



HAWTHORNE

Fine Art

Adelaide Cole Chase (1868-1944)

Adelaide Cole Chase was born in Boston in 1868. The daughter of American landscapist Joseph Foxcroft Cole (1837-1892) and Belgian musician Irma de Pelgrom, Chase studied at the Boston Museum School and in Paris under Carolus-Duran in Paris.¹

In 1888, Chase exhibited publicly for the first time at the St. Boltoph Club in Boston. Her work hung beside notable Boston artists including J. Appleton Brown, Agnes Bartlet Brown, and her father J. Foxcroft Cole. The *Boston Evening Post* said the young artist, “[made] a brilliant debut as a portraitist with her charming head of a large-eyed girl, executed in a quaint and piquant style, with a truly original touch.”²

In 1892, Chase married architect William Chester Chase. The couple spent their honeymoon in Europe visiting the art galleries of Italy.³ Following her marriage, Chase continued to paint and regularly exhibited her portraits of prominent society members. In 1898, the J. Eastman Chase Gallery held an exhibit of the artist’s portraits. A critic for the *Boston Evening Transcript* said, “There is a sense of vitality in these canvasses which is not unlike the kindred characteristics seen in John Sargent’s portraits, with full as much sensitiveness to beauty and grace.”⁴ The following year, Chase exhibited with other Boston artists at the 68th annual exhibition of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.⁵

In 1901, Chase exhibited in New York with the Society of American Artists. When she exhibited again with the society in 1903, the *New York Times* said her work showed the influence of Sargent.⁶ In 1908, the Art Institute of Chicago held an exhibition of Chase’s portrait and floral works.⁷ In 1909, two of her portraits were included in an exhibition at the Maryland Institute Gallery in Baltimore organized by the Charcoal Club. The *Baltimore Sun* noted, “Miss Adelaide Cole Chase, perhaps second only to Cecile Baux [sic], the celebrated French woman artist, is the leading portrait painter of the women artists in this country.”⁸

¹ “American Art to Make Exhibit at Museum,” *The Montgomery Advertiser* (Montgomery, Alabama), Thu, Mar 21, 1935, 6.

² “The Fine Arts,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Massachusetts) Fri, Apr 27, 1888, 3.

³ “Table Gossip,” *The Boston Globe* (Boston, Massachusetts) Sun, Jul 3, 1892, 22.

⁴ “Portraits by Mrs. Adelaide Cole Chase,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Massachusetts), Sat, Mar 12, 1898.

⁵ “The Fine Arts,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Massachusetts), Mon, Jan 16, 1899, 10.

⁶ “The American Artists,” *The New York Times* (New York, New York) Sun, Apr 5, 1903, 7.

⁷ “Gallery and Studio Notes,” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Massachusetts) Sat, Jan 4, 1908, 15.

⁸ “Art Treasures Admired,” *The Baltimore Sun* (Baltimore, Maryland) Sun, Jan 10, 1909, 9.



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In 1909, the artist was among several prominent Boston artists including Edmund C. Tarbell, Frank W. Benson, and Abbott Graves to contribute to the 15th annual exhibition of American oil paintings, watercolors, miniatures, pastels and sculptures held at the Maine State Building in Poland Spring, Maine.⁹ In 1913, following the 79th exhibition of the Boston Art Club a critic for the *Boston Evening Transcript* lauded Chase's portrait of a young woman in white as a work by an "exceptional painter." The critic went on to say that that beside the work of Chase, the portraits by other artists represented in the exhibit, "fade into relative insignificance."¹⁰

In 1914, her work was included in a portrait exhibition at the Copley Society. Her work hung on the east wall of the gallery beside works by John Singer Sargent, Cecilia Beaux, Anders Zorn, and Howard Cushing. The *Boston Evening Transcript* said Chase was, "triumphant in her portrait of a young musician (7) holding his violin. She is a painter of exceptional temperament and ability, and this is one of her best things."¹¹ Chase's work entitled *The Violinist* was purchased by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1916, and placed in the museum's permanent collection.

In 1920, the artist held her first solo exhibition at the Guild of Boston Artists.¹² That same year, Chase won the Popular prize for her portrait of Mary Shippen Schenk at the 115th annual exhibition of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. The work depicting a young girl dressed in a white dress with a blue sash and matching bow was illustrated in *The American Magazine of Art*. A review in the magazine said the work was "both picturesque and significant."¹³ In 1935, Chase's work was included in an exhibition of American contemporary art at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts in Alabama.¹⁴

During her lifetime, Chase exhibited regularly in her native Boston and in cities throughout the country. An associate member of the National Academy of Design, Chase also held memberships with the Copley Society and the Guild of Boston Artists.

⁹ "Poland Spring Art Exhibit," *Sun-Journal* (Lewiston, Maine) Wed, Jun 23, 1909, 10.

¹⁰ "Art Club's Best Show," *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Massachusetts) Fri, Feb 7, 1913, 11.

¹¹ "Copley Hall Portrait Show," *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, Massachusetts) Tue, Mar 3, 1914, 11.

¹² "Mrs. Chase's Portraits," *The Berkshire Eagle* (Pittsfield, Massachusetts), Mon, Feb 2, 1920, 6.

¹³ "The Pennsylvania Academy's Annual Exhibition," *The American Magazine of Art*, Volume XI, Number 6 (New York, N.Y.: American Federation of Arts, April 1920) 206, 208.

¹⁴ "American Art to Make Exhibit at Museum," *The Montgomery Advertiser* (Montgomery, Alabama), Thu, Mar 21, 1935, 6.