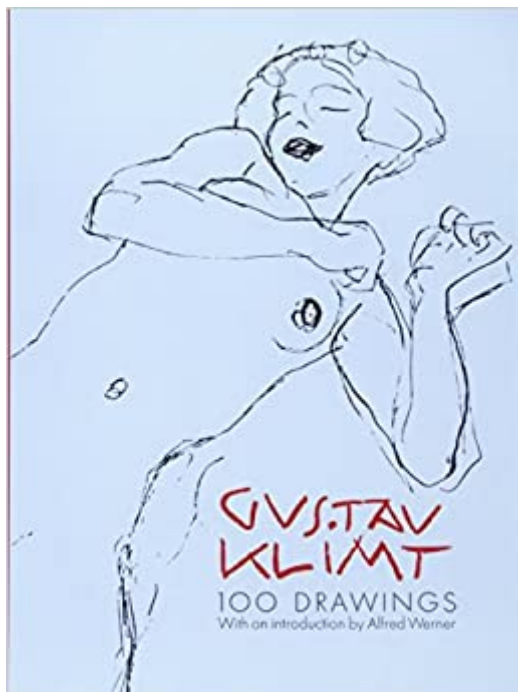


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Gustav Klimt: 100 Drawings



Synopsis

Gustav Glick, director of Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum, wrote as early as 1922 of Gustav Klimt (1862–1918) that his drawings were perhaps his ultimate artistic achievement. This founder of Secessionstil and leader of the revolt against the Viennese academies was able to achieve greater freedom in his drawings than in his more laboriously executed paintings. While there are only about two hundred completed oils, the drawings number in the thousands, and are reported to have at times quite littered his studio. He himself considered them finished works, and often exhibited them alongside his paintings. Klimt's subject matter is almost exclusively the female body, naked or half clothed. For this he earned the reputation of erotic artist, and while he did not suffer the outright persecutions of his successors Schiele and Kokoschka, he was nevertheless subjected to the trials that a frankly erotic artist had to undergo in Vienna, where the everyday subject of conversation was the current love affairs of celebrities but where audiences were shocked by the sight of a dancer's naked legs. An issue of *Ver Sacrum* which reproduced one of his drawings was confiscated by the authorities. The drawings reveal above all that concern of great draughtsmen from Michelangelo through Blake the marriage of subtle grace and expressive dynamism that is the human body. Like that of these two past masters, Klimt's method is essentially linear. He knew, as they did, that line, rather than shading, the creation of volume or the use of color, is the natural medium for expressing the freedom of the living human form. As he matured as an artist there was an increasing awareness of this and a greater and greater spontaneity that approached, finally, "the lightness of a net of gauze."

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Customer Reviews

Gustav Glatz, director of Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum, wrote as early as 1922 of Gustav Klimt (1862–1918) that his drawings were perhaps his ultimate artistic achievement. This founder of Secessionstil and leader of the revolt against the Viennese academies was able to achieve greater freedom in his drawings than in his more laboriously executed paintings. While there are only about two hundred completed oils, the drawings number in the thousands, and are reported to have at times quite littered his studio. He himself considered them finished works, and often exhibited them alongside his paintings. Klimt's subject matter is almost exclusively the female body, naked or half clothed. For this he earned the reputation of erotic artist, and while he did not suffer the outright persecutions of his successors Schiele and Kokoschka, he was nevertheless subjected to the trials that a frankly erotic artist had to undergo in Vienna, where the everyday subject of conversation was the current love affairs of celebrities but where audiences were shocked by the sight of a dancer's naked legs. An issue of *Ver Sacrum* which reproduced one of his drawings was confiscated by the authorities. The drawings reveal above all that concern of great draughtsmen from Michelangelo through Blake the marriage of subtle grace and expressive dynamism that is the human body. Like that of these two past masters, Klimt's method is essentially linear. He knew, as they did, that line, rather than shading, the creation of volume or the use of color, is the natural medium for expressing the freedom of the living human form. As he matured as an artist there was an increasing awareness of this and a greater and greater spontaneity that approached, finally, "the lightness of a net of gauze." An original Dover publication (1972), reproducing 100 Klimt drawings from originals and other sources. Introduction by Alfred Werner, the Austrian-born art historian, who has published several monographs on artists of Klimt's period. List of illustrations, including titles, sources, and original sizes.

Pros: A bunch of Gustav Klimt sketches. Cons: You wish you had ten times as many. Gustav Klimt displayed an amazing ability to let go of a lot of his classical training and turn towards an understanding of drawing not as an ever-increasing precision of draftsmanship, but as the ability to transform elements of line and form into playfully drawn elements of emphasis and decoration while maintaining likeness. I don't know that everyone would want to imitate him (or for that matter, his contemporary, Egon Schiele) but the elegance with which he renders and transforms line and form into expressive reworkings of the human figure is undeniably brilliant. I'm glad I own it.

Beautiful delicate drawings. Some are very light but I can still see the form so no complaints. A real treat to have a chance to see such gorgeous line work after being so familiar with Klimt's finished paintings.

Its ok

I chose this rating because out of 100 illustrations 33 were so very faint that I need a magnifying glass to see anything on the page because it is so very faint. I think this book was a reject. This problem with the illustrations should have been mentioned

An excellent art book: it's, above all, visual poetry. The only flaw is the low quality of the printed paper.

A fantastic look back at the innovator. A very insightful study of Klimt's foundation work.

for those that love Klimt this is a great addition to the art library - his drawings are very inspiring

Masterful

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