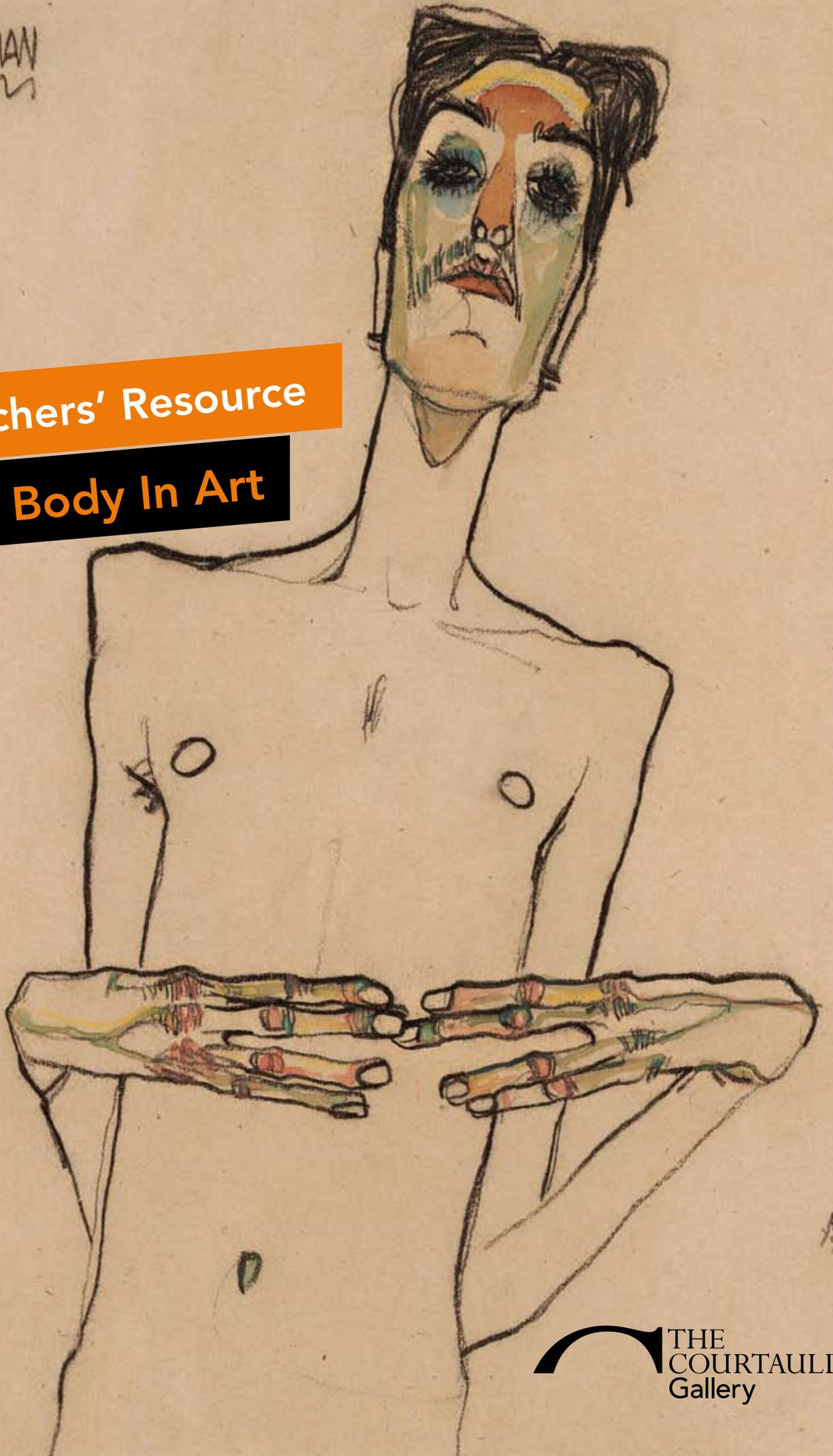


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Teachers' Resource

The Body In Art



CONTENTS

1: Introduction: THE BODY IN ART

Caroline Levitt

2: BODY LANGUAGE

Nicola Shearman

3: THE FASHIONED BODY

Liz Kutesko

4: THE CENSORED BODY

Caroline Levitt

5: THEM

A contribution by a practising artist

Danny Treacy

6: REGARDER!

French and German language resource

Alice Odin & Nicola Shearman

7: CLASS ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

8: GLOSSARY

9: TEACHING RESOURCE IMAGE CD

THE BODY IN ART

Compiled and produced by
Caroline Levitt and Sarah Green

Terms referred to in the
glossary are marked in **PURPLE**

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WELCOME

The Courtauld Institute of Art runs an exceptional programme of activities suitable for young people, school teachers and members of the public, whatever their age or background.

We offer resources which contribute to the understanding, knowledge and enjoyment of art history based upon the world-renowned art collection and the expertise of our students and scholars. I hope the material will prove to be both useful and inspiring.

Henrietta Hine
HEAD OF PUBLIC PROGRAMMES

This resource offers teachers and their students an opportunity to explore The Courtauld Gallery's outstanding collection of prints. The gallery's holding of some 24,000 prints spans more than 500 years and represents all of the major print making techniques. It enables us to consider the development of printmaking from the fifteenth century up to the present day and hopefully will inspire future engagement with the medium.

We hope teachers and educators of all subjects will use this pack to plan lessons, organise visits to The Courtauld Gallery and for their own professional development.

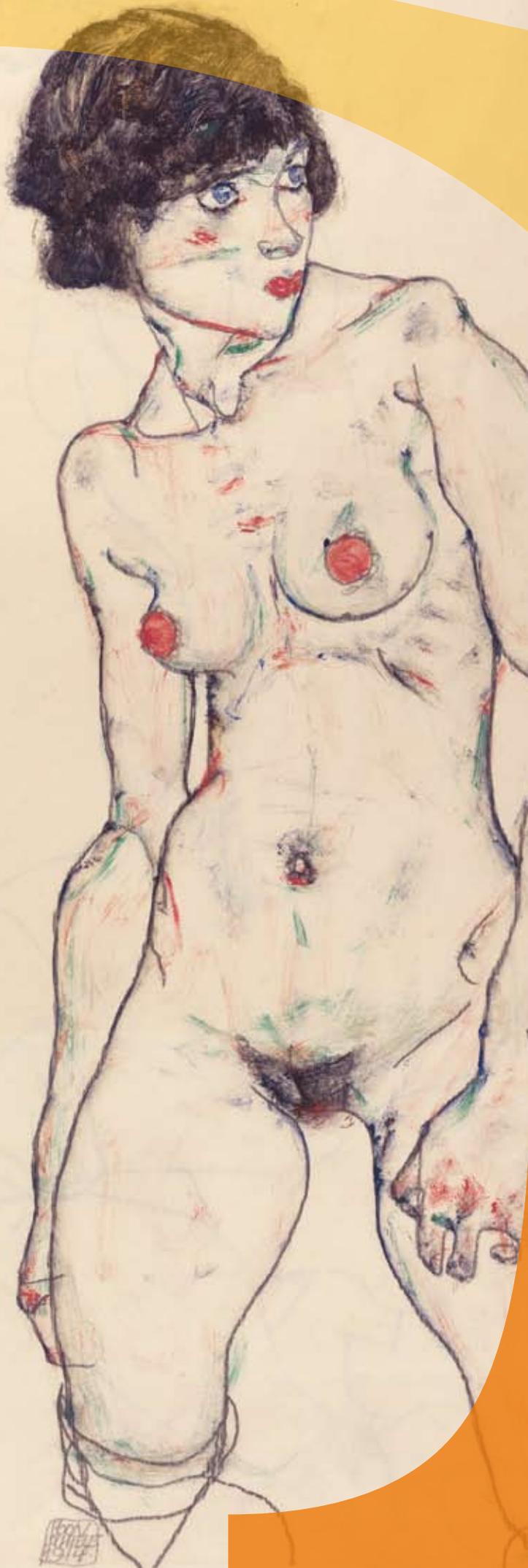
Sarah Green
PROGRAMME MANAGER
GALLERY LEARNING

COVER IMAGE:

Egon Schiele (1890-1918)
Mime van Osen, 1910
Gouache and black chalk,
37.9 x 30 cm
The Leopold Museum,
Vienna

THIS PAGE:

Egon Schiele (1890-1918)
*Standing Nude
with Stockings*, 1914
Black chalk and gouache
48.5 x 32.1 cm
Leopold Museum, Vienna.



1: INTRODUCTION THE BODY IN ART

Caroline Levitt

'SOCIETY LEAVES ITS MARK UPON THE BODY, FASHIONING MEN AND WOMEN IN ITS IMAGE. NAKED OR CLOTHED, THE BODY IN REPRESENTATION IS CLOAKED IN CONVENTION.'

Tamar Garb, 1998

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From Greek marble sculptures from the 5th century BC to Anthony Gormley's present-day casts of himself, the human body has been an immensely popular subject with artists. Painters and sculptors have chosen variously to lend a bodily appearance to **mythical**, **ideal** or intangible characters; to document and explore the bodies of others; or to present an image of the self which might scrutinise, express or mask. Conventions have developed surrounding the representation of human beings, determining what is and is not acceptable and building up a complex web of **symbolism** and implication, based for example on the innate body language of certain poses or the extent and type of clothing included. This teachers' pack, *The Body in Art*, has been written to coincide with the exhibition *Egon Schiele: The Radical Nude*. Through the various essays included, you are invited to think more about the bodies we all inhabit and the ways we expect to see them represented.

Representations of the 'body' might be understood quite differently from paintings in which figures are included, perhaps as characters in a narrative, but not engaged with at close quarters. An artwork in which figures are 'bodily' focusses on the **materiality** and physical presence of the subject: the qualities of flesh, the clothed or unclothed state, and the effects and scars of life, including wounds or ageing, which might be more or less frankly represented. The epic paintings of Peter



Paul Rubens, such as *Cain Slaying Abel* (1608-9, image. 1), are deeply concerned with the representation of the qualities of flesh and the contours and contortions of the body in response to certain events or activities. Rubens' bodies are often well-formed and strong, standing in sharp contrast, for example, to the almost painful honesty of a later painter such as

Manet, whose barmaid in *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (1882, image. 2) lacks the plumpness or healthy glow of a well-to-do lady and whose red face, deep-set eyes, pale vein-ridden arms and rough hands betray her status as a worker. Of course *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* also weaves a rich social narrative that relies as much on the various aspects of background and



still life as on the central figure on whose physical qualities we have focused.

In the work of Egon Schiele, background is often absent, so that the human figure, with its imperfections and marks of experience, stands out and becomes all the more tangible. Schiele's style is **gestural**: the insistent line of his drawings reflects the involvement of his own body in the process of making the pictures. At the same time, his drawings are **expressive** in the way that elements such as the contorted and angular outlines and the hints of unnatural colour that often seem to reinforce less conventionally attractive aspects of the flesh (such as veins, nipples, ribs and elbows) present us with bodies that challenge social norms and evoke an uncomfortable emotional or moral state. A 1910 portrait of Schiele's friend the mime artist Erwin Dominik Osen is a case in point (image. 3).



So even though Schiele's nudes are in some ways sparsely drawn, with only a few lines and transparent colour washes, they are rich in materiality and bodily presence.

The work of Danny Treacy, a practising artist who has written about his work for this resource, challenges the notion that bodily appearance is connected to identity by experimenting with a sense of **otherness** through carefully constructed, costumed and photographed self-portraits. In contrast, the essay on *The Fashioned Body* examines the representation of bodies that conform to or challenge social norms and expectations through the clothing they wear or the shape they take on: public bodies, fashioned by or against society and as such costumed for a spectacle. The fashioning of the body is not just to do with clothing, but is as much to do with the conventions of representing the human form in varying states of undress.

Few debates have occupied art historians as much as the distinction between the categories 'naked' and 'nude'. Kenneth Clark put it this way:

To be naked is to be deprived of our clothes, and the word implies some of the embarrassment most of us feel in that condition. The word 'nude,' on the other hand, carries, in educated usage, no uncomfortable overtone. The vague image it projects into the mind is not of a huddled and defenceless body, but of a balanced, prosperous, and confident body: the body re-formed. (Kenneth Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form*, 1953)

Goddesses and heroes, depicted as **ideal** human forms, are typical of the category 'nude'. Figures apparently unaware of being looked at, presented as innocent or monumental, immune to the weaknesses of human existence. A naked figure, in contrast, is both confrontational and vulnerable, gaining strength from its unflinching defiance in the face of established rules of taste but at the same time susceptible to the embarrassment and defencelessness that Clark noted. Schiele's drawings of bodies stripped bare were both painfully real and an assault on accepted morals, and their censorship by trial in 1912 is the

starting point for a consideration of what is deemed acceptable or unacceptable in the essay *The Censored Body*. This subject should be examined in tandem with that of *Nudity at the turn of the twentieth century*, which offers a means of comprehending the morals and codes we must see as a backdrop to paintings of the human body in this era. Finally, the expressive qualities of the body, and the fine line between physicality and psychology, are illuminated in the essay *Body Language*.

The body, such a universal subject for artists, turns out to be a vessel through which we can examine some key moments in the development of not only Art History but society as a whole. Most major shifts and movements have come about as a result of an artist doing something perceived to be radical, and the human body has so often been integral to that act. We might marvel that the one thing that all of us has in common - a physical body, be it attractive, damaged, aged or plain - has had the power more than any other subject to provoke controversy. What should perhaps seem everyday has by turns been deemed worthy of adoration or censure - totem or taboo, as Freud might frame it - and an agreement on exactly how we should treat it in visual representation seems elusive at best. This teachers' resource offers a means of navigating the debate.

FURTHER READING:

Tamar Garb, *Bodies of Modernity: Figure and Flesh in Fin-de-Siècle France* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998).

PREVIOUS PAGE:

Image. 1
Peter Paul Rubens,
Cain Slaying Abel, 1608-9.
Oil on panel, Oil on panel,
131.2 x 94.2 cm.
The Courtauld Gallery,
London.

THIS PAGE:

Image. 2
Édouard Manet,
A Bar at the Folies-Bergère,
1882.
Oil on canvas,
130 x 96 cm.
The Courtauld Gallery,
London.

Image. 3
Egon Schiele,
*Erwin Dominik Osen, Nude
with Crossed Arms*, 1910.
Black chalk, watercolor and
gouache on paper,
44.7 x 31.5 cm.
Leopold Museum, Vienna.

CURRICULUM LINKS:
KS3+ Art and Design, History,
History of Art and other Humanities

2. BODY LANGUAGE

Nicola Shearman

The human form has been at the centre of European art since the **Renaissance** rediscovery of **Antiquity**. Reflecting the influence of **Humanist** thinking circulating at the end of the fifteenth century, the work of artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Albrecht Dürer turned to the intense study of the human body, recognising that beauty was not the sole province of the **divine**. By the beginning of the twentieth century, advances in medical science, theories of evolution and philosopher **Friedrich Nietzsche's** announcement of 'the death of God' had spawned a new fascination with the physical and psychological workings of the human body which many considered far from healthy. And it was far from beautiful too: in fact, the ugliness in much of the work of the young Viennese artist Egon Schiele (1890-1918) and his compatriot Oskar Kokoschka (1886-1980) caused widespread outrage in its time and is arguably just as difficult to look at today.

Particularly in Vienna, the frank exploration of sexuality and the subconscious exposed growing cracks in what we might see as a decorative façade which, in the words of author Hermann Broch, had produced a state of 'cheerful vegetation...'. The task of exposure was shared by writers suspicious of the limits of written language, and by artists looking not to mimic external impressions, but instead to uncover inner desires and uncertainties. If we were to look for a graphic definition of **expressive** art with the guts to confront uncomfortable truths, then the whole-body grimace which greets us in a Schiele self-portrait would be a good place to start. Comparing works from The Courtauld Gallery contemporary to the radical nudes of Schiele, this essay explores elements of an art that brought a new eloquence to the human form.

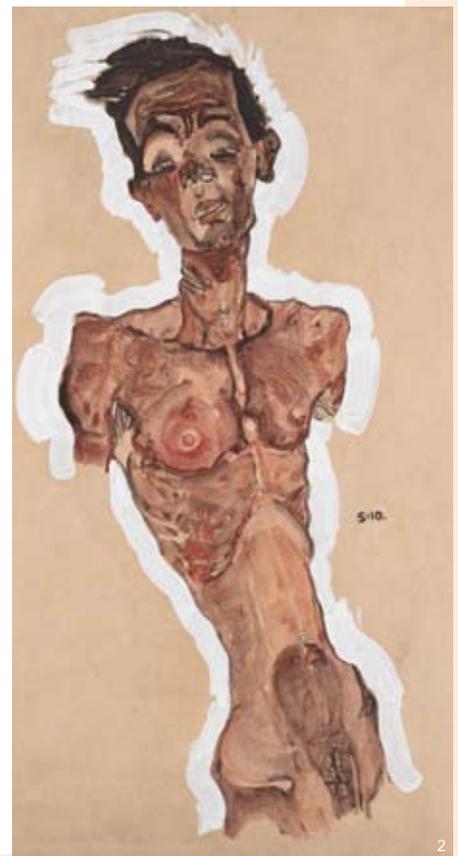
The bodies in question are not just eloquent, but loudly so: whether in the febrile gestures of adolescent angst on display in Vienna, or the vigorous strokes of colour that led to the 'savage' reputation of Parisian artist Kees van Dongen (1877-1968). These images are the cries of youth impatient with tradition and they proclaim the power of art to direct modern life. Nietzsche's outspoken artistic prophet Zarathustra and **Sigmund Freud's** revelations on the dominant role

of instinctive drives were amongst these artists' frames of reference. While not all artists would have read Freud's work, cultural and scientific circles in Vienna were closely linked such that psychoanalysis was certainly in the air. Accompanying these ideas was a new fascination for the radical **stylistisation** of the body in art and artefacts from African and Oceanic countries on show in newly opened ethnographic museums. All of these cultural models shared equal weight in the developments that were later to be termed 'Expressionism'. But perhaps the greatest impulse, certainly in the art of Schiele and Kokoschka, came from their own deep fascination with the youthful self and the discovery of what Peter Vergo, in his essay in the catalogue to the exhibition *Egon Schiele: The Radical Nude* characterises as both the 'joy' and the 'fear' of sex.

STRIKING A POSE

Practised in fluent drawing from a young age, the twenty-year-old Schiele turned his intense gaze on his own body in two chalk and gouache drawings from 1910 (images 1 and 2). Along with the exaggerated flattening and angularity that emphasises the emaciated look, what is striking about these drawings is the way the limbs have been cut and manipulated to fit the area of paper. Telling us a good deal about Schiele's concerns with the **formal** devices of pictorial design, these fragmented forms speak volumes about the dislocation between the body's outer image and the interior self. We can sense the urgency with which the artist has put himself under scrutiny as if in a mirror, or in the unnerving clarity that can come in dreams - recording with rapid touch and unflinching honesty what it took psychoanalysts decades to write up in words.

The Confusions of Young Törless (1906) by the Austrian writer Robert Musil tells the story of a young military cadet plagued by uncertainty and sexual awakenings amidst a rigid regime of outward idealism. Observing the awkward body of a friend, Törless imagines he can see through his clothes to a grotesquely twisted spine, 'such as are to be found in all representations of **martyrdom**'. Under Schiele's unsparing gaze this picture of pale, drawn youth accompanies familiar associations of artistic isolation which had



A GESTURE CAN SAY IT ALL IN THE SAME WAY THAT A LINE DRAWING WITH SPARING COLOUR ON AN OTHERWISE EMPTY SURFACE CAN HAVE A MORE DIRECT IMPACT THAN A HIGHLY-WORKED PAINTING...

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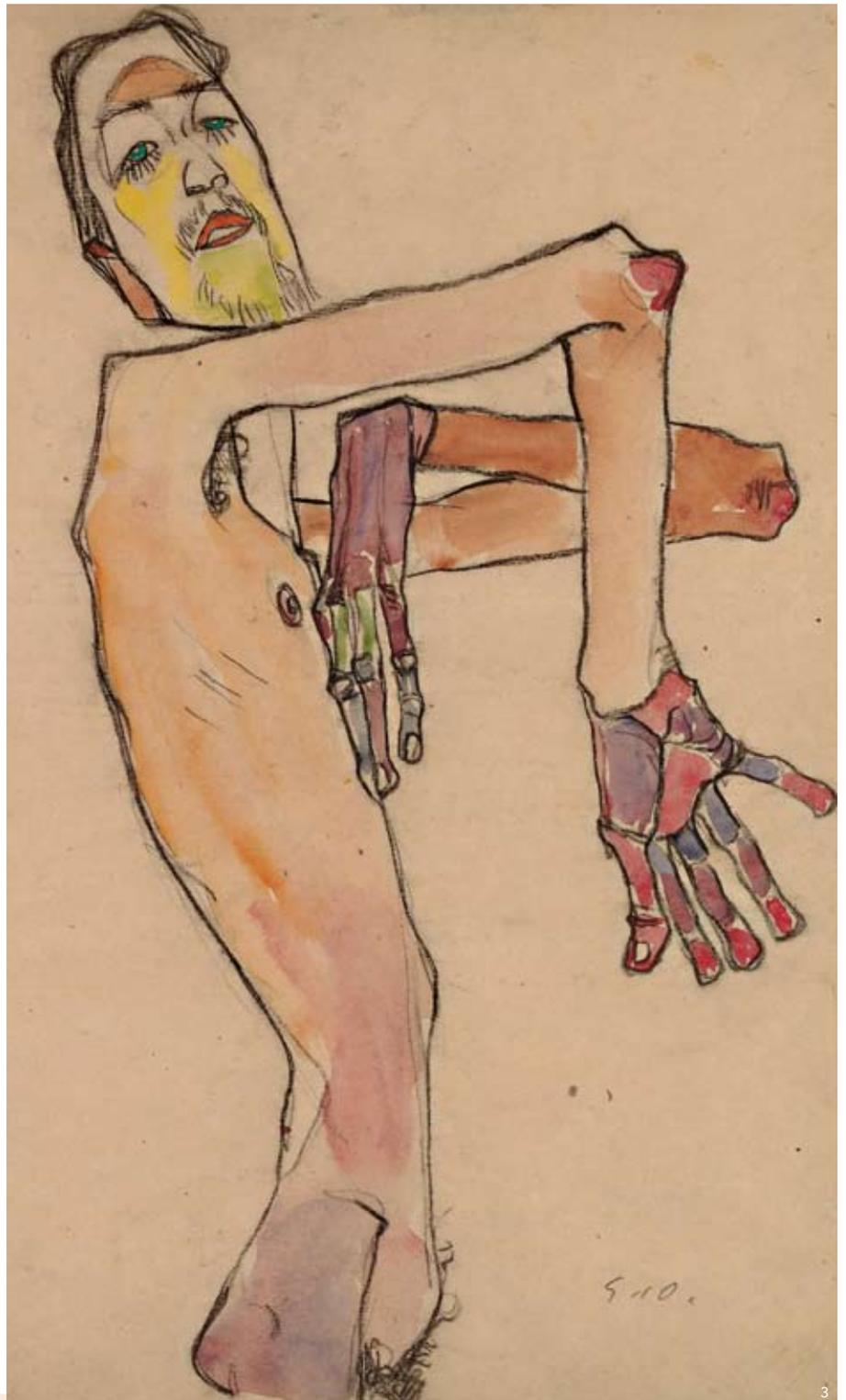
long been a feature of the artist's self-portrait.

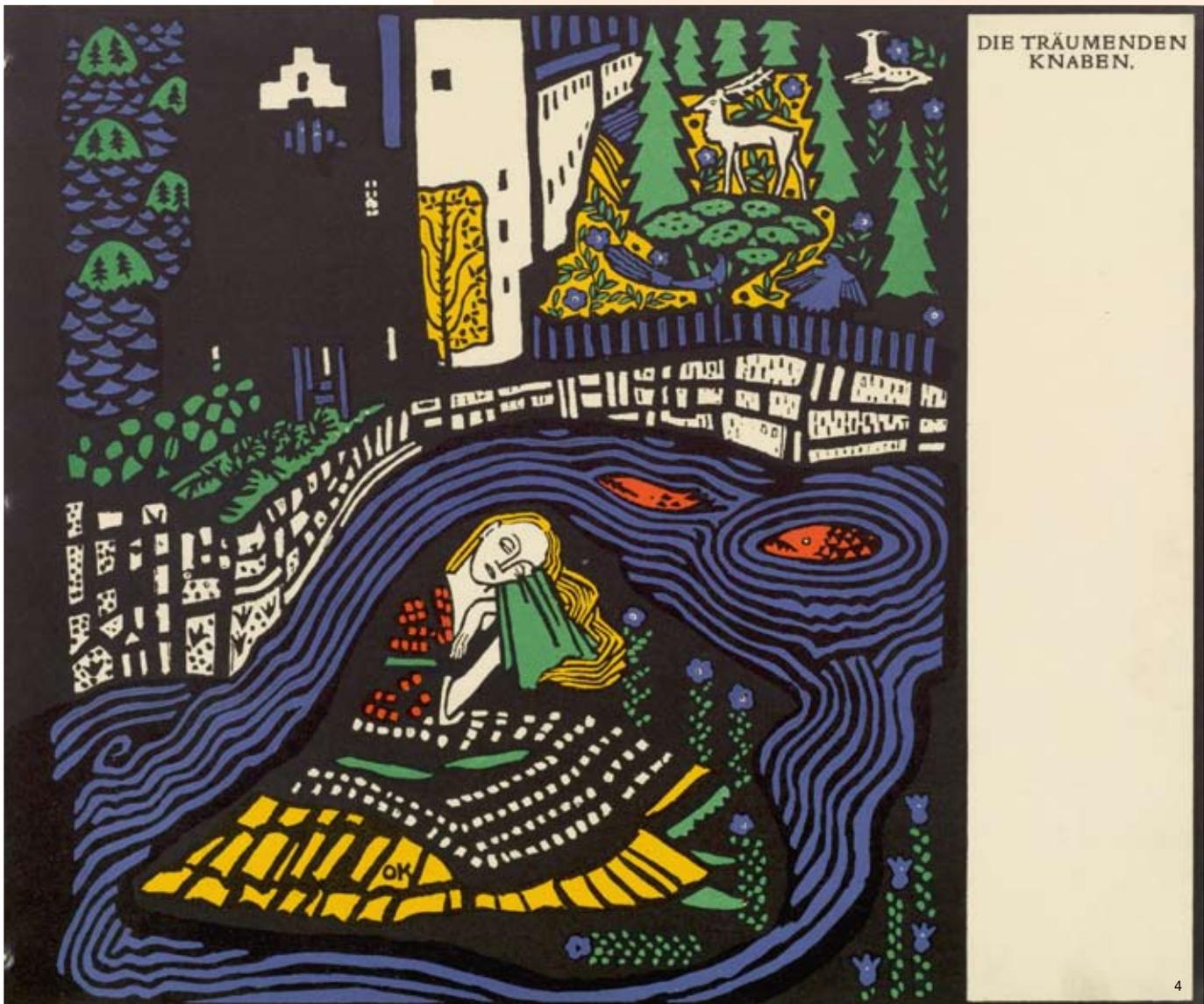
Whilst the **cult of the ego** and the undisguised craving for personal experience drive these depictions, they nevertheless go beyond pure **navel-gazing**. The extreme posturing in Schiele's art derives from a variety of visual sources encountered not only in the fluid lines of his teacher Gustav Klimt's eroticised art, but equally in the combination of mime and free expression that was a feature of modern dance at the time. In adopting such poses, the art historian Jane Kallir explains that Schiele was, 'simultaneously probing his inner feelings and trying on a multitude of personalities'. Similarly, the truncated figure of Schiele's friend the mime artist Erwin Osen (image. 3) demonstrates in the collapsed puppetry of arms and over-balanced head the capacity of gesture to communicate emotional experience where words are inadequate. Compressed into the succinct language of the body, a gesture can say it all in the same way that a line drawing with sparing colour on an otherwise empty surface can have a more direct impact than a highly-worked painting. However body language can be ambiguous; the dislocation between vacant facial expressions and contorted limbs that is a particularly unsettling feature of many of these works has a direct pathological source in photographic records from patients in an asylum.

Isolated from any narrative context, single figures or disjunctive pairs exude a sense of alienation and are off-centred by awkward perspectival angles. The effect is to **abstract** the figure into a series of lines that are expressive in and of themselves. The viewer's response is not reliant on an immediate recognition of content or shared experience and so the image becomes universal rather than just personal, and therefore perhaps more bearable to look at.

ENFANT TERRIBLE

There was a strong performative aspect to the work of Kokoschka. His illustrated fairytale *The Dreaming Youths*, produced for the decorative arts cooperative of the Wiener Werkstätte in 1907, weaves myth out of biography in an unsettling mix of





DIE TRÄUMENDEN KNABEN.

subversive fantasy with the traditional aesthetics of childhood. Based on a series of dream scenes in which the artist adopts the persona of a teenage werewolf in pursuit of a young girl, the shifting rhythms and often jarring imagery of the poem are echoed in the visual clash between bony adolescent forms and the jewel-like backgrounds of lush island scenery and deep blue seas. Any innocence suggested by the format and the primary colours of the lithographs is undermined by a current of sexual anguish that insistently breaks through the decorative surface. See for instance the menacing teeth of the red fish circling the sleeping girl on her island in *Sleeping Girl* (fig. 4) and the decorative yellow tree, which the accompanying verse describes as follows:

'a Peruvian tree of stone / its many-fingered / branches grasp like / anguished arms and fingers / of thin yellow figures ...'

For Kokoschka as for Schiele, sexual discovery was both fraught with conflict and coloured by the misogynistic social climate which insisted women remain silent while at the same time blaming them for male insecurities. The age-old myth of woman as temptress was reflected by artists such as Klimt and in the 'pseudoscience' of writers such as Otto Weininger, a Viennese sociologist whose book *Sex*

and *Character* of 1903 perpetuated Nietzsche's opposition of male intellect against female physicality. These ideas attracted narcissistic young artists with a heightened sense of drama and also formed the basis for dramatic productions, such as Kokoschka's 1909 Expressionist play *Murderer, Hope of Women*.

THE NAKED TRUTH

Whilst symbolist art of the late nineteenth century had employed the body in veiled allusions to a simmering sexuality, the aim of Schiele's nudes was to depict the naked truth, whether society was ready to receive it or not. Similarly, the historian Carl Schorske describes the direct body language of Kokoschka as 'opening up a world of fire and ice'. To the Parisian audience first exposed to the work of Matisse, Vlaminck and fellow artists in the Salon D'Automne of 1906, the effect was comparable. They were given the name Fauves (wild beasts) after one critic described the effect as like 'being in a room filled with wild beasts'. The label applies well to another member of this circle, whose work *Torso: The Idol* (1905, fig. 5) explores the relation of wild colour to raw passion.

Van Dongen was a Dutch painter with a background in political cartoons. In making Paris his home, he relished the anarchic overthrow of academic tradition

FOR KOKOSCHKA AS FOR SCHIELE, SEXUAL DISCOVERY WAS BOTH FRAUGHT WITH CONFLICT AND COLOURED BY THE MISOGYNISTIC SOCIAL CLIMATE WHICH INSISTED WOMEN REMAIN SILENT WHILE AT THE SAME TIME BLAMING THEM FOR MALE INSECURITIES...

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FOR RADICAL ARTISTS SEEKING AN INJECTION OF ENERGY INTO WHAT THEY SAW AS TIRED TRADITIONS, THE SCULPTURE, TEXTILES AND BODILY ORNAMENT OF TRIBAL ART PROMISED NEW CREATIVE TERRITORY...

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that drove the modern movement. He took particular inspiration from Vincent van Gogh's brave pursuit of the emotional effect of colour and gestural brushstrokes. Applying these principles to the human body, van Dongen could also draw on the experience of Parisian nightlife, both in **cafés-concerts** and the circus, where in harsh electric lighting the lavish make-up of the showgirls, and the bodies of the strong men would heighten the effect of sexual transgression that was part of the drama of such public places. The hot colours on the face, the glimmer of an aura outlining the body and the thick **impasto** that celebrates paint as much as it does the contemplation

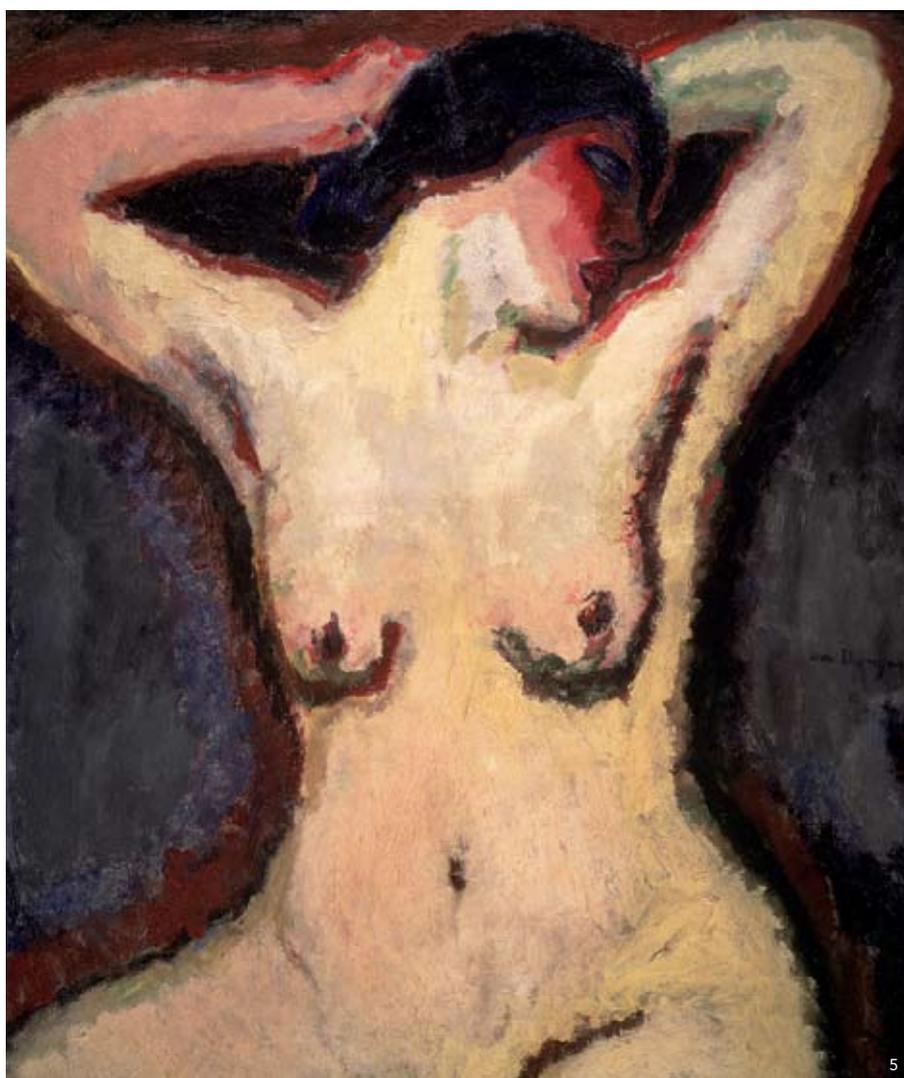
of female flesh all combine with the luxuriant pose to articulate a picture of female sexuality.

The painting's subtitle 'Masks' points to another ingredient in the potent **Fauvist** recipe: namely, a fascination with the art of non-European societies, such as that typified in Gauguin's discovery of Tahiti. For radical artists seeking an injection of energy into what they saw as tired traditions, the sculpture, textiles and bodily ornament of tribal art promised new creative territory. Added to this was the imagined ideal of an unfettered way of life that offered an exotic contrast to the constrictions of an industrialised society. One of the tasks for art historians since the early modernist era has been to unravel the multiple influences and misapprehensions which led to a fascination for the '**primitive**'. What is unquestionable is that much of what we recognise as '**expressive**' in early twentieth-century art relates to visual models that, in their stylised compression of human experience, effect a means of direct emotional communication. For van Dongen, inspiration came from a collection of Javanese dance masks characterised by the stylised outlining of deep black eyes and brilliant red lips. Furthermore, it is likely that the pose of the woman (his wife Guus was the model on this occasion) with the angular arms reaching behind the head, borrows from Picasso's *Demoiselles D'Avignon* of 1907, famous for its reference to African carvings in the mask-like faces

of the women. When we learn that the two artists had neighbouring studios in the building known as the *Bateau Lavoir*, the connection seems to be a productive one.

EXPRESSIONISM

In his unfinished novel, *The Man Without Qualities* (1930-43), Musil wrote: 'There was also something known as Expressionism. Nobody could say just what it was, but the word suggests some kind of squeezing out; constructive visions, perhaps, but inasmuch as the contrast with traditional art revealed them as destructive, too' While it is pointless to look for a single definition of what makes an 'expressive' image of the body, it can be said that a quality of exaggeration is common to all the works considered here. Whether this is manifest in intense colour, extreme gestures, or stark outlines, the urgency with which these artists - later recognised as amongst the first 'Expressionists' - set about externalising inner truths led to a means of direct communication that bypassed language. The fact that the message was not delivered without injury has been underlined by critics and historians both then and since: Kokoschka, when he went on to paint portraits of contemporaries, was known for his unnerving manner of 'unpeeling' the characters from their physicality. Meanwhile, Schiele's graphic line, simultaneously wavering and incisive, has been described as having a 'seismographic' effect. Such imagery both highlights the way in which art was capable of getting beneath the skin and hints at the necessity of drastic intervention at a time when the pillars of European tradition were found to be crumbling.



PREVIOUS PAGE:

Image. 1
Egon Schiele
Nude Self-Portrait in Grey with Open Mouth, 1910.
Black chalk and gouache on paper, 44.8 x 32.1 cm.
Leopold Museum, Vienna.

Image. 2
Egon Schiele
Nude Self-Portrait, 1910.
Black chalk, gouache and opaque white on paper, 44.9 x 31.1 cm.
Leopold Museum, Vienna.

Image. 3
Egon Schiele
Erwin Domin k Osen, Nude with Crossed Arms, 1910.
Black chalk, watercolor and gouache on paper, 44.7 x 31.5 cm.
Leopold Museum, Vienna.

THIS PAGE:

Image. 4
Oskar Kokoschka
The Dreaming Youths: Sleeping Girl, 1907.
Lithograph, 24 x 29.3 cm
© The Samuel Courtauld Trust, The Courtauld Gallery, London/DACS 2014

Image. 5
Kees van Dongen
Torso: The Idol, 1905.
Oil on canvas, 92 x 81 cm.
© The Samuel Courtauld Trust, The Courtauld Gallery, London/DACS 2014

CURRICULUM LINKS:
KS3+ Art and Design, History, History of Art and other Humanities

3. THE FASHIONED BODY: DEGAS, MORISOT AND RENOIR

Liz Kutesko

In 1863 poet and critic Charles Baudelaire declared in the French newspaper *Le Figaro*: 'Modernity is transitory, fleeting, contingent'. He instructed contemporary artists not to 'scorn or forgo this transitory, fleeting element that undergoes such frequent metamorphoses. By removing it, you lapse into the void of an abstract, indefinable beauty.' The Impressionists wanted to capture the beauty and excitement of **modern** life in and around Paris, the capital of **modernity**, prior to and following the fall of the **Second Empire** in 1870. Their lively brushstrokes sought to animate the ephemeral and transitory qualities of Parisian modernity, as described by Baudelaire, and its recently established **commodity culture**, which was shaped by the imperatives of fashion, consumerism and incessant innovation. Paris had emerged as a rapidly transforming metropolis, due in part to its swift modernisation by city planner Baron Haussmann (1809-1891), who fashioned an extensive landscape of wide boulevards, grand parks, avenues, squares and gardens throughout the city. This period also witnessed the evolution of the department store, such as *Au Louvre*, *Les Grands Magasins* and *Le Bon Marché*, in which women could buy ready-to-wear fashions off the shelf that needed little if no alteration, not to mention the proliferation of specialist fashion magazines such as *La Mode Illustrée* and *Les Modes Parisiennes*. Artists at the vanguard, such as Berthe Morisot (1841-1895), Edgar Degas (1834-1917) and Pierre Auguste Renoir (1841-1919), breathed new life into the rigid poses of fashion illustration as they depicted the changing momentum of fashion that would lead it to where it is today. They portrayed Paris through an innovative language of painting, which used fashion as a powerful marketing strategy and quintessential symbol of transitory modernity, encapsulated by the *Parisienne*, the elegant modern woman who was accustomed to such **bourgeois** luxuries. This essay will examine the fashioned feminine body using three "snapshots", each of which give a sense of the importance of fashion to the Impressionists' priority to express modernity: Degas' *Lady with a Parasol* (1870-2), Morisot's *Portrait of a Woman* (1872) and Renoir's *La Loge* (1874).

These paintings will be used to consider how Morisot, Degas and Renoir made skillful use of oil paint to capture the light and texture of the various folds and shapes of the fabrics that adorned the bodies of their subjects and which, rather than give a painstaking reproduction of fashionable trends in feminine dress, revealed a sense of the visual effect that fashion as a whole conveyed by way of the movements and gestures of Parisian women from 1870-1874.

Degas' *Lady with a Parasol* (image. 1) is made up of quick, expressive strokes of black, grey and white oil paint on canvas and forms part of a series in which the artist experimented with the results of light on the transient, fashionably attired female form. Degas once declared: 'The source of ornament. Think of a treatise on ornament for women or by women, based on their manner of observing, of combining, of selecting their fashionable outfits and all things. On a daily basis they compare,

more than men, a thousand visible things with one another.' Degas' observations on women's abilities to choose their own accessories and ornamentations from a plethora of possibilities reveal his active interest and participation in fashion. A label on the back of *Lady with a Parasol* reads 'At the Race-course' and explains the subject's elegant appearance in a **bustle** dress that is lovingly sculpted by the artist and draped over layers of petticoat, complete with a nipped in waist to emphasise the trim female form. A parasol shields the subject from the open air as she is captured from behind and in motion. The rough sketch-like forms give a sense of immediacy to this unfinished image, which is reminiscent of the **couturier's** direct creative process as fabric was draped over a model's body. The fluid application of paint highlights a dynamic contemporary femininity that the viewer is invited to experience by envisioning how the fabrics may have swished and undulated with an unexpected gust of wind, sway of the hips or flurry of



AS THE ONLY WOMAN REPRESENTED IN THE FIRST GROUP EXHIBITION OF THE IMPRESSIONISTS MORISOT HAD AN INNATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE INDIVIDUAL ELEMENTS OF FEMININE DRESS...

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activity. Other areas of the painting, such as the subject's profile and the details of her exquisite headwear, are painted with great delicacy and reflect Degas' unequivocal interest in the **chapeau**, which formed the crown and status symbol of any respectable woman in the 1870s and was inevitably matched to her visage and attire.

Like Degas, Morisot paid equal attention to the materiality of female dress, as can be seen in a portrait of her sister Madame Edma Pontillon, which she completed in 1872 (image. 2). The painterly texture of her brushwork, which encompasses broad and delicate strokes freely applied, evokes the flounces, frills and ornamentation of the luxurious fashions depicted. As the only woman represented in the first group exhibition of the **Impressionists** held in Paris in 1874, Morisot had an innate knowledge of the individual elements of feminine dress, from underwear to day dresses, evening wear and outdoor attire. She depicts her subject dressed in a beige and chestnut brown day dress with pleated edging, a high waistline, and long, close-fitting sleeves, which show the remaining influence of **pagoda-style sleeves** that were fashionable throughout the 1860s. The bodice of her dress is V-shaped, filled in with a **chemisette** comprised of muslin trimmed with lace, and adorned with a splash of purple and mauve flowers. The subject wears her hair piled high on top of her head in a pleated **chignon** that is threaded with a silver ribbon. She shows off matching purple and gold drop earrings and a pendant that is strung on a black velvet ribbon, both of which reflect the decorative accessories prevalent at the time. A thick sash comprised of velvet

envelops her waist to form a bow that places the decorative bulk at the back of her dress, and emphasises her curvaceous feminine form. Unlike Degas' energetic painting, which gave a tangible sense of the rush of modernity through the artist's frantic sweeps onto the canvas, Morisot delivers a quiet nod of appreciation to female finery through her carefully orchestrated and meticulously executed portrait.

Like Morisot and Degas, Renoir placed fashion at the heart of his paintings, as can be seen in an examination of *La Loge* (image. 3), which he painted in 1874. Renoir had an intimate knowledge of the technical and material nature of dress since his mother was a seamstress, his father a tailor and his elder sister a dressmaker, who in 1864 married the fashion illustrator Charles Leray. Here he depicted his favourite model and mistress, Nini Lopez, who is ostentatiously dressed in a fashionable **tenue de premiere** in black and white, an ermine **mantle**, pink flowers placed in her carefully-coiffured hair and adorning her **bodice**, a strand of pearls, gold earrings and a gold bracelet, white gloves and conspicuous powdered make-up. This overt display of wealth may have been suitable for a married woman but Nini has an ambiguous relationship to her male companion, who is dressed in full evening wear consisting of a white waistcoat or **gilet** cut very wide and low, a stiffened white shirt, a starched white cravat, black trousers and gold cufflinks. This unclear relationship is expressed through the complex interplay of gazes presented in the painting: he raises his binoculars to scrutinize the other women displayed in their theatre boxes, whereas she sits perfectly still, seated in full view of her admiring audience, a smile playing across her lips, one gloved hand holding her fan and white-laced handkerchief, the other a pair of unused binoculars. It is hard to tell the exact material of the subject's dress, which remains blurred by the Impressionistic style, although it appears to be of white silk chiffon with appliqued ruched black silk net. Such hazy and insubstantial fabrics would have appeared at their best in the evening, particularly under the artificial lights of the theatre which would have caused the various layers to shimmer and



gleam in contrast. Her sparkling jewellery captures the viewer's eye and evokes the visual and literal consumption so fundamental to fashion. Renoir produces a poetic interpretation of the more prosaic details of dress through delicate, softly brushed forms of varying colour and tones. His paint handling is varied and fluent. Forms are delicately rendered without crisp contours. Nini's gown provides a strong monochrome and triangular underpinning to the composition. By depicting Nini in the latest **vogue**, which would have been unaffordable for both the artist and his model, Renoir hoped for recognition and the consequent monetary gain that might reward him with the upper-class lifestyle that he imagined his luxuriously dressed mistress within.

If we look at any of the three paintings discussed in this essay we get a sense of the importance of public display and spectacle in modern Parisian life, and the significance of fashion within that as a vibrant non-verbal system of communication, indicative of wider social, cultural and economic meanings. The **Impressionists** captured fashion as a whirlwind spiralling towards modernity, which simultaneously inhabited the past, captured the essence of the present and was imbued with potency for the future. Whilst clothing might be understood as a stable and utilitarian form of dress, for Degas, Morisot and Renoir, fashion, with its affinity for transformation and innovation, was constantly shifting in a cyclical process.

FURTHER READING:

Groom, Gloria Lynn, ed., *Impressionism, Fashion and Modernity* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago; New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Paris: Musee d'Orsay; London: Yale University Press, 2012)

Simon, Marie, *Fashion in Art: the Second Empire and Impressionism* (London: Zwemmer, 1995)

Muller, Florence et al., *Dior Impressions: the inspiration and influence of Impressionism at the House of Dior*, (New York: Rizzoli, 2013)

PREVIOUS PAGE:

Image 1
Edgar Degas,
Lady with a Parasol, 1870-2.
Oil on canvas,
75.3 x 85 cm.
The Courtauld Gallery,
London.

THIS PAGE:

Image 2
Berthe Morisot,
Portrait of a Woman, 1872-5.
Oil on canvas,
56 x 46.1 cm.
The Courtauld Gallery,
London.

Image 3
Pierre-Auguste Renoir,
La Loge, 1874.
Oil on canvas,
80 x 63.5 cm.
The Courtauld Gallery,
London.

CURRICULUM LINKS:
KS3+ Art and Design, History,
History of Art and other Humanities

4. THE CENSORED BODY

Caroline Levitt

In January 1915, an exhibition of Egon Schiele's work was held at the Galerie Arnot in Vienna. Schiele himself designed the poster: a self-portrait in the guise of the early Christian martyr Saint Sebastian (image.1). Targeted by arrows from the left hand side, the figure appears tortured and victimised, the subject of unwarranted persecution. In 1912, Schiele had been arrested and held in custody. He was ultimately released after 24 days, charged with offences against morality for drawings that were considered **pornographic**. Schiele was neither the first nor the last artist to come under juridical scrutiny for his art, as two paintings from The Courtauld Gallery will testify.

In 1863, Édouard Manet had submitted his painting *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (now in the Musée d'Orsay, Paris) to the annual official exhibition in Paris, the **Salon**. It was rejected on grounds of poor painterly skill, and criticised more widely for the inclusion of naked women alongside clothed men, considered an assault on public taste. Whilst objections by the Salon jury were generally made on aesthetic grounds - the painting was too sketchily executed, or the female nude did not conform to the expected standards of beauty - appearances and morality were closely interlinked in the nineteenth century, as they are today. The presence of women with their clothes removed alongside men who look a lot like art students might even be seen as a critique of the practice of **life-drawing**. Whilst plenty of traditional artists had painted from live models, they had concealed this origin beneath a carefully finished picture of an **idealised** female figure with no male presence to make it problematic; Manet forces us to confront the truth, that artistic models are paid to remove their clothes.

In December 1917, Modigliani's *Female Nude* (image. 2) was included in the window of an exhibition at the Berthe Weill Gallery in Paris. It was censored, along with a number of other paintings, and the show closed by the police. In many ways, this seems to be an inoffensive painting: the woman has her eyes closed, allowing us to look at her without being confronted, and her pose is itself very traditional. Presumably, it was the crudely delineated pubic hair (still a taboo in painting at the



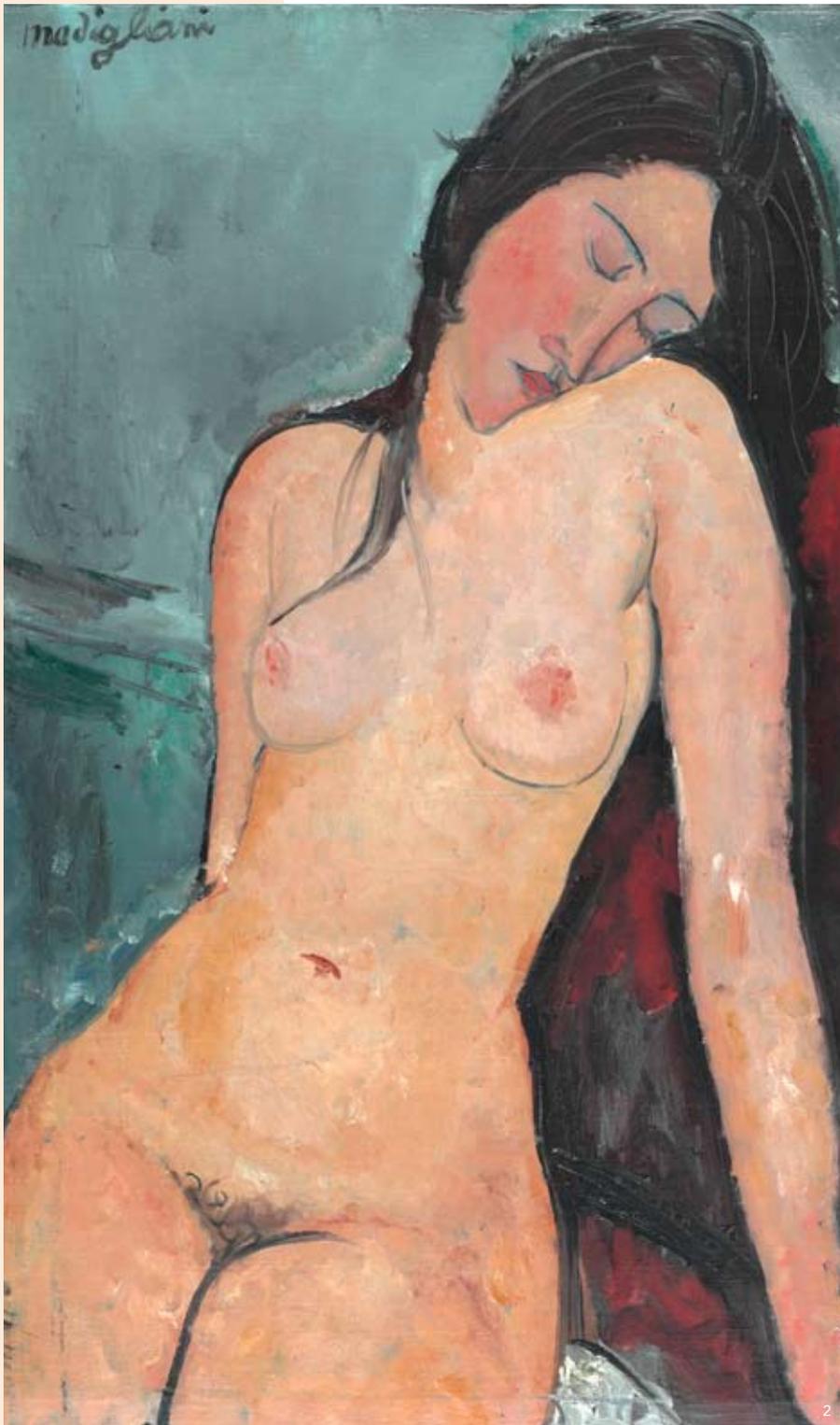
time) and the attention Modigliani had drawn to his model's nipples by painting them in such a vibrant red, that caused offence. Instead of concealing the private areas of the woman's body, as conventional depictions of **Venus** might have done, Modigliani seems to have made them deliberately prominent. The flatness of Modigliani's painting style by now was becoming commonplace in modern art, and so it was not so much for his painterly technique as for the seemingly erotic

bodily qualities of his subject that his paintings were suppressed. The obvious marks of the hard end of the brush in the hair of the woman serve to emphasise the artist's close engagement with his subject and canvas - these are **gestural** marks that reinforce the presence of the artist and the sensual qualities of the image.

One interesting link between each of these three examples is that of publicity through controversy. Schiele, in his 1915

MODIGLIANI'S FEMALE NUDE WAS INCLUDED IN THE WINDOW OF AN EXHIBITION AT THE BERTHE WEILL GALLERY IN PARIS. IT WAS CENSORED, ALONG WITH A NUMBER OF OTHER PAINTINGS, AND THE SHOW CLOSED BY THE POLICE...

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poster, actively presents himself in the light of his earlier arrest and imprisonment, using the image of an artist hounded by critics to pre-empt and mediate any forthcoming criticism of his latest work; the exhibition was a personal triumph. Manet later produced three known copies of *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, one of which hangs in The Courtauld Gallery (image. 3 overleaf). These canvases were saleable precisely because of the scandal that had made the original piece infamous, and Manet became known as an artist who pushed boundaries and paved the way for daring and exciting new artistic developments. Modigliani's *Female Nude*, hung as it was in the window of the gallery in 1917, has always had the ability to attract and promote: it is now used by The Courtauld Gallery shop on a paper bag and distributed by the thousand to hold postcards, pens, rubbers and the like. However it is important to observe one significant fact about the paper bag Modigliani: the figure has here been cropped at the shoulder so that the nipples and pubic hair, so key to the painting's history, are invisible.

The **regulation** and **censorship** of nudity in public imagery remains a key question for art institutions and advertising bodies. The Committee of Advertising Practice states that 'Marketing communications featuring gratuitous use of nudity can cause serious or widespread offence'. It seeks to regulate the advertising industry in order to avoid such affront. Some may feel that those who enforce advertising guidelines have occasionally been heavy-handed. In 2008, CBS Outdoor (now Exterior Media) forced the Royal Academy of Arts to withdraw a London Underground poster for an exhibition of the sixteenth century German artist Lucas Cranach: it bore a reproduction of one of Cranach's paintings of a nude Venus, thinly veiled in such a way as to make the figure all the more alluring. How are we to view such an intervention? On the one hand, this type of censorship is vital and responsible action on the part of the regulator, intended to protect a potentially vulnerable viewing public who have no choice but to view the images placed before them on the tube, regardless of their age or religion. Similarly stringent rules lead to placement restrictions governing the use of sexually



MANET BECAME KNOWN AS AN ARTIST WHO PUSHED BOUNDARIES AND PAVED THE WAY FOR DARING AND EXCITING NEW ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENTS...

FOLLOWING ITS REJECTION BY THE SALON JURY LE DÉJEUNER SUR L'HERBE WAS SHOWN IN A SEPARATE EXHIBIT OF REJECTED WORKS, WHERE IT WAS AVIDLY LOOKED AT BECAUSE OF ITS CONTROVERSY...

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suggestive imagery, preventing it from being used in the locality of schools, for example. However when censorship begins to intervene not only in the reproduction of paintings for advertising campaigns, but (as with the historical examples we have considered) in the production and display of the artworks themselves, we might see it as a violation of the right to freedom of expression.

There is an important difference between **copyright** and **regulation**. Elizabeth Childs suggests that censorship is a “regulative” operation - that is a process by which works of art that have entered the public sphere are controlled, repressed or even destroyed by the representatives of political, religious or moral authority’. Strict censorship, for whatever reason, will often remove something completely from public view, leaving the public with no access to it and no way of critiquing its value and impact for themselves. This was not so in the case of Manet’s *Le Déjeuner sur l’herbe*, for example, which following its rejection by the Salon jury was shown in a separate exhibit of rejected works, where it was avidly looked at because of its controversy. Official approval was not granted, but neither was the painting totally hidden from view. Manet had been more strictly censored on political grounds in 1869, when he was prevented from even submitting (and therefore exhibiting) his painting *The Execution of the Emperor Maximilian*. We may feel that political censorship is more harmful to the freedom of expression than regulation on the grounds of sexual immorality.

In contrast to viewing posters on the London Underground, going to an exhibition (as long as the nature of the content has been made clear), is the viewing public’s choice. In order to navigate part of the problem, it is becoming more common for certain rooms of exhibitions to be classified in the manner of films - for example the 2013 Martin Creed exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, in which one terrace space was allocated as being for over 18s only. However there is seen to be

a distinct difference between attending a public showing of a sexually explicit film and attending an art exhibition that contains paintings such as Schiele’s women with their legs spread. Art galleries manage to retain a certain degree of dignity. Perhaps this is above all because they are less interested in creating an atmosphere in which naked imagery can be absorbed and privately enjoyed in a darkened room, than in creating a space where paintings can be collectively critiqued in terms not only of their content, but also their technique and context. As educated viewers, we consider ourselves capable of taking a step back from a picture and looking at it dispassionately and intellectually. We think we are above such things as obscenity or **pornography**. But a word of warning is needed here: we must be careful that we do not reduce the impact of works such as Schiele’s by viewing them in this way. They were painted to have an impact, and they do invite us to scrutinise not only the bodies that Schiele has laid bare, but also, to an extent, our own. As Niccola Shearman points out in her essay for this pack, the impact of work like Schiele’s is as much psychological as it is physical.

A particular problem lies with the definition of **pornography** or even ‘overtly sexual’ imagery, which has tended to be deliberately separated from nudity in painting, and yet for which Schiele and the Royal Academy respectively were criticised. Gemma Blackshaw, in her essay for the catalogue to accompany the exhibition *Egon Schiele: The Radical Nude* puts it this way:

‘Unauthored, undated and unregulated, pornographic photography could be placed by authorities and “art lovers” in opposition to high art culture’.

A lack of authorship, as well as the multiple copies often made available, make pornography not only cheap but also hard to track and therefore to regulate. Such material also distinguishes itself from art by the fact that it is usually looked at in private, whereas artists tend to rely on public gallery exhibitions. But artists have

PREVIOUS PAGES:

Image. 1
Egon Schiele,
Self-portrait as St Sebastian,
poster for the 1915
exhibition at the Galerie
Arnot. Kunsthistorisches
Museum, Vienna.

Image. 2
Modigliani
Female Nude, c.1916.
Oil on canvas,
92.4 x 59.8 cm.
The Courtauld Gallery,
London.

THIS PAGE:

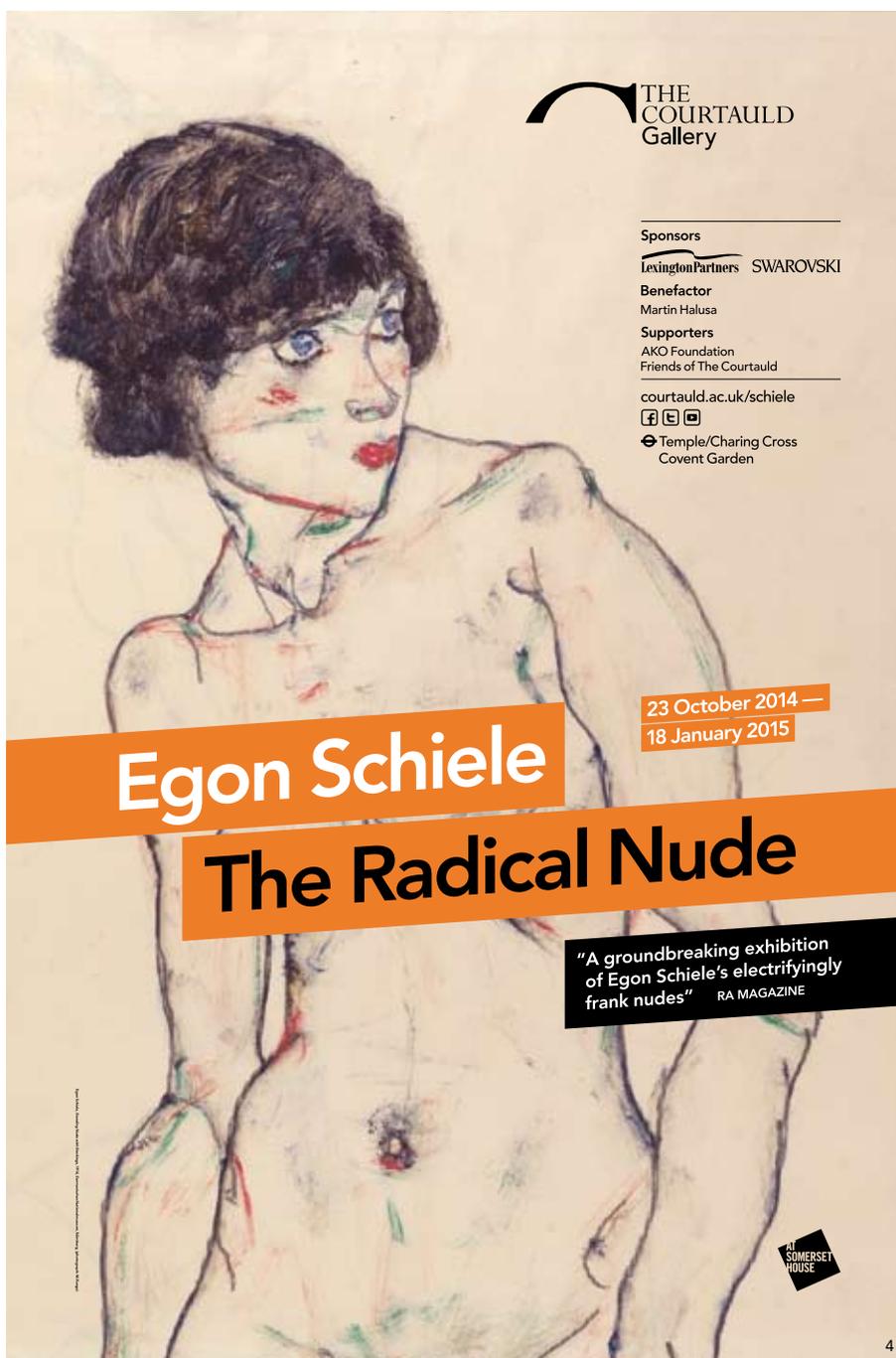
Image. 3
Édouard Manet,
Le Déjeuner sur l’herbe,
1863-7.
Oil on canvas,
89.5 x 116.5 cm
The Courtauld Gallery,
London.

Image. 4
exhibition poster
Egon Schiele:
The Radical Nude,
The Courtauld Gallery,
London, 2014.

increasingly blurred the boundaries and it is insufficient to simply declare something immune to **regulation** because it is painted rather than photographed or is a century or more old: both these arguments were made in defence of the Royal Academy's Cranach poster. The case of Schiele points to the fact that the ethics of the way in which the body, and especially certain parts of it, are treated in paintings is a recurring debate, and classifying something as pornographic or artistic, as though they are mutually exclusive terms, may not be the most helpful approach.

Our response has much to do with our perspective as 21st century citizens. As Alice Odin notes in her essay for this teachers' pack, the naked body in previous centuries was hidden away and considered something of an embarrassment, even in private. Today, in contrast, we have become comfortable with our own bodies and used to seeing images of scantily clad figures, perhaps in advertisements for lingerie or beauty products; as a result, paintings such as those of Manet, Modigliani and indeed Cranach have lost something of their ability to shock us. The works of Schiele, however, remain to an extent uncomfortable, perhaps because of their frankness and discomfiting attention to detail in some areas or due to the exposed sense of vulnerability caused by their sketchy and sinuous transparency in others.

Almost exactly a century after Schiele's Galerie Arnot exhibition, The Courtauld Gallery is showing Schiele's nudes in what is, still today, a daring exhibition. Should these works be declared harmful and obscene and suppressed entirely from view, in the way that Manet's *The Execution of the Emperor Maximilian* was censored? Or is there a more useful and measured way of responsibly allowing the viewing public to appreciate Schiele's skill in the raw and frank representation of the body that is common to us all? The underground poster design for *The Radical Nude* engages with the issue sensitively but directly, using Schiele's 1914 *Standing Nude with Stockings* to represent the exhibition (fig. 4). Her bony, pronounced shoulders, elbows and hips, her facial expression, part sensual and part anxious and the marks of colour that bring the body to life but also appear like scars on the surface of her flesh are all hallmarks of Schiele's style. The poster design does not shy away from the exhibition's content. And yet the figure is cropped, perhaps provocatively, but decently, just below the hips, and the exhibition's title cuts strategically across her torso on orange strips. The modern equivalent of a carefully placed fig-leaf, the strips are not subtle. They are a self-aware statement that material like this may not be to everyone's taste or benefit. They act as a warning. At the same time, the implication is that in entering the exhibition, the strips will be peeled apart for the viewer, and both the body, and the mystery surrounding the work of Schiele, will be revealed for appreciation, scrutiny and critique. Just like Schiele's 1915 poster design, the poster for *The Radical Nude* pre-empts and deflects criticism on the basis of morality.



THE POSTER DESIGN DOES NOT SHY AWAY FROM THE EXHIBITION'S CONTENT. AND YET THE FIGURE IS CROPPED, PERHAPS PROVOCATIVELY, BUT DECENTLY, JUST BELOW THE HIPS, AND THE EXHIBITION'S TITLE CUTS STRATEGICALLY ACROSS HER TORSO ON ORANGE STRIPS

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FURTHER READING:
Elizabeth Childs (ed.), *Suspended License: Censorship and the Visual Arts* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1997).

Alyce Mahon, *Eroticism and Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Egon Schiele: *The Radical Nude* (London: The Courtauld Gallery, 2014).

Online report on the suppression of the Royal Academy poster:
www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2008/feb/13/art1

CURRICULUM LINKS:
KS3+ Art and Design, History, History of Art and other Humanities

5. THEM

Danny Treacy



My practice is 'process based', this means that every stage is important in the final photograph. It begins with my search for clothing in very specific locations. I then remove the clothing, take it to my studio and wear it, at times un-picking it and re-stitching it, either to fit me or to change it's form completely. The different parts of clothing in one image may have come from many different places, collected over months or years, so the figure becomes a composite of other people's actions, as well as my own. Finally the figure is photographed, so that it is preserved and allows the viewer to see every detail. Them, is an ongoing body of work which

involves constructing body suits from found clothing, wearing and photographing them. This essay considers various aspects of this work and of my artistic process.

Them was not formulated in terms of an 'idea', rather I let my senses guide me: In 2001 while taking photographs in a high rise housing block which was due to be blown up, I came across some clothing in several of the flats and felt compelled to remove my clothing and wear the stranger's clothing. I did this instinctively, both for myself and for the camera, which was present as a witness, I took the photograph and left.

IN 2001 WHILE TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS IN A HIGH RISE HOUSING BLOCK WHICH WAS DUE TO BE BLOWN UP, I CAME ACROSS SOME CLOTHING IN SEVERAL OF THE FLATS AND FELT COMPELLED TO REMOVE MY CLOTHING AND WEAR THE STRANGER'S CLOTHING...

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The results were not completely satisfactory. For me, the photographic moment, the time it takes to actually take the photograph, started to feel too short, so I began the process of including several key elements in my practice that resulted in a more successful way of working.

TIME

By removing clothing from various locations in deconstructing and reconstructing it, re-stitching and then wearing my 'costumes', I was able to greatly extend the time spent with the clothing and this felt much more fruitful. It is with this starting point that I wear the clothing, followed by a de-construction of others by proxy (their clothing), then follows a processing of the garments so that in a way the clothing becomes my flesh; dismantling it to fit me (intimacy) and then reassembling it (violation). So for me, the 'radical' must be present from the start of the process.

EXPLORATION

When locating the clothing, I take on the role of explorer and hunter, this is a vital part of the process. I gather items of clothing from very specific areas which I term 'Fertile Grounds': An area can remain a Fertile Ground for many years, or in some cases for just a few hours. Places such as car-parks, grave yards, woodland, the banks of tidal rivers for example. Spaces that are united in their ambiguity, all used by humans, yet at certain times of the day or night the spaces function in unintended ways. It is acts of transgression, acts which go against a law, rule, or break codes of conduct, that I am attracted to. I do not want to witness the acts nor am I interested in the specific individuals who cross these boundaries. What I am drawn to is the inherent resistance and defiance of these and other such acts that reveal something of the human animal. The clothing becomes coded in its context and ceases to be mere clothing. The humans who once occupied it become alien and I am left to piece the clothing together based only on a sense of its charged presence.

COLLECTING

I view these banal objects as artefacts of a stranger's intimate history. If history can leave traces on objects, then I feel akin to an archeologist.



THIS PAGE:

left:
Danny Treacy
Them #1,
2002
Photograph courtesy
of the artist

right:
Danny Treacy
Them #2,
2002
Photograph courtesy
of the artist

The way in which the clothing is located changes as I locate more clothing. For example I have been drawn to mattresses; they are objects that humans come into contact with for at least a third of their lives while sleeping and engaging in intimate acts. In some cases well-used mattresses become imprinted with residual marks left by contact with the body, so becoming like a Turin shroud.

A mattress holds both aspects of the materials I am drawn to; there is firm knowledge that contact has occurred coupled with the ability to project what may have happened.

There is also criteria for what I dismiss; I was once drawn to the idea of taking clothing from washing lines; I realised that the clothing would have been washed clean. More importantly, there would be no mystery.

THE BLACK

By standing against a black background I remove all irrelevant details. The black represents more than just a colour, it is a space, a void. This separates the viewer from Them. It may also be several other things; the night, which registers as a black liquescence, the unknown, the subconscious. It is vital that the figures emerge from the black, it is this void that unhinges them from the everyday, achieving a sense of the uncanny. Psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud created this term which generally means the presentation of something that was hidden and yet it is strangely familiar. I feel that the comment by Joanna Lowry for the book *Theatres of The Real* summarises this 'the figures seem like some strange operation of the dreamwork-once again the unfamiliar emerges from the reconstituted tatters of the familiar'.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Although performative and sculptural elements play a part, my practice culminates in the act of standing in front of the camera for the final photograph. The final pieces are captured using a large format camera, printed life-size so that the viewer has a one to one relationship with each figure. It is important to me that every detail is laid bare, from bloodstains to burns, from rips of passion to oily marks. The photographic act becomes a ritual, a trophy, a souvenir. It is vital that I am inside the garments. Being inside the clothing in close proximity and attaining intimacy is essential. A large part of my work is about the senses, I feel that wearing the clothing dictates my reaction to it and how I go about creating the figures. This would not happen as if I put the clothes onto a mannequin without actually stepping inside them. It is also important that I am not seen by the viewer, it is not about my identity but my actions and the histories of other people through their clothing.

The title *Them*, is a refusal to strictly define, in language Them is a group, unnamed. If I were to exhibit the actual pieces as sculptures, an audience would have various ways to approach the work, as an image there is only one viewpoint.



I want the viewer to come to their own assumptions when viewing the photograph. Photography is a dogmatic medium, often understood to portray the real and true. However, I do not want to put too tight a reading on each piece, which is why I do not give each piece a text based title.

"I meet Danny Treacy's work as a painter and as a fellow aficionado of all types of monsters: those that we construct to house our fears, to project that which is repugnant onto, and also those hybrid, unclassifiable life forms whose ambiguous edges threaten to disrupt the boundaries of our selves. How appropriate then that this show called "Them" is more about "us" than it is about "them... Then there is Them #1, 2002. This is the one that is most obviously gendered, both male and female. The seat of an old pair of jeans engulfs the head, which is an elongated, flattened shape that looks too slender to enclose a real head. The man half is wearing a work boot; the woman half wearing a red pump. Across its chest is a patchwork of tough and soft fabrics, sewn with some edges frayed and others lovingly folded under and stitched—"clean seams" as my grandma would say. The most disturbing aspect of this portrait is the wrongness of the placement of the seams. One can only imagine the body for which this was made. Imagining it—it is a body that moves very differently from mine: perhaps the right leg hinges back at the hip instead of forward. It must move very haltingly. Think of every alien in every scary movie you have ever seen. They move differently than we, too slow, too fast, too different... His stance is resistant, almost proud. He looks ready to take you on. He is abjection made proud—a whole made of cast-off parts".

The Shaman of Slough, Hayley Barker, Septemeber 2010.

CONCLUSION

Them are the relics of moments when I was close to others, by proxy, through their clothing. They become artefacts, souvenirs of the adventure to seek out and collect the clothing. What remains key is that primarily, it is about the actions of others. During a process that is playful and theatrical, it also has sinister and furtive characteristics.

Somewhere in the process of collecting, of de-construction, re-creating, stitching, wearing and standing in the clothing, I feel that in the final image I disappear, not revealing anything of myself, the antithesis of self-portraiture. There is a transgression of gender, race and form.

The 'other' I become is possibly due to a form of passivity existing within the clothing: It is precisely because there is no way to know the exact situations that led to the abandonment of the clothing there is an ability to reconfigure and re-present the clothing as both fictitious yet evidential.

"Through a labour-intensive costuming process that involves deconstructing

and re-creating existing pieces of clothing, he contrives to conceal himself until he disappears. The process hides all traces of the artist's gender and race, and in some cases it is not possible to tell whether he is a human or an animal. It could be argued that the photographs are in fact the antithesis of self-portraiture as the self evaporates in to a created void. In fact the images pose the question of where the self is located, and whether, through subterfuge, it is possible to eliminate it altogether. For Treacy the answer is yes. The portraits intentionally obfuscate aspects of the artist's identity; they allude to displacement and absence, aptly illustrating the dissolution of-not only the artist-but also the human-a practice that can be traced throughout the history of self portraiture. The masked creatures loom out of a black void to be photographed in a forensic, 'objective' manner, evocative of ethnographical portraits of others during the nineteenth century. The clothes, completely transformed from their original function, become souvenirs or trophies of a hunt. Clothing becomes Treacy's skin; often stained and worn, the garments metamorphose and mould around his body. This transformation, which should seem revolting, is strangely erotic and intimate."

Susan Bright 'Auto Focus' The Self-Portrait in Contemporary Photography, 2010.



RELEVANT ARTISTS:

Mark Dion, Dion's practice is also process led, he crates a mythology around the 'collector'.

Hans Bellmer, Bellmer's work was made in solitude and is highly personal. I also find it has a strong sense of the 'uncanny'.

IN 2001 WHILE TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS IN A HIGH RISE HOUSING BLOCK WHICH WAS DUE TO BE BLOWN UP, I CAME ACROSS SOME CLOTHING IN SEVERAL OF THE FLATS AND FELT COMPELLED TO REMOVE MY CLOTHING AND WEAR THE STRANGER'S CLOTHING...

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PREVIOUS PAGE:

left - right:
Danny Treacy
Them #19
Them #15
Them #5
Them #8
Them #20
Them #25
Them #11
Them #17
Photographs courtesy of the artist

THIS PAGE:

Danny Treacy
Them #21, Detail
Photographs courtesy of the artist

CURRICULUM LINKS:
KS3+ Art and Design, Photography and Fashion Design

6. REGARDE! LA NUDITÉ AU DÉBUT DU 20E SIÈCLE

French Language resource

Alice Odin

Les corps dessinés par Egon Schiele dans l'exposition *The Radical Nude* exhibent une nudité superbe mais vive, dans un style considéré choquant à l'époque, et qui, au début du 21e siècle, nous rend encore inconfortables. Le nu dans l'art a toujours existé, des sculptures grecques anciennes prônant des corps parfaits, à l'iconographie religieuse illustrant le péché originel d'Adam et Eve, des Venus mythiques, aux femmes demi-mondaines de Toulouse-Lautrec ou encore Degas. Le nu dans l'art a cependant toujours été scrupuleusement réglementé.

La nudité dans la société occidentale, et plus particulièrement en Europe au 19e siècle était taboue. On sait que dans la société victorienne, les corps étaient couverts des pieds à la tête. Les femmes portaient de longues robes, avec très peu d'ouvertures et avec de hauts cols boutonnés jusqu'au cou. En France, à la même période, les femmes portaient beaucoup d'épaisseurs, ainsi que plusieurs sous-vêtements qui recouvraient leur peau. Chaque petite partie du corps restant exposée était considérée érotique, comme un poignet aperçu entre le bout d'une manche et d'un gant par exemple ou une cheville aperçue entre une botte et le bas d'une jupe. Le corps nu était seulement vu et examiné dans des domaines très précis: dans le monde de l'art et en médecine. Dans les deux cas, l'interaction avec le corps était strictement réglementée et publique, ce qui empêchait tout contact érotique ou immoral. Il est cependant intéressant de noter que jusqu'en 1877 en France, les morgues étaient des lieux publics que n'importe qui pouvait visiter et où l'on pouvait voir un corps nu, exposé derrière une vitre.

Les historiens ont aussi mis en lumière que jusqu'au 20e siècle, la plupart des gens ne se lavaient pas le corps entièrement. On se lavait uniquement les parties du corps exposées telles que le visage, les mains ou les avants bras. Les douches et le bain n'étaient pas utilisés couramment avant le 20e siècle. Même les classes sociales éduquées et riches avaient peur de l'eau et de se laver le corps entièrement à l'eau. Alors que le tourisme balnéaire grandit au 19e siècle en Europe, les touristes se baignent tout habillés. Ce sont les avancées médicales et scientifiques du

milieu du 19e siècle qui mettent en lumière l'importance d'une hygiène corporelle et l'importance de laver son corps entièrement et régulièrement. C'est aussi à ce moment-là que l'on commence à prendre conscience de son propre corps et de la notion de nudité. Enfin, ce n'est pas avant le 20e siècle qu'arrivent des miroirs de plein pied, qui jusque-là étaient très coûteux, dans l'habitation. C'est alors que les gens peuvent enfin voir leurs corps et observer la composition morphologique du corps humain.

Moralement, la nudité avait aussi mauvaise réputation. Les femmes qui exposaient leur corps ou portaient des vêtements plus courts ou ouverts, étaient souvent considérées comme des femmes faciles ou même des prostituées. Logiquement, lorsque des cafés concerts où des femmes nues s'exhibaient voient le jour à la fin du 19e siècle à Paris, le public de ces lieux grandit très vite, malgré leur mauvaise réputation auprès de la société bourgeoise. Dans les années 1880 et 1890, ces lieux tels que le Moulin Rouge ou les Folies-Bergère deviennent très populaires, et ce grâce aux 'tableaux vivants' ou aux danses semi-érotiques comme le Cancan qui s'y produisent. C'est d'ailleurs de là que viennent les origines du strip-tease, s'inspirant de danses comme celles de la 'puce' où une danseuse enlevait ses vêtements petit à petit en quête d'une puce imaginaire jusqu'à ce qu'elle soit nue. En 1905, le spectacle de Mata Hari, qui enlève ses vêtements un à un jusqu'à ce qu'elle ne porte plus qu'un soutien-gorge pailleté et des bijoux au Musée Guimet est un succès immédiat. Il faudra attendre les années 1930 en Angleterre pour que ces spectacles de nus soient produits (il y en avait un seul au *Windmill Theatre* à Londres). La loi britannique de l'époque interdisait aux femmes nues de bouger, ce qui contribua à la renaissance du genre du 'tableau vivant'.

Au début du 20e siècle, de nouvelles façons de concevoir le corps apparaissent. Les avancées médicales et d'hygiène qui avaient par exemple amené le redéveloppement architectural de Paris dans les années 1870 sous le Baron Haussmann, amènent des changements dans les dynamiques urbaines et sociales. Une place au sport et au bien-

être physique est faite et de nouvelles façons de penser au corps apparaissent. En Allemagne naît l'école de pensée, *Lebensreform* (réforme de la vie) qui centre sa philosophie sur le corps. Mettant en valeur l'importance de la forme physique dans le bien-être physique, social mais aussi moral, cette école de pensée prône aussi de faire du sport nu, comme les Grecs anciens le faisaient. Comme les penseurs grecs, les penseurs du *Lebensreform* pensent que le corps nu est un corps naturel, sacré et beau qui doit être célébré. Être nu en groupe, en faisant du sport ou en allant aux bains publics par exemple, doit être quelque chose de naturel où la pudeur ne divise plus les êtres humains. Cette idéologie émane de sentiments patriotiques et germaniques, mais ouvre la voie au naturisme qui devient une mode en Allemagne au début du 20e siècle dans les classes supérieures et devient beaucoup plus démocratique après la première guerre mondiale. C'est de nos jours encore un aspect important de la culture allemande, comme on a pu le voir récemment à Munich où le conseil municipal vient d'autoriser le naturisme dans certains parcs et bords de rivière de la ville.

ACTIVITÉ:

Travailler avec un partenaire. Imaginez que vous n'avais jamais vu votre réflexion dans un miroir, ou bien dans une photo. Demandez à l'autre personne de vous décrire de telle sorte que vous vous reconnaîtriez dans la rue! Utilisez des mots descriptifs plutôt que des jugements.

POUR ALLER PLUS LOIN:

Anne Carol, *'La nudité au XIXe siècle'*, Rives nord-méditerranéennes, 30 / 2008, <http://rives.revues.org/2303>

Johan Chapoutot, *La nudité*, 01/09/2009, in L'Histoire no. 345 <http://www.histoire.presse.fr/dossiers/la-nudite>

MORALEMENT, LA NUDITÉ
AVAIT AUSSI MAUVAISE
RÉPUTATION. LES FEMMES
QUI EXPOSAIENT LEUR
CORPS OU PORTAIENT
DES VÊTEMENTS PLUS
COURTS OU OUVERTS,
ÉTAIENT SOUVENT
CONSIDÉRÉES COMME
DES FEMMES FACILES OU
MÊME DES PROSTITUÉES...

//



REGARDE! NACKTHEIT UM DIE JAHRHUNDERTWENDE

German Language Resource

Translation by Niccola Shearmann

Es ist eine schön, doch rohe Nacktheit, die in den Aktzeichnungen von Egon Schiele in der Ausstellung *The Radical Nude* ausgestellt wird. Zu Lebzeiten des Künstlers schockierend, bereitet uns diese Darstellungsweise auch noch im einundzwanzigsten Jahrhundert Unbehagen. Nacktheit in der Kunst existierte schon immer: von der dem perfekten Körper nacheifernden altgriechischen Plastik bis zur religiösen Ikonographie, die den Sündenfall Adam und Evas symbolisierte, sowie von mythologischen Bildern der Göttin Venus bis hin zur Darstellung von Frauen vom zweifelhaftem Ruf in den Werken von Toulouse-Lautrec oder Degas. Gleichzeitig waren solche Darstellungen auch immer streng reguliert.

In der westlichen Gesellschaft, insbesondere im Europa des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, war Nacktheit tabu. Allgemeinbekannt ist, dass im viktorianischen Zeitalter der Körper vollkommen bedeckt sein musste: Frauen trugen lange voluminöse Kleider, mit sehr wenigen Öffnungen und die Kragen hoch zugeknöpft. In der gleichen Epoche trugen die Frauen in Frankreich mehrere Kleidungsstücke übereinander, die nackte Haut durch allerlei Unterwäsche bedeckte. Jedes noch so kleine unbedeckte Teil wurde als erotisch empfunden, wie zum Beispiel, wenn das Handgelenk oder der Knöchel (zwischen Handschuh und Ärmel oder zwischen Stiefel und Rock) zu sehen war. Nur unter sehr spezifisch geregelten Umständen wurde der nackte Körper betrachtet oder untersucht: beispielsweise in künstlerischen oder medizinischen Kreisen. In beiden Fällen unterlag aller Umgang mit dem Körper sowohl strengen Regeln als auch der öffentlichen Überwachung; eine Tatsache, die alle erotischen oder unanständigen Taten unterdrückte. Interessant ist jedoch, dass zur selben Zeit die Leichenhäuser in Frankreich bis 1877 öffentliche Einrichtungen waren, zu denen jedermann Zutritt hatte und nahezu nackte Körper durch Schaufenster betrachten konnte.

Sozialhistoriker fanden heraus, dass sich die meisten Menschen bis ins frühe zwanzigste Jahrhundert nur selten den ganzen Körper wuschen. Zwar wurden regelmäßig die freiliegenden Körperteile

gewaschen (das Gesicht, die Hände, die Oberarme), dennoch wurden Bäder oder Duschen erst im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert allgemein üblich. Selbst in wohlhabenden und gebildeten Kreisen hatte man Angst davor, den ganzen Körper ins Wasser zu tauchen. Im Laufe des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts verbreitete sich der Tourismus überall in Europa und Badeorte wurden immer beliebter. Trotzdem schwammen die Menschen fast völlig bekleidet im Wasser. Erst nach weiterem wissenschaftlichen und medizinischen Fortschritt wurde die Öffentlichkeit über die Gesundheitsvorteile von der regelmäßigen Reinigung des ganzen Körpers aufgeklärt, was zu einer neuen Wahrnehmung des eigenen Körpers und der Bedeutung seiner Nacktheit führte. Hinzu kam die Tatsache, dass erst im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert der Ganzkörperspiegel durch sinkende Herstellungskosten für jedermann verfügbar wurde. Dies führte dazu, dass man sich des eigenen Aussehens und des Körpers im Allgemeinen gewahr wurde.

Von einem moralischen Standpunkt gesehen, wurde Nacktheit als sehr unanständig empfunden. Frauen, die ihren Körper offenkundig zur Schau stellten, wurden als „leichtes Mädchen“ oder Prostituierte klassifiziert. Folglich entstanden im Paris des späten neunzehnten Jahrhunderts mehrere Lokale von stetig wachsender Beliebtheit, auch wenn diese vom herrschenden Bürgertum als Orte vom schlechten Ruf angesehen wurden. Bekannt wurden in den achtziger und neunziger Jahren Nachtlokale wie etwa das Moulin Rouge oder das Folies-Bergère, wo man sogenannte *tableaux vivants* oder auch gewagten Tänze wie den *Cancan* aufführte. In solchen Etablissements soll auch der *Striptease* seinen Ursprung gefunden haben, etwa durch verführerische Tänze wie 'den Floh', wo sich die Tänzerin nach und nach immer mehr Kleiderstücke auszieht, auf der fruchtlosen Suche nach einem über ihren Körper krabbelnden Floh. 1905 hatte Mata Hari über Nacht Erfolg mit einer Nummer, in der sie sich bis zu einem juwelenen BH entkleidete. Erst in den 1930er Jahren wurde im Londoner *Windmill Theater* die einzige Nacktrevue in England eröffnet, da nach britischem Recht nackten Frauen das Bewegen auf der Bühne verboten war; eine Sache, die zum Wiederaufleben des *tableau vivant* führte.

Zu Beginn des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts änderte sich die Einstellung zum Körper. Fortschritte im medizinischen und wissenschaftlichen Bereich führten zu neuen Hygienestandards, die wiederum die sozialen Verhältnisse sowie eine neue Stadtdynamik beeinflussten. Ein Beispiel hierfür ist die Neugestaltung von Paris in den 1870er Jahren durch Baron Haussmann. Ferner entwickelte sich eine neue Betonung von Sport und der körperlichen Gesundheit. In Deutschland entstand eine neue Bewegung namens 'Reform des Lebens', deren Philosophie vom Körper ausging. Der Glaube, dass körperliche Fitness auch das physische, soziale und moralische Wohlbefinden fördert, erlaubte es, Sport wieder ohne Kleidung zu treiben, wie es schon bei den alten Griechen die Regel gewesen war. Wie die Griechen der Antike, glaubten auch die Anhänger der Reform des Lebens, dass der nackte Körper etwas Natürliches, Heiliges und Schönes sei und geehrt werden sollte. Die öffentliche Nacktheit sollte – zum Beispiel in einer Sportgruppe oder beim öffentlichen Baden – als selbstverständlich angesehen werden, und man meinte, dass Menschen nicht mehr durch Scham von einander ferngehalten werden sollten.

Während diese Bewegung zwar in einem bestimmten germanischen Nationalgefühl wurzelte, ebnete sie auf der anderen Seite den Weg für einen Naturismus, der zunächst in den höheren Schichten gelebt wurde, sich aber nach dem ersten Weltkrieg auf alle Bevölkerungsschichten ausdehnte. Noch heute ist dieser Brauch ein wichtiger Teil einer deutschen Lebensart, so darf man heute zum Beispiel in manchen Grünanlagen und an einigen Flussarmen in München auch ohne Bekleidung spazieren gehen.

AKTIVITÄT:

Arbeite mit einem Partner zusammen. Stell dir vor, du hast dich selbst nie im Spiegel oder in einem Foto gesehen. Jetzt lasse deinen Partner dich beschreiben, und zwar auf solcher Weise, daß du dich erkennen würdest, wenn du dich auf der Strasse sehen solltest. Der Partner sollte dabei Wörter benutzen, die dich beschreiben, und nicht solche, die dich beurteilen.

English Translation: NUDITY AT THE TURN OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Alice Odin

The bodies drawn by Egon Schiele between 1913 and 1917 expose beautiful but raw nudity, in a manner that was seen as shocking in his time, and in a way that still makes us – 21st century viewers – uncomfortable. Nudity in art has always existed, from the Ancient Greek sculptures emulating perfect bodies, to religious iconography symbolising Adam and Eve's original sin; from mythological **Venuses** to depictions of disreputable women in Toulouse-Lautrec or Degas' works. It has however always been scrupulously regimented.

Nudity in Western society, and more particularly in Europe during the 19th century was taboo. It is well known that in Victorian society, bodies were heavily covered up: women wore long flowing dresses with very few openings and collars buttoned up high. In France, at the same time, women wore many layers of clothing, with various undergarments covering up their flesh. Any small part of the body left uncovered such as a wrist (between a sleeve and a glove) or an ankle left bare between a boot and a skirt was seen as erotic. Naked bodies were only seen and investigated under very specific regulated circumstances: in the art or medical worlds. In both cases, the engagement with the body was carefully controlled and public, which stifled any erotic or improper acts. It is however to be noted that up until 1877 in France, morgues were public places where anyone could walk in and see an almost naked body on display behind a window pane.

Social historians have uncovered that up until the very early 20th century most people rarely washed their whole bodies. Exposed parts of the body (the face, hands and upper arms) would be washed regularly, but showers or baths were not commonly used until the 20th century. Even in wealthy and educated circles, there was a fear of washing the whole body with water. While tourism expanded and seaside resorts bloomed in the 19th century all across Europe, people still bathed in the sea almost fully clothed. It was not until medical and scientific progress alerted the general public to the importance of washing their entire body regularly that people took note of what their own bodies and therefore their own nakedness

entailed. And it was not until full length mirrors were made more readily available in the 20th century (they were very expensive to produce until then) that people could actually see what their naked body, and therefore bodies generally, looked like.

Morally, the naked body was also disreputable. Women seen as flaunting their bodies would be classed as easy women or prostitutes. Logically, in the late 19th century in Paris, underground places where nudity was on display appeared and became increasingly popular, even though they were seen as disreputable haunts by the ruling bourgeoisie. In the 1880s and 1890s, places like the Moulin Rouge or the Folies-Bergère, which put on show **tableaux vivants** or revealing dances such as the Cancan, became well known. Some say the origins of striptease began there and then with such seductive dances as the 'flea' act where a dancer would slowly remove layer after layer of clothing in a vain search for a flea crawling on her body. In 1905, Mata Hari's act at the Musée Guimet was an overnight success. Her act included her progressive shedding of clothes and accessories to a jewelled bra. It was not until the 1930s that nude shows appeared in England (and the only one was at the Windmill Theatre in London), where the British law prohibited naked women from moving and thus gave way to the revival of the *tableau vivant*.

At the beginning of the 20th century, new ways of thinking about the body emerged. Medical and scientific progress led to new hygiene standards which also led the way to new urban and social dynamics, as the redevelopment of Paris in the 1870s under Baron Haussmann has shown. A new emphasis on physical fitness and sports also induced new ways of thinking about the body. In Germany, a school of thought known as the *Lebensreform* (life reform) became prominent, anchoring its philosophy in the body. Highlighting that physical fitness enabled better physical, social and moral well-being, it also allowed for sports to be practised naked, just as the ancient Greeks had done. Like the ancient Greeks, *Lebensreform* thinkers thought that naked bodies were natural, sacred and beautiful and should be celebrated. Being naked in a group, while practicing sports or in public baths for example, should be

natural, and modesty should no longer drive a wedge between human beings. The ideological core of this stemmed from patriotic and Germanic roots and paved the way for naturism, which became a trend in Germany in the early 20th century, initially amongst the upper classes but becoming much more democratic after the First World War. It still is an important trend of German culture nowadays with the city of Munich recently allowing people to wander around naked in certain parks and riverbank areas of the city.

ACTIVITY

Work with a partner. Imagine that you have never seen yourself in a mirror or a photograph. Ask the other person to describe you in such a way that you would recognise yourself walking in the street! Use descriptive rather than judgmental words.

PREVIOUS PAGE:

Egon Schiele,
Standing Nude with Orange Stockings, 1914.
Black chalk and gouache,
48.5 x 32.1 cm.
Leopold Museum, Vienna.

CURRICULUM LINKS:
KS3+ MFL French and German,
History and other Humanities

7: THE BODY IN ART: SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

DISCUSSION AND DEBATING ACTIVITY

'Should artworks be subject to censorship?'

Split into two groups. One group should argue that artworks should not be censored or suppressed from public view, but should be available for those who choose to see them. The other group should argue for censorship.

See if you can reach any form of agreement.

Now imagine that you are a regulator, responsible for deciding what is and isn't allowed to be seen a) in art galleries and b) on public billboards. Create a set of criteria or rules to be followed.

Are there any paintings in The Courtauld Gallery that you would ban from public view? You can also see the Courtauld collections online at www.artandarchitecture.org.uk

Would your criteria have led to the Royal Academy's poster for the Cranach exhibition being banned? See the story at: www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2008/feb/13/art1

IMAGES::

top:
Egon Schiele
Nude Self-Portrait, 1910.
Black chalk, gouache and opaque white on paper, 44.9 x 31.1 cm.
Leopold Museum, Vienna.

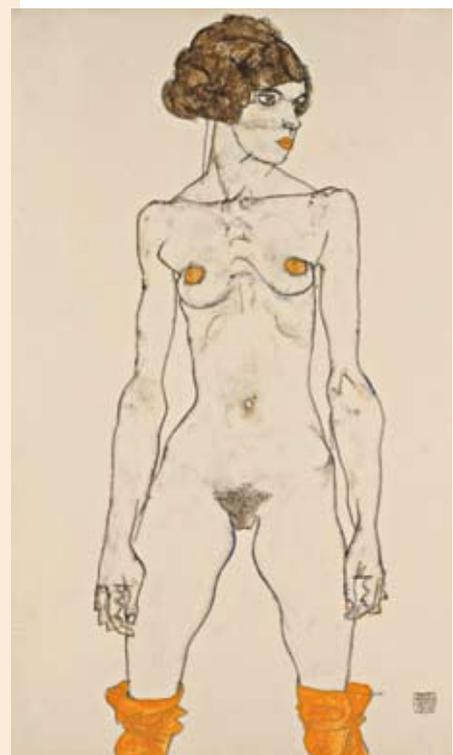
bottom:
Egon Schiele,
Standing Nude with Orange Stockings, 1914.
Black chalk and gouache, 48.5 x 32.1 cm.
Leopold Museum, Vienna.

PRACTICAL ACTIVITY

Think about the various ways in which you use your body expressively: not just facial expressions, but hand gestures, posture, the way you walk, your closeness or distance from the person or group you are with etc. Begin by working as a group, playing a form of the game charades, where you each try to present an emotion, reaction or viewpoint using only your body and that of a partner if you wish. The group must guess what you are trying to portray. Here are some suggestions:

- LONELINESS
- ANGER
- EXCITEMENT
- FRIENDSHIP
- DISAPPROVAL

Think about which particular gestures were the most successful. Can you now develop one of these into an artwork or advertisement in any medium (sketch, painting, photograph or even film) that is articulate without using any words? You may want to use particular elements of the medium you are working in to reinforce the pose you have chosen to portray - for example colour or line in painting, or speed in filming. A palette of vibrant colours might suggest an impassioned expression, a sketchy outline might represent uncertainty or a slow motion film might suggest something thoughtful or controlled. You could even experiment with making your work more abstract, leaving out a representation of the body altogether but using certain angles, shapes or noises that replace limbs, features or conversation, maybe exaggerating or repeating their form or line of movement.



CURRICULUM LINKS:
KS3+ Art and Design, History,
History of Art and other Humanities

8: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ABSTRACT: (noun) Art that does not represent an object, person or scene from external 'reality' but that is made up of non-representational colours and forms. (verb) To reduce an object's form to bare essentials so that it retains something of its original appearance but is vastly abbreviated and simplified, such that it may appear non-representational.

ACADEMIC: Related to study and thought rather than practical skills; in accordance with the principles of the **Academy**.

ACADEMY: An institution responsible for higher learning or research or the development of art, literature or science. Art Academies were first set up in the fifteenth century to educate artists as intellectuals rather than just craftsmen. The French Academy was founded in 1648 and ran its own school, the **École des Beaux-Arts** which is a famous French art school located in Paris. The school has a history spanning more than 350 years, training many of Europe's great artists. Academic style was modelled on classical 'antiquities,' preserving these **idealised** forms and passing the style on to future generations.

ANARCHIC: An attitude with no controlling rules or principles to give order; an anti-institutional mindset.

ANTIQUITY: The ancient past, especially the period of **classical** and other human civilizations before the Middle Ages.

BODICE: The part of a woman's dress (excluding the sleeves) which is above the waist.

BOURGEOIS: Belonging to or characteristic of the middle class, typically with reference to its perceived materialistic values or conventional attitudes.

BUSTLE: A dress style that put more emphasis on the curve of the waist, and placed the fullness of the skirt at the back, supported by a hooped petticoat.

CAFÉ-CONCERT: A form of entertainment popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially in Paris, which incorporated a leisurely meal and/or drinks with a light-hearted musical performance or a circus or cabaret act. Café-concerts originally took place outside, but were later accommodated indoors in large music halls.

CENSORSHIP: The suppression of speech, public communication or other information which may be considered objectionable, harmful, sensitive, politically incorrect or

inconvenient as determined by governments, media outlets, authorities or other such entities.

CHIGNON: A large coil of real and artificial hair worn either at the nape of the neck or the back of the head.

CHEMISETTE: An undershirt.

CHAPEAU: A hat or cap.

CLASSICAL: Relating to or inspired by ancient Greek or Roman literature, art, or culture. The classical period is hard to define, but is often taken to begin with the earliest poetry of Homer, around the 7th-8th century BC, and to end with the rise of Christianity and decline of the Roman Empire in the 5th century AD.

COMMODITY CULTURE: A social attitude that relies on the assignment of economic value to useful objects (commodities), trading them for profit. A commodity culture is often seen as a characteristic of wealthy or capitalist countries, because it promotes competition that squeezes the poorest or least valuable out of the bottom of the market, turning essentials into luxuries and shopping into a pastime.

COUTURIER: An establishment or person who makes original garments to order for private clients.

CULT OF THE EGO: Worship, prioritisation or staging of the self.

DIVINE: Relating to God or gods rather than humanity.

EXPRESSIVE: Effectively conveying thought or feeling. Expressive painting is often **gestural**.

FAUVIST: 'Fauve', literally meaning 'wild beast', was the name jokingly given to a group of artists including Matisse, Derain and Vlaminck who exhibited together in Paris in 1905. Their works were intentionally instinctive and spontaneous rather than sophisticated, and often used brush colours and broad brushstrokes, leaving areas of the composition looking unfinished. The Fauves embraced the childlike appearance of their art as a form of **expressive Primitivism**.

FORM: The shape, appearance or structure of something, be it an object, artwork or piece of writing or music.

FORMAL: Concerned with the **form**, shape, composition and appearance of a painting, as opposed to its content. 'Formalism' is a particular way of thinking about art that stresses these physical characteristics.

FREUD, SIGMUND (1856-1939): An Austrian neurologist who became famous as the founder of psychoanalysis, a clinical method for treating psychological disorders and mental illness. Key principles include the analysis of dreams, free association and an understanding of the unconscious part of the brain.

GESTURAL: Relating to or created by gestures. Gestural art will show evidence that bodily activity has been part of the process of creation, for example through the vigorous application of paint or expressive brushwork.

HUMANIST: A philosophical and ethical stance that emphasises the value and power of human beings, individually and collectively, and generally prefers critical, rational thinking and evidence over faith.

IDEAL/IDEALISED: Represented as perfect or better than in reality. An ideal figure in a painting might be entirely imagined, or might be a form of collage, taking the best parts of several real-life models. Conventionally, an ideal woman would have balanced proportions, smooth skin and soft features, whilst an ideal male figure would have strong musculature.

IMPASTO: An area of very thickly applied paint that stands out from the surface of the canvas and in which the marks of the brush can be clearly seen.

IMPRESSIONISTS: A group of artists including Degas, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir and Sisley who exhibited together in Paris from 1874 to 1886, independently of the **Salon**. Challenging black and white photography, they sought to create an impression of aspects of a scene that could only be experienced, not recorded mechanically - such as the changing effects of light on colour or the atmosphere of an interior. They sometimes painted out of doors without making extensive preparatory studies, and their works often leave brushstrokes and underpainting visible, drawing attention to the non-mechanical production of their canvases.

LIFE-DRAWING: Drawing the human figure from observation of a live model, often naked.

LITHOGRAPHY: A printed image made using a process that relies on the principle that oil and water do not mix. An image is drawn or transferred onto a smooth stone or metal plate using oil, fat or wax. Acid is then applied to the plate, which etches into the areas that are not protected by the oil-based medium. The plate is then moistened and the etched areas retain water. An oil-based ink is then applied and repelled by the water, sticking

only to the original drawing. Finally, the ink is transferred to a blank paper sheet, producing a printed page which is called a lithograph.

MANTLE: A loose sleeveless cloak or shawl, worn especially by women.

MARTYR: A person who is killed because of their strong religious or other beliefs.

MATERIALITY: A state where attention is drawn to the physical or material properties of an object or form.

MISOGYNISTIC: Demonstrating misogyny, a hatred or dislike of women, often leading to sexual discrimination and the **objectification** of women through the prioritisation of a male viewpoint.

MODERN: Of the present moment. 'Modern' artists will often engage with **modernity**. Or they might reject the convention of art as representational, seeing this as an illusion and producing abstract canvases, focused on elements such as composition, form, colour and surface rather than on content or subject matter. This is often called 'Modernism'.

MODERNITY: Literally, the present-day. A way of engaging with what is modern in such a way as to embrace the present and emphasise its characteristics over those of the past. In art, the term often refers to a period from c.1850-1950, during which artists often tried to depict or replicate the experience of existing in a constantly changing world and actively ejected the conventions of the **Academy**.

MYTHICAL/MYTHOLOGICAL: Relating to, based on or appearing in myths, usually of ancient Greek or Roman origin. The term can be used to mean something that is made up or based on a story or the imagination as opposed to documented or based on fact.

NARCISSISTIC: Having or showing an excessive interest in or admiration of oneself and one's physical appearance. The term comes from the myth of Narcissus, who fell in love with his own reflection in a pool and died because he was unable to leave it.

NAVEL-GAZING: Engaging in self-absorbed behaviour. A more casual term for Narcissistic, the phrase comes from the idea that looking down at one's own navel will result in a narrow perspective that ignores a wider world view.

NIETZSCHE, FRIEDRICH (1844-1900):

A German philosopher, whose theories embraced the physical world in which we live rather than the idea of a world beyond. Amongst his philosophies was the idea that

God was dead and had been replaced by a superior human being, the 'Übermensch'.

OBJECTIFICATION: Treatment of a human being as though they are a passive object, without rights; in art, a figure that has been objectified in a painting will not seem to play an active role, but will exist to be looked at or used.

OTHERNESS: The quality, fact or experience of being different - 'other' than oneself.

PAGODA SLEEVE: A form of sleeve consisting of a narrow upper arm spreading to a wide opening at the wrist.

PERSPECTIVE: An artistic technique intended to help depict a three-dimensional scene or object on a two-dimensional (flat) canvas. The laws of perspective dictate that objects in the distance will appear smaller and paler than those in the foreground.

PORNOGRAPHY/PORNOGRAPHIC: The portrayal of sexual subject matter with the intention of providing the viewer with excitement and pleasure. Usually in the form photos, magazines or films.

PRIMITIVE: Basic or raw, unaffected by the constraints of civilised society; going back to origins. In the early twentieth century, many artists collected or became interested in art from cultures they understood to be 'Primitive' in Africa and Oceania. They used aspects of this 'non-western' art to inspire their own paintings and sculptures, for example the flat faces or almond shaped eyes of dance masks. They saw this as a way of making art that was 'authentic' and not overshadowed by what was acceptable to the **Academy**.

REGULATION: A rule or policy maintained by an authority, with the intention of controlling something that might otherwise become unruly or out of hand.

RENAISSANCE: Literally 're-birth'. The term given, roughly, to the art and literature of the 14th to 16th centuries, in which artists and authors tried to revive and learn from the ideals of **antiquity** in developing their own art. The Italian Renaissance led to paintings that looked more three-dimensional than ever before as artists studied ancient sculpture and invented **perspective**.

SALON (PARIS SALON): The annual (or later biannual) official exhibition connected to the Académie des Beaux Arts (Fine Art school) in Paris. It began in 1725 and its glory years were 1748-1890. In order to exhibit, artists had to have their works accepted by a jury with

strong ideals, and participation was a mark of honour. In 1881, the government withdrew official sponsorship from the annual Salon, and a group of artists organised the Société des Artistes Français to take responsibility for the show, at which point it became somewhat more forward-thinking.

SECOND EMPIRE: The period in French history from 1852-1870 when Napoleon Bonaparte III ruled as an emperor. Napoleon's rule interrupted the revolutionary republican system, which is still in place today.

STYLISATION: The treatment or depiction of an object in a decorative or non-realistic style. A form might be turned into a pattern, or given a simplified or prominent outline, for example.

SYMBOLIST: Someone, especially an artist or writer, who uses imagery in their work, allowing one thing to stand for something else (often a physical form standing for an idea or concept). The late nineteenth century Symbolist movement was international, and artists often used dreamlike or mystical imagery to hint at deeper meanings that went beyond physical representation.

TABLEAU VIVANT: A scene presented on stage by costumed actors who remain silent and motionless as if in a picture. In the underground cafes of Paris, these scenes were re-enacted by scantily clothed women.

TENUE DE PREMIÈRE: (French term) a dress worn for the opening night of a performance.

VENUS: The Roman goddess of love and beauty, the Roman equivalent of the Greek Aphrodite. She is often represented as an ideal female figure in sculptures and paintings.

VOGUE: the prevailing fashion or style at a particular time.

9: TEACHING RESOURCE CD

This CD is a compilation of key images from The Courtauld Gallery's collection and the exhibition **EGON SCHIELE: THE RADICAL NUDE** related to the theme 'The Body in Art'.

The Power Point presentation included in the CD aims to contextualise the images and relate them to one another. All the images (and an accompanying image list) are also included individually in the 'images' folder.

FURTHER DETAILS:

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TEACHERS' RESOURCE
THE BODY IN ART
First Edition

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