

# Essay on a. vienna 1900: a total work of art

[Art & Culture](#), [Artists](#)



The primary reading explores the important highlights of the Viennese art in the 1900s, which encompasses an analysis of the wide range of brilliant masters of the time. The term “ Total Work of Art” was referred to in the reading as a vague word that describes the utopian aspirations of the nineteenth-century inventions. On the other hand, Richard Wagner described total work or art as compositions of collective art that defines the era as a whole. Total work have existed deep in the domestic level in Vienna, but the essence of artistry in as a total work of art representing the society in the 1900s depends on those who enjoy the work. The description of artistry during the era is unlike the Ringstrasse or the Baroque because the characteristic that total work or art represent are sophistication and personality of the people that are engaged in the artistic craftsmanship. The secessionists mentioned in the reading encompass the leading artists that helped shape the conventional exhibition policy, out mode regulation, mediocrity, and economic protectionism that created the ground for an enormous change. For example, in the vacuum that resulted from the tradition that was discounted from the range of valid innovation; the changes that the innovators have put forth formed the breeding ground for the 20th century Vienna. The term used throughout in the reading to define the total work of art was Gesamtkunstwek, which became a standard at the height of achieving the overall interest and purpose of art in Vienna. The manifesto attesting to the work of art at that time is the Ver Sacrum or the illustrated art paper inaugurated in 1898.

The fourteenth secession exhibit, on the other hand embodied the principles of Gesamtkunstwek because it features a combination of collective artworks

from different artists in an objective to create aesthetic aura in the Viennese artistic scene. The work of Hoffman was among the celebrated artistic accomplishments during the era while Ludwig Van Beethoven provided the leitmotiv perspectives in the musical scene. Another important work of in the classical music genre was the “ Ode to Joy” by Max Klinger that sets the utopian realization by encapsulating the redemption of human suffering in his music. The rest of the reading was focused on the works of other important artists during the era, which embodies the innovation in methodologies and technique such as the Christian Iconography works in oil by Kokoschka. However, among the emerging Viennese artists during the 1900s, Arnold Schoenberg’s work took the special place in the heart of the Vienna art movement. Schoenberg is not only a notable composer, but also a visual artist by actively participating as both a composer and a painter.

## **B. Reading reaction**

The part that I find most interesting about the reading is the introduction of the various artists that were not or seldom mentioned in the mainstream art discourse. However, the most important aspect that I picked up in the reading process is the emergence of an art movement that goes deep in the heart of everyone in Vienna. It is apparent for most people that the city of Vienna was the birthplace of the best works of art, music, opera, and architecture that people still enjoys up to this day. On the other hand, I was surprised that the total work of art as described in the reading is a term used to define the era where collective works of art shares common characteristics. I was in the notion that art is about individual expression, but the total work of art is a presentation of a standard that the majority of

artists would get their inspiration from. There was a sense of unity, and common purpose perceived in the term total work of art, as it represents not just one work but as a whole.