Freud’s Vienna: Artistic Revolution as Oedipal Revolt

Introduction
Schorske’s Vienna
Analysis of Schorske’s methods which drew together seemingly disparate figures whose shared social and political experience, described as ‘a crisis of the liberal ego’, produced commonalities of thought and expression in the shaping of a specifically Viennese modernism.

Session 1
The Garden and Landscape as Rational and Psychical Space
Taking one of Schorske’s singular themes from Fin-de-Siècle Vienna we will consider ‘the transformation of the garden’, as psychical space through the paintings of Egon Schiele and Richard Gerstl, the early graphic works of Oskar Kokoschka, and the music of Arnold Schoenberg, notably *Verklärte Nacht, Opus 11*.

Session 2
Eros and Thanatos, Sex and Death
Freud first introduced notion of the death instinct with the publication of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). We trace the inextricably linked impulses of sex and death through the writings of Arthur Schnitzler, the paintings of Klimt, notable for their subtle explorations of interior, instinctual impulses, and Oskar Kokoschka’s early expressionist drama, *Murder Hope of Womankind*. Through this examination various significant early twentieth-century tropes of ‘woman’ emerge.

Session 3
‘Art Belongs to the Unconscious. One must express oneself...directly’.
Schoenberg’s reflections on the inner drive as the essential source of all art, and his struggle with unconscious drives of ego and id, were expressed through a series of hallucinatory paintings, visual manifestations of the ‘Ur-Schrei’ (inner cry) which characterised the expressionist impulse of the period. We examine these conflicting impulses through the works of Schoenberg and his circle, which included Kokoschka and satirist Karl Kraus.