

# Austrian artists draw crowds to Nat. Gallery

Story and photos  
by Elphina Magona

The opening night of the National Gallery's "An Awakening in Austria" exhibition, Thursday evening, was say administrator's, "a dazzling success which drew several hundred visitors."

The exhibition, which runs until 24 May, features reproductions of the watercolours and drawings of Gustav Klimt and Egon Schiele. Its aim says the gallery is to bring the work, some pieces less well known than others, to a wider audience. Many visitors were attracted to the exhibition for just that reason. Several on Thursday said they were familiar with one or two of the artists' more famous pictures and were there to learn more about Klimt and Schiele's lesser known work.

According to the gallery's assistant director and curator of the exhibition, Nancy Kirkaldy, the work of both artists was viewed as provocative and somewhat controversial in the early 1900s. This controversy, a gallery spokesperson said, "was instrumental (during their careers) in sparking debate about what was considered art and the

role of art in society." Similarly the gallery hopes that the exhibition, "will help inspire local artists into making more challenging and thought-provoking art."

The twenty-one Schiele and 13 Klimt prints on display represent an overview of the 85 - p r i n t collection. The mood was set during the event by George Davidson who played on a baby grand. Several local restaurants donated food for the opening.

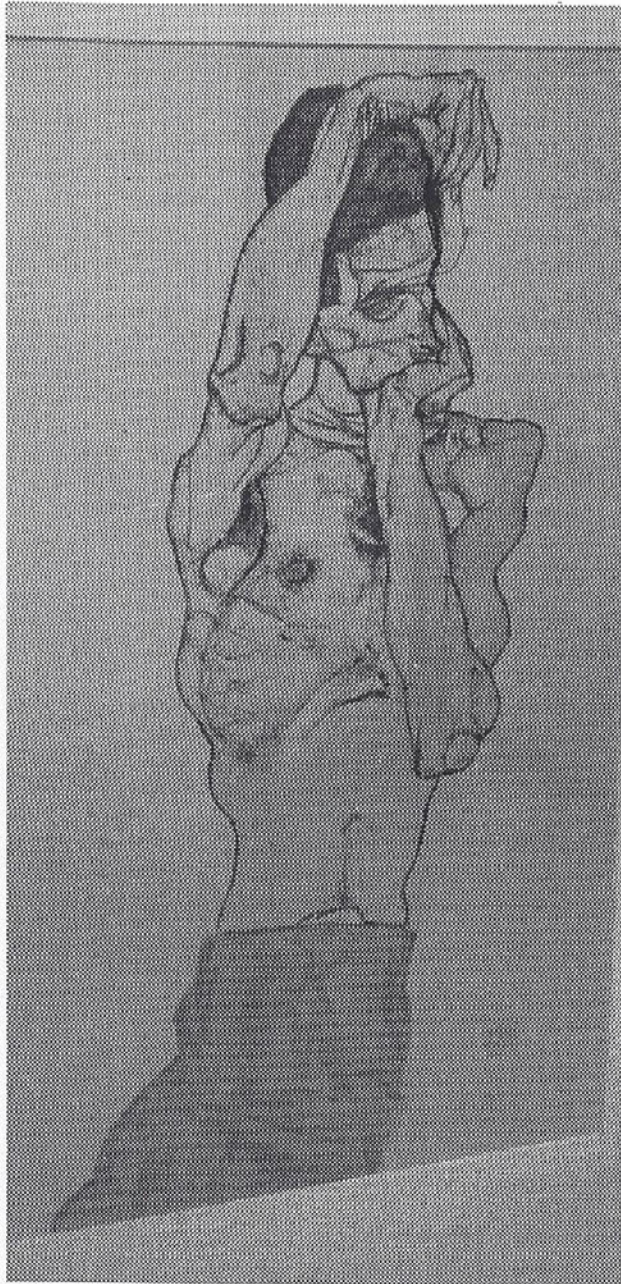
"We have had nothing but enthusiastic comments regarding the exhibition... several people have said they intend to come back for another look because the opening night was so busy," Ms Kirkaldy said on the Friday.

The gallery, she noted, is a non-profit organisation and could not have shown the

exhibition without the assistance of Bank Austria Cayman Islands Ltd.

The travelling

exhibition will return to the Austrian Cultural Institute in New York once the current show ends.



self-portrait of Egon Schiele entitled "Male figure in Red oncloth."



Schiele's "Sitting Woman With Her Left Leg Drawn Up."