

ADELE BLOCH-BAUER II. 1912

Oil on canvas, 190 x 120 cm

Signed bottom right: GUSTAV KLIMT

Inventory Nr. 4210

Acquired through a bequest (1928) of Ferdinand Bloch-Bauer.

Formerly in the Bloch-Bauer Collection, Vienna

Novotny/Dobai, Nr. 177

Cf. Strobl II, Nrs. 2074–2112

First exhibition: XI International Art Exhibition, Munich 1913, Nr. 1599

After the high point of his golden style had been reached with the portrait of "*Adele Bloch-Bauer I*" and "*The Kiss*" (see p. 35), Klimt abandoned the use of gold in his work. In its place came a stronger use of colour, which was henceforth to characterise all his painting. The decisive factor behind this change cannot be discovered from any statements by Klimt himself (who very seldom commented on his art), but can be inferred from contemporary tendencies in painting, where colour came to prevail over form (Fauvism in France, Expressionism in Germany). The contrast between the first, golden portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer and this work, painted five years later, is very great. A marked change in

approach is apparent in the composition (from now on Klimt favoured standing models over the somewhat stiff sitting pose), and in the quite different sort of colouring; also in the content, specifically the impression created by the manner and pose of the subject. The latter's "nervous clairvoyance and soul-penetrating urgency" (Novotny) suggest the influence of two painters of the younger generation, Egon Schiele and Oskar Kokoschka; the uncompromising revelation of human nature in their art had so impressed Klimt that he provided both of them with their first opportunity to exhibit before a wider public.

