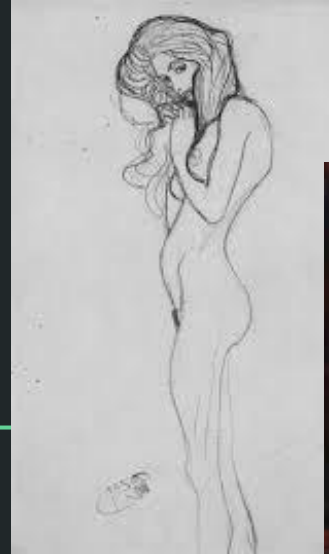


Comparative Study

Gabrielle Matiszik



My comparative study focuses on analyzing Gustav Klimt, and local artist Jake Nordstrum. I focus on the artistic stylistic choices such as form, color, and emotional connection as well as the cultural inspiration behind both of the artists in Gustav Klimt's *Medicine*, Study for one of the Gorgons from 'The Beethoven Frieze, and Nordstrum's *Make His Paths Straight*.

Evaluation of Cultural Significance of Gustav Klimt

Gustav's ultimate purpose was to create *gesamtkunstwerk*, or a "total work of art." This could also be seen as the use of decoration for fulfilling art. Klimt also worked with Wiener Werkstätte. The goal of this studio was to improve the level of quality and performance of everyday objects. Gustav was one of the primary influences of Art Nouveau period. His work often reflected the line between natural and artificial, fine and decorative art.



Medicine by Gustav Klimt

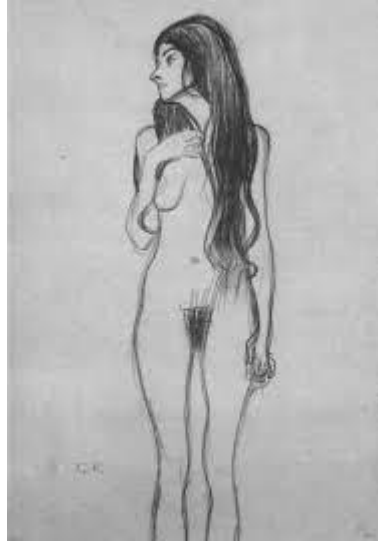
Gustav Klimt was an Austrian painter who is most known for his paintings from the Symbolism and Art Nouveau periods. He moved away from realism and historical subject material all together as he moved to attempting to discover the more decorative possibilities of art. One perspective of Gustav's art was that it was a transition mechanism between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This was around the time of the inventions of life altering technologies, and Klimt's work often reflected that delicate balance of what is known and remains unknown. It was the beginning of a new era.



Study for one of the Gorgons from 'The Beethoven Frieze' by Gustav Klimt.

Evaluation of Cultural Significance of Gustav Klimt

Gustav frequently used themes that were looked down upon by the highly influential Catholic church. The church did not approve of Gustav's works that dealt with topics such as death and sex, which was a large portion of the topics that Gustav enjoyed displaying in his pieces. At times, Gustav received charges of obscenity and criticism for his approaches to symbolism and use of erotic elements. "The relaxation which would do me the world of good, does not exist for me."~ Gustav Klimt



Study for one of the Gorgons from 'The Beethoven Frieze' and *Medicine* by Gustav Klimt.

His own personal inspirations came from ethereal atmospheres and artists such as Aubrey Beardsley. Gustav also used some components and techniques from the Impressionist movement as well as motifs from Greek, Egyptian, and Byzantine art. As popular of an artist as Gustav is today, he received a significant amount of criticism and condemnation for his work in the early twentieth century.



Medicine by Gustav Klimt

Interpretation of Function and Purpose:

Annotation of *Medicine* by Gustav Klimt

The general idea of this piece was that art is powerless in the act of aiding the sick or helping cures be found for illnesses. This was a powerful statement seeing that Vienna was the world's leading city of medical discovery.

Nude figures were seen as grotesque and unsightly, especially that of a woman and in a prestigious place such as a university.

The original reason that Klimt was employed by the university was to display the successes of the university. As Klimt grew in popularity, he began to care less about his employer and more about his message.



Images such as skeletons, prominent bones, and naked women represent the continuation of death, sex, pain and suffering despite medical advances that humans have discovered and implemented.

- The world is constantly suffering, because of sin.

The main figure is an artistic interpretation of Asclepius, (the Greek god of medicine.) Many people found the piece to be sacrilegious due to its association with other religions, and believed it was Klimt disowning the one God of the Roman Catholic Church.

- People wanted the piece removed for this reason

Medicine by Gustav Klimt

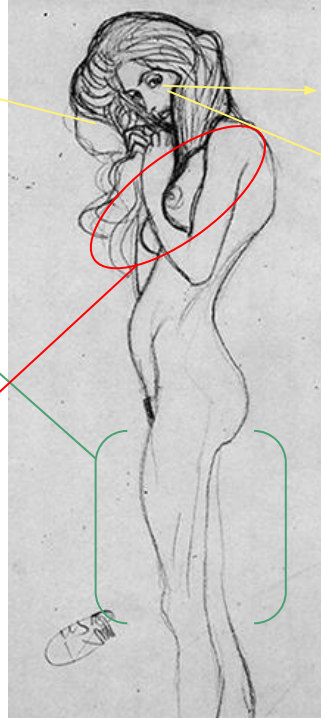
Interpretation of Function and Purpose #1

Annotation of Study for one of the Gorgons from 'The Beethoven Frieze' by Gustav Klimt.

Strong, female character. While she is shying away from the central viewpoint, she is still powerful.

- Full disclosure of the human figure
- Slight disfiguration of proportions, but realistic
- Contemplation of the woman as opposed to the man

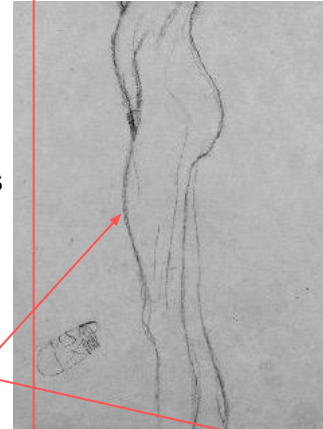
Full nude figures were uncommon, specifically with women and the showcase of imperfections. This was not a common expression of sexuality, specifically in women who were supposed to be viewed as pure and non-sexual beings.



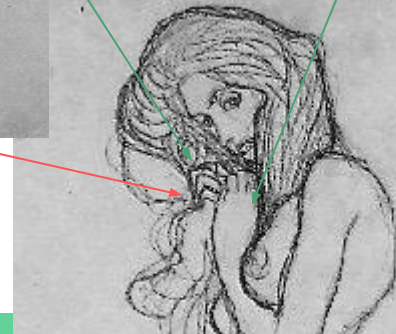
These themes of women transferred over into ideas of love, sex, death, and the mystery of the unknown. Gustav's paintings often crossed borders between what was classified as "safe" art.

- Gustav was known for pushing these boundaries with mixed results for his work.

The legs are strong and straight. This shows strength and power despite the hiding of the face and chest



Close up of the face and hair, the arms are drawn in as a sort of protection or barrier that is being formed, or concealed



Study for one of the Gorgons from 'The Beethoven Frieze' by Gustav Klimt.

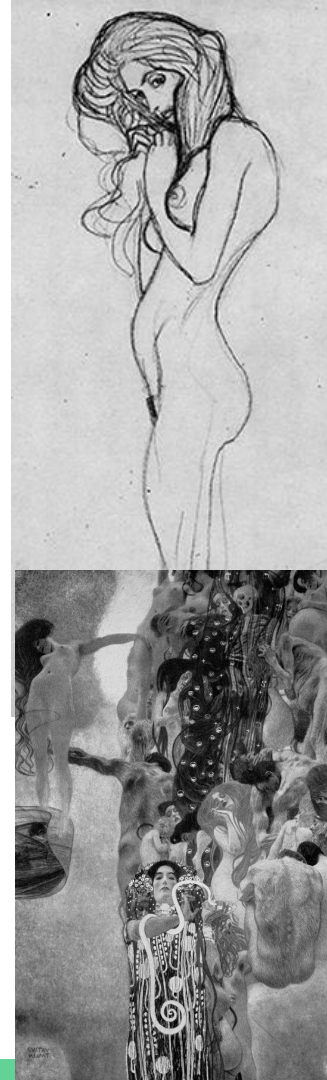
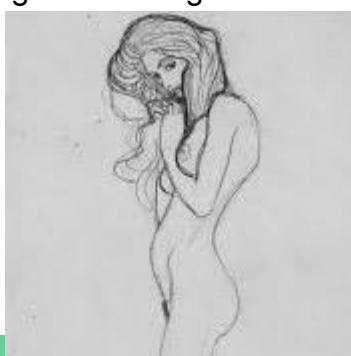
Analysis of Formal Qualities of Gustav Klimt

Klimt liked to explore themes and ideas that were a bit before his time. His exploration of sexuality of women as well as the harsh reality of life without miracles.

Gustav chooses to put the human figure on full display which is a leap for the arts especially when it deals with the figure of a woman. With the strong presence of women in a sexual fashion, it forced many people to observe what they had simply been choosing to ignore, and that was that women were also human with those desires and those features.

This can be seen in *Medicine*, specifically with the strong female presence as opposed to male, but also the characterization of this woman as a goddess, despite the sad reality of medical advancements. This piece also explores some of Gustav's beliefs on religion and the questioning ideas that this piece provokes.

Study for one of the Gorgons from 'The Beethoven Frieze' by Gustav Klimt also explores some of these ideas of women as well as taking a stance against society and the gender norms in art.



Evaluation of Cultural Significance of Jake Nordstrum

Jake Nordstrum is an up-and-coming artist that became established in Brown Deer, Wisconsin. Nordstrum has a bachelor's degree of arts from the University of Wisconsin in both drawing and painting. His main focus in art is abstraction. Two of his largest sources of inspiration are Jackson Pollock and Pablo Picasso. Nordstrum attempts to follow suit of Picasso's understanding of art in that powerful art is conveyed through emotion rather than the supercilious surface level of beauty.



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*Make His Paths
Straight* by Jake
Nordstrom

Also, incorporating Picasso, Nordstrum follows suit with the importance in the instruments that were utilized during the creation of the piece. There is little planning or forethought that goes into Nordstrum's paintings. He believes that the beauty lies within the creation of the art piece rather than the piece itself. In his mind, art is not about a subject matter rather the feeling that is being conveyed in the process of creating art. Most of Nordstrum's themes have to do with Christianity and the juxtaposition of abstract art

Interpretation of Function and Purpose:

Annotation of *Make His Paths Straight* by Jake Nordstrom

Deep reds, blacks/greys and the occasional areas of blue and yellow. Provides a mood of anger or seriousness. There is also a sinister tone, but that's combated by the blue and yellow.

There's the irony in the title instructing to keep his paths "straight" while the main focus of the piece centers around curved lines.

- Could be a metaphor for the followers of Christ seeing that Nordstrom is highly influenced by Christianity.
- Popular topic within the Bible to discuss the persecution that followers of Christ will face throughout their lives.



Make His Paths Straight by Jake Nordstrom

This could be defined as geometric abstraction, with the presence of blended rectangular shapes in the background while the forefront of the piece is dominated by the curving arcs.

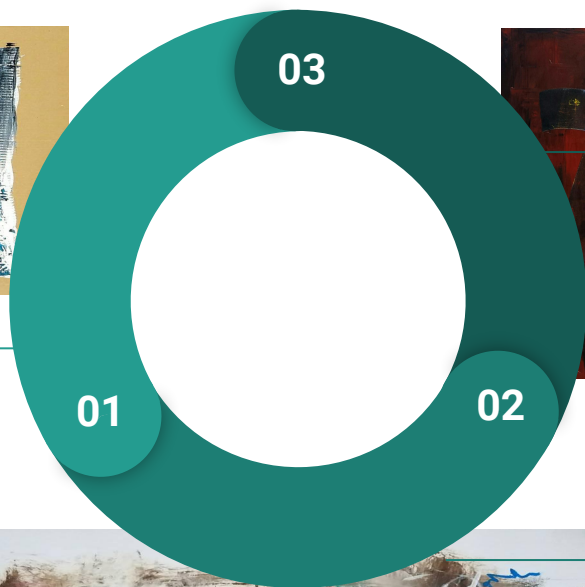
- The arcs are more difficult to determine against the red black background. The red could be used as symbolism for hell with the curves the "path to righteousness."
- The curves are also melded together within the background giving the illusion that there is no straight and narrow, rather continuous turmoil with no end in sight, resulting in a disheartening piece that brings no comfort.

There are also significant drop offs of the designated "path." This symbolizes how many people who believe have moments of doubt or questioning in religion, or the acts of a higher being.

Analysis of Formal Qualities of Jake Nordstrum



Nordstrum's pieces reflect the religious themes in which they are based. For example, Nordstrum often includes pieces of Bible verses in his titles, and demonstrates the strong religious connections which he integrates from his life into his pieces through form, color, and movement.



In Nordstrum's piece, *Make His Paths Straight*, he utilizes irony. All the forms in the piece have curve to them which indicate the complexity of the given situation seeing as none of the paths are physically straight. Nordstrum incorporates the use of light and shadow in his work as he uses a close color palette with similar colors in darker various hues.



Despite the lack of formal figure, the cohesive unity of the piece is still vital to the appearance. The composition is diverse in order to reflect upon the various situations in which they are reflecting upon. Composition is key in order to achieve balance within *Make His Paths Straight*.

Comparing and Contrasting Gustav Klimt and Jake Nordstrum

Nordstrum believes in the complete lack of form and shape in his work. He strives toward complete abstraction to direct attention to the emotion of his work.

Nordstrum utilizes a smaller color palette. There are limited highlighted sections, but also deep hues specifically reds, purples, and blues.



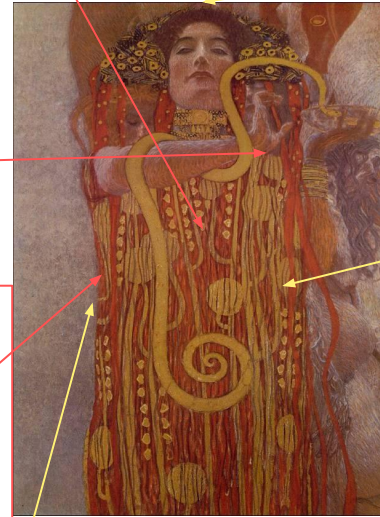
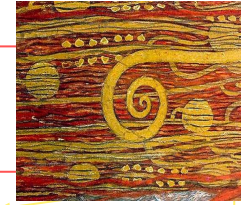
Make His Paths Straight by Jake Nordstrom

The composition of the piece reflects upon the emotions that were felt during the process of the production of the piece. Movement is key to emotion.

There is a strong use of geometric form in both Nordstrum and Klimt's work through background and pattern.

Strong religious symbolism through imagery and theme.

Dedication to aesthetics and movement throughout the pieces.



Medicine by Gustav Klimt

Klimt focussed on themes of romance, sex, and death. He often based his works off of controversial topics in order to spark interest from the public.

Klimt leaned towards women figures in his work. They were often objectified to exemplify the stigmatism of women as sexual beings.

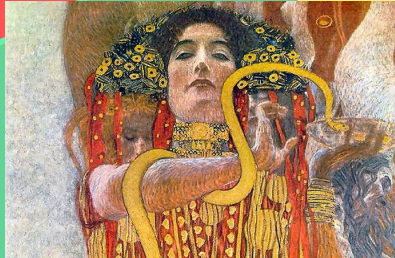
Klimt chose to incorporate multitudes of patterns and colors in his pieces, incorporating warm and cool hues alike in a singular work



Comparing Artistic Style Choices

Gustav Klimt

- Color scheme is vast
 - Colors stray from set color schemes
- Limited similarities in background geometry
 - Borders on surrealism with shapes becoming figures
- Background shapes and figures do not overpower the forefront subjects



Jake Nordstrum

- Uses geometric shapes to formulate complete abstraction
 - No recognizable forms
- Mixture of harsh and smooth blending
 - Various textures: soft and hard
- Emphasis on the importance of light and shadow to use movement



Comparing artistic Style choices

Gustav Klimt

- Gustav Klimt liked to use elongated figures. Similar to that of his protege Egon Schiele, Gustav Klimt exaggerated the length of fingers, facial features, and the height of the figure. The use of these distortions make the figures appear to look ghostly or even god like. Gustav drew inspiration from the traditional art renaissance with the incorporation of modern social issues surrounding women, sex, death, and the questioning of religion. Gustav incorporates the lack of a designated pattern.

Klimt and Nordstrum

- In both Nordstrum's *Make His Paths Straight* and Gustav's *Medicine*, there is a focus point on religion. Nordstrum's is in favor of a strong religious influence suggesting the struggles that many overcome in order to find the path of god while Gustav critiques religion, specifically within medical advancements even going to suggest god as a woman .

Jake Nordstrum

- Jake Nordstrum uses complete abstraction and strays from any distinguishable shapes or features within his pieces. The blending is harsh and often quite textures, unlike that of Gustav Klimt. While most of his pieces remain in shadow, Nordstrum focuses on the importance of light and shadow through mellow contrast within his pieces. For example, in *Make His Paths Straight*, there is only a single source of light that can be seen to highlight the supposed "path."

Comparing Use of Emotion



Study for one of the Gorgons from 'The Beethoven Frieze' by Gustav Klimt.

Gustav dedicated much of his work to deeper complex meanings behind simplistic figures

Both artists question the social norms in which the artists have found themselves in. Despite the different time periods, both Klimt and Nordstrum pushed the boundaries of what was seen as acceptable.

Backlash against possible religious stereotypes. The work raises mixed questions about faith and higher beings.



Make His Paths Straight by Jake Nordstrom

Constant conflict within the piece. There appears to be no resolution to the paths that are laid out resulting in a constant state of confusion and feeling as if you are trapped.

Dramatic; sense of build up. Gustav uses religious themes with floating human forms to express the rise and fall of man as seen within the skulls. Feelings of uncertainty are present for the individuals in the work as well as graphic nudity resembling purity, or heaven.



Medicine by Gustav Klimt

Both Gustav Klimt and Jake Nordstrum incorporate elements of life and death. They reflect upon the human condition and the constant limbo.

Focus point of the piece is the womanly figure in front. The juxtaposition suggests power, and leadership through the stance and outstretched arm

Comparing Composition

Despite the ability for Gustav Klimt's ability to create a cohesive piece, the center of focus is not always centered in the work. There are multiple areas of focus that allow the piece to be engaging to the eye.

With the various areas of focus comes different areas of meaning and significance. The various components give way to the ability of multiple interpretations of the specified area within the holistic work.



3.)
Medicine by Gustav Klimt

Both pieces have multiple components and throughout the work, but the piece still reflects the unity and the ability to be one cohesive work through the composition.

Both works by Gustav and Nordstrom reflect an importance to detail and shading. Small intricate details can be seen through the use of light and color in patterns as well as organic forms.

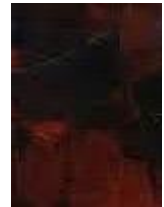


Light is brought to the center of the piece, and this is where your eyes are brought to. This is the location of the crossroads and where the paths are split off into a multitude of directions that spread throughout the entire work.



Make His Paths Straight by Jake Nordstrom

The piece travels through the light. For example, the eyes follow the geometric shape in the form of a path. This path leads to the center while the corners lurk more in the shadows. The dark bleeds into the shapes in the forefront.



Comparing Gustav to Gustav

Medicine has an extreme amount of value with the numerous human forms compiled into the singular work. This value exemplifies the human form.



Medicine by Gustav Klimt

Medicine consists of various textures and colors, including deep crimson reds, dark hues, and bright golds that showcase throughout the whole piece.

Both of the pieces by Gustav Klimt incorporate a multitude of organic shapes. Geometric structures are limited, and this in turn, exemplifies the features of the human structure within each of the compositions.



Study for one of the Gorgons from 'The Beethoven Frieze' by Gustav Klimt.

This work, on the other hand, lacks value due to the simplicity of the piece, consisting of one basic outline with limited detailing.

The color is limited to the background, which limits the context in which this piece can be given due to the limited contrast within.

Connections to Personal Art



One of the main umbrella ideas that connects my two pieces is identity. Though both of the pieces follow suit of self representation, they follow different art movements to convey similar ideas in order to reach a larger audience spectrum.



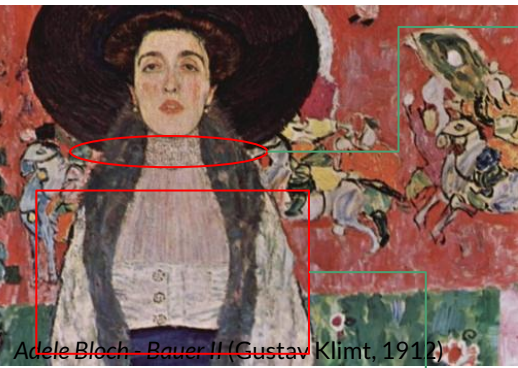
Progression by Gabrielle Matiszik



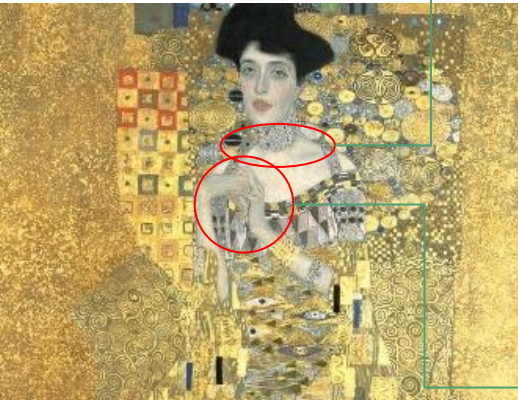
I have Made one too many Turns by Gabrielle Matiszik

Both of the pieces use a similar color scheme and brush strokes. The technique that I used in both of my pieces mimic various textures and shapes though the outcomes are severely different. There is a strong sense of emotion that was used to create both of the works and can be seen through the deep red hues and blending in the bruises and blood.

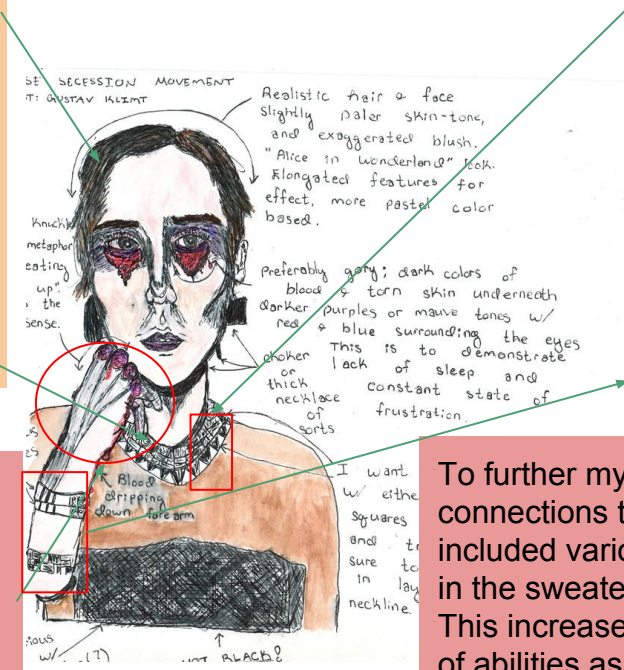
Brushstrokes and Technique (Klimt vs personal)



Klimt puts an extreme focus on small details. For example, many of his clothed figures wear elaborate outfits or extensive jewelry such as bangles. The cheeks are often flushed and the hair is put up in some fashion.



Hands are another component Klimt likes to use in pieces such as *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I*. The placement of the hands help convey an emotion or feeling such as concealed or protective.

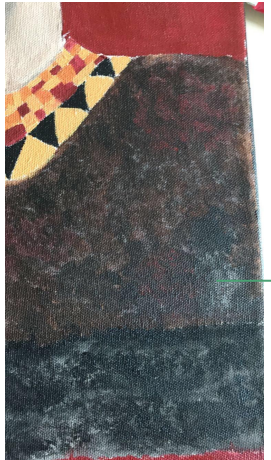


I created a jeweled collar that used geometric forms and patterns similar to that of the background in several of Klimt's pieces. The hair is also pulled back with a bow, and bangles adorn the arm with more geometric shapes and jewels.

To further my connections to Klimt, I included various textures in the sweater and hair. This increased my range of abilities as I worked to a semi-realistic portrait; similar to that of many Gustav Klimt portraits.

Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I (Gustav Klimt, 1907)

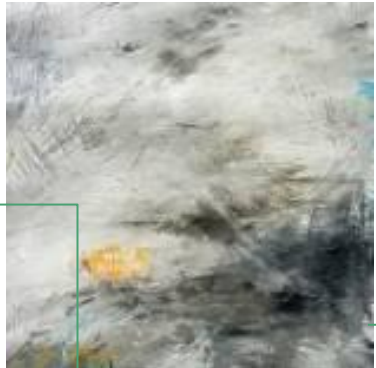
Brushstrokes and Technique (Nordstrom vs personal)



Progression by Gabrielle Matiszik

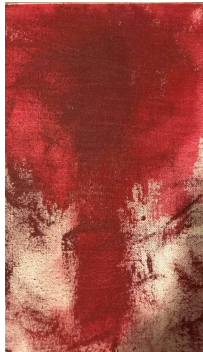
In Jake Nordstrom's *Make His Paths Straight*, there is a mixture of brush strokes and blending that were used. There are harsher areas such as the large geometric shapes and the off-center of the piece, while in the background the blending is smoother and less rigid. To mimic this, I provided different textures in my own piece. For example, I created a stark contrast between the texture of the sweater than the texture of the skin and hair. This was to promote realism with

surrealistic elements



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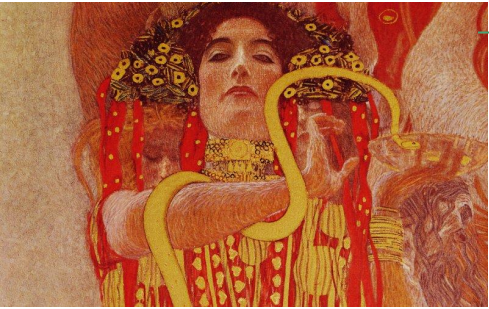
Make His Paths Straight by Jake Nordstrom



I have Made one too many Turns by Gabrielle Matiszik

The second piece that I created was a complete abstraction piece. I attempted to use various blending techniques to mimic both Gustav Klimt's and Jake Nordstrom's stylistic choices in their work. This piece was harsher than my first piece, and I strayed from geometric abstraction to soften the outlines.

Use of Color (Nordstrum vs Klimt vs personal)

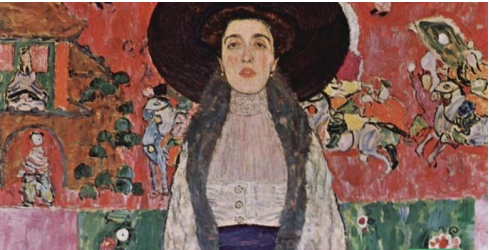


Medicine by Gustav Klimt

I practiced smooth blending techniques in the hand and bruising. The painting borders on realistic, but remains in that limbo of distortion



Make His Paths Straight by Jake Nordstrum



Adele Bloch - Bauer II (Gustav Klimt, 1912)

I utilized the geometric background of many Klimt pieces. The colors are varied, and the background does not align with the subjects, yet it does not stray from unity and remains one cohesive piece

I attempted to use a similar color scheme in my own piece to that of Jake Nordstrum's. I relied on dark maroons and violets in the bruising and background geometric forms.



Progression by Gabrielle Matisz



Reflection



I have Made one too many Turns by Gabrielle Matiszik



Progression by Gabrielle Matiszik



Adele Bloch - Bauer II (Gustav Klimt, 1912)



Make His Paths Straight by Jake Nordstrum

Overall, I am very pleased with the work that came as a result of my comparative study. I was able to dive into topics like identity through representation in my own immediate form, as well as branching off into a new form of abstraction. The pieces I created work together through color scheme and umbrella topics that I have carried with me through my entire senior IB Portfolio. I wanted to explore topics of religion, sexuality, and gender all of which together compile what identity is. Self expression can be viewed through several platforms, and that is what I wanted to be able to convey through the use of Jake Nordstrum in addition to a traditional artist such as Gustav Klimt.