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THE MIDWESTERN ARISTOCRACY: ANDERS ZORN'S PORTRAITS IN GILDED AGE ST. LOUIS

by

Rebekah Hoke Brown

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College of the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Arts

Major: Art History

Under the Supervision of Professor Wendy Katz

Lincoln, Nebraska

May 2023

The Midwestern Aristocracy: Anders Zorn's Portraits in Gilded Age St. Louis

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University of Nebraska, 2023

Advisor: Wendy Katz

To the American aristocracy of the Gilded Age, painted portraits functioned as pictorial symbols of one’s taste, power, and status. This thesis evaluates the motivations of a provincial elite in St. Louis, Missouri, and sees their taste for portraits by Swedish artist, Anders Zorn, as the result of the intersection of myriad cultural and ethnic allegiances. Situating Zorn as a trans-Atlantic artist, this thesis functions as a patronage study, evaluating the portraits and goals of specific St. Louis patrons and analyzes Zorn’s role as an active agent in the art market, leveraging his public persona to establish aesthetic authority over his patrons.

The first section of this thesis evaluates the nuances of conspicuous consumption, gender roles, politics, and ethnicity which undergirded Gilded Age St. Louis. The second section is a formal and contextual analysis of Zorn’s portraits of Adolphus Busch, Lilly Eberhard Anheuser, and Halsey Cooley Ives, that reflects these contemporary St. Louis realities. It examines the complicated concept of “American-ness” negotiated by the city’s upwardly mobile German American art patrons, the elite’s efforts to establish European and Aesthetic art through the School and Museum of Fine Arts at Washington University, and how art contributed to setting and policing boundaries of status and taste in the city.

The latter section discusses the circumstances around Anders Zorn's lawsuit against St. Louis millionaire and patron, Henry Clay Pierce, analyzing competing Gilded Age conceptions of a portrait's purpose. Zorn's dispute with Pierce soon became public, with the conflict drawing in many local artists, revealing the industrial age tension between economic control wielded by the patron and the aesthetic authority granted the socially entrenched artist.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank those whose support helped to make this work a reality. First, I would like to thank my husband, Taylor, for his comfort and support throughout this process. From making me meals to following me on my research trips, he has been my biggest fan. I would also like to thank my parents and my sisters, who have encouraged me to pursue my dreams since I was small and have inspired me to push forward as I have written this thesis. I would like to thank Dr. Wendy Katz, who has been everlastingly patient, kind, and supportive throughout the research and writing process. Her experience and knowledge in art history and in American Art has been invaluable. I would also like to thank Stuart and Lynn Embury, whose support and friendship have allowed me the opportunity to complete this thesis.

In my research, I would like to thank the St. Louis Art Museum and staff for allowing me access to the Museum's collection files and archives. Importantly, I would like to thank the Zorn Museum in Mora, particularly museum director Johan Cederlund, for allowing me to conduct research in their archives, for being so willing to answer my questions, and for allowing me to comfortably stay close to the Museum. I could not have written this thesis without the information gleaned from the Zorn Museum archives and the kind art historians I met there. I would also like to thank Carl-Johan Olsson, curator at the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm, for allowing me the chance to see the Henry Clay Pierce portrait in person, along with several other Zorn works in the Museum's collection. Seeing these works was a special moment in my art historical journey that I will never forget.

GRANT INFORMATION

In writing this thesis, I received a grant from the Hixon-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The Graduate Student Activity Grant allowed me to travel to Sweden in January 2023 to conduct research at the Zorn Museum in Mora and at the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm.

The Gilded Age, a period where new industrial processes enlarged fortunes, increased class distinctions, and heightened consumption, also saw a renaissance in the arts. Portraits were a favorite commodity for the U.S.'s would-be aristocrats: a columnist in the *Brooklyn Eagle* wrote in 1894 that "the fashionable world has gone mad over portrait painting."[1] As a result, international artists were drawn into the U.S. portrait market, including the Swedish painter Anders Zorn (1860-1920). In 1893, Zorn was appointed commissioner of the Swedish exhibition for the World's Fair in Chicago. His trip to the World's Fair marked the first of seven lengthy trips to the United States, which resulted in over one hundred artworks, mainly portraits, completed there. Not only did this 1893 trip mark the beginning of a profitable series of commissions for Zorn, but his friendship with the World's Fair art director, Halsey Cooley Ives, a dedicated St. Louis advocate for the arts, helped him develop a fruitful network of patronage outside East Coast urban centers in St. Louis, Missouri. Zorn's portraits of the "provincial" elite in St. Louis shed light on their aspirations for a cosmopolitan status that would match their peers in Europe and England as well as in the major eastern cities of the U.S.

This study evaluates the motivations of Zorn's patrons in St. Louis and sees their taste for his aestheticized portraits as the result of the intersection of social, economic, and cultural ambitions.[2] Ives and other of Zorn's St. Louis patrons were founders of the St. Louis School and Museum of Fine Arts at Washington University, institutions which

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[1] Quoted in Barbara Dayer Gallati, *Beauty's Legacy: Gilded Age Portraits in America* (New York: New York Historical Society, 2013), 10.

[2] As a patronage study, it follows the model of such works as John Ott, *Manufacturing the Modern Patron in Victorian California* (Ashgate, 2014) and Alan Wallach, "Thomas Cole and the Aristocracy," *Arts Magazine* 56, no. 3 (1981): pp. 93-106.

were intended to bring great European art to the city.[3] Like elites in the northeastern U.S., wealthy St. Louisans sought to distinguish themselves and align with patterns set by the European aristocracy, but were uniquely motivated to justify their membership among the American aristocracy, both individually through portraiture and as a ruling class in the city of St. Louis. Zorn's portraits of and interactions with his St. Louis patrons, namely beer tycoon Adolphus Busch and his wife Lilly Eberhard Anheuser, St. Louis museum director and educator, Halsey Cooley Ives, and millionaire Henry Clay Pierce, reveal the difficulties the local elite faced in shaping themselves into the "art for art's sake" mindset of families like the Vanderbilts, Freers, or Gardners in the northeastern United States.

While Anders Zorn was a well-known artist in the late nineteenth century, estimations of his contributions to art history have diminished over time. Zorn did not identify with the impressionist movement or the avant-garde in Europe, though contemporary critics were keen to describe him in those terms. He only appears as a minor character in accounts of French art. Michelle Facos notes that in the U.S., "the barriers of language and culture hamper more extensive research [on Zorn]."[4] As a result, most writers on Zorn have celebrated him as a distinctively Swedish artist. Zorn's contemporary and biographer Karl Asplund notes "[i]t is quite impossible for me to convey to my readers the real idea of what the most profoundly national works of Zorn mean to us Swedes."[5] This thesis instead frames him as a trans-Atlantic painter of the

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[3] Mary Ann Steiner, *The Saint Louis Art Museum's Handbook of the Collection* (St. Louis: MO, St. Louis Art Museum, 2004), 10.
[4] Michelle Facos, *Nationalism and the Nordic Imagination: Swedish Art of the 1890s* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), 1.
[5] Karl Asplund, *Anders Zorn: His Life and Work* (London: The Studio, 1921), 1.

Aesthetic movement, and focuses on his patronage in the US, an important market for many European artists.

Further, while Zorn's popularity among the Gilded Age elite of Boston and New York is well documented, art historians have overlooked Zorn's uniquely receptive pool of patrons in the Midwest, specifically St. Louis, Missouri.[6] Zorn's acceptance among the East Coast elite was a factor in his Midwestern success, but this study evaluates the social, economic, and cultural goals of patrons in St. Louis. This research attempts to isolate the characteristics of Zorn's style that recommended him to the upwardly mobile in St. Louis. The focus on Zorn's patronage, and so his relationship to a class of industrialists, approaches his national origins in terms of how he marketed himself. Zorn was himself, in this sense, an artistic commodity. However, this study situates Zorn as an active agent, rather than a victim of the art market. Zorn leveraged his public persona to establish aesthetic authority over his patrons. Of course, in creating a 'brand,' he too enacted the corporate culture that had shaped his industrial purchasers.

During the Gilded Age, most members of elite groups earned money through their ownership of shares in corporations, organizations which realigned economic and cultural power in the U.S.[7] Prior to the expansion of manufacturing during the Civil War, art buyers had gained their income through commerce or real estate. Manufacturing on an increased national and international scale after the war led to reliance on corporate

[6] Elizabeth Doe Stone, "Cosmopolitan Facture: John Singer Sargent and Anders Zorn, 1871-1915," PhD dissertation, University of Virginia, 2020.
[7] Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*. 1st ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 4.

structures to provide the investment necessary for expensive and extensive machinery and transportation networks, which, in turn, gave the directors and shareholders of these massive organizations' significant disposable incomes.[8] This corporate elite was eager to spend their dividends to gain and maintain distinction and identity.[9] One way to do so was through patronage of original artworks and oil portraits, which also helped furnish the elite's new mansions in the suburbs.

Thorstein Veblen's *Conspicuous Consumption*, written in Chicago in 1899, cynically describes the competitive and obligatory nature of so-called "pecuniary decency" among the leisure class, wherein consumption of luxury goods and art was necessary for displaying wealth and distinguishing themselves. Men showed "pecuniary strength" through women's conspicuous consumption of valuable goods and conspicuous display of leisure and connoisseurship.[10] The upper-class woman's display of leisure or artistic knowledge illustrated that she did not need to occupy her time with anything "gainful or substantial."[11] One's financial and social success was not visible unless it had been translated into consumer goods and expenditures like rare gifts, expensive meals, and original artwork.[12] Because the American bourgeoisie, despite their money, lacked the prestige of the European aristocracy's inherited distinctions, the half or full-length oil portrait, with its historical connotations of landed aristocracy and ancestor worship,

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[8] Henry W. Berger, *St. Louis and Empire: 250 Years of Imperial Quest and Urban Crisis* (Carbondale:IL, Southern Illinois University Press, 2015), 42; Trachtenberg *Incorporation of America*, 4.
[9] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 305.
[10] Thorstein Veblen, *Conspicuous Consumption*, (London: Penguin Books, 1899), 58.
[11] Veblen, *Conspicuous Consumption*, 55.
[12] Veblen, *Conspicuous Consumption*, 49.

helped compensate. Rich Americans often bought entire English estates, with their galleries of ancestors. Therefore, within this obligatory system of spending, investment in art was logical for the businessman, who was used to the idea of investment and return.

The wealthy in St. Louis and elsewhere in the U.S. built mansions in the suburbs with their expensive oil portraits as critical expressions of wealth, class, and even moral identity; they relied heavily on gender and women's decoration of the home to maintain these categories. The private world of the home was associated with women, not only as the space in which they wielded the most power, but as a space outside the market. Upper-class women's charitable, educational, artistic, and social activities were signs of the family's upper class and moral status. While upper-class white men were able to connect socially with white middle- and working-class men in the four hundred fraternal groups of St. Louis, women's clubs, like their homes, were more stratified.[13] The numerous wealthy, independent female patrons active during this period, notably Isabella Stewart Gardner of Boston and Bertha Palmer of Chicago, commissioned portraits from artists like Zorn that turned them into highly stylized and stylish objects. However, the majority of Zorn's patrons were men who negotiated with the artist for portraits of the women in their families. Lilly Anheuser Busch and Mrs. Eben Richards (daughter of Henry Clay Pierce) sat for Zorn at the request of a husband and father, respectively. While these women were neither powerless nor voiceless, their portraits served purposes for their families, not just themselves. For midwestern, nouveau riche families, portraits

[13] Fraternal groups also restricted membership, but not as stringently as the domestic space. Katharine T. Corbett and Howard S. Miller. *Saint Louis in the Gilded Age*. (St. Louis, MO: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1993), 25.

signified the families' possession of aristocratic, inborn taste. As art historian Barbara Gallati writes, obtaining a portrait was a rite of passage, "one that could affirm the sitter's social stature" or stake a claim to a status that was not entirely secure.[14] Those with means sought artists to help them craft personas that articulated their place in local as well as more distant social hierarchies.

In order to select architects, landscape designers, textiles, furniture, heating, electric and other functional systems for these modern homes, women from wealthy provincial families either travelled to the East Coast themselves, worked with dealers and interior designers often available at major department stores, or, ideally, went to Europe to purchase furnishings and artwork. That last course of action had the additional value of forming personal connections with artists and designers that were not available to ordinary shoppers. Thanks to steamships, rich Americans generally traveled to Europe between four and five times in their lifetime. Travelling to Europe was part of the "broader pattern of American bourgeois consumption," and became "a distinctive leisure practice that contributed to self-definition and acculturation."[15] As Pierre Bourdieu notes, in Europe, the distinction between those who were "economically richest" and "culturally richest" became especially clear to the American elite.[16] As a result, they embraced a similar attitude at home and "were eager to monitor taste, set patterns of social contact,

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[14] Gallati, *Beauty's Legacy*, 12.
[15] Maureen E. Montgomery, "Natural Distinction": The American Bourgeois Search for Distinctive Signs in Europe," in *The American Bourgeoisie: Distinction and Identity in the Nineteenth Century,* ed. Sven Beckert and Julia Rosenbaum (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 27-28; Richard Broadhead, *Cultures of Letters: Scenes of Reading and Writing in Nineteenth Century America* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1993), 123-126.
[16] Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 219.

and exercise control" accordingly.[17] Edith Wharton, a scion of New York old money, in *The Custom of the Country* (1913) reveals a certain disdain for the newness of these pretensions. Wharton condemned upstarts, because "European traditions and manners were based on centuries of cultural accretion…and were not things to be appropriated unreflectingly as commodities with price tags attached."[18] American businessmen pursued art as an investment, which had the advantage of displaying their economic prowess in the guise of aesthetic refinement.[19]

As a result, the contemporary art market was saturated with trans-Atlantic portraitists, from St. Louis-born (but New York-based) artist William Merritt Chase, who traveled to Europe every year, to Beaux-Arts academician Alexandre Cabanel, who painted Americans in Paris, to a host of others, from Italy, Spain, and Germany. Wealthy Americans preferred commissioning portraits from "those of note whose reputation would lend an air of cultural sophistication to their pictorial images," which translated to artists who had European education and connections, including the legitimation of exhibiting at the Salon.[20] Anders Zorn fit these criteria, as he enjoyed robust patronage and commissions in Europe prior to, during, and after his success in the United States. The elite in St. Louis shared the belief that academic training signaled mastery of cultural codes, and the art school and museum they founded there was intended to both bring

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[17] Gabriel P. Weisberg et al., *Collecting in the Gilded Age: Art Patronage in Pittsburgh, 1890-1910* (Pittsburgh, PA: Frick Art & Historical Center, 1997), 53.
[18] Montgomery, "Natural Distinction," 38.
[19] Rémy G. Saisselin, *The Bourgeois and the Bibelot*, (New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1984), 79.
[20] Leanne Zalewski, "Alexandre Cabanel's Portraits of the American 'Aristocracy' of the Early Gilded Age," *Nineteenth Century Art Worldwide* 4, no. 1 (2005), http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/spring05/300--alexandre-cabanels-portraits-of-the-american-aristocracy-of-the-early-gilded-age.

great European art to the city and train local artists in the techniques of European masters; such civic institutions further enshrined the taste of the elite as a model for the broader public.[21]

The work of these trans-Atlantic portraitists aligned with the Aesthetic Movement, a style which emphasized design and seemed to erase boundaries between manufacture and art, undermining traditional hierarchies of fine vs. applied arts as its patrons had undermined an older American social and economic hierarchy.[22] Melody Deusner emphasizes that these patrons were not only part of a new corporate culture, but participated in a "networked" age, both in their business practices and in art, where purchases of patterned, stylized artworks were also "deployed by their patrons and collectors as tools of interconnection" for sympathetic circles.[23] Commissioned portraits, like landscapes and figure paintings, also functioned within decorative systems in the home or museum, both spaces for coordination and consolidation of social and economic power. Those networks were also distinctly cosmopolitan, or as Roger Stein writes, the Aesthetic movement, with its adherents in Paris, London, and New York, "encouraged the aesthetic appropriation of all cultures, past and present, East and West, to the needs of an idealized and reified conception of beauty."[24]

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[21] Paul Dimaggio, "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston: The Creation of an Organizational Base for High Culture in America," *Media, Culture & Society* 4, no. 1 (1982): p. 374.
[22] Roger Stein, "The Aesthetic Craze," *ARTNews* 85, no. 10 (1986): p. 100.; Roger Stein, "Artifact as Ideology: The Aesthetic Movement in its American Cultural Context" in *In Pursuit of Beauty: Americans and the Aesthetic Movement*, ed. Doreen Bolger Burke (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986), pp.23-51.
[23] Melody Barnett Deusner, *The Aesthetic Painting in Britain and America: Collectors, Art Worlds, Network* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020) 5.
[24] Stein, "The Aesthetic Craze," 100.

As this suggests, neither the Aesthetic movement nor its cousin, the Arts and Crafts movement, were artistic styles of the everyman. Indeed, the Aesthetic movement encouraged connoisseurship, an appreciation of style that required the study of original masterpieces and extensive education and travel. This manner of distinguishing oneself as an expert on beauty attracted patrons like Isabella Stewart Gardner, who amassed important collections of both Old Masters and contemporary Aesthetes. Like other trans-Atlantic artists, most famously his rival John Singer Sargent, Zorn worked in multiple styles and modified his style to the preferences of his patrons. His portraits of the international elite, with their decorative character and virtuosic application of paint, however, fit what Stein calls the "vocabulary and syntax" of the Aesthetic movement, though Zorn at times adopted the more regularized brushstrokes and spontaneous quality of impressionism for his outdoor paintings of Swedish peasants and nature scenes (realism for the low, aestheticism for the high).[25] His ability to modify the Aesthetic movement with these touches of realism may have attracted Midwestern businessmen who were uncomfortable with more drastic departures from mimesis in pursuit of art for art's sake.

Gilded Age St. Louis, at the moment of Zorn's arrival on the scene in 1893, did not have as well developed a culture of connoisseurship. Its boosters indeed sought to establish the city as modern, industrial, and sophisticated, despite economic, geographical, and social limitations that had consigned it to a second rank, behind Chicago. St. Louis's location near the intersection of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers

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[25] Stein, "The Aesthetic Craze," 100.

had given it control of steamship transport of goods from the manufacturing north to consumers in the south, until railroads reoriented transportation in favor of Chicago. This put St. Louis in a steep economic decline after the Civil War and resulted in "civic jealousy and mounting desperation."[26] In order to spur a new urban "golden age," St. Louis businessmen and boosters instituted the "Future Great City of the World" campaign, with construction of the Eads Bridge as its cornerstone. The campaign was a success, and the Eads Bridge opened in 1874, allowing railroads to cross the Mississippi and paving the way for modern business, infrastructure, and, eventually, international art patronage.

One St. Louis businessman and Zorn patron who took advantage of the markets opened by the bridge and railroad was German immigrant Adolphus Busch. Considered a beer-marketing genius, Busch immigrated to the U.S. in 1857, at eighteen, and married Lilly Anheuser, daughter of another St. Louis brewer, in 1861, before serving in the Union army. Busch's post-war contribution to the business was to alter and speed up bottling, which gave him a significant advantage over other brewers and allowed him to broadly market his product.[27] In 1880, after his father-in-law's death, Busch became president of the company, now called Anheuser Busch. Busch also pioneered the national market, enabling this beverage with its short shelf-life to be transported further and last longer. Along with "rationalized management, invasive national marketing and saturation

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[26] Corbett, *St. Louis in the Gilded Age*, 6.
[27] Walter Barlow Stevens, *St. Louis, The Fourth City, 1764-1909* (St. Louis, MO: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1909), 296.

advertising," he created a brewing empire still in existence.[28] Like other successful businessmen in St. Louis active in transportation, oil, brewing, manufacturing, and agricultural processing, Busch developed a corporate structure to consolidate manufacturing and distribution as well as to heighten efficiency. These patrons, who had innovated complex, interconnected organizational systems, found the art of the Aesthetic movement similarly attractive in its complex patterns.

These new corporate and industrial structures in the city transformed the social lives of more than the elite, both opening and posing barriers to mobility. Commissioning and collecting artwork helped the elite navigate these changes. By the 1880s, St. Louis had the country's fifth largest urban population (350,000). It had a four-tiered social hierarchy, which was reflected in "personal values, everyday behavior and material possessions:" The wealthiest, like Busch; the upwardly mobile middle class and professionals, like the educator, Ives; the working class, which included native-born and immigrant members; and the destitute.[29] While the state of Missouri, with its strong ties to the South, was politically Democratic during the Gilded Age, the city of St. Louis was comparatively more Republican than the rest of the state. However, within the city, political control was still contested between a sizable elite Republican base and an almost equally large immigrant and working-class Democratic constituency.[30]

[28] Corbett, *St. Louis in the Gilded Age*, 11.
[29] Corbett, *St. Louis in the Gilded Age*, 20.
[30] Lana Stein, *St. Louis Politics: The Triumph of Tradition*, (St. Louis: MO, Missouri Historical Society Press, 2002), 10-11.

Despite this political matching of strength, the St. Louis elite maintained supremacy through their wealth and social connections. They "looked upon St. Louis as rightfully theirs to manage as they saw fit," and considered their business practices and success "identical to the progress of the city."[31] Economic interests trumped political ones for most members of the elite. Republicans united with Democrats to gain federal funding to expand the city's commercial infrastructure, notably the Eads Bridge.[32] Later public spending on civic improvements and public works approved by city officials continued to benefit the elite, as for example taxing the entire city for an outer park and parkway system which would primarily serve new suburbanites. Such spending projects led to the creation of Forest Park and what would become the City Art Museum in 1906.[33] Further, in an era where the city did not provide adequate water or sanitary services, the wealthy were able to maintain their own infrastructure, and protect their property from industrial infringement.[34] As a result, the St. Louis aristocracy were called the "Big Cinch," because they quickly and easily settled most discussions of how to run the city.[35] In 1877, they rallied to fund private militias to keep "order" amongst striking rail laborers. Though the militia was ultimately unnecessary and never called to action, the *St. Louis Globe Democrat* described militia members as "the pick of the best educated classes of

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[31] Julian S. Rammelkamp, "St. Louis Boosters and Boodlers," *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society*, 34, no. 4 (1978), 203-204.
[32] Berger, *St. Louis and Empire*, 43.
[33] Jack Muraskin, "St. Louis Municipal Reform in the 1890s: A study in failure," *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society*, 25 (1968), 223; Mary Ann Steiner, *The Saint Louis Art Museum's Handbook of the Collection* (St. Louis: MO, St. Louis Art Museum, 2004), 9.
[34] Eric Sandweiss, *St. Louis: The Evolution of an American Urban Landscape* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001), 176.
[35] Rammelkamp, "St. Louis Boosters and Boodlers," 207.

society."[36] Bitterness against the Big Cinch was rampant and while working and immigrant St. Louisans were able to, at times, thwart the interests of the elite at the polls, Progressive reform in St. Louis was stunted by the overpowering sway of the elite.[37]

Zorn's patrons numbered among these affluent and powerful Republican St. Louisans. Adolphus Busch donated to Republican President William Howard Taft's campaign in 1908.[38] While Henry Clay Pierce publicly refused identification with any political party, Pierce was associated with the St. Louis Club, which played host to visiting Republican President William Howard Taft in 1910 (Taft also sat for Zorn) and his family would later host President Coolidge.[39] Charles Nagel was an outspoken Republican, mayoral candidate, and established the "Charles Nagel Republican Club."[40] Halsey Cooley Ives was elected as a Republican city councilman for the city in 1895. In this era of corporate integration, Zorn's St. Louis patrons were not Progressives, advocating for reform, so much as they participated in establishing political, economic, and social national and international monopolies. Pierce's oil and railroad interests, closely associated with Standard Oil, extended to ownership of much of Mexico's railroads. By commissioning portraits by artists like Zorn for their palaces in St. Louis, they leveraged these invisible social and business connections to pictorially police, and proclaim, the boundaries of their social class.

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[36] Quoted in Mark Kruger, *The St. Louis Commune of 1877: Communism in the Heartland* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021), 209.
[37] Lana Stein, *St. Louis Politics*, 11.
[38] "Women Helped Taft to Win with $17,000," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Nov. 24, 1908, p. 6.
[39] Howard Louis Conard, *Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis: A Compendium of History and Biography for Ready Reference,* vol.3 (St. Louis: Southern History Company, 1899), 1732; "Large Crowds Out Early to See Taft," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, May 5, 1910, p. 2.
[40] "Political Notes," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, March 2, 1897, p. 12.

Of the city's high population of immigrants, the largest numbers came from Germany, starting with a sizable migration in the 1830's.[41] By 1880, one in four St. Louisans claimed German ethnicity. As reflected in the numerous German newspapers of the period, German St. Louisans were Catholic, Protestant, Progressive, Republican, or Democrat; some, like journalist Henry Boernstein, were followers of Karl Marx and denounced all religion.[42] Though these immigrants were diverse, Germans especially maintained their language and customs and supported a thriving community. Native-born Protestant members of St. Louis society distrusted foreigners, especially Irish Catholics, and ethnic conflicts persisted after the Civil War.[43] But to the Anglo-American elite, German (kin to Anglo-Saxon) heritage was more acceptable than Celtic, and Germans, a significant political constituency, were largely exempt from active persecution. German immigrants were able to move "more or less freely" between native Anglo-American and German communities, with intermarriage accepted, though the affluent St. Louis Club harbored lingering nativist ideologies, barring membership for most non-Anglo-Americans, including German Americans.[44] As a result, Protestant German Americans like Adolphus Busch maintained close ties to the German community, for example donating to Catholic charities and hiring Catholic workers, even as they developed a

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[41] The second largest immigrant group was the Irish. Ernst A. Stadler, "The German Settlement of St. Louis," *Midcontinent American Studies Journal* 6, no. 1 (1965): 17.
[42] Boernstein was anti-Catholic, as were many secular/revolutionary Germans. See Steven Rowan, "The German Press in St. Louis and Missouri in the Nineteenth Century: The Establishment of a Tradition," *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 99, no. 3 (2005): 463.
[43] Margaret Lo Piccolo Sullivan, "St. Louis Ethnic Neighborhoods, 1850-1930: An Introduction," *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society* 33, no.2 (1977): 66.
[44] Audrey Olson, "The Nature of an Immigrant Community: St. Louis Germans 1850-1920," *Missouri Historical Review* 66, no. 3 (1972): 357; Todd Barnett, "The 'Great Controversy': The Press, Religion, and Society in Gilded Age St. Louis," *Missouri Historical Review* 107, no. 2 (2013): 87.

presence in the upper ranks of society among the native Republicans who controlled the city's institutions. Though in 1876, the first German was elected Democratic mayor, arguably more influential were notable Republican German St. Louisans such as Henry Flad, chief engineering assistant to James B. Eads in the construction of the era-defining Bridge; Dr. William Taussig, a backer of the Eads bridge, a noted doctor, and patron of Zorn; and Charles Nagel, the son of German immigrants, attorney for Anders Zorn and Adolphus Busch, and a founder of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.[45]

This sizeable and prosperous German American community represented an alternative patron pool for Zorn. Though they sought an international identity like their Anglo peers, they retained a certain cultural separatism. At the same time, they had a vested interest in distinguishing themselves from the more "vulgar" immigrants in the city's working class, despite a shared ethnic background. This is reflected in the changing physical structure of the city, particularly the distances between business owners and their factories, and the development of elite precincts. Beginning in the 1850s, with the first manufacturing fortunes, and continuing well into the Gilded Age, the Protestant Republican elite of St. Louis moved as a group to the West End and Near South Side suburbs, bordering the city limits. Later they would use land deed covenants to maintain religious and ethnic barriers to property owning in these areas.[46] But even before that, unassimilated ethnic groups, like Eastern European immigrants, as well as African

[45] The first German American mayor of St. Louis was Henry Overstolz. Stadler, "The German Settlement of St. Louis," 26.
[46] Lana Stein, *St. Louis Politics*, 11; David W. Detjen, *The Germans in Missouri, 1900-1918: Prohibition, Neutrality, and Assimilation* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1985), 6.

Americans, were barred.[47] This affected Germans, too. However assimilated individuals may have been, German neighborhoods remained just outside elite areas. By 1914, of German Americans who were considered "elite," only 12.8% lived in the West End.[48] The 1890 census characterizes the German contingent of St. Louis as largely living in "good class[es]" of "fine residential living" in both north and south St. Louis, in private residences and middle-class neighborhoods west of Grand Avenue, near the elite quarters of Northwestern St. Louis.[49] Zorn patron Dr. William Taussig lived at 3447 Lafayette Ave., three miles from No. 1 Busch Place, home of noted German American, Adolphus Busch. Though Busch still lived next to his brewery, as had been the custom for brewers as a symbol of faith in the success of their business, both he and Taussig lived in the more southerly side of St. Louis, nearer to what was colloquially referred to as "German town" than to elite Anglo peers.[50]

These physical separations suggest that while wealthy German Americans may have adhered to upper class religious, political, and economic mores, an ethnic identity still marked them. Like the Anglo-American elite, they collected European art, but they tended to maintain a preference for Northern European art centers, like Munich or even Zorn's Sweden. Zorn's status as a "northern" European artist may have expressed his patrons' continued connection to the strong and vital German community. Zorn's

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[47] Though slavery was abolished by 1865 in Missouri, severe discrimination hindered African American mobility. Sullivan, "St. Louis Ethnic Neighborhoods," 67.
[48] Audrey Olson, "The Nature of an Immigrant Community: St. Louis Germans 1850-1920," *Missouri Historical Review* 66, no. 3 (1972): 354.
[49] Sullivan, "St. Louis Ethnic Neighborhoods," 69-70.
[50] Christopher Naffziger, "The Foundations of a Great American Brewery: The Early Architecture of Anheuser-Busch," *Brewing History,* vol. 164 (2016): 44.; Albert Nelson Marquis, *The Book of St. Louisans: A Biographical Dictionary of Leading Living Men of the City of St. Louis and Vicinity*, (St. Louis: MO, St. Louis Republic, 1912), 588.

complex German-Swedish background and "peripatetic life" permitted such affiliations. When Zorn was asked in a Pittsburgh hotel to indicate his national origin, he replied, "Nowhere."[51] He was born in Sweden, but his father was an itinerant German brewer. Though Zorn never met his father, he maintained contact with his father's German friends and family throughout his life. The German brewer's son might well have found social and cultural connections with the German community in the U.S. Elizabeth Doe Stone notes that Zorn's portraits of brewers "may be understood, in part, as an exercise in self-fashioning," as he asserted his rightful place within an international upper class via portraits of his estranged father's peers, who served as "a visual analogue to his personal biography."[52] These portraits of German American brewers, like Busch and his son-in-law Hugo Reisinger, reflect "cosmopolitanism and opulence." Similarly, Zorn saw himself as successfully merging two worlds, equally a product of "local pride and global ambition."[53] As such, Zorn may have seen commissions from the St. Louis German American elite as opportunities to affirm not only their identities, but his own.

Zorn's portraits of Adolphus and Lilly Anheuser Busch, completed in 1896 and 1897, like those of his three other German American patrons, show their assimilation to and separation from Anglo-American patterns of consumption. Busch came from a well-off Protestant family in Germany and had been decorated by Kaiser Wilhelm II; the

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[51] Douglas K.S. Hyland, "Zorn and His American Patrons," in *Zorn: Paintings, Graphics, and Sculpture*, eds. Douglas K.S. Hyland, Hans Henrik Brummer (Birmingham, AL: Birmingham Museum of Art, 1986), 15.
[52] Elizabeth Doe Stone, "Zorn and the Brewery," in *Zorn: A Swedish Superstar,* ed. Carl-Johan Olsson (Stockholm, Sweden: Nationalmuseum), 98.
[53] Stone," Zorn and the Brewery," 98. Busch introduced Zorn and Reisinger at the St. Louis Exposition of 1904. Both admired the Secessionist exhibitions in Germany, and Reisinger sat for a portrait in Paris in 1907. Cecilia Lengefeld, *Anders Zorn: Eine Künstlerkarriere in Deutschland* (Berlin: Reimer, 2004), 60.

Busches had no incentive to give up their association with European aristocracy and even built a castle in their home country. Yet Busch was not aristocratic old money in U.S. terms. Despite his wealth--by 1901, Anheuser-Busch's sales surpassed one million barrels compared to the eight thousand barrels the firm had produced in 1865 when Busch first joined; by 1890, Busch had already matched or surpassed the wealth of his Anglo-American peers in St. Louis--brewing was considered a German American industry. This status separated the Busches from fellow oil or railroad titans like John D. Rockefeller or Henry Clay Pierce, both of whom were also Zorn patrons.[54] And as noted above, when the wealthy of St. Louis were gravitating towards the West End, the Busch family still lived in south St. Louis's "common fields."[55] Despite their European pedigree and wealth, the Busch family stood in a sometimes precarious social position in St. Louis due to their immigrant identity. As a result, they were eager to articulate their place in the American social and business hierarchy by commissioning portraits by Zorn.

Zorn probably painted the Busches on his second visit to St. Louis in 1896, when he did just six portraits, while staying with Ives. It may have been his friend the lawyer Charles Nagel who introduced them, as Nagel had been a trusted advisor for Busch for many years.[56] The *St. Louis Republic* in June 1901 said that Zorn remained near Busch "constantly" for an entire week in order to study him in his daily life. Claiming that the portrait was "already painted in his mind," a phrase that the newspapers would highlight

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[54] Stevens*, St. Louis*, 296; Stadler, "The German Settlement of St. Louis," 25.
[55] Naffziger, "Great American Brewery," 44.
[56] Nagel praised Busch's "quickness of judgement and decision in business deals and in dispensing money for the public good." "Busch's Quickness in Business Deals related by Nagel," *St Louis Post Dispatch*, Oct 12, 1913, p. 27.

as an indication of his original (not mimetic) style, Zorn's portrait of Busch required only four sittings of one to three hours.[57] Busch stands in three-quarter profile with one hand resting on his hip, facing an unseen bright light (fig. 1). He is dressed in a "sack suit," a black, wool suit with a loose-fitting jacket, indicating he is a businessman, not a socialite.[58] Though Busch likely sat for Zorn in his home, as did many of Zorn's American patrons, Busch is presented in work attire. Just as Busch was physically near his factory, even while at home, Zorn's depiction of Busch implies that he is always prepared to attend to the needs of his company.

Zorn also presents Busch with a measure of dash, seen in his well-groomed mustache, thin beard/goatee, as well as the gilded spectacles he holds in his right hand. On Busch's vest near his midsection is a gold medal or pendant on a gold braided chain, perhaps one of the decorations given to Busch by friends in Germany; this medal, in particular, was likely presented by Kaiser Wilhelm II.[59] Consistent with Busch's reputation, Zorn presents Busch as an "elegant dresser," and eliminates the accoutrements that some patrons requested (see the discussion below of Henry Clay Pierce). Despite being known as a confident man with a booming voice, the dark background with hints of maroon and brown, and Busch's far off gaze, present a silent, solitary, and striking impression. Art historian Hollis Clayson argues that Zorn often imbued his American male sitters with the power of "achievers and doers, often sternly focused upon a pressing

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[57] "Museum of Fine Arts Now Boasts a Portrait by Anders Zorn, Presented by the Artist," *The St. Louis Republic*, June 16, 1901, p. 45.
[58] Daniel James Cole and Nancy Deihl, *The History of Modern Fashion from 1850* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2020), 70.
[59] "Once Decorated by the Kaiser; Twice by Duke," *St Louis Post Dispatch*, Oct 12, 1913, p. 27.

task in the here and now of space and time."[60] However, Busch is lost in thought, with the characteristic far-off look of Zorn's American sitters. He is not surrounded by material signs of success or specifics of place. The space he inhabits is a mental, intangible space. Like Zorn's portraits of artistic peers and intellectuals in France and the US, Busch is, despite the businesslike dress, artistic; the man's character is conveyed by Zorn's signature virtuosic, or bravura, brushwork, suggesting it is inborn, not more prosaically derived from his external life. While his portrait was presumably intended to hang in his home, Busch was proud of Zorn's portrayal and much like other American elite at the time, was keen to share by loaning it to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, the St. Louis Museum of Fine Arts, as well as many other exhibitions.[63] To Busch, this portrait was not only a reflection of himself, but of his station as a tycoon of industry, of his business, and of his membership among the American elite with the authority to dictate the taste of St. Louis.

Zorn's portrait of *Lilly Eberhard Anheuser* (fig. 2) is quite different from Zorn's portraits of other, younger female sitters in St. Louis, like *Mrs. Eben Richards* (fig.5). While the Richards portrait features modest color accents, Mrs. Busch is centered amid a kaleidoscope of tints. Lilly sits regally on a gold chair, holding a bunch of rich, purple flowers, and wearing a pastel blue dress buttoned up to her neck, with angular accents of applied white lace, trim, and fitted leg-of-mutton sleeves. Though ladies' fashion dictated dark jewel tones or browns for public appearances, a woman was able to dress more

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[60] S. Hollis Clayson, "Anders Zorn's Etched Portraits of American Men, or the Trouble with French Masculinity," in *Interior Portraiture and Masculine Identity in France, 1789-1914*, eds. Temma Bladucci, Heather Belnap, Pamela Warner (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing), 184.

colorfully at home, in the presence of social peers. Presented then as in her own home, Lilly wears more impractical if fashionable attire. The effect of Zorn's loose brushstrokes is to soften Lilly's dress, though her face remains markedly more clear and realistic, with a gaze that seems fixed slightly right of the viewer. Zorn's lively brushwork combines hues of brown, yellow, and gold to give the impression of light reflecting on the gilded surfaces of her chair. In the background, a small, seated, gray silhouette seems to sit cross-legged upon a pedestal. Likely one of the many statues collected by Adolphus for his home, it implies that Lilly too is a particularly fabulous artwork. In her sumptuous dress and gilded armchair, with her purple bouquet, the verdant curtain behind her, and the suggestion of statuary and plush rugs in the background, Lilly Busch's portrait showcases the rich collections of her husband, producing an effect of richness and bounty.

These portraits created gender differences. Male portraits were "sober and direct," and their dark realism conveyed practical business savvy, a scientific and objective approach to the world. The *St. Louis Star and Times* in 1910 noted that it was much harder to paint a man, perhaps for this reason—it was more difficult to turn them into "art." Depictions of wealthy women were nuanced and subtle, more self-consciously artistic, and decorative. Their role as objects, whose beauty of form referred to the taste of a father or husband, was highlighted by representing them "in their prominent roles as society figures…through their demeanor, dress, and accessories."[61] Even women who controlled their own commissions may have chosen this type of portrayal because of its

[61] Zalewski, "Alexandre Cabanel's Portraits."

equation with upper class femininity and sexual appeal. As the two works are the same size canvas, and a standing Busch appears to turn toward his seated wife in a familiar arrangement, Zorn's portraits were likely meant as pendants. While Adolphus' portrait is somber and direct, despite his abstracted expression, Lilly's portrait and confident gaze presents her as highly decorative, conveying the family's opulence. Zorn's depiction of the Busches thus intimates they were aligned with the habits of the American bourgeoisie, cementing their position not only as wealthy German Americans, but insiders of the highest social class.

Busch was very much engaged in aesthetic decisions not only about his own appearance, but all his surroundings, from his office furniture, to the gardens, to his collections.[62] Their sumptuous, twenty-room mansion at No. 1 Busch Place resembled a Renaissance palazzo, constructed with expensively cut stone and in stark contrast to the vernacular-style homes found among the middle and lower classes in St. Louis. The mansion boasted "Victorian splendor," presumably a variety of eclecticism, and famous luxury items like Aubusson rugs, in a color scheme like Lilly's of blue, green, and rose. The brewery next door was in the elaborately ornamented Romanesque style of the cathedrals of the Rhine, Busch's home.[63] These choices reflect the Beaux-Arts style of patrons like the Vanderbilts, with their richly ornamented palazzos and chateaux. Paintings were integrated into the decorative scheme, and one descendant recalled that the mansion walls were filled with "artists of note."[64] Yet Busch seemed to acquire huge

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[62] Krebs and Orthwein, *Making Friends Is Our Business*, 46.
[63] Naffziger, *The Foundations of a Great American Brewery,* 37.
[64] Krebs and Orthwein, *Making Friends Is Our Business*, 54.

numbers of paintings, rather than singular masterpieces. Busch once said that he had so many pictures in his home that it had become difficult to hang them all. Perhaps telling is that one prominent work in his home was Franz Seraph von Lenbach's *Portrait of Prince Otto von Bismarck* (1884-1890), which depicts the leader beloved by German nationalists as the founder and defender of the German empire.[65] By investing in such patriotic work by Germany's best-known academic portraitist, rather than an old master or modern Impressionist, Busch showcased his ethnic ties, not his connoisseurship.

Busch was a generous donor to educational institutions, often again with particular attention to German culture in the U.S. He donated $100,000 to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, which hosted delegates of the Kaiser during the Exposition's German Day, $120,000 to the construction of Washington University's Busch Hall, and $30,000 to establish a German language chair at Washington University.[66] He and his son-in-law, Hugo Reisinger, an art collector and friend of Zorn, collectively donated $150,000 to found Harvard University's Museum of Germanic Culture, later called the Busch-Reisinger Museum, which showcased both German and American art.[67] While not a member of the Museum of Fine Arts' Board (though he was on the Board of Washington University), Busch donated funds and loaned artwork to the Museum, including his portrait by Zorn. His concern about assimilation as well as cultural tradition is evident in the way Busch was remembered after his death. In response to his death in

[65] James Van Dyke, "Spotlight Essay: Franz Seraph Von Lenbach," Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, 2016, https://www.kemperartmuseum.wustl.edu/node/11327.
[66] Rowan, "The German Press in St. Louis," 465; St. *Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 12, 1913.
[67] William and Willow Hagans, *Zorn in America: A Swedish Impressionist of the Gilded Age,* (Chicago, IL: Swedish-American Historical Society, 2009), 252.

1913, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* produced a sizeable spread in the Sunday paper discussing his business savvy, generosity, and faultless taste. The paper cited an unnamed St. Louis art dealer who oversaw Busch's gallery, as recalling that Busch in 1911 said that he would no longer buy art by foreign artists and would instead only purchase American works. The author marvels at this statement, since Busch was known to have collected great international works, like his own portrait by Anders Zorn, "one of the three greatest paintings of that artist."[68] The anecdote, published not long before World War I, indicates a certain social pressure on Busch and other German Americans to buy American.[69] Zorn's portraits, in this context, satisfied both cultural positions: they were a symbol of membership in the local elite, and yet still emphasized Busch's Northern European roots.

Busch's interest in the arts, like that of his peers, was deliberately cultivated by Halsey Cooley Ives. Ives was a crucial intermediary between the St. Louis elite and academically trained artists, as well as more avant-garde artists like Zorn. A "protagonist in the popularization of art" in St. Louis, and a proponent of art education (including museums) as a tool for industry, Ives was a founding director of the St. Louis Museum of Fine Arts (renamed the City Art Museum in 1906) from 1881-1911, a founder of the adjoining School of Fine Arts, and a crucial contact for Zorn.[70] Born in New York, Ives studied art in his local Union Academy as well as in technical art schools in London,

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[68] "Foreign Paintings Rejected by Busch," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 12, 1913, p. 27.
[69] Naffiger, "The Foundations of a Great American Brewery," 48; Stadler, "The German Settlement of St. Louis," 25.
[70] *Dictionary of American Biography*, (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1946), 519.

eventually gaining employment in the U.S. as a draftsman.[71] After joining the Union Army in 1864, Ives was stationed in Tennessee where he studied art privately under a Polish artist, Alexander Piatowski. After the war, Ives was semi-itinerant as a designer and decorator, traveling in the U.S., Mexico, and Europe; like other educators in the museum movement, he believed that the principles of design could and should be examined in the arts of all great cultures. These experiences with industrial and applied as well as fine arts informed Ives's career-long perspective on the importance of private and public support for art.

Non-artists had taken the lead in founding institutions in St. Louis, but they supported programs aimed at mechanics and industry. The St. Louis Agricultural and Mechanical Association began holding fairs in 1856, which included displays of the fine arts.[72] Artists responded by establishing the Western Academy of Art in 1859, which offered instruction as well as annual exhibitions that excluded the mechanical arts. Notably, female pupils were admitted to both the Association and the Academy. Hannah Brown Skeele, one of the Academy's first students, exhibited at the Agricultural and Mechanical Association fair in 1861. That same year, the *New York Times* noted that "the love of art and art-culture has obtained a foothold in St. Louis."[73] Ives seemed at first to support the democratic idea of the Agricultural Association that art and mechanics were allied. Hired in 1874 at Washington University's Polytechnic School, he began offering

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[71] Stevens, *St. Louis*, 487.

[72] *Ninth Annual Report of the Saint Louis Agricultural and Mechanical Association* (St. Louis, MO: Missouri Democrat Book and Job Printing House, 1871), 13.

[73] "Art Gossip," *The New York Times*, Feb. 11, 1861, p. 2., quoted in Amy Torbert and M. Melissa Wolfe, *Art Along Rivers: A Bicentennial Celebration*, (St. Louis, MO: Saint Louis Art Museum, 2021), 58.

free evening drawing courses, making them available to working people. Ives' drawing classes became the University's School (and Museum) of Fine Arts in 1879, with the museum collection, an educational tool, displayed at the School of Fine Arts' building until the Museum built its own space in 1881. The Museum of Fine Arts was renamed the City Art Museum in 1906 when they moved into their new Beaux-Arts building in Forest Park, but the school and museum remained connected private entities until they formally split in 1909.[74] Though the School and Museum were privately funded through Washington University, Ives saw the Museum of Fine Arts as educating the public, allowing St. Louisans free admission on Fridays, weekends, and holidays.[75]

Ives's zeal for art endeared him to his fellow artists in St. Louis.[76] There was a robust population of primarily male, Anglo-American artists in the city, as the founding of the ambitiously named Western Academy indicates. These local artists often hailed from the middle and working classes, like former paymaster for the Union Army, Mississippi River landscape painter Joseph R. Meeker, who helped found the St. Louis Sketch Club. These artists, like Ives, understood the importance of academic training, especially in Europe, to elevating the arts above mechanical training. Artists like landscape painter Paul E. Harney, historical painter Matthew Hastings, and maritime painter Harry S. Chase studied art in Munich or the Netherlands, as opposed to Paris.[77]

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[74] Steiner, *The Saint Louis Art Museum's Handbook*, 10.
[75] Halsey C. Ives, "Museum and the People," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 10 May 1907, p. 15.
[76] Edmond Wuerpel, "Art Development in St. Louis," (1897), quoted in Sally Bixby Defty, *The First Hundred Years 1879-1979* (St. Louis: Washington University School of Fine Arts, 1981), 5.
[77]Harry S. Chase: from Vermont, father was a dentist. Joseph R. Meeker: paymaster in Union Army and did swamp scenes of the Mississippi.Helped establish Sketch Club and STL Academy. WH Howe: clerk for a

They formed artist clubs that emphasized their professional status, like the St. Louis Sketch Club (established 1877) or the St. Louis Artists' Guild (reorganized 1886). Many St. Louis artists were also members of the Society of Western Artists (established 1896), including Gustav Carl Waldek, Robert Bringhurst, and Frederick Oakes Sylvester, who exhibited nationally as well as locally. These professional organizations also allowed local artists to interact as near equals with St. Louis patrons.[78]

Ives exerted himself to bring exhibitions of modern European art to the Museum. He told the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* in September 1884, after a particularly successful exhibition at the Museum, that he was "confident that St. Louis will yet be one of the art centers of the world," and foretold that St. Louis was as Florence or Naples on the eve of the Renaissance. This American renaissance required elite support, or as Ives put it, "when our merchants have grown tired of the pursuit of gain for the mere pleasure of possession, they will turn aside to the pleasure to be found in the cultivation and fostering of an art spirit…and an art feeling will permeate the entire community."[79] As he had likely seen in other major U.S. cities, institutions of the arts, whether museums or philharmonic orchestras, were not sustainable without the almighty dollar.[80] With an elite that was disinclined to pay higher city and state taxes for public art institutions, Ives

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dry goods store, then studied in Europe. "A Group of Great Artists: An Honor Roll of the Cluster of Brilliant Men Who Made St. Louis an Art Center," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* Nov. 26, 1899, p. 37.

[78] Sarah Burns, *Inventing the Modern Artist: Art and Culture in Gilded Age America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 27.

[79] "Art in St. Louis: What Has Been Done Gives Promise of What Will Be," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Sept. 20, 1884, p. 10.

[80] Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow, Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 128.

worked to entice individual patrons' support instead.[81] In a letter dated January 1898, asking Busch to donate to the School of Fine Arts, Ives states: "in Europe, as you are well aware, the governments provide means to carry on Industrial Art education. In this country our only hope is in our men of liberal ideas, whose broad training and experience has taught them the value of investing money in such work."[82] Such a plea was successful among the St. Louis elite, who were already eager to heighten their distinction through patronage of the arts.[83] Ives, through the city museum, offered patrons a platform that legitimized their taste, while securing support for training in design through the School of Fine Arts.

Eager to emulate London's South Kensington Museum, Ives and his wealthy boosters constructed in St. Louis a culture of art and design that relied on the acquisition and exhibition of European art, grounded in what were seen as universal aesthetic principles capable of being inculcated by academic training. Elite collectors loaned art to the city's museum, ranging from the Dutch masters to Barbizon artworks, as well as

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[81] While the St. Louis School and Museum of Fine Arts were privately funded at the time, in 1907, Ives successfully got the city to pass an ordinance in April 1907for a property tax to support the Museum. Bixby Defty, *The First Hundred Years 1879-1979*, 2.

[82] Halsey Cooley Ives letter to Adolphus Busch, January 10, 1898, Halsey Cooley Ives Collection, St. Louis Art Museum Archives.

[83] Charles Parsons is an example of the kind of businessman who Ives hoped to educate and entice to invest in European art for the city; someone who was less a connoisseur and more a man looking to art for status. An affluent banker who was the Presiding Chairman of the World's Congress of Bankers at the Columbian Exposition and member of the Museum of Fine Arts Board of Control, Parsons did become a supporter of the Washington University School of Fine Arts. He traveled frequently to Europe, where he purchased a number of British portraits, French Barbizon pictures, and academic paintings. Parsons also purchased plenty of American landscapes at home. His selections are representative of most nineteenth-century art buyers. Of the seventy-three contemporary paintings he left to the St. Louis Museum, forty-six percent are by French artists, fourteen percent are by American artists and ten percent are English, with the remaining thirty percent from German, Dutch, and Italian artists. Janet Lynn Whitmore, "Painting Collections and the Gilded Age Art Market: Minneapolis, Chicago, and St. Louis, 1870-1925," PhD dissertation, University of Minnesota, 2002, 58.

Aesthetic portraits of themselves. The goal was to bring "great art" to the people of the city and "to produce an 'educated public' with an appreciation of artistic meaning and purpose," as defined by this elite.[84] Established as a "free gift" to the people of St. Louis, the Museum of Fine Arts had a similar goal.[85] The Board of Control at the Museum of Fine Arts was run by ten well-known St. Louisans, including Zorn patrons Ives, Charles Nagel, and Daniel Catlin, a wealthy tobacco manufacturer who was President of the Museum until 1898.[86] Busch, Catlin, Nagel, and Ives regularly loaned art from their collection and their portraits by Zorn to the Museum.[87] As Lewis Mumford explains, the metropolitan oligarchy realized that "by the patronage of the museums, [they could] establish their own claims to culture: more than that they [could] fix their own standards of taste, morals, and learning as that of their civilization."[88] By funding acquisitions as board members, or giving or loaning their own artwork to the Museum of Fine Arts, they were able to "isolate high culture [and] differentiate it from popular culture."[89]

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[84] Neil Harris, "The Gilded Age Revisited: Boston and the Museum Movement," *American Quarterly* 14, no.4 (1962): 561.
[85] "Art Notes: The Crow Museum," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, Feb. 13, 1881, p. 11.
[86] The Board also funded the construction of the new Museum of Fine Arts building, starting in 1881. "St. Louis Art Museum," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, Feb. 16, 1881, p. 5. Catlin, president of the Museum of Fine Arts from 1881-1898, also invested in banking and real estate, owning multiple homes in the affluent Lucas Place/Locust Street area of the city. After his death in 1917, Mrs. Justina Kayser Catlin donated thirty Barbizon and Hague school artworks to the Museum. Upon her death, Zorn's portrait of Catlin was also donated. Catlin's son, Daniel K. Catlin, would also become a president and trustee of the Museum.
[87] "Best Paintings from the Homes of St. Louis in Vacation Art Exhibit" *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* June 15, 1911, p. 13. Daniel Nugent and Robert Brookings also regularly donated their portraits by Zorn to the Museum. Whitmore, "Painting Collections and the Gilded Age Art Market, 58.
[88] Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities* (New York: Secker & Warburg, 1959), 32.
[89] DiMaggio, "Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston," 374.

Museum trustees guided the aesthetic program of the Museum and by extension, the art tastes of the city of St. Louis.[90] They saw themselves competing with national collectors, like Charles Lang Freer, for American and European artists whose styles represented internationally acclaimed movements. At the School of Fine Arts, interest in the Arts and Crafts movement dominated. In an 1897 lecture seemingly aimed at the city's patrons, school director and local artist Edmund H. Wuerpel lauded France's superiority in designing luxury goods for the home, especially their excellent "taste shown in the manufacturing of tapestries, carpets, wallpapers, porcelain, glass, bronzes—everything in which design may fill a conspicuous place."[91] He posited that good design is good business; study of the arts supported industry. These comments, typical for the period, reveal how the interests of corporate managers coincided with investment in design, and a taste for art that highlighted the "principles" of art, and so art for art's sake. One of the founders of the School, Wayman T. Crow, affirmed this commitment to the study of design as a tool for training workers, not artists, in 1881:

> "Aesthetic culture is one of the best proofs of national and individual refinement. The study of art is elevation…It will be the aim of this School for Fine Arts to educate the public taste, instil [sic] sound principles of aesthetic culture and foster a distinctively American type of art…Industrial art will feel a quickening impulse."[92]

Elite investment in museums and art schools still had the same goals as the Agricultural and Mechanical Association.

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[90] William K. Bixby was also key at the City Art Museum, serving on its governing board for thirty years and chairing the St. Louis World's Fair Art Committee in 1904. Bixby leveraged his substantial resources as well as his friendships with well-known East Coast collectors, like Charles Lang Freer, to support the arts in St. Louis and solicit commissions for the museum from Aesthetic artists like Thomas Wilmer Dewing. Torbert and Wolfe, *Art Along Rivers*, 59.

[91] Wuerpel quoted in *The First Hundred Years 1879-1979*, 1.

[92] Steiner, *The Saint Louis Art Museum's Handbook*, 8.

However, local St. Louis artists benefitted from the greater cultural authority that the Aesthetic movement gave to artists, rather than patrons. The media praised Ives and the selection committee at the Museum for giving local artists prominence in exhibitions, implicitly equating them with European masters. In the same exhibition of 1884 that Ives said marked a renaissance in the city, one newspaper observed that despite the many notable works from Europe on loan, St. Louis art was not put in "one room or an out-of-the-way corner," but distributed among nationally and internationally known artists. W.H. Howe was shown with renowned German American landscape artist, Albert Bierstadt, and George Eichbaum was in as good of light as Jean-Baptiste Édouard Detaille.[93] The museum's emphasis on academically trained, professional artists, served local artists and led to their later acceptance of Zorn.

Ives met Zorn as head of the art department for the Chicago World's Fair. His involvement in Chicago and again as art director for the St. Louis Exposition of 1904 reflected his belief in the importance of art education for industry. World's fairs promised to spur innovations in industrial design and the fine arts. At the St. Louis World's Fair, Ives displayed the decorative arts, the more "minor arts," within the fine arts displays, reasoning that "all artwork…in which the artist-producer has worked with conviction and knowledge is recognized as equally deserving of respect."[94] Ives took three trips to Europe before the 1893 exposition to collect art to exhibit and to solicit expatriate artists like Sargent and Whistler to participate. During one of these trips, he

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[93] "Art in St. Louis: What Has Been Done Gives Promise of What Will Be," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Sept. 20, 1884, p. 10.
[94] Torbert. *Art Along Rivers*, 61.

met Zorn, who likely saw a kindred spirit in the hardworking educator with humble beginnings.[95] When the Chicago Exposition closed, Ives obtained 183 artworks from its Fine Art Exhibition to form the initial collection of the St. Louis Museum of Fine Arts.[96] Ives was attracted to the Arts and Crafts movement and to Zorn precisely because of their potential for elevating the prestige of the arts and the hand of the artist in the eyes of the public.

Ives's embrace of a practical version of the Aesthetic movement's emphasis on design was a tool of mobility for him, as it was for Zorn, and Zorn's patrons. Prior to the 1893 World's Fair, as a professional educator, Ives could be considered part of St. Louis's middle class. He lived at 3721 Westminster Place in North St. Louis, nearly seven miles from the elite suburbs. However, after the success of the World's Fair, the resulting new museum accessions, and his hosting of the famous artist Zorn, Ives' social status evolved. He corresponded with international artists and museums and received knighthoods from Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, and Portugal. More prosaically, he was elected to the city council in St. Louis from 1895-1899, a period of Republican control of the mayor's office, when the elite of St. Louis were at the peak of their influence. In office, he successfully advocated for legislation establishing the St. Louis Museum of Fine Arts as a public institution. Ives also became vice president of the St. Louis Club, a selective social club on affluent Locust Street known to put on "the grandest and most

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[95] Zorn calls Ives his friend in 1896. Anders Zorn and Birgitta Sandström, *Självbiographiska Anteckningar* (Mora, Sweden: Zornsamlingarna, 2004), 145. "The Swedish artists have many warm friends in America, among them no one more so than the writer of this letter." Halsey Cooley Ives letter to Director of Royal Academy for Fine Arts Gustaf Cederstrom, April 23, 1902, Ives Collection, St. Louis Art Museum.
[96] Janet Whitmore, "Painting Collections and the Gilded Age Art Market," 54.

elegant" events in St. Louis social history.[97] With his wife, St. Louisan Margaret A. Lackland, Ives moved to the suburbs in 1897, building their home, Redcroft, north of St. Louis in Overland.[98]

Zorn's half-length portrait of Ives (1893) at first appears pensive (fig.3). Ives leans on his desk in his study in a finely textured suit, with his face in three-quarter profile. Ambient light (presumably from an unseen window) accentuates wall panels of rich wood behind him, on which subtle brushstrokes indicate decorative floral patterns. The panels may refer to Ives's training as a designer, or simply to someone who demands beauty in all of his surroundings. Left of Ives is a mix of translucent horizontal and vertical brushstrokes in forest green, gold, and white, against a blackish background; these amorphous shapes may be a bookcase or a coatrack. Like Zorn's portraits of French artists and intellectuals, Ives sits in an interior workspace, ignores his papers, and looks off somberly as if lost in thought.[99] Dramatic light falls strongly on his head, but also on his hand, which is nearly as prominent. The hand rests on the papers with a red gem ring prominent, his forefinger and pinky raised in a slightly strained position. He is not writing or doing, but in this moment of contemplation, his hand—the hand of a fellow artist—is artistically arranged and ornamented. Zorn highlights Ives' nuanced social position as one who was simultaneously elite, intellectual, and technical; a connoisseur, an educator, and a fellow designer, whose art expresses his distinct sensibility.

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[97] "The Second Grand Ball Was a Magnificent Affair," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, January 30, 1894, p. 10.
[98] "Halsey Cooley Ives LLD, Founder of the St. Louis School of Fine Arts First Director of the City Art Museum of St. Louis," ed. Walter B. Stevens, (St. Louis, 1915), 50, Ives Collection, St. Louis Art Museum.
[99] Clayson, "Anders Zorn's Etched Portraits of American Men," 178.

Zorn and his patrons both relied on Ives' connections, knowledge, and artistic eye. As such, Zorn's portrayal emphasizes his interiority, more than his relationship to a specific environment. The goal of a modern male realist portrait of manners and class was described by French author, critic, and likely acquaintance of Zorn in Paris, Edmond Duranty, in 1876:

> "What we need are the special characteristics of the modern individual—in his clothing, in social situations, at home or on the street. The fundamental idea gains sharpness of focus…It is the study of the relationship of a man to his home, or the particular influence of his profession on him, as reflected in the gestures he makes, the observation of all aspects of the environment in which he evolves and develops."[100]

Zorn often did place male sitters in private spaces like a home or office, in clothing that indicates something about their personality, social status, or business, visualizing the influences of their profession and environment on their identity. However, Zorn was not committed to realism. Clayson observes that Zorn's portraits "did not assume a single, dominant model of the male individual, but engaged in the imagination and re-articulation of period masculinities."[101] In portraits like Ives's, Zorn's virtuosic style turns the sitter into an aristocrat who possesses taste and style, not just wealth and status. Ives' portrait is a study of character independent of objects or emblems, accessories or environment (even the setting in a study points to internal contemplation); his artistic acuity is innate and aristocratic.[102]

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[100] Duranty quoted in Clayson, "Anders Zorn's Etched Portraits of American Men," 178.
[101] Clayson, "Anders Zorn's Etched Portraits of American Men," 177-78.
[102] Sharon Hirsh, *Symbolism and Modern Urban Society* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press 2004), 219.

Zorn's portrait of Ives was well known in St. Louis and abroad. It was loaned many times to exhibitions and expositions. As late as 1910, *The St. Louis Star and Times* discussed it as an example of Zorn's method, noting that he follows the method or "dictum" that the artist should "fix his eyes on the face and note what sort of image he gets of the hands, the background, the clothing, out of the corner of his eye."[103] This glancing treatment is itself how Zorn conveys the effortlessness of Ives's artistic judgment. The portrait served as almost an advance advertisement for Zorn, who gained popularity among the elite of St. Louis not long after. It demonstrated his ability to portray the artistic personalities of Americans, as well as of European and English aristocrats. His participation in Chicago, like his exhibiting in the Paris Salon, legitimized him to less secure buyers, even as the contrast there or in St. Louis with more conservative artists helped define his style.[104] With bravura brushstrokes reminiscent of Diego Velasquez, and figures posed in self-conscious, sometimes slightly strained or stylized arrangements, Zorn was a member of an "international circle of painters who adroitly navigated between academic tradition and the emerging avant-garde."[105] He helped make the Aesthetic movement's values accessible by combining virtuosity in his application of paint with realist shape and form. But in a provincial city like St. Louis, despite Ives's efforts, Zorn would struggle at times amid a patron class who still understood the portraitist as a craftsman.

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[103] Emily Grant Hutchings, "The Study of Art in the Home: Modern Ideals in Portraiture," *The St. Louis Star and Times*, Feb. 27, 1910, p. 57.
[104] Emma Zorn mentions that Zorn's "Parisian Reputation" preceded him when he arrived in the U.S. in 1893. Hans Henrik Brummer, "Anders Zorn in America," in *Anders Zorn: Sweden's Master Painter*, ed. Johan Cederlund (New York: Skira Rizzolo, 2013), 32.
[105] Albert Boime, "Sargent in Paris and London: A Portrait of the Artist as Dorian Gray," *John Singer Sargent,* ed. Patricia Hills, (New York: Whitney Museum of Art, 1986), 76-77.

The professionalization of art, with its establishment of standard expectations for training and the increased number of professional artists, led to the need for artists to distinguish themselves within the art market. Sarah Burns notes that "in the dawning age of advertising and consumption, money and physical goods were not the only media of exchange: socially and culturally, the public self and its distinctive style were dynamic agents for signaling and negotiating identity, status, power, and desirability."[106] It was not only artworks that were luxury commodities. The artist became a commodity as well. As a result, artists were, by necessity, "remodeled by the new conditions of producing and marketing their work, and themselves."[107] James Abbott McNeill Whistler pioneered the cultivation of a public persona that added to his allure as an artist. By presenting himself as a "public, consumable image," and by associating his controversial personality with his art, Whistler enhanced the demand for both.[108] The spread of mass-market journalism transformed Whistler, and artists that followed his example, into national celebrities. The fascination with the artistic "personality" led a humorist to note: "Let an artist…become popular in America: will not your papers immediately inform the public what he or she had for breakfast?"[109] Zorn followed Whistler's lead in presenting a version of himself to the American public that established his personality, and thus his aesthetic authority. He advertised his social networks and his unique style and personality in the media to

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[106] Sarah Burns, "Old Maverick to Old Master: Whistler in the Public Eye in Turn-of-the-Century America," *American Art Journal* 22, no.1, 1990): 38.
[107] Burns, *Inventing the Modern Artist*, 2.
[108] Burns, "Whistler in the Public Eye," 30.
[109] Andrew Lange and Paul Blouet, "The Typical American," *The North American Review,* vol. 150, (May 1890): 590, quoted in Burns, "Whistler in the Public Eye," 38.

promote his artwork, affirm his autonomy, and establish his place within the social and economic fabric of urban America.

Zorn quickly allied with the "right" social and artistic networks. Upon his arrival in New York for the Chicago World's Fair in March 1893, James Waddell Alexander, president of Equitable Life Insurance, an established philanthropist, and Zorn's escort, immediately provided Zorn with cards for the clubs in which he was a member. Zorn recalls that he "immediately got an insight [that] club life is so important in America. There you can have a reason to say: 'Tell me which club you belong to, and I will tell you who you are.'"[110] Club membership was crucial in making meaningful social connections. Sarah Burns explains that clubs "provide[d] social support, separate[d] insiders from outsiders, increase[d] chances for publicity, and promote[d] contact with patrons."[111] Zorn was swift to incorporate himself into St. Louis's clubs. By November 1893, Zorn was honored at both the St. Louis Club and the St. Louis Artist's Guild, where he could brush elbows with the key collectors, artists, and elite of St. Louis.[112] The next month, Zorn was reported in Chicago newspapers as being "fêted in Gotham…at the Salmagundi club."[113] The Salmagundi club was one of the biggest professional artist clubs, known for its juried exhibitions.[114] Its activities and those of its members, including famed St. Louis artist, William Merritt Chase, were also reported in and meaningful for determining social and artistic credentials in St. Louis. Zorn's association with this and other clubs,

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[110] Zorn and Sandström, *Självbiographiska Anteckningar*, 125.
[111] Burns, *Inventing the Modern Artist*, 27.
[112] "Swedish Art Commissioner Zorn Dined," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 18, 1893, p. 3.
[113] "The Fine Arts," *Chicago Tribune,* Dec. 24, 1893, p. 26.
[114] "Ye Art and Artist's Corner," *Chicago Tribune,* July 14, 1902, p. 5.

his ability to appear as a social equal in these exclusive spaces, meant a great deal in cultivating a public image of taste, social savvy, and legitimacy.

Once Zorn's "depictions of the contemporary world," realist, plein-air paintings of everyday life, completed in Paris, went on display in Chicago, local newspapers were quick to comment on his popularity among the World's Fair judges, connoisseurs, and patrons.[115] The *Chicago Tribune* reported in October 1893 that six of seven works that Zorn placed on display had already been purchased by "careful" collectors, namely Isabella Stewart Gardner and George Vanderbilt.[116] Later that month, the *Tribune* wondered at the "rapidity with which the young Swedish painter, Anders Zorn, has achieved his reputation in America," wherein at only six months after his arrival, "the artist can scarcely supply the demand for his work."[117] By publishing these de facto press releases, the media in Chicago contributed to Zorn's public image as an artist in demand by the New York Vanderbilts and the Boston Gardners. In describing his style, they commend Zorn's "new view of nature," an impressionist command of light and air that was not "comprehended" by the masses but could be appreciated by "anyone who has observed similar effects of light and air."[118] The *Tribune* implies that only the artistically initiated will understand his style. Such publicity would have reached St. Louis patrons who attended the World's Fair, as well as Ives.

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[115] Brummer, "Anders Zorn in America," 30, 34.
[116] "Sales from the Art Gallery," *Chicago Tribune*, Nov. 1, 1893, p. 13.
[117] "The Fine Arts," *Chicago Tribune*, Nov. 26, 1893, p. 42.
[118] "The Fine Arts," *Chicago Tribune*, Nov. 26, 1893, p. 42.

The newspapers also postulated that Zorn "owes much of the originality, which is only another name for personality, of his work to the fact that he is the pupil of no school nor master but gives in his work results of his personal observation of nature."[119] Contemporary art critic Royal Cortissoz wrote about the significance of personality in this era, emphasizing that personality can be valuable in art, as long as it does not get carried to extremes. Art should not simply be a "reproduction of some episode in life, [but should also be] the vehicle for the expression of the artist's point of view." Cortissoz affirms that "the expression of that point of view is essential to the perfection of a work of art." Ultimately, the value of an artist's personality will be determined by their own individual "expression of beauty for beauty's sake."[120] Zorn's acclaim stemmed from his skill in reproducing the natural world, but only after the "inspiration passed from nature through every fibre of [his] individuality."[121] Brilliant technicians of art, like Zorn, mobilized their individuality to create reflections of their subjects that merged the spiritual and the material.[122]

Zorn's particular negotiation of his personality, the artist's claim to originality, was noted by a St. Louis paper, which quoted him to the effect that he paints the portrait in his mind long before the canvas. This explained his rapid execution of portraits. But also, by saying he imagines his compositions before making them a reality, the author emphasizes that Zorn does not imitate other artistic models or nature but creates his own designs. These statements frame originality and personality as synonymous, revealing

[119] "Popular Successes of the Art Palace," *Chicago Tribune,* Oct. 29, 1893, p. 35.
[120] Royal Cortissoz, "Egotism in Contemporary Art" *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 73 (May 1894), 645.
[121] Cortissoz, "Egotism," 647.
[122] Cortissoz, "Egotism," 649.

how Zorn carefully constructed artistic individuality and subjectivity. Individuality was in a precarious position as corporations sought to refit “the individual to function effectively as part of an intricate, bureaucratic, and strongly hierarchical system while being reassured that his singularity counted for something.”[123] In stark opposition to the corporate body, the great modern artist was expected to be original, an “unincorporated individual, who produced himself.”[124] A common criticism at the time was that U.S. artists returning from study in Paris “were not strong enough to resist the dominating influence of their masters,” which by dismissing their individuality almost entirely invalidated their art.[125]

According to the *Chicago Tribune*, Zorn passed this test by reliance on his own instincts, instead of on a master or school. But this did not mean he was a lowly realist. The *Tribune*’s emphasis on his instincts indicates that Zorn’s genius arose from carrying the pictorial image beyond mere imitation. The author affirms that which makes Zorn the ideal modern artist: artistic insight unique to him. In such descriptions of Zorn’s work, the Chicago media equally differentiates Zorn’s work from the common and the mass produced. These characteristics are why, according to the *Tribune*, Zorn enjoyed such positive reception among the collectors at the World’s Fair: his individuality could be imparted to his patrons as well. Themes of Zorn’s originality and individuality remain foundational for Zorn’s brand throughout the remainder of his career in the US.

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[123] Burns, I*nventing the Modern Artist*, 41.
[124] Burns, I*nventing the Modern Artist*, 42.
[125] Burns, *Inventing the Modern Artist*, 41.

This is apparent in the promotion of him by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* in 1900, which dramatically recounts a portrait commission from Swedish King Oscar II. The article casts Zorn and King Oscar in opposing roles: Zorn, as a "shrill," "indiscreet," and "unpleasant" artist, and the King, as a modest monarch possessing "the fullest measure the politeness expected of princes."[126] Though Zorn had instructed the King's advisors that he would only paint a portrait of the King if he were in everyday dress, the King arrived for the sitting in full naval uniform. Zorn informed the King that he would charge 25,000 francs for the portrait, as opposed to the agreed upon 10,000 francs, if the King did not change his clothing; the King followed Zorn's orders. During one of the ensuing sittings, Zorn complimented the King on his poetry, indicating their shared aesthetic tastes. The characterization of Zorn as shrill and indiscreet may hint at a later period's feminization of artists in the Aesthetic movement, but being difficult and unabashedly opinionated established his artistic intransigence, his pursuit of his own rather than a patron's design, and thus his dedication to art itself, not commerce. This article was reprinted in papers around the United States, affirming Zorn's persona as an aesthete, who differs from the ordinary, both in artistic execution and in personality.[127]

The St. Louis Republic in 1901 similarly frames Zorn as headstrong, with a touch of eccentricity. The anecdote recounts Zorn's running joke, that he "threatened" to send a painting to the Museum of Fine Arts for their collection; they characterize Zorn's

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[126] "Artist Anders Zorn, Who Painted Sweden's King, Was in St. Louis," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Oct. 21, 1900, p. 36.

[127] Also reported in "Royal Economy in Portraits," *The Buffalo News* (Buffalo, NY), Dec. 11, 1900, p. 6; "Painter and King," *Daily News* (Santa Barbara, CA), March 13, 1901, p. 2; "King Oscar and Artist Zorn," *The Inter Ocean* (Chicago, IL), October 21, 1900, p. 42, and others.

"species of humor [as] too foreign to be appreciated."[128] He finally donates a portrait, seemingly without notice, which leads the author to deduce that "Zorn exercises to an unusual degree the artist's time-honored prerogative of doing things at his own pleasure and at his own time and in his own way." This is consistent with Zorn's persona; he possesses and donates the portrait; his personality is as an original, who "knows" how to select moments and objects. The author recounts two other anecdotes meant to highlight Zorn's "very arbitrary" nature. The first recalls a portrait sitting with an unnamed "society woman" in St. Louis. Zorn confessed that he "actually let her have her choice" about holding either a book or a flower. Instead of an example of Zorn's collaborative nature, Zorn's "condescension" in allowing his patron to take part in deciding the composition indicates Zorn's more usual particularity. This instance was an outlier, not a hallmark of Zorn's approach to aesthetic control of his artwork. As in Chicago, the St. Louis media frame Zorn's personality as inseparable from his art and practice.

For most of his St. Louis patrons, Zorn's choices elevated their status. When he painted the portrait of tobacco merchant Daniel Catlin, a stalwart museum supporter, Zorn observed that his sitter "was a good-natured giant" who liked whiskey.[129] Zorn claimed Catlin's drinking during sittings allowed Zorn to observe the movements of his mouth and tongue. Zorn said that he painted Catlin's "tongue with its wet, shiny moisture in his open mouth," despite the risk of being "damned as usual by [Catlin's] family" for this breach of decorum. Open mouths and tongues had traditionally been signs of lower-

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[128] "Museum of Fine Arts Now Boasts a Portrait by Anders Zorn, Presented by the Artist," *The St. Louis Republic,* June 16, 1901, p. 45.
[129] Anders Zorn and Birgitta Sandström, *Självbiographiska Anteckningar* (Mora, Sweden: Zornsamlingarna, 2004), 180.

class subjects, but Zorn's style was able to replace this with a quality of individuality and personality instead. Mrs. Catlin approved of the portrait; "it exceeded her wildest dreams." She donated the portrait to the Museum of Art at the end of her life, along with many other works from Catlin's private collection.

Henry Clay Pierce, by all accounts, was equally seduced by this persona, only to angrily reject it when it challenged his own class prerogatives. Pierce was the type of socially entrenched, Protestant, Anglo-American patron to whom Zorn's portraits appealed. Pierce was the founder of the national Waters-Pierce Oil Company, president of the St. Louis Club, and was considered "the most aristocratic of the St. Louis multi-millionaires."[130] He was a conspicuous consumer, who built a mansion on the grandest private street in northwestern St. Louis, Vandeventer Place, purchased the "finest steam yacht in existence" from the King of Portugal, and built a splendid mausoleum for his wife, Minnie Finlay Pierce, who passed away January 1899, just before he hired Zorn.[131] However, Pierce was not a patron of the arts, like Busch, and was most known in town for his extensive rail holdings, brusque business practices, and activity in local clubs. Pierce nonetheless was familiar with the ability of the portrait to affirm membership among the American elite. He thus sought family portraits from an artist like Zorn, who came with recommendations from his business associates. However, Pierce's lawsuit against Zorn over these same portraits indicates that Zorn's assertions of authority, and perhaps by extension the academic model represented by Ives, had its challengers. Pierce

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[130] "Texas Indicts Millionaire H. Clay Pierce," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Nov. 22, 1906, p. 1.
[131] "H. Clay Pierce's Steam Yacht," *St. Louis Republic*, March 26, 1901, p. 3.

viewed portraits as physical "likenesses," in which he paid for the labor of his employee, Zorn, who was bound to carry out his demands. Pierce's objections to Zorn's portrayal of himself and his family arose from Pierce's belief that the aestheticizing style Zorn employed diminished his social power. And, to Zorn, Pierce represented a threat to his power as an artist to control his 'product;' the portrait was his mental imagining, an expression of his personality, not Pierce's.

Pierce met Zorn not in St. Louis but in New York City in February 1899, at the home of Edward Rathbone Bacon, a New York lawyer, financier, railroad owner and art collector, who sat on many of the same corporate boards as Pierce.[132] Pierce sought Zorn out to commission three portraits, to be painted from sittings in St. Louis. According to Zorn's later account, he hesitated to accept as Pierce "looked so unpleasant," and because he would be required to use photographs of Mrs. Pierce for her portrait, a stipulation he usually never accepted.[133] However, Zorn was strongly urged by Mr. Bacon to take the commission, presumably because Bacon wanted to strengthen his social and business ties with Pierce. Zorn also said that he was intrigued by the appearance of Pierce's daughter, Perle (Mrs. Eben Richards), who looked "quite good."[134] Zorn negotiated to paint portraits of Pierce's deceased wife, Pierce, and Perle, with the stipulation that he would also potentially paint Pierce's other daughter, Violet. Each portrait cost $4,000, to be paid upon completion. Zorn wrote that he was only warned against the Pierces after his arrival

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[132] Both men bought out shares of the Baltimore and Ohio rail ways, "The Baltimore and Ohio," *The New York Times*, July 1, 1899, p. 4.
[133] Gerda Boethius, *Anders Zorn: An International Swedish Artist, His Life and Work*, (Stockholm: Nordisk Rotogravyr, 1949), 53.
[134] Zorn and Sandström, *Självbiographiska Anteckningar*, 161.

in St. Louis later that month. His friend Charles Nagel, the respected lawyer and future Secretary of Commerce and Labor to President Taft, told Zorn that Pierce was an "exacting man and, to judge from his record, was not averse to litigation."[135] Another of Zorn's friends confided that Pierce was "the dirtiest, stinking skunk that ever walked the streets of St. Louis."[136]

Despite these warnings, which alluded to tensions in the upper echelons of St. Louis, Zorn began his work at Pierce's sumptuous estate. He began with the portrait of the late Mrs. Pierce, with Perle sitting in the place of her mother.[137] But he planned to work on the three portraits simultaneously and yet found that within a few days of his arrival, Pierce had gone hunting instead of sitting for him. What possibly was a misunderstanding led to a confrontation between Zorn, who demanded that Pierce keep his appointments, and Pierce, who expected Zorn to prioritize the portrait of the late Mrs. Pierce.[138] In response to this interaction, both men leveraged their connections in the city to seek the upper hand against each other. Zorn admitted to his friend, Nagel, that "there could be difficulties;" Nagel promised his help with legal intervention, if Zorn should have need. Pierce took advice "secretly" from Ives on "how to deal with [Zorn]." Though Ives was Zorn's host while he was in St. Louis, Ives was also the vice president to Pierce's president in the St. Louis Club.

[135] Curatorial narrative, Zorn papers, National Museum Archives, Stockholm, Sweden, 1.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Zorn and Sandström, *Självbiographiska Anteckningar*, 161.
[138] Zorn and Sandström, *Självbiographiska Anteckningar*, 162; Henry Clay Pierce letter to Anders Zorn, May 1899, (Zorn Museum Archives, Mora, Sweden).

The patron-artist relationship remained troubled once Pierce began to regularly sit for Zorn. While Pierce said he merely hoped for "likeness," he proved to be as exacting as Nagel anticipated, dictating very specific requirements for his portrait, including situating himself in his favorite chair, with his son's poems in his hands, as well as a background that included stained glass, a miniature bronze statue of an Indian to represent his life in the West, and two dogs to represent his hunting prowess (fig. 4).[139] Zorn obliged, locating him in a wood study as he had Ives, with muted shades of brown, black, and white, though Pierce's study is peppered with items that Zorn accents. The green and blue on the cover of the book of poems, for example, are repeated in the curtain and stained glass at the window. Zorn's brushstrokes are more tightly controlled than his other St. Louis portraits, also suggesting he tried to meet Pierce's demand for greater realism. Daylight's reflections on a few gilded items on Pierce's desk are also less obvious than the dramatic effects on Lilly's Anheuser Busch's gilded chair. The light from the window, however, blurs the side of Pierce's face, and the foreshortening seems to make his torso disproportionately large in relation to his legs. Though such anatomical distortions are not unusual in Aesthetic movement portraits, Pierce complained about the size of his legs, resulting in their later reduction by Zorn.

Zorn said "[Pierce] received all that he wanted" and that he "was very polite" to allow Pierce's requests.[140] The emblematic composition, in combination with Zorn's later forced alterations, do contrast to the portraits of Ives and Busch, over which Zorn had

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[139] Anders Zorn letter to Henry Clay Pierce, May 1899 (Zorn Museum Archives, Mora, Sweden).
[140] Zorn and Sandström, *Självbiographiska Anteckningar*, 163.

complete or nearly complete control. Pierce sits stiffly in his throne-like leather office chair, in a black sack suit, with the slight gold chain of a pocket watch crossing his vest, with his pets and symbols gathered around him. Pierce presumably subscribed to Edmond Duranty's idea that to adequately communicate identity in portraiture, a sitter must be situated at home, in his clothes, surrounded by items that reflect his life. However, these symbols surrounding Pierce function more as external props, rather than unified in their design by Pierce's individual sensibility. The desk's array of fairly prosaic objects remains neat and untouched. Instead of a businessman in action, he sits still, grasping the poems written by his son, C.A. Pierce. Pierce perhaps hoped, with his desk and poems, to infuse the portrait with an academic, pensive air, though he does not look lost in thought. Instead, he gazes sternly at the viewer. As Pierce had taken over his father-in-law's oil business, this pose may have reinforced the message of generational continuity; Pierce would continue and maintain the family and its business despite his wife's death. The effect of Pierce's pose, however, does not seem either natural or comfortable, despite Zorn's realist mode, nor artful in the sense of endowing him with an aristocratic air of casual elegance.

Completing the portrait of Pierce's daughter Perle, *Mrs. Eben Richards* (1899), was also contentious (fig. 5). Though Pierce had initially agreed to leave her portrait entirely to Zorn's discretion, the process was slowed by Pierce's unhappiness with Perle's seated pose and by his demand that Perle only sit for Zorn when he was at home,

which proved difficult with his frequent hunting trips.[141] Perle, too, seemed to have no interest in sitting, and was, in Zorn's opinion, rude and disrespectful.[142] Though Perle was a reluctant sitter, Zorn considered her portrait to be "unusually beautiful," but admitted that there is "something ice cold" and "evil in her look."[143] In Zorn's opinion, much like her father's portrait, her character shone through. Zorn placed Perle in a simple, dark setting, like the ones he typically chose for his male sitters, suggesting she is in the painter's studio, though she sat for Zorn in the ballroom of her father's home. Despite the inky black background which absorbs her simply styled dark hair and even her deep-set brown eyes, each plane of Perle's portrait is filled with white and gold: the golden curtain behind and to Perle's left, the glittering gold arms of her chair, the large, puffy, all-enveloping white and gold wedding dress, and even the verdant green and white flowers she holds in her lap, which pick up the white highlights in the dress. Perle's face and neck are almost the only flesh visible, with her arms, legs, and hands swallowed by the opulent, exaggerated folds of her dress. This was Perle's actual wedding dress, which included fashionable leg-of-mutton sleeves and lustrous satin fabric, worn for her marriage to the lawyer, Eben Richards, held at her father's St. Louis estate.

While the portrait lacks the kaleidoscopic color of Zorn's portrayal of Lilly Anheuser Busch, Perle's portrait served a similar, if not identical purpose. Unlike Busch, who was a collector of beautiful things and eager to establish his American identity,

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[141] Though Pierce wanted Perle to be depicted in a standing position, Zorn refused due to the inadequate canvas size Pierce had purchased. Anders Zorn letter to Henry Clay Pierce, May 1899 (Zorn Museum Archives, Mora, Sweden).
[142] Anders Zorn letter to Henry Clay Pierce, May 1899 (Zorn Museum Archives, Mora, Sweden).
[143] Zorn and Sandström, *Självbiographiska Anteckningar*, 163.

Perle's father did not need to establish his place among the elite, only to sustain that position. The beautiful dress and flowers, likely gifts from her father and groom, and the furnishings around her suggest the men's successes. Though surely this portrait enhanced Perle's reputation in society, and her steady gaze and air of serene confidence suggest she is content with her role, the portrait functioned to showcase her father's ability to marry his virtuous and stylish daughter to a successful, educated, co-investor in the railroad industry.

Pierce demanded the most control over Zorn's portrayal of the late Mrs. Pierce, a picture that was perhaps intended for a more limited audience. In life, Minnie lived in luxury, occupying "a conspicuous position in the social life of the city," with a captivating manner and brilliant intellect, always a central figure among the "exclusive Vandeventer place social set."[144] She was active in St. Louis Club events with her husband and was also a founding member of the St. Louis Humanity Club, a women's organization which sought to improve conditions in hospitals and asylums.[145] For the portrait, Mrs. Richards wore her mother's clothes, with her pose and setting in the drawing room again decided by Pierce, based on his memory of Minnie (fig. 6).[146] Along with these stipulations, Zorn was asked to consult a photograph of Minnie, though its

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[144] Conard, *Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis*, 1733. "Mrs. H. Clay Pierce Dead," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat,* Jan. 6, 1899, p. 5; "Death of Mrs. Pierce," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Jan. 5, 1899, p. 1.
[145] "The Second Grand Ball Was a Magnificent Affair," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, January 30, 1894, p. 10; "Women's Clubs," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, Dec. 11, 1898, p. 35; Conard, *Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis,* 1733.
[146] Zorn wanted to pose Perle elsewhere in the home for Minnie's portrait, as the drawing room had difficult lighting. Anders Zorn letter to Henry Clay Pierce, May 1899 (Zorn Museum Archives, Mora, Sweden).

lighting proved challenging for Zorn.[147] A photograph of her from the same period, which was likely Zorn's reference, indicates that Zorn did convey a likeness, but likely simplified her dress and made her pose more informal (fig. 7). The stylized photo depicts a standing and regal Minnie, several years before her death, in an intricate and opulent dress with layers of satin fabric and hanging lace applique. As in her daughter's portrait, her gigantic rectangular sleeves dominate the picture and suggest her forceful personality. While she wears a similarly silhouetted dress in Zorn's portrait, it is simpler while remaining sumptuous, with yellow satin fabric and white lace outlining the neckline and shoulders. Yellow was not a common dress color at the time, and certainly not for an older, married woman like Mrs. Pierce. But at home, the bright color was socially acceptable, as in the portrait of *Lilly Eberhard Anheuser*. Unlike the confident and formal photo, Zorn poses Minnie more comfortably and placidly as if at rest, with her head facing the viewer, slightly tilted. She wears more jewelry than her daughter, with gilded bracelets on each wrist, and one ring prominently displayed on her right ring finger and another, partially obscured in her lap, on her left. A small, pearl-like brooch is highlighted in both the photograph and painting, its purple color in the painting connecting it with the similarly fashioned, purple-jeweled ring on Minnie's finger, its unusual color amid all the yellow a reminder of her conspicuous but artistic consumption, and her role as a wife to Pierce.

Mrs. Pierce functions less as an ornamental accent to Pierce's mansion than Zorn's depiction of Lilly Anheuser Busch. Zorn's brushstrokes are particularly luminous

[147] Anders Zorn letter to Henry Clay Pierce, May 1899 (Zorn Museum Archives, Mora, Sweden).

on Mrs. Pierce's front and left side, implying that she sits by a window in the daylight and highlighting the luscious fabric of her dress. The less involved/detailed/patterned lace of her painted portrait was likely an effect of Zorn's loose and dreamy brushstrokes. Zorn's lively strokes are especially noticeable in the smoky, gray background, in the carved, polished table on which Minnie's arm rests, and in the fold of her dress, where her other hand is placed. Mrs. Pierce's rather muted representation in Zorn's portrait, perhaps his way of handling the distance from her living person as mediated by photographs and descendants, possibly contributed to her husband's displeasure. Pierce demanded rugged realism in his own portrait, and he likely sought a similarly exaggerated setting and distinctive emblems in his wife's portrait.

The Pierce portraits kept Zorn in St. Louis for a little over a month. Once Zorn finished, he left St. Louis for Boston, and on March 24th, 1899, he wrote to Pierce. He stated that the work was "complete to [his] entire satisfaction and the three portraits can be considered… [his] best work," and confirmed that Pierce could send the $12,000 payment to the Gardner home in Boston.[148] After Zorn sent follow-up letters on April 6th and 22nd, Pierce finally replied, "demanding" that Zorn return to St. Louis, as the three portraits had unacceptable defects and were in violation of their contract. Pierce demanded that Zorn make nine changes to the portrait of his wife, eight changes to his daughter's portrait, and twenty-one changes to his own.[149] Zorn wrote in response: "I do not acknowledge any other authority than my own as to when my work is finished or not;

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[148] Anders Zorn letter to Henry Clay Pierce, March 24, 1899, (Mora, Sweden: Zorn Museum).
[149] Brummer, "Anders Zorn in America," 42.

these were finished."[150] Zorn continued to state that if Pierce insisted on these changes, he would oblige, but would also remove his signature from the portraits. Despite his many concessions to Pierce's demands for input into the portrait designs, Zorn's position was that he might technically be employed by Pierce, but he was the final arbiter of style and so of their contract.

Pierce found the artist's intransigence intolerable. Time and again, letters from Pierce's attorney reflect that Pierce believed Zorn had violated their verbal contract. In a city where industry and titans of business were glorified far more than artists, Pierce expected deference to his wishes. Perhaps as important, Zorn's portraits did not correspond with who Pierce thought he was. This warped representation by Zorn, as he saw it, could harm his reputation. An irate letter from Pierce in May 1899 claims that after Pierce grew ill and "insensible" in early March 1899, Zorn insisted on completing the portrait by having Pierce's son, C.A. Pierce, sit for it, despite his son being "seventy-five pounds" heavier and in "every way…a much larger man."[151] While a similar arrangement had been acceptable for his wife, this rather literal depiction of the continuity of the family line among the men threatened to submerge Pierce's individuality in Zorn's. And that persona was not, for Pierce, an accurate or flattering or useful projection of his social position.

In response to Pierce's angry letter, Zorn arranged to travel to St. Louis. He hoped that he could, "without hurting [his] work too much, make some trifling changes" to the

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[150] Zorn and Sandström, *Självbiographiska Anteckningar*, 163.
[151] Henry Clay Pierce letter to Anders Zorn, May 2, 1899, (Mora, Sweden Zorn Museum).

portraits and resolve the disagreement.[152] According to Zorn's account, written many years later, after waiting for thirty minutes for Pierce to see him, Zorn proceeded to make several adjustments to Pierce's portrait under his host's supervision. One such alteration was the thinning of Mr. Pierce's legs, resulting in the portrait's top-heavy appearance. Though Zorn found that the portrait had "lost character" as a result, Pierce thought the changes were an improvement. As Zorn continued to accommodate Pierce's complaints, he began to feel as though Pierce was purposefully making ridiculous requests. For instance, Pierce demanded alterations to Mrs. Pierce's chin. Pierce then proclaimed that Zorn had "spoiled the chin," forcing Zorn to wipe the fresh paint away, revealing Mrs. Pierce's original face. To Zorn, Pierce was simply seeking to humiliate him and leverage his substantial unpaid commission. Adding insult to injury, Pierce performed this display of power in front of his adult children.

Zorn's autobiography recalls the moment in which the two realized their irreconcilable differences:

> "I don't remember our conversation word for word but remember how his frame of mind went back and forth from threats to have the servants throw me out and a weak confession through tears that he knew that what I did probably was correct and that he hadn't found fault with my work, that I could get my check now this moment, but he wanted me to understand that I couldn't play with him as I wished ("bully me"). Then I must have said something [un]kind to him again so he became beet red with anger and he invited me to take it [the money] up in court."[153]

Zorn did exactly that. Unwilling to compromise any further, Zorn retained his friend, Nagel, to sue Pierce for payment for the three portraits, as is, for $12,000. Zorn was of

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[152] Anders Zorn letter to Henry Clay Pierce, May 1899 (Zorn Museum Archives, Mora, Sweden).
[153] Zorn and Sandström, *Självbiographiska Anteckningar*, 163.

the opinion that "if a jury or judge should decide against him it need not be a reflection upon him as an artist, but occupying the position among artists that he did he would not compromise to the extent of one cent."[154] For Zorn, regardless of the outcome, standing up to Pierce was necessary for his reputation as an artist. He recalls that during the process of painting Mrs. Richards' portrait, Perle claimed that its background was "the most awful thing [she] had ever seen in her life" and she was sure that when her father got well, he would not stand for it. Zorn replied, "the background will remain for ever as I do it and as long as it bears my signature, I am responsible for it. You can engage a brick layer to lay the bricks differently if you pay him his extra labor, but art is something quite different, Mrs. Richards."[155] This interaction was condemned by Mr. Pierce as an example of Zorn's habit of impertinent language, but Zorn's comparison to a bricklayer reveals the weight Zorn placed on his skilled role as an artist. To adhere to Pierce's and Perle's demands in order to be paid would be to admit that he was being paid for his labor as opposed to his genius, aesthetic sensibility, and style. To the contrary, Zorn affirmed that these were the very qualities which gave him the right to demand control of the portrait.

Zorn's lawsuit represents the struggle for authority between patron and artist during the Gilded Age, a struggle that had earlier played out between Whistler and Frederick Leyland in the design of the Peacock Room. Industrial magnates treated paintings like commodities but doing so with art of the Aesthetic movement risked

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[154] Curatorial narrative, Zorn Papers, National Museum Archives, Stockholm, Sweden, 1.
[155] Anders Zorn letter to Henry Clay Pierce, May 1899 (Zorn Museum Archives, Mora, Sweden).

violating the style's tenets, which gave the artist, because of his sensibility, ownership.[156] Lawyers Charles Nagel and Frank Lehmann represented Zorn, and Pierce's son-in-law, Eben Richards, represented Pierce. Pierce and Richards maintained that Zorn refused to carry out his contract even though he was able to do so; and that Zorn had agreed that rectifying the "defects" as Pierce had instructed, improved the work. In reply, Nagel affirmed that Zorn's "artistic conscience and best judgement" precluded changes to the Pierce portraits, because any such changes would injure them. Further, said Nagel, Zorn had done his "utmost to conform to every suggestion, the acceptance of which would not impair the quality of and the character of the work. He can do no more."[157] This stalemate between patron and artist presented two potential outcomes: the first, in which the court would determine that the patron was the sole arbiter of aesthetic taste, and the second, where the taste of the artist was admitted as having sole authority.

Preparations for the trial began in mid-May 1899, but Pierce's legal team requested four suspensions, and the trial was not scheduled until the end of January 1901. They also successfully changed the trial location to Clayton, Missouri, outside of St. Louis city limits. In their affidavit to the court, Pierce's team alleged that Zorn had "an undue influence" in the city of St. Louis, making it inequitable to try the case there, though Zorn himself suspected that the change in venue was done only to give Pierce an "easier time bribing the jurors," not to mention Clayton's proximity to the wealthiest neighborhoods in St. Louis.[158] Pierce likely hoped to rally his social peers to his side,

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[156] Burns, *Inventing the Modern Artist*, 48.
[157] Charles Nagel to Eben Richards, May 6, 1899, (Zorn Museum Archives, Mora, Sweden).
[158] Zorn and Sandström, *Självbiographiska Anteckningar*, 173.

because certainly St. Louis artists had rallied around Zorn. Indeed, Zorn's legal team turned not to patrons, but to "experts" in art, enlisting "other artists as widely known as Zorn," to testify on his behalf. These artists are less well-known today: Alexander Harrison, a native-born landscape and portrait painter based in Philadelphia, who had gained a reputation in Chicago in 1893; Carl Fredrik von Saltza, a Swedish artist who had worked in St. Louis and was a member of the Society of Western Artists, but was now in New York; and Edward Emerson Simmons, a Massachusetts-born muralist who "ha[d] pictured many of Gotham's famed 'Four Hundred." Ives also agreed to testify for Zorn. According to the *St. Louis Republic*, these "expert witnesses" were expected to evaluate the portraits and confirm that Zorn's "productions" conformed "to the canons of art which govern portrait painting."[159] As this suggests, though the case ended up being settled before trial, the publicity around it created a debate over the definition of a portrait, whether its ultimate aim was to be an artwork, rather than a likeness, and if the former, to what extent the artist rather than the buyer should control the design.

A month prior to the trial, the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* published an article entitled "St. Louis Artists Declare Art Demands Pay" in which they asked ten of "the leading artists of the city" to provide input on the definition of a portrait.[160] Among the ten were Ives, still an art professor at Washington University and Museum of Fine Arts director, artists who had exhibited at the Museum like portraitist George Eichbaum, landscape painter Paul E. Harney, and historical painter Matthew Hastings, as well as

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[159] "Business and Art Arrayed in Court," *The St. Louis Republic*, Dec. 5, 1900, p. 14.
[160] "St. Louis Artists Declare Art Demands Pay," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Dec. 16, 1900, 37.

members of the Society of Western Artists like Gustav Carl Waldek and Robert Bringhurst. Two local women painters were also interviewed, including a miniaturist, Mrs. Agnes Thompson, and Mrs. A.M.G. Pattison, an amateur who was active in St. Louis's women's clubs.[161] According to the *Post-Dispatch*, Pierce also sought artistic validation by commissioning a new portrait of Mrs. Pierce from acclaimed Hungarian-Viennese painter, Arthur von Ferraris. While Ferraris' portraits generally fit a modified Aesthetic style, which merged realism and virtuoso brushwork, Ferraris relied on the best photographic technology to capture the "real" Mrs. Pierce to satisfy Pierce's demands for accuracy.[162] When Ferraris asked Pierce why Zorn's portrait had not been acceptable, Pierce told him that he wanted resemblance or likeness, not "Zorns."[163] The newspaper's interviews with artists also reflect upon the concept of "likeness," but they frame it more as a depiction of character through the artist's aesthetic choices. Though the ten had some dissenters, the majority wanted to elevate the professional credibility and influence of artists for the sake of their own careers and for the sake of the city's art scene.

In the article, Ives states that a portrait must express the sitter's character beyond "mere representation." Ives, ever the educator, explains that "literal" portraits fall into the trap of expressing "nothing but the circumstances by which [a] life was surrounded," like one's home, and the "external things which have retarded the growth of a man," like a

[161] The other artists interviewed were Professor C.A. Winter and T.L. Stoddard. Mrs. A.M.G. Pattison, (Alice M Gould Pattison, aka Mrs. Everett W Pattison), "St. Louis Artists Declare Art Demands Pay," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Dec. 16, 1900, 37.
[162] Von Ferraris was known to have painted portraits of the Chicago elite as well as the Emperor of Germany. *American Art News* 6, no. 7 (1907): 2.
[163] "St. Louis Artists Declare Art Demands Pay," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Dec. 16, 1900, 37.

miniature bronze statue of an Indian or fashionable clothing, in Pierce's case.[164] Instead, a "true portrait…must show forth the man himself, must express the hopes and aspirations that dominate his life…[and] reflect those traits of individuality which distinguish him from the other men with whom he mingles in his social and business life."[165] While Ives acknowledges the power of portraits to assert the sitter's position in society, he believes a true artist should elevate the sitter above their peers by revealing their internal, rather than external, life: their character, wisdom, business acumen, and virtue. Mrs. A.M.G Pattison, clubwoman, art critic, suffragette, and wife of a wealthy banker, corroborated Ives: "a portrait, to be great, should recall to the spectators not only the physical image" of a sitter, but, "should convey the painter's interpretation of the mind, the heart, the soul of the person whom he studies, not only with his eye, but with his mind, heart, and soul." Pattison recalls the words of Bernhard Berenson, the great connoisseur of the Italian Renaissance and adviser to Isabella Gardner, who said, "Mere reproduction is not art… [but is only] illustration." Pattison, via Berenson, highlights what Zorn and the Aesthetic movement stand for, the difference between creating "great" art and the performance of labor.

The two artists who disagreed with Zorn and Ives were local miniature painter, Mrs. Agnes J. Thompson, who claimed that she "personally" would not collect for work that did not please her client, and narrative painter Matthew Hastings. Thompson's position as a female artist barred her from the category of genius, which was reserved for

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[164] Anders Zorn letter to Henry Clay Pierce, May 1899 (Zorn Museum Archives, Mora, Sweden).
[165] "St. Louis Artists Declare Art Demands Pay," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Dec. 16, 1900, 37.

men, and this may have colored her reply.[166] Hastings, a friend of "the Missouri artist" George Caleb Bingham, known for his pre-Civil War genre pictures of the frontier, similarly discussed honoring the patron's expectations. A portrait does not have to be a good picture, but ought to maintain an easily recognizable resemblance to its sitter. While he acknowledged Zorn's reputation and admitted to never seeing the Pierce works himself, Hastings stated that merely "because a man is clever in handling a subject, does not mean that he is a good portraitist. People don't want a clever picture and that isn't what they pay for." To Hastings, Zorn's cleverness, his style considered as his technical mastery and prowess, ought not be a factor, only the faithful representation of nature. As more provincial artists, and in Hastings' case an older artist, whose reach did not extend much farther than the Midwest, their concept of art and their patronage were likely both more traditional, and less influenced by principles derived from European training.

The other St. Louis artists interviewed in the paper more resembled the artists asked to testify at the trial, in exhibiting nationally as well as locally. Sculptor Robert P. Bringhurst, himself a frequent contributor to World's Fairs and a member of the Society of Western Artists, stipulated that a portrait likeness requires the artist's insight to produce a "strong character likeness." The artist's aesthetic, not mimetic, decisions are key to producing mental rather than physical resemblance. George Eichbaum, a popular local portraitist, echoed these sentiments, stating that while the public and the subject's friends demand likeness, it is not "the object of a portraitist to paint a map of the face, but

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[166] Sarah Burns, "The 'Earnest, Untiring Worker' and the Magician of the Brush: Gender Politics in the Criticism of Cecilia Beaux and John Singer Sargent," *Oxford Art Journal*, 15:1 (1992) 36–53.

to paint into it that which lights it up in conversation, to wit, expression, animation, vivacity." To that end, Eichbaum could not accept that Pierce was unhappy with Zorn's style as, in his opinion, Zorn was, "not an impressionist but an expressionist, and his work is so prominently distinct that a client cannot plead ignorance of his style, when he gives him a commission." Eichbaum affirms that Zorn's patrons chose him because of his individuality, which set him and so them apart from the ordinary. The painter Carl Waldeck, another member of the Society of Western Artists, was of a similar mind, claiming that "Mr. Zorn would not be a genius if he had not a style of his own, and that is what the public pays for."

Their testimony indicates Pierce's demand for likeness instead of "Zorns" was disingenuous. As Eichbaum observed, Pierce sought out Zorn in the home of one of his patrons, a fellow railroad investor. Pierce knew Zorn's style and his ambitions required a "Zorn," something also evident in Pierce's fury over Zorn's threat to remove his signature from the portraits.[167] Without his signature, they would be robbed of their authenticity, and would not function to connect Pierce to either Zorn's world of aesthetic superiority and "air of cultural sophistication," or to the class of patrons who had obtained proof of their membership in this world; it would render the portraits nearly useless.[168] As Bringhurst, Eichbaum, and Waldeck observe, the market for portraits demanded a distinctively individual style that departed from imitation to convey character—the artist's own as much as the sitters.

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[167] Zorn and Sandström, *Självbiographiska Anteckningar*, 163.
[168] Zalewski, "Alexandre Cabanel's Portraits."

The iconography of Pierce's portraits placed him in the American aristocracy. They included items personal to the sitter, like Perle's wedding dress, Minnie's brooch, and Pierce's Indian statue, that individualized them, albeit in a standard context of wealth and privilege. Even commissioning a portrait of his dead wife indicated that Pierce knew that portraits communicated the stability and continuity of the family's moral as well as financial order. Zorn's "signature" dreamy effect, like his virtuosic brushstrokes, with its sharper focus only on the foreground, may have seemed to detach his style from his sitters and evidently displeased Pierce. But it was his style that truly communicated the quality of individuality that in an age of mass consumption was necessary for elite membership. The Pierce commission demonstrates a crucial problem for provincial elites. They ardently sought portraits that included a cosmopolitan character, and that required a portrait in at least a modified version of the Aesthetic style. But the style, with its requirement that the artist impose his artistic personality on the subject, seemed to shift the referent of the portrait from the sitter to the artist. Zorn's offer to remove his name—to give the Pierces in effect a mass manufactured, anonymously produced luxury good, that despite its visual features was devoid of precisely its "aesthetic" quality—revealed exactly what was provincial about the Pierces.

Though a 1914 revision of the city charter sought to loosen the Big Cinch's grip on St. Louis, Republicans retained control of the city's ward-based politics until 1932, when Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidential candidacy and the Great Depression led to a rise in Democratic power. However, the decline in Zorn's reputation started

earlier.[169] Due to poor health, he was unable to attend the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1904 or socialize with the city's investors. A Democratic paper attacked his portraits on display at the Fair as too realist, aggressive, and inartistic, calling Zorn himself a "dressparado."[170] They deemed Zorn's 1900 portrait of Chicago lawyer and clubman, A. J. (Arthur) Caton, "wholly mundane" and lacking "love and respect," with "no individuality of vestiture," instead preferring the Romantic portraits of eighteenth-century Scots painter Henry Raeburn.[171] Zorn's last visit to St. Louis was in 1907, and while Zorn continued to paint American sitters until 1917, his time depicting St. Louisans had passed.[172]

The idea that the Aesthetic movement was all about show, dress, and materialism, and as such was unable to express the "inner" man, or the man who wasn't rich, was increasingly current. At the same time, the educational model of art promoted by men like Ives gave way to new definitions of progress and artistic value. Artists from the so-called "Ashcan" school, like George Bellows, represented this move away from aestheticism and cosmopolitanism, and towards a realism and metropolitanism which reflected the working class's importance to popular American culture. Bellows deliberately adopted a more rebellious persona counter to that of the hyper-refined Aesthete.[173] The phrase "art for life's sake" replaced "art for art's sake."[174] The International Exhibition of Modern Art in New York City (and Chicago) in 1913, otherwise known as the Armory Show, introduced modernist abstraction and in so doing introduced a different set of meanings around European artists. At the very least, art from Europe did not speak of tradition anymore. Finally, whether serving modernists or

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[169] Stein, *St. Louis Politics*, 13, 27.
[170] "An Expert's Notes on World's Fair Pictures," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, Sept. 24, 1904, p. 2.
[171] "An Expert's Notes on World's Fair Pictures," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat,* Oct. 7, 1904, p. 3.
[172] Zorn visited the City Art Museum, along with other artists and members of the School of Fine Arts. Poor weather prevented attendance for many St. Louisans. "Studio Notes," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 11, 1907, p.4
[173] Marianne Doezema, *George Bellows and Urban America*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 2.
[174] Bellows' mentor, Robert Henri, is credited for "art for life's sake." Doezema, *George Bellows and Urban America,* 26.

Ashcan realists, dealers and galleries increasingly replaced the clubs and patron networks that had supported artists like Zorn.[175] Promoters of European and American modernism like Alfred Stieglitz still fostered insiders, but he actively resisted a business-minded approach on the part of buyers to the spiritual mission of art.[176]

The *New York Tribune* in its 1920 obituary for Zorn accordingly revised his public persona to show his concern for realism and the ordinary man.[177] It described how Zorn would call in peasants near his home in rural Sweden to evaluate his work; he considered the judgement of the common folk the real test of his art. The *Tribune's* account emphasized his connection to Sweden, but Zorn's association with Germany and German Americans may also have played a role in the fall of his fortunes in these years before World War I. As early as 1909, Zorn was identified by a St. Louis paper as a German artist.[178] Hostility against German Americans was on the rise in St. Louis at the same time, and the Missouri Council of Defense discouraged the German language in public schools and on street names.[179] Patrons of all ethnicities were more inclined to entrench themselves in distinctly American art, investing their wealth in art that would represent their own "American-ness."

Nevertheless, Zorn's role in Gilded Age St. Louis is significant, and significantly different from his role as another international artist painting in the broader national market. In St. Louis, Zorn's portraits identify the social, economic, and cultural goals of the founders of the city's art institutions. His patrons, with his assistance in constructing their identity as possessing an artistic sensibility, had a lasting effect on the city. In 1909, with the passage of a museum tax, the City Art Museum began to receive financial

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175 Kirsten Swinth, *Painting Professionals: Women Artists & the Development of Modern American Art, 1870-1930*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 100.
176 Tara Kohn, "Elevated: Along the Fringes of 291 Fifth Avenue," *Panorama: Journal of the Association of Historians of American Art,* 4, no. 2 (Fall 2018), 8.
177 "Attention is Turned to the Work of Anders Zorn, the Swedish Artist Who Died Recently in Stockholm," *New-York Tribune*, Aug. 29, 1920, p. 36.
178 "H. Clay Pierce to Wed," *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, August 1, 1909, p. 1.
179 Detjen, *The Germans in Missouri*, 24.

support from the City of St. Louis for acquisitions. Less reliant on Ives's circle of patrons, Museum acquisitions turned towards a "universal" collection that included African and Asian art. Despite this, the character of the St. Louis Art Museum collection today still reflects the passions and personalities, or collecting tastes, of its nineteenth and twentieth-century founders and donors.[180] Zorn's portraits of the St. Louis elite remain crucial examples of the goals and ambitions of both the Gilded Age patron and the Aesthetic artist. Through presenting a carefully cultivated persona of aesthetic authority, cosmopolitanism, and provincial or ethnic identity, Zorn was uniquely appealing to the St. Louis elite, who sought to affirm their political and social supremacy over civic as well as artistic St. Louis. By patronizing Zorn, they were able to bring "great art" to the city and validate their roles as tastemakers in an American and European aristocracy.

[180] Steiner, *The Saint Louis Art Museum's Handbook of the Collection,* 10.

Appendix: Zorn's St. Louis Portraits & Patrons

Halsey Cooley Ives (1893)

Mr. William Taussig (1896)

Mrs. Daniel Nugent (1896)

Adolphus Busch (1896)

Lilly Eberhard Anheuser Busch (1897)

Mrs. Lucy Turner Joy (1897)

Mrs. Nagel (1897) etching

Henry Clay Pierce (1899)

Mrs. Henry Clay Pierce (1899)

Mrs. (Perle Pierce) Eben Richards (1899)

Daniel Catlin (1901)

Mrs. John Cotton (1901)

Charles Nagel (1901)

Robert Somers Brookings (1904)

Hugo Reisinger (1907) (met in St. Louis, introduced by Adolphus Busch)

Illustrations

Figure 1. Anders Zorn, *Adolphus Busch*, 1896, oil on canvas, 51 x 37½ in. (129.5 x 95.2 cm). Busch Family Collection, Rhode Island.

Figure 2. Anders Zorn, *Lilly Eberhard Anheuser Busch*, 1897, oil on canvas, 51 x 37½ in. (129.5 x 95.2 cm). Busch Family Collection, Rhode Island.

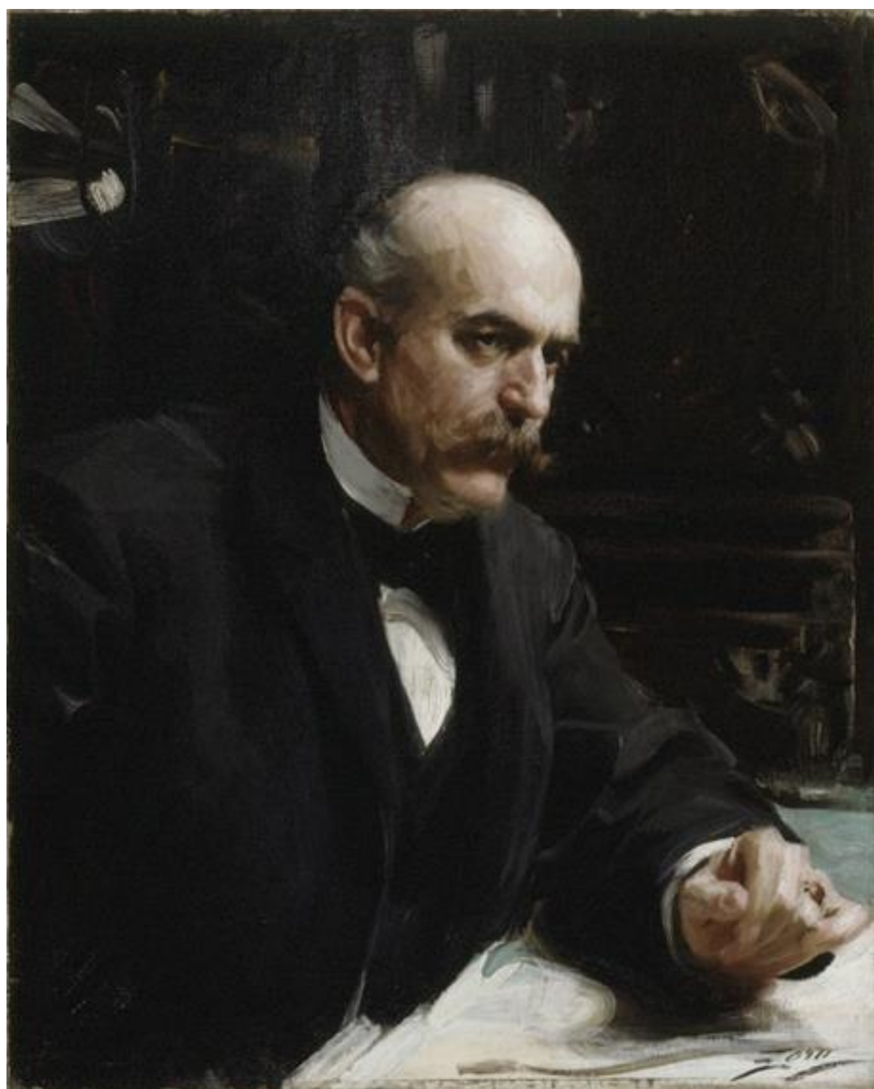

Figure 3. Anders Zorn*, Halsey Cooley Ives*, 1894-95, oil on canvas, 32 x 26 in. (81.3 x 66 cm). Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, MO.

Figure 4. Anders Zorn, *Henry Clay Pierce*, 1899, oil on canvas, 59 7/8 x 42 1/8 in. (152 x 107 cm). Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.

Figure 5. Anders Zorn, *Mrs. Eben Richards*, 1899, oil on canvas, 60 × 42 ¼ in. (152.4 x 107.3 cm). Private collection.

Figure 6. Anders Zorn, *Mrs. Pierce*, 1899, oil on canvas, 60 x 42 in. (152.4 x 106.7 cm). Private collection.

Figure 7. Minnie Finlay Pierce, photograph in Howard Louis Conard, *Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis: A Compendium of History and Biography for Ready Reference,* vol.3 (St. Louis: Southern History Company, 1899), 1732.

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