









Naya Tadavarthi

Assignment W6 – Growth: Out of Thin Air

When considering collage material for this assignment, I brainstormed artistic movements that I liked. I remembered the artists I learned more about or even discovered for the first time while living in Vienna last year. Moreover, I began to think about how artistic movements themselves are a sort of collage, as many creators bring their own ideas and energy together. Each artist is distinct but also forms part of a whole, a characteristic also embodied by the Vienna Secession (c. 1897-1919).

To find figures to collage, I searched for Secession artists and their contemporaries in the online collections of the Leopoldmuseum and the Belvedere Museum. I saved works from figures such as Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, Oskar Kokoschka, Anton Kolig, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, and Richard Gerstl, among others. For the collage part of this assignment, I resized these images in Photoshop and printed them in color. Then I cut, taped, and glued body parts from different sketches, figure drawings, and paintings together. For the tracing part of this assignment, I scanned these collages and imported them into Photoshop, where I used the techniques we learned in class on Tuesday to create silhouettes. I realized that the calves and forearms I added to all my figures during the collage process resembled boots and gloves, which evoked a cabaret aesthetic. Since cabaret-style performance was also a part of the Secession and broader avant-garde circles in Vienna in the early twentieth century, I decided that this visual choice made thematic sense. So, for the painting part of this assignment, I added hats, boots, and leotards to my figures and transferred the images to watercolor paper. Inspired by the bold black outlines of Secession artists like Schiele, I then traced these figures in ink. However, my favorite stylistic aspect of Secession painters, such as Schiele, Klimt, and Kolig, is the shimmery, multicolored quality of the skin in their figures (see images below). When I saw some of these

paintings in museums, I was struck by their beauty and how poorly this style translated into a digital medium. Even the highest quality photographs could not fully capture the dynamism with which the painted colors interacted on the canvas. I wanted to recreate this effect, and although these artists used oil paint, I approximated this style with watercolor pencils. Then, I painted the garments in such bold colors as I saw in my visual research and collage material.

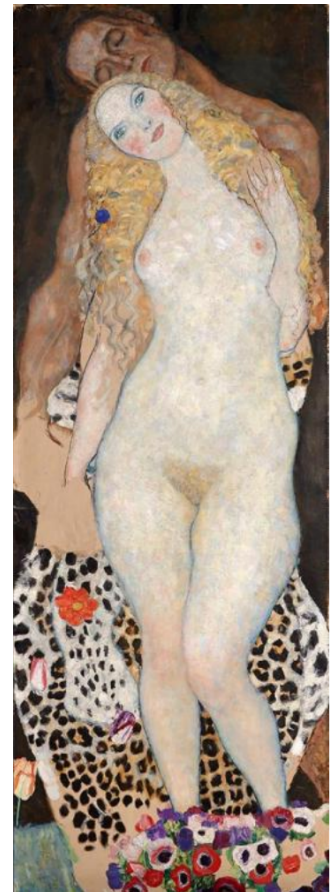
If I were to repeat this assignment, I would print out even more images from which to collage. Although I had collected twenty paintings, I found myself running low on arms and legs by the end of my collage process, especially since some of my source material consisted of head and torso studies with the ends of limbs cut off. However, I think that this limitation of collage material also had a positive effect, in that it forced me to make more unconventional and unexpected choices with my figures.



Anton Kolig, *Seated Youth (In the Morning)*, oil on canvas, 1919. Leopoldmuseum.



Egon Schiele, *Self Portrait with Chinese Lantern Plant*, oil on canvas, 1912. Leopoldmuseum.



Gustav Klimt, *Adam and Eve*, oil on canvas, 1916-1918. Belvedere Museum.