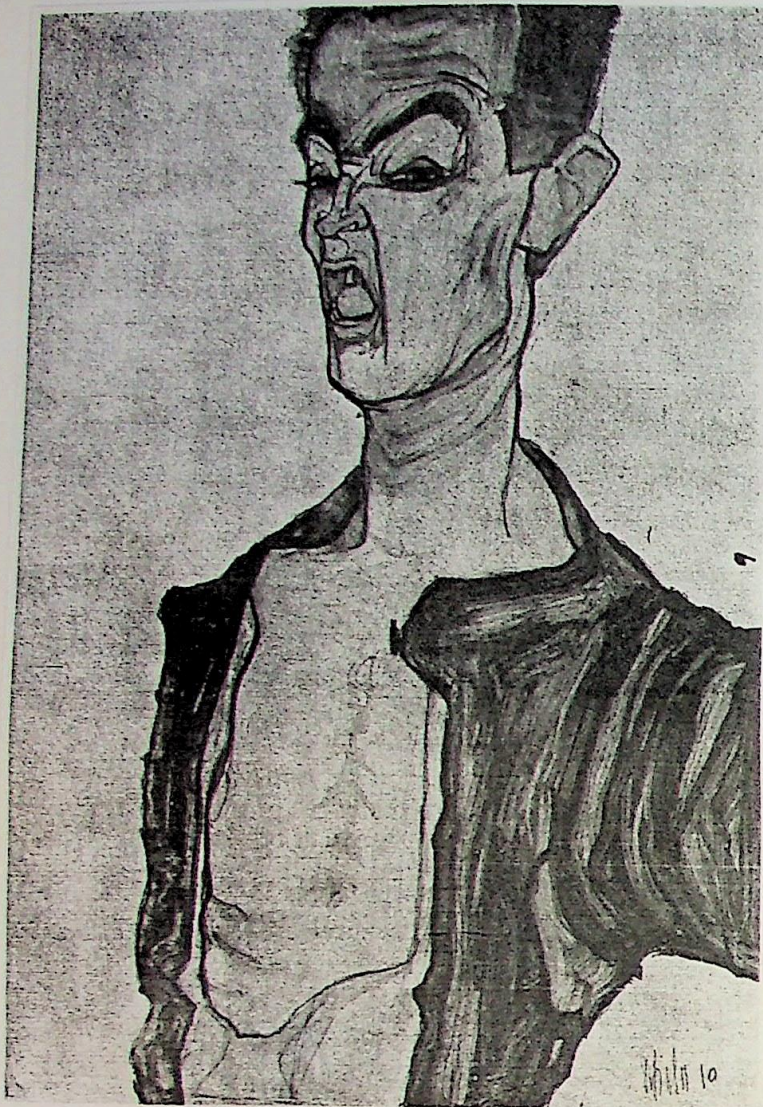


(Pl. 28a.) Silence by Redon.



(Pl. 28b) Silence by Levi Dyrmer.

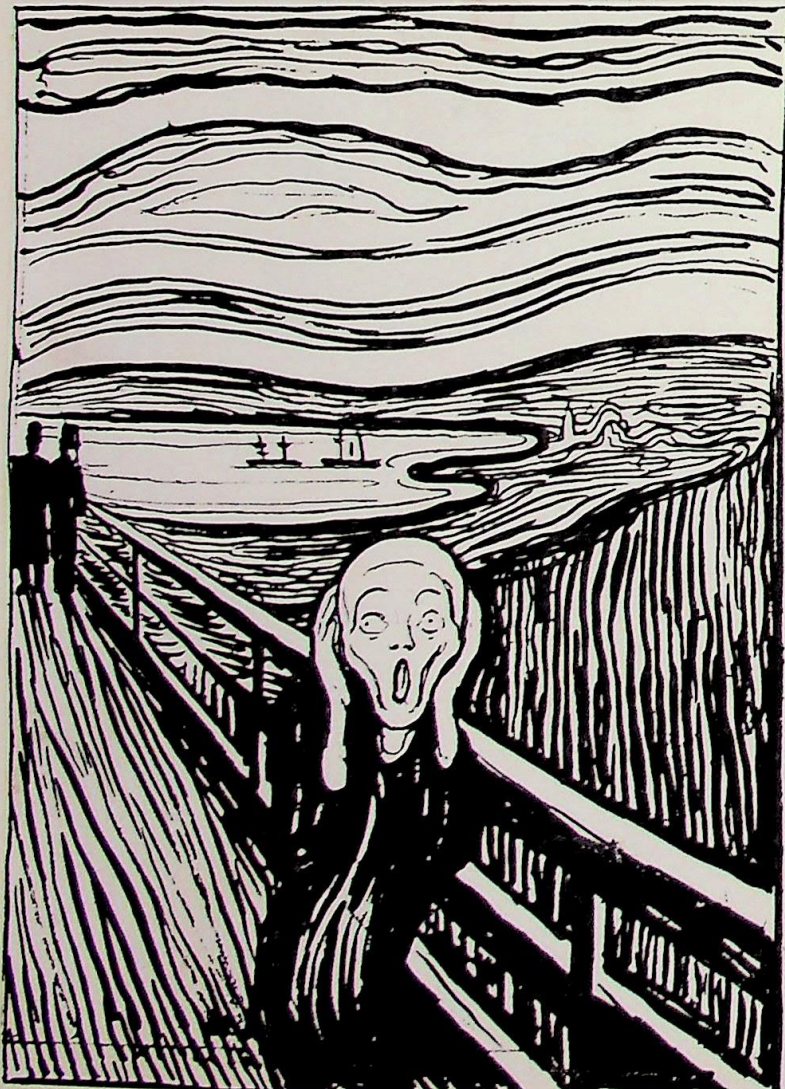




(Pl. 29) Self-portrait with tooth by Schiele.



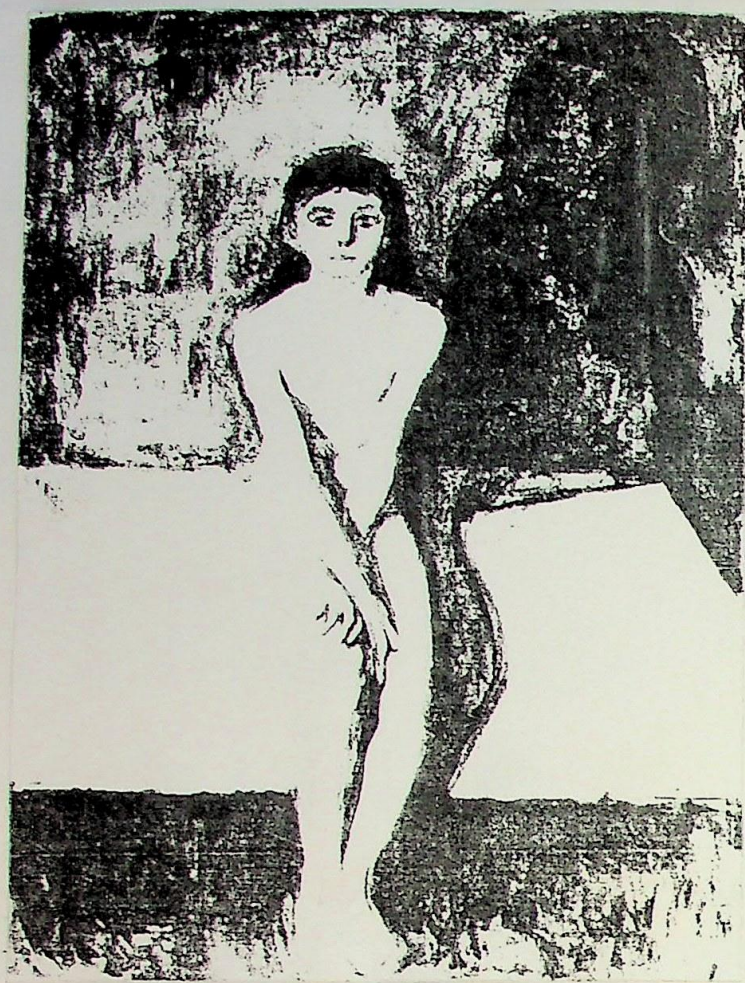
(Pl. 31) Self-portrait Grimacing by Messeerschmidt.



(Pl. 30) The Scream by Munch.



(91.32) Drawing a nude in front of a mirror by Schiele.



(Pl. 33c) Fekerty by Manich

Below: (Pl. 33b) Poldi hadzinsky by Schiele



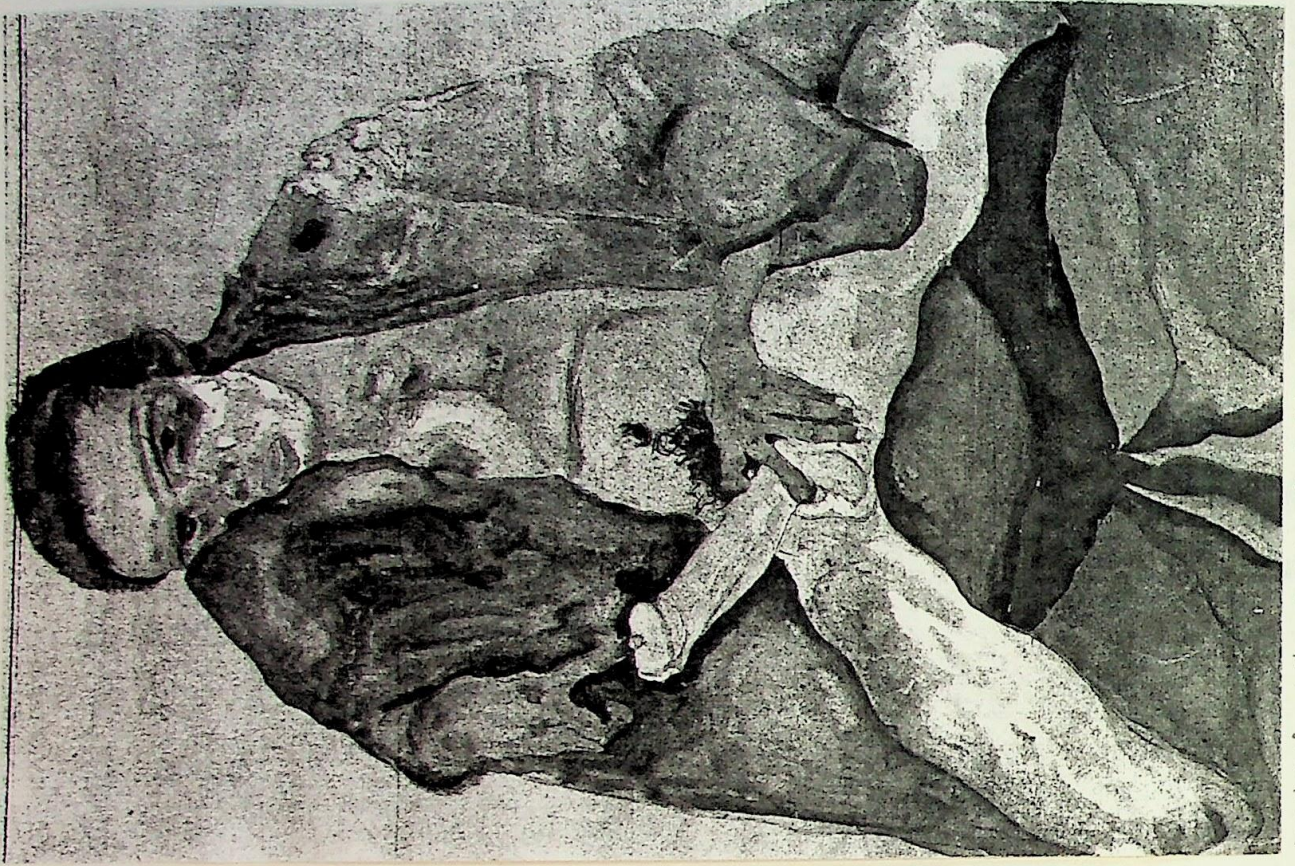
Right: (Pl. 33c) Edward Kosmak by Schiele.

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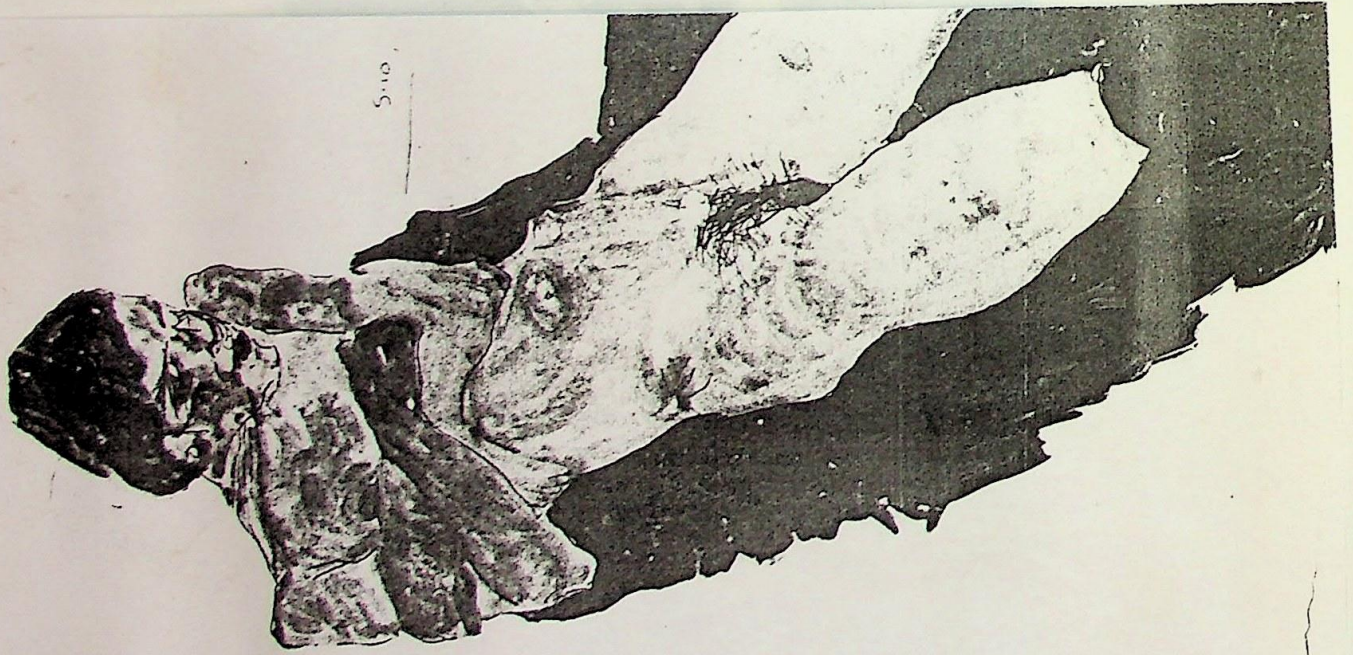


(91.34.) *Reinhardt woman by Schiele.*





(1936) Self-portrait masturbating by Schiele.



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(1935) Red Nude by Schiele



(11.37) Standing nude girl by Schiele.



(11.38) Serre Fesse by Rops.



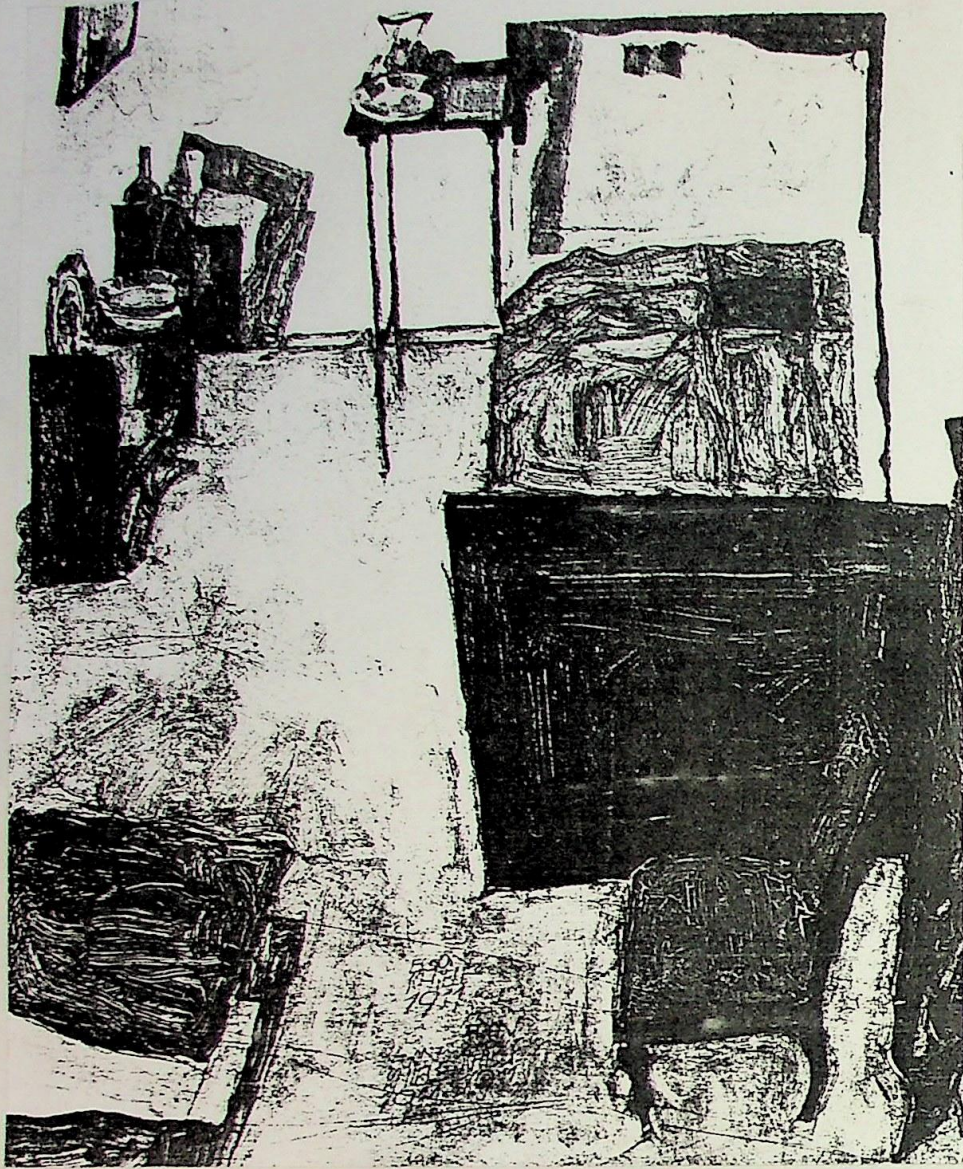
(11.39) Self Seers (1) by Schiele.



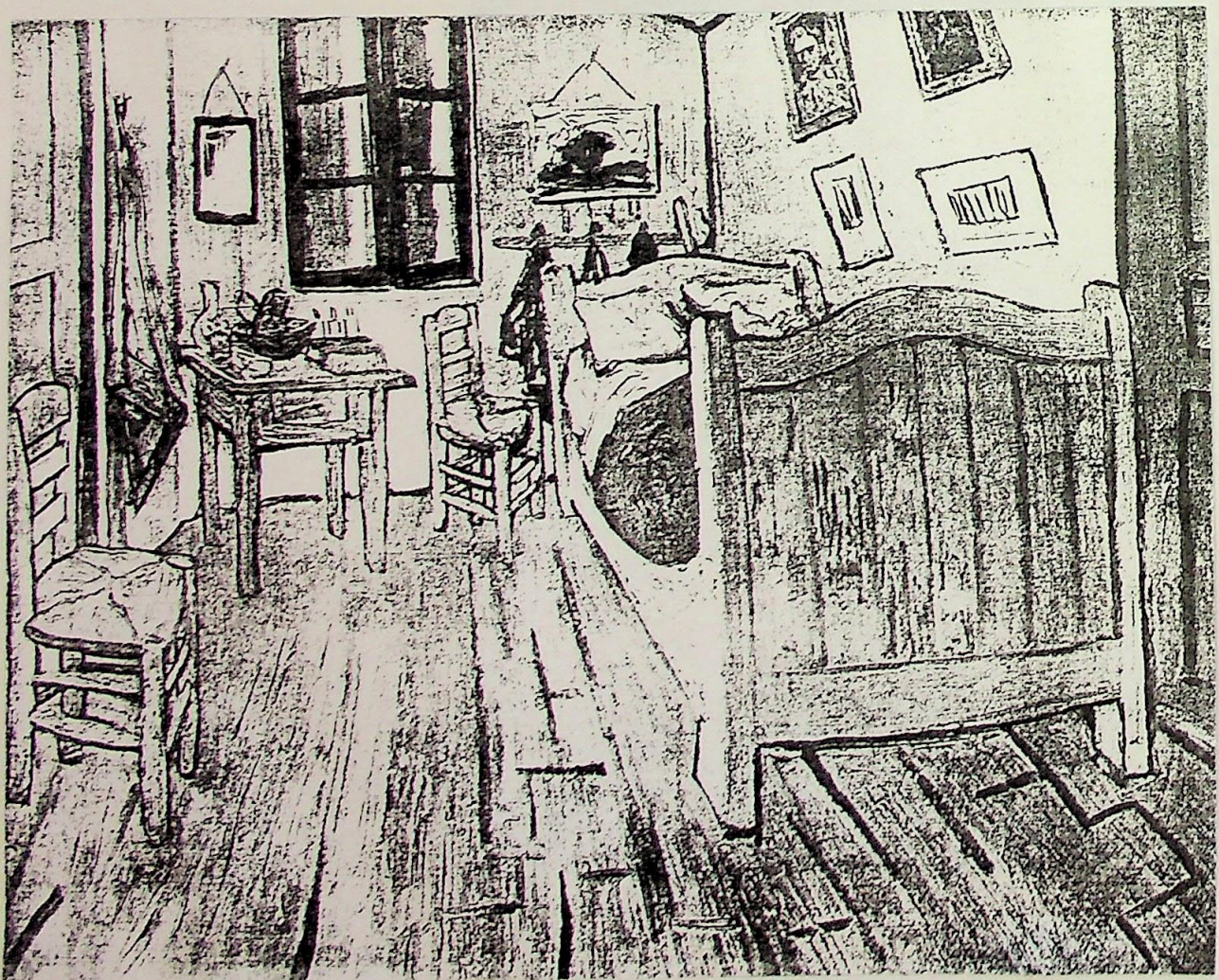
(91.40) Self-portrait with Fingers Spread. by Schiele.



(91.41) Self-portrait with Yellow Christ by Gauguin.



(Pl. 42) Room at Neulengbach  
by Schiele.



(Pl. 43) Bedroom at Arles by Van Gogh.

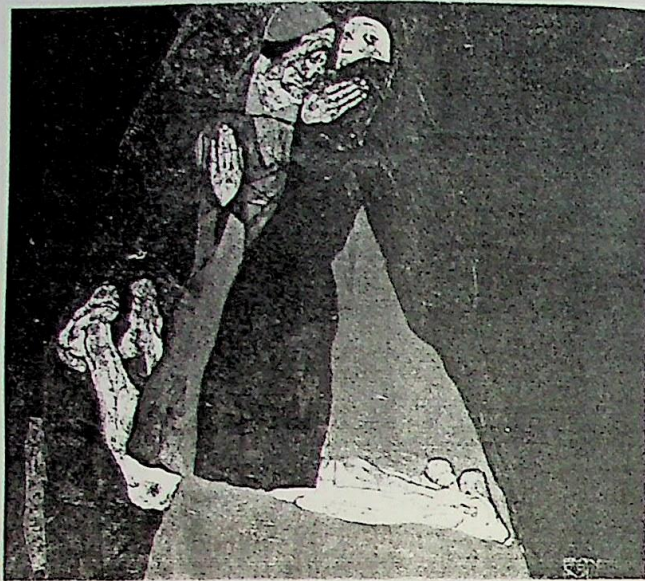




(Pl. 44) In Prison by Schiele.



(Pl. 45) Kiss by Klimt.



(Pl. 46) Cardinal and Nun by Schiele.



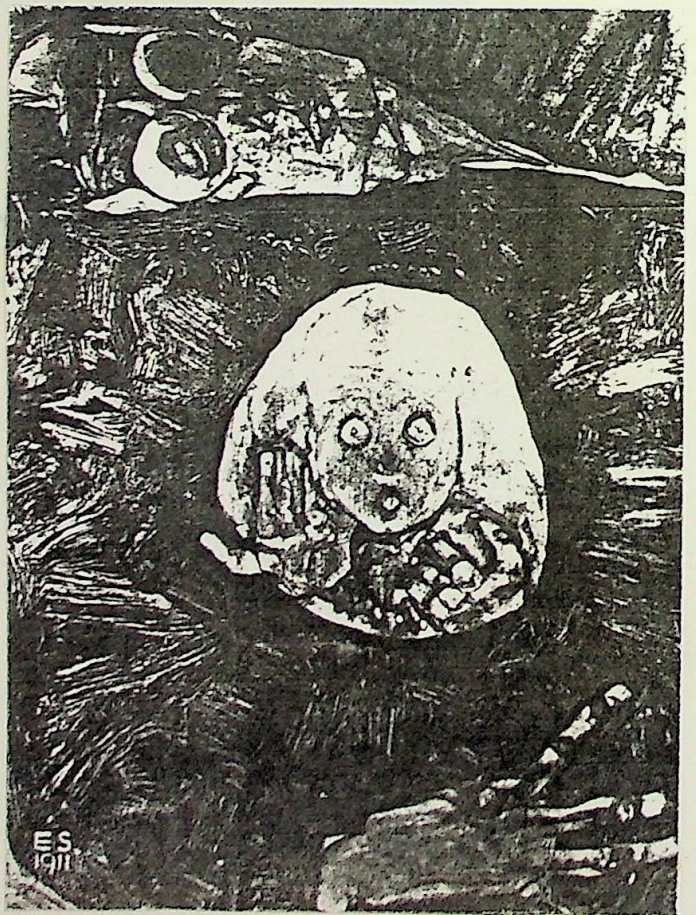
(Pl. 47) Hermits by Schiele.



(Pl.48.) Pregnant woman and Death by Schiele.



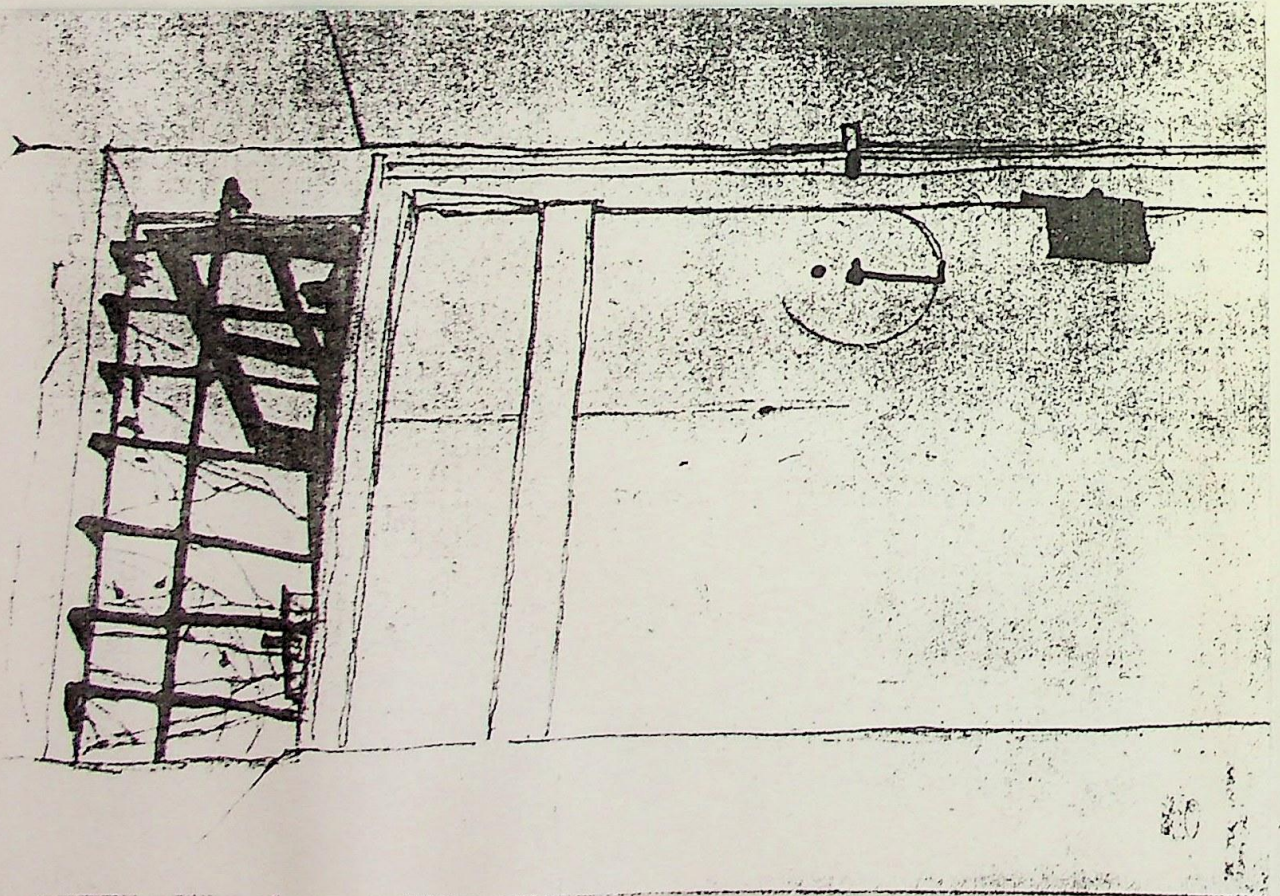
(Pl.49.) Holy Family by Schiele.



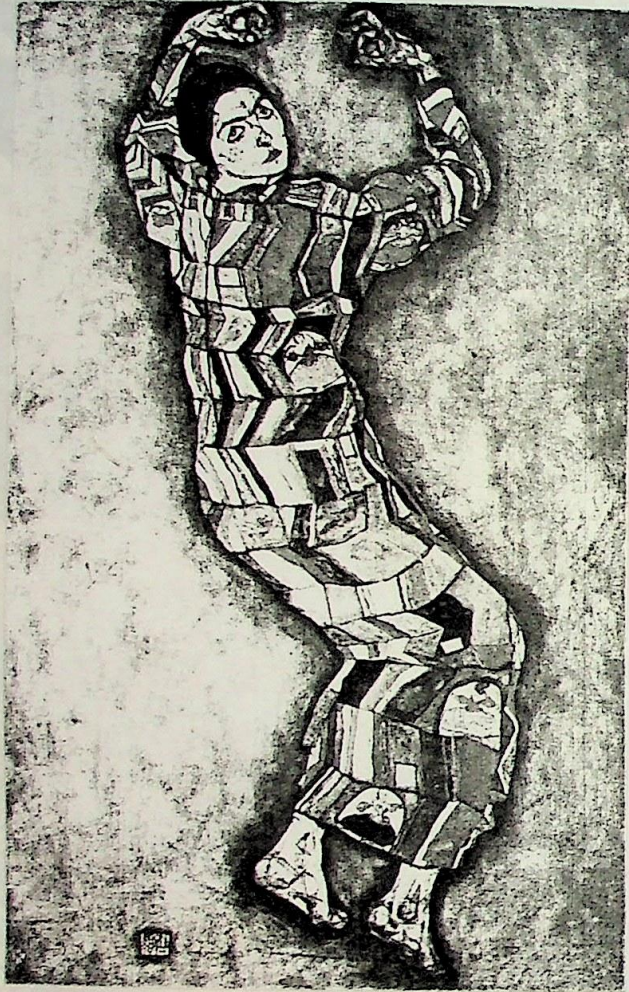
(Pl.50.) Birth of a Genius by Schiele.



(Pl.52) Double - portrait of Otto and Heinrich Borsch by Schiele.



(Pl.51) Door to the Open by Schiele.



(21.53) Frederike Beer by Schiele.



(1154) Death and the Maiden by Schiele.

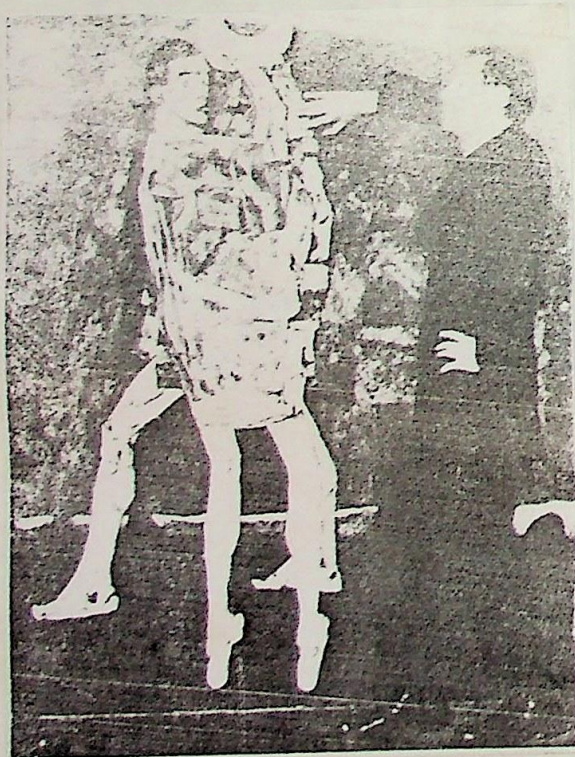


(1155) The Storm by Kikuchi.

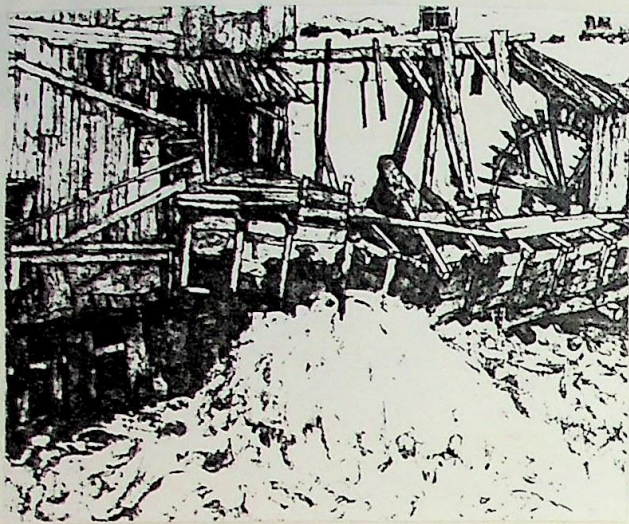


Levitazione

(Pl. 56) Soaring by Schiele.



(Pl. 57) Photograph. Schiele by Trecca.



(11.58) Ruined Mill at Mühling by Schiele.

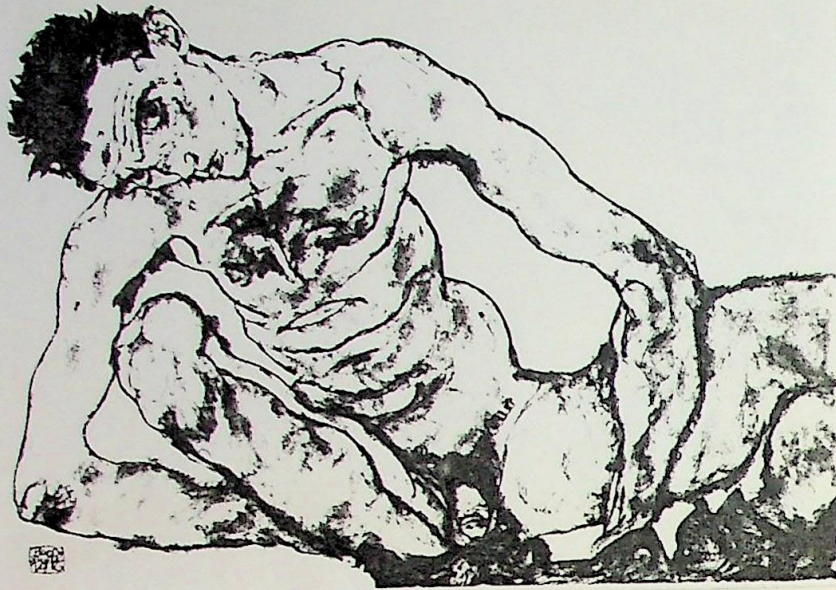
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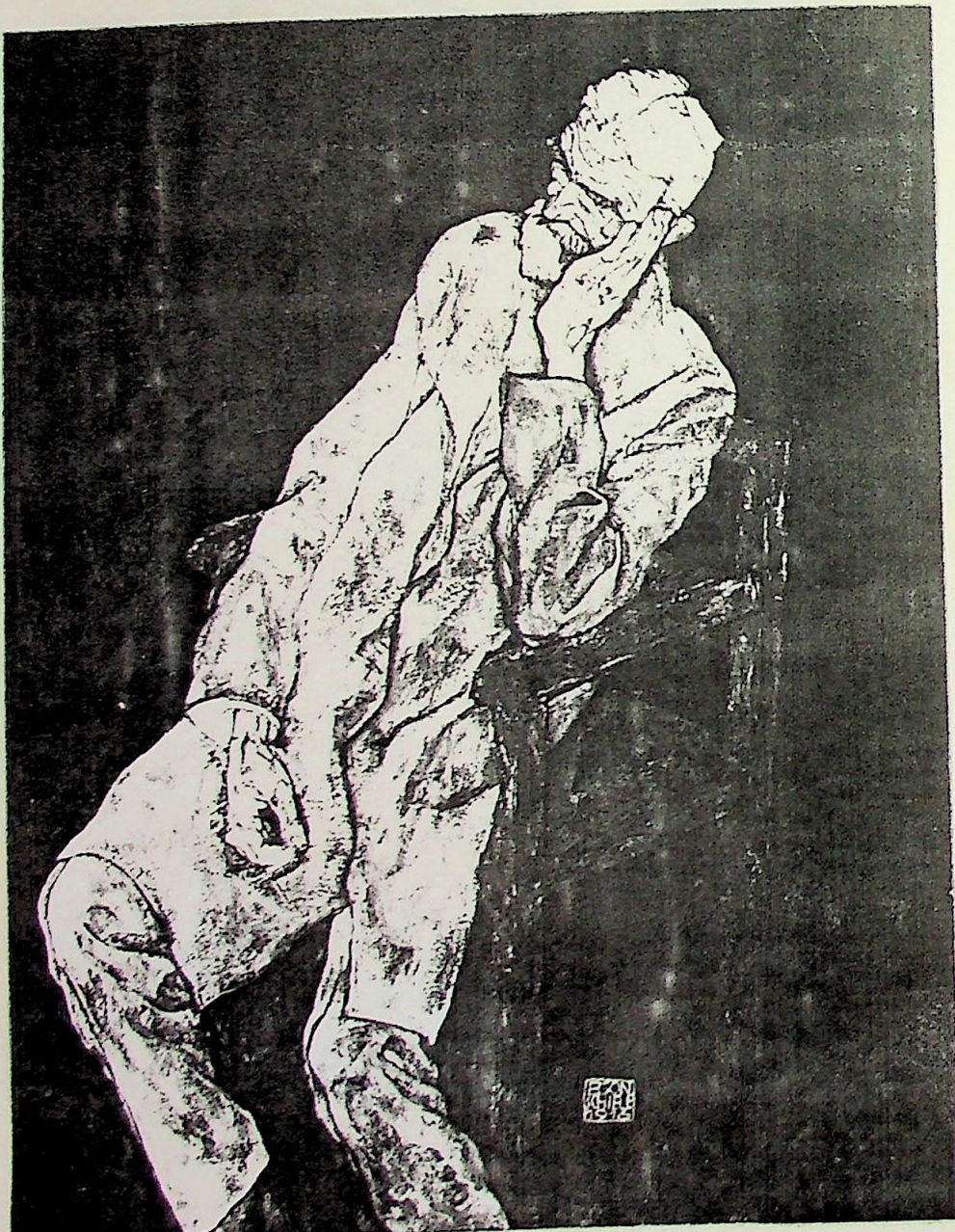
(11.59) Krumau by Schiele.

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(Pl. 60) Self-portrait squatting by Schiele.



(Pl. 61) Johann Harms by Schiele.



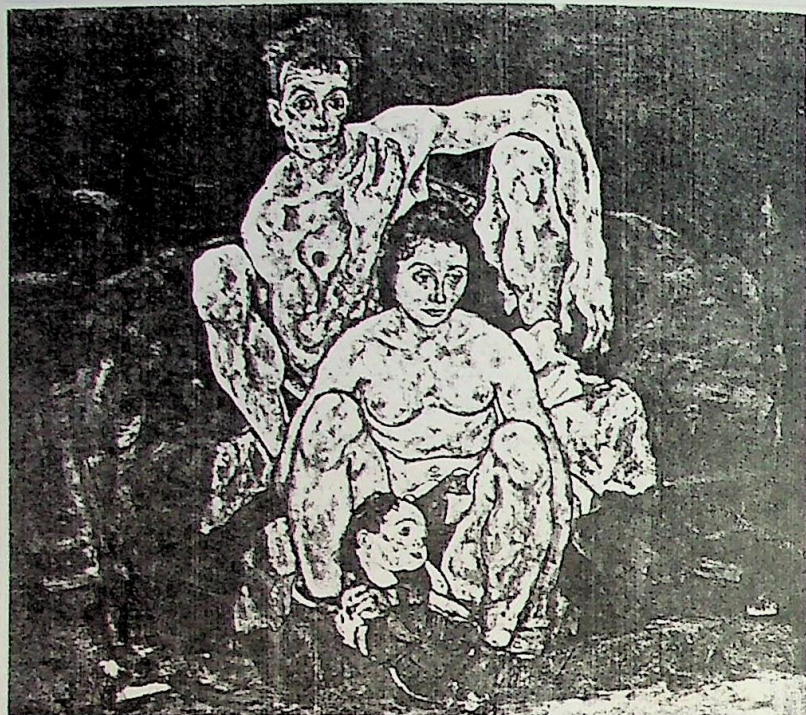
(Pl. 62) The Bride by Klimt

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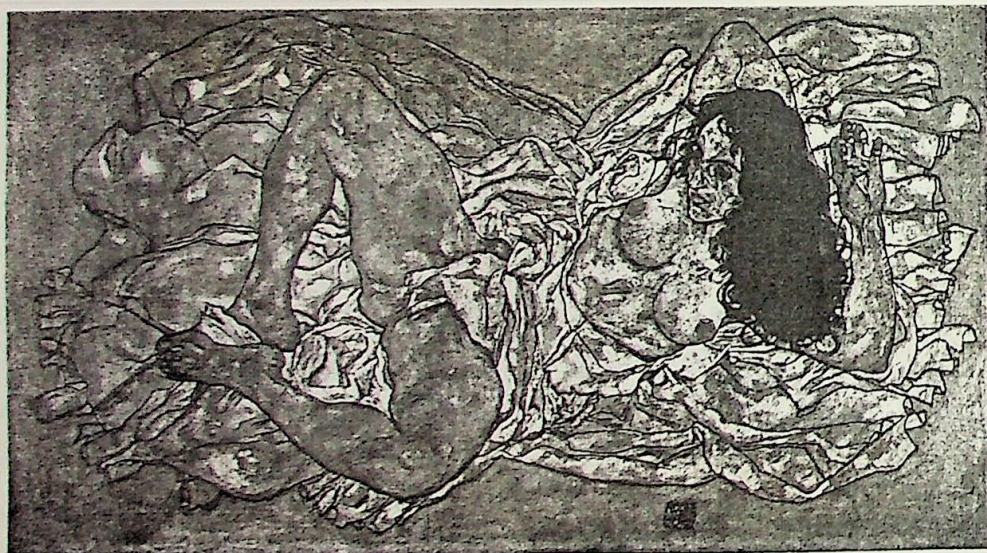


(Pl. 63) The Baby by Klimt.

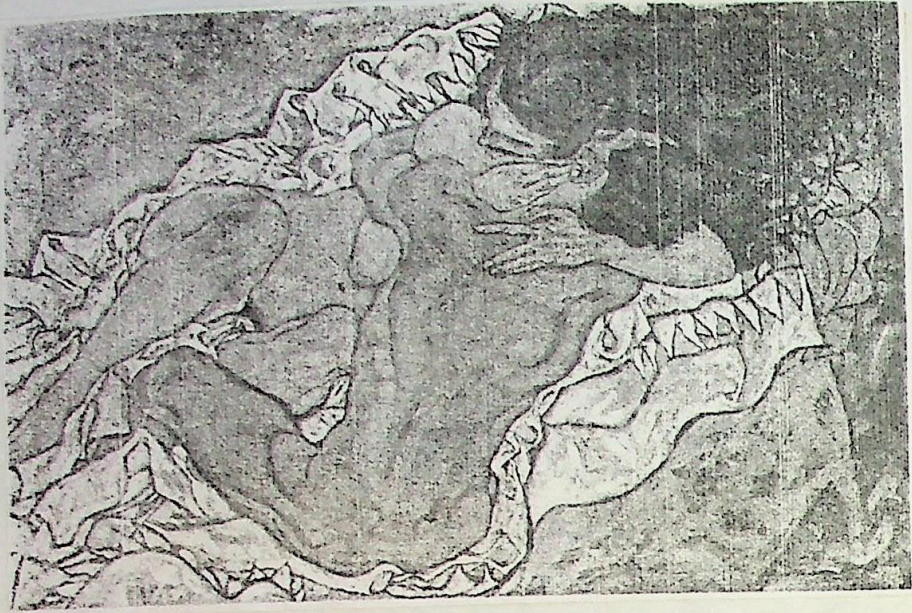
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(Pl.64) *The Family* by Schiele.



(Pl.65) *Reclining woman* by Schiele.



(Pl. 66) The Embrace by Schiele.



(Pl. 67) Paris von Gütersloh by Schiele.