

Art and Visual Culture at the Turn of the Century

Monika Schwärzler-Brodesser

February 3–14, 2024

4 ECTS

Course Description

The art course of the winter school will deal with the cultural and intellectual achievements of a number of prominent representatives from the fields of fine art and applied art. It is the aim of the course to provide a multifaceted picture of what happened at the time, when art slowly embarked on the project of Modernism. The course will draw a line from Historicism, the style prevailing in the second half of the 19th century, to Art Nouveau, the style of the young, and will end with an outlook on the Austrian type of Expressionism. All these phenomena and developments will be viewed in the wider context of European art and visual culture.

The following topics will be covered in the course:

- **Historicism:** Hans Makart, his impact on the lifestyle and aesthetic preferences of the Viennese bourgeoisie; his history paintings, portraiture, and interior design projects.
- **Art Nouveau** (Jugendstil) and its stylistic features. The Vienna Secession movement; its motto, artistic program, and most important shows.
- **Gustav Klimt:** The scandal caused by his university paintings, his iconic images, and their reception.
- **The Vienna Workshop**, its ideal of craftsmanship and the concept of the total work of art.
- **Female painters of the time:** Broncia Koller-Pinell, Olga Wiesinger-Florian; their limited access to art education, their status in a highly patriarchic society.
- **Pictorialism:** The aesthetic style prevailing in photography at the turn of the century. Madame d'Ora and her photo studio.
- **The Viennese salons** as places of networking and cultural exchange. Famous “influencers” of the time and their promotion of aesthetic trends.
- **Austrian Expressionism:** Egon Schiele; his anti-aestheticism as a slap in the face of the Viennese bourgeoisie.
- **Oskar Kokoschka:** rebel, assailant of bourgeois values (“Murderer Hope of Women”), as well as emphatic painter of psychic realities.
- **Art Nouveau revival** in the 60s. Turn of the century artists as soul mates of the Hippy generation.

Requirements: **Attendance and participation** (20 % of the grade), **reading** (20 %), **project** (20 %) and **final exam** (40 %).

Recommended Reading: A. Janik and S. Toulmin: Wittgenstein’s VIENNA. New York: Touchstone (1973); E.R. Kandel: The Age of Insight. New York: Random House (2012); C.E. Schorske: Fin-de-siècle Vienna. Politics and Culture. New York: Alfred A. Knopf (1980); K.A. Schröder: Egon Schiele. Eros and Passion. Munich and New York: Prestel Verlag (1995).

Syllabus

1st week

Monday, February 4, 2025
11:00 am–1:00 pm

Highlights and iconic images of Vienna 1900; The second life of these images in popular culture;

Tuesday, February 5, 2025
11:00 am–1:00 pm

Historicism: its stylistic features – the Vienna Ringstraße; characterization of the class that adopted Historicist style as their mode of expression;
Hans Makart as a 19th century “influencer” concerning matters of taste and style; his portraiture, history paintings, and interior design projects;

Reading: Lehmann, D.H. (2013). Portraying Viennese Beauty. In G. Blackshaw (Ed.), *Facing the modern: the portrait in Vienna 1900*. (catalogue National Gallery London)

Wednesday, February 6, 2025
11:00 am–1:00 pm

Art Nouveau, the “new art” and “art of the young,” Jugendstil as a counter movement and antithesis to historicism;
The stylistic features of Art Nouveau;

Thursday, February 7, 2025
11:00 am–1:00 pm

The Viennese Secession movement: its artistic program, motto, and periodical *Ver Sacrum*
The supporters and financial backers of the Secessionists; the Secession building by Joseph Maria Olbrich;
Gustav Klimt as the head of the heretics: his faculty paintings and the scandal they caused;

Reading: Kandel, E.R. (2012). Viennese Artists, Writers, and Scientists Meet in the Zuckerkandl Salon. In E.R. Kandel, *The Age of Insight. The Quest to Understand the Unconscious in Art, Mind, and the Brain*. New York: Random House.

Friday, February 8, 2025
11:00 am–1:00 pm

Egon Schiele as a representative of Austrian Expressionism; his artistic response to the social and cultural conditions of pre-WW1 society;
Oskar Kokoschka: rebel, agitator against bourgeois values (“Murderer, the Hope of Women”), as well as emphatic painter of psychic realities;

Reading: Blackshaw, G. & Topp, L. (Eds.). (2009). *Madness and Modernity. Mental Illness and the Visual Arts in Vienna 1900*. (catalogue Wellcome Collection, London) Farnham: Lund Humphries.

HAVE A NICE WEEKEND

2nd week

Monday, February 10, 2025
11:00 am–1:00 pm

The Vienna Workshop: its ideal of craftsmanship, its economic structure, Palais Stoclet as its main commission;
The concept of the total work of art;
Adolf Loos and his attack on the aestheticism of the Viennese society, “Ornament and Crime.”

Tuesday, February 11, 2025
11:00 am–1:00 pm

Early staged photography;
“Cartes de visite” satisfying the needs of ordinary people for self representation;
Pictorialism, the photographic style prevailing at the turn of the century;
Heinrich Kuehn, Hans Watzek;

Tuesday, February 11, 2025
2.00 pm – 4.00 pm

Mandatory field trip to the Leopold Museum

Wednesday, February 12, 2025
11:00 am–1:00 pm

Circumstances of female art production at the time: the role and status of female artists in society; their limited access to art education;
The notion of “femme fatale” as a cultural phenomenon of the turn of the century and its psychoanalytical implications;

Thursday, February 13, 2025
11:00 am–1:00 pm

Presentation of students’ projects
Repetition and wrap-up

Friday, February 14, 2025

Final Exam

11:00 am–1:00

Recommended Reading

Janik, A. & Toulmin, S. (1973). Wittgenstein's VIENNA. New York: Touchstone.

Kallir, J. (1986). Viennese Design And The Wiener Werkstätte. London: Thames and Hudson.

Kandel, E. R. (2012). The Age of Insight. New York: Random House.

Schorske, C. E. (1980). Fin-de-siècle Vienna. Politics and Culture. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Schröder K. A. (1995). Egon Schiele. Eros and Passion. Munich and New York: Prestel Verlag.