GUSTAV KLIMT CROUCHED SITTING NUDE TO THE RIGHT 1908/09

Gustav Klimt, Crouched sitting nude to the right, woman's study of the lovers in "Death and Life", 1908/09 pencil on paper

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In Klimt's modern allegories of life, grief, pain and melancholy are omnipresent as elemental states of the human soul. Accordingly, his drawing practice was marked by the tireless search for the most appropriate postures and gestures, the essence of which he tried to capture through the obsessive study of the individual human figure.

The present study of a nude model sitting bent over was created around 1908/09 as part of the earliest preparations for the painting "Death and Life," which Klimt repeatedly altered between 1911 and 1916, and added new figures.

In all versions, a long-robed figure of death faces a tower of figures at full length. A brooding, melancholy mood characterizes the naked people of different ages piled up, side by side and on top of each other.

The pondering about the transience of human life finds its culmination in the lovers sitting in the very front. The man bends protectively over the woman, of their lowered heads one can only see the top part. Our drawing is connected with those works which are verifiably related to the woman of the lovers. From the tense bending of the back and neck, the forward falling hair to the frantically grasping hand, everything is focused on the quintessence of inner pain. That Klimt's incomparable line art is not only dedicated to female aesthetics is impressively demonstrated by this autonomous-looking work.

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