

## **A love for myths and gloves: Max Klinger's *Opus VI A Glove (1881)* and his modern way of visualising society's fear of the *femme fatale* through classical Greco-Roman myths**

When in 1878 the Art Union in Berlin<sup>1</sup> exhibited a cycle of ten ink drawings simply called *A Glove (Ein Handschuh)* by the 21-year-old Max Klinger, the critics were at odds. As the Danish critic Georg Brandes described in *Modern Spirits (Moderne Geister)* in 1887: "Their originality was so deep and baroque, unlike everything seen before [...]. The average Berlin citizen is not sure, if this was ingenious or witty madness."<sup>2</sup> Three years later the drawings were published as a print series entitled *A Glove (Opus VI)* with slight alternations<sup>3</sup> and in the following essay this etching cycle from 1881 presents the starting point of this discussion.

In today's view, the series not only attests the artist's originality and skill, but it is also recognised as one of the earliest examples of German symbolist art.<sup>4</sup> Together with themes like criticism at the academic norms for art, visualisation of dreams, and most of all the issue of female sexuality at this time, it represents contemporary major debates at the time, not only in Germany, but also in Vienna around 1900.

Due to its unconventional approach, *A Glove* visualises the protagonist's innermost thoughts about desire and fears for his sexualised object in fantastic and nightmarish scenes. The aim of this essay is to explore Klinger's way of illustrating fetishism and the fear of female sexuality connecting with motives of classical myths like the birth of Aphrodite, the triumph of Galatea and the story of Pygmalion.

First this essay will begin with a short overview of the current state of research related to *Opus VI* and continues with a visual analysis of the ten prints in the same order as published in the first edition in 1881. Afterwards, a definition of fetishism at this time period, followed by an explanation of the symbols for male and female sexuality in Klinger's series, is given. To outline the main points of this essay, the iconography and symbolism of this artwork are compared to classical Greco-Roman myths. The conclusion leads to the contextualisation of Klinger's *A Glove* as an ironic reflection of major debates concerning modernity, dreams and the attitude towards female sexuality in contemporary society at the turn of the century.

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<sup>1</sup> Mück, 25

<sup>2</sup> „Ihre Originalität war so tief und so barock, sie waren unähnlich Allem, was man früher in dieser Art gesehen [...] Der gewöhnliche Berliner war allerdings nicht klar darüber, ob dies Genialität oder Wahnwitz sei [...].“  
Quoted after Mück, 25

<sup>3</sup> Streicher, 128

<sup>4</sup> Wenn, 70

Alexander Dücker's monograph *Max Klinger* (1976) forms one of the earliest modern examples of research about this artist. He focuses mainly on Klinger's graphics, which is stated as the most virtuoso part of his oeuvre.

The catalogue for the exhibition *Max Klinger 1857-1920. Ein Handschuh. Traum und Wirklichkeit* (1992) in the *Städtische Galerie im Städelschen Kunstinstitut* in Frankfurt deals with Klinger's first success in the German art scene. Together with other graphics by other artists like Félicien Rops, Gustave Doré or Odilon Redon the authors Klaus Gallwitz and Margret Stuffmann present an overview of recurring themes like dreams, desires and the image of the artist.

With *Graphic Works of Max Klinger* (1977) Kirk Varnedoe and Elizabeth Streicher published a comprehensive description of Klinger's graphic cycles. In 1990, Elizabeth Streicher wrote her dissertation exclusively about *Max Klinger's "Paraphrase on the Finding of a Glove" (1878-1881)*.

Christiane Hertel's article *Irony, Dream and Kitsch: Max Klinger's Paraphrase of the Finding of a Glove and German Modernism* (1992) concludes the sudden change in style represents the change of society's mindset during Klinger's time.

Christian Drude describes Klinger's most remarkable quality in his book *Historismus als Montage. Kombinationsverfahren im graphischen Werk Max Klingers* (2005). According to Drude, Klinger combines a variety of styles and techniques, according to the stylistic pluralism practiced in academic art.

Although Anja Wenn's publication *Max Klingers Grafikzyklus „Ein Leben“* (2006) treats *A Life (Opus VIII)* by Klinger, her research is also important for *A Glove*. The author emphasizes the amount of graphic cycles Klinger produced between 1880 and 1900, on which he must have worked simultaneously. Therefore, the artist's main focus was to deal with specific themes and topics and the pictures were later divided into different graphic cycles.<sup>5</sup>

In *Das Ornamentale in Max Klingers Druckgrafik. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Antikenrezeption und des Japonismus* (2007), by Sookyoung Kim, the author focuses on the ornamental elements found in *A Glove* and postulates them as a forerunner of the later evolved Jugendstil.

In the context of the fear of women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century society, Cathrin Kruse compares works by Arnold Böcklin, Franz von Stuck and Max Klinger in *Das lockende Weib und der Tod. Tod und Leidenschaft in der deutschen Malerei des 19. Jahrhunderts* (2007).

Hans-Dieter Mücks monograph *Von der herben Zartheit schöner Formen. Max Klinger. Leben und Werk 1857 bis 1920* (2015) is a very detailed research report, where Klinger's life and work are explained in great detail.

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<sup>5</sup> Wenn, 12

The narrative of *A Glove* starts with the *Place (Ort)* [FIG 1] of the occurrence, namely a roller-skating rink in Berlin. Between the well-dressed figures, which clearly presents them as part of bourgeois society, we see a man resembling the artist Max Klinger on the left side. He wears striped trousers, glasses and his characteristic beard. He stands next to another, who is presumably his friend Hermann Prell.<sup>6</sup> Their attention is aimed on a little girl that has apparently just tumbled on the ground. A woman, whose white dress makes her stand out amongst the other characters, sits in front of the building.

The *Glove* series is probably inspired by Klinger's personal experience. The research literature mentions a love affair between the young artist and a "Brazilian woman T.". He apparently met her on the roller-skating rink in the Hasenheide in Berlin. It is further described that Klinger intended to marry her, but it was not possible due to his financial situation. Therefore, the following plates can be seen as visualisations of his very personal desires and horrors he experienced during his unhappy affair.<sup>7</sup>

In *Action (Handlung)* [FIG 2] the young man resembling Klinger picks up a white glove from the ground, which was dropped by the woman in the white dress. She smoothly rolls away, while the man leans towards the glove. This movement makes his hat fall off, which mirrors the falling of the woman's glove. On the left we see another woman, who is accompanied by a man on each side. It cannot be clearly said, if it was the woman's intention to lose her glove, which was known as a gesture of male courtship in German literature.<sup>8</sup>

*Yearnings (Wünsche)* [FIG 3] represents the transition from the realistic world to the subjective inner sphere of the protagonist. A male figure sits in his bed and buries his face in his hands, possibly out of sorrow. Next to him is a side table, where an extinguished candle signals that the man has been up all night. The white glove lays down at his feet on the left side. A landscape with mountains and trees emerges beyond this domestic scene in a bedroom. Behind the glove grows a tree with fruits, whose height emphasises the horizontal composition of the etching. At the bottom of this tree, we see a female figure walking in the distance and away from the protagonist. The stylisation of the tree and the upright format are influenced by Japanese art.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore the branches of the tree mirror the shape of a hand or a glove.

In contrast to the calm atmosphere we experienced before, *Rescue (Rettung)* [FIG. 4] displays a stormy and turbulent scene at sea. In a white sailboat a bearded man with a hat tries to reach with a hook the glove, which is threatened to sink in the high waves. The sky is covered by clouds and lightning, which mirrors, again, the shape of the glove.

The iconography of the following picture *Triumph (Triumph)* [FIG 5] resembles an apotheosis. The now fur trimmed glove rides in a carriage made of a seashell. It holds the reins of two hippocampi during

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<sup>6</sup> Gallwitz and Stuffmann, 12

<sup>7</sup> Gallwitz and Stuffmann, 37

<sup>8</sup> Drude, 137

<sup>9</sup> Kim, 134

sunrise. The waves turn into flower tendrils, where a scaled dragon-like creature glimpses from beneath a huge acanthus leaf. Compared to the image before, the scene is executed in a much lighter mood.

After the triumphal procession, the glove is then washed ashore in *Hommage (Huldigung)* [FIG. 6] and rests on a rock. This spot is flanked by two high lamps signalling an altar. The foam of the waves suggests the shape of rose petals. A clear and bright sky overarches the scene.

In *Anxieties (Ängste)* [FIG. 7] the viewer is confronted with a visualisation of a nightmare experienced by the male protagonist. While the man sleeps, the sea water gushes into his bedroom. A bald man, submerged in the water and clutching at the young man's bed, points at a giant glove, which rises behind the dreamer's head and tries to grab what appears to be the moon in eclipse. Behind this man, a witch-like figure hangs on the wings of the scaled monster, the latter of which has already been introduced in *Triumph* before. Behind a burning candle, another beast, probably a crocodile, approaches the bed. On the left side of the image a pair of gloves stretches out towards the protagonist. The unsettling atmosphere of this fantastic and scary scene is supported by the darkness of the etching.

The next image named *Repose (Ruhe)* [FIG. 8] portrays the glove on a delicately designed tripod in the centre. At the bottom, rectangular lines suggest symmetry and perspective in the composition, although the missing shadow from the light above makes the construction seem as if floating in an undefined room.<sup>10</sup> In the back long, white gloves hang side by side like a curtain. On the left side the reptile-like creature is disrupting the symmetry by peeking out of the glove row, with its gaze focused on the glove in the centre. Each side features ornamental arabesques trailing downwards, which disturbs the established perspective of the scene, since they do not appear to be fixed to anything in the space of the image.

*Abduction (Entführung)* [FIG. 9] shows the catastrophic climax of the cycle: Now the viewer can recognise the whole body of the creature. The flying beast resembles a flying dinosaur<sup>11</sup> and it gently carries the glove outside the house in his dentulous mouth. The previous owner of the glove tries to grasp the monster's tail, not deterred in the slightest by the shards of the broken window glass, which have not been shattered by the creature during the raid. Under the flying dinosaur a tree blossoms, which represents the "strange nocturnal beauty, which seems to conflict with the horrors of the happening"<sup>12</sup>.

The last plate *Cupid (Amor)* [FIG. 10] brings the cycle to a close. On a horizontal surface the inanimate glove lays under a small rose shrub. The blossoms lean towards the glove, like arrows pointing towards

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<sup>10</sup> Drude, 130

<sup>11</sup> Morton, 139-40

<sup>12</sup> „[...] seltsamer nächtlicher Schönheit sind, die zum Schrecken des Geschehens in Widerspruch zu stehen scheint“. Quoted by Gallwitz and Stuffmann, 28

the object of importance. On its left side sits a dragonfly-winged Cupid, his back twisted and turned towards us and looking straightforward at the viewer. He covers his mouth with his left hand, as if he would yawn.<sup>13</sup> His weapons, a bow and a quiver with four arrows, are pointing towards the viewer. In the end Cupid is disarmed, which means that the protagonist is now freed from his desires.

The story revolves around the protagonist's longing and desires for the female owner of the glove, but due to lack of her presence, the glove becomes his fetish. The choice of a glove as a replacement for a woman in a sexual context, and therefore object of fetishism, can be related to the status as a connoted female garment. Additionally, the process of dressing, where the hand slides into the glove, can evoke the implication of vaginal penetration.

In *Triumph* the glove lays like a "tempting offer" between the "swollen lips of an opened shell"<sup>14</sup>. The shrubs resemble a motive similar to pubic hair and a woman's womb.<sup>15</sup> Streicher describes this scene as "a modern allegory of love and barely suppressed sexuality"<sup>16</sup>. She points out that the glove is in charge of the chariot and therefore, "the glove -- and hence the woman -- is in control"<sup>17</sup>. The emancipation of the glove starts with this plate and it becomes a protagonist in the following plates next to the young man.

On the other side there are also elements sublimating male sexuality. First of all, the violent power of the sea as seen in *Rescue* and *Anxieties* is connoted to male sexuality<sup>18</sup>, which overcomes the young man in his dreams about his fetish. Also, the horse-like hippocampi are related to male instincts.<sup>19</sup> According to Hertel, who illustrates this point with another graphic by Klinger called *Dancing before Chimeras* [FIG 11] around the same time, the thievish creature sublimates male desires too.<sup>20</sup>

It cannot be ignored that the iconographical elements used in the plates *Rescue*, *Triumph*, *Homage*, *Repose* and *Amor* are referring to motives of classical Greco-Roman myths, in particular stories strongly linked to Aphrodite, Galatea and contemporary interpretations based on Pygmalion. In Klinger's *Opus VI* the gloves resemble the female protagonist of these myths and experience their relationship to their respective male counterpart, whose affection is rejected by his love interest. In the case of Aphrodite, she was born by the violent act of castration. These stories combined with the nightmarish scene the protagonist experiences in *A Glove* show his worries of rejection, the dominance of women over men and most importantly the fear of sexual autonomy. All these mentioned traits are embodied in the

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<sup>13</sup> Gallwitz and Stuffmann, 30

<sup>14</sup> Quoted after Kim, 87

<sup>15</sup> Dückers, 136

<sup>16</sup> Quoted by Streicher, 155

<sup>17</sup> Quoted by Streicher, 155

<sup>18</sup> Kim, 132

<sup>19</sup> Dückers, 135

<sup>20</sup> Hertel, 100

*femme fatale*, a stock character in media where the roles are reversed and the woman is, for once, a danger to men.<sup>21</sup> This fear of women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is strongly influenced by the philosophical theories of Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Nietzsche.<sup>22</sup>

The first interpretation is linked to the story of Aphrodite's birth as described by Hesiod.<sup>23</sup> After Cronus castrated his father Uranus, he threw the severed genitals into the sea, out of which Aphrodite emerges and lands at the shores of Cyprus. In *Rescue*, the hook used by the fisherman can be seen as the tool of castration. After that, *Triumph* shows the glove accompanied to the shores, where it strands in *Homage* and becomes a cult in *Repose*. This image sequences resembles Aphrodite's origins. In the end, the glove in *Cupid* appears like a sleeping Venus, who is traditionally accompanied by her son Cupid. The roses and Cupid's presence refer to an "allegory of love"<sup>24</sup>, as stated by Hüls. She explains further that the gloves as an erotic symbol and the disarmed Cupid comes together as an allegory of a "settlement of erotic desires"<sup>25</sup>. Also, the use of blossoms and roses directly refers to the Goddess of love.<sup>26</sup>

A similar iconography compared to the birth of Aphrodite is used for the story of the Nereid Galatea<sup>27</sup> as told by Ovid.<sup>28</sup> Galatea is described as a beauty; whose skin is as white as milk. The cyclops Polyphemus, whose appearance stands in strong contrast to the nymph, falls in love with her beauty. In one version the nymph reciprocates his love and they even have a child named Galas together.<sup>29</sup> In another story, Galatea plays with Polyphemus' feelings but is not in love with him in the end. Her rejection and departure from him are portrayed as the Nereid rides away in a carriage led by hippocampi, while the cyclops stays on shore.<sup>30</sup> To illustrate this point the painting *Triumph of Galatea* by Raphael Santi [FIG 12] is given as an example. The similarity between Klinger's *Triumph* and Raphael's painting has been already noted by Hertel.<sup>31</sup>

Finally, as already mentioned at the beginning, in the third version of the Galatea's myth, she fell in love with Acis and after Polyphemus found out about their relationship, he killed her lover by crushing him with a stone. In this case, the roles of Polyphemus and Acis can be transferred to the creature and the male protagonist in *A Glove*. While the glove tries to escape from the beast in *Triumph*, it is still observed by it in *Repose*. In the end, the monster succeeds by raping her from her lover in *Abduction*.

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<sup>21</sup> Kruse, 15

<sup>22</sup> Kruse, 15.

<sup>23</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony*, 173-206

<sup>24</sup> Hüls, 54

<sup>25</sup> Hüls, 55

<sup>26</sup> Streicher, 169

<sup>27</sup> Czapla, 108

<sup>28</sup> Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Bk XIII, 738-788

<sup>29</sup> Czapla, 97-98.

<sup>30</sup> Czapla, 103-104

<sup>31</sup> Hertel, 101

Another parallel I would like to emphasise is the similarity to the Pygmalion myth. As told by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, Pygmalion was an artist, who was disappointed by the sexually liberal Propoetides. As a consequence, he created a lifelike female sculpture made of ivory and fell in love with his ideal beauty. Pygmalion prayed to Aphrodite that his future wife will be like his statue and the goddess granted him his wish by bringing his artwork to life.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the statue received the name Galatea afterwards, probably because the origin of the nymph's name. Her eponymous appearance strongly resembles the white colour of Pygmalion's statue.<sup>32</sup> On that basis authors of the 19<sup>th</sup> century rewrote the ending, in which, after Galatea displeased her creator, the woman turned to stone again. For instance, in the operetta *Die schöne Galathée (The beautiful Galatea)* from 1865 by the composer Franz von Suppé and Leonhard Kohl von Kohlenegg: with the statue's physical awakening also comes her sexual desire and Galatea seduces not only Pygmalion's servant Ganymed but also his client Mydas, who won her affection through gifts like jewellery. Disgusted by his lover's infidelity, the artist asks Venus for help again. This time the goddess of love turns Galatea to stone again and the artist sells her to Mydas. This ending reflects the double moral standards for male and female sexuality practiced at this time: as soon as a woman practices sexual encounters with other lovers, it leads to prostitution, the expulsion from society and death, which was a common cliché in literature at this time.<sup>33</sup>

In my opinion Klinger likens himself to Pygmalion, because he is not only the artist of the cycle but also resembles the protagonist of the story. After his annoyance of the unrequited love by a woman, her inanimate glove becomes his focus of sexual attraction, exactly like the statue for Pygmalion. Additionally, the glove comes to life in the protagonist's dreams too. The similar iconography used for the triumph of Galatea refers to the namesake statue by Pygmalion too. For instance, in Henry Howards *Love Animating Galatea, the Statue of Pygmalion* [FIG 13], Pygmalion's statue is even arranged like the mythological Galatea. The appearance of the glove is similar to the white coloured materials Pygmalion used for his sculpture like ivory<sup>34</sup> or marble<sup>35</sup>, which also refers to her originally Greek heritage of her name. After the glove was admired in *Homage* and *Repose*, it was subsequently stolen by another male contestant. On request of the artist Klinger, who is terrified by the glove's liberal sexuality in his nightmares, the glove turns lifeless again at the end. But the inanimate glove is still portrayed in a desirable way to the viewer, as the pose resembles a sleeping Venus. As Hertel constates too, "the glove turns back into a trivial accessory"<sup>36</sup>, and the viewer is invited to pick it up.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Czaplá, 112-113

<sup>33</sup> Wenn, 270

<sup>34</sup> As original described by Ovid in *Metamorphoses*, Bk. X, 243-297

<sup>35</sup> In the operetta by Suppée and Kohl von Kohlenegg Galatea is made of marble.

<sup>36</sup> Hertel, 101.

<sup>37</sup> Hertel, 101

This ending resembles the finale of the operetta by Suppé and Kohlenegg, as the sculpture is given away to another owner.

With reference to the etchings as choice of medium, Klinger's prints are inspired by artists such as Albrecht Dürer and Francisco Goya. The popularity of Klinger's work led to a revival of original prints and etchings in Germany at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>38</sup> According to Streicher, the most remarkable similarities between Goya and Klinger concern the subjectivity of the images, which deal with society and life itself, the focus on dreams, nightmares and the perception of one's inner world, the inscription for every scene and "the expressive power of individual images and groups of images"<sup>39</sup>, which is emphasized by the cyclical structure.

Another resemblance between both artists is the use of stylistic elements outside the academic standards. According to Hertel, Klinger transferred this everyday scene of romantic advances into a mythological sphere and therefore refers to "the emblems of the 'higher' [...] cherished in nineteenth-century bourgeois culture, such as Raphael's Galatea and the Venus de Milo"<sup>40</sup>. As a result, the artist's intention was to create an attempt to criticise the academic ideas for style, above all portraying naturalism and realism, in an ironic way.<sup>41</sup> His attempt was successful as it can be seen in the mixed critics mentioned at the beginning. Other stylistic influences originate from Japanese art, as seen in *Yearnings*. An innovation appears in the way ornamental elements are used in *Triumph*, *Homage* and *Repose*. The style of these floral ornaments serves an aesthetic purpose, as it is later pursued in Jugendstil art.<sup>42</sup> Kim even describes this stylistic approach as "Jugendstil surrealism"<sup>43</sup>.

Moreover, Klinger is not only by Brandes' means a modern artist. His way of creating dreamlike worlds are against the academic art norms in 19<sup>th</sup> century Germany, of portraying realism and naturalism. According to Drude, Klinger selects and combines artistic traditions and adds new coding to them. In his opinion, Klinger follows the ideas of historicism and its stylistic pluralism, but in considerate and ironic ways, as the artist connecting regardless different approaches although their obvious discrepancy.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, Kruse described the tendency of adding new levels of interpretation regarding the contemporary situation together with myths are not only present in the works of Klinger, but also in art by other German artists like Arnold Böcklin and Franz von Stuck.<sup>45</sup> Klinger's choice of

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<sup>38</sup> Streicher, 125

<sup>39</sup> Streicher, 124

<sup>40</sup> Quoted by Hertel, 101

<sup>41</sup> Hertel, 102

<sup>42</sup> Kim, 89

<sup>43</sup> Quoted by Kim, 89

<sup>44</sup> Drude, 179

<sup>45</sup> Kruse, 15.



portraying issues like the battle between the sexes, social problems and reflection of the political situation positions him as a “modern style of mind”<sup>46</sup>.

One of the most remarkable qualities of Klinger’s cycle is the involvement of fantastic elements that one can experience in dreams. Probably the most popular book about dreams is Sigmund Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams (Traumdeutung)* published in 1900. But due to the temporal difference, Klinger must have other influences for this particular artwork. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the artist could have access to early works of dream research, for instance *The Life of the Dream (Leben des Traums)* (1861) by Karl Albert Scherner and *The dreaming life of the Soul (Das Traumleben der Seele)* (1877).<sup>47</sup> Klinger functions as a pioneer through his “expression of disturbed fantasies about love and death”<sup>48</sup>. Scholarly researches about dreams and fetish obsessions were made several years later by Sigmund Freud or Richard von Krafft-Ebing.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, Varnedoe and Streicher describe the glove as “blatantly Freudian, being simultaneously phallic (in the finger) and vaginal (in the sheath configuration, an even more specifically in the repeatedly accentuated open slits of it back and palm)”<sup>50</sup>.

Morton suggests another source of inspiration is the works by Heinrich Heine and E. T. A. Hoffmann, where “dreams with the highest degree of terror were attributed to sexual anxieties”<sup>51</sup>. Varnedoe and Streicher described the writings by Karl Marx and Charles Darwin as another inspiration.<sup>52</sup> Especially the appearance of the pterosaur in *A Glove* is a straight up reference to Darwinist theories.<sup>53</sup>

Another focus is the social critical approach regarding women’s sexuality in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Women were not supposed to experience sexual encounters before their marriage, unlike their male counterparts. If they did, they lost their reputation and their prospects of getting married. As women could not live independently, they needed to be always subordinate to a male authority in the patriarchy. This hegemonic power dynamic between the sexes is emphasized in Christian society by the *Fall of men*, where Eve (and subsequently all women after her) is blamed for the expulsion from the garden Eden.<sup>54</sup> Society’s fear of female sexuality and the seductive power over men is visualised in the disturbing nightmares of the young man in *A Glove*.

As already stated, the glove is an erotic symbol and refers in the mythological context directly to female characters, who are self-determined and sexually liberal. Especially in the reference to Pygmalion and Galatea, the annoyance of the glove’s sexual independence leads to the return to lifelessness in the

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<sup>46</sup> Quoted after Morton, 2

<sup>47</sup> Dückers, 135

<sup>48</sup> Quoted by Varnedoe and Streicher, 15

<sup>49</sup> Varnedoe and Streicher, 15

<sup>50</sup> Quoted by Varnedoe and Streicher, 15

<sup>51</sup> Quoted by Morton, 262

<sup>52</sup> Varnedoe and Streicher, 16

<sup>53</sup> Morton, 139

<sup>54</sup> Wenn, 377-378

end, which can be literal seen as death. These double standards in society are also referred by Klinger in other etching cycles such as *A Life (Opus VIII)* and *A Love (Opus X)*.<sup>55</sup>

Generally speaking, Klinger's graphic works and especially *Opus VI* can be interpreted in many different ways, because of their lack of concreteness, which originally was one of the requirements for art demanded by academic norms as well. Despite the supposedly classical motives borrowed from Graeco-Roman mythology, the artist further adds fantastic and subjective elements in his compositions. His symbolic and allegorical imagery wants to lead the viewer's thought to add a new meaning to them. Klinger's oeuvre plays with these associations and his purpose is to visualise previously unseen inner processes, thoughts and emotions of being human.<sup>56</sup> This is one of the many reasons, why Max Klinger is still a popular field of research, as can be seen by his popularity in research in the last 30 years.

All the things considered Max Klinger's *A Glove* represents a variety of themes, which later became central topics for the Viennese culture of the fin-de-siècle. Topics, as it has been discussed in this essay, like rediscovered interest in graphics, the criticism of the norms for art demanded by the academic institution, the way of displaying subjectivity (like dreams or the unconsciousness) and society's issues regarding gender and the fear of the power of the *femme fatale*.

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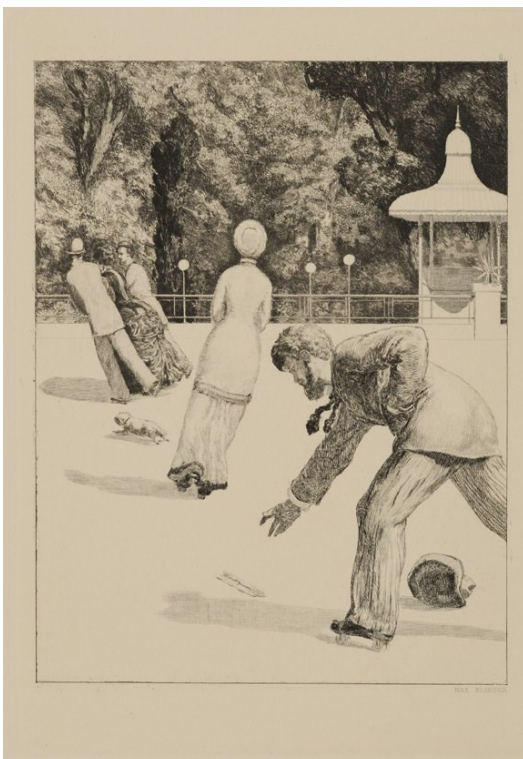
<sup>55</sup> Varnedoe and Streicher, 15

<sup>56</sup> Wenn, 375-376

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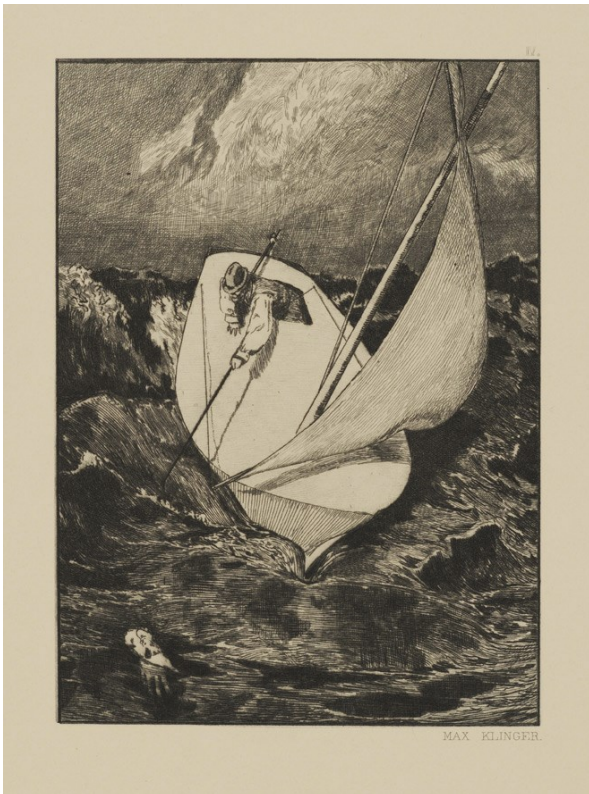
**FIG 1:** Max Klinger, *Place (Ort)*, 1881, fourth edition published in 1898, etching and aquatint, 22.8 x 32.7 cm, Collection of McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton



**FIG 2:** Max Klinger, *Action (Handlung)*, 1881, fourth edition published in 1898, etching and aquatint, 24.8 x 18.9 cm, Collection of McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton

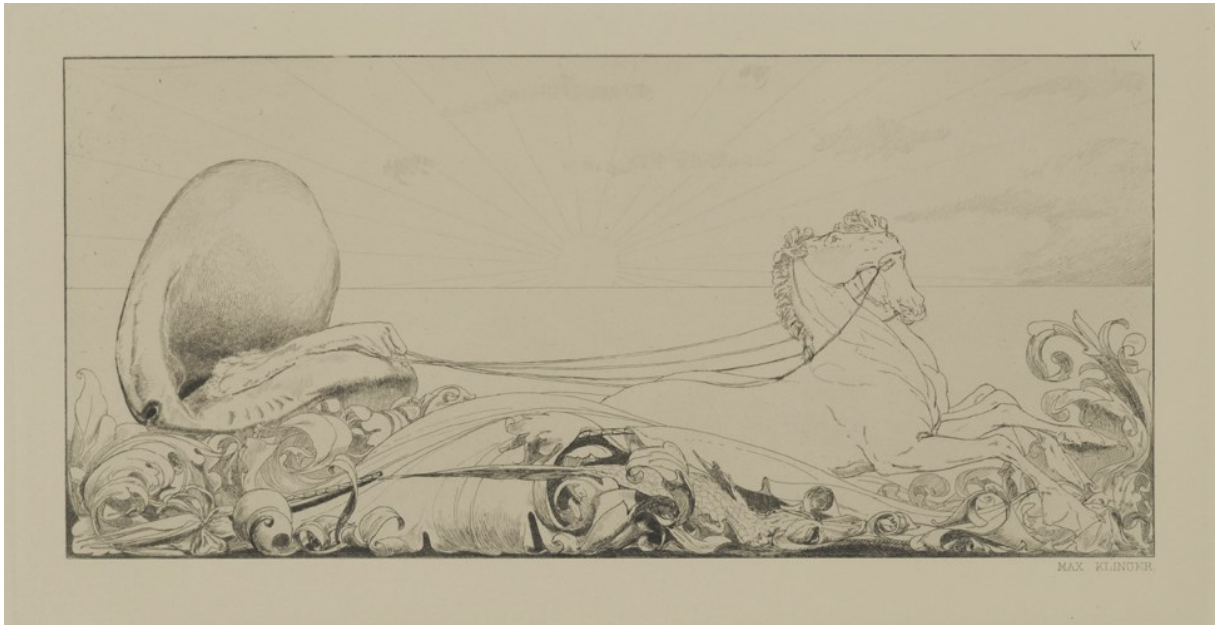


**FIG 3:** Max Klinger, *Yawnings (Wünsche)*, 1881, fourth edition published in 1898, etching and aquatint, 28 x 10.7 cm, Collection of McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton



**FIG 4:** Max Klinger, *Rescue (Rettung)*, 1881, fourth edition published in 1898, etching and aquatint, 14.3 x 10.4 cm, Collection of McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton





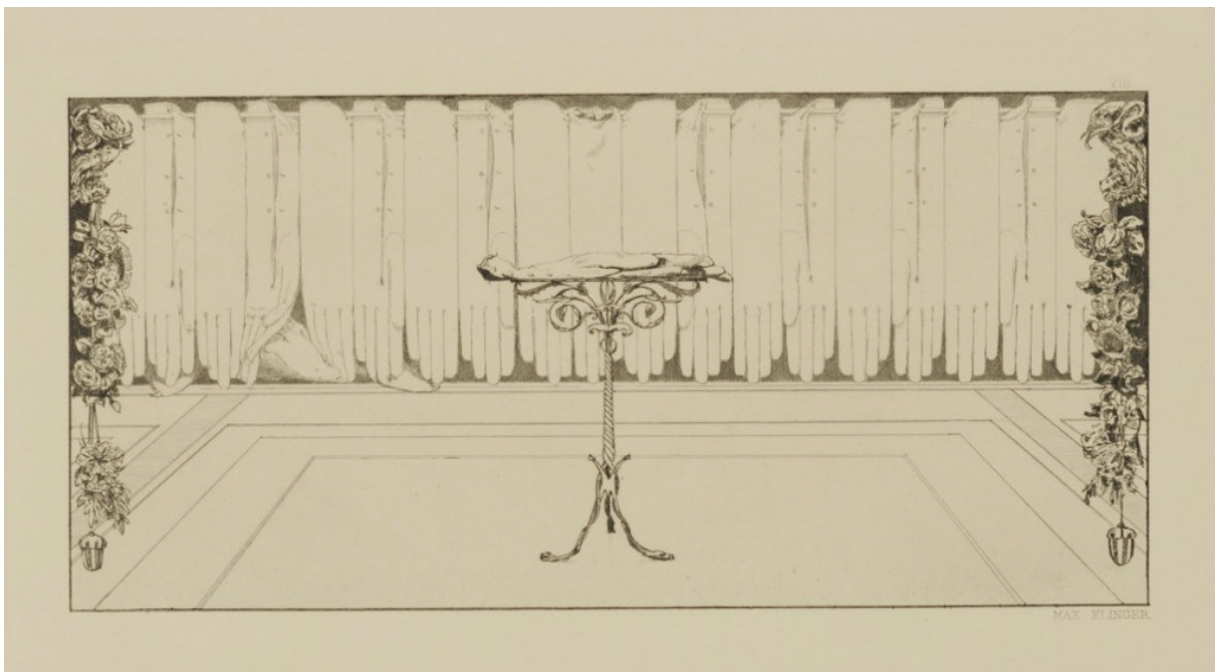
**FIG 5:** Max Klinger, *Triumph (Triumph)*, 1881, fourth edition published in 1898, etching and aquatint, 11 x 23.8 cm, Collection of McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton



**FIG 6:** Max Klinger, *Hommage (Huldigung)*, 1881, fourth edition published in 1898, etching and aquatint, 12.3 x 29.2 cm, Collection of McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton



**FIG 7:** Max Klinger, *Anxieties (Ängste)*, 1881, fourth edition published in 1898, etching and aquatint, 11 x 23.9 cm, Collection of McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton



**FIG 8:** Max Klinger, *Repose (Ruhe)*, 1881, fourth edition published in 1898, etching and aquatint, 11.1 x 23.4 cm, Collection of McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton



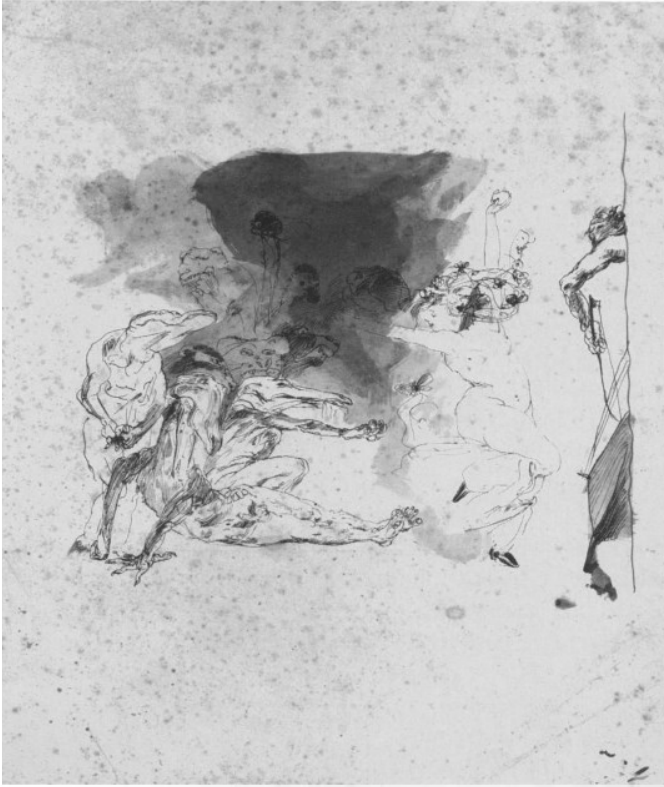


**FIG 9:** Max Klinger, *Abduction (Entführung)*, 1881, fourth edition published in 1898, etching and aquatint, 8.9 x 21.9 cm, Collection of McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton



**FIG 10:** Max Klinger, *Cupid (Amor)*, 1881, fourth edition published in 1898, etching and aquatint, 11 x 23.8 cm, Collection of McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton





**FIG 11:** Max Klinger, *Dancing before Chimeras (Tanz vor Fabelwesen)*, 1880-1881, pen-and-ink and brush in black, 3.3 x 2.81 cm, Staatliche Graphische Sammlungen, Munich



**FIG 12:** Raphael Santi, *Triumph of Galatea*, ca. 1514, fresco 295 x 225 cm, Villa Farnesina, Rome



**FIG 13:** Henry Howard, *Love Animating Galatea, the Statue of Pygmalion*, ca. 1802, oil on canvas, 50.16 x 60.32 cm, Victoria and Albert Museum, London