

## PASSION FOR PATTERN



**Target Grade:** Middle and High School; although an Elementary School teacher adapted it using paper doll images for younger students.

### **Learning Objectives:**

Students will study the work of Gustav Klimt in the context of the Vienna Secession Movement and contemporary issues of repatriation of Nazi confiscated art. Students will explore pattern and texture in a mixed media collage painting.

### **Essential Understandings:**

Students will understand the role of pattern and texture in the course of art production and their concept of beauty.

Students will comprehend the Vienna Secession Movement as a part of the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Students will understand the implication of the Nazi confiscation of art in today's world.

### **National Standards:**

- 1.0 Students will perceive and respond to works of Gustav Klimt and use the vocabulary of the visual arts to express their observations.
- 2.0 Students will apply artistic processes and skills using the techniques of mixed media collage to communicate the meaning and intent in mixed media collages, incorporating pattern and texture.
- 3.0 Students will understand the historical contributions and cultural dimensions of the Vienna Secession Movement and the contemporary issues of repatriation of Nazi confiscated art.

4.0 Students will respond to, analyze and make judgments about the work of Gustav Klimt and their own work.

**Vocabulary:**

Pattern, Texture, Vienna Secession Movement Repeat, Repeat DesignArt  
Nouveau Movement Texture, Actual Texture, Implied Texture, Nazi  
Flat Picture Plane, Repatriation, Antiquities,  
Commission, Commissioned

**Materials:**

- large magazine photos of figures or student generated photographs; Opaque White
- Pens Or Correction Fluid



#22-0914 12 ct. Pointed Tip Student Scissors Best Pack



#22-1403 8 g. Washable Glue Stick box



#22-7209 Construction Paper Pencils



#22-1506 Metallic Medium Point Peggable Carton Markers



#22-1501 Glitter Gel Pens



#66-80XX Sargent Art Watercolor Liquid Metals



#24-2499 Acrylic Paints



#22-1565 4ct. Black Fine Tip Markers



#23-5026 25 sheet Watercolor pad

**Time:** Approximately two weeks of 45 minute class periods.

**Introduction and Motivation:**

1. Students will study the work and context of Gustav Klimt and explore pattern and texture in a mixed media collage painting.  
Important: Use only referenced websites and teacher approved images. Klimt's work can be too mature for the classroom so students should not be allowed to research on their own.
2. Research referenced websites to see a variety of work by Gustav Klimt if available.
3. Research Greek, Roman, Japanese, and Egyptian antiquities for repeat patterns and textures.
4. Read the biography of Gustav Klimt using reading prompt if website not available.
5. Discuss the role of Gustav Klimt in the Vienna Secession Movement and in the repatriation of his artwork to the heirs and the value of those artworks in today's market.
6. Discuss the reproductions of Gustav Klimt and how he used pattern and texture in a flat picture plane.

7. Discuss real and actual texture with examples.

**Procedure:**

1. Students draw several examples of patterns.
2. Students draw several examples of textures.
3. Students paint several examples of patterns and textures using a variety of materials.
4. Students write an assessment rubric using Klimt's work as a basis with the help of the teacher.
5. Students select desired figure from magazine pages. (Teacher should tear out a selection of pages ahead of time from which students may select—it saves time.)
6. Students carefully cut out head and all flesh areas of figure.
7. Using the left over picture, students trace over the outline edges of the figure on drawing or watercolor paper.



8. Students glue flesh on background paper using light outlines as guides.
9. Students lightly sketch outline of the clothing, making changes to enhance the flat quality of the overall design. Sketch at least three background divisions.
10. Students begin applying chosen media to create patterns, working from the back to the front of the design.
11. Students fill in negative space with metallic paint or markers. Metallic paint may also be splattered or added as texture.



12. Students write a creative piece about the person in the painting. It could be a biography, a poem, a story. Why was the painting commissioned?

**Assessment and/or Evaluation:**

Students create a title for their artwork and write an artist's statement.

Students check their work against the rubric.

Students pair/share to discuss their work and self-evaluate.

The work is scored by the teacher using the assessment rubric created at the beginning of the artwork.

**Extensions:**

Students may wish to work from a posed photograph of their own taking.

Students may use black and white photographs by doing the patterns and textures using only black white, different grays, and silver.

**Resources:**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/gustavklimt>

<http://www.artchive.com/gustavklimt>

<http://www.iklimt.com>

<http://www.ibiblio.org>

<http://www.expo-klimt.com/>

Stephan Koja. *Gustav Klimt: A Painted Fairy Tale*. Prestel Verlag. New York. 2007

Gustav Klimt, *The Kiss*

*Portrait of Adele Block-Bauer I*

*Portrait of Emilie Flöge*

Venola, Penelope. School Arts Magazine "Passion for Pattern." January 2012

Pg. 19-21.

See reading below.

GUSTAVE KLIMT  
FIVE PAINTINGS FROM THE COLLECTION OF FERDINAND AND ADELE  
BLOCH-BAUER

Excerpt from: <http://collectionsonline.lacma.org/art/ExhibPast2006.aspx>

Gustav Klimt was born in 1862 into an artistic Viennese family and received his education at Vienna's School of Fine Arts. He began his career with a commission to decorate the ceiling of the grand staircase at the Burg Theater, among the most prominent

Viennese buildings and the most important venue for high society. His murals for the theater combined a variety of historical references, including naturalistic portraits of the city's most prominent citizens, and brought him awards and great prominence. A series of allegorical paintings he subsequently created for the University of Vienna, however—radical treatment of themes such as “Philosophy,” “Jurisprudence,” and “Medicine”—provoked scorn and ridicule.

Klimt turned his energies to the Vienna Secession, of which he had been a founding member. He soon became known as the foremost portraitist of Vienna's new upper class, primarily its female members. He depicted the wives and daughters of these wealthy families as splendid icons enfolded in luxuriant patterns. This development reached spectacular intensity in the handful of rare paintings in his “gold style.” These portraits were so labor-intensive that he averaged only one per year after 1900. Each portrait required many sketches (several hundred in the case of *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I* on which he worked from 1904-1907).

In contrast to these elegant renderings of the socially prominent, he also painted landscapes devoid of any human presence, which evoked the mystery and richness of nature.

Klimt died of a stroke in Vienna in 1918, leaving numerous paintings unfinished.

Klimt's most memorable works included his dazzling portraits of Vienna's leading society ladies, many of whom were Jewish. One of the best known of these is his magnificent 1907 painting, *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I*, portraying the wife of the industrialist Ferdinand Bloch-Bauer (the aunt of Maria Altmann)

Foremost among this rare “gold style” works, the painting captures its elegant and intelligent subject as the ideal of feminine beauty. The figure dissolves into sumptuous patterning reminiscent of the Byzantine mosaics at Ravenna, Italy, portraying the Empress Theodora, which Klimt had visited in 1903. Klimt's fine craftsmanship in this work is evident in his varied uses of real gold, as a diffuse background luster reminiscent of Japanese lacquer, as the fabric of a flowing gown, and as a pattern punctuated with Egyptian god's-eye motifs. In contrast with this rich decorative treatment, Adele's face stands out as an extraordinarily modern psychological portrayal, while her hands are arranged gracefully to conceal a deformed finger. Self-assured yet introspective, she comports herself as a woman of privilege devoted to the world of the intellect. Transcending the customary role of women at the time, Adele hosted a salon, a regular social gathering of artists, writers, musicians, and progressive politicians who discussed the issues of the day.

Adele Bloch-Bauer was the only woman whose portrait was painted twice by Klimt. In *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer II*. The artist abandoned the iconic ambience and gold decoration of the first portrait in favor of a more modern approach to color. The vivid

colors are applied spontaneously, yet with a strong compositional sense. An Asian motif can be seen in the upper background.

Beginning in 1900 Klimt spent most summers on Lake Atter in the Austrian Alps where he painted directly from nature. His delicate, mostly square-format canvases captured his observations of the tranquil countryside, untouched by any human presence. In these paradoxically introspective compositions, Klimt captured the blossoming beauty of gardens, flowers, and fruit trees in mosaic patterning of color and light. Their diffuse “impressionist” quality conveys a sense of timeless calm. The dense brushstrokes create curtains of color, as in *Apple Tree I*, encouraging the viewer to become lost in the atmosphere of the painting.

Klimt painted his landscapes using telescopes and opera glasses, and his elimination of distance is evident in works such as *Beech Woods* and *Apple Tree I*. These are landscapes entirely lacking in sky, clouds, or stars, with no reference to time or human beings. In *Houses in Unterach on Lake Atter*, Klimt included lodges along the shoreline set against the surface of the water, with its reflections and refractions of light and color.

Adele and Ferdinand Bloch-Bauer—the aunt and uncle of Maria Altmann—lived in an urban Viennese palace filled with cultural treasures, exquisite furniture, a world renowned porcelain collection, and paintings by Gustav Klimt as well as other artists. In 1923 Adele drafted her will, in which she stated that her husband would be her heir, but that after Ferdinand’s death, the Klimt paintings would go to the Austrian Gallery. Adele died of meningitis in 1925 at the age of 43 and at that time all of the artworks remained in the Viennese home.

When Germany annexed Austria in March 1938, Ferdinand Bloch-Bauer, a Jew, fled Austria without the Klimt painting. The new Nazi government saddled him with a punitive tax bill and engaged a Nazi trustee, Dr. Erich Furer, to sell Ferdinand’s property. Three of the Klimt painting went to the Austrian Gallery and the others were sold elsewhere. After the war such transactions were deemed void and the artworks were subject to restitution proceedings.

Ferdinand Bloch-Bauer spent most of the war in Switzerland and died in November 1945. When writing his last will he knew that many Austrians had supported Hitler and did not want the Klimt paintings to go to the Austrian Gallery. He therefore left the property to his niece, Maria Altmann, and two of her siblings.

Maria Altmann and the other heirs immigrated to North America. While they managed to export many works from eh Bloch-Bauer collection, the Klimt paintings remained in Vienna. Austrian authorities ruled that the paintings belonged to the Austrian Gallery, basing their decision on Adele Bloch-Bauer’s 1923 will.

Until the late 1990s the Bloch-Bauer heirs believed that there was little that they could do to recover the lost patrimony. In 1998 Austria passed a law that opened archives and

facilitated restitution claims and Maria Altmann learned more about the fate of the Bloch-Bauer Klimts. She engaged an attorney, E. Randol Schoenberg (himself from a prominent Viennese Jewish family), to recover the paintings. The case went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in June 2004 that the heirs could sue the state of Austria in a U.S. court. Not wanting a lengthy legal process with appeals, Schoenberg, representing the 99-year-old Maria Altmann, entered into legally binding arbitration with the Austrian authorities.

In January 2006 an Austrian panel issued its verdict of the six painting in question, five belonged to the heirs. A decision about the remaining painting would come at a later date. Maria Altmann and the heirs could reclaim a part of their family's history. Just as life has taken her from Vienna to Los Angeles, so too have the paintings followed this path.

The *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I* was sold for US\$135 million to Ronald Lauder for his Neue Galerie in New York City in June 2006, which made it at that time the most expensive painting for about 4 months. [It has been on display at the gallery since July 2006.

In November 2006, Christie's auction house sold *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer II* at auction for almost \$88 million, the fourth-highest priced piece of art at auction at the time. *Beech Woods* was sold for \$40 million, *Apple Tree I* for over \$33 million, and *Houses in Unterac on Lake Atter* for more than \$31 million.

The story of these Klimt paintings...reads like a sweeping, romantic epic of loss and redemption.