

**ART LUST:  
DESIRE AND THE ART OF PICASSO AND KLIMT**

Let me begin by saying what a privilege it is to participate in this year's IFPE conference exploring "The Reach of The Mind". It is my hope that my presentation will enrich and expand on the manner in which you approach and experience works of art. In particular, my paper will focus on works of erotic art, a topic very near and dear to my heart, along with other parts of my anatomy. I am struck by what seems to be a hunger within the psychoanalytic community for greater degrees of authenticity and self-revelation in the arena of professional papers. It is in this vein, and in some way inspired by the courageous efforts of Pablo Picasso and Gustav Klimt, that I strive to reveal aspects about my own subjective experiencing in order to promote greater openness, honesty and frankly, the naked truth.

Before I get into the body of my paper, and I do mean *body*, I would like to share with you a few quotes that essentially establish the artistic, psychological, and political frame work for my presentation. The first is a statement by Picasso:

A man must not remain indifferent before a work of art that he passes by, negligently casting a glance at it... He must vibrate with it, be moved by it, and in so doing, himself engage in creation, through his imagination if not in fact... The spectator must be ripped out of his torpor, shaken, grabbed by the throat so that he can become aware of the world in which he lives – and, to do that, one must first get him out of this world.<sup>1</sup>

Next, a quote from the fin-de-siecle Austrian dramatist and critic, Hermann Bahr:

I propose a toast to Klimt, the dazzling pagan. Out there where they think they know everything, it is assumed that he is only playing around with lines. Those poor fools: quite unable to comprehend the unspeakable power of this hallowed vow to wantonness! Here is the sole artist who refuses to darken burgeoning nature with the bourgeois sense of shame. The only one to reclaim the pagan gaze.<sup>2</sup>

And last but not least, a quote from a paper by Arnold Davidson on Freud's *Three Essays on The Theory of Sexuality* which appeared in an issue of *Critical Inquiry*, 1987:

Sidney Morgenbesser is said to have asked the following question on an exam at Columbia University: "Some people argue that Freud and Marx went too far. How far would you go?" Whether Freud went too far or not far enough, this is exactly the right range of question. How far can you go? How far will you go?<sup>3</sup>

So on that note, let me share with you one of my earliest childhood memories. You might call it a *model scene*. It relates to an experience in which I found myself alone on the street in front of my childhood home in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, circa 1960; I was about three years old. It was a very hot day and I decided to strip off my sundress and parade down the street completely naked. I was buck naked in Bucks County. A neighbor boy, a couple years older came to the rescue, and took me home to my mother. When she answered the front door, it was *his* look of shame I remember, not hers. Probably a displacement.

In addition to my interest in psychoanalytic scholarship and research, it is the desire to recapture the feelings of excitement, pride, and joy around the exposure of my good stuff that most likely prompts me to be here today. And so, in a manner of speaking, I take this risk to share myself with you in hopes that we can all learn something more about the nature of desire and the erotic imagination.

So let me now turn to a kindred soul, and certainly one of the great masters in the world of the erotic imagination, Pablo Picasso, seen here in a *Self-Portrait* from 1907 when he was 26 years old (National Gallery, Prague, Slide #1). It's hard not to be struck by the passionate intensity of this visage. The penetrating quality of his gaze reminds me of certain photographs of Sigmund Freud.

The initial inspiration for this paper and some of the other writing I am currently working on, sprang from an evening lecture presented at the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Society and Institute, now The New Center for Psychoanalysis, almost two years ago. The discussion centered on an early painting by Picasso entitled *The Family of Saltimbanques* (1905, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Slide #2), at which Dr. Harold Blum and his wife, Dr. Elsa J. Blum, presented papers about the painting while showing the slide.

I remember when the lights went down and the slide was shown that I suddenly felt like I was back in an Art History lecture, and how much I loved those classes. During the course of the evening, however, I began to long for the presenters to change the slide, to show other related images. I was not used to being exposed to the same work of art for such an extended period of time; in Art History classes the slides tend to change every ten minutes or less. I began to feel a bit frustrated, even slightly annoyed.

As a result of this “forced” marathon exposure to a single painting, a happy accident occurred which sewed the seed for several of my subsequent ideas. I left that night in a stimulated state, primarily because my analyst had decided to attend as well, and though we did not sit together, it was the first time we had attended an event outside the consulting room. I was excited to share this lecture about Picasso with him and went home hoping to have a dream about the painting.

I did.

It seems that spending so much time (two hours plus) staring at the same image allowed the painting to penetrate my unconscious and produce a fascinating dream. In it, my analyst became the alter-ego of Picasso, the tall figure at the left, the phallic creative

artist/writer, and the two childlike figures, his son, whose image reminded me greatly of Gainsborough's *The Blue Boy* (The Huntington Art Collections, San Marino, CA, 1770) and daughter, in pink, holding his hand. The isolated, seated woman off to the right was his wife (I wanted to get her out of the picture). I found myself identified with the most primitive character in the painting, the half-naked boy holding a drum over his head. In my dream, however, I was myself, as a woman, a woman full of intense, primitive desire and longing.<sup>4</sup> I cannot recall who the heavysset man in the red suit was in my dream, standing between me and my Picasso... the analytic superego, perhaps?

Some months after this experience, which had made a profound impression on me, I happened to read a review of the philosopher Richard Wollheim's (1923-2003) recent autobiography, published posthumously in 2005. A biographer of Freud (1971), Wollheim is perhaps best known for his synthesis of Freud and Wittgenstein which led to an entirely new way of experiencing art. In a series of lectures given at the National Gallery of Art in Washington in 1984, he said:

I evolved a way of looking at paintings which was massively time-consuming and deeply rewarding. For I came to recognize that it often took the first hour or so in front of a painting for stray associations or motivated misperceptions to settle down, and it was only then, with the same amount of time or more spent looking at it, that the picture could be relied upon to disclose itself as it was.<sup>5</sup>

Wollheim believed it took that long for all the surface associations, thoughts and artifice related to looking at a picture to fall by the wayside, thereby allowing a "truer" more deeply personal experience of the piece. In reviewing the published collection of these lectures in *The Los Angeles Times*, reviewer Daniel A. Herwitz observed that Wollheim had "done no less than recover for psychology its obvious place in the explanation of what is most profound and subtle about paintings."<sup>6</sup>

This made total sense to me, now that I had experienced something I never would have voluntarily, in spite of a Master's degree in Art History and time spent working in the art gallery business. I decided then to experiment with a handful of paintings that greatly excited me and see what happened.

On a trip to New York City in June of last year, I visited the newly remodeled Museum of Modern Art. On my journey alone that day through the galleries, I came upon Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J. Version O)* (Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1907, Slide #3), remarkably painted just two years after *The Family of Saltimbanques* and in the same year as the *Self-Portrait* shown earlier. The painting, restored for the first time in almost a hundred years since its creation to coincide with the reopening of the museum, fairly sparkled with luminosity. It is an enormous, commanding canvas, almost eight feet square.

I had already considered using this masterpiece of 20<sup>th</sup> century art for my experimentation with *looking at art*. I even considered making a special trip to New York, wondering if I would be able to get access to looking for at least an hour without difficulty. Anyway, here I was, in New York for other reasons, but since I had the time, I decided to *carpe diem*. At the time, I considered the merits of looking instead at the grand Matisse mural, *Dance II* (Museum of Modern Art, 1910, Slide #4), a joyous celebration of dance, color, sensuality, the female form, along with female connectedness.<sup>7</sup> This painting was created with the companion piece, *Music* (The Hermitage, St. Petersburg, 1910, Slide #5) for the mansion of wealthy Moscow textile merchant, Sergei Ivanovitch Shchukin. Objections to the exposure of male genitalia forced Matisse subsequently to paint them out, rendering the men in this mural not only

disconnected from one another, in contrast to the women of *Dance*, but eunuchs disconnected from their sexuality as well.<sup>8</sup> It is unclear why Matisse chose female figures to represent *Dance* and male figures to represent *Music*, but due to the artistic castration, one must wonder whether it matters. In any event, it seems that symbolically, *Music* has become separated from its sexuality. Unthinkable!

Hanging alone in a large, airy, stairwell landing, I was tempted to spend an hour leaning more comfortably on the banister and contemplating the delightful and pleasurable image of the Matisse. I was on vacation, after all. But no, I decided to spend an hour standing in the center of the seatless gallery containing *Les Demoiselles* (Slide #6); it just felt much more compelling. At that point, I did not take any notes. I just stood and looked for a little over an hour and paid attention to my thoughts, feelings and associations, essentially like a meditation. The following day, I began to journal about my experience:

Yesterday, I stood in front of *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* for over an hour. I remember feeling annoyed that there were no seats in that room and thought about asking the guard if I could sit on the floor (I didn't). The museum was pretty crowded with a steady flow of visitors passing by to look at the painting for a minute or two, maybe five, max. I am certain that the guard will begin to eye me with suspicion at any moment.<sup>9</sup>

This is an experiment. What will come into my mind if I really *look* for this long? If I let this painting get under my skin?

I feel glad I have not read too much about this painting yet, thereby possibly contaminating my associations. I do know that Picasso originally had a soldier as the

fifth woman entering the room on the left, and that the two figures on the right were altered as a result of the impact of African masks.<sup>10</sup>

These women are in a brothel in Avignon; that we know. The painting was completed in 1907, almost 100 years ago. The complexity of this composition is certainly compelling. It is a disturbing, fascinating, thrilling picture. At one point I thought, “Why did I have to pick *this* one? Should I switch to the more pleasurable *Dance* mural by Matisse on the stairwell? I could rest on the railing there too!

No. There’s something painful and upsetting about this painting. Scary too... But it is too compelling... I want to see if I can find my way into this picture and see if I can understand myself, Picasso, and these women better as a result.

Who are these women? Whores to be sure, but what are they feeling, thinking? And perhaps more aptly, what was Picasso thinking and feeling when he painted them? Now what am I thinking and feeling looking at them? I think about the different levels of experiencing with a work of art: subject, artist, viewer. (And I might add as an aside in the present moment, audience and presenter).

It’s a dense, crushed, too close space. Suffocating. I think the two central women who look like twins, sisters, Picasso himself (they have his eyes), are laying on a bed wrapped in sheets, waiting for their next client. They appear to glare at the viewer in a full frontal assault. Are they bored, enraged? Do these expressions mask *their* fear?

The figure that enters on the left has a heavy, literally dark, masculine character. She is the one who replaced the male soldier figure. There is a deadness to her. In fact there is much depersonalization, objectification here. I wondered if I would dream about

them...they seem so unreal, like mannequins, and yet the intensity of their facial expressions reveals the magnitude of their emotional aliveness.

When I studied the figure on the upper right, I was struck by the use of red, green and black. I felt she was perhaps the most disturbing figure of all. The solid black eye, the sheer brutality of her face...I became afraid of dreaming about her – perhaps a night terror? I imagine she is storming into the room in a jealous rage. She feels rivalrous with one or more of the women in this room...something no doubt common in brothels.

The figure on the lower right, the only one who appears to be seated, back facing us but head turned, also to confront the viewer. Is she afraid? Depressed (literally blue?). They seem tired. Are they waiting? Are they just hanging around in this claustrophobic bedchamber with a bowl of fruit in the foreground, waiting for their next prospect/victim?

There is a lot of movement and rhythm in the painting and sharp angles which further contribute to the edginess, the violence, of this often uncomfortable painting. It is in contrast with the work of Matisse, intended to *rattle* the viewer into a stimulated discomfort.<sup>11</sup> I begin to wonder if these are all different views/aspects of the same woman...the painting *is* situated on the cusp of Cubism.<sup>12</sup> Is their rage, desire, and fear toward men the mirror reflection of how the artist feels toward them?<sup>13</sup> What about the vulnerability of the women? Is it *masked*, or do the masks actually express more vulnerability than the human visages?

I try to draw a rendering of my recollection of the painting as I had done with *The Family of Saltimbanques*. It is crude to be sure, and I'm working in pen. But I stumble when I reach the masked figures. They are harder for me to recapture. Why? I begin to

wonder if anything more will come to me regarding this strange, curious, rather intimidating canvas. I have my doubts. I go to bed both hoping and fearing I will dream about the painting.<sup>14</sup> I wake in the middle of the night thinking, “I’m not dreaming about this...maybe I’m not ready, or maybe it was the wrong painting to choose! Am I blocked?” But I do have a dream:

I am looking at, and simultaneously experiencing myself as a woman who looks like Jennifer Connolly with brown (instead of green) eyes in camouflage and a combat helmet. She suddenly realizes she is in danger, surrounded by a group of hostile men. She thinks to herself, “I must not express the shock or the terror I feel. I must *dead*en my facial expression so as not to betray my true feelings.” She is put on a military transport vehicle of some sort, the only woman surrounded by *armed* men, and taken away.

Picasso turns the viewer into the soldier/john who enters the room in the brothel where the women wait like caged, territorial animals.<sup>15</sup> We feel the shock, the dread and the impotence...but it is commingled with excitement and desire, isn’t it? In the Jennifer Connolly dream everything appears in a sort of reversal. The female prostitutes become male soldiers and the male soldier, client, viewer, becomes Jennifer Connolly with large brown eyes, like the prostitutes, like Picasso, like me. I thought, why her? It’s the eyes, I think. That’s what I notice first about her and this painting is all about gaze, desire, and becoming mesmerized...seduced and imprisoned by the gaze. You cannot walk past this giant masterpiece of a painting without becoming caught by its sheer animal magnetism.<sup>16</sup> You *have* to look.

Picasso was most likely influenced by certain predecessors who had painted scenes of harem women, or nudes, with a curtain being drawn back to reveal them. Two examples are Jean-Auguste Dominique Ingres, *Bather of Valpincon* of 1808 (The Louvre, Paris, Slide #8) and Cezanne’s, *The Eternal Feminine* painted in 1877 (The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Slide #9), earlier referred to as *The Golden Calf*, when

it was exhibited in 1907, the same year Picasso painted *Les Femmes d'Alger*. In this image, a naked woman appears on a large bed with curtains drawn, surrounded by admiring men, one of whom, with back to us in the foreground, appears to be the pope.

It is possible that the initial inspiration came from a famous, or rather infamous, and quite radical for 1866, painting by Gustave Courbet, entitled *The Origin of the World* (Private Collection). On the surface appeared a snow scene; but when one slid open the panel (curtain), what was revealed was a hidden, very realistic oil portrait of the torso of a naked woman from mid-breast to mid-thigh, lying on her back; pretty much an open crotch shot, you might say. The provenance of this notorious painting includes ownership by Jacques Lacan, who apparently kept it “veiled” in his country home outside Paris.<sup>17</sup>

If we consider this aspect of the iconography, that is the pulling back of the curtain to reveal the sine qua non of female desire, we must also refer to a series of erotic drawings by Picasso entitled *Vaginal Environment* (1902, Private Collection, Slide #10), in which, as shown here, a woman appears to open the curtain of her own labia to reveal herself in all her naked glory.<sup>18</sup> I find these images by Picasso, that is the *Vaginal Environment* series, of which this is one of several versions, interesting symbolically because they seem to literally *embody* something akin to Nietzsche’s *eternal return* and Freud’s *eros* and *thanatos*.<sup>19</sup> Is she emerging from or returning to the womb? Coming or going, so to speak...

Similarly subversive, is a painting by Gustav Klimt from 1907, the same year as *Les Femmes d'Alger*. Klimt’s obsession with female sexual desire reaches its apex in his portrayal of the beautiful mortal princess, *Danae* (Private Collection, Graz, Austria, Slide

#11). In Greek mythology, Danae was the daughter of King Acrisius and his wife Eurydice. A prophecy foretold of the death of Acrisius at the hand of his grandson, and so, to prevent his daughter from any possibility of engaging in sexual intercourse, the king locks her away in a tower. Zeus, however, having taken an extreme fancy to the beautiful princess, transforms himself into a shower of gold coins, to ravish Danae, who responds to his gesture in passionate ecstatic rapture.

In a move of subversive brilliance, Klimt chooses to represent an allegory of forbidden intercourse, having himself been forbidden by the Viennese cultural ministers to depict the subject explicitly.<sup>20</sup> So both intercourse and female desire here are subversively portrayed. It is interesting to note the contrast in Picasso's portrayal of female desire: aggressive, confrontational, and angular; versus Klimt's: passive, receptive, and curvaceous.

Klimt paints *Danae* in a cramped, womblike space, making her appear as a kind of embryo woman. The crushed density of the composition feels similar to the Picasso. The flowing fabric in the lower right of the painting resembles drapery. The canvas is square, as if to tightly constrict desire which is explosive, powerful, and pushes out against the boundaries...a metaphor for how radical the art of Klimt and his followers, especially Egon Schiele, were considered. Educated and attentive viewers of the day would have recognized the placement of the small black rectangle near the genitals as a symbol of the "male principle", or phallus, which appears as well in other paintings of Klimt's, such as *The Kiss* (1907/1908, Austrian Gallerie, Vienna, Slide #12) and *The Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer* (1907, The Neue Gallerie, New York, Slide #13).<sup>21</sup> In a

case of serious art lust, Ronald Lauder paid \$135 million for *The Portrait of Adele* last November, making it the most expensive painting ever sold.

My subjective encounter with *Danae* (Slide #14) did not involve a sustained one-hour plus viewing. Rather, finding myself quite captivated by her beauty (like Zeus) and the sheer eroticism of the image, I looked at reproductions of the painting multiple times, and ended up having the following associations. I thought about it as a metaphor for the dangers of female sexuality and erotic desire...so dangerous it would lead to deadly consequences, i.e. the death of her father at the hands of her son. How about the fact that in this story, female desire is imprisoned in a tower? What would Freud say?

Zeus is the *father* of all gods in Greek mythology and the paragon of male desire for women. It is not an accident that this image, along with others in the history of art depicting Zeus' transformations in order to make love to beautiful women without detection by his jealous wife, Hera, have held enormous unconscious power for me over the years. My father is Greek! These images, Danae and the coins, Leda and the swan, Europa and the bull, and Io and the cloud, represent potent unconscious themes relating to forbidden intercourse with the powerful father, along with the desire for surrender.<sup>22</sup>

And is it the surrender to the male, or of the woman to the power of her own desire, or both? And what of the power of female desire to seduce the viewer as well as Zeus into a kind of surrender?

For me, Klimt's painting became a powerful metaphor for the integration of the masculine and the feminine. Sort of an erotic yin and yang, if you will. I arrived at this interpretation after having referred to the painting one day when I was feeling extremely anxious and vulnerable regarding a very difficult situation in my personal life requiring

an enormous amount of strength and assertiveness. Somehow, I found myself drawn to looking again at the image of *Danae*. I imagined my way into the painting, found my way into her body, and the experience of integrating the strength and power of my own masculine energy empowered me to take on the challenge at hand.

There has been some controversy regarding the way in which these subjects can and have been viewed as Zeus' exploitation of his mortal lovers, just as certain feminists have viewed Klimt's paintings as objectifications of women for his own gratification and that of a lascivious male audience.<sup>23</sup> And yet, there is evidence that emancipated, bourgeois women had access to several of these images for their personal viewing pleasure. In fact, Klimt's *Danae* reportedly decorated the lady's sitting room in the home of its very first owner, in the Villa Ast, a house designed by the Jugendstil architect, Josef Hoffmann.<sup>24</sup>

In closing, let me say, that I am aware that I have shared several ideas as well as images with you today, and that I have not insisted that you engage in an extended viewing of one particular work of art yourselves in the process. Perhaps that will be the focus of a future presentation. It is my hope that my experience might invite you to consider a different way to think about looking at art.

There is no doubt that looking at art is a form of Rorschach, or projective, and that each individual's experience of looking will be a reflection of that person's unique subjectivity. It is curious to wonder how much of our human subjective experiencing of a particular work of art is not simply pure projection, but rather an intersubjective conversation with the artist's unconscious which can illuminate elements of the artist's internal world as well as our own. It is my hope that sharing my deeply personal,

subjective experience of these works of art will encourage others to take the time to engage more deeply with the rich world of imaginative potential space opened up to us by the creative expression of the visual arts, in particular those related to the sphere of the erotic.

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## NOTES

1. Cited by Genevieve Laporte in *Si tard le soir, le soleil brille*. (Paris: Plon, 1973), p. 98. (free translation).
2. Hermann Bahr, "Drei Briefe an den Herausgeber" in Franz Blei, ed., *Die Opale: Blätter Für Kunst und Literatur*, vols. iii and iv (Leipzig, 1907), quoted passage on pp. 217ff.
3. Arnold Davidson, "How to do the History of Psychoanalysis: A Reading of Freud's Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality" in *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 13, no. 2, 1987, p. 277.
4. Relating to themes of longing and loss, the quietly melancholic tenor of this painting apparently inspired the opening of Rainer Maria Rilke's fifth *Duino Elegy*:  
*But tell me, who are they, these travelers, even a little/more fleeting than we ourselves, - so urgently, ever since childhood,/ wrung by an (oh, for the sake of whom?)/ never-contented will? That keeps on wringing them, bending them slinging them, swinging them,/ throwing them and catching them back: as though from an oily,/smoother air, they come down on the threadbare carpet, thinned by their everlasting/ upspringing, this carpet forlornly/ lost in the cosmos./ Laid on like plaster, as though the suburban sky/ had injured the earth there.*  
  
Hans L. C. Jaffe, trans. Norbert Guterman, *Pablo Picasso*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1983), p. 74.
5. Richard Wollheim, *Painting as an Art: The A. W. Mellon Lectures in Fine Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. ?. Comment on Freud's methodology in "The Moses of Michelangelo" in the *Standard Edition*...
6. Daniel A Herwitz, Review of above ref'd book, in *The Los Angeles Times*, specific date, 1984, p. ?
7. The choice of female figures in Matisse's depiction of *Dance* when compared to the configuration of the male figures in *Music* symbolically captures the central thesis of the writings of the women of the Stone Center in Wellesley, MA, from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century on. See for example, Jordan, Judith, et al. *Women's Growth in Connection* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1991).
8. John Jacobus. *Henri Matisse* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1983), p. 124.
9. In Wollheim's essays, he says, "I noticed that I became an object of suspicion to passersby, and so did the picture I was looking at," p. ?
10. Museum of Modern Art, audio tour, June 2006.

11. Henri Matisse, *Notes of a Painter* (1908), in which he described his ideal for art: “for every mental worker, for the businessman, as well as the man of letters, for example, a soothing, calming influence on the mind, something like a good armchair which provides relaxation from physical fatigue”, in Peter Stendahl, “Art as Life: The Matisse We Never Knew”, a review of Hilary Spurling’s biography, *A Life of Henri Matisse*, vol. ii, (New York: Knopf, 2005), in *The New Yorker*, August 29, 2005, p. 80.
12. The first Cubist landscapes by Braque and Picasso appeared between 1908 and 1909, followed by Picasso’s first iconic Cubist portrait, the *Portrait of Daniel Henry-Kahweiler*, in 1910 (The Art Institute of Chicago). *Cubism* was a sometimes derogatory label initially assigned by the art critics of the day. H.L.C. Jaffe, trans. Norbert Guterman, *Pablo Picasso*, (New York: Abrams, 1983).
13. In line with Stoller’s theories on sexual excitement, Picasso does in fact reduce the objects of desire to the object of a painting; see Robert Stoller, *Sexual Excitement: Dynamics of Erotic Life* (London: Karnac, 1986), p. 6.
14. When we consider that we have transferences to works of art, in this case “hope and dread”, it is not so dissimilar to the transferences activated in the intimacy of the psychoanalytic situation, or any intimate relationship for that matter. See Mitchell, Stephen, *Hope and Dread in Psychoanalysis* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).
15. “john”: the original association I had to the painting, which is interesting in that *john* can mean a male patron of a brothel, a toilet, and it happens to be my father’s name.
16. Steinberg, Leo. “The Philosophical Brothel,” *October* (New York and Cambridge, MA), no. 44 (Spring 1988), pp.7-74, in which he makes the observation that the brothel here reverts to the jungle.
17. Elisabeth Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan* (New York: Columbia University Press) pp. 183-184.
18. A good example of the symbolism expressed in these images appeared in Otto Weininger’s misogynistic volume, *Geschlecht und Charakter (Sex and Character)*, published in Vienna in 1903: “Woman is *only* sexual, man is *also* sexual: (...) man is accordingly aware of his sexuality, while woman is totally unaware of hers and can in good faith deny it, *because she is nothing but sexuality, because she is sexuality itself* (...) Put very bluntly: man possesses his penis, but woman is possessed by her vagina.” O. Weininger, *Geschlecht und Charakter: Eine prinzipielle Untersuchung*, 16<sup>th</sup> ed. (Vienna and Leipzig, 1917), pp. 114ff. Freud and Picasso, in particular, would develop this idea of the possessed and possessing/devouring vaginal woman/mother/Medea/Medusa (refs).
19. Relative to themes of coming and going, birth and death, it is interesting to note that despite Picasso’s lifelong devotion to themes regarding all aspects of love and desire,

his most prolific periods for his erotic productions were as a relatively young boy and man, and quite late in life, shortly before he died in 1973, e.g. the series of engravings entitled *Raphael and La Fornarina*, 1968. Jean Clair, ed., *Picasso Erotyque* (New York: Prestel, 2001), p. ?

20. Tobias G. Natter and Max Hollein, eds. *The Naked Truth: Klimt Schiele, Kokoschka, and Other Scandals* (New York: Prestel, 2005), p. 186.
21. Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siecle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1981) p. 272.
22. These subjects have been favored by artists since antiquity and particularly during the Renaissance, and were taken up again by Klimt. Unfortunately, an unusual interpretation of *Leda and the Swan*, painted in 1917 (not only is the swan black rather than the standard white, but he approaches the crouching, naked, sleeping Leda from the rear) was destroyed at Schloss Immendorf in Austria in 1945. Werner Hofmann, *Gustav Klimt* (Greenwich, CT: New York Graphic Society, LTD., 1974), no. 69. Some well known versions of these erotic myths have been painted by, among others, Leonardo DaVinci, Michelangelo, Titian, and Corregio.
23. For more on recent feminist reactivity to Klimt's depiction of women as passive recipients of the gaze of male lust, see Hans Jurgen Dopp, "Sachlichkeit und Morbidez: Zu den erotischen Acquarellen des Wiener Malers O.R. Schatz" in Peter Weibel, *Phantom der Lust: Visionen des Masochismus*, 2 vols., English supplemental exhibition catalogue, Neue Galerie Graz am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Munich, 2003.
24. T. Natter, et al, eds. *The Naked Truth*, p. 24. *Hope I* (National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, 1903), a radically subversive depiction of a very pregnant woman standing alone, was housed originally in a special cabinet at the end of a long corridor in the villa of Fritz and Lili Waerndorfer: "As reported by one of those invited on various occasions to the Villa W., a ritual had evolved around Klimt's picture: after tea, the lady of the house would escort her female guests to the picture gallery. There a servant girl would hand her a red velvet case containing a silver key. This was used to open both doors of the cabinet, so revealing the picture within – thus giving access to 'this most intimate of images'", from the memoirs of Helga Maimberg, *Widerhall des Herzens* (Munich, 1961), pp. 102-105. One can imagine that similar stories could be told about the viewings of Courbet's *The Origin of the World*. One of the reasons *Hope I* was considered so incredibly scandalous, was due to the absence of a male figure, typically present with a pregnant female figure throughout the history of art. Clearly, this is no immaculate conception; the sex act and its consequence are implied, without the sex act itself having been shown; cf: Arthur Schnitzler's popular play of the same period, *Die Reigen* (*The Round Dance*, also known as *La Ronde*). This symbolic process of using a *key* to open a *cabinet* containing the image of a naked pregnant woman, an image of female desire consummated, is an amusing feature and undoubtedly, no coincidence.