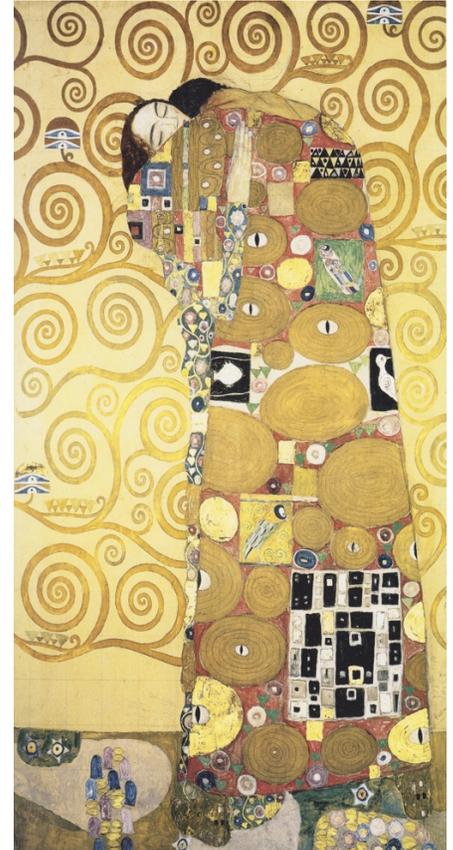


# Gustav Klimt “The Fulfillment”

By: Caison Gray (Hum 104, Bory)

*Bibliography:*

Gustav Klimt was born in Austria on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1862. The Klimt family already had artistic roots with Gustav’s mother being a music performer and his father being a gold engraver. Therefore, when Gustav began displaying his artistic abilities early on in his life. Klimt grew up in poverty but was able to attend the Vienna Kunstgewerbeschule, a school for applied arts and crafts. Vienna Kunstgewerbeschule, which is now the University of Applied Arts Vienna, is where Klimt studied architectural painting from 1876 until 1883. Klimt and his two artistic brothers soon started their own, small art company called the “Company of Artists.” Their company began in 1877 and received numerous commissions for their artistic abilities. However, in 1880 Klimt began his own art company on his own. Within his own art company, Klimt created over two-hundred paintings and over two-thousand drawings. Also, Klimt founded the Secession in 1897 to rebel against the traditionalism and constrictions of the artistic community supported by the wealthy. The rebellion grew and eventually fourteen other similar artists banded together to display their abstract work and combat censorship. Gustav Klimt died on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 1918 after suffering from a stroke and battling the influenza epidemic occurring around that time period.



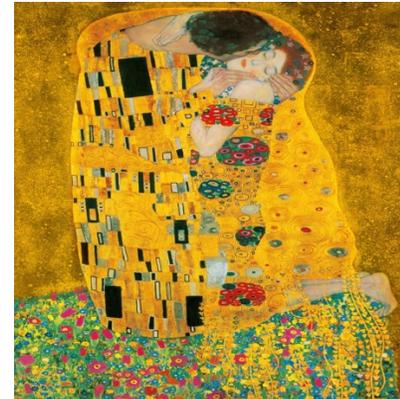
*“The Tree of Life, Expectation, and Fulfillment”:*

During the year of 1904, Klimt spent time collaborating with other artists working on the Palais Stoclet as a testament to Art Nouveau. Within this time period, Gustav Klimt created “The Fulfillment” in 1905 for the wealthy Belgian industrialist of the Palais Stoclet. Klimt also created a series of paintings along with “The Dancer” and “The Tree of Life.” Klimt demonstrated human love and the divine through the gold background and the tediously decorated garments. The combination of squares and circles on the male garment represents the difficulty of finding a balance between masculinity and femininity to both coexist in a relationship. The concept of abstraction is displayed without explicitly depicting so, through the themes of love and the sensuality above earthly life.

*Critical Reception:*

The 1900 “Philosophy,” “Medicine,” and “Jurisprudence,” which were three ceiling paintings that Klimt painted for the University of Vienna, were labeled as “painted lunacy,” and “immoral.” After this critical response to his paintings, Klimt withdrew the paintings himself, returned the money he was paid, and never took another public commission. On his 1903 trip to Ravenna, Italy, Klimt was artistically inspired by the Byzantine mosaics and artwork, which later influenced him into using vibrant colors and gold. Klimt’s “Danae” painting of 1907 became one of his first pieces to use this newfound inspiration but was yet again criticized. However, Gustav Klimt found his success with his 1908 creation “The Kiss.” “The Kiss” painting was inevitably bought by the Austrian government, selling for the largest amount of money paid for an artistic work. Gustav Klimt’s painting of “The Kiss” was displayed to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Emperor Francis Joseph I’s reign and the artistic achievements occurring in Viennese society.

The art of Gustav Klimt used color and pattern, which was heavily influenced by the art of ancient Egypt, Byzantium, and Japan. Klimt was known for painting women engulfed in the color gold and numerous flowers. Klimt focused on creating a world within is art that emphasizes beauty as the dominant force.



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