



Klimt

Gilles Néret

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Gold, flowers, and female beauty: The work of the decadent Austrian symbolist

The unfading popularity of **Gustav Klimt (1862–1918)** attests not only to the particular appeal of his luxuriant painting but also to the universal themes with which he worked: **love, feminine beauty, aging, and death.**

The son of a goldsmith, Klimt created surfaces of ornate and jewel-like luminosity which show influence of both Egyptian and Japanese art. Through paintings, murals, and friezes, his work is defined by **radiant color, fluid lines, floral elements, and mosaic-like patterning.**

With a number of subjects dealing with sensuality and desire as well as anxiety and despair, all this irridescence is also charged with feeling. Klimt's numerous images of women, characterized by **curvaceous forms, tender flesh, red lips and flushed cheeks,** were particularly charged with passion, at a time when such frank eroticism was still taboo in Viennese upper-middle class society.

This book presents a selection of Klimt's work, introducing his pictorial world of decoration and desire, as well as his influence on artists to come.

About the Series:

Each book in TASCHEN's Basic Art series features:

- a detailed chronological summary of the life and oeuvre of the artist, covering his or her cultural and historical importance
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