

THE WOMEN OF KLIMT, SCHIELE AND KOKOSCHKA

Lower Belvedere
22 October to 28 February 2016



Egon Schiele
The Embrace (Lovers II), 1917
Oil on canvas
100 x 170 cm
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THE WOMEN OF KLIMT, SCHIELE AND KOKOSCHKA

The beginning of the twentieth century saw wide-reaching social and economic changes, not least of which was a rethinking of traditional gender roles. The incipient move toward gender parity provoked vehement counter-arguments on the part of popular theorists such as Otto Weininger. Yet the sexual liberation served men as well as women; both had reason to break out of nineteenth-century moral constraints. The more forthright acknowledgment of male and female sexual desire sent thrills and chills through early twentieth-century Austrian art, infusing the work of the nation's leading artists with a mix of terror and exhilaration. Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele and Oskar Kokoschka each approached what was then known as the *Frauenfrage* – the woman question – in different, yet overlapping, ways. *The Women of Klimt, Schiele and Kokoschka* explores their differences and similarities and in the process offers new insights into early twentieth-century gender relations and the origins of modern sexual identity. Jane Kallir organized the exhibition along four main themes: portraiture, couples, mothers and children, and nudes.

In the words of Agnes Husslein-Arco, the director of the Belvedere and the 21er Haus: “*The Women of Klimt, Schiele and Kokoschka sheds light on both sides of Vienna society, as well as those outside the salon culture of the upper classes. More and more middle-class women raised their voices in opposition, and, together with women workers, organized themselves into a movement. They not only wanted to rethink male dominated upbringing, the purely representative function of wives and society’s empty conventions; they demanded rights and insisted that gender roles be reconsidered and arranged anew.*”

It is easy to understand why Klimt's portraits – sumptuous, elegant and brilliantly colored – were popular with the women of Vienna's high society. But the artist's richly ornamented surfaces almost completely obscure the sitters' personalities. Schiele and Kokoschka turned this decorative formula inside out, thrusting their subjects into a pictorial void. In the process, they forced a confrontation with the existential anxiety that had been concealed by Klimt's *horror vacui*. Defying the then-prevalent contention that women lack souls, Schiele and Kokoschka forged a new, modern form of psychological portraiture.

“*It was in this Zeitgeist,*” notes the curator and vice director of the Belvedere, Alfred Weidinger, “*that Klimt's character as a person and artist was forged.*” “*Klimt,*” explains Weidinger, “*moved amid these spheres, and his art was chiefly in response to widely held discussions about the ‘riddle that is woman’, discussions that by 1900 or so had become the focal point of his artistic output. From then on, his art concentrated entirely on the female sex, approaching it from a variety of ways.*”

Uniting the work of Klimt, Schiele and Kokoschka was a persistent belief in romantic love: a union of soul mates sealed by erotic passion. But whereas Klimt, in his paintings of couples, placed the subject on a lofty allegorical plane, Schiele and Kokoschka, both expressionists, allowed personal experiences to inflect their work. Indeed, Schiele's and Kokoschka's evocations of relationships gone sour are often more emotionally compelling than their portrayals of idealized, happy lovers. Because males and females were at the time deemed opposites, the two could not be comfortably joined.

"Intellectuals in fin-de-siècle Vienna were downright obsessed with female sexuality," writes the New York gallery owner and curator Jane Kallir in describing the era's social and political framework. *"This obsession,"* she continues, *"was reflected in the work of personalities as varied as Sigmund Freud and Gustav Klimt, Otto Weininger and Oskar Kokoschka, Arthur Schnitzler and Egon Schiele. But it was Schiele's representations of women that were considered especially offensive."*

The mother and child, one of the oldest subjects in Western religious art, was likewise transformed by the pressures of fin-de-siècle sexual politics. In the popular imagination, females were categorized either as "Madonnas" (chaste and maternal) or "whores" (sexually voracious predators). Klimt and Schiele subverted this dichotomy by depicting pregnant nudes and naked mothers, thereby explicitly linking motherhood to female sexuality. Kokoschka, on the other hand, seemed really to imagine that maternity "cured" a woman of sexual promiscuity. He obsessed about fathering a child with his lover, Alma Mahler, and in his art repeatedly allegorized her as the Virgin Mary.

Traditionally, the goal of the female nude in Western art has been to control and subdue the subject's innate eroticism through a process of ordering and idealization. At the beginning of the twentieth century, men's fear of female sexuality was expressed in the concept of the femme fatale, one of Klimt's recurring subjects. While these brazen, provocative women were controversial in their day, overall there is little in the artist's work to upset the primacy of the male gaze. Klimt's nudes are seductively beautiful, and in many of his most explicit erotic drawings they are passive almost to the point of unconsciousness.

By comparison, Schiele's and Kokoschka's nudes are far more abrasive. Angular lines subvert their inviting curves, and erratic cropping creates an aura of unease. Unlike classical nudes, these women often seem aware that they are being watched, and at times they appear none too pleased. Schiele's and Kokoschka's nudes, like Klimt's, convey an undercurrent of fear. It would not be accurate to call any of these artists feminists. Nevertheless, all three acknowledged female sexual autonomy to a degree that was unprecedented at the time.

A Brief History of Masturbation

In the long history of thinking about sexuality, the Greeks are well known for their indulgences, embracing all things related to physical love, up to and including masturbation. For the most part, Christianity restricted the sexual freedom endorsed by the Greeks. The monk St. John Cassian, born around 360 CE, was one of the first to write about masturbation. He regarded it as a vice, but one that could be overcome. Numerous Christian penitential books written during the Middle Ages echoed this view, speaking of masturbation – female masturbation expressly – as a lesser sin. Masturbation wasn't considered a grave offense until Pope Alexander VII condemned sexual self-stimulation in the seventeenth century. But whereas theologians denounced masturbation as a sin, medical doctors treated it as a sickness. Sigmund Freud's *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, published in 1905, put masturbation in a scientific light that was more in keeping with the times, paving the way for new understanding. But public views about self-pleasure were slow to evolve.

In the work of turn-of-the-century artists and writers – Adolf Loos or Peter Altenberg, say – one finds a kind of elitist and sexist detachment, a permissiveness of deviance, up to and including paedophilia. Schiele was slapped with his first obscenity charge in 1910, after fourteen of his drawings had been removed from an exhibition in Prague. In 1912 he was arrested for crimes involving moral turpitude. Many painters drew on nude photography and literary precursors for inspiration. For his drawings of nude women masturbating, Klimt took an important cue from shunga, Japanese woodblock prints with explicitly sexual motifs that emerged around 1820 and whose contents were sometimes so graphic that their circulation was forbidden. What is striking about Klimt's works is less their nudity than their enlarged and skillfully detailed representations of the vulva.

The Women of Gustav Klimt

Alongside Egon Schiele and Oskar Kokoschka, Gustav Klimt was among the most important erotic painters of his era. His decorative works hung in many houses on Vienna's Ringstraße and in stately buildings throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire, making him the heir apparent to the eminent painter Hans Makart. But as he completed a commission for a series of ceiling paintings at the University of Vienna, he surpassed his earlier achievements. The female subjects in these works have an immense physical and psychological presence. From this commission onwards, women would be the main subject of Klimt's art.

In view of the public prejudices of his day, Klimt's explicit and unvarnished drawings of women masturbating were tantamount to a quiet outcry. Like Pierre-Antoine Baudouin before him, Klimt liberated women from the necessity of seeking sexual gratification exclusively from men or female lovers. But none of his contemporary artists depicted the subject as clearly and unambiguously as he did. On account of his frankness, he faced sporadic accusations of pornography. But this didn't stop him and he continued to exhibit his erotic works in public. Klimt was not the first artist to portray a woman masturbating, but he was the first to make female self-pleasure its own genre.

The revolutionary aspect of his approach cannot be overestimated. Around 1900 society was still decidedly patriarchal. Klimt's focus on women's pleasure and his handling of female intimacy are more than just unusual. His art was the first to free them from fear and shame.

In view of the subject, it is not surprising that Klimt spent most of his life among women. He never married and never shared a flat with a girlfriend, but he lived together with his sisters Klara and Hermine in the apartment of his mother, Anna. During the day, he spent time in his atelier, where he was constantly surrounded by women – sitters for his portraits and young women who posed for nude drawings. This experience helped Klimt understand and respond to intimate themes from the life of women.

The Women of Egon Schiele

Schiele was slapped with his first obscenity charge in 1910, after fourteen of his drawings had been removed from an exhibition in Prague. In 1912 he was arrested for crimes involving moral turpitude; in the years that followed Kokoschka repeatedly accused him of being a pornographer. When Schiele completed the painting that would secure his breakthrough, he was barely twenty, a youth whose artistic abilities far exceeded his emotional development. The hallmarks of his works – the preoccupation with metaphysical questions and with sex – are typical themes of late adolescence. Throughout his early twenties, these matters tormented him. As he grew older, however, he became more detached. Those who see Schiele's interests as abnormal overlook how young and artistically precocious he was. This made it possible for him to express feelings that older artists usually repress.

What distinguishes Schiele from Klimt, however, is that his representations are not mere projections of male desire. At the root of his work is an interaction between the artist and the model, an exploration and questioning of the mysteries of sexual attraction and aversion. One can hardly call Schiele a feminist, but very few artists before and after him have so openly bestowed sexual autonomy on their female subjects. With an intentional disregard for the aesthetic means traditionally used to reduce and objectify the force of female nudes, he unleashed the power of the female other and cast doubt on the effectiveness of rational male control. Still today, Schiele's expressionist nudes contain something threatening for some heterosexual men.

Unlike Klimt, who always kept his lovers at a distance, even when they were the mothers of his children, Schiele overstepped the tacitly acknowledged boundaries of his private sphere – his studio – by openly professing his love for his girlfriend, the model Wally Neuzil. Yet because of her low social station, Schiele never saw Wally as a potential wife and decided instead for Edith Harms – a daughter of a master locksmith for the railway – who demanded that Schiele break off contact with his lover. The works he completed around his break-up with Wally and the first months of his marriage suggest how difficult this phase was for him. The idea of an ecstatic union between body and mind that he expressed so clearly in some of his earlier works gave way to the sober realities of human relationships. His experience with marriage gave his portraits more depth and sensitivity.

By contrast, his nudes from that time appear more detached. Although his representations of women sometime contain disturbing elements, they are more objective and less provocative than his earlier erotic works.

The art historian Hans Tietze noted that Schiele, "condensed all his vitality into a single, hastily travelled span of time."¹ In bridging the period between adolescence and adulthood Schiele's work finds its completion.

The Women of Oskar Kokoschka

In early twentieth-century Vienna Oskar Kokoschka earned himself the flattering nickname of *Oberwildling*, the wild one. His work at the Vienna art exhibitions of 1908 and 1909 was hotly debated by the press. His portraits and his plays were controversial; his shaved head seemed radical. Kokoschka's early artistic work occurred at a time in which alienation between the sexes, already augmented by the corset of bourgeois sexual morality, had reached a high point. It culminated in an atmosphere of uncertainty towards everything sexual. By around 1900, female figures in modern literature were portrayed as man-eating nymphomaniacs, corrupt seductresses and worshipped mistresses. Be it in the form of Judith or Salome, they expressed the male fear of castration.

There is little doubt that Kokoschka's negative view of woman increased considerably after he failed to win the affections of his classmate Lilith Lang in 1907. Comparison with the successful "activities" of his idol Gustav Klimt was certainly another source of frustration. Kokoschka's envy of his artistic rival Egon Schiele was palpable in his disdain. Schiele was "constantly surrounded by girls", which led to his immoral behaviour at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts.² Karl Kraus and Adolf Loos, with whom Kokoschka became friends around 1908/09, were no slouches either when it came to sex. Loos had many affairs, married three times and in 1928 became entangled in a moral scandal. By contrast, the young Kokoschka usually took flight where love was concerned. It is likely that he saw women as dangerous seductresses and male sexual desire as a threat.

The female nude certainly offered a way to approach the other sex from a passive position. Interestingly, Kokoschka's nudes neither arouse desire nor idealize the women's body according to the tenets of the academic tradition. Rather, Kokoschka alternatively displays his fascination with physical movement or seeks to uncover the inner psyche, even when it elicits revulsion. This puts his nudes in distinct opposition to the sensually erotic paintings of Gustav Klimt and to the explicitly erotic representations of Egon Schiele, who drew from his own sexual experiences.

¹ Hans Tietze, "Egon Schiele," in *Die bildenden Künste*, 2. Jg., Nr. 5, 1919, pp. 99–100.

² Ludwig Goldscheider, *Kokoschka*, Cologne (1963, reprint 1970), p. 10.

Though sexual questions made up only a part of Kokoschka's multifaceted work and occupied him only temporarily, his idea of women underwent a remarkable transformation. After the failure of his relationship with Alma Mahler, he surmounted his inner conflicts and had a positive experience with Anna Kallin, leaving him more at ease around women. Starting in the mid 1920s, other subjects entered his artistic purview – cities and landscape, in particular. In 1941, at the age of fifty-five, Kokoschka married the twenty-six-year-old law student Olda Palkovská.

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ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES

Gustav Klimt

- 1862 Gustav Klimt is born in Baumgarten, near Vienna, to Ernst Klimt, a gold engraver from Bohemia and Anna Rosalia (née Finster) from Vienna. He is the second of seven children.
- 1876 At the age of fourteen he enrolls at the Kunstgewerbeschule des k.k. Österreichischen Museums für Kunst und Industrie (today the Vienna University of Applied Arts) and studies painting with Ferdinand Laufberger.
- 1883 Gustav Klimt, his brother Ernst and their classmate Franz Matsch found the Künstlercompagnie, the "Artists' Company". They receive numerous commissions, decorating theatres in Vienna, Carlsbad and Reichenberg.
- 1885 The artists execute a ceiling painting in the Hermesvilla of Empress Elisabeth in Lainz, outside Vienna.
- 1886 One of the most important commissions for the Künstlercompagnie is the decoration of the grand staircases and interiors of Vienna's Burgtheater.
- 1888 Emperor Franz Joseph I awards Klimt, his brother and Franz Matsch the Golden Order of Merit for their work in the Burgtheater; Klimt also receives the Emperor's Prize for his work *Auditorium of the Old Burgtheater*.
- 1890 Klimt is commissioned to design a cycle of paintings for the staircase of Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum.
- 1891 Gustav Klimt, Ernst Klimt and Franz Matsch are inducted into the Genossenschaft der bildenden Künstler Wiens – known today as the Künstlerhaus. He meets the modiste Emilie Flöge, who will go on to become his life-long companion.
- 1892 His father and brother Ernst die.
- 1893 Klimt travels to Hungary, where he completes the decoration of the theatre at Esterhazy Schloss in Totis.
- 1894 Klimt and Matsch are commissioned to complete a series of ceiling paintings for the Great Hall of the University of Vienna, known as the *Fakultätsbilder*.
- 1897 Gustav Klimt co-founds the Vienna Secession and is elected to be its first president.

- 1898 The Vienna Secession organizes its first exhibition and the magazine *Ver Sacrum* is founded. Klimt becomes a member of the International Association of Painters, Sculptors and Gravers, and an external member of the Association of Artists at the Munich Secession.
- 1899 Klimt completes *Music* and *Schubert at the Piano*, two paintings in the panelling above the doors at the Dumba Palace in Vienna.
- 1900 The ceiling painting *Philosophy* for the University of Vienna provokes criticism and outrage; nevertheless it wins the gold medal at the World Fair in Paris.
- 1901 *Medicine* – the second of the three ceiling paintings for the University of Vienna – also elicits severe criticism.
- 1902 Klimt finishes his *Beethoven Frieze* in 1901/02 for the exhibition of Max Klinger's *Beethoven Sculpture* in the Vienna Secession building.
- 1903 Eighty of Klimt's paintings are exhibited at the Secession building under the title *Klimt Kollektive*. Klimt travels to Ravenna, whose gold mosaics leave a deep impression on him.
- 1904 Klimt signs an exclusive contract with Galerie Miethke, under the artistic direction of Carl Moll. In the same year he is commissioned by Adolphe Stoclet to design a mosaic frieze for a palace in Brussels.
- 1905 Klimt leaves the Vienna Secession over differences with other members.
- 1906 Klimt is made honorary member of the Royal Bavarian Academy of Arts in Munich.
- 1907 Klimt meets Egon Schiele.
- 1908 The Wiener Kunstschau opens, featuring Klimt's *The Kiss*, among other works.
- 1909 A trip to Paris gives Klimt important new impulses, initiating the end of his so-called Golden Period.
- 1910 Klimt takes part in the IX Venice Biennale.
- 1911 The *Stoclet Frieze*, whose public exhibition in Vienna was forbidden by its patron, is completed in Brussels.
- 1912 Klimt is made president of the Association of Austrian Artists.

- 1916 Together with Egon Schiele, Oskar Kokoschka and Anton Faistauer, Klimt takes part in the exhibition of the Association of Austrian Artists at the Berlin Secession. On May 25th Klimt is named to Saxony's Academy of Fine Arts; in the following year he is made honorary member of Vienna's and Munich's arts academies.
- 1918 On January 11, Klimt suffers a stroke; he dies in Vienna on February 6.

Egon Schiele

- 1890 Egon Schiele is born on June 12 in Tulln (Lower Austria). He is the first and only surviving son of Adolf Eugen Schiele (1850–1905), a senior official at Austrian State Railways, and his wife, Marie Schiele (1862–1935). Schiele's childhood is overshadowed by the illness of his father, who suffers from untreated syphilis. Three of Marie's pregnancies end in stillbirth. A daughter named Elvira died in 1893 at the age of ten. Schiele grows up with an older and a younger sister – Melanie (1886–1974) and Gertrude, known as Gerti (1894–1981).
- 1901 Schiele attends secondary school in Krems. Because of his poor performance his parents bring him back to Tulln in the middle of the school year. There he finishes the year with the help of a private tutor.
- 1902 Short on academic success, he transfers to a secondary school in nearby Klosterneuburg. But his performance in school hardly improves.
- 1904 After Adolf Schiele's illness forces him to retire, the family moves to Klosterneuburg to be with their son. In the summer Adolf, gravely ill, attempts suicide. He dies on New Year's Eve of the same year.
- 1905 After his father's death, the family's financial situation rapidly worsens.
- 1906 Because of his learning difficulties, Schiele's mother withdraws him from school before graduation. He passes the entrance exam for the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. At sixteen, he is the youngest student enrolled. The family resettles in Vienna.
- 1908 Schiele is placed in the class of Christian Griepenkerl, known for his strict adherence to traditional academic painting. Schiele takes part for the first time in a public exhibition. He is increasingly influenced by Klimt, whom he is supposed to have met the year before.

- 1909 Klimt invites Schiele to participate in an international art exhibition. Schiele, dissatisfied with Christian Griepenkerl and traditional painting, forms the Neukunstgruppe, the New Art Group, in protest. Threatened with expulsion, Schiele and many of his friends (including Anton Peschka, Albert Paris Gütersloh, Anton Faistauer, Sebastian Isepp, Franz Wiedegele and Dominik Osen) leave the academy. In December the Neukunstgruppe holds its first public exhibition in the Kunstsalon Pisko.
- 1910 With his particular variety of expressionism, Schiele makes a stylistic and professional breakthrough. He attracts a group of patrons, among them Arthur Roessler, Carl Reininghaus, Oskar Reichel and Heinrich Benesch. Schiele flees to Krumau to escape the rivalries within the Neukunstgruppe and his uncle's attempts to conscript him into military service.
- 1911 Schiele decides to settle in Krumau, accompanied by his lover Wally Neuzil. She would remain his most important model until his marriage. When a nude model is spotted posing in his garden, he is forced to leave Krumau. Arthur Roessler arranges with Galerie Miethke to host Schiele's first solo exhibition and introduces him to the art dealer Hans Goltz in Munich, with whom Schiele develops his first long-term business relationship.
- 1912 Resettled in Neulengbach, Schiele again runs afoul of social norms. After a run-away girl seeks refuge with him and Neuzil, the police arrest him on charges of kidnapping, statutory rape and public indecency. He is acquitted of the first two charges but convicted of the third on the grounds that minors were exposed to depraved materials in his studio. He spends twenty-four days in prison; after his release, he returns to Vienna, where he rents a studio in the 13th municipal district that he keeps for the rest of his life. Schiele participates in a variety of exhibitions – with *Der Blaue Reiter* group in the Galerie Goltz in Munich, with the *Sonderbund* in Cologne, with the *Hagenbund* in Vienna, and at the Museum Folkwang in Hagen. He also wins over two additional patrons: the Vienna innkeeper Franz Hauer and the industrialist August Lederer.
- 1913 Despite his numerous contacts and his growing prominence, Schiele's economic situation is precarious. A solo exhibition at the Galerie Goltz is a flop, and the art dealer ends his collaboration with Schiele in the fall.
- 1914 Schiele's financial misery comes to a head. In December he opens his second solo exhibition in Vienna, at Guido Arnot's gallery. Until this point, the First World War has had little direct effect on Schiele's life.
- 1915 Schiele decides to marry Edith Harms and rejects Neuzil, who he feels is beneath his social standing. The marriage takes place on June 17; three days later he begins basic military training in Prague. Though he continues to make art, his output wanes in the second half of the year.

- 1916 In May Schiele is transferred to a clerk job in a prisoner-of-war camp near Mühling. Schiele uses an empty storage area as a studio. Although opportunities for painting, exhibition and sale have sharply declined during the war, Schiele gains prominence when the left-wing Berlin magazine *Die Aktion* devotes an issue entirely to him. By the end of the year, he is doing everything he can to return to Vienna.
- 1917 Schiele manages to get transferred to Vienna, where he is tasked with creating visual records of retail stores throughout the empire. Despite the constraints of wartime society, Schiele scores a number of professional successes. He strengthens his relationship to Franz Martin Haberditzl, the long-time director of the Austrian State Gallery (today the Belvedere), who acquires three drawings and sits for a portrait. The book dealer Richard Lányi publishes the first portfolio of reproductions of Schiele's works. Schiele collects contributions for a war exhibition that debuts at Vienna's Military History Museum; subsequent showings in the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark. His participation in an exhibition of the Munich Secession reawakens interest from his former dealer Hans Goltz.
- 1918 After the death of Gustav Klimt in February, and with Oskar Kokoschka living in Dresden, Schiele is widely regarded as Austria's leading artist. Coming off the financial success of the Vienna Secession exhibition in March, he rents a larger studio on Wattmangasse in Vienna's 13th municipal district. In the final days of the war, Edith, who is six months pregnant, catches the Spanish flu. She dies on October 28. Schiele, who is also inflected, dies three days later, in the early morning hours of October 31.

Oskar Kokoschka

- 1886 Oskar Kokoschka is born on March 1 in Pöchlarn on the Danube (Lower Austria), the second child of Gustav Josef Kokoschka and Maria Romana (née Loidl).
- 1887 The family settles in Vienna.
- 1896-1904 Kokoschka attends a state *Realschule* in the Vienna district of Währing, where he completes his first drawings and watercolors. He later visits the Kunstgewerbeschule des Österreichischen Museums für Kunst und Gewerbe, a school for architecture, furniture, crafts and modern design.
- 1905-1907 Kokoschka enrolls in the teacher training program in Freehand Drawing in Middle Schools led by Anton von Kenner. In 1906 he enters the painting class of Carl Otto Czeschka; a year later he attends the class of Berthold Löffler. During this time he meets Lilith Lang and receives his first commissions from the Wiener Werkstätte, including the book of fairy tales *Die träumenden Knaben* ("The Dreaming Youths").

- 1908 Kokoschka takes part in the 1908 Wiener Kunstschau. Despite severe criticism, all his works are sold on the first day.
- 1909 His works are shown at the International Art Exhibition in Vienna. On July 3, the drama *Murderer, the Hope of Women* debuts. After leaving the Kunstgewerbeschule, he meets Adolf Loos; with his support he devotes himself almost entirely to painting. He later completes the double portrait *Hans and Erika Tietze*.
- 1910 With Adolf Loos he travels to Les Avants and Leysin, Switzerland, where he receives numerous portrait commissions. In March, he travels to Berlin to assist with Herwarth Walden's magazine *Der Sturm*.
- 1911 In January he returns to Vienna and participates in the exhibition of the artists' association *Hagenbund*. He receives temporary employment as a drawing instructor at a private school for girls.
- 1912 His work is shown at exhibitions in Budapest, Berlin and Cologne. He begins to assist Anton von Kenner in his general nude drawing class at Vienna's Kunstgewerbeschule. In April he meets Alma Mahler.
- 1913 His work is shown in exhibitions in Budapest, Zurich, Munich and Stuttgart.
- 1914/15 After breaking off his relationship with Alma Mahler, he volunteers in the Austrian army, where he suffers serious injuries during deployments in Galicia and Ukraine.
- 1916 He signs a general agreement with the Berlin art dealer Paul Cassirer, providing him with a regular income through 1931 (with occasional interruptions). He works as a war painter on the Isonzo Front.
- 1917 Having recovered in Dresden, he joins the circle of artists and writers surrounding Käthe Richter, Walter Hasenclever and Ivar von Lücken. Three of his stage pieces are performed at the Zurich gallery DADA.
- 1919 After being appointed to the Dresdner Academy, he is made an honorary member of the artists' group Dresdner Sezession. He completes a life-size doll modelled after Alma Mahler.
- 1922 His work is shown at the Venice Biennale.
- 1923–1929 Made professor in 1926, he takes a leave of absence from teaching in Dresden and travels through Europe, North Africa, Egypt, Palestine, Istanbul and Jerusalem.

- 1931–1933 An exhibition of his work is held in Paris. Kokoschka resides for longer periods in Paris and Vienna.
- 1934 After his mother dies, he resettles in Prague and meets Olda Palkovská.
- 1937 The first large solo exhibition of Kokoschka's work takes place in Vienna. Nazis confiscate 417 of his works from German museums and deem him a "degenerate artist".
- 1938 An exhibition of his work is held in New York. He immigrates to England.
- 1940–1942 Olda Palkovská and Kokoschka marry.
- 1947 Kokoschka becomes a British citizen.
- 1953 Kokoschka founds the International Summer Academy in Salzburg. He leads the main course *Schule des Sehens* ("School of Seeing"), and continues to teach the course until 1962. He settles in Villeneuve on Lake Geneva.
- 1958 Retrospectives of his work take place in Vienna, Munich, and the Haag.
- 1971 A retrospective exhibition for his eighty-fifth birthday is organized at the Austrian Gallery Belvedere in Vienna. He publishes his autobiography *My Life*.
- 1975 He regains Austrian citizenship.
- 1980 Kokoschka dies on February 22 in Montreux.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition Title	The Women of Klimt, Schiele and Kokoschka
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