

**Alphonse Mucha in Gilded Age America
1904-1921**

Anna Daley

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts in History of Decorative Arts and Design

MA Program in the History of Decorative Arts and Design
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution;
and Parsons the New School for Design,
an Academic Division of The New School
2007

© 2007

Anna Daley
All Rights Reserved

Table of Contents

1. List of Illustrations.....	ii-iii
2. Introduction.....	1-3
3. Early Career and the Lure of America.....	3-9
4. First Trip: March 6—May 19, 1904, New York.....	9-23
5. Second Trip: January—Late July/Early August 1905, New York.....	23-27
6. Third Trip: November 22, 1905—May 1906, New York.....	27-41
7. Fourth Trip: October 1906—November 1909, Chicago and New York.....	41-62
8. Fifth Trip: Late November 1909—March 17, 1910, Lake Forest and Chicago.....	62-65
9. Sixth Trip: February—Late March/April 1913, Chicago and New York.....	65-71
10. Seventh Trip: Late 1919/Early 1920—March 1921, New York and Chicago.....	71-77
11. Mucha's Final Years: 1928-1939.....	77-78
12. Conclusion.....	78-79
13. Bibliography.....	80-83
14. Illustrations.....	84-105

List of Illustrations

- Figure 1: Design for leaflet for first Cours Mucha, 1897
- Figure 2: *Gismonda*, 1894
- Figure 3: *Job*, 1896
- Figure 4: *Carriage Dealers Philadelphia Exposition*, 1902
- Figure 5: *Friendship* from the *New York Daily News*, April 3, 1904
- Figure 6: Designs from *Figures Décoratives*, 1905
- Figure 7: Reproduction of the front and back covers of the Art Supplement of the *New York Daily News*, April 3, 1904
- Figure 8: *New York Daily News* poster, 1904
- Figure 9: “A Chat with M. Mucha: Opinions and Work of a Parisian Artist,” *New York Sun*, April 10, 1904.
- Figure 10: Nymph and Butterfly Lamp Pendant by Louis Comfort Tiffany from a design by Alphonse Mucha, nd
- Figure 11: *Portrait of Mrs. Wismann*, 1904
- Figure 12: *Portrait of John Cardinal Farley*, 1908
- Figure 13: *Isabella Stewart Gardner*, John Singer Sargent, 1888
- Figure 14: *Savon Mucha* point of purchase display, 1906
- Figure 15: *Les Fleurs*, 1898
- Figure 16: *Portrait of Milada Cerny*, from the *Chicago Tribune*, June 28, 1905
- Figure 17: *Poster for St. Vincent’s Orphans POUND Party*, from the *Chicago Tribune*, December 9, 1906
- Figure 18: Lefevre-Utile advertisement, 1903
- Figure 19: Jell-O advertisement, 1910
- Figure 20: Cream of Wheat advertisement, 1906
- Figure 21: *Slavia*, advertisement for Mutual Bank of Prague, 1907
- Figure 22: Photo of Alphonse in front of *Portrait of Mrs. Robert William*

Leatherbee and her son Charles, nd

Figure 23: *The Birth of Beauty* for the German Theatre, 1908

Figure 24: *Comedy* for the German Theatre, 1908

Figure 25: *Tragedy* for the German Theatre, 1908

Figure 26: Panel from the *Seven Beautitudes* representing “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,” from *Everybody’s Magazine*, December 1906

Figure 27: *Leslie Carter*, 1909

Figure 28: *Maude Adams*, 1909

Figure 29: *Zdenka Černy*, 1913

Figure 30: *Rudolf Firml*, 1906

Figure 31: *The Abolition of Serfdom in Russia*, 1919

Figure 32: *Mucha Exhibition, Brooklyn Museum*, 1920

Figure 33: Covers of *Hearst’s International Magazine*, May and December 1922

Introduction

Czech graphic designer and painter Alphonse Maria Mucha periodically visited America between 1904 and 1921. While in America, Mucha produced numerous and varied works of art and design products. Some of the works he created while in America, lithography for magazine covers, concert posters, and advertisements, were similar in composition to his most famous lithographs produced in his most fertile period, the Paris years, 1894-1904. However, much of the work Mucha produced in America was unique in his oeuvre and furthermore, in type or media, is rarely associated with a man typically categorized as a graphic or decorative designer. These atypical works include oil portraits and massive *panneau* painted in an increasingly naturalistic and academic style, the interior design of the German Theatre, and set and costume designs. Perhaps his most distinctly American works, if not in composition than in the social milieu that generated them, are his package designs for his own line of soap, *Savon Mucha*.

In addition, during his tenure in America, Mucha finally realized his ambition to teach his own course, mixed and mingled with some of the Gilded Age's most recognizable names, and became a celebrity. Mucha taught his "Cours Mucha" on the fundamentals of drawing and the history of American Art in New York at the New York Women's School of Applied Design (also known as the School of Applied Design for Women) and in Chicago at the Art Institute. In New York, Mucha quickly endeared himself to Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, the George J. Goulds, Charles R. Crane and Charles Schwab. In Chicago, Mucha became friends with Mrs. Potter Palmer and Mrs. Marshall Field. Mucha also claimed acquaintance with a President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt. Newspapers in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and

Chicago frequently featured stories about all of the aforementioned projects and the social gatherings he attended. In addition, newspapers and magazines often reproduced examples of Mucha's earlier work during this period.

By 1904 the Aesthetic movement was a thing of the past and Art Nouveau was fast losing its currency. Moreover, some scholars believe that by 1904 Mucha's most productive years and best work were behind him. Yet, Mucha seemed to be omnipresent in American visual culture and a powerful tastemaker at this time. In the following pages, I will attempt to explain why Mucha's work continued to be popular in America through the 1920s although his two most prevalent styles of working in this period, Art Nouveau and academic history painting, and the aesthetic theory that informed them, were rapidly being eclipsed by Modernism. By understanding why Mucha, his work, and his lectures were as wildly popular, as his biographies claim, a new light can be shed on Gilded Age taste and the American art community at the turn of the century.

The years Mucha spent in America constitute a little-known chapter of his career. Mucha holds an important place in the history of art and design and although he produced some of the most instantly recognizable Art Nouveau graphic art, little scholarly work has been done on his career and none has been done specifically on his time in America. Mucha's son, Jiří, is Mucha's sole biographer and his two attempts, cited in my bibliography, are far from scholarly. The scholarly work that has been done on Mucha focuses primarily on his work in Paris in the 1890s and his painting cycle, *The Slav Epic*. Jiří has drawn the timeline of his father's life almost exclusively from his father's letters to his mother, Maruška (Maria Chytilová). No corroborative research has been

done to substantiate or elaborate upon any of his father's assertions or claims about his work or social life. Jiří provides his father's voice and the history of his years in America and I will provide the framework of popular culture, high society, and the artistic world of turn-of-the-century America within which to place this narrative. Larger social and cultural issues such as the triumph of "personality" in the twentieth century, the emergence of the "New Woman" and the growing importance of media attention, in addition to wealthy patronage, informed Mucha's American experience. By combining Mucha's personal history and these factors with stylistic and formal analyses of the works produced in this period, I can illuminate an otherwise forgotten chapter of his career.

Prologue: Early Career and the Lure of America

Alphonse Maria Mucha was born on July 24, 1860 in Ivančice, a small Moravian town in what was then the Kingdom of Bohemia and is now the Czech Republic. As a child Mucha showed an early aptitude for drawing. According to Mucha family lore his mother tied a pencil around his neck so that he could draw as he crawled around the family home. He received his first watercolor set on his third Christmas and took to painting immediately.

As an adult, Mucha's first employment as a painter was with a Vienna theatrical scenery and curtain company, Kautsky-Brioschi-Burghardt, in the autumn of 1879 or the spring of 1880. He worked for the next five years as a painter in various capacities throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In 1885, Mucha finally began his formal training as an artist at the Akademie in Munich. After completing two years of study Mucha left the Akademie and, with the help of his long-time patron Count Carl Kuhen, established himself in Paris, first at the Académie Julian and later at the Académie Colarossi. After

leaving the Colarossi, he supported himself by producing illustrations for magazines and newspapers; it was hard but steady work.¹

Mucha's career as an illustrator for publications slowly produced more and more important commissions and by 1894 he had attracted a group of pupils who would come to have their drawings corrected. In 1897, as the number of his pupils grew, Mucha began his first regular course in composition and decorative drawing (figure 1). In 1898 Mucha joined his pupils with those of American ex-patriot painter James Abbott McNeill Whistler. The partnership ended in 1901, but the two artists parted as friends. According to Jiří, years later when a student asked Whistler why he had so many of Mucha's posters hanging in his rooms, Whistler retorted, "So that I can show fools like you what it means to be able to draw."²

Mucha's most famous collaboration, with the actress Sarah Bernhardt, began in haste. In late 1894 Mucha was working for the printing firm Lemercier on a commission for the Brazilian government. The day after Christmas, Bernhardt phoned the manager of Lemercier, Maurice Brunoff, and asked him to produce a new poster for her production of *Gismonda* by New Year's Day. Brunoff, frantic and short-handed, gave the assignment to the still little-known Bohemian illustrator. The poster's long, narrow dimensions and subtle colors worried Brunhoff but vastly impressed Bernhardt (figure 2). Mucha's *Gismonda* caused a sensation and over the next six years he designed almost all of Bernhardt's production posters including *Les Amants* (1895), *La*

¹Jiří Mucha, *The Master of Art Nouveau: Alphonse Mucha*, Geraldine Thompson, trans (Prague: Knihtsk, 1966), 13, 16, 24-33, 35, 44, 46. Hereafter *TMAN:AM*.

² *TMAN:AM*, 63-64.

Dame Aux Camélias (1896), *Lorenzaccio* (1896), *La Samaritaine* (1897), *Médée* (1898), *Hamlet* (1899), *La Tosca* (1899), and *L'Aiglon* (1900).³

Mucha achieved such a high level of fame in Paris through his association with Bernhardt that commissions soon flooded in. The decade beginning in 1894 encompassed the years of Mucha's greatest output and greatest renown. In the late 1890s, publishers paid Mucha upwards of 500 francs for a cover illustration and reproductions of his advertising posters, such as the iconic *Job* of 1896, sold for as many as twenty-five francs. The cost of a good lunch during this period, Jiří notes, was only two or three francs (figure 3).⁴ After a successful showing of his work at the Exposition universelle internationale de 1900, many firms produced objects featuring Mucha's designs, such as carpets, fabrics, and furniture. Celebrated jeweler Georges Fouquet won many awards for the pieces he produced from Mucha's drawings. The most famous of these Fouquet-produced pieces is the snake armband Mucha designed for Sarah Bernhardt, which he included in the poster for *Médée*.⁵

Mucha signed an exclusive contract with the printer Champenois in late 1895 or early 1896 in order to secure himself a regular monthly salary. It was thanks to the industry of Champenois that not only did Mucha's fame continue to grow in Paris, but also that he became known in America. Champenois licensed Mucha's designs and illustrations to companies and publications

³ Ibid, 67, 75, 78.

⁴ Ibid, 89 and; Jiří Mucha, *Alphonse Maria Mucha: His Life and Art* (New York: Rozzoli, 1989), 222. Hereafter *AMM:HLA*.

⁵ Anna M. Dvořák, "Alphonse Mucha: Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina, 1978), 51.

throughout Europe and America, often with alterations. Mucha designs, in various incarnations, could be found on calendars, postcards, and advertisements for such varied products as Fox-Land Jamaican Rum and *The Carriage Dealers Journal*, published in Philadelphia (figure 4).⁶

The contract with Champenois did indeed provide some financial security, but it also resulted in an overload of work. Mucha dramatically explained his situation in a letter from January 1904, “You’ve no idea how often I am crushed almost to blood by the cogwheels of this life, by this torrent which has got hold of me, robbing me of my time and forcing me to do things that are so alien to those I dream about.”⁷ It was this daily pressure to churn out work for mass distribution that would motivate Mucha to leave Paris in 1904.⁸

The constant output necessary to fulfill his contract with Champenois kept him from embarking on what he envisioned would be his magnum opus, a mural cycle dedicated to the history of his people, the Slavs. Mucha believed he needed to accumulate more money more quickly in order to be able to single-mindedly dedicate himself to his epic. America appeared to offer the solution. Mucha reasoned in an undated letter to his then fiancé, Maruška, “From my experience of Americans in Paris, from the interest in my work in America and knowing I had friends I could rely on, I came to the conclusion that I would do better if I tried America, where the circulation of money was more lively.”⁹

⁶ Jack Rennert and Alain Weill, *Alphonse Mucha: The Complete Posters and Panels*, (Boston: A Hjert and Hjert Books, 1984), 11, 99, 131. Hereafter *CP&P*.

⁷ Letter quoted in *AMM:HLA*, 197.

⁸ *TMAN:AM*, 78-79.

⁹ Letter quoted in *TMAN:AM*, 195.

Mucha's argument for trying America was well founded. It seems that Mucha's American students had been urging him to open a school in America or, at the very least, give a lecture series in their native country. Furthermore, Mucha was being modest when he characterized the reaction to his work in America as "interest." For example, previous to 1904 the nationally circulated American arts publication, *Brush and Pencil* featured two glowing reviews of his work. Lastly, as Will H. Low, an American freelance journalist who resided in Paris, wrote in his memoirs, in comparison to America, "the struggle for life is far more intense throughout the Old World."¹⁰

The editors of *Brush and Pencil* wrote in their 1897 review of the latest issue of *La Plume*, which was devoted entirely to Mucha's work, "that Mucha ranks first as a poster artist, even before Chéret, as very few who have seen his many Bernhardt posters or his [Four]Seasons' will care to deny."¹¹ Two years later in the 1899 issue of *Brush and Pencil*, an article entitled "The Passing of the Poster," which bemoaned the end of the decade of the "ephemeral glory of the poster," refers to Mucha as "quite supreme in his class." The author goes on to praise his posters' "strong decorative quality" and beautiful exactness which work together to leave the viewer of the advertisement he created with "only the memory of strong artistic charm."¹²

Though Mucha often complained of having too much work to do, his chief complaint was of having no worthwhile commissions. The "treadmill of

¹⁰ Will H. Low, *A Chronicle of Friendships, 1873-1900* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), 116-117.

¹¹ "Art Literature," *Brush and Pencil* 1, no. 3 (1897): 73.

¹² Mabel Key, "The Passing of the Poster." *Brush and Pencil* 4, no. 1 (1899): 14.

Paris,” as Mucha described it, was powered by endless mediocrity.¹³ Low explained that there was an abundance of artists and a scarcity of important contracts, wealth and honors. Low believed that in his “newer civilization” the opposite was more often the case.¹⁴ Mucha only asked for “the opportunity to do some more useful work,” which was all but impossible in Paris’ overcrowded artistic marketplace.¹⁵

Finally, one of the friends that Mucha trusted that he could rely on for a start in America, the Baroness Rothschild, was a powerful and influential friend, indeed.¹⁶ Undoubtedly it was Mucha’s talent, fame and apparent rapport with ladies of a certain age that attracted the notice of the Paris socialite and patroness, Lenora Rothschild.¹⁷ According to an article in the French publication *Gil blas*, the elderly Rothschilds, the baron in retirement from the family bank and both in semiretirement from Parisian high society, preferred to surround themselves with artists and scholars.¹⁸ Mucha began to visit the baroness’ home towards the end of 1903. She gave Mucha to understand that with her assistance and her family’s connections to America’s fiscal elite he would be able to establish himself in America as a highly paid portrait painter.

¹³ *TMAN:AM*, 195.

¹⁴ Low, *Chronicle of Friendships*, 116-117.

¹⁵ Quoted from a letter to Maruška dated March 7, 1904 and reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 197.

¹⁶ *TMAN:AM*, 195.

¹⁷ Jiří Mucha alleges that, “Father’s immediate social success was due to the fact that he had for the ladies of middle age and beyond an irresistible charm. He was gallant, always kept a safe distance, and had just the amount of eccentricity which makes an artist interesting without making him unbearable.” *AMM:HLA*, 206.

¹⁸ *Gil blas*, 24 May 1904 cited in Herbert R. Lottman, *The French Rothschilds: The Great Banking Dynasty Through Three Turbulent Centuries* (New York: Crown, 1995), 130.

She even arranged a commission for him, to paint the portrait of Mrs. Wismann, an American relative.¹⁹

Though he would later to claim to an American reporter that, “I do not care for portrait work ...because it is so not so original, not so imaginative. One cannot put one’s dreams into a portrait,” Mucha believed that only oil portraits, like the Wismann commission, could bring him the money he needed as quickly as he wanted.²⁰ With visions of rapidly accumulating wealth and more free time to pursue his dreams of honoring his Slavic heritage, Mucha decided that he would try America. Therefore, after finishing as much of his contracted work for Champenois as he could manage, Mucha set sail for New York City on the *La Lorraine* on February 26, 1904.²¹

First Trip: March 6—May 19, 1904, New York

Upon arriving in New York, Mucha moved in to a studio with attached apartment in Sherwood Studios at 58 West 57th Street. According to Jiří, Mucha’s arrival was front page news in all the New York papers. Three extant articles bear up this assertion.

Mucha’s work literally was on the front page of the Art Supplement to the April 3, 1904 edition of the *New York Daily News*. Mucha produced *Friendship*, an original lithograph, to grace the cover of the supplementary section (figure 5). The lithograph depicts two female personifications, France and America, with France seated behind and embracing a standing America. The rendering of the two figures is very much in the same vein of his ongoing *Figures*

¹⁹ *TMAN:AM*, 195.

²⁰ “A Chat with M. Mucha: Opinions and Work of a Parisian Artist,” *New York Sun*, 10 April 1904, 9.

²¹ *TMAN:AM*, 197.

Décoratives project, far more ephemeral and almost transparent, when compared to his more heavily linear posters for Sarah Bernhardt (figures 6 and 2). An admiring article by a former student, J. Hayden-Clarendon, covered the back page of the supplement. Reproductions of *La Rose* and *Le Lys*, from *Les Fleurs* (1898), along with another unidentified work, a sketch “from life” of Mucha, and two endorsements by Frederic Dielman, President of the American Academy of Design, and muralist William de Leftwich Dodge accompanied the article (figure 7).²²

The tone of the article and endorsements is laudatory in the extreme, almost fawning. The entire spread is entitled “Mucha, the Life and Work of the Greatest Decorative Artist Alive in the World” with the subheading of “Mucha—An Appreciation” for the article. The first lines of Dodge’s endorsement provide a clue to the tone of the article. Dodge writes, “the advent of Mucha in this country is propitious. He will be cordially welcomed. Undoubtedly he stands at the head of his own school, especially in the class of the artistic poster, which has made his name famous.”²³

The *Daily News* advertised the Art Supplement featuring Mucha with special posters that included a full length image of Mucha in the Bohemian garb he preferred to work in: embroidered white shirt, pants, and wide sash (figure 8). The poster again refers to Mucha as the “the world’s greatest decorative artist” and advertises the reproduction of *Friendship* as “a Mucha picture for 5 cents.”

²² My analysis of the “Art Supplement,” *New York Daily News*, 3 April 1904 is based entirely on the several reproductions of it I have found in *AMM:HLA*, 201; *TMAN:AM*, 198; and *CPP*, 314-315. I was unable to obtain a copy of the actual issue. As a consequence, I can only read a few words or sentences from the article and endorsements.

²³ *TMAN:AM*, 198.

Mucha was evidently unused to such lavish promotion of his work by a newspaper and he was certainly unused to the employment of his own image in such a promotion. He wrote Maruška on April 3rd, “Today the hoardings gave me a shock. Among the profusion of posters I was suddenly confronted by my own image, life size—botched beyond recognition, of course—printed in color on a red background. So there you are. The whole town was plastered with them, and I am told that it was the same in Philadelphia, Boston and all over the place.”²⁴

One week later, on April 10, 1904, the *New York Sun* published a similarly rapturous article about Mucha, “A Chat with M. Mucha, Opinions and Work of a Paris Artist.” (figure 9) The article also featured two sketches of Mucha, a full length image of him, this time in an active pose, pulling on a jacket, with the caption, “Mucha dressing for company” and a dark and moody portrait of a heavy-lidded “Mucha the dreamer.” Whereas the *Daily News* article seems to focus its praise on Mucha’s work and reputation as an artist, the *Sun* article centers more on praising the actual person of Mucha and reporting his opinions.

After opening the article with the ubiquity of Mucha’s posters in New York poster rooms, the unnamed *Sun* reporter goes on to describe Mucha as “slightly below the medium height but ‘sits tall’ so that when he rises to walk across the studio you are surprised he is not taller...[he is] well built... [with a] supple and trim figure.” The *Sun* reporter also noted his “picturesque attire,” referring to the Bohemian garments he painted in.²⁵

²⁴ Letter quoted in *TMAN:AM*, 198.

²⁵ “A Chat with M. Mucha,” 9.

The article continues on, in a somewhat breathless manner, with Mucha's observation that Americans "have formed a distinct people out of all the best in the world" and that New Yorkers, "cannot be compared, you are just by yourself, *curieux, etrange, manifique!*" The article then moves to a discussion of the fact that Mucha often used American models, even while working in Paris. He told the reporter he so often used American women as models because, "the most beautiful... have ever come from America."²⁶

An article in the April 8, 1904 issue of *The World* also centered on Mucha's opinions of American women. In the two-column article, "American Women Superb Says This French Artist," Mucha is quoted as declaring, "she [the American woman] is infinitely more superior to the most beautiful women of Europe. Here the woman is strong, vigorous—at once svelte and solid."²⁷ These two articles were only the first of many published in American newspapers that concentrated on Mucha's physicality, personality and personal opinions on feminine beauty. While the majority of his press coverage stemmed from his work, exhibitions, or appearances at certain social events there was a distinct group of articles that served solely to promote his personal charm and taste.

As these early articles indicate, in America, Mucha was not only the creator of famous images, as he had been known in Paris, he was also a celebrity in his own right. The American, turn-of-the-century phenomenon of celebrity or "personality," as Warren I. Sussman terms it in his article "Personality' and the Making of Twentieth-century Culture," was an increased

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Article quoted in *AMM:HLA*, 207. I was unable to obtain a copy of the full article.

public interest in what made a person creative, fascinating, or magnetic. Previously, in the nineteenth century, the concept of “character” was emphasized in the popular press and social guides. Ralph Waldo Emerson described the concept of character, in which the chief characteristic was self-mastery and attention to duty, as “moral order through the medium of individual nature.”²⁸

Many turn-of-the-century social theorists, like Thorstein Veblen, argued that a material change necessitated a corresponding change in social order. Several economic changes took place in the decades of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. America transformed from a producer to a consumer society and moved from an industrially-based capitalism to fiscal capitalism. Abundance replaced scarcity. A corresponding promotion of self-realization replaced self-sacrifice; personality replaced character.²⁹

If Emerson’s lines on self-mastery and moral order defined the nineteenth-century concept of character then the oft-quoted truism, “personality is the quality of being somebody,” defined the twentieth-century concept of personality. Between 1900 and 1920 hundreds of books and articles were written about personality, how to build it and how to harness its power. Herbert Croly’s 1909 personality manual, *The Promise of American Life*, explains, “success in any...pursuit demands that an individual make some sort of personal impression.” Painters, architects, politicians, all depend, “upon a

²⁸ Warren I Sussman, “Personality and the Making of Twentieth Century Culture.” In *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century*. (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 274.

²⁹ Sussman, “Personality,” 275.

numerous and faithful body of admirers.”³⁰ Furthermore as Richard Schickel wrote in his study of the film career of Douglas Fairbanks Senior—who was born in 1883 and died 1939, making him Mucha’s contemporary—“ Indeed it is now essential...that [even] the non-performing artists become performers so that they may become celebrities so that in turn they may exert genuine influence on the public.”³¹

In the chapter “Performing the Self” in Sarah Burns’ *Inventing the Modern Artist: Art and Culture in Gilded Age America*, Burns uses the highly successful career of Whistler as a case study of the relationship between an artist’s personality, the media, and success. She explains that Mucha’s former academy partner’s career flourished because Whistler learned how to perform his life and work as a spectacle, cultivating the right identity. She writes, “Whistler vividly dramatizes the injection of the modern artist into the realm of spectacle. Indeed, more and more,, painting was about the artist’s personality and nothing more.”³²

Like Mucha’s *Sun* and *World* articles, many of the articles written about Whistler focused exclusively on his appearance, behavior, and opinions. The article, “Whistler, Painter and Comedian,” in *McClure’s Magazine* centered on his, by then shop-worn *bon mots*, his tendency to dress elaborately and a bit strangely (for the interview he wore a child’s straw hat and a bit of ribbon in place of a necktie) and his “life of the party” energy and charisma.

³⁰ Ibid, 281.

³¹ Richard Schickel, *His Picture in the Papers: A Speculation on Celebrity in America Based on the Life of Douglas Fairbanks, Sr.* (New York: Charterhouse, 1974), 9, as cited in Sussman, “Personality,” 283.

³² Sarah Burns, *Inventing the Modern Artist: Art and Culture in Gilded Age America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 221-222.

Furthermore, the *McClure's* article, like the *Daily News* poster and *Sun* article, included a portrait of the artist, in this case a photograph. As the *Sun* portraits emphasized Mucha's dreamy eyes and the *Daily News* poster featured the native Bohemian dress he painted in, the photograph of Whistler included the key personality markers in his physical appearance; the white lock, monocle, and the slender bamboo cane.³³ The focus on the artists' personal appearance is unsurprising when contemporary "purely scientific" analytical studies of individuality, such as Nathaniel Southgate Shaler's *The Individual* (1900), put forth the notion that the key to all expression of self is the face; that physiognomy could reveal the roots of personality.³⁴

Burns argues that Whistler's eccentric appearance and engaging behavior became a public act that made his name synonymous with the idea of "good press," thus guaranteeing his frequent appearance in newspapers and magazines.³⁵ Mucha's facility with ladies of a certain age, his exotic studio attire, and even his difficulty with the English language, resulting in speech that was a charming mix of French and English, could be considered his public act, which assured his popularity with the media.³⁶

While the American press took care of Mucha's introduction to the American public, high-society women effected his introduction to potential patrons. As previously mentioned, Mucha owed his first commission in America, the portrait of Mrs. Wismann, to the attentions of the Baroness

³³ Burns, *Inventing the Modern Artist*, 223.

³⁴ Nathaniel Southgate Shaler, *The Individual: The Study of Life and Death* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1900), as cited in Sussman, "Personality," 281-282.

³⁵ Burns, *Inventing the Modern Artist*, 223.

³⁶ *AMM:HLA*, 206.

Rothschild. It was this notice that likely secured him the notice of her American counterparts.

Mucha's letter to Maruška on March 8, 1904, just two short days after his arrival, reveals that Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt III had paid him a welcoming visit.³⁷ In 1904, "the frequently fatuous Grace" as Louis Auchincloss, author of *The Vanderbilt Era: Profiles of a Gilded Age*, described Mrs. Vanderbilt, was hard at work conquering New York high society. She actively courted the press and the celebrity it offered in her campaign to install herself as one of the city's *grandes dames*.³⁸

In the following weeks, Grace returned to Mucha's studio without her husband and in the company of other prominent society ladies such as Ms. Anne Morgan, Elsie de Wolf, and Mrs. McKay. These women frequented Mucha's studio, drinking tea and admiring his progress on Mrs. Wismann's portrait.³⁹ In a letter dated April 9, 1904 Mucha writes, "Today was again nothing but visits. Early in the morning the ladies came to see the portrait, which is now finished. They are all delighted and say they have never seen a portrait painted in this way. One of them is Mrs. Vanderbilt, and there was also Mrs. McKay and other ladies from the same circle. I gave the portrait a lot of care and used a certain effect of lighting...and that's what they find so astonishing...this is what they like so much."⁴⁰

³⁷ Ibid, 201.

³⁸ Louis Auchincloss, *The Vanderbilt Era: Profiles of a Gilded Age* (New York: Scribner, 1989), 7, 115.

³⁹ *AMM:HLA*, 206.

⁴⁰ Letter quoted in *TMAN:AM*, 200.

This “circle” that Mucha refers to was composed of the premiere tastemakers in New York society at the time. Grace was giving exclusive parties with “impeccable” guest lists.⁴¹ Elsie de Wolf and Anne Morgan, daughter of J. P. Morgan, were in the thick of fundraising and planning for the landmark Colony Club, the first large scale private clubhouse for women, which was to be designed entirely by de Wolf.⁴² And Mrs. Katherine McKay, often referred to as the “beautiful Mrs. McKay,” was using her husband’s wealth and standing as the president of the Postal Telegraph-Cable Company to launch herself in New York society and promote the cause of women’s suffrage. Mucha undoubtedly cultivated their acquaintance with the notion that these women’s good opinion was essential to a lucrative career as a portrait painter. And, in turn, these important women must have seen some advantage in cultivating his acquaintance. Women such as Grace and the “beautiful Mrs. McKay,” who were both actively scheming for social power, likely hoped some of the glow of Mucha’s newly minted celebrity, his quality of “being someone,” would reflect upon them.

Though Mucha’s first trip to American was brief he also found time between painting the Wismann portrait, giving interviews and entertaining society ladies to renew an old acquaintance and form a new one. Some time in late April or early May, before Mucha’s departure on May 19th, Louis Comfort Tiffany invited Mucha to tour his workshops and Laurelton Hall, his home in Long Island. Mucha and Tiffany knew each other through Fouquet’s shop in Paris and their work on the Exposition universelle. Unfortunately, Mucha

⁴¹ Auchincloss, *The Vanderbilt Era*, 115.

⁴² Jane S. Smith, *Elsie de Wolf: A Life in High Style* (New York: Athenaeum, 1982), 102-103.

mentioned his visits with Tiffany only in passing in his letters. He wrote to Maruška, “Today I went to Tiffany’s. He invited me to look at his premises...They have been working for many years from my designs. Tomorrow afternoon I am going there again.”⁴³

In *Aphonse Maria Mucha: His Life and Art* Jiří clarifies the possibly misleading statement, “they have been working for many years from my designs.” Jiří explains that by “my designs” Mucha was likely referring to his *Documents Décoratifs* a book of motifs and designs, published in Paris in 1902, that Mucha produced to be used as a copybook in schools and workshops. Mucha may also have been making an oblique reference to Tiffany’s working in the style of Art Nouveau in general, which Mucha sometimes referred to as “my style.”⁴⁴ The only known Tiffany piece produced from one of Mucha’s designs is a nymph and butterfly lamp pendant of unknown date (figure 10).⁴⁵ The central figure was likely derived from *Documents Décoratifs*.⁴⁶ In a letter dated January 24, 1906 Mucha wrote that Tiffany again invited him to the workshop and that this time Tiffany even sent a car to fetch him. He explained to Maruška, “They asked me over because we’ve known each other for a long time, and I stayed there till six o’clock.”⁴⁷

⁴³ Quoted from an undated letter and reproduced in *AMM:HLA*, 202 and *TMAN:AM*, 198.

⁴⁴ *AMM:HLA*, 202.

⁴⁵ Robert Koch, *Tiffany: Rebel in Glass*, revised third edition (New York: Crown Publishers, 1982), 187.

⁴⁶ *AMM:HLA*, 138-137. According to Louisa Bann, Manager of Research Services at the Tiffany and Company Archives, the Tiffany Archives do not contain much specific information regarding Louis Comfort Tiffany’s Tiffany Studios, an entirely separate entity from Tiffany and Co., outside of documentation of his jewelry designs, which were sold at Tiffany and Co. stores.

⁴⁷ *AMM:HLA*, 218.

Unsurprisingly, Mucha's arrival in America quickly attracted the notice of the Bohemian community in New York, especially the Bohemian Catholic church. Almost as soon as Mucha landed Father Prout, rector of the Bohemian Church of St. John Nepomunk, visited him and offered him several commissions. Jiří contends that these commissions, including a painting of the Madonna for the church's convent, a banner of Saint John for the church, and a portrait of the Archbishop of New York, Father John Farley, were nothing but a nuisance for Mucha, taking up all of his spare time on his first and second visits to America. He further alleges that Father Prout played on his father's sense of Christian duty in order to obtain the works for free.⁴⁸

Interestingly, in an article entitled, "Paintings Valued at \$230,000 Go to Church," in the December 27, 1904 edition of the *New York Times*, the commission of the banner of St. John Nepomunk is described as a donation and Father Prout stated that the creation and donation of the banner, valued by Mucha at \$40,000, was Mucha's idea from the very beginning, motivated by his desire to do something for the newly dedicated church's benefit.⁴⁹ Eventually, the *Madonna* was donated to the Sacré Coeur in Paris. As for the portrait of the archbishop, Mucha finally finished it in January 1908 but retained ownership of the painting until 1913, presumably because he was never paid for it. In a letter dated February 19, 1913, just prior to his return to Europe from his sixth trip to America, Mucha wrote Maruška, "I am also bringing the Archbishop unless I can sell him in New York. I'd let him go cheap—but not under 2,000,

⁴⁸ *TMAN:AM*, 204.

⁴⁹ "Paintings Valued at \$230,000 Go to Church," *New York Times*, 27 December 1904, 2.

otherwise I'll bring him home."⁵⁰ According to an article in the May 30, 1920 issue of the *Chicago Tribune*, on that date the painting was hanging in St. Patrick's cathedral in New York.⁵¹

With the two portraits begun this first trip, the *Portrait of Mrs. Wismann* and *Portrait of John Cardinal Farley*, Mucha wanted to set himself apart from his contemporaries (figures 11 and 12). He wanted to do something new, "not just a portrait à la Sargent," as he often phrased it. Mucha saw American painter John Singer Sargent's style as the dominant portrait painting style of the period.⁵² Contemporary critics often commented on Sargent's uncanny ability to capture the individuality in each of his sitters. Sargent often achieved this level of verisimilitude through his depiction of their posture and gestures. Wayne H. Morgan writes in *New Muses: Art in American Culture, 1865-1920*, that Sargent's great talent was to depict contained emotion and captured motion.⁵³ For example, in his portrait of Isabella Stewart Gardner (1888), by having Gardner stand perfectly erect with hands folded below her waist, Sargent was able to capture her characteristic energetic precision in behavior and dress as well as contrast her traditional hourglass figure with her thick arms and broad chest (figure 13). Sargent's candid portrayal of Gardner's physical robustness inspired a variety of reactions, from complimentary to

⁵⁰ Letter quoted in *AMM:HLA*, 239 and *TMAN:AM*, 256. In *TMAN:AM* the letter is misdated as February 19, 1931.

⁵¹ Louise James Bargelt, "Paintings Given to Prague Shown at Art Institute," *Chicago Tribune*, 30 May 1920, E5. No one on St. Patrick's volunteer staff could confirm the painting's presence in the cathedral in 1920, however it is standard practice to hang a portrait of the current Archbishop of New York in St. Patrick's during his tenure.

⁵² *AMM:HLA*, 206; and *TMAN:AM*, 254.

⁵³ Wayne H. Morgan, *New Muses: Art in American Culture, 1865-1920* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978), 74-76.

venomous. Gardner's husband, Jack Gardner, had, by far the most revealing reaction to the portrait; he said, "It looks like hell, but it looks like you."⁵⁴

In her doctoral thesis on Mucha, "Alphonse Mucha: Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings," Anna Dvořák argues that, in fact, Mucha's early American portraits are nothing like Sargent's work, but neither are they anything like his other portraits. "Similar anonymity applies to most of the oil portraits that the painter executed after his arrival in the United States."⁵⁵ Whereas Mucha's poster portraits of Sarah Bernhardt seemed to capture the essence of both the actress' personality and that of whichever character she was playing, Mucha's portraits of Mrs. Wismann and the archbishop are devoid of all personality. In his efforts to avoid following Sargent's impressionistic, controversial and intensely personal portraiture style Mucha also abandoned his successful previous style and painted portraits that were empty. The sitter's faces are blank, equally lacking in emotion or individuality.

The portraits are not only similarly anonymous, but they are also similar in composition. Both Mrs. Wismann and the archbishop are seated, with their hands folded in their laps, looking straight ahead. The subjects of the portraits both wear voluminous garments, which Mucha laboriously renders spilling into the foreground and flowing out of the frame of the image. Jiří believes that his father gave so much attention to the draperies because Mucha felt that he was the master of depicting fabric. Mucha believed that draperies were a good showcase for his virtuosity in line and fold.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Mary Kate O'Hare, "John Singer Sargent and Modern Womanhood," *The Magazine Antiques* 169, no. 3 (March 2006), 73.

⁵⁵ Dvořák, "Alphonse Mucha: Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings," 109.

⁵⁶ *AMM:HLA*, 222.

Further, the portraits use analogous light effects. The portrait of the archbishop seems to be lit with a soft, ethereal beam of light focused on his face and upper torso, leaving the rest of the painting in shadow and suggesting a divine presence. The *Portrait of Mrs. Wismann* utilizes a kind of *chiaroscuro* as well: firelight. In his interview with the *New York Sun* Mucha explained to the reporter, who inquired about the painting, “It is to be hung over the mantel and the open fire below will seem to have produced the peculiar light.”⁵⁷ The “peculiar light” effect that he was referring to was, as he explained to his circle of society ladies, “From above she is lit with blue light—that is daylight—and from below shines a crimson light [firelight], which plays on the lace, and the background.”⁵⁸ Mucha’s focus on accoutrement, drapery and lighting, instead of the actual sitter’s posture and expression, produces the anonymity described by Dvořák.

After completing Mrs. Wismann’s portrait, Mucha returned to Europe on May 19, 1904 on the *SS Zeeland* with the unfinished portrait of the archbishop in tow. He went first to Paris where the “displeasure of Champenois” and a pile of unfulfilled commitments awaited him.⁵⁹ He tried to extricate himself from work in order to return to Bohemia in time to spend the holidays with his fiancé but found himself buried. Mucha was only able to visit Bohemia for a few days before he sailed again from Bremen for New York on January 8, 1905.

Second Trip: January—Late July/Early August 1905, New York

Mucha returned to New York just in time to be offered a commission to

⁵⁷ *New York Sun*, 10 April 1904, sect. 2, p. 9.

⁵⁸ Quoted from a letter to Maruška dated April 9, 1904 and reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 200.

⁵⁹ Quoted from a letter to Maruška dated May 19, 1904 and reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 205.

create a *panneau* portrait of the famous opera singer Madame Réjane for the most infamous ball of the Gilded Age. Shortly after he arrived in the city Mucha wrote to Maruška, “Yesterday I was asked to do a little job. One of the millionaires here (there are so many of them) is organizing a ball...which is to exceed anything held so far. The entire high society of America is to be invited, and the one who is giving the ball is called Hyde.”⁶⁰ Mucha was referring to James Hazen Hyde’s ball at the Stanford White designed, Sherry’s Hotel at Fifth Avenue and Forty-fourth Street, thrown on January 31, 1905.

Hyde was the young and fashionable, newly anointed vice-president and acting president of the Equitable Life Assurance Society. His historic fête was a costume ball with the theme of the court of Louis XVI. Six hundred guests, including Elsie de Wolf, Anne Morgan and Mrs. McKay, dined on three full suppers, listened to two orchestras who played throughout the party, and danced upon spring-fresh grass, flitting between rose-covered lattices in the dead of winter.⁶¹

The *panneau* Mucha created, nine feet tall and four feet wide, was a portrait of Réjane in costume, “full of flowers and things.”⁶² Réjane was the evening’s marquee entertainment. She performed in a light play, *Entre Deux Portes*, written especially for her.⁶³ Mucha had so little time to work on the *panneau* that he sent it to Sherry’s the day of the party still wet and unsigned.

⁶⁰ Quoted from a letter to Maruška dated January 1905 and reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 211; and *AMM:HLA*, 214.

⁶¹ Patricia Beard, *After the Ball: Gilded Age Secrets, Boardroom Betrayals, and the Party that Ignited the Great Wall Street Scandal of 1905* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), 171, 172, 175.

⁶² Quoted from a letters to Maruška dated January 1905 and March 6, 1905 and reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 211 and *AMM:HLA*, 214.

⁶³ Beard, *After the Ball*, 175.

He had to rush to the hotel to sign it and then rush home to change before the party began. Mucha reported to his fiancé that the decorations for the ball were, “extremely expensive—Hyde a millionaire...spared nothing, least of all money.”⁶⁴

Indeed, it was the supposed expense of the massive party that made it legendary. Rumors flew around Equitable that Hyde had spent \$200,000—equivalent to about \$4,000,000 or \$4,500,00 when adjusted for inflation—on the party and had charged it to the company.⁶⁵ Hyde was subsequently forced from his position by the company’s board of directors, who cited a breach of faith with the company’s investors as their reason for severance. A government investigation later found that the ball actually cost only a fourth of the alleged amount and that Hyde paid for it with his own private funds. However, by the time the investigation was complete Hyde had fled to France, where he remained in self-imposed exile for forty years. In the ensuing years, Hyde’s Louis XVI ball was, in the words of Patricia Beard, author of *After the Ball: Gilded Age Secrets, Boardroom Betrayals, and the Party that Ignited the Great Wall Street Scandal of 1905*, “recounted to exemplify outrageous extravagance, a party gone wrong...the tale could all be reduced to one word, hubris.”⁶⁶ It came to typify all that was iniquitous and unethical in Gilded-Age America.

Shortly after Hyde’s ball Mucha caught a “chill,” likely the flu, which kept him from working until March. In April of 1905 Mucha gave a few lectures at

⁶⁴ Quoted from a letters to Maruška dated January 1905 and March 6, 1905 and reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 211 and *AMM:HLA*, 214.

⁶⁵ Inflation calculated with the help of an online inflation calculator, provided by the U. S. Department of Labor, which can be found at www.dol.gov/dol/topic/statistics/inflation, that utilizes the Consumer Price Index to generate its figures.

⁶⁶ Beard, *After the Ball*, 11.

the New York School of Applied Design for Women.⁶⁷ Ellen Dunlap Hopkins had founded the school in 1892 in order to help train women in illustration and design for textiles, wallpaper, and metalwork, in order to support themselves. As the brochure for the school states, “Appreciating the fact that there is no reason why a woman of average health, intelligence, and industry should not be capable of self-support as man, provided that she has equal opportunity for developing her practical abilities. The various applications of industrial art offer employment [for] women [with] innate sense of the useful and the decorative [and] professional training.”⁶⁸

The NYSAD was quite the *cause célèbre* among the parents and older relatives of Mucha’s high society friends. Mrs. McKay’s mother-in-law, Mrs. John McKay, sat on the Advisory Committee, Grace Vanderbilt’s great aunt by marriage, Mrs. Frederick W. Vanderbilt, was a Director, and Anne Morgan’s father was an honorary member of the Board of Directors.⁶⁹ As would be the case at the Institute of Art in Chicago, it is likely that Mucha’s friends played an integral role in his obtaining the initial engagement at the NYSAD.

Mucha’s lectures were so popular that Mrs. Hopkins suggested that he should teach a full course at the school, a “Cours Mucha,” like at his academy in Paris.⁷⁰ Mucha agreed and in a letter to Maruška from June 16, 1905 Mucha explained the details, “I’ve arranged that my school here will be virtually my

⁶⁷ TMAN:AM, 212.

⁶⁸ New York School of Applied Design for Women, “Brochure of the School Work” (New York: New York School of Applied Design for Women, circa 1895), 9.

⁶⁹ New York School of Applied Design for Women, *New York School of Applied Design for Women Annual Catalogue* (New York: New York School of Applied Design for Women, 1906/1907), 3, 4, 6.

⁷⁰ TMAN:AM, 213.

Académie from Paris, transferred to New York for the sake of the American students...it will be an independent section of the New York School of Applied Design for Women. It won't only be for women, but for everybody."⁷¹

Mucha's studio remained a gathering place for the *grandes dames* of New York and on April 17, 1905 a Mrs. Meritt, the cousin or niece of Theodore Roosevelt was among them.⁷² Apparently Mrs. Meritt was greatly impressed with Mucha because she arranged for Mucha to travel to Washington, D.C. to meet the president. On May 27th, Mucha wrote Maruška, "I went to the White House where President Roosevelt lives...he knew about me—I don't remember now what he'd seen of mine—so we talked a lot about American art. After that I went [home] and the whole afternoon I wrote my views on American art and what ought to be done to emancipate it from foreign traditions. I had promised to send it to Roosevelt, so I wrote it straight away and had it delivered."⁷³ In a set of unpublished memoirs written years later Mucha claimed that his suggestions were put into practice.⁷⁴ Unfortunately, Jiří does not pursue this claim further in either of his books and it has been impossible to evaluate Mucha's statement because Roosevelt makes no mention of Mucha or any of his ideas in his published correspondence.

Later on the evening of the 17th Mucha went to look at the capitol's architecture. He continued his letter to Maruška when he returned. He

⁷¹ Letter quoted in *AMM:HLA*, 217.

⁷² From a letter to Maruška, dated April 17, 1905, reproduced in *AMM:HLA*, 216. In *AMM:HLA* in the letter reproduced, Mucha refers to "a cousin of Theodore Roosevelt, Mrs. Meritt." In *TMAN:AM*, 213, Jiří reproduces an undated letter which reads, "some ladies are coming, among them Roosevelt's niece." It would seem that even Mucha was unclear as to Mrs. Meritt's relationship to the president.

⁷³ Quoted from a letters to Maruška dated May 27, 1905 reproduced in *AMM:HLA*, 217.

⁷⁴ *TMAN*, 213.

somewhat pompously remarked, “It [the US Capitol Building] is a rather imposing building—in size; but from close quarters it looks rather provincial. A large Renaissance work, copied by small local artists. This shows itself in the details, like Baroque ornaments in a village church.”⁷⁵

Regardless of whether or not Roosevelt utilized Mucha’s suggestions about creating a more native style of American art he did seem to enjoy Mucha’s company. Mucha spent the Fourth of July at the Roosevelt’s home at Oyster Bay, Long Island. He wrote to Maruška on July 7th that, “We ate a little but talked a lot. I had to promise that I would come again. So I’m going back one day next week if I can find the time.”⁷⁶

Mucha returned to Europe either later that month or in early August; he sailed on the *Kronland* to Antwerp and then continued on to Paris, where more unfinished commissions from the previous year loomed. He planned to return to America in November in order to prepare for his Cours Mucha.

Third Trip: November 22, 1905—May 1906, New York

Mucha began teaching his special course in the Illustration Department of the New York School of Applied Design for Women in December of 1905. Mucha is first listed as the Instructor of Advanced Design, on the “Faculty” page in the 1906/1907 NYSAD *Annual Catalogue*. His course, which began on November 1, 1905 and was held every Tuesday, had its own page of description in the catalogue. In the course description Mucha is introduced as, “M. Alphonse Marie Mucha Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, Chevalier of the Order of Francis Joseph of Austria, and gold medalist from numerous exhibitions.”

⁷⁵ Quoted from a letter to Maruška dated May 27, 1905 reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 213.

⁷⁶ Letter quoted in *AMM:HLA*, 217.

The catalogue indicates that the course, entitled “Course ‘Mucha’,” was a private course with “no connection with the school courses” and was open to men and women whose artwork had first been approved by Mucha. This private course cost two dollars a class, amounting to a cost of thirty dollars for the course, which was five dollars more than the next most expensive course at the school.⁷⁷ The premium price charged for Mucha’s class reflects an anticipation of high public demand for the experience of learning from the artist. The directors of the NYSAD would not be disappointed.

The first month of courses went so well, in fact, that the directors decided to give Mucha’s special course its own floor in its new premises. In a letter dated January 17, 1906 Mucha wrote, “They have started building a new school, in which I will have a whole floor free of charge. The local inspector came to my last lecture and found it so interesting that he signed on as a student.”⁷⁸

In the 1907/1908 *Annual Catalogue* Mucha is listed as continuing to teach his “Course ‘Mucha’,” beginning on November 1, 1906 and ending March 1, 1907, as well as a twice-weekly “Life Class.” This life-drawing class could be taken as part of the NYSAD curriculum or separately by students outside of the school, which implies recognition on the part of the school’s directors of Mucha’s popularity. Allowing students from outside the school to take Mucha’s courses meant that many more students had access to them, which also meant that the NYSAD made more money on the extra monthly fees. Mucha’s special course continued to be one of the most expensive classes offered at the NYSAD,

⁷⁷ *New York School of Applied Design for Women Annual Catalogue* (1906/1907), 15, 17, 18, 22.

⁷⁸ Letter quoted in *TMAN:AM*, 219.

at thirty dollars only the class on “Historic Ornament from all periods” was as expensive. His life class cost eight dollars a month.⁷⁹ The 1908/1909 *Annual Catalogue* indicates that Mucha taught the same courses the next academic year as well.⁸⁰ After 1909 Mucha no longer appears as a faculty member in any of the extant catalogues.

Apparently the majority of both Mucha’s male and female students in his “Course ‘Mucha’” were drawing instructors. From a March 1906 letter, “It is interesting that most of my students are teachers of drawing in various schools. The Tuesday evening class consists entirely of women teachers. There are seventeen of them, and I teach them my method, and try to work out a new system. In the museums I have studied every available example of American Indian art and other local work and from all of this I have prepared material for teaching in the schools.”⁸¹

There are no extant records of the names of Mucha’s students or enrollment figures outside of those cited above. This makes investigation into the impact of Mucha’s lectures on the design and illustration community of New York nearly impossible. Yet, from later NYSAD course catalogues, which contain the names of the instructors and their previous training, we can look into Mucha’s legacy at the institution. In the 1920/1921 *Annual Catalogue* three of the current instructors; Miss Cora S. Reiber, Instructor of Cast and

⁷⁹ New York School of Applied Design for Women, *New York School of Applied Design for Women Annual Catalogue* (New York: New York School of Applied Design for Women, 1907/1908), 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23.

⁸⁰ New York School of Applied Design for Women, *New York School of Applied Design for Women Annual Catalogue* (New York: New York School of Applied Design for Women, 1908/1909), 14, 17, 19-22.

⁸¹ Letter quoted in *TMAN:AM*, 219.

Elementary Drawing, Miss Elizabeth Mosenthal, Professor of Elementary Design, and Mrs. Frederick Remington, Instructor in Flower Drawing and Water Color Painting, are all listed as “pupil of Alphonse Mucha” or as having “studied under Alphonse Mucha.”⁸² Though it remains unclear what, if any, of Mucha’s teachings these instructors passed down to their students, it is clear that the directors of the NYSAD believed that attaching Mucha’s name to their faculty was important. His name had retained its celebrity into the 1920s.

In his letters, Mucha mentioned his belief in the necessity of teaching his students a native American art style. He clarified his mission and broadcast it to the public in the December 24, 1905 *New York Times* article entitled, “French Artist Comes Here to Boom American Art.” The anonymous reporter explains that when he or she asked Mucha why he had left his work and academy in Paris to teach in America, Mucha answered, “I did have two or three hundred American young men and women in my classes in Paris, but I felt I was doing them an injustice in bringing them to France when their first formative work ought to be done at home in the United States. Yes I mean it, it was impossible to bring out the real American genius that was in these students when the French atmosphere was always at work upon them.”⁸³

In the 1870s and 1880s many American artists, such as Whistler, Sargent, Mary Cassat, Thomas Eakins and Winslow Homer studied in Paris because American training and technical skill were widely considered inadequate and old-fashioned. The post-Civil War generation of artists were

⁸² New York School of Applied Design for Women, *New York School of Applied Design for Women Annual Catalogue* (New York: New York School of Applied Design for Women, 1920/1921), 4. NB: The Mrs. Frederick Remington mentioned in the catalog is not the wife of the artist Frederick Remington, as that Mrs. Frederick Remington, né Eva Adele Caten, died in 1918.

⁸³ “French Artist Comes Here to Boom American Art,” *New York Times*, 24 December 1905, SM6.

“impatient with past [American] masters [were] concerned not with what to paint...[but] with how to paint, and, above all, with what the act and product meant.”⁸⁴ They looked to Europe to obtain this knowledge and experience. Later in their careers, many of these artists transmitted what they learned in Europe both through the subject matter of their paintings and sculptures and through teaching the next generation.⁸⁵ Henry James wrote in 1887 that, “It sounds like a paradox but it is a very simple truth, that today when we look for ‘American Art’ we mainly find it in Paris. When we find it out of Paris we find a great deal of Paris in it.”⁸⁶ Mucha seems to think that taking these visual cues from Europe had overwhelmed American artists’ native sensibilities.

In the *Times* article, Mucha goes on to argue that American art needs to be distinctive and immediately recognizable as American, just as French art is. He proclaims, “There is an American method of doing business, the American method of farming, the American fashion in clothes, there must be an American art.” Mucha suggests monthly drawing contests in which all participating artists were asked to draw the same object. He claims that, “When all of the compositions were hung on the walls of the exhibition hall one, two, or three would stand out as distinctively and emphatically American.” When asked by the reporter how other artists feel about the need for a distinctly American art he replies, “My brother artists are as enthusiastic as I am at the thought of the

⁸⁴ Morgan. *New Muses*, 78.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 111.

⁸⁶ The Metropolitan Museum of Art, “Americans in Paris: 1860-1900,” available from www.metmuseum.org/special/se_event; internet (accessed January 28, 2007).

genius upbuilding [sic] of native American art. They may be relied upon to help with all their might.”⁸⁷

Mucha is never clear on just what the American style would consist of, outside of repeating the words “distinct” and “emphatic” in several places. The article is full of gross generalizations about what it means to be American and America’s influence on the rest of the Western world. Mucha seems to make his argument for what is American by listing what it is not—anything European. His dislike of the heavy use of the neo-classical style in Washington D.C. is an excellent example of this line of reasoning. He rails against the provincial use of the European “Renaissance” style, as he terms it, in his letter to Maruška, but he does not explain what style he would put in its place.⁸⁸ Mucha only makes the negative argument.

Still, these vague statements are not the compelling aspect of this article. What is interesting about Mucha’s argument is its appearance in the *New York Times*. Mucha’s rather disjointed line of reasoning was deemed worthy of publication. This signifies both that a notion of a thoroughly American art was considered newsworthy—Mucha’s was only one of many voices in the debate over the need for a national style—and that Mucha was considered an eminent member of the artistic community whose opinion on such lofty matters was sought after.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ “French Artist Here to Boom American Art,” SM6.

⁸⁸ *TMAN:AM*, 213.

⁸⁹ Elizabeth Johns’s extremely informative article, “Histories of American Art: The Changing Quest,” *Art Journal* 44, no. 4 *American Art* (Winter 1984), 338-344, begins with a concise discussion of the 19th and early 20th century debate among art historians concerning the merits of a native, nationalist art style of painting versus the merits of a more cosmopolitan European-influenced style.

In the midst of the beginning of his lectures, Mucha paused to visit an old friend, Sarah Bernhardt. On December 22nd Mucha wrote to Maruška,

I went along to the Majestic Hotel at twelve o'clock [to see Sarah]...Naturally a warm reception with kisses on both cheeks as usual after such a long absence. We were both glad to see each other again...Poor thing, she's grown much older since I last saw her, but she was very well made up...and she still has the freshness of her spirit, body and voice...She was thrilled that I am the one who has started the job of bringing some order to American national art. She says no one else could do it and that she has the same idea for dramatic art. She is going to insist on them starting a conservatory because before that exists one cannot talk about American dramatic art at all, and she has promised that she will work with me. I stayed with her until three o'clock.⁹⁰

Mucha's account of his "warm reception," though entirely plausible and indeed probable, is not corroborated in either Bernhardt's memoirs, *My Double Life*, or in her biography, *Madam Sarah*. Furthermore, Mucha's name is nowhere to be found in *My Double Life* and he garners only a brief mention in *Madame Sarah* as "that genius of the decorative poster."⁹¹ In her memoirs Bernhardt discusses her visit to America at length and even outlines her last days in New York City in late December. She spends pages on her visit to Menlo Park to meet Thomas Edison, but never mentions Mucha's visit to her hotel.⁹²

In truth, none of Mucha's claims of visits from the likes of Elsie de Wolfe and Grace Vanderbilt or of visits to the White House can be corroborated. Furthermore, none of Mucha's high-powered friends and acquaintances seems

⁹⁰ Letter partially quoted in *AMM:HLA*, 218 and quoted more fully in *TMAN:AM*, 220-221, 224.

⁹¹ Sarah Bernhardt, *My Double Life, the Memoirs of Sarah Bernhardt*, Victoria Tietze Larson, trans (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999); and Cornelia Otis Skinner, *Madame Sarah* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), 262.

⁹² Bernhardt, *My Double Life*, 261-265.

to have found his appearances in their lives worth recording in letters or memoirs, nor his art worth collecting. It is Mucha's absence from these documents and collections that may hold the key to what I would consider the failure of personality and celebrity to produce a successful American career for him. Unlike in Whistler's case, increased notoriety in the mass media did not ultimately lead to increased financial success or patronage for Mucha.

Whistler's libel lawsuit against the art critic John Ruskin in 1878, avidly covered by the press, actually marked the beginning of his American reputation as a nationally famous artist and his career "grew and gathered momentum from that point on."⁹³

In contrast, despite Mucha's celebrity, his career was stalling, particularly financially. Mucha's studio work progressed slowly on his initial commissions, the portraits of Mrs. Wismann and Archbishop Farley, because he constantly retouched the paintings and, in the case of the archbishop's portrait, was not paid in a timely manner.⁹⁴ Furthermore, these portraits would be Mucha's only oil portrait commissions until 1908. Yet, Mucha's original business plan for his sojourn in America was premised on a steady stream of portrait commissions and he was loath to return to a career of mass market lithography. Despite a critically successful exhibition and a major product commission, Mucha's early trips to America were marked by the seemingly paradoxical state of being a celebrity and a near pauper at the same time.

Mucha had his first solo exhibition in New York on April 3, 1906. According to his letters, various dealers had expressed interest in organizing a

⁹³ Burns, *Inventing the Modern Artist*, 227.

⁹⁴ *AMM:HLA*, 222.

show for him from his first days in America. Mucha mentioned both a Knoedler and an Adler, without first names, in several of his letters. Knoedler likely refers to proprietor of M. Knoedler and Co., a well known Fifth Avenue gallery, referred to in Jane S. Smith's biography of Elsie de Wolfe as a "velvet-lined, established beach head in New York."⁹⁵

Regardless, when Mucha finally decided to exhibit his work, he did so on his own. Jiří explains, "Like so many would-be businessmen, someone had only to suggest that he could manage without the experienced dealers for him to convince himself that he could get the better of them."⁹⁶ Whatever his expectations of "getting the better" of the dealers in the early planning stages of the exhibition, by the day of its opening he wrote Maruška, "the exhibition will be opened, and will continue until Easter—but I don't expect to sell much."⁹⁷ Mucha only sold enough works in New York and other cities, including Philadelphia, to break even.

Though his first American exhibition was not a financial success, it was well received by the press. The *New York Times* mentioned the exhibition's opening at the National Arts Club in its weekly "The World of Arts and Artists" section and in an April 8, 1906 article reviewed the show. The majority of the article is taken up with detailing the notable works in the show, a pastel study for the *Portrait of Mrs. Wismann*, *Quo Vadis*, *Sketch for a Church Painting in Jerusalem*, four panels from the *Lord's Prayer*, and various selections from

⁹⁵ Frances Wietzenhoffer, *The Havemeyers: Impressionism Comes to America* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1986), 224; and Smith, *Elsie de Wolfe*, 99.

⁹⁶ *TMAN:AM*, 218.

⁹⁷ Quoted from a letter dated April 1, 1906 and reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 218.

Documents Décoratifs and *Figures Décoratives*.⁹⁸ Still, the brief comments on each of the above-mentioned works are positive. The author remarks that *Quo Vadis* is “remarkable for its handsome lines and clever management of draperies,” that both of the *Décorative* groupings demonstrate Mucha’s “extraordinary power in seizing the spirit of an object and presenting it in a conventional and decorative way,” and that the study for the *Portrait of Mrs. Wismann* displays a “masterly swing of lines, the color scheme being delicate.”⁹⁹

As to the major product commission, Mucha wrote to Maruška on April 25th to report the new business venture, “I’m doing some tiny drawings for soap cartons—imagine! A Chicago firm has the idea of launching a ‘Mucha soap,’ and they want me to do four small *panneaux*, each with a figure and with different flowers. In the normal way I never would have agreed.”¹⁰⁰ (figure 14) Mucha executed the commission, for Armour, the Chicago meatpacking firm, that year drawing four *panneaux* featuring feminine personifications of fragrances; violet, lilac, heliotrope, and sandalwood. A preserved point-of-purchase display from 1907, as seen in figure fourteen, is evidence that the “Savon Mucha,” as the product was titled, went into production.

⁹⁸ “The World of Art and Artists,” *New York Times* 1 April 1906, X8; “Mucha Posters at the Arts,” *New York Times*, 8 April 1906, 7; and *AMM:HLA*, 137-138. *Quo Vadis* was a *panneau* based on the myth of Petronius and Eunice painted in 1902, the *Sketch for a Church Painting in Jerusalem* was a preparatory work for a *panneau* for an unnamed church in Jerusalem dedicated to the Virgin Mary and completed between 1901 and 1904, and *The Lord’s Prayer* was Mucha illustrated and bound version of the prayer, published in 1899 in Paris. *Figures Décoratives* was another grouping of designs and sketches intended for use as a copybook, commissioned and published by the Parisian publisher Lévy in 1905. *AMM:HLA*, 120, 177, 189.

⁹⁹“Mucha Posters at the Arts,” 7.

¹⁰⁰ Letter quoted in *TMAN:AM*, 219.

Mucha designed the entire display of four small panels printed within a decorative gold frame and shaped like a miniature folding screen.¹⁰¹ Evoking the shape of a decorative screen, behind which a woman might dress, associates the products with the boudoir and feminine mystique. The use of glossy black and gold to frame the images also brings to mind a lacquered Japanese screen, suggesting the exotic, refinement and expense.

Mucha had produced an earlier series of four floral personifications in 1898. Champenois printed 1,000 copies of the original versions of *Les Fleurs: La Rose, L'Iris, L'Oeillet, Le Lys* (*The Flowers: Rose, Iris, Carnation and Lily*), four panels featuring women surrounded by flowers, on vellum and sold them as a set for forty francs (figure 15). Later, the firm produced a variant of the panels, pictured in figure fifteen, on a single sheet of paper, priced at eight francs, in order to reach a broader market.¹⁰² While the composition of four panels featuring women as flowers framed together is clearly not unique to the *Savon Mucha* display, the rendering of the actual panels is quite different from *Les Fleurs*.

In *Les Fleurs*, the flowers frame the figures, suggesting an outdoor setting, especially in the case of *L'Oeillet*, which also includes a tree. In the *Savon Mucha* labels, the flora takes center stage, stationed in the foreground, in front of even the figures of the women. Their prominent place is doubtless intended to help convey the fragrant properties of the product.¹⁰³ The large renderings of the flowers layered on top of the images of their personifications also work to remove any sense or suggestion of locale. *Les Fleurs* appeared to

¹⁰¹ CP&P, 318.

¹⁰² Ibid, 194.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 318.

be set out of doors on a soft spring day, but the *Savon Mucha* labels seem to be tiny windows into a cluttered dreamscape. The *Savon Mucha* women and their floral counterparts float in space behind decorative railings or trellises and in front of what seems to be patterned wallpaper. The cool blues and greens of the images further accentuate the nocturnal tone of the images.

The other significant way in which the *Savon Mucha* project differed from *Les Fleurs*, and in fact all of his earlier works, is that it was a product whose sales were premised entirely on his celebrity. Mucha had previously created countless advertising posters for all manner of products. Once his illustration style became famous manufacturers hired him because they hoped some of the luxury, beauty, and heightened emotions his work referenced would be transferred to their product. *Savon Mucha* was the first product that would bear Mucha's name. In essence, by putting his name to this product, Mucha was selling himself. For the first time a manufacturer was trading on Mucha's personal cachet as well as his famous pictorial style. Armour hoped that some of his personality, his mystique, his Bohemian exoticism and, most importantly, his quality of being a "somebody" would be transferred to their product. Burns argues in "Performing the Self," that at the turn of the century the commodified self became a vital marketing tool for artists, such as Mucha. She draws a direct line from artists of this period, and products like *Savon Mucha*, to Andy Warhol's Campbell's Soup cans, but perhaps a more appropriate comparison would be Warhol's cover for the Velvet Underground's first album, *The Velvet Underground and Nico* (1967).¹⁰⁴ The album artwork consisted of only a sketch of a banana and Warhol's signature. The name of the band, the album title nor

¹⁰⁴ Burns, *Inventing the Modern Artist*, 245.

an image of the band members are included; the initial visual packaging of the band was premised entirely on their association with Warhol's celebrity.

Unfortunately, barring the Armour commission, Mucha's ill-considered attempt to organize his own exhibition was only one in a long string of poor business decisions. Regardless of his lack of portrait commissions, on these early trips, Mucha refused almost all of the illustration commissions he was offered, which would have afforded him some income in the interim. In March of 1904 he wrote home that, "A man came to see me. He was sent from Boston from a big firm of lithographers, and wanted to commission me to do posters, calendars and so on. I sent him packing."¹⁰⁵ Mucha similarly refused an offer to illustrate a novel. He reasoned, "It would have involved me too much in vulgar business society."¹⁰⁶ He even refused to paint a lunette for Charles Schwab because he thought it was beneath his artistic dignity.¹⁰⁷ Mucha almost turned down the Armour commission as well on these grounds but his lack of funds changed his mind; "in the normal way I never would have agreed, but the money will be useful."¹⁰⁸ Jiří points to Mucha's impending marriage to Maruška and his unfortunate tendency to lend money to spendthrift friends as the impetus to start taking on projects like the *Savon Mucha* labels.¹⁰⁹

Once he made the decision to take on more illustration work, like the commission for the Christmas 1906 cover of the notorious gossip magazine

¹⁰⁵ Quoted from a letter to Maruška dated March 8, 1904 and reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 198.

¹⁰⁶ Quoted from a letter to Maruška dated April 25, 1906 and reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 219.

¹⁰⁷ *TMAN:AM*, 218.

¹⁰⁸ Quoted from a letter to Maruška dated April 25, 1906 and reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 219.

¹⁰⁹ *TMAN:AM*, 204.

Town Topics, he often worked in secret.¹¹⁰ Only years later, in an undated letter to Maruška, did he confess to taking on all comers. He wrote, “You’ve got no idea of the struggle I had, all the hopes raised and dashed again. But you know I would never sit idly with hands folded. I had orders for magazine illustrations—and there were the fashion plates. One man who published fashion designs for tailors came to me with an offer and I made three drawings. The tailors liked them and asked for more. Naturally I didn’t tell them I’d done them myself but said they were by my pupils.”¹¹¹ Mucha’s shame in taking on this type of work affirms not only his belief in an artistic hierarchy where a fine artist, which he aspired to be, was above a decorative or commercial artist, but also his lack of success in America, at least as he perceived it, because he had to take on commercial work again. Notwithstanding his popularity in the press, he was not working on the prestigious projects he believed were more abundant in America than in Paris.

In May, Mucha prepared to return to Europe once more, this time with marriage on his mind. His impending nuptials to Maruška intrigued the American press. The title of a May 2, 1906 article in *The American* exclaimed, “Mucha the Poster Painter Finds his Ideal Beauty in Bride-to-be,” with the subtitle, “Man over whose Pictures the Women Raved will Wed in the Woods near Prague.”¹¹² Mucha sailed to Le Havre on the Red Star Line and made the overland journey to Prague in barely enough time to attend his own wedding.

¹¹⁰ Dvořák, “Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings,” 51.

¹¹¹ Quoted from an undated letter to Maruška and reproduced in *AMM:HLA*, 218.

¹¹² “Mucha the Poster Painter Finds his Ideal Beauty in Bride-to-be,” *The American* (New York), 2 May 1906. Reprinted in part in *AMM:HLA*, 219. I was unable to obtain a copy of the entire article.

Fourth Trip: October 1906—November 1909, Chicago, New York, Cape Cod

In October, Mucha returned to America with his new bride and proceeded directly to Chicago. He had accepted an offer to lecture at the Art Institute as part of the Scammon lecture series. Jiří suggests that, as was likely the case with his NYSAD appointment, Mucha had the leaders of high society, Mrs. Potter Palmer and Mrs. Marshall Field, to thank for the offer. Bertha Honoré Palmer and Delia Spencer Field were both in their fifties when they met Mucha and thus in Jiří's opinion most susceptible to his charms.¹¹³ Moreover, both women and their husbands were forces in the Chicago arts community. Marshall Field aided in the founding of the Art Institute in 1879.¹¹⁴ Mrs. Potter Palmer was a noted collector and financial contributor to the Institute.¹¹⁵ Her biographer, Ishbel Ross, writes of Mrs. Potter Palmer, "If all else about Mrs. Potter Palmer were forgotten she would still be remembered as the person who introduced Impressionist art to the United States."¹¹⁶ Ross also writes that Mrs. Potter Palmer had a strong rapport with artists, "she conversed easily and fluently with the artists in their own language and gave sympathetic attention to their whims and aspirations."¹¹⁷

Though neither of Jiří's biographies is clear on when Mucha met these women, he may have done so in a visit to Chicago in the summer of 1905, again not documented in either biography. The *Chicago Tribune* published a drawing

¹¹³ *AMM:HLA*, 206.

¹¹⁴ Axel Madsen, *The Marshall Fields* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley, 2002), 129.

¹¹⁵ Ishbel Ross, *Silhouette in Diamonds: The Life of Mrs. Potter Palmer* (New York: Arno Press, 1975), 147; and "Entertainment Review," *The Nation* 90, no. 2329 (February 17, 1910): 171.

¹¹⁶ Ross, *Silhouette in Diamonds*, 147.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, 152.

by Mucha of Milada Černy in the June 28, 1905 issue.¹¹⁸ When Mucha and Maruška came to Chicago in October 1906 they stayed with the Černys, a Bohemian family. The 1905 drawing of Milada and then the subsequent living arrangements the next year suggests Mucha met the family, the Potters and the Fields on an earlier visit to Chicago in 1905.

Both the portrait of Milada Černy and a drawing Mucha created for the poster for the 1906 St. Vincent's Orphans' Pound Party, also published in the *Chicago Tribune*, exhibit a sentimentality that resembles the typical style used to depict children in turn-of-the-century advertisements (figures 16 and 17). Mucha portrays both Milada and the anonymous orphan as round-cheeked and fluffy haired, with sweet, wistful gazes. Contemporary advertisements featuring children in both France and America followed this convention. For example, four children gather in front of a shop window in a 1903 advertising poster for Lefevre-Utile products. The children shown are delightful, chubby-cheeked mop-tops that appear to throw off their own angelic radiance in the bright afternoon sun (figure 18). Two contemporary advertisements from America, a Jell-O ad from 1910 and a Cream of Wheat ad from 1906, also depict children in this sentimentalized and saccharine way (figures 19 and 20).¹¹⁹

It is important to note that in both countries adults, especially women, were often also shown with the same cheerful and engaging expressions and soft features, as the Cream of Wheat chef is in figure twenty. However, neither Mucha nor other French or American artists used the Art Nouveau style of illustration, where advertisements were so often populated with women, to

¹¹⁸ "Portrait by Mucha of a Child Pianist," *Chicago Tribune*, 28 June 1905, 7.

¹¹⁹ Jim Heim, ed., *All American Ads 1900-1919* (Cologne: Taschen, 2005), 558, 488.

portray children. Perhaps Mucha and other illustrators found the style too adult for the depiction of children due to Art Nouveau's sexual undertones. Regardless, in his two known American illustrations of children Mucha did not use "his" style, but rather chose to follow commercial art convention.

The majority of Mucha's time in Chicago was spent preparing for and giving lectures at the Art Institute. According to the *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago* Mucha gave the fourth Scammon Lecture series, named after Chicago lawyer, businessman and philanthropist, Jonathon Young Scammon (1839-1890), in March and April of 1908 and filled in for Spanish painter Joaquin Sorolla y Bastida as a lecturer in April of 1909. According to the October 1907 addition of the *Bulletin* on March 17, 19, 24, 26, 31st and April 2nd 1908 Mucha gave six lectures on "*Les Harmonies de la Composition.*"¹²⁰ Mucha likely gave an abbreviated version of his Scammon lectures when he filled in for Sorolla y Bastida with five lectures "on composition" in April.¹²¹

There is no record of the exact lectures that Mucha gave. However, Jiří interviewed one of Mucha's Institute students, Edward A. Wilson, a New York City-based graphic artist, who recalled Mucha as a truly memorable teacher. Jiří writes in *His Life and Art* that he can tell just how memorable his father was to Wilson by Wilson's ability to recall Mucha's instructional maxims verbatim. Such maxims turned on Mucha's insistence on the need for native art, his belief in the importance of studying nature, and his division of art into animal and spiritual groups. Mucha's belief in the value of American art

¹²⁰ *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago*. Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago 1, no. 1 (October 1907), 8.

¹²¹ *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago*. Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago 3, no. 1 (July 1909), 9.

unfettered by European models connected to his ideas on the drawing from nature. As Anna Seaton Schmidt, another student of his Chicago lectures, reported to the *Boston Transcript* in an undated article, “[Mucha said] some of your schools still teach you to draw from casts of Greek statues. That foolish idea was imported from Europe. Draw from Nature alone—then you will have nothing to unlearn. The Greeks did not learn their art from copying statues, they learned it from Nature.”¹²²

According to Wilson, Mucha preached the use of a 2:3 ratio in drawing because it could be found everywhere in nature, in seed pods and the human body. Mucha also put great store in the science of sight, as he understood it, and explained that the eye translates everything we see into this 2:3 ratio because it is the most satisfying proportion to look at. He also believed that curves and circles put the least amount of strain on the eye. Mucha defined art that utilizes these proportions and shapes as decorative because it was restful to look upon. Lastly, Wilson remembered Mucha’s argument for a more spiritual art, versus an animal one—an example of which would be primitive cave painting—which failed to transcend human fears. Truly spiritual art was harmonious and beautiful and thus a reflection of the artist’s soul.¹²³ Mucha’s insistence on a close study of nature and reproduction of one’s sensory perception of nature as a means to more spiritual artistic production echoes the dusty and dated opinions of artist and critic John Ruskin—found, for example in his 1847 book *Modern Painters*—and his ilk.¹²⁴

¹²² *AMM:HLA*, 234-235. I could not obtain a copy of the cited *Boston Transcript* article.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ Mary Ann Stankiewicz, “‘The Eye is the Nobler Organ’: Ruskin and American Art Education,” *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 18, no. 2 (Summer 1984), 51-52.

In 1975 St. Martin's Press published a supplement to their *Alphonse Mucha: Graphic Work of Art Nouveau* entitled *Lectures on Art*.¹²⁵ *Lectures on Art* is an undated lecture Mucha either gave and then recorded in his notes or wrote solely for publication. It focuses on and expands upon the 2:3 ratio concept that Wilson remembers from the Chicago lectures. According to Mucha' in his *Lectures*, "It will be found that not only are the principal points in the human body placed in different harmonies and proportions of II to III, but also that the entire parts and details in each member carry out this law to astonishing details."¹²⁶ Because the human body's proportions, and as Mucha argues later in the lecture, the proportions of all things in nature, are based on the ratio of 2:3 the artist should include this proportion in his designs to make his work seem more life-like or natural, and thus more pleasing to look at. The 2:3 proportion can be achieved by placing what Mucha calls "points of interest" throughout a portrait or even a geometric designs in a 2:3 ratio.¹²⁷

It is difficult to be sure if Mucha "practiced what he preached" in regards to the use of the 2:3 proportion because Mucha's discussion of the topic was characteristically exuberant but vague, specifically as to what actually constitutes a "point of interest" and where exactly they should be placed. But, perhaps we can find an example of Mucha using this concept in his *Friendship* lithograph (figure 5). Studying the image, there are what may be considered three points of interest, on a diagonal line from foreground to background; the circle in America's hand, America's face, and then France's face in a

¹²⁵ Alphonse Mucha, *Lectures on Art* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975).

¹²⁶ Mucha, *Lectures*, 12.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, 14.

composition that comprises two figures—a 2:3 ratio of points of interest to figures in the composition.

The Chicago media was pleased to have such a famous European artist lecturing and living in their city, if only temporarily. As a May 16, 1909 article from the *Chicago Tribune* exclaimed, “This is Mucha’s second visit to Chicago and he is receiving the warmest welcome not only by the artists who know him but by the art loving public, which knows and appreciates his work.”¹²⁸ The Chicago press also published two articles reporting on Mucha’s taste in women similar to the *New York Sun* and *The World* articles of 1904. The articles, “American Shop Girls More Beautiful than the Famous Models of Paris says Alphonse Mucha, Artist” and “Ways in Which Beautiful Arms Express Emotions” echo his earlier observations on the superiority of the American woman.¹²⁹

The “American Shop Girls More Beautiful” article is an extended interview with Mucha on the details of the pre-eminence of even the lowly American shop girl over the great beauties of Europe. Mucha told the anonymous *Tribune* reporter in reference to a question about the design he was currently working on, “That is made from an American girl selected from a shop. I might look through all of Paris and I would not find so wonderful a model. Why? Such a face and figure, in fact, type, could not exist in Paris.”¹³⁰ Mucha goes on to explain that American women of all economic classes have

¹²⁸ “Famous Artist at Art Institute,” *Chicago Tribune*, May 16, 1909, H2.

¹²⁹ “American Shop Girls More Beautiful than the Famous Models of Paris says Alphonse Mucha, Artist,” *Chicago Tribune*, 23 August 1908, F6; and “Ways in Which Beautiful Arms Express Emotions,” *Chicago Tribune*, 15 November 1908, F6.

¹³⁰ “American Shop Girls More Beautiful,” F6.

more variety in their coloring and more honesty in their expression which makes them more suitable as artist models. He argues, “In Paris you will find the same eyes, same hair, same features. In America if you want a model with a certain type of face; you go out to the shops and find her.”¹³¹

Tellingly, like his espousal of fifty-year-old aesthetic theory, Mucha’s interest in America’s “New Woman” was behind the times. In 1894 Sarah Grand coined the term “New Woman” to describe a type of bourgeoisie woman who had been developing for three decades—the active, working woman. The eponymous image of the New Woman, Charles Dana Gibson’s “Gibson Girl,” was pure, chaste and beautiful, as were the epitomes of femininity of the previous decades. Still, the turn-of-the-century Gibson Girl was also “independent, self confident, and athletic,” much like her real-life counterparts, such as Isabella Stewart Gardner.¹³² By choosing to troll the shops to look for young, fresh, and varied models Mucha was acknowledging, on some level, the presence and growing numbers of the New Woman as both workers and consumers. However, by only showing interest in their beauty—in their arms, eyes, and figures—he was completely missing the larger issue, the increased acceptance of a level of social and financial independence for women, heretofore unrealized, at the turn of the century.

In “Ways in Which Beautiful Arms Express Emotions” Mucha is quoted amidst a general discussion of the difficulties artists have faced across the

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Holly Pine Connor, *Off the Pedestal: New Women in the Art of Homer, Chase, and Sargent* (Newark: Newark Museum, 2006), 4. Exhibition Catalogue for the exhibit “Off the Pedestal: New Women in the Art of Homer, Chase, and Sargent” on view at the Newark Museum from March 18 to June 18 2006, the Marion Koogler McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, TX from July 26 to October 15 2006, and the Frick Art and Historical Center in Pittsburgh, PA from November 4 2006 to January 14, 2007.

decades in finding a model with perfect arms. Interestingly, in this article Mucha advocates for French model Amelia Rose as having the most beautiful arms in the world. Mucha is the only artist quoted in the article and his opinion is included to stand for the opinions of all contemporary artists. The press seemed not only to regard Mucha as a celebrity in his own right, but furthermore, these articles indicate that he was considered an expert in feminine beauty and taxonomy.

During this period, newspapers frequently portrayed artists as the arbiters of opinion on beauty. In a *New York Times* article entitled, "Most Beautiful Women Here," French artist André Brouillet's remarks to *Gil blas* on the superiority of American women are quoted. Brouillet told *Gil blas*, "From a mixture of German and English blood has resulted a new type superior to the two original types and combining the best qualities of each."¹³³ The increased interest in artists' opinions in conjunction with the rise of the celebrity artist indicates that this celebrity status not only served to render Mucha and Brouillet fascinating but also authoritative. Beyond that, the nationalist or racial overtones to the remarks of both Mucha and Brouillet are striking, and may be linked to the rising interest in eugenics in later decades. Also remarkable is the fact that emphasis seems to be placed on Mucha's and Brouillet's status as foreigners approving not of the beauty of their own country's women, but of American women.

After returning to New York from Chicago in early 1907, Mucha and Maruška visited the collections of three prominent New York art collectors, Louisine Havemeyer, wife of H.O. Havemeyer, Charles M. Schwab, and Charles

¹³³ "Most Beautiful Women Here," *New York Times*, 7 June 1908, C1.

R. Crane. Maruška was favorably impressed by Louisine's collection. She wrote her mother with a laundry list of the couple's collection of works by Old Masters and Impressionists on February 1, 1907, "Yesterday we were again in a lovely house. It is on Fifth Avenue and once again of course the owner is a millionaire, Havemeyer, the Sugar King. On the walls hang eight Rembrandts, a Bronzino, a Holbein, a Fra Filippo Lippi, a Veronese, a Tiepolo, about ten Goyas, a Courbet, a Corot, a Manet, and about twenty Degas—in short it is wonderful."¹³⁴

Mucha and his new bride were likely invited to the Havemeyer home for one of Louisine's weekly "musicals," where a diverse group of guests including ambassadors, museum directors, and artists were invited to tour the collection and listen to live music. These gatherings seem to have been fairly impersonal affairs. Louisine remarks in her memoirs, *Sixteen to Sixty: Memoirs of a Collector*, "Frequently I have met people abroad who, after greeting me, have said: 'I have been in your home, Mrs. Havemeyer, and I have enjoyed seeing your pictures.'¹³⁵ Apparently invitations to her "musicals" were not restricted to her close friends, as this statement seems to indicate Louisine did not know all of her previous visitors on sight.

Mucha had previously visited Charles M. Schwab's newly built three-million-dollar mansion at 72nd Street and Riverside Drive in March of 1906 and shortly thereafter Schwab offered Mucha the commission to paint a lunette in his home.¹³⁶ Upon her first visit to Schwab's mansion, Maruška was not

¹³⁴ Letter quoted in *AMM:HLA*, 227.

¹³⁵ Louisine Havemeyer, *Sixteen to Sixty: Memoirs of a Collector* (New York: privately printed, 1961), 51.

¹³⁶ Robert Hessen, *Steel Titan: The Life of Charles M. Schwab* (New York: Oxford

impressed by the grandeur. She wrote her mother, “He also has a gallery—naturally every rich man has a gallery here even if he doesn’t understand a thing about it—with pictures by the most famous artists, often not particularly good ones, but that doesn’t matter... the principal thing is that no one but he could afford it.”¹³⁷ As Schwab’s biographer, Robert Hessen, states, “Schwab had a passion for owning the biggest and best.”¹³⁸

If Maruška was unmoved by the Schwab’s glamour, she found much more to respect in the person of Charles R. Crane. Maruška wrote to her mother comparing Schwab to Crane, “Crane, of course,” she reasoned, “is a small millionaire but he is an intelligent, cultured person, whereas Schwab is a parvenu from head to foot.”¹³⁹ Charles R. Crane was heir to the industrial and plumbing supply company his father had founded, R.T. Crane Brass and Bell Foundry. Crane used his fortune to travel to countries such as Russia and China, learn about the local people, and aid them when he could. He served President Wilson, a close personal friend, as a member of the Root Commission, which traveled to Russia to observe the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, as one of the leaders of the King-Crane Commission to a post-World War I Turkish Empire, and as United States Minister to China in 1921 and 1922. He also served an integral role in the formation of Czechoslovakia through his support of the country’s first president, Thomas Masaryk.¹⁴⁰

University Press, 1975), 132-133; and a quote from a March 28, 1906 letter reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 220.

¹³⁷ Quoted from a letter from Maruška to her mother dated January 13, 1907 and reproduced in *AMM:HLA*, 226.

¹³⁸ Hessen, *Steel Titan*, 133.

¹³⁹ Quoted from a letter from Maruška to her mother dated February 19, 1907 and reproduced in *AMM:HLA*, 227.

Crane first met Mucha at an unofficial dinner held at Delmonico's in support for the Russians during the Russo-Japanese War in 1904 or 1905.¹⁴¹ Crane was in sympathy with Mucha's desire to serve his country, Czechoslovakia, and his people, the Slavs, in his capacity as an artist. This political sympathy slowly evolved into what Mucha had been seeking all along, a patron-client relationship. Of all of Mucha's contacts and acquaintances in America's highest echelons, only Crane was interested in actually supporting and acquiring his work. The first painting Crane commissioned was the portrait of his eldest daughter, Mrs. Josephine Crane-Bradley as the personification *Slavia*.¹⁴²

Mucha based his 1908 portrait of Josephine Crane-Bradley on a poster of the female personification of the Slavic people that he had created for the Mutual Insurance Bank of Prague in 1907 (figure 21).¹⁴³ Dvořák argues that this portrait, unlike his earlier portraits of Mrs. Wismann and Archbishop Farley, represents one of Mucha's last typically Art Nouveau works, doubtless because he based it on an earlier graphic works, such as *Figures Décoratives*. To create the painting, now lost, Mucha used thin washes of color and gold paint which gave the oil painting the translucency of a watercolor. The use of gold paint renders the figures in the oil painting flat, as they are in Mucha's posters and, Dvořák contends, "gives the painting flatness and a certain

¹⁴⁰ David Hapgood, *Charles R. Crane: The Man Who Bet on People* (Philadelphia: Xlibris Corporation, 2000), 10, 21, 49, 56.

¹⁴¹ *AMM:HLA*, 236; and *TMAN:AM*, 238. Jiří cites a date of 1904 in *AMM:HLA* and 1905 in *TMAN:AM*.

¹⁴² *AMM:HLA*, 236; and *TMAN:AM*, 238.

¹⁴³ *CP&P*, 322.

gaudiness that further underlies the decorative character of the work.” The painting had a lightness and luminescence not seen in Mucha’s other heavily layered and agonized works in oil. Architect Louis Sullivan incorporated Josephine’s portrait into the Harold Bradley residence, the prairie-style house Crane commissioned Sullivan to build for her and her husband in 1909 in Madison, Wisconsin.¹⁴⁴

When, in 1920 the newly formed Czechoslovakian government commissioned Mucha to design its new currency he used the *Slavia* image on the one hundred-*korun* note and 1931 he again employed it in the design for a stained glass window for St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague.¹⁴⁵ Crane’s biographer, David Hapgood, reasons that by using *Slavia* on the Czechoslovakian bank note Mucha was acknowledging his debt to Crane. Mucha’s use of what was at least partly a representation of Crane’s progeny on the country’s currency was even more appropriate when, in 1924, Josephine’s sister, Frances, became a member of Czechoslovakia’s first family with her marriage to President Masarayk’s son, Jan.¹⁴⁶

Soon after Mucha completed the portrait of Josephine, Crane commissioned a portrait of Frances, then Mrs. Leatherbee (figure 22). With this portrait Mucha returned to his earlier oil portrait style and its accompanying obsessive perfectionism.¹⁴⁷ Dvořák claims that, as with the portrait of the archbishop, Mucha’s need to create the ideal oil painting lead him to paint and

¹⁴⁴ Dvořák, “Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings,” 107; and Robert Twombly, *Louis Sullivan: His Life and Work* (New York: Viking, 1986), 392-393.

¹⁴⁵ *CP&P*, 322.

¹⁴⁶ Hapgood, *Charles R. Crane: The Man Who Bet on People*, 52.

¹⁴⁷ *AMM:HLA*, 236.

repaint almost every detail of the portrait. Additionally, Mucha, anxious to please because he believed he had found a willing financier for his long dreamt of *Slav Epic*, included “an incredible amount of paraphernalia, materials, and textures.”¹⁴⁸ As Mucha explains in a letter home, “I’m repainting first this and then that, always improving, and actually learning a lot...This picture has everything: heads, hands, a dog, flowers, draperies, gold, silk, silver, rug, background—in short, when I finish it to my satisfaction, I will have learned how to paint anything.”¹⁴⁹ Detail that would pose no problem for the draughtsman demanded myriad improvements from the painter.¹⁵⁰ In a letter dated February 10, 1910, Mucha admits to “re-doing the head for the umpteenth time.”¹⁵¹ Between Mucha’s struggle to meet his own high expectations and Frances’ pregnancy and illness, the portrait remained unfinished when he left the country near the end of 1909.¹⁵²

In the spring of 1908 while Mucha was still working on Josephine’s portrait, Dr. Maurice Baumfeld offered him a chance to produce his most complete work of interior design since he designed Georges Fouquet’s shop interior in 1901.¹⁵³ Baumfeld, the director of the German Theatre, had commissioned Mucha previously to design the sets for *Der Richter von Zalamea*

¹⁴⁸ Dvořák, “Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings,” 111.

¹⁴⁹ Quoted from a letter dated January 3, 1910 and reproduced in *AMM:HLA*, 238.

¹⁵⁰ Dvořák, “Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings,” 111.

¹⁵¹ Letter quoted in *AMM:HLA*, 238.

¹⁵² Dvořák, “Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings,” 111.

¹⁵³ *TMAN:AM*, 229, 232.

and a German-language version of *Twelfth Night* in 1907 and early 1908.¹⁵⁴ Pleased with Mucha's previous work, Baumfeld asked the artist to oversee the redecoration of the German company's new theatre, previously known as the Lenox Lyceum, on Madison Avenue and Fifty-ninth Street. As Baumfeld announced to the *New York Times*, "Prof. Alphonse Mucha will personally conduct the painting and decorating of the interior. He will not only produce the necessary paintings himself, but will also personally make all of the sketches and drawings for the interior decoration."¹⁵⁵ This was a gross understatement of the work entailed.

As Dvořák explains, "As the Lyceum has been built for an audience of twenty-five hundred persons and the new auditorium needed to seat but one thousand, there was ample room for foyers passages, staircases, retiring rooms, and other accessories."¹⁵⁶ This meant that Mucha was responsible not only for the huge decorative panels that he planned to paint over the summer on vacation in Cape Cod, but also for all of the interior decoration, including the stenciled patterns of plant and animal motifs on the walls of the corridors and smoking rooms, the ceiling and a stained glass window with the allegorical theme, "the revelation of dramatic art to beauty."¹⁵⁷

Despite the almost impossible deadline of an October 1st opening and Maruška's open skepticism about his ability to finish such a large job on time—in one letter she sarcastically asked Mucha, "Why not ask them if they want

¹⁵⁴ "New German Company," *New York Times*, 2 October 1907, 11; and "Twelfth Night in German," *New York Times*, 12 February 1908, 7.

¹⁵⁵ "New Home Uptown for German Theatre," *New York Times*, 1 March 1908, 9.

¹⁵⁶ Dvořák, "Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings," 88.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 93.

you to do the doors and windows as well?"—the commission was too tempting to pass up.¹⁵⁸ The most important part of the overall decorative scheme was, of course, the *panneaux*. The décor of the German Theatre featured three large *panneaux* measuring twelve feet by twenty-four; two, *Comedy* and *Tragedy*, on either of the stage and the other, *The Birth of Beauty* (also known as *The Quest for Beauty*), above the proscenium, as well two small roundels, *The American Girl* and *The German Girl*, which hung above *Comedy* and *Tragedy*, respectively, and at least two smaller *panneaux*, measuring nine feet square, above the boxes (figures 23, 24, and 25).¹⁵⁹

The dominant color schemes of the three largest panels were violet, gray, green, and golden red, chosen to support the mood of the paintings. The complicated linear patterns, the rich folds of draperies, the floral detail and unerringly graceful figural studies were typical of the artist's best achievements in graphic arts, and shared with them "the beauty of conception, the delicacy of handling, and almost sensuous feeling of decorative quality."¹⁶⁰

The *Birth of Beauty*, which, according to an article in the *New York Sun*, was inspired by "Ode on a Grecian Urn" by John Keats, juxtaposes two opposing groups, to the left the complicated paraphernalia of an old scientist or magician and the bejeweled figures of his attendants in richly folded robes with the simplicity of a naked young girl under a flowering tree (figure 23).¹⁶¹ The wealth of ornamental flora and draped cloth that curve around the left side of

¹⁵⁸ *TMAN:AM*, 231.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*; and "The German Theatre in New York," *Architectural Record* 24, no.6 (December 1908): 408-416.

¹⁶⁰ Dvořák, "Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings," 89.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, 91; and the *New York Sun* article was quoted in *AMM:HLA*, 242 but no citation was given.

the panel to frame the figures stops just in front of the feminine representation of beauty. The resulting composition is multi-layered and visually complicated; the narrative remains unclear.

Both *Comedy* and *Tragedy* employ the device of a gigantic, shadowy god-like personification of the genres in the background with a smaller and more solid human figures gazing outward at the viewer in the foreground. In *Comedy* a joyous and thrusting personification looms over a youth sitting in the branches of a tree and charming three maidens with his music. The maiden in the foreground responds with dreamy rapture while her two companions behind her respond with either melancholy or passionate yearning. In *Tragedy* one man broodingly cradles the body of another, either asleep or dead, in front of a frightening, helmeted titan. Dvořák believes that the dichotomy of the elaborate decorativeness of *Comedy*, composed of three pictorial layers of figures, mist, plants and trees and the powerful simplicity of *Tragedy* was intentional and represented the two individual styles of Mucha's work.

She writes, "In *Comedy*, Mucha defended his undisputed title of the master in decorative design, in *Tragedy* he offered to the public an example of the type of work through which he hoped to live for future generations."¹⁶² *Comedy* and *The Birth of Beauty* bore a direct relation to his decorative work in posters like *Les Fleurs* and the *Savon Mucha* labels. *Tragedy*, on the other hand, marked another step in the formation of a less decorative and more emotionally direct mural style he would employ in the *Slav Epic*. His

¹⁶² Dvořák, "Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings," 92.

illustration series, *The Seven Beautitudes*, can be considered the first foray into this new way of working.¹⁶³

The *Seven Beautitudes*, printed as a Christmas supplement for the December 1906 edition of *Everybody's Magazine*, is, in Dvořák's opinion, the most important work of illustration Mucha produced in America (figure 26). The images, comprising six full-page illustrations and a final medallion, each corresponding to a Biblical verse, "already lack the flatness of [his] Art Nouveau works."¹⁶⁴ Mucha created the images while on his honeymoon in the small village of Pec in Southern Bohemia and he used the local peasants as models. Dvořák considers these drawings to be important because they represent his earliest and most fully realized step towards a more naturalistic style. This style is more conservative, less stylized, less ornamental, and more serious.¹⁶⁵ The images are encircled in the typical Mucha floral frame but the scenes within are more directly narrative, communicating the subject of each verse. *The Beautitudes*, taken in conjunction with *Tragedy*, signify a shift toward the historical style of painting employed in the later *Slav Epic*.

The preparatory drawings for *Comedy*, *Tragedy*, and *The Birth of Beauty* are almost all that remains of the German Theatre. Eight months after opening, during which time Mucha designed the sets and costumes for a production of *Henry IV*, the theatre closed down. William Morris added it to his circuit of vaudeville theatres in 1909 and renamed it The Plaza Music Hall.

¹⁶³ The Beautitudes, which are eight in total, are the first eight verses of the Sermon on the Mount, as recorded in Matt. 1:3-10. From The Catholic Encyclopedia, "The Eight Beautitudes," available from <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02371a.htm>; internet (accessed November 3, 2006).

¹⁶⁴Dvořák, "Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings," 52.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 52-53, 57.

Within a month the Morris theatres passed into the hands of Marcus Loew, who converted into one of the new “nickel odeons.” The newly dubbed Plaza Cinema was one of the city’s most famous movie theatres until it closed in 1929 and the building was pulled down. None of the *panneaux* survived the demolition.¹⁶⁶ Luckily, before the building was destroyed a few articles were published in trade magazines that featured photos of the interior of the theatre and commentary on the success of its design.¹⁶⁷

The author of “The German Theatre in New York” in *Architectural Record* remarks, “The most striking impression that one gets from the German Theatre is produced by the fact that the decoration of the entire house seems to hang together remarkably well, in short to possess a coherent scheme.”¹⁶⁸ The author goes on to applaud Mucha’s use of a color palette based around ecru, deep brown, gray, and green, which showcased the panels and worked with the extremes of the theatre’s lighting. Additionally, the stenciled motifs gave “character to the apartment.” As an aside, the author also noted that the embroidered, yellow velvet curtains used in the theatre were apparently executed by some of Mucha’s students from the New York School of Applied Design for Women.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ *AMM:HLA*, 231.

¹⁶⁷ Both of these articles, “The German Theatre in New York,” *Architectural Record* 24, no.6 (December 1908): 408-416; and “The Decoration of the New German Theatre,” *Architects’ and Builders’ Magazine* 41 (December 1908): 89-93, were only available on microform. The poor quality of the reproductions of the images on microform makes it impossible for me to reproduce these images a second time for this paper.

¹⁶⁸ “The German Theatre in New York,” *Architectural Record*, 413.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 415, 416; and “The Decoration of the New German Theatre,” *Architects’ and Builders’ Magazine*, 89.

Mucha's association with the American theatre did not end with the ill-fated German Theatre. In 1909 he also produced the scenery and promotional material for two productions featuring two of the America's most famous actresses, Leslie Carter and Maude Adams. Both productions, Carter's *Kassa* and Adams' *Maid of Orleans*, were lavish and spectacular; unfortunately, no preparatory drawings remain as testament to all of Mucha's hard work.

Kassa was an unqualified flop. *The Nation* pronounced the play, written by John Luther Long and produced by Carter, "one of the most violent, empty, and silly melodramas seen here [New York] in a decade."¹⁷⁰ *The New York Times* was no kinder to the play, calling it "cheap and tawdry," but it did recognize Mucha's superb scenic design—the article's author continues, "a fact which is only emphasized by the elaborateness with which it has been mounted. Scenically *Kassa* will satisfy."¹⁷¹ *Kassa* was so poorly received, in fact, that shortly thereafter Carter went into retirement, only to reappear on stage again over a decade later in 1921's smash Broadway hit, *The Circle*.¹⁷²

In contrast, in 1909, Maude Adams's star was on the rise. Adams was best known as a favorite of playwright J.M. Barrie and producer Charles Frohman, and as such performed the title role in the original cast of Barrie's *Peter Pan*, which ran for over seven hundred performances, beginning in 1904. Frohman hired Mucha to design the stage and costumes, again of which no evidence remains, for Adams' performance in Johann Christoph Friedrich von

¹⁷⁰ "Drama," *The Nation*, 28 January 1909, 96.

¹⁷¹ "Mrs. Carter has a Warm Welcome," *New York Times*, 24 January, 1909.

¹⁷² "The Evolution of a Star," publication unknown, 6 November 1921 from "Leslie Carter Scrapbook" (New York: Chamberlin and Lyman Brown Theatrical Agency Collection), 1974.

Schiller's play, *Maid of Orleans*. Adams performed the play one evening only at the Harvard University Stadium. The event was a resounding success.¹⁷³

Only the publications and posters Mucha designed are left of both the dismal failure *Kassa* and the sparkingly successful *Maid of Orleans* (figures 27 and 28). Both posters utilize the classic Mucha poster style he established with his work for Sarah Bernhardt; "a tall vertical format framed by a decorative border, subtle coloring, and the curvilinear treatment that is his distinguishing characteristic."¹⁷⁴ However, Carter's poster is much more similar to his work for Bernhardt, as represented by his poster for *Gismonda*, in the placement of the title or the actress's name in a separate, upper register and in the use of a semi-circular or circular framing device around the upper body of the figure (figure 2). Adams' poster is more reminiscent of Mucha's *Les Fleurs* or *Savon Mucha* labels due to both its clear placement out of doors, à la *Les Fleurs*, represented by trees and flowering bushes, and its heavy layering of patterns and decorative elements à la *Savon Mucha* (figures 13 and 14).

The portrait Mucha produced of Leslie Carter was also used on the programs for the performance.¹⁷⁵ In addition, Mucha created buttons for the four hundred and fifty members of the Pleiades Club in attendance for opening night featuring the Hungarian word *pajtasi*, meaning friendship.¹⁷⁶ The "poster" of Maude Adams is actually an oil portrait in the style of a poster which was displayed at Harvard to promote the performance and for years afterwards hung

¹⁷³ *AMM:HLA*, 234.

¹⁷⁴ *CP&P*, 330.

¹⁷⁵ *TMAN:AM*, 235.

¹⁷⁶ *AMM:HLA*, 232. *Kassa* was set in Hungary.

in the lobby of the Empire Theatre where Adams frequently performed. Mucha designed a gilt frame for this more permanent display. A black outline lithograph of this image was also produced, suggesting that it was printed as a poster, possibly for use in other plays Adams performed in. Unfortunately, none of these variants are extant.¹⁷⁷

The posters for *Maid of Orleans* and *Kassa* in slightly different ways return Mucha to his earlier iconic style of decorative illustration in the midst of his seeming evolution into a muralist. Though Dvořák sees works like the German Theatre *panneau* and the *Seven Beautitudes* as links in a chain that connects Mucha's early career to his late career, works such as the theatre posters and his illustrations of Milada and the anonymous orphan do not fit this pattern of a march toward epic naturalism. Mucha's time in America seems to have splintered his working style. His various styles—decorative, sentimental and naturalistic—in one sense represent the various jobs he had to take on while waiting for a suitable patron for his *Epic*. Yet, even within the same media or type of work, for example theatre posters or oil portraits there is no stylistic consistency. His portrait of Josephine Crane-Bradley is more decorative and delicate than the belabored portrait of Frances Leatherbee. His poster portrait of Maude Adams resembles his later Armour soap labels whereas his poster portrait of Leslie Carter is a throwback to his very earliest works. Mucha seems to have lost his way in America. He may have liked to refer to Art Nouveau as his style but with his trips abroad, as Dvořák argues, he moved further and further away from *le style Mucha*. Unlike Dvořák, however, I believe that this move away from Art Nouveau was not linear. In fact, his

¹⁷⁷ *CP&P*, 330 and 331.

working style lost all coherence. Until he was able to focus exclusively on his *Epic*, with Crane's assistance, he floundered.

The failure of personality, or celebrity, to produce meaningful commissions likely fueled this muddled and inconsistent period in his career. Mucha's vision of American success, based on quickly finding consistent patronage as a portrait and mural painter, never materialized. So while he tried to move forward towards the *Slav Epic* Mucha had to fall back on his older working style in order to continue in America. His celebrity was premised on his most famous works produced in Paris at the height of Art Nouveau. In order to live the lifestyle of his wealthy friends he eventually had to take on all of the work offered to him, which stemmed from his famous personality as a European artist working in a sensuous, decorative and instantly recognizable style. Hence the creation of works like the *Kassa* poster and the portrait of Josephine Crane in the same period as the *Seven Beautitudes* and the portrait of Francis Leatherbee. Mucha must have felt pulled in several directions at once, drawn and quartered by the exigencies of survival, the flattering glow of celebrity, the yearning for more satisfying work and a sense of practicality.

Fifth Trip: Late November 1909—March 17, 1910, Lake Forest and Chicago

Some time during his previous trip to America, Mucha presented his *Slav Epic* project to Charles R. Crane. The *Slav Epic*, as previously discussed, was Mucha's dreamt of magnum opus, a mural cycle—which would eventually total twenty canvases averaging twenty-five feet by nineteen feet—depicting the history and struggle of the Slavic people in Eastern Europe. Before Mucha left the country for a brief holiday in Bohemia in early November 1909, Crane had agreed to consider financing the cycle at a cost of \$15,000 a year, for five years.

Back in Bohemia, Mucha was so excited at the prospect of finally being able to embark on the cycle that he drew sketches for the first three panels and began collecting source material. When he returned to America, at the end of the month, he eagerly showed Crane his preparatory drawings. Crane asked Mucha to wait a few days more while he reflected on the proposal further. Waiting was agony for Mucha, as he wrote in a letter home, “But how to make the time pass until Monday? He [Crane] doesn’t realize that for me [waiting] is like being suspended between life and death. At last I’m on the road, on the true road of my life—for which I have prepared so long. Only now am I starting to live. Today is the first day of my life.”¹⁷⁸

As it turned out, Mucha had to wait yet another month for the “first day of his life.” Crane had promised to make a decision before he left for Egypt in December, but he didn’t. In the meantime, to occupy his mind, Mucha stayed at the home of Mrs. Leatherbee in Lakewood Illinois. While there, he continued to work on her portrait and designed and constructed a plaster model of a new façade for the Leatherbees’ house.¹⁷⁹ Dramatically, Mucha received his answer from Crane in his stocking on Christmas morning. As Mucha wrote Maruška, “In the morning we all emptied our stockings. [Mine] was filled with all sorts of things including an envelope containing a cable from Crane. This is how it read: ‘Cairo, 24th—Leatherbee, Lakeforest Illinois—Merry Christmas Leatherbees, Smiths, Cranes, Mucha. Tell Mucha everything satisfactory...’”¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Quoted from a letter dated November 1909 and reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 246.

¹⁷⁹ Dvořák, “Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings,” 41.

¹⁸⁰ Quoted from a letter dated December 25, 1909 and reproduced in *TMAN:AM*, 248.

A later letter to Maruška, dated January 9, 1910, confirmed that Crane had accepted the proposal to pay Mucha \$15,000 a year to begin his *Slav Epic*.

However, before he could begin what he termed his “constellation of hopes” he first needed to finish the Leatherbee portrait. After Christmas, Mucha continued on in Chicago until his return to Europe in March in order to wrap up this project. Unfortunately, Mrs. Leatherbee’s aforementioned continued illnesses and Mucha’s dithering resulted in delay after delay. Still, Mucha remained positive about the time-consuming process. He wrote home on February 22, “People keep coming to look at it [the Leatherbee portrait]. It’s obviously something quite new.” He continued on somewhat cryptically, “It will probably be the last of my ‘female’ works. My future ones will be very masculine.”¹⁸¹

On February 26, 1910 the *Chicago Tribune* announced that the portrait was “practically completed” and the Mucha would soon be returning to New York to sail for Paris with a ten thousand dollar check.¹⁸² The article also indicated that the portrait would be part of an exhibit at the Art Institute of Chicago. *Harper’s Weekly* reviewed the exhibition, “Chicago’s Notable Portraits” in April of 1910. Mucha’s *Portrait of Mrs. Robert William Leatherbee and her son Charles*, which the *Harper’s* reporter Giselle D’Unger described as “a marvelous composition of detail and color,” was included with seventy-one other portraits from several periods and Western European countries that either belonged to Chicago collectors or pictured important Chicagoans, like Mrs. Leatherbee.¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Letter quoted in *TMAN:AM*, 254.

¹⁸² “Mucha Completes \$10,000 Oil Portrait,” *Chicago Tribune*, 26 February 1910, 6.

¹⁸³ Giselle D’Unger, “Chicago’s Notable Portrait Exhibition,” *Harper’s Weekly*, 16 April 1910, 34.

Although D'Unger complimented the work, Mucha was unhappy with it. In a letter home from March 11, 1910 he writes, "After dinner we went to the exhibition...[My picture] looked imposing and they [the Leatherbees] liked it very much. I naturally noticed that the heads were very dull, especially hers. But it doesn't really matter because the lighting there is so bad, hardly any of the portraits can be seen properly."¹⁸⁴ Apparently, Mucha picked up on the anonymity of the figures that Dvořák commented upon. In fact, though Mucha left the portrait in Chicago to remain in the exhibition when he returned to Europe later that month, on his next stay in America, beginning in February of 1913, he further altered the portrait. As the title of a February 24, 1913 *Chicago Examiner* article explained, "Mucha, World Famous Artist, Here to Put Happiness in Mrs. Leatherbee's Portrait."¹⁸⁵

Sixth Trip: February—Late March/April 1913, Chicago and New York

After an absence of three years, Mucha began his sixth trip to America by fulfilling a promise he had made three years earlier. Every time he had visited Chicago he stayed with the Černys. The whole family was musical; Mr. Černý, managed his own music school and had been a composer and a musical director. His eldest two daughters, Milada and Zdenka, were accomplished classical musicians—Milada was a pianist, Zdenka chose the cello—and had been performing with the country's best orchestras.¹⁸⁶ As previously mentioned, Mucha's sketch of Milada was published in the *Chicago Tribune* in 1906. Apparently, Zdenka also wanted Mucha to produce a portrait of her. As

¹⁸⁴ Letter quoted in *AMM:HLA*, 254.

¹⁸⁵ "Mucha, World Famous Artist, Here to Put Happiness in Mrs. Leatherbee's Portrait," *Chicago Examiner*, 24 February 1913.

¹⁸⁶ *CP&P*, 346.

he explained to Maruška in a letter dated March 3, 1913, he had promised Zdenka on his last visit to Chicago in 1910 that, “when she became a virtuoso and a successful concert artiste, I would paint her portrait. So I drew her. They gave it to Neubert [a printmaker] for reproduction and it will be used as a poster for her tour of Europe next year.”¹⁸⁷ Unfortunately, the next year was 1914 and the start of the First World War. The tour was cancelled and the poster was never used. The Zdenka Černy tour poster is, as Dvořák describes it, “pleasing in its simplicity.”¹⁸⁸ (figure 29) Moreover, the typical Mucha Art Nouveau ornamentation is virtually absent other than the two stylized circles of white fleur-de-lis on the plane behind Zdenka and floating in front of her cello.¹⁸⁹

Nevertheless, the portrait of Zdenka, seated at her music stand, cello in hand, ready to perform, does resemble his poster-portrait style female personifications, as seen in *Les Fleurs* (figure 15). Though Zdenka is more conservatively and contemporarily dressed than Mucha’s fantasy women, with bound hair and a modest gown, the linear rendering of the curl of her hair, and the attention paid to the drape of her gown and the heavy lace on the bodice of her dress are all typical of Mucha. The contemplative cast of her expression and the layering of circles in front of and behind Zdenka is also reminiscent of the floating quality of the *Savon Mucha* labels (figure 14).

The only other poster that Mucha produced which matches and even surpasses Zdenka Černy’s tour poster in simplicity of composition, is the now

¹⁸⁷ Letter quoted in *TMAN:AM*, 262.

¹⁸⁸ Dvořák, “Book Illustrations and Mural Paintings,” 107.

¹⁸⁹ *CP&P*, 346.

lost poster of the Czech pianist and composer Rudolf Firml (figure 30). Firml met Mucha at the Černys' home in 1906 and Mucha likely produced the poster for free, as a favor to his fellow countryman.¹⁹⁰ If the Černy poster is simple then the Firml poster is minimal. The poster comprises only a profile portrait of the composer against a white background and what appears to be a stylized lyre in the upper right hand corner of the thin, round-edged square that frames the image. The portrait of Firml is also uncharacteristically pared down, likely due to Firml's sex and necessarily less-involved garb. Firml's hair receives the most attention; each strand is seemingly individually rendered. In contrast, Mucha merely suggests the dark planes of the musician's suit.

The Černy and Firml posters represent yet another style in Mucha's oeuvre. They are further evidence of the absence of any linear development towards a single method of image-making in Mucha's career. Late works like the Černy poster and the *Slav Epic* were departures from his early iconic works, as represented by his poster for *Gismonda*, in two entirely different ways: graphic simplicity and an emotionally-charged, history-painting-style naturalism.

Mucha's sixth trip to America was his shortest, spanning a mere three months. Nevertheless, during this brief trip Mucha found time to attend the opening of what, in retrospect, was simultaneously the single most important event in the realm of visual arts in the early twentieth century and the death knell of both the academic and Art Nouveau styles—the Armory Show of 1913. The 1913 exhibition contained around 1300 works of art by 300 artists. It was the diversity of the catalogue that made this particular Armory Show so

¹⁹⁰ CP&P, 316.

provocative, from Ingres to Picasso, Manet to Matisse. Rodin, Redon, Van Gogh, Cézanne, Brancusi and the infamous Duchamp were also represented. As Edward H. Dwight, director of the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute Museum of Art, wrote on the occasion of the museum's fiftieth anniversary recreation of the famous exhibition, "Many of the works have been lost, many of the artists forgotten, but even if it were physically possible to repeat the exhibition exactly as it was in 1913, the public would not react the same...It presented a large quantity of modern art to an audience for the first time in America. The show caught a complacent art world and public off guard—surprised, jolted and offended them."¹⁹¹

Although J. M. Mancini argues in her article, " 'One Term is as Fatuous as Another': Responses to the Armory Show Reconsidered," that recent scholarship has overstated the case for the unanimous negative reaction in established critical and artistic circles, Mucha, and many of his colleges and friends, such as Louis Comfort Tiffany, were indeed surprised and jolted.¹⁹² In a letter he wrote to Maruška, upon returning from the February 17th opening, Mucha portrayed the show as fascinating but ultimately of no account. He described the event as, "tremendously interesting. From the best European works to the Cubists and Futurists...There were some terrible things so that I often had to stop still and just laugh...It is a syndicate of sheer cranks. A

¹⁹¹ Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, *1913 Armory Show, 50th Anniversary Exhibition 1963* (Henry Street Settlement: New York, 1963), 5-6. Exhibition Catalogue for the "1913 Armory Show, 50th Anniversary Exhibition 1963" held at the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica, New York from February 17 to March 31, 1963 and the Armory of the Sixty-ninth Regiment, New York, New York from April 6 to April 28, 1963.

¹⁹² J. M. Mancini, " 'One Term is as Fatuous as Another': Responses to the Armory Show Reconsidered," *American Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (1999), 837.

typical psychological phenomenon at all periods of great change.”¹⁹³ Mucha ends the letter with the assertion, “I was particularly glad to note the unanimity among all artists, critics, and the public that the eccentrics are not even worth laughing at,” directly contradicting Mancini, who asserts that besides painter and writer Kenyon Cox and Leila Mechlen, editor of the *American Federation of Arts Journal*, few critics derided all of the new works.¹⁹⁴ In point of fact, Tiffany was much more strident than Mucha in his criticism of the show. He declared that these modern artists, “wander after the curiosities of technique, vaguely hoping that they might light on some invention which will make them famous. They do not belong to art, they are untrained inventors of the process of art.”¹⁹⁵

It is unsurprising that Mucha was not impressed with the new works. In his article, “The Mission of Art,” published in the 1909 edition of *The Pleiades*, the yearbook of the Pleiades Club, Mucha argues, very much in a Ruskinian vein, for a typically traditional view on the function of art.¹⁹⁶ He asks, “In the beginning, what is art?” and he answers with Keats, “ ‘Truth is beauty, and beauty, is truth, and that is all we know.’ Art is a combination of truth and beauty. It means an aesthetic interpretation of the moral harmonies in the physical plane. A harmonious projection of beauty in a manner which represents Truth, or the will of God.” As his article continues he seems to defend those artists, like himself (especially in the case of the *Slav Epic*), who

¹⁹³ Letter quoted in *AMM:HLA*, 251.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid*; and Mancini, “ ‘One Term is as Fatuous as Another,” 837.

¹⁹⁵ *AMM:HLA*, 251.

¹⁹⁶ The Pleiades Club was a social club in New York City that had no specific professional affiliation but which published an annual yearbook of poems, short stories, and illustrations in beautifully bound, limited edition runs. The New York Historical Society holds copies of the yearbooks for the years 1900 to 1936.

continued to work in historical styles, “The man who works with his public, that is, gives them the things they demand is one kind of success, but he stands in danger of lending a hand to retrogression of lending of public ideals and morals.” He ends with an attack on all the new young artists who did not, in his opinion, follow a truthful, beautiful, and spiritual path, “...do not be one of the men in the world of art who form the unhealthy miasma rising from a swamp of low morals and degraded minds.”¹⁹⁷

Mucha’s belief that art should be inherently beautiful and spiritual combined with the subject matter of the *Slav Epic* not only marked him as traditional, and perhaps behind the times, but also as an “antimodernist,” as T. J. Jackson Lears defines the concept. As Lears explains in *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920*, antimoderism, much like modernism, appeared in various incarnations and across several media in the years between 1880 and 1920, and beyond. The uniting factor among antimodernist writers and artists was a search for a more intense experience of life or even a kind of spiritual ecstasy. Some antimodernists looked to nature, or to the Orient, where others studied medieval history and occultism to find deeper connections. Mucha’s thorough study of early Slav history and later meticulous illustration of it in order to celebrate and represent his ethnic group ties him to the antimodern medievalism of the period. Furthermore, during his entire career his frequent use of the “premodern emblem” of female personification and his depiction of all of his female sitters, many of whom, as previously mentioned, were from the

¹⁹⁷ The Pleiades Club. *The Pleiad* (The Pleiades Club Year Book). New York: Pleiades Club, 1909 [pages are unnumbered].

increasingly economically independent class of working women—performers like Adams, Carter and Zdenka Černy included—in an ageless and timeless manner, nude or draped in fabric, hair aswirl, speaks to Mucha’s lifelong interest in a time and a place apart from modern life.¹⁹⁸ Lears attributes Mucha’s and others interest in the past and in the spiritual as a reaction to the new tensions created by modern life. He writes, “Antimodernists were far more than escapists: their quests for authenticity eased their own and others’ adjustments to a streamlined culture of consumption.”¹⁹⁹

Seventh Trip: Late 1919/Early 1920—March 1921, New York and Chicago

Mucha returned to America, for the final time, after the end of World War

I. During the war, Mucha completed eleven of the twenty projected canvases of the *Slav Epic*. As the *Chicago Tribune* reported in an April 20, 1920 article, “Mr. Mucha, as a matter of fact concluded the work during the war, and in conjunction with Mr. Crane had the paintings encased and ready to be stored under ground in case the war’s ravages should have reached Prague.”²⁰⁰ As the article goes on to mention, Mucha had returned to America to exhibit some of the finished works. Furthermore, the article announced that Crane had made the arrangements to donate the murals to the city of Prague once the exhibitions in America were completed.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981), xiii-xiv, 301.

¹⁹⁹ Lears, *No Place of Grace*, xiv.

²⁰⁰ “Charles R. Crane Here for a Day; Tea for Them at Cordon,” *Chicago Tribune*, 20 April 1920, 21.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

Mucha, Maruška, and their two children arrived in New York, likely in late 1919, to mount an exhibition of five of the *Epic* tempera on canvas paintings; *Chelčický Preaching to the Villagers of Vodanony*, *The Abolition of Serfdom in Russia*, *Mikulás Zrinský Defending Sziget*, *John Huss Preaching at the Bethlehem Church*, and *Santovit Festival* (figure 31). According to Jiří, the first eleven canvases had been exhibited in Carolinum Hall or Clementium Hall in Prague to great acclaim.²⁰² Unfortunately, the five canvases did not make the journey from Prague to New York on time. As Mucha complained in a letter to his aunt Anna, “They did not send the pictures from Prague until December 14th and they did not arrive here in New York until March 14th! By then the exhibition should have been over. The season was so far advanced that I had to postpone the New York exhibition until autumn.” He continued on a more positive note, “In the meantime I sent the pictures to Chicago, where they are being shown at the Art Institute and are a great success.”²⁰³

Thus the *Slav Epic* debuted in America in Chicago, on display from June 15th to late November. The hastily-mounted exhibition at the Art Institute was indeed successful.²⁰⁴ Mucha reported to his Aunt Anna in the same letter that in one week fifty thousand people visited the exhibition.²⁰⁵ In addition, the October 1920 *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago* reported that the

²⁰² Jiří wrote that the exhibition took place at the Carolinum Hall in *AMM:HLA*, 269 and at the Clementium Hall in *TMAN:AM*, 268.

²⁰³ Quoted from a letter dated July 6, 1920 and reproduced in *AMM:HLA*, 269.

²⁰⁴ The *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago* makes no mention of the *Slav Epic* exhibition in the summer schedule as published in the May 1920 edition, which leads me to believe that the Mucha show was a last minute edition. *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago* 14, no.5 (May 1920), 79.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

attendance for the summer had been unusually large.²⁰⁶ The original brochure published by the Art Institute, “Historical Paintings of the Slavic Nations by Alphonse Mucha,” lists the dates of the exhibition as June 17th to July 19th, just over a month. The high attendance rates must have persuaded the Institute to extend the run. The back cover of the brochure also offers visitors the opportunity to purchase a limited edition portfolio of reproductions of the finished canvases, produced by the Bohemian Arts Club.²⁰⁷

In addition, the reporters of the *Chicago Tribune* were certainly enthusiastic. Louise James Bargelt wrote in a July 30, 1920 article that, “his work is never without the spark of his ever present genius,” and compared his *Lord’s Prayer* to the work of illustrator extraordinaire, Gustave Doré.²⁰⁸ Eleanor Jewett was an especially keen admirer of Mucha’s. She wrote in her brief review of the exhibition, “Taking them as a whole, one can say frankly that they typify excellence in composition, in drawing—a point that is not always true when such vast subjects are considered—in color harmony, in vitality, and in sincere exposition of a tragic history.”²⁰⁹ After the exhibition came down in late November, Jewett mourned their loss in an article entitled, “Mucha Paintings Gone, Art Institute Walls Are Bare Now.” She laments, “The paintings have been taken down and nothing put in their place. There is nothing which can exactly fill their place. The Art Institute authorities find no works...of suitably

²⁰⁶ *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago* 14, no.7 (October 1920), 93.

²⁰⁷ The Art Institute of Chicago, “Historical Paintings of the Slavic Nations by Alphonse Mucha,” (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1920).

²⁰⁸ Louise James Bargelt, “Paintings Given to Prague Shown at Art Institute,” *Chicago Tribune*, 30 July 1920, E5.

²⁰⁹ Eleanor Jewett, “Group of Mucha’s Mural Paintings Typifies Excellence,” *Chicago Tribune*, 27 June 1920, G6.

majestic theme to redeem the Mucha loss.”²¹⁰ She also pleads with her wealthier readers to take up Mucha’s offer to paint a mural cycle for Chicago.

The murals next traveled to the Brooklyn Museum of Art; as announced in the *New York Times*, the exhibition opened on January 19, 1921.²¹¹ Just before the exhibition opened the collection of works on display was enlarged to include fifteen oil paintings, around one hundred and thirty drawings, originals for *Documents Décoratifs* and *Figures Décoratives*, some examples of his lithographs for Champenois, and several of his posters of Sarah Bernhardt. Mucha also produced a poster to advertise the exhibition in his typical Art Nouveau style featuring the archetypal Mucha woman with gorgeous, flowing hair (figure 32). The circular crown of thorns she holds in her right hand symbolizes the centuries of suffering the Slavs endured.²¹²

As it was in Chicago, the exhibition was a smashing success in New York. Mucha wrote home on February 16, 1921, “On Sunday there were again nine thousand people at the exhibition...Its success is due to the widespread interest among all classes...The papers here say they are the greatest works of the century.”²¹³ The art critic for the *New York Times* praised the paintings for their restraint, “The ardent spirit of a powerful emotional inheritance is made more potent by the chill austerity of the envelope. The restraint of the murals is first among their many impressive qualities.” The author goes on to praise the balance of the compositions, “...the impression [created] of mist and with his

²¹⁰ Eleanor Jewett, “Mucha’s Paintings Gone, Art Institute Walls Are Bare Now,” *Chicago Tribune*, 3 December 1920, 14.

²¹¹ “Art: Exhibitions of Paintings,” *New York Times*, 9 January 1921, 98.

²¹² *CP&P*, 352.

²¹³ Letter quoted in *AMM:HLA*, 270.

pale color subdues the vitality of his conception. But he breathes into these pallid phantoms a mental and spiritual life more persistent and haunting than the lustiness of flesh and blood realism.”²¹⁴

Several prominent American scholars and artists were also very supportive of the works. Mucha wrote, “A group of painters led by Blashfield and MacMonnies [sic] have begun agitating...that the pictures should not leave New York yet, because they are an education for the general public, but especially for artists.”²¹⁵ Edwin Howland Blashfield was a muralist and an academic who studied the work of other American muralists. He published *Mural Painting in America* in 1914, an extended version of a lecture he gave as part of the Scammon Lectures at the Chicago Art Institute, which treated on the contemporary state of the art form.²¹⁶ He also sat on the advisory committee of the National Gallery of Art, beginning in 1908.²¹⁷ Frederick William MacMonnies was a popular painter and sculptor whose work can be seen today in the Quadriga and Army and Navy groups for the *Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch* in Prospect Park in Brooklyn.²¹⁸

Both Blashfield and MacMonnies contributed work to the White City at the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition. Blashfield’s contributed a number of murals and MacMonnies constructed the *Columbian Fountain*, a barge of state

²¹⁴ “The World of Art: Alphonse Mucha’s Mural Decorations,” *New York Times*, 16 January 1921, BR9.

²¹⁵ Quoted from an undated letter and reproduced in *AMM:HLA*, 270.

²¹⁶ Review of *Mural Painting in America*, by Edwin Howland Blashfield, *The Nation*, 15 January 1914, 68.

²¹⁷ “Art,” *The Nation*, 26 March 1908, 292.

²¹⁸ Ethelyn Adina Gordon, “MacMonnies, Frederick William,” *The Dictionary of Art* 20 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 31.

guided by the allegorical figures Fame and Father Time. Their works, for the fair and throughout their careers, like the entire architectural and decorative program of the White City, was didactic. Through their murals and sculptures both artists linked America with the classical traditions of Greece and Rome by using classicizing themes, personifications and standards of beauty. Their historical comparisons were intended to bolster the nation's social, political and economic identity. This European influenced *beaux-arts* style was the official Gilded Age artistic language as dictated by the National Academy, which ruled the American art market in the early twentieth century through its control over art schools and juried shows.²¹⁹

Renowned ancient art and architecture historian and curator of the Brooklyn Museum, William H. Goodyear wrote Mucha a very complimentary letter, which Jiří reproduced in its entirety in both of his biographies. Goodyear wrote to Mucha,

My dear Mr. Mucha, it gives me great pleasure to mention in writing what I have said to you personally several times regarding your mural paintings—and I am glad to say that this verdict, which I have also mentioned to many others, has met with the approval of every competent expert of my acquaintance. I consider your mural paintings to be of the greatest works of their class since the time of the early sixteenth-century Italian artists.²²⁰

Mucha's antimodernist *Slav Epic* was very much in step with the Blashfield, MacMonnies, Goodyear's and the National Academy's classical ideals. The *Epic* was an edifying history painting cycle painted in naturalistic, yet emotionally and spiritually charged, style and peopled with beautiful,

²¹⁹ Erika Doss, *Twentieth-century American Art*, Oxford History of Art (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 20, 22, 25, 35, 41-42.

²²⁰ *AMM:HLA*, 270; and *TMAN:AM*, 270-271; and Brooklyn Museum of Art, "William Henry Goodyear," available from: www.brooklynmuseum.org/research/digital-collections/goodyear; internet (accessed October 31, 2006).

perfectly proportioned figures. Mucha's new works were a strong example of the conventional style promoted by those in power in American art.

Interestingly, though Mucha never mentioned it in his letters, Blashfield and MacMonnies's reliance on European models for the production of American art completely contradicted Mucha's prescription for the creation of a distinctly American style.

Finally, the exhibition moved from the Brooklyn Museum to the New York School of Applied Design for Women, opening on March 7, 1921 and likely closing in just a few weeks, as Mucha left America for the last time, sailing on the *Aquitania*, on March 26, 1921. Before he left, he accepted a commission from *Hearst's International Magazine* to produce all of the magazine's covers for 1922 (figure 33). He produced these covers in Czechoslovakia. They were, like the German Theatre *panneaux*, alternately more stylized and decorative or naturalistic. From the letters he wrote on board the *Aquitania*, listing commissions and future projects, it is clear that Mucha had every intention of returning to America. But the *Slav Epic* occupied almost all of his time, tying him to his homeland until its completion in 1928.

Mucha's Final Years: 1928-1939

Interest in the *Slav Epic* remained high in America. The *New York Times* announced the completion of all twenty murals in a full page article on October 28, 1928. The majority of the body of the article is taken up by explaining the narrative of the twenty paintings to an audience largely ignorant of the history of the Slavs. The author, T. R. Yearra, seems to be most deeply impressed by the historic accuracy of the paintings, which he writes is the product of months

of diligent study on Mucha's part.²²¹ No further mention of Mucha appears in any American paper until his death in 1939. A brief obituary published in the *New York Times* attributed his death to "shock caused by Germans' seizure of Prague."²²² According to Jiří, his father's health suffered after being questioned by the Gestapo on March 15, 1939.²²³

Conclusion

There is no denying that the body of work Mucha produced during his sojourns in America between the years 1904 and 1921 was not representative of his best nor his most innovative work. His portraits were uninspired and his lithographs were largely derivative or imitative of his earlier work. His style and artistic philosophy were decades out of date. No, the work that resulted from Mucha's time in America is not particularly compelling, but the relationships and circumstances that produced the work are. The strange confluence of celebrity and obscurity, of commercialism and antimodernism that produced such a diverse corpus of work is both symptomatic of a flux in the greater artistic community in early twentieth-century America and unique to Mucha.

The *Savon Mucha* commission is perhaps most emblematic of the social and artistic environment that informed Mucha's American career. *Savon Mucha* is representative of both his failure and triumph in America. Failure because, Mucha's lack of success at portrait painting and lack of viable patronage for the majority of his time in the country meant that he had to return to the grind of

²²¹ T. R. Yearra, "The Epic of the Slav on Canvas, Twenty Paintings Now Completed by Alfons Mucha Light Up the Great Moments in the Life of the Sturdy Race which Holds Eastern Europe," *New York Times*, 28 October 1928, 86.

²²² "Mucha, Noted Artist, Dropped First Name, Death Due to Shock Caused by Germans' Seizure of Prague," *New York Times*, 18 July 1939, 25.

²²³ *TMAN:AM*, 285.

illustration work and take on projects like *Savon Mucha*. And triumph, because this commission was proof that through the attentions of the media Mucha had become a celebrity in America. *Savon Mucha* speaks not only to his celebrity status but further his participation in the mass consumer market through selling his personality and the exoticism and luxury it signified to the American public. Lastly, notwithstanding *Savon Mucha's* status as a mass-market product, likely featuring American shop girl models and produced with the “New Woman” consumer in mind, the Art Nouveau style and artistic themes featured on the soap labels—female personifications in the characteristic Mucha dress, floating in space alongside plants and decorative elements—had a timeless and distinctly antimodernist feel. The *Savon Mucha* commission is the product of a mixture and merging of influences and thus perfectly encapsulates Mucha’s slightly jumbled American career.



Figure 1. Alphonse Maria Mucha, Design for a leaflet for first Cours Mucha, 1897, lithograph, from *TMAN:AM*, 68.



Figure 2. Alphonse Mucha, *Gismonda*, 1894, lithograph, from *TMAN:AM*, 62.



Figure 3. Alphonse Mucha, *Job*, 1896, lithograph, from *CP&P*, 83.



Figure 4. Alphonse Mucha, *Carriage Dealers Philadelphia Exposition*, 1902, lithograph, from *CP&P*, 99.



Figure 5. Alphonse Mucha, *Friendship*, 1904, lithograph, from *CP&P*, 315.



Figure 6. Designs from *Figures Décoratives*, 1905, lithograph, *AMM:HLA*, 203.

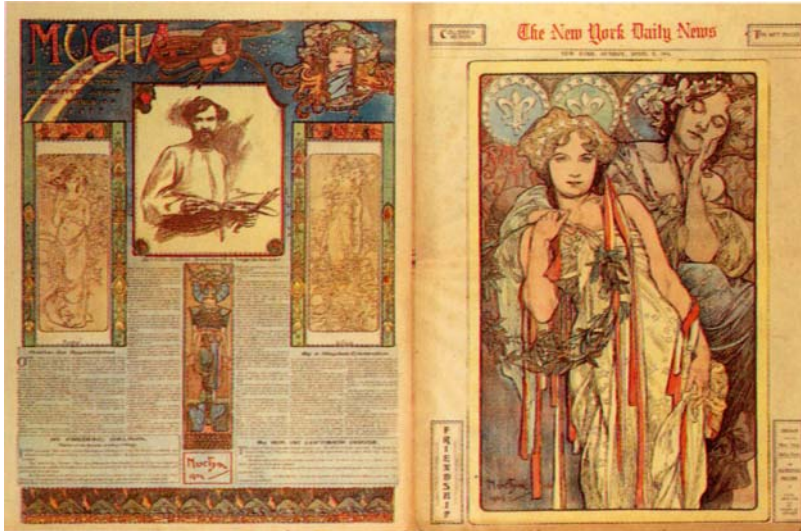


Figure 7. Reproduction of the front and back covers of the Art Supplement of the *New York Daily News*, April 3, 1904, from *AMM:HLA*, 201.

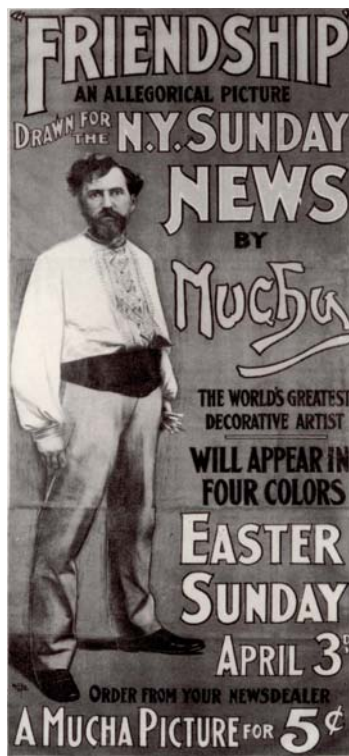


Figure 8. *New York Daily News* poster, 1904, lithograph, from *CP&P*, 314.

A Chat With M. Mucha

OPINIONS AND WORK
OF A PARIS ARTIST

Alphonse Marie Mucha of Paris, who as an artist is known best by his poster work, but who desires to be known less for that than for other achievements, is in New York at present, in a big, sunny studio in the Sherwood.

Nearly every poster room in Greater New York, it is safe to say, has as its pièce de résistance an enormous panel of "Mucha," with the glaring superscription "Mucha" across one corner. Therefore, one associates the artist with this well known bit of work.

Asked about it, he depreciates the reference. "It is four years now since I have done any official—yes—posters, as you call them," he said. "They have had their day practically, for it is a field which has been overworked, and while it served its purpose for a time, I do not think of myself as a poster artist. I am not known in Paris for that work as well as for other."

Mr. Mucha is not a Parisian by birth. He is a native of Bohemia, but he has resided in Paris for sixteen years.



MUCHA DRESSING FOR COMPANY.

Figure 9. "A Chat with M. Mucha: Opinions and Work of a Parisian Artist," *New York Sun*, April 10, 1904, 9.

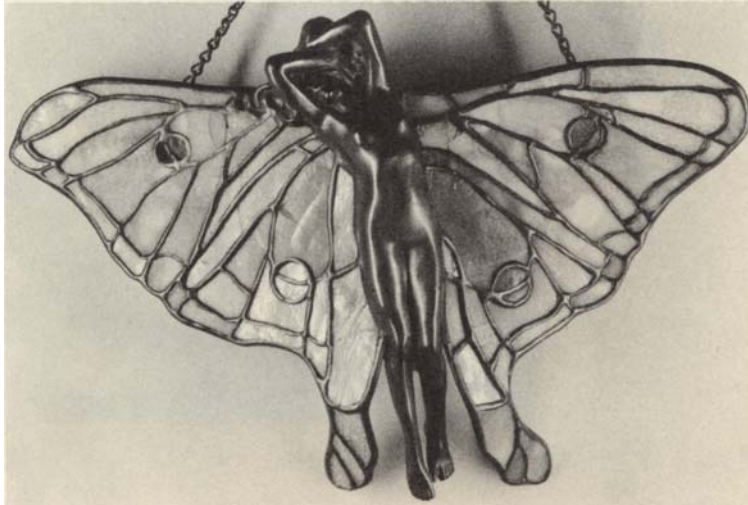


Figure 10. Alphonse Mucha and Louis Comfort Tiffany, *Nymph and Butterfly Lamp Pendant*, nd, bronze and glass, from *Rebel in Glass*, 187.



Figure 11. Studio photograph of *Portrait of Mrs. Wismann*, 1904, from *TMAN:AM*, 200.

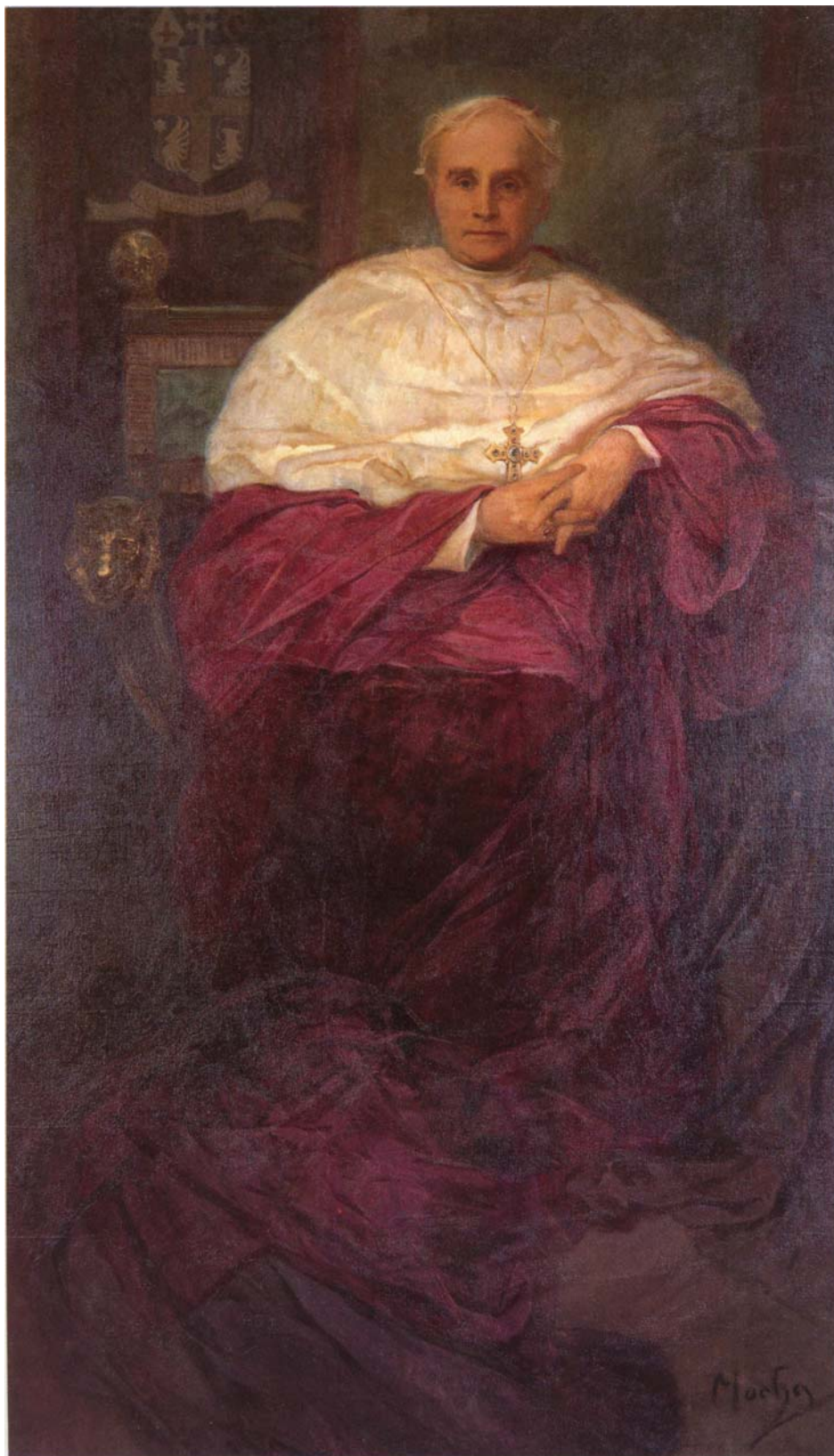


Figure 12. Alphonse Mucha, *Portrait of John Cardinal Farley*, 1908, oil on canvas, from *AMM:HLA*, 212.

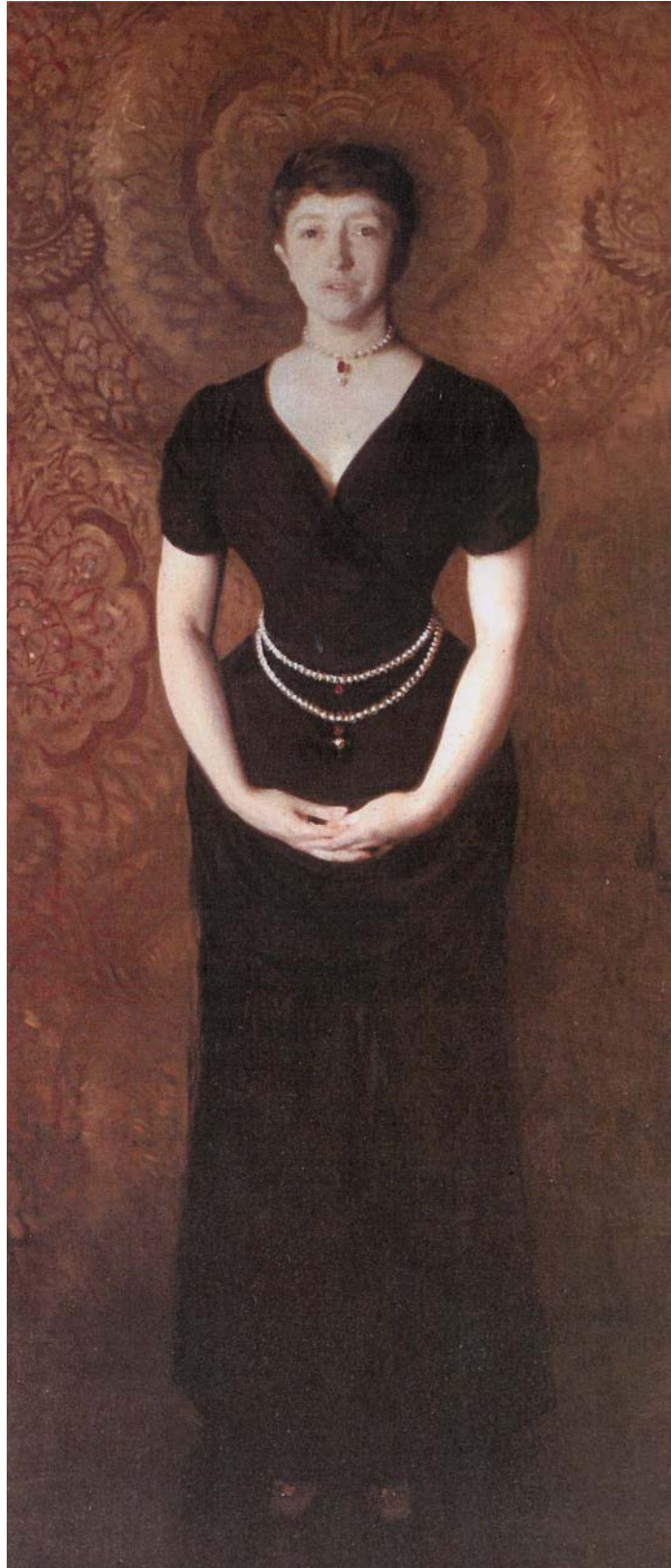


Figure 13. John Singer Sargent, *Isabella Stewart Gardner*, 1888, oil on canvas, from Richard Ormond, *John Singer Sargent, Paintings, Drawings, and Watercolors* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), 70.



Figure 14. Alphonse Mucha, *Savon Mucha* point-of-purchase display, 1907, from *CP&P*, 318.

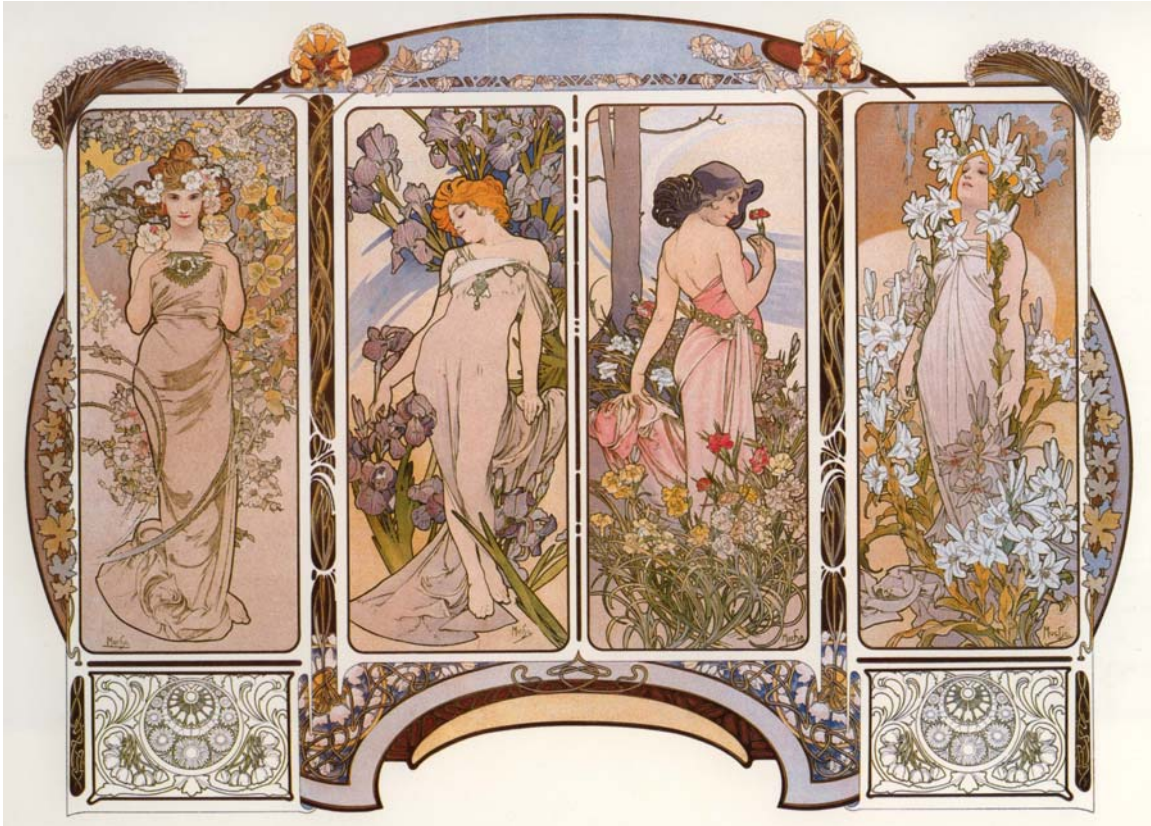


Figure 15. Alphonse Mucha, *Les Fleurs*, 1898, lithograph, from *CP&P*, 194.



Figure 16. Alphonse Mucha, *Portrait of Milada Černy*, from “Portrait of a Child Pianist,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 28, 1905, 7.



Figure 17. Alphonse Mucha, *Poster for St. Vincent's Orphans' Pound Party*, from "Poster Drawn by Artist Mucha for St. Vincent's Orphans' Pound Party," *Chicago Tribune*, December 9, 1906, 5.



Figure 18. Lefevre-Utile advertisement, 1903, from *Un Siecle de Reclames*, fig 161.

**They Wanted
JELL-O**

Do you remember the dreadful disappointment it used to be in the old days at home when mother brought out for dessert some baked apples or pie-plant pie, or something else that was "common," and you wanted shortcake or pudding?

Now the little folks want

JELL-O

It is not always best to give the children what they want, but no mistake can be made in giving them JELL-O for dessert. It is good for them.

Every child loves JELL-O, which is so delicious and refreshing, so full of nutriment, so pure and wholesome, so economical and so easily prepared, that there is no reason why the little ones or anybody else should be disappointed in dessert. The whole family like it just as well as the youngest member.

A JELL-O dessert costs ten cents and can be made in a minute. It sounds almost too good to be true, but it isn't.
All grocers sell it in seven flavors.
Illustrated Recipe Book free on request.

The Genesee Pure Food Co., Le Roy, N.Y., and Bridgeburg, Can.

Figure 19. Jell-O advertisement, 1910, from *All American Ads*, 558.

**CREAM
of WHEAT**

Children everywhere "watch the clock" for time to eat

**CREAM
of
WHEAT**

because they love it so.

*A dainty breakfast
A delightful luncheon
A delicious dessert*

COPYRIGHT, 1906, BY CREAM OF WHEAT CO.

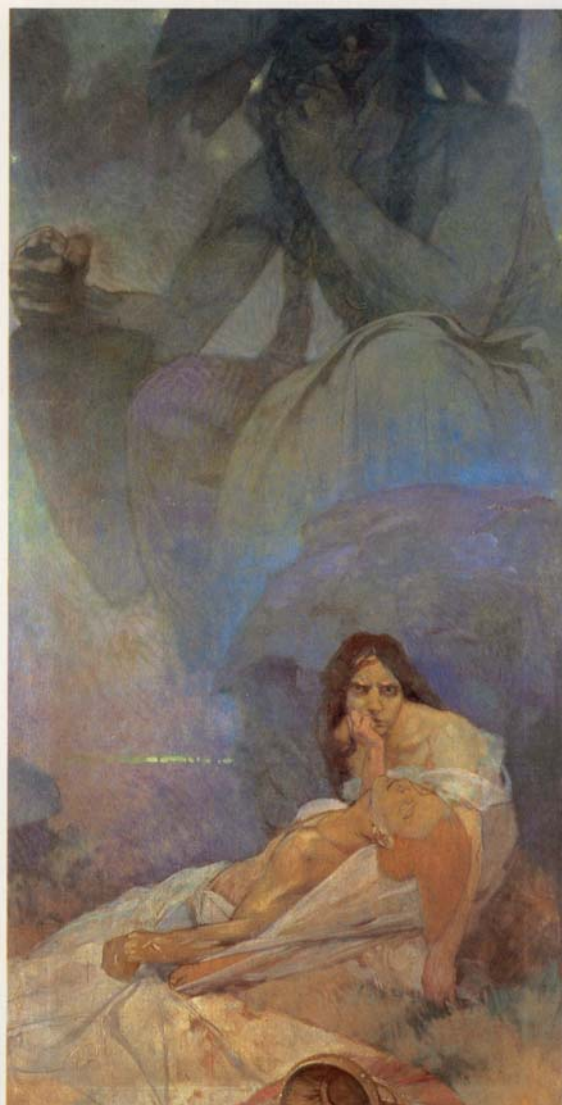
Figure 20. Cream of Wheat advertisement, 1906, from *All American Ads*, 488.



Figure 21. Alphonse Mucha, *Slavia*, 1907, lithograph, from *CP&P*, 323.



Figure 22. Photograph of Mucha in front of *Portrait of Mrs. Robert William Leatherbee and her son Charles*, nd, from *AMM:HLA*, 230.



Figures 23-25. Alphonse Mucha, Preparatory drawings for *The Birth of Beauty*, *Comedy, Tragedy* for the German Theatre, 1908, oil, from *AMM:HLA*, 228.

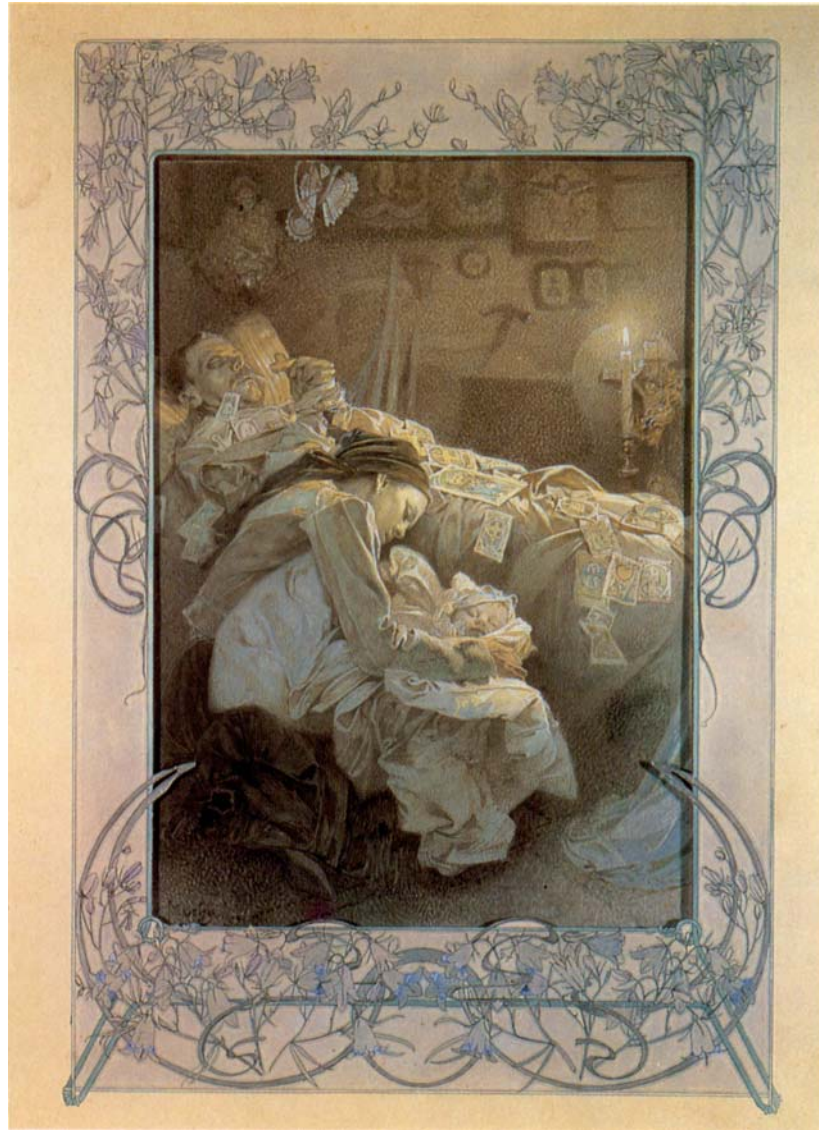


Figure 26. Alphonse Mucha, Panel from the *Seven Beautitudes* representing “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,” lithograph, from *Everybody’s Magazine*, December 1906, 75.



Figure 27. Alphonse Mucha, *Leslie Carter*, 1909, lithograph, from *CP&P*, 325.



Figure 28. Alphonse Mucha, *Maude Adams*, 1909, oil on canvas in gilt wood frame, from *AMM:HLA*, 233.



Figure 29. Alphonse Mucha, *Zdenka Černý*, 1913, lithograph, from *CP&P*, 347.

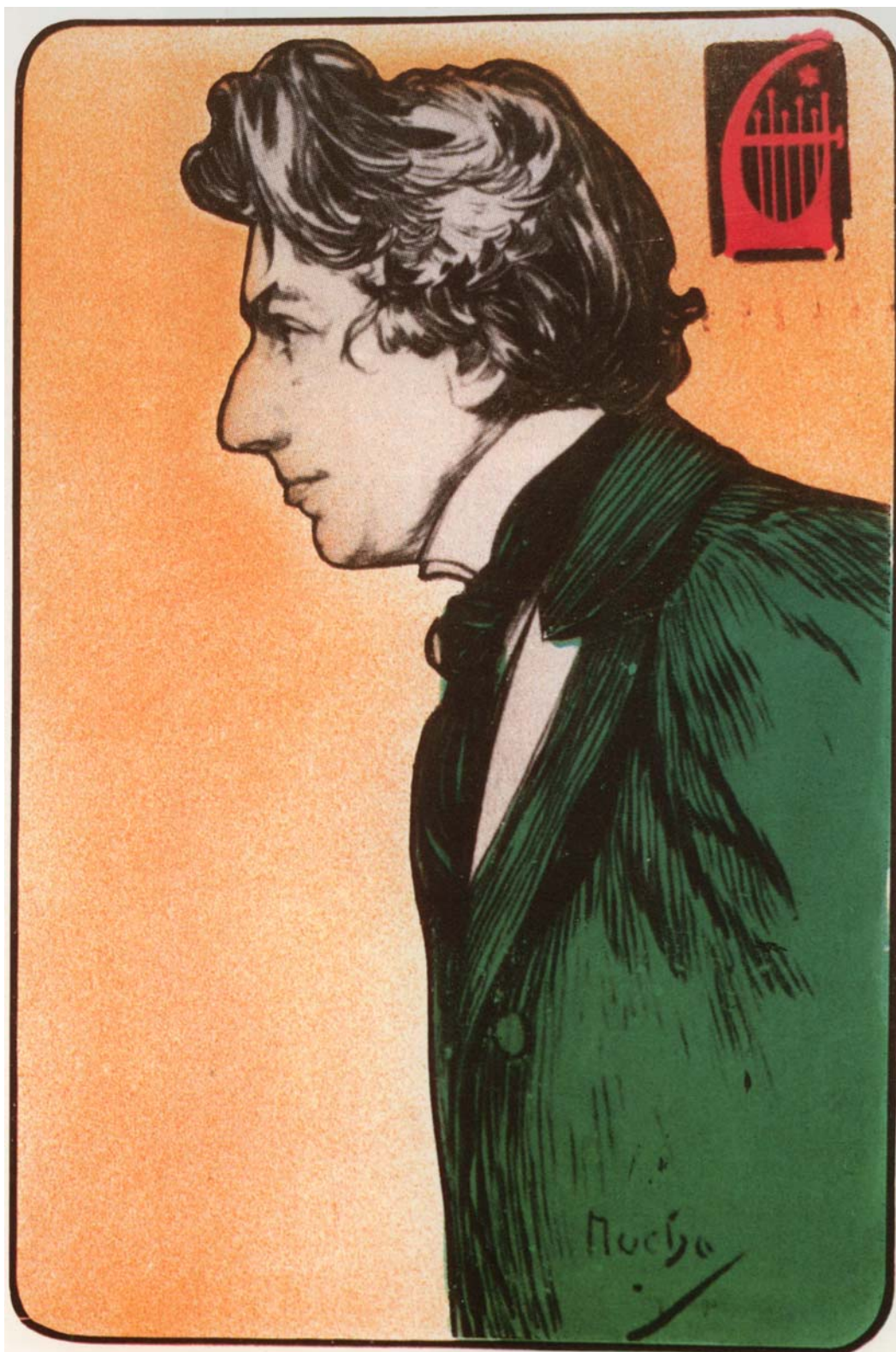


Figure 30. Alphonse Mucha, *Rudolf Firml*, 1906, lithograph, from *CP&P*, 316.

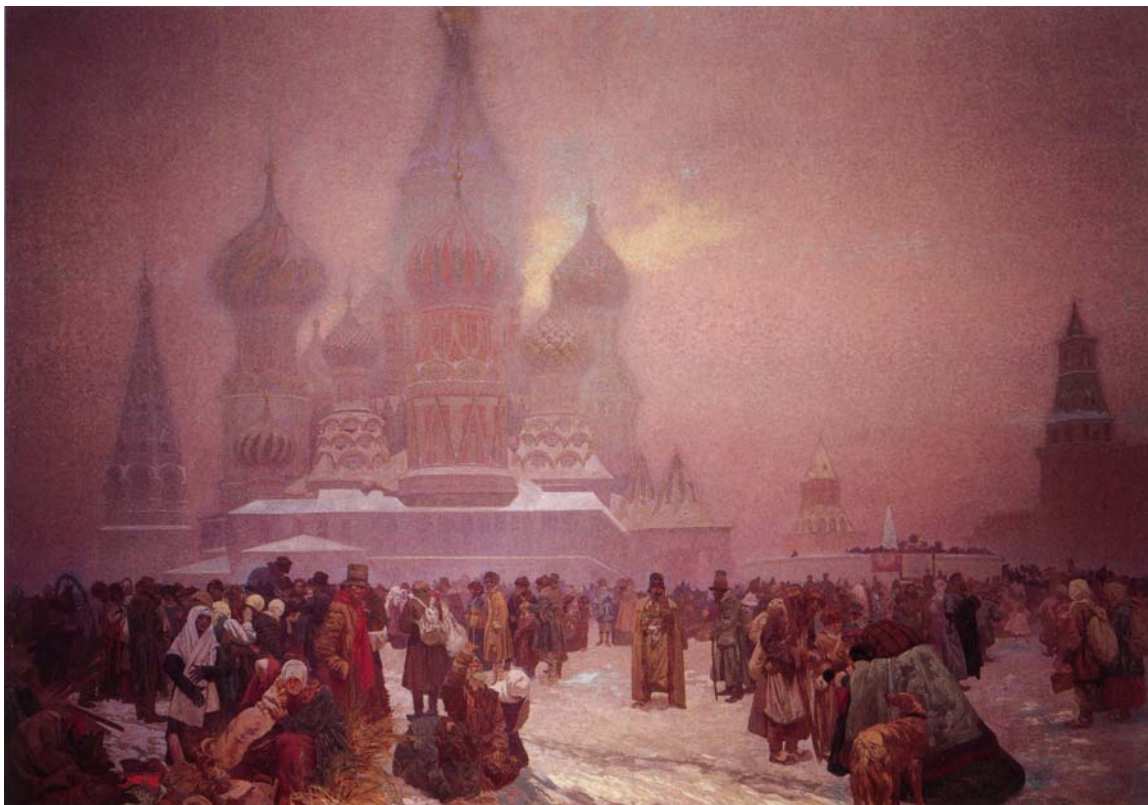


Figure 31. Alphonse Mucha, *The Abolition of Serfdom in Russia*, 1919, tempera on canvas, from *AMM:HLA*, 257.

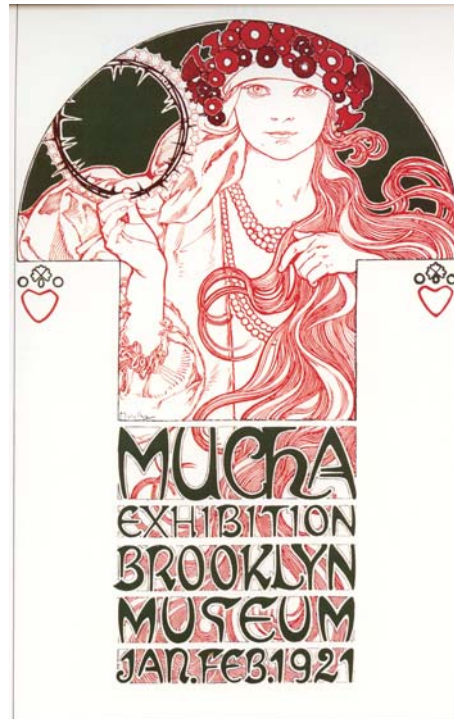


Figure 32. Alphonse Mucha, *Mucha Exhibition, Brooklyn Museum, 1920*, lithograph, from *CP&P*, 353.



Figure 33. Alphonse Mucha, Two covers of *Hearst's International Magazine*, May and December 1922, from *AMM:HLA*, 271.

Bibliography

Abbreviations for Most Frequently Used Sources

AMM:HLA

Mucha, Jiří. *Alphonse Maria Mucha: His Life and Art*. New York: Rozzoli, 1989.

TMAN:AM

Mucha, Jiří. *The Master of Art Nouveau: Alphonse Mucha*. Translated by Geraldine Thompson. Prague: Knihtsk, 1966.

CP&P

Rennert, Jack and Alain Weill. *Alphonse Mucha: The Complete Posters and Panels*. Boston: A Hjert and Hjert Books, 1984.

Primary Sources

“A Chat with M. Mucha, Opinions and Work of a Paris Artist.” *The Sun* (New York City), 10 April 1904, 9.

“American Art Academy Notes.” *Brush and Pencil* 16, no. 4 (1905): 116-117.

“Art Literature.” *Brush and Pencil* 1, no. 3 (1897): 73-74.

Bernhardt, Sarah. *My Double Life, the Memoirs of Sarah Bernhardt*. Translated by Victoria Tietze Larson. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999.

Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago 1, no. 1 (October 1907).

Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago 3, no. 1 (July 1909).

Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago 14, no.5 (May 1920).

Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago 14, no.7 (October 1920).

Chicago Tribune. 28 June 1905, 7; 9 December 1906, 5; 31 March 1908, 11; 23 August 1908, F6; 14 November 1908, 9; 15 November 1908, F6; 16 May 1909, H2; 30 May 1909, B1; 5 October 1909, 7; 26 February 1910, 6; 16 November 1910, A1; 11 February 1912, 3; 8 December 1912, 7; 14 September 1913, 1, 4; 20 April 1920, 21; 22 April 1920, 19; 30 May 1920, E5; 15 June 1920, 19; 27 June 1920, G6; 3 December 1920; 14.

D’Unger, Giselle. “Chicago’s Notable Portrait Exhibition.” *Harper’s Weekly*. 16 April 1910, 9, 34.

De Wolf, Elsie. *After All*. New York and London: Harper and Brothers,

1935.

Havemeyer, Louisine. *Sixteen to Sixty: Memoirs of a Collector*. New York: Privately printed, 1961.

Key, Mabel. "The Passing of the Poster." *Brush and Pencil* 4, no. 1 (1899): 12-19.

"Leslie Carter Scrapbook." New York: Chamberlain and Lyman Brown Theatrical Agency Collection at the New York Public Library Microfilms, 1974.

Low, Will H. *A Chronicle of Friendships, 1873-1900*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908.

Mucha, Alphonse. *Lectures on Art*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975.

New York School of Applied Design for Women. "Brochure of the School Work." New York: New York School of Applied Design for Women, circa 1895.

New York School of Applied Design for Women. "The Story of the New York School of Applied Design for Women." New York: New York School of Applied Design for Women, circa 1902.

New York School of Applied Design for Women. *New York School of Applied Design for Women (Annual Catalogue)*. New York: New York School of Applied Design for Women, 1907/1908, 1908/1909, 1920/1921.

New York Times. 27 December 1904, 2; 1 February 1905, 9; 12 March 1905, 8; 22 December 1905, 9; 24 December 1905, SM6; 23 March 1906, 9; 1 April 1906, X8; 2 October 1907, 11; 21 January 1908, 7; 12 February 1908, 7; 1 March 1908, 9; 28 March 1908, 8; 20 April 1908, 7; 24 January 1909, 11; 19 February 1909, 9; 3 August 1909, 6; 19 February 1914, 1; 9 January 1921, 98; 16 January 1921, X6; 28 October 1928, 86; 9 April 1933, SM12; 18 July 1939, 25.

Roosevelt, Theodore. *Letters*. Edited by Elting E. Morison. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954.

The Art Institute of Chicago. "Historical Paintings of the Slavic Nations by Alphonse Mucha." Brochure. Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1920.

"The Decoration of the New German Theatre, Madison Avenue and 59th Street, New York City." *Architects' and Builders' Magazine* 41 (December 1908): 89-93.

“The German Theatre in New York,” *Architectural Record* 24, no. 6 (December 1908): 408-416.

The Nation (New York City). 26 March 1908, 292; 17 February 1910, 171-172; 15 January 1914, 68.

The Pleiades Club. *The Pleiad* (The Pleiades Club Year Book). New York: Pleiades Club, 1909.

Secondary Sources

Auchincloss, Louis. *The Vanderbilt Era: Profiles of a Gilded Age*. New York: Scribner, 1989.

Beard, Patricia. *After the Ball: Gilded Age Secrets, Boardroom Betrayals, and the Party that Ignited the Great Wall Street Scandal of 1905*. New York: Harper Collins, 2003.

Brooklyn Museum of Art. “William Henry Goodyear.” Available from www.brooklynmuseum.org/research/digital-collections/goodyear; internet. Accessed October 31, 2006.

Burns, Sarah. *Inventing the Modern Artist: Art and Culture in Gilded Age America*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.

Connor, Holly Pine. *Off the Pedestal: New Women in the Art of Homer, Chase, and Sargent*. Newark: Newark Museum, 2006. Exhibition Catalogue.

Doss, Erika. *Twentieth-century American Art*. Oxford History of Art. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Ghozland, F. *Un Siècle de Réclames Alimentaires*. Paris: Editions Milan, 1984.

Hapgood, David. *Charles R. Crane: The Man Who Bet on People*. Philadelphia: Xlibris Corporation, 2000.

Heim, Jim, ed. *All American Ads 1900-1919*. Cologne: Taschen, 2005.

Hessen, Robert. *Steel Titan: The Life of Charles M. Schwab*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Hoyt, Edwin Palmer. *The Vanderbilts and their Fortunes*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1962.

Koch, Robert. *Tiffany: Rebel in Glass*. Revised third edition. New York: Crown Publishers, 1982.

- Lears, T. J. Jackson. *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920*. New York: Pantheon, 1981.
- Lottman, Herbert R. *The French Rothschilds: The Great Banking Dynasty Through Three Turbulent Centuries*. New York: Crown, 1995.
- Madsen, Axel. *The Marshall Fields*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley, 2002.
- Mancini, J.M. " 'One Term is as Fatuous as Another': Responses to the Armory Show Reconsidered," *American Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (1999): 833-870.
- Metropolitan Museum of Art. "Americans in Paris: 1860-1900." Available from www.metmuseum.org/special/se_event; internet. Accessed January 28, 2007.
- Morgan, Wayne H. *New Muses: Art in American Culture, 1865-1920*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978.
- Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute. *1913 Armory Show, 50th Anniversary Exhibition 1963*. Henry Street Settlement: New York, 1963. Exhibition Catalogue.
- O'Hare, Mary Kate. "John Singer Sargent and Modern Womanhood." *The Magazine Antiques* 169, no. 3 (March 2006): 72-79.
- Ross, Ishbel. *Silhouette in Diamonds : The Life of Mrs. Potter Palmer*. New York: Arno Press, 1975.
- Skinner, Cornelia Otis. *Madame Sarah*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966.
- Smith, Jane S. *Elsie de Wolf: A Life in High Style*. New York: Athenaeum, 1982.
- Stankiewicz, Mary Ann. " 'The Eye is a Nobler Organ': Ruskin and American Art Education." *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 18, no. 2 (Summer 1984): 51-64.
- Sussman, Warren I. " 'Personality and the Making of Twentieth Century Culture.'" In *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Pantheon, 1984.
- Twombly, Robert. *Louis Sullivan: His Life and Work*. New York: Viking, 1986.
- Wietzenhoffer, Frances. *The Havemeyers : Impressionism Comes to America*. New York: H.N. Abrams, 1986.