

## Early Twentieth Century Art in St. Paul as Seen Through the Career of Alice Hügy

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In the 1880s, Minneapolis was already on its way to becoming Minnesota's art capital with the emergence of cultural organizations that thrived and gave rise to the museums that secure its prominent position in the art world today. While St. Paul eventually developed its own reputation in the art world, progress was intermittent and driven by individuals motivated by a passion for art rather than by institutions. Perhaps the artist who best represents these grassroots efforts is Alice Hügy, who was called the matriarch of the St. Paul art colony. Although this designation may seem a stretch for a person whose name is barely recognized today, it indicates that Hügy was held in high esteem by her contemporaries, and reflects her continual involvement in the local art scene from the 1890s well into the twentieth century. Her long and diverse career as illustrator, painter, teacher and organizer is interwoven with the early history of both commercial and fine art in St. Paul.

In the early 1890s, opportunities for acquiring a fine arts education were limited in St. Paul, which had no organizations in place comparable to the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts and the Minneapolis School of Art.<sup>1</sup> At the time, studying with one of the city's resident professionals was the only local option for aspiring artists of modest means like Alice Hügy, who was taking lessons from Julius Segall while supporting herself by designing graphics for newspaper advertisements.<sup>2,3</sup>

Recognizing the need for affordable art lessons, a St. Paul ladies' art club stepped to the plate in 1893 and arranged for classes to be held in the attic of the Metropolitan Hotel on the west side of Smith Park, now Rice Park.<sup>4</sup> Hügy was one of the first to take advantage of the new opportunity. She attended the night drawing



Portrait of Alice Hügy by Clara Mairs, 1922. Hügy had brown hair, brown eyes and wore wire-rim glasses. *Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*

classes taught by Burt Harwood, who had studied in the Académie Julian in Paris and was a member of the Art Students League in New York.

### St. Paul School of Fine Arts

The fledgling school became incorporated as the St. Paul School of Fine Arts (SPSFA) in 1894, with Harwood serving as its first director. Soon the faculty included Orlando Cheeks, Knute Okerberg and Grace McKinstry. Cheeks, also a member of the Art Students League, gave drawing lessons and Okerberg, who had studied modeling in Paris and Stockholm, was in charge of the sculpture classes. Painting was taught by McKinstry, who had been one of the early students at the Minneapolis School of Fine Arts and had later studied at the League and Cooper Union in New York, as well as the Art Institute of Chicago and the Académie Julian in Paris.<sup>5</sup> Heavily influenced by the Art Students League



St. Paul School of Fine Arts students in the attic of the Metropolitan Hotel, 1893. The teacher in front of the class is Burt Harwood. Seated in the back row are Paul Manship, far right, and Alice Hügy, second from the left. Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society.

in New York, where students were members, the new school in St. Paul adopted the League's curriculum, which in turn was based on the French academic system.<sup>6</sup> After acquiring basic skills, students copied drawings by the masters and then progressed to drawing humans, working first from plaster casts and later from live models, as did the sculpture students who modeled in clay. The life classes used nude models and women worked alongside men, which was rare in the 1890s, even at the Académie Julian. From the beginning, women were treated equally to men and played important roles in the school.

From 1895-1899, the SPSFA held summer classes in the historic Sibley House in Mendota, which was comfortably furnished and provided sleeping quarters for students and staff.<sup>7</sup> Located near the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers, the site provided magnificent views and was an ideal place to practice the plein air method, which advocated sketching and painting outdoors.<sup>8</sup> Hügy would later recall that Burt Harwood taught the techniques of the French Impressionists, which emphasized light and pure color, shunning black, while Grace McKinstry taught a more representative approach to painting, as did Alexis Fournier, who had established a local reputation and was now successful in the east and abroad.<sup>9,10</sup> Illustrator John Norval Marchand taught methods that had earned him a reputation in commercial art. When the program expanded to include

instruction in decoration and design, noted muralist Elizabeth Chant and the McKey sisters, who designed tapestries and costumes in New York, were brought in.<sup>11</sup> The informal atmosphere of the house was conducive to a variety of creative activities, such as putting on plays, which benefited from the piano in the parlor. The school's summer program at the Sibley House came to an end when the DAR took over the historic property in 1900.

In 1897 the SPSFA moved its regular program from the top floor of the Metropolitan Hotel to more spacious quarters in the Moore Block at Seven Corners.<sup>12</sup> By then enrollment had doubled and the school was developing a good reputation, which helped its students gain admittance to respected schools in the East and abroad.<sup>13</sup> An article in the *Saint Paul Daily Globe* stated "The school was modeled on the same plan as the best schools of the country . . . Several of the St. Paul students have gone direct into the Academic Julian in Paris, being admitted with high rank."<sup>14</sup> Other students continued their studies in New York or found employment there.

A 1902 article in the *Globe* identified Hügy as one of the SPSFA students who had moved on to positions in established firms in New York. "Another earnest, promising student was Miss Alice Nugy [sic]. This young woman is also in New York in the employ of a large designing house on Fifth Avenue of that city and is doing good work. She was in the employ of W. L. Banning, of this city, for some years, and abandoned a position with this house paying \$1,000 per annum to go to the great city."<sup>15</sup>

W. L. Banning Jr. was one of the first local firms to produce advertisements in-house. Originally, advertising agencies had merely purchased large amounts of space in newspapers at a discount and then resold spots at higher rates to companies, who were then responsible for their own ads. Early advertisements consisted mainly of text, sometimes accompanied by simple images reproduced from pen and ink drawings, but by 1900 advertising in the Twin Cities was about to change dramatically in response to the introduction here of the halftone process, which produced more realistic images and required special skills and equipment. Demand for these more sophisticated illustrations gave birth to the modern ad agency that employs a





The St. Paul School of Fine Arts held summer classes at the historic site in Mendota which included the Sibley House, Faribault House (pictured) and several other mid-nineteenth century buildings associated with the fur trade. Circa 1897, courtesy Minnesota Historical Society.

multidisciplinary staff. Hügy may have gone to New York to absorb cutting-edge developments in the advertising field in preparation for the revolutionary changes about to take place in the industry at home.

Upon her return to Minnesota, Hügy found employment with the St. Paul branch of the Bureau of Engraving, the Minneapolis company that had introduced the halftone engraving process to the Twin Cities in 1898.<sup>16</sup> President J. C. Buckbee's son, Charles E. Buckbee, and nephew, Norman T. Mears, who were in charge of the office, later purchased the branch from the parent company and changed its name to the Buckbee-Mears Company of St. Paul.<sup>17</sup> While Hügy worked there, she continued to take classes at the St. Paul School of Fine Arts, which moved to the third and fourth floors of the newly erected St. Paul Auditorium at 48 West Fourth Street soon after it was completed in 1907.<sup>18</sup> The long-awaited civic venue addressed perennial complaints that, unlike Minneapolis, St. Paul did not have an exhibition hall, a library and an art gallery.<sup>19</sup> The auditorium, which was large enough to host major events and accommodate a symphony orchestra as well as various kinds of popular entertainment, also incorporated a museum, art gallery, and art school, leaving St. Paul with only one serious deficiency. The city would not have an adequate

space to house the public library until 1917, but meanwhile it would offer its residents a different educational opportunity.

### St. Paul Institute School of Art

Two receipts for tuition at the "St. Paul School of Art" dated April and May of 1908 are included in Hügy's papers at the Minnesota Historical Society. She may have saved these particular receipts as a memento, because the school was about to be reorganized and absorbed into the recently established St. Paul Institute of Arts and Sciences, also headquartered in the auditorium. The Institute was a part of St. Paul's overall plan to raise the cultural opportunities of its residents, especially the poor.<sup>20</sup> Composed of seven schools—Commerce, Domestic Art and Domestic Science, Education, Fine Arts, Science and Industrial Arts, evening high schools and evening grade schools—the Institute was a private undertaking that collaborated with the public school system. The "St. Paul Institute School of Art" offered twenty-one different classes, about half in the fine arts and the others in the applied arts.<sup>21</sup> Its location in the spacious auditorium not only enabled the school to expand its program, but also exhibit the students' work. Hügy would later recall, "The most important activity at this point was composition, with exhibitions

and criticism every two weeks. The influence was now not quite so impressionistic. Black was permissible, since Robert Henri in New York was using it so effectively.”<sup>22</sup>

Opportunities for students to show their work soon increased significantly. The annual art exhibit at the Minnesota State Fair, which had hit a low point during the early 1900s, gradually began to feature fine art again and often included art school exhibits.<sup>23</sup> The art exhibit at the fair, which increased in quality dramatically after the Minnesota State Art Society took charge in 1914, would continue to be one of the best opportunities for Minnesota artists to display and sell their work and Hügy participated frequently.<sup>24,25</sup> Soon there were several other options. The Artists Society of St. Paul, formed in 1914, sponsored exhibits open to local artists who qualified for membership by submitting their work to a jury. Hügy, who was one of the founding members, served on juries and acted as its corresponding secretary at times. The Society’s exhibit at the Institute in December 1914 gave Hügy and fellow student Clara Mairs special recognition.<sup>26</sup> In November 1917, Hügy, Mairs, and Elsa Laubach Jemne were among the artists included in an exhibit at the newly completed

St. Paul Public Library, which would host many other art exhibits in the coming years.<sup>27</sup> Major exhibits were sponsored by the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MIA) after it was opened in 1915 by the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts.<sup>28</sup> Beginning in 1918, an annual MIA event known as the Exhibition of the Work of Local Artists drew from work by a group that included Hügy, Frances Cranmer Greenman, Clement Haupers, Jemne, Mairs, Edward Brewer, Floyd Brewer, Syd Fossum, Elof Wedin, Jo Lutz Rollins, and Ada Wolfe.<sup>29</sup>

The St. Paul Institute School of Art, which had struggled financially, closed in 1916 due to low enrollment and it would be several years before St. Paul had a functioning art school again.<sup>30</sup> Artists associated with the school organized the Art League of St. Paul, giving a name to the informal art colony that had begun to form around Mairs, Hügy, and Haupers.<sup>31</sup> The group, which also included Bob Brown,<sup>32</sup> Harry Byers, Joseph LaFond, George Resler, Jack Smith, and Ben Swanson, continued working together in the school’s former space in the St. Paul Auditorium, sharing resources such as live models.<sup>33</sup> Going forward St. Paul’s art colony was a fluid group as new artists appeared

St. Paul Institute School of Art exhibit at an early Minnesota State Art Society exhibition. The Society included exhibits by Twin Cities art schools in its annual expositions, which were held all over the state until 1914, when they became part of the Minnesota State Fair. *Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society.*







A group of artists at Pig's Eye Island, St. Paul, in 1926. Artists include Clara Mairs, Clement Haupers, Alice Hügy and other members of the St. Paul art colony. *Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society.*

on the scene and others left temporarily to work and study elsewhere, as did Mairs and Haupers, who spent much of the twenties abroad. In contrast, Hügy was ever-present on the art scene in St. Paul.

### St. Paul School of Art

In 1924, members of the Art League of St. Paul mobilized in the Court Block at Fourth and Cedar with the intent of reviving the former St. Paul Institute School of Art, albeit with a slightly different name and a new mission that signaled a return to the philosophy of St. Paul's first art school. The "St. Paul School of Art" was incorporated in 1927 with a structure modeled even more closely after the prestigious Art Students League in New York, in that its students, who were referred to as "members," managed the school.<sup>34</sup> Sympathetic to modern art and encouraging students to develop their own style, the school was considered more progressive than the Art School of Minneapolis.<sup>35</sup> A review of the school's exhibition at the library in November of 1927 by art critic James

Gray of the *St. Paul Dispatch* gives credence to this appraisal. Gray emphasized the variety he saw in the style of the exhibitors, who included Hügy, Dewey Albinson, Ben Anderson, Haupers, Jemne, Mairs, and Ben Swanson.<sup>36</sup>

Lacking wealthy patrons, the scrappy school had no home of its own and was ever in search of better accommodations. In 1926 the school had moved from the Court Block to 107 East Third Street. Two years later it moved to a larger space on the third floor of the Essex Building at 23 East Sixth Street, where the school had room to exhibit the students' work.<sup>37</sup> Taking advantage of the variety of subject matter readily available nearby, Alice Hügy could be seen instructing her classes throughout downtown St. Paul.<sup>38</sup>

In 1932, the St. Paul School of Art moved to smaller quarters at 341 Selby Avenue, where it would remain throughout the Great Depression.<sup>39</sup> The first few years of the depression were the hardest for artists, whose situation improved in 1933 when the federal government came to their aid with the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP), which hired unemployed

professional artists to create sculptures, paintings, and other forms of art for public buildings and parks.<sup>40</sup> Cameron Booth, who had left his position with the Minneapolis School of Art in the fall of 1929 to teach at the St. Paul School of Art, and was now its director, became involved with the program, which was administered in Minnesota by Russell Plimpton, Director of the MIA.<sup>41</sup> The PWAP was soon superseded by the Federal Arts Project (FAP), one of several programs under the Works Progress Administration.<sup>42</sup> Booth was asked to be local administrator but recommended Clem Haupers, an instructor at the St. Paul School of Art, for the position.<sup>43</sup> Haupers was put in charge of FAP in Minnesota and later all seven states in the Upper Midwest.<sup>44</sup> FAP was designed to maintain and develop the skills of trained, not necessarily professional, artists who were in need. Hügy was not eligible for PWAP because she had an income at the time, but under the State Emergency Relief Program, she taught painting from 1934-35 at the St. Paul Arts and Crafts Center, which offered various creative opportunities for the city's residents. When FAP became operational in 1935, she was hired to do paintings for hotels and offices.<sup>45</sup> FAP supplied various kinds of artwork for both private and public "clients," including schools and many government buildings throughout the state. FAP paid all labor costs and the recipients of the art paid for supplies.<sup>46</sup>

Booth continued to serve as director of the St. Paul School of Art throughout the Great Depression, energizing students with his enthusiasm and elevating the school's reputation by exhibiting the work of artists associated with the school in public places, notably the St. Paul Public Library.<sup>47</sup> The school's activities were an important means of maintaining morale within the St. Paul arts community during the Depression, as were those of the Club Montparnasse. Founded in 1930, the club sponsored a variety of educational and entertainment events that incorporated the graphic arts, music, dance, drama and literature. Hügy, who served as its art chairman, organized and participated in its art exhibits. A review of the club's show at the library on June 14, 1934, called special attention to the paintings of Haupers, Mairs, Hügy, and Lowell Bobleter.<sup>48</sup>

### **Saint Paul Gallery and School of Art**

In 1939, the St. Paul School of Art moved a fifth time to the most permanent home it would ever enjoy. Thanks to a generous gift from Roger and Mary Shepard, the school acquired the Chauncey and Martha Griggs House at 476 Summit Avenue built in 1883. The addition of a large skylight at the top of the mansion created an ideal environment for studio classes, and the large rooms below provided perfect settings for exhibiting the students' work as well as the permanent collection the school had begun to acquire. Reflecting the school's new mission, which was to increase opportunities for the students and faculty to exhibit their work, the organization was renamed the Saint Paul Gallery and School of Art (SPGSA).<sup>49</sup> The school also continued to accommodate classes in various buildings downtown, as it had been doing while located on Selby.<sup>50</sup>

Although Hügy was not listed as a faculty member in the SPGSA's brochures, she taught at the school's downtown locations and her work was regularly shown in its exhibits.<sup>51</sup> In 1957, the SPGSA held an exhibition entitled '30, '40, '50: *Three Decades of Painting in St. Paul*. The artists, who were invited to show one work from each decade, included Hügy, Haupers, Mairs, Jemne, Bobleter, Floyd Brewer, Alexander Oja, Morris Pleason, and LeRoy Turner.<sup>52</sup> The catalogue noted:

These artists are the men and women who made and kept art a living reality in St. Paul through the lean depression years, the war years, the frantic post-war years . . . They have represented Art to their community, and they have represented their community to the art world. Such museums as the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Library of Congress have bought their work. They are the personification of the local art scene of the last two and one-half decades, but their show is not a backward look; it is rather a promise that this city has, and will continue to have, vital, dedicated artists to make art a living reality.<sup>53</sup>

In 1960, SPGSA started an annual Art Mart for the purpose of selling works by local artists. Hügy, Floyd Brewer, Peter Lupori, and Henriette





Art students at the St. Paul Institute School of Art, which occupied the third and fourth floors of the St. Paul Auditorium. Circa 1912, photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Diebold were featured in a newspaper article covering the inaugural event. In the photograph, Hügy is working on an abstract painting, likely a sign of her failing eyesight rather than an indication that she embraced the direction art took after WWII. By then Hügy's sight was seriously impaired and she was participating less in the school's activities, but she continued to maintain an interest in every aspect of the St. Paul art scene, and could be seen squinting at the work shown in local exhibits.<sup>54</sup>

Architect Malcolm Lein, who had become the first non-artist director of SPGSA in 1947, presided over profound changes to the organization during his long tenure. Under Lein's leadership, the school enlarged its permanent collection, staged high-profile exhibitions, and opened up the curriculum and shows to craftspeople.<sup>55</sup> In 1961 the SPGSA organized the first of several biennials, juried competitions that invited participation by artists all over the country. Originally focused exclusively on drawings,<sup>56</sup> later biennials were patterned after the school's "Fiber, Clay, Metal" exhibit first produced in 1952. Of particular importance was a traveling exhibit organized by the school, which was known by then as the St. Paul Art Center. Sponsored by a federal grant, the "U S Information Agency Craft Show" opened in Berlin and toured Europe before making the rounds back in the States, bringing international attention to the school.<sup>57</sup>

### The St. Paul Arts Center

In 1964, the St. Paul Gallery and School of Art moved downtown to a new, modern building that was designed to serve as both an arts center and a science museum.<sup>58</sup> Its new location in the St. Paul Ramsey Arts and Science Center allowed for the SPGSA's large art collection to be taken out of storage and shown to the public. As its new name implied, the St. Paul Art Center began to prioritize exhibition over instruction. Its educational program was surpassed by those at the University of Minnesota and local colleges as well as the School of Associated Arts that had been started by Lowell Bobleter in 1948.<sup>59</sup> In response, the organization changed its name and character in 1969, when it became the Minnesota Museum of Art (MMA), downplaying education and aligning itself with the whole state rather than the city. Coincidentally, Alice Hügy's death in 1971 paralleled with the end of the line for the 1894 St. Paul School of Fine Arts and its successors, all of which she had participated in, first as a student and later an instructor. During its intermittent and peripatetic history, St. Paul's namesake art school had operated under six different names in nine different locations, but it had always emphasized education until this point.

In the near future, the MMA would phase out its educational programs and offer a wide range of exhibitions under yet another name, the Minnesota Museum of American Art.<sup>60</sup> After

residing in the Jemne Building for twenty-five years,<sup>61</sup> the museum moved to Landmark Center for another two and a half decades, then to the West Publishing Building and most recently to the historic Pioneer Endicott Building at corner of Fourth and Robert Streets, where it is now located and branded as “The M.”<sup>62</sup> As for St. Paul’s art colony, when local artists found themselves without an organization to rally around in the 1970s,<sup>63</sup> they found a way to continue to work together by moving into affordable space in Lowertown’s abandoned buildings, sparking the transformation of the decaying historic warehouse district into a vibrant neighborhood. Alice Hügy would have approved of how today’s St. Paul Art Collective and its Art Crawls carry on the grassroots tradition that has historically characterized the art scene in St. Paul.

### **Alice Hügy the Artist**

Hügy initially made her mark in the field of commercial art. By the age of sixteen, she was producing pen and ink drawings for newspaper ads and other promotional materials for St. Paul companies, including the Hamm’s Brewery, Grain Belt Beer and the Elk Laundry.<sup>64,65</sup> Her drawing style was influenced by the work of Charles Dana Gibson, whose illustrations appeared frequently in *Life* and several other major publications.<sup>66</sup> Hügy’s designs for the New England Furniture Company featured a young, attractive woman named “Priscilla,” her version of the Gibson Girl, the iconic image that Gibson had created around 1890.<sup>67</sup>

While building her reputation as a commercial artist, Hügy pursued her dream of becoming a fine artist by taking art lessons. Her first teacher was Julius Segall, who had studied at the Royal Academy in Munich. Segall, an art teacher at Hamline University, was also giving private lessons in downtown St. Paul.<sup>68</sup> Hügy recollected drawing in lead pencil from plaster casts of famous Greek sculptures and copying drawings by Albrecht Dürer, the legendary artist from Nuremberg. When the St. Paul School of Fine Arts opened in 1893, she was one of its first students, and she continued her study through the 1910s, becoming a central figure in St. Paul’s first art colony.

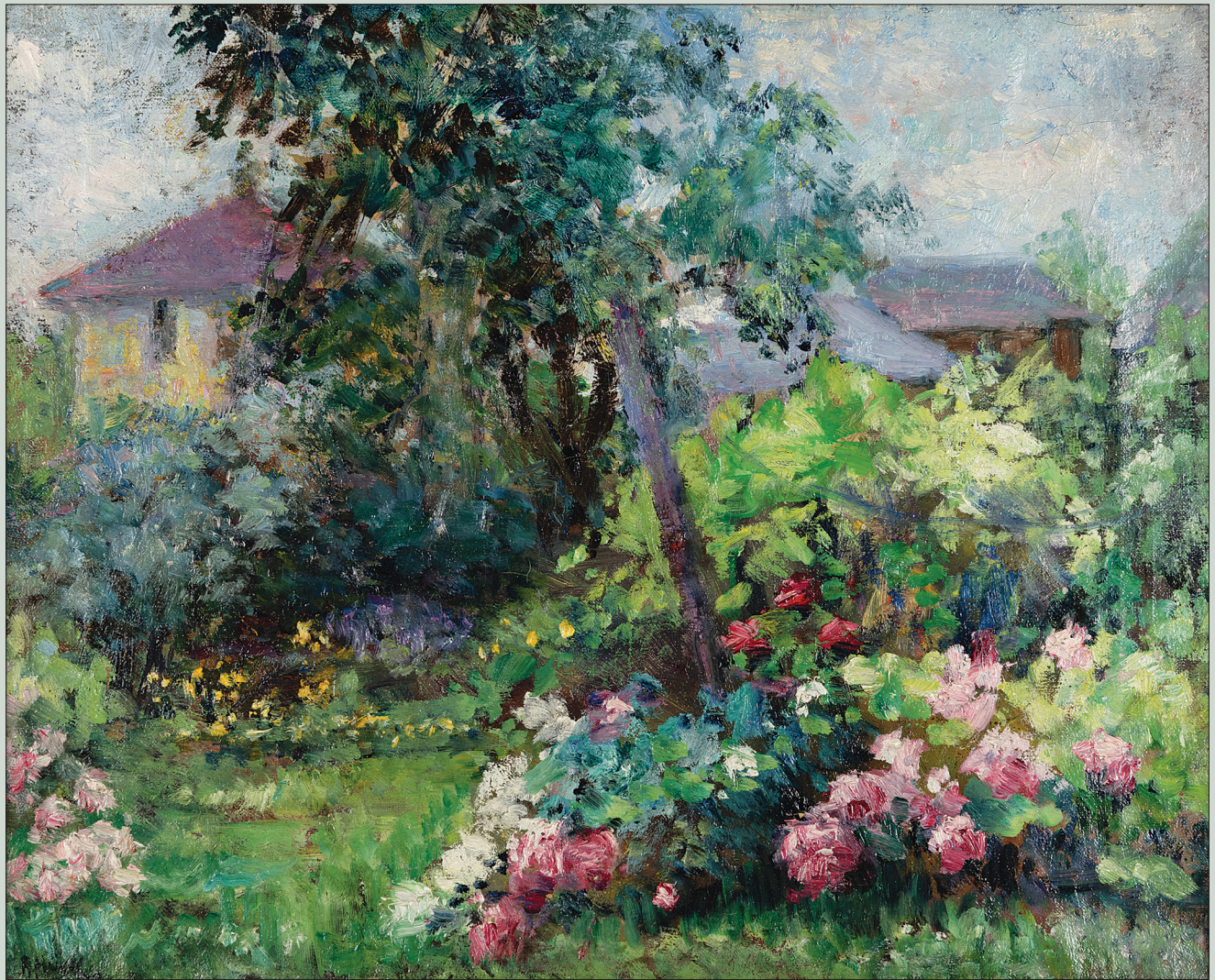
By the twenties, she was a locally respected fine artist. In March of 1926, she had a solo

exhibit at the Saint Paul library which ran for three weeks and featured eighty of her works. A news article covering the show referred to her as “Miss Alice Hügy, prominent St. Paul artist.”<sup>69</sup> The year 1928 was especially successful for Hügy. She received an award for her oil painting “Decorative Arrangement” from the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and her watercolor “Trees and Snow” was exhibited in two major shows in other cities, the eighth Annual Exhibition of Watercolors at the Art Institute in Chicago and the annual all-American show in Philadelphia.<sup>70</sup> The decade ended on a high note for Hügy, whose painting “Swede Hollow” was included in “MN Artists of 1929,” a major exhibit at MIA featuring fifty works by fifty artists prominent in the Twin Cities at the time.<sup>71</sup>

Beginning in 1910, Hügy regularly entered her work in art exhibits at the Minnesota State Fair where she received special recognition on several occasions. At the 1917 State Fair, she exhibited “Stormy Sunset” and “October Afterglow.”<sup>72</sup> Hügy was awarded first prize in the commercial category at the 1924 State Fair for her tempera and ink entry, and in 1928 she took first place in the still life category for “Green Apples.”<sup>73</sup> In a major art exhibit at the 1949 fair that featured noteworthy Minnesota artists living and dead, Hügy was represented by four works from four different decades in three different mediums: a pastel portrait “Old Age” (1917), the watercolor “Green Apples” (1927) and two oil paintings, “Gladioli” (1934) and “A Yellow Calla” (1943). Hügy exhibited at the fair in 1951 and sold two oil paintings, “Zinnias in Water Pitcher” (1929) and “October Bouquet” (1949) for \$65 each. In 1954, she was honored with a solo exhibit of fifteen paintings that served as a retrospective of her career.<sup>74</sup>

For the most part, Hügy’s work was representative, ranging in style from realistic to Impressionist to Post-Impressionist. She was versatile and skillful in many mediums, drawing with charcoals as well as pen and ink, painting with oils and pastels as well as watercolors. Noted authority on Minnesota artists Julie L’Enfant praised her skillful handling of the latter as follows: “Hügy was masterly in her use of watercolor, exploiting its capabilities for transparency and layering.” Describing her oil paintings, L’Enfant wrote: “As she had learned at the St. Paul School





*Garden*, a 16.125 x 20 in. oil on canvas painted by Alice Hügy in 1925.

Rena Neumann Coen, an authority on early Minnesota art, gave this detailed description of *Garden*:

Its vigorous brushwork is similar to that of the French masters, who originally developed the Impressionist style in the 1860s and 1870s. Using the Impressionists' broad brush strokes, which are clearly visible on the canvas, the artist reveals the very means by which she has constructed the painting. She thereby creates an intensely personal relationship with the viewer, since she has not smoothly polished away the strokes of the brush that indicate her presence in the creative process. Typically, too, the broad strokes . . . seem to flatten the perspective of the painting, drawing our attention to the two-dimensionality of the

canvas, almost in a mosaic-like way. They create an overall surface design of bright color that only suggests, rather than precisely delineates, the forms of the flowers, the trees, and even the house in back of the garden. Hügy indulges here in a virtuoso technique that translates, just as Monet and his fellow French Impressionists did, the natural effects of a garden seen in full bloom into a lavish pattern of texture and color. In its unpretentious subject, its seeming spontaneity, and its eminently painterly style, it is a fine example of Impressionist painting in America.

*In the Minnesota Historical Society collection.*





Phalen Lagoon, a 15 x 21 in. watercolor that Alice Hügy painted circa 1930, depicts the south channel bridge in Phalen Park, St. Paul. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

of Fine Arts, Hügy used the naturalism of the Barbizon School and occasionally the broken brushwork and tactile surface of the French Impressionists, although color was her main interest rather than the subtle play of light.”<sup>75</sup>

Throughout her career, Hügy’s work celebrated the beauty of nature, which she revealed in colorful still life works that were predominantly floral and landscapes that captured scenic areas of St. Paul, such as the Mississippi River Valley and Lake Phalen. Her love of nature was already evident in photographs Hügy took as a young woman, which record what familiar sites in St. Paul looked like at turn of the nineteenth century.<sup>76</sup> Hügy would later paint several of these local parks and landmarks.

Having spent nearly her entire life in St. Paul, except for the five years she worked in New York City, Hügy was popular with local art collectors during her lifetime and her work is still well represented in private as well as museum

collections.<sup>77</sup> Since her death, Hügy’s work has been included in several group shows. In the fall of 1979, The Swedish Institute in Minneapolis mounted an exhibit entitled “1929,” which reprised the earlier show at the MIA. The brochure identified her “Swede Hollow” as a painting of the “historically significant Swede Hollow immigrant community.”<sup>78</sup> In 1984, Hügy was included in “Private Collectors and Art by Women,” an exhibition mounted by WARM that showcased works by women that were held in private art collections in the Twin Cities.<sup>79</sup> Alice Hügy’s work was most recently exhibited in 2007 at the Minnesota Museum of American Art in a group show called “In Her Own Right: Minnesota’s First Generation of Women Artists,” which featured five pioneering female artists: Hügy, Mairs, Frances Cranmer Greenman, Josephine Lutz Rollins, and Ada Wolfe.<sup>80</sup>

Despite her inclusion in these major exhibits, there are some who felt that Hügy deserved more



recognition. Paul Kramer, a successful artist in his own right and the founder of the Kramer Art Gallery, stated, "I suppose the person who probably doesn't have the kind of recognition that she should have had is Alice Hügy who . . . probably wasn't in the right circles or come along at the right time . . ." <sup>81</sup> That Hügy didn't hold the highest positions in the art schools where she taught and the other art organizations she served is likely due to her personality more than anything else. <sup>82</sup> Hügy was not ambitious and did not promote herself. Alluding to her unassuming nature, Tom Blanck, a collector of Hügy's work, indicated that her characterization of herself as "just a flower painter" was "total self-deprecation." <sup>83</sup> Pursuing neither fame nor fortune, she seems to have found artmaking its own reward. In her words:

There is no delight greater than the delight of creating something—something all your own which expresses you, apart from every other human being ... this satisfaction is what art does for the artist ... the expression of beauty in art is as important to a human experience as any other. ... Art is the response to the beauty and wonders of the world in which we live. <sup>84</sup>

### Alice Hügy's Personal Life

Alice Elizabeth Hügy immigrated to Minnesota as a young child and grew up on the West Side of St. Paul. She was born on January 2, 1876 in Solothurn, a small city in the German-speaking area of Switzerland. Around 1879 her mother Marie Hügy (née Wanner) died and her father, Louis E. Hügy emigrated to the U.S. and went to Chicago. <sup>85</sup> She and her sister Anna were brought to St. Paul by her French uncle, René Vilatte, and raised in his home at 429 South Robert Street. During the 1880s and '90s, Vilatte operated a butcher shop next to the family home. He reportedly left the management of the meat market to his wife Elise, while he hung out down by the river on the West Side Flats in a shanty at 93 Livingston Avenue. Described as an eccentric free spirit who did not hesitate to voice his opinions, he apparently had an influence on Alice's personality and encouraged her to become an artist. <sup>86</sup>

By the age of sixteen, Alice was earning a living by producing pen and ink drawings for



newspaper advertisements, perhaps under the aegis of W. L. Banning Jr., a pioneering St. Paul ad agency where she was clearly employed by 1895. Banning published a wide range of products, including Central High's yearbooks. In the back of the 1893 yearbook, Banning advertised, "We furnish advertising ideas and make all classes of designs and illustrations." Alice may have designed some of the graphics for Central High yearbooks about the time she would have graduated from there, had she pursued a high school education. Hügy continued to work for Banning throughout the nineties, creating various promotional materials for many St. Paul companies, including the Elk Laundry, the J. George Smith Candy Store, and the Louis F. Dow Company. <sup>87</sup>

Her local accomplishments as a commercial artist and gifted student at St. Paul's School of

Alice E. Hügy, "Tiger Lilies," ca 1933, oil on canvas, 30 × 21 3/4 in. Collection of the Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Gift of the Works Progress Administration Federal Art Project, Minneapolis, Minnesota. 1943.750



The Villate Meat Market, 424 South Robert Street, St. Paul. Standing in front from right to left are Anna Hügy, Alice Hügy, René Villate, his wife Elizabeth and Gustave LeClerq, a business partner. Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society.



Fine Art enabled her to get a job in an established advertising firm in New York City. Alice Hügy was not listed in the city directory from 1901-1904, the years she referred to when she wrote, "I spent five years in New York doing commercial work for a living and going to all the exhibitions of paintings." When she returned to St. Paul, she took a position with the Bureau of Engraving, which soon became the Buckbee-Mears Company. By 1910 Hügy was self-employed and working out of the family home at 612 Cherokee, built by her uncle René shortly before he died in 1907.<sup>88</sup> Going forward, she supported herself by doing freelance work, which included producing pen and ink drawings for local businesses and other art, notably a suffrage poster she did for Walter R. Ramsey in 1919, the year Congress passed the nineteenth amendment.<sup>89</sup>

While supporting herself as a commercial artist, she continued to study at the St. Paul School of Fine Art, and later the St. Paul Institute, where she rounded out her education by taking classes in other disciplines such as music, literature, philosophy, and humanity. By 1920 she had become a respected fine artist, teacher, and prominent member of the St. Paul arts community.

Her achievements as an artist and the connections she had made during the twenties led

to steady employment during the Great Depression. She was selected to create public art and teach at the St. Paul Arts and Crafts Center. An article in the *Pioneer Press* noted "During the 1920s and depression '30s, Alice and her classes were familiar scenes, busy in the parks, on street corners, in hidden cul de sacs, sketching and painting the city."<sup>90</sup> The article referred to her as the "matriarch of the St. Paul art colony," a sobriquet that reflected her longtime involvement in the local art scene. She had been a student in St. Paul's first art school, taught and exhibited for many years in its successors, and been active in various St. Paul art organizations, in many cases as one of the founding members.

Alice's personality likely contributed to her visibility in the community and the respect she enjoyed during her lifetime. She was a colorful character who was outspoken like her uncle, whose influence on her apparently went beyond encouraging her interest in art. Although she voiced strong opinions on politics and religion, she did not use her artwork to send messages, but as her nephew put it, "If she had something to say, she said it."<sup>91</sup> Hügy apparently had little interest in money and was generous. On several occasions, she gave away her paintings for charitable causes. When the city was in the process of purchasing private property for Holman Field,





Photographs of Alice Hügy, 1909. Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society.

St. Paul's downtown airport, she donated the piece of property at 93 Livingston she had inherited from her uncle.<sup>92</sup>

Hügy became a neighborhood celebrity for her role in preserving Cherokee Regional Park, known for its spectacular view of the Mississippi River Valley, and both Minneapolis and St. Paul's downtowns. In 1923 Hügy led a campaign that resulted in the rerouting of Cherokee Heights Parkway (now Cherokee Heights Boulevard) to avoid the removal of two large oak trees. When the park was later threatened by commercial development, Hügy was at the center of neighborhood resistance that ultimately defeated the project. For her major part in these political battles, she was affectionately referred to as the "Grand Dame of the Riverview-Cherokee Heights neighborhood."<sup>93</sup>

By 1967 Hügy, who had been gradually losing her sight, was blind and reluctantly gave up her longtime home across the street from Cherokee Park. Her house and its contents, which included hundreds of her art works, were sold to pay for her care at Wilder Nursing Home. Her long and prolific career was celebrated with an exhibit at the Minnesota Historical Society, and the Greater St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce presented her with an Outstanding Citizen award. Hügy died in St. Paul on November 24, 1971, at the age of 95.<sup>94</sup> Her obituary referred to her as the matriarch of the St. Paul art colony.

*Diane Trout-Oertel, an architect and longtime resident of St. Paul, has contributed two previous Ramsey County History articles about notable women in the city's history.*

## NOTES

1. *Art and Life on the Upper Mississippi, 1890-1915*, Michael Conforti, Ed. (Associated University Presses, Inc., Cranbury NJ, London, Ontario Canada, 1994), 97. (Hereafter *Art and Life on the Upper Mississippi*) In 1883 a private association of art-minded middle and upper-middle class citizens founded the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts, which set the City on a trajectory to becoming the art capital of Minnesota. For more information, see Jeffrey A Hess, *Their Splendid Legacy: The First 100 Years of the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts, 1985). The trustees of the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts founded the Minneapolis School of Fine Arts (renamed the Minneapolis School of Art in 1910, reflecting the new emphasis on applied arts, and renamed the Minneapolis College of Art and Design in 1970). In 1886 the school appointed New England painter Douglas Volk its first director. In 1893 the school attracted artist Robert Koehler, who taught there a year before succeeding Volk as director. Koehler became a catalyst for the artistic community, founding the Artist League, an association of the area's leading local painters. Interest in the Arts was furthered by exhibitions held in the new Industrial Exposition Building, a large hall built in 1883 on the west side of St. Anthony Falls that accommodated

commercial fairs and cultural exhibits, including shows featuring prominent artists from the East as well as local talent. By 1889 Minneapolis also had a public library, where smaller art exhibits were occasionally sponsored by the Society of Fine Arts. Lacking a suitable venue, art shows and other cultural exhibits were limited in St. Paul to occasional events organized by its women's clubs. St. Paul newspapers were quick to point out that the city was lagging behind its neighbor and cities in the east. See also the *St. Paul Daily Globe*, February 4, 1892 and November 6, 1895. Artists had been immigrating to St. Paul and giving art lessons as early as the 1850s. Noted New York artist Charles Noel Flagg held classes in St. Paul in the mid-1880s. The St. Paul Drawing Academy operated at 54 East Kellogg from 1876-86, according to an unpublished list of art schools in St. Paul, compiled from city directories (1856-1978) by Robert E. Hoag, SPPL item no. F51853.

2. Julie L'Enfant, *Pioneer Modernists: Minnesota's First Generation of Women Artists* (Afton, MN: Afton Press, 2011), 84. L'Enfant gave "Segal" as the artist's last name, which is how Hügy spelled it in an autobiographical statement she wrote for the catalogue of the Fine Arts Exhibition at the State Fair in 1949. An article in the *St. Paul Daily Globe* September 12, 1890, 1,

indicates that Segall gave lessons, at first in the Presley block and later at 50 West Third Street.

3. Ibid, 82; *St. Paul City Directory* (St Paul, R. L. Polk & Co, 1893-9). Hügy was listed in the business section under artists in 1893. From 1896-9, she was listed as an employee of the Banning advertising agency at 317 Wabasha in St. Paul.

4 “Origins, Growth and Achievements of the St. Paul School of Fine Art,” *The Saint Paul Globe*, May 15, 1904, 42; *St. Paul Daily Globe*, September 12, 1890, p 1. The Metropolitan Hotel (1870-1913) was located at the present-day site of the 317 on Rice Park Event Center, formerly the Minnesota Club. The art classes were held in the well-lit penthouse that was added shortly after 1890.

5. *Minneapolis Tribune*, November 18, 1894, p 15; *St. Paul Daily Globe*, January 16, 1895, 5. Burt Harwood later became well known for the Indian paintings he did in Taos, New Mexico beginning in 1916. Grace McKinstry (1859-1936), best known as a portrait painter of notable Minnesotans, was an art advocate, lecturer, and a founding officer of the State Art Society.

6. The Art Students League, which had been founded in the summer of 1875 by students who left the conservative National Academy of Design, became the most influential art school in America. See [artstudentsleague.org/about](http://artstudentsleague.org/about). The SPSFA followed the League’s curriculum until about 1903, when Miss Bonta became director of the school and introduced the method taught by A. W. Dow, head of the art department of Columbia university.

7. *The Saint Paul Daily Globe*, June 28, 1896, 17. A full description of the interior of the Sibley House is provided.

8. *The Saint Paul Globe*, July 11, 1897, 14.

9. *The Broad Ax*, August 13, 1896. Article places Hügy in Harwood’s sketch class in Mendota in 1896. When Harwood moved to Paris, he was succeeded by Ina Norton Barber, who was also a member of the Art Students’ League. *The Broad Ax*, September 16, 1897, has Alice spending three weeks in Mendota attending Miss Barber’s sketch class.

10. Susan Hanson Clayton, “Sufficiently in Earnest: Tracing Institutional Change at St. Paul’s Minnesota Museum of American Art” (Master’s thesis, University of St. Thomas, 2002), 15. Alexis Fournier (1865-1948) made frequent appearances at the summer sessions in Mendota. He spent the better part of 1897-99 in Paris, but he would have been available to teach in the summers of 1896 and 1897, which he spent in Minnesota.

11. L’Enfant, 86. R.S. McCourt, *The History of the Old Sibley House*, Minnesota Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (St. Paul, 1910).

12. The Moore Block was located approximately where the apartment building catty-corner from Xcel Energy Center is today. The SPSFA remained in the mixed-use block until 1903, after which it was headquartered at 48 East Fourth Street (Cedar and Minnesota Streets) until 1908.

13. *The Saint Paul Globe*, October 3, 1897, 5.

14. *The Saint Paul Globe*. February 6, 1898, 3.

15. *The Saint Paul Globe*, September 28, 1902, 23.

16. L’Enfant, 82. “To commemorate our fiftieth anniversary, Bureau of Engraving, Inc,” unpublished booklet on the history of the Bureau of Engraving, 1948, MHS, St. Paul, MN (call no. TR970.B8775 1948). The first successful commercial method of half-tone printing was patented by Frederic Eugene Ives (1856 –1937). The process was introduced in MN by the Bureau of Engraving (not to be confused with the Federal Bureau of Engraving and Printing) was a company started in Minneapolis by artist Edwin F. Bauer and Robert M. Schmerler. In 1900 the firm was joined by J. C. Buckbee, who would serve as its President for the next five decades. Subsidiary engraving plants or branch offices were soon established in Saint Paul, Omaha, Kansas City, Des Moines, Davenport and Milwaukee.

17. The St.Paul branch became Buckbee Mears around 1907. Alice Hügy is listed in the city directory as an artist for the Bureau of Engraving in 1906, and by 1909 she is listed as an employee of Buckbee Mears.

18. The St. Paul Auditorium was demolished in 1982 to make way for the Ordway, which was built partly on its site. A 1932 addition to the west side of the building, designed by African-American architect Clarence W. Wigington, was not demolished and is known today as the Roy Wilkins Auditorium.

19. *St. Paul Daily Globe*, February 16, 1890, Sunday Issue, 1; *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, February 4, 1892, 8. The need for a public building incorporating an auditorium, a public library, and art gallery had been the subject of many other *Globe* newspaper articles after 1890.

20. L’Enfant 90. See “First Year-Book of the St. Paul Institute of Arts and Sciences: A Record of Its Activities from Its Incorporation April 28, 1908 to June 1, 1909,” in the collections of MNHS for more information.

21. The applied arts offered included ceramics, textile design, illustration, photography, printmaking, and industrial design.

22. Hügy autobiographical statement, 1949 State Fair, Minnesota State Fair Annual Fine Arts Exhibition Catalogs, Minnesota Historical Society (hereafter MNHS).

23. Leo Harris, “Fine Arts Exhibits at the Minnesota State Fair, 1885-1914,” *Ramsey County History*, vol. 48, no. 2, 3-11.

24. Grace McKinstry was a founding officer of the Minnesota State Arts Society, created c. 1903 by the Minnesota legislature. From 1915 to 1928 the fair sponsored juried shows of work by Minnesota artists under the leadership of Maurice Flagg, the society’s first director. After suffering a brief setback under the leadership of a gallery owner from New York who featured academic art from New York and Chicago galleries, the emphasis would return to Minnesota artists in 1932, after a group of local artists protested this lack of local representation.

25. Katherine Goertz, “Haupers, Clement



(1900-1982)," MNopedia, MNHS. From 1915 to 1928 the fair sponsored juried shows of work by Minnesota artists under the leadership of Maurice Flagg. After suffering a brief setback under the leadership of a gallery owner from New York who featured academic art from New York and Chicago galleries, the emphasis would return to Minnesota artists in 1932, after a group of local artists protested this lack of local representation. Clement Haupers was then put in charge at the urging of Cameron Booth.

26. L'Enfant, 33.

27. L'Enfant, 90. In 1948 Hügy, Mairs, and Jemne were also included in an exhibition at the library entitled "Eleven St. Paul Women Artists," the catalog for which can be found in the Hauper-Mairs papers at MNHS.

28. *Art and Life on the Upper Mississippi*, preface. The Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts was the driving force behind the MIA, the first permanent art museum in the Twin Cities. Founded in 1883, the Society, which initially raised the public's interest in fine art by exhibiting works borrowed from local collections, was largely responsible for establishing Minneapolis as the art capital in the region.

29. L'Enfant, 91.

30. Robert E. Hoag, Unpublished list of art schools in St. Paul, compiled from city directories (1856-1978). Saint Paul Public Library, item no. F51853. The Institute remained in operation until 1926, but dropped references to the Institute School of Art in 1916.

31. Clara Mairs is sometimes credited with organizing the League. Clara Mairs (1878-1963) received her early training at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the St. Paul Institute School of Art. She and Haupers later studied in Paris.

32. Bob Brown's presence in St. Paul was intermittent during this period but he was almost certainly in St. Paul in 1919, the year he married Louise Driese of St. Paul. See Paul Nelson, "Bob Brown: 'Paint What You See,'" *Ramsey County History*, vol 57, no 2, 14-26.

33. L'Enfant, 34.

34. "Winter Catalog of The Saint Paul School of Art, October 1st, 1928, to June 1st, 1929," Saint Paul School of Art and Saint Paul Gallery and School of Art catalog collection, 1928/1929-1962/1963, MNHS. The school was managed by a student body named the Art Students League of St. Paul, which was "open to students who have worked in the School for three months and qualify otherwise." Samuel Chatwood Burton (1881-1947), Professor of Art and Architecture at the University of Minnesota, is thought to have been the St. Paul School of Art's first director. Born in Manchester, England, he was an etcher, sculptor, lithographer and painter.

35. Clayton dissertation, 28.

36. L'Enfant, 95.

37. "The M's Story," accessed July 7, 2025, mmaa.org. See "M Locations Over Time" for dates and locations of the museum's forerunners, from the SPSFA to the MMAA. The chronology incorrectly places the

art school in the Auditorium from 1904-1909. It was located at 46 East Fourth Street from 1904-1907, when it moved to the newly completed Auditorium at 48 West Fourth Street.

38. Garith Hiebert, "Sales, Shows to Honor Artist Alice Hügy, 91," *St. Paul Sunday Pioneer Press*, March 5, 1967, First Sec., 20; Hiebert wrote that Hügy taught for thirty years at the "St. Paul School of Art," a term that also refers to the school during the period it was called the St. Paul Gallery and School of Art.

39. The building was occupied by the Haines Photography Studio for many years.

40. The short-lived program, which operated from December 8, 1933, to May 20, 1934, was administered by the United States Treasury Department, with funding from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. The artists were selected based on their artistic qualifications and their need for employment.

41. Nina Marchetti Archabal, "In Memoriam CAMERON BOOTH 1892—1980 A Chronicle from His Scrapbooks," *Minnesota History*, vol. 47, no. 3, fall 1980, 104. Cameron Booth left the Minneapolis School of Art (MSA) to fill the position made vacant at the St. Paul School of Art by the sudden death of Anthony Angarola, a promising young local artist and teacher who had taken over in 1929 for Haupers, who had left for Paris. Several sources have suggested that Booth made the move in response to the commercial direction that MSA took in 1927, when Edmund Martin Kopietz was brought to MSA to change its emphasis from fine arts to applied arts based on his experience at the Chicago School of Art. In the Hügy papers at MNHS, a letter dated May 22, 1930 to Hügy from Sam C. Sabeau criticized MSA's commercial direction and suggested it gave the St. Paul school "an opportunity to become the leading art center in the Northwest."

42. The ambitious employment and infrastructure program created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1935. Over its eight years of existence, President Roosevelt's WPA relief program put roughly 8.5 million Americans to work building schools, hospitals, roads, and other public works and also sponsored projects in the arts, providing jobs for actors, musicians, writers, and other artists.

43. Archabal, 105.

44. Clement Haupers, interview by George Reid and Nina Archabal, June 27, 1977, interview no. OH 1.4, transcript pages 2-14, Oral History Project, MNHS. Clement Haupers said he thought he was chosen to lead FAP because he had given art lectures for the State Emergency Relief Program by giving art lectures and contributed prints to Public Works of Art Program plus he had started to manage the art section at the MN State Fair in 1931. Clement Haupers (1900-1982) was well known as an art educator who influenced decades of young artists and an administrator, who was instrumental in developing the visual arts in Minnesota. He began teaching in 1930s at the St. Paul Arts and Crafts Center and the St. Paul Gallery and School of Art and continued teaching until his death. He became the superintendent

of the Fine Arts Department of the Minnesota State Fair in 1931, a position he held until 1942.

45. L'Enfant, 95.

46. Clement Haupers, interview by George Reid and Mary Harvey, December 9, 1977, interview no. OH1.5, transcript p.2, Oral History Project, MNHS.

47. Archabal, "In Memoriam CAMERON BOOTH," 106. In 1942 Cameron Booth won the coveted Guggenheim award and left the St. Paul School of Art to travel in the American West and paint. In 1944 Booth joined the faculty of the Art Students League of New York.

48. L'Enfant, 98.

49. Going forward it would still sometimes be referred to as the St. Paul School of Art.

50. Rena Neumann Coen, *Minnesota Impressionists*, Afton Historical Society Press (Afton, Minn., 1996); Paul Kramer, interview by Scott Strommen, 27 October 1981, interview OH29, transcript p. 14, Oral History Project, MNHS; Hiebert, Hügy20. All three sources mention the Newton Building at Fifth and Minnesota as a downtown location for the school's classes. Coen wrote that Hügy taught for many years in the Newton Building. She also credited Hügy for establishing St. Paul's first art gallery, an undocumented fact that has been repeated by others many times. She may have concluded this from a line in Hiebert's article regarding Hügy's leading role in "the first St. Paul Gallery and School of Art," a phrase which actually referred to the school of that name.

51. "St. Paul Gallery and School of Art Annual Exhibition of Twin Cities Artists," Exhibit catalog, April 1940, and "St. Paul Gallery and School of Art Second Annual Exhibition of Twin Cities Artists," Exhibit catalog, April 4-30, 1941, Kay Spangler, Minnesota Annual/Biennial Fine Art Exhibition Project Records, MNHS. Hügy sold her watercolor "Spring" for \$35 in the former and an oil "Yellow Canna" for \$100 in the latter.

52. L'Enfant, 99. Hügy was represented by "Green Apples," the watercolor that had taken first place in the still life category at the 1928 Minnesota State Fair, and two oils, "Blue and Purple Irises" and "Common Garden Variety."

53. L'Enfant, 99-100, quoting Marie Peck, Chairman of Arrangements, '30, '40, '50: *Three Decades of Painting in St. Paul*, exh. cat. (St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Museum of Art, 1957).

54. L'Enfant, 100; Hiebert, 20.

55. Clayton dissertation, 33-39; "History of the M's Collection," accessed July 22, 2025, <https://mmaa.org/collection/history-of-the-ms-collection>.

56. "St. Paul Gallery and School of Art First Biennial Exhibition," Exhibit catalog, November 1961, Kay Spangler, Minnesota Annual/biennial Fine Art Exhibition Project Records, MNHS. Collection also includes catalogs for the biennials the school sponsored in 1963 and 1966.

57. Paul Kramer, interview by Scott Strommen, October 27, 1981, interview OH29, Transcript p. 42-43, MNHS; Craft Today USA, accessed March 23, 2025, <https://artvee.com/dl/craft-today-usa>. The United

States Information Agency (1953 to 1999) was a foreign affairs agency that promoted U.S. values and interests abroad.

58. Financed by a municipal bond, the building would later become the home of McNally Smith College of Music and is now the home of the History Theatre.

59. The school changed its name twice and moved to various locations in St. Paul. When it closed in 2013, it was known as the College of Visual Arts, located at 344 Summit Avenue. Lowell Stanley Bobleter (1902-73) was a prominent St. Paul artist who at various times served as a director of the SPSA, a superintendent of the State Fair's fine arts department and an art professor at Hamline University.

60. Since the 1990s, the museum exhibits American art with a focus on Minnesota art.

61. The modernist gem on Kellogg was originally built for the Women's Club.

62. "The M's Story." The author disagrees with the MMAA's contention that its history dates back to St. Paul's first art school incorporated in 1894, not only because there was an eight-year gap between the SPISA and the SPSA that left St. Paul without an art school until local artists organized the SPAS in 1926, but because the M's art collection can at best be traced back to the 1940s.

63. Clement Haupers, interview by Thomas O'Sullivan and Elizabeth Knight, April 3, 1981, interview no. OH1.6, transcript p. 23, Oral History Project, MNHS. Haupers suggested that, once the school transitioned to a museum, it did not do much for local artists.

64. Coen, 59; St. Paul City Directories 1893-9. Hügy was listed in the business section under artists in 1893. By 1896, she was listed as an employee of the Wm L. Banning Jr. ad agency at 317 Wabasha in St. Paul. She likely produced her earliest ads on a freelance basis.

65. Hiebert, 15.

66. Hügy autobiographical statement, 1949 State Fair; "Charles Dana Gibson," accessed March 8, 2025, <https://americanillustration.org/project/charles-dana-gibson>. Charles Dana Gibson (1867-1944) was an American illustrator who got his start with *Life* magazine around 1885. By 1890 his illustrations were in demand and he was also doing illustrations for *Scribner's*, *Century*, and *Harper's*.

67. L'Enfant, 86; Coen, 59. Priscilla's image became well-known throughout the greater Twin Cities area.

68. Hügy autobiographical statement, 1949 State Fair; Peter C. Merrill, *German-American Artists in Early America: A Biographical Dictionary*, Friends of the Max Kade Institute for German American Studies, Inc. (Madison, Wisc.: 1997), 117-120; *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, September 12, 1890. Julius G. Segall (1860-1925) was born in what is now Poland. His family immigrated to the U.S. in 1872 and settled in Milwaukee. After studying in Munich, where he was trained to paint in the realistic style popular in Munich, he returned to America to enjoy a long professional career as a representational artist and teacher. In 1890 he and his wife Regina Werner moved to St. Paul, where he taught



drawing and painting at Hamline University for two years and gave lessons downtown. Later he maintained a studio in the Globe Building at 36 East Fourth Street. The Segalls returned to Milwaukee in 1904, where they lived for the rest of their lives.

69. *Saint Paul Daily News*, March 19, 1926. See also *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, March 21, 1926.

70. Hügy autobiographical statement, 1949 State Fair; Coen, 59. Hügy's painting, which is now in the collections at MNHS, had also received an honorable mention from MIA in 1927.

71. "Minnesota Artists of 1929," Kay Spangler, Minnesota Annual/Biennial Fine Art Exhibition Project Records, MNHS.

72. "Minnesota State Fair, 1917," Kay Spangler, Minnesota Annual/Biennial Fine Art Exhibition Project Records, MNHS.

73. Hügy autobiographical statement, 1949 State Fair.

74. Minnesota State Fair Annual Fine Arts Exhibition Catalogs, MNHS. Undated watercolors entitled "Juneau, Alaska" and "Harbor of Vancouver" suggest Hügy made a trip to the Northwest and Alaska.

75. *L'Enfant*, 92.

76. Alice Hügy photograph album, MNHS. Twenty-four photos taken in the 1890s include views of the Indian Mounds, Como Park, Lake Phalen, Fort Snelling, the Sibley House and two buildings now gone, the Armory and the Eisenmenger Ruins.

77. MNHS owns a number of her artworks and the Minnesota Museum of American Art owns a watercolor and a drawing. The Weisman owns an oil.

78. "Minnesota Artists 50 Years Ago: 50 Works of Minnesota Artists of 1929," Kay Spangler, Minnesota Annual/Biennial Fine Art Exhibition Project Records, MNHS.

79. *L'Enfant*, 243. Women's Art Registry of Minnesota was a cooperative gallery that sponsored exhibitions and programs to educate the public about women's art.

80. *L'Enfant*, 11, preface by Brian Scott.

81. Paul Kramer, interview by Scott Strommen, October 27, 1981, interview OH29, transcript p. 82. Paul S. Kramer (1919-2012) was a prominent painter, educator, and gallery owner who studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts after his initial training at SPSCA, where he later taught, eventually becoming director of exhibitions. His public career also included being superintendent of the Minnesota State Fair fine arts department from 1957 to 1974, where he helped usher in a new generation of Minnesota artists.

82. Hügy was not listed as a faculty member in St. Paul Art school brochures, whether due to her lack of academic credentials or her preference to remain solely an instructor.

83. *L'Enfant*, 95, quoting Tom Blanck interview, February 6, 2009.

84. Hiebert, 15-20. Hiebert quoting Hügy for his article in the *Pioneer Press*.

85. *Germans to America*, 1878, 113; census records; *Saint Paul Globe*, February 8, 1899. It is not clear why

their father Louie (Louis) Hügy immigrated to the U.S. in 1878 and worked in Chicago until he joined the Vilattes in St. Paul around 1900. Alice visited her father in Chicago shortly before he joined the family in St. Paul.

86. Coen, 59; Alice E. Hügy, "Alice E. Hügy Papers, 1874-1967," N.p., 1874, MNHS. Note on the back of Vilatte's business card reads, "fled from France during its trouble, where he had been a member of the aristocracy (son from first marriage was the archbishop of Paris or some such); came to this country and traveled and worked along the Great Lakes and with the voyageurs—of which he was one for awhile—settled in St. Paul where he operated a butcher shop with one LeClerc in the '80s and '90s, spent most of his days cursing the U. S. and the Catholic church." Vilatte, who came to America in 1874 (*L'Enfant*, 81), brought Alice, Anne, and new wife to the U.S. in 1880 or 1882. Most census records indicate Alice and her sister arrived in St. Paul in 1880.

87. St. Paul City Directory, 1894-99. Hügy was listed as an artist in the business section in 1894, as an employee of Banning Co. at 317 Wabasha in 1895, as its designer in 1897 and its illustrator in 1899. Originally an engraving and publishing concern, Banning became one of St. Paul's first true ad agencies; *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, May 2, 1895, January 27, 1889, and September 28, 1900. Her sister Anna was salutatorian of her graduation class at Central High School. Both had attended Humboldt School. Anna married Herman J Mehl in 1900 and apparently married a second time because her son was named Arthur Armstrong; Central High School, yearbook collection, 1890-1921, MNHS. The 1893, 1894, and 1897 yearbooks were printed by Banning. The logo Hügy designed for the Elk Laundry, located at 51 West Third Street, can be seen among the sponsors' ads at the back of the 1897 yearbook. See also Hiebert, 15.

88. Hügy autobiographical statement, 1949 State Fair; St. Paul City Directory, 1906-1920. She inherited the house after her stepmother Elise Vilatte died in 1917. For several years her sister Anna Armstrong and son Arthur lived with her. After Anna died, she raised her nephew.

89. *L'Enfant*, 90.

90. *Pioneer Press*, May 1, 1932.

91. Hiebert, 15, 20.

92. *Ibid*; *L'Enfant*, 95.

93. *L'Enfant*, 98; Coen, 60; Hiebert, 20. West Side residents considered requesting that the city council rename Cherokee Oaks Park to Alice Hügy Park. Near the house where Hügy lived is a little pocket of public land called Alice Park that may well have been named in her honor.

94. The *Pioneer Press* reported she was 95, which is supported by the U.S. Security Index that states Alice Hügy was born on January 2, 1876; the Minnesota Death Index states she was born on January 2, 1878. Most sources, including census records, agree with the former.