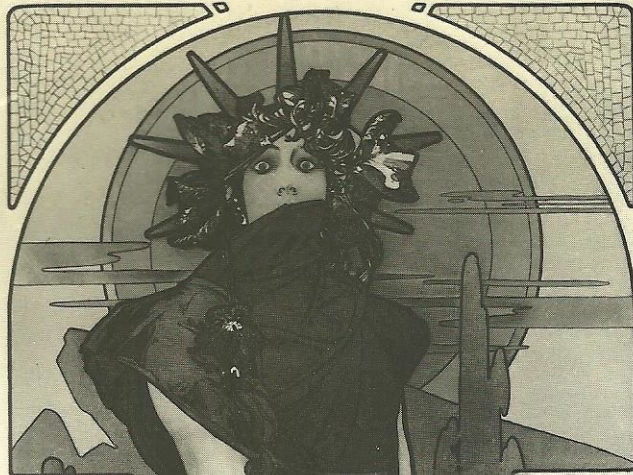


MEDEE

THEATRE DE LA RENAISSANCE



SARAH BERNHARDT



Mucha

Imp. F. CHAMPENOIS
66, Boulevard St Michel, PARIS

ALPHONSE MUCHA

EXHIBITION

May 23rd to June 30th, 1986

GROSVENOR GALLERY

LONDON

ALPHONSE MUCHA (1860-1939)

Alphonse Mucha was born in 1860 at Ivancice in Moravia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was a child prodigy who could draw before he could walk or talk. It is recorded that his mother tied crayons round his neck so that he could draw while crawling on the floor. At the age of nineteen he went to Vienna to work under Kautsky and others on the decor of the Ringtheater. In 1881 the Ringtheater was burned down with great loss of life, and Mucha returned to Moravia where he was fortunate enough to find a patron who sent him to the Art Academy of Munich.

Six years later he arrived in Paris where he studied at the Academy Julian under J. P. Laurens. For a time he shared a studio with Gauguin, and to this Strindberg was a frequent visitor. His allowance having been cut off by the death of his patron, Mucha began to contribute illustrations to such magazines as *La Via Populaire* and *Le Monde Moderne*, and throughout the nineties he did a great deal of book illustrations. But his real fame began with his poster for Sarah Bernhardt in 'Gismonda' (No. 29).

The nineties of Paris was the great age of the poster. What had been begun by Chéret was carried to its highest pitch of perfection by Toulouse-Lautrec. Mucha struck a new note. His graceful line, his simplified structure with its deliberate absence of perspective, his delicate colour: all these combined to convince the critical Partisans that a genuine talent had arisen in their midst, and that Mucha was in the forefront of the new wave of *Art Nouveau*. His first one-man show at the 'Salon des Cent' provoked great enthusiasm and he became a Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur. Sarah Bernhardt decreed that all her posters and the décor and costumes of the plays in which she appeared should be by him.

In 1900 he was responsible for one of the pavilions of the Paris Exhibitions; but he did not confine himself to painting and, in the same year, he brought out his 'Documents Décoratifs' which, with its designs for furniture, jewellery, lace and household objects, was recognised as the authoritative statement of the aims of *Art Nouveau*. It could almost be said, by this time, that Mucha *was Art Nouveau*.

His fame spread abroad. Already, in 1897, there had been an exhibition of his posters in Vienna; and in 1904-1906 he went to the United States of America where he not only painted portraits but taught in the Art Institute of Chicago and in New York. He returned to Europe to marry but by 1908 he was back again to Chicago to deliver a series of lectures.

In 1910 he returned to Bohemia and settled at Castle Zbirov with his wife. His main interest at this period was a series of paintings representing 'The Slav Epic', and for this he made several journeys in the Balkans. With the establishment of Czecho-Slovakia after World War I he was recognised as the leading Czech artist and was commissioned to design the coat-of-arms, the stamps and the banknotes for the new state. In 1920 he made another trip to America when his first pictures of 'The Slav Epic' were exhibited at the Brooklyn Museum and in Chicago. He died in Prague in 1939.

JAMES LAVER.

ALPHONSE MUCHA (1860-1939)

Original Drawings and Watercolours, Paintings,
Posters and Graphics

EXHIBITION

May 23rd to June 30th, 1986

(Front cover No. 28)
(Back cover No. 23)

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DRAWINGS

1

Finished Drawing for plate 15, *Figures Décoratives*
Pencil and gouache, Paris c. 1903
 18×13in.



2

2

Girl in a Red Bonnet
Pencil and watercolour, signed, Paris c. 1903
 17³/₄×13³/₄in.



3

3

Study of Girl with Flowers for a *panneau décoratif*
 21¹/₂×16in.

4

Sketch of a Head of an Old Man
Pencil and chalk, signed and dated '31
 12×9in.

5

Le Carillon de Pâques, preparatory sketch
Pencil, signed 1896
 10³/₄×7¹/₂in.

6

Sketch of a Head of a Bearded Man
Pencil, signed
 10×8in.

7

Design for a Diploma for the Academy of Science
Pencil and coloured crayon, signed
 13¹/₂×9in.

8

Sketch of a Seated Nude
Pencil, signed, on tracing paper
 12¹/₂×9in.

9

Storytime in the Garden
Pencil and watercolour heightened with white, signed
 39×29in.

10

Study of Ivy, preparatory sketch for the *panneau décoratif*
Pencil, heightened with white, signed, 1901
 22×15in.

11

“L’Habitation Pratique”, sketch for the magazine cover
Pencil, signed, c. 1903, on tracing paper
 14³/₄×13³/₄in.

12

“Luciline”, Girl under a Lampshade, sketch for the advertisement
Pencil, signed, c. 1899
 11×7¹/₂in.



13

13

Study of a Girl Seated in an Armchair
Pencil, signed c. 1899
 13×10in.

14

Lance Parfum "Rodo", sketch for poster
Pencil, signed, 1896, on tracing paper
 17×12in.



14



15

WATERCOLOURS

15

“Biscuits Champagne”, Lefèvre-Utile, final drawing for a biscuit box

Pencil, pen and ink and watercolour, signed, 1897

5¼×8¾in.

16

Design for a Menu, reproduced in the magazine “Cocorico”

Pencil and watercolour, signed, c. 1903

9×6¼in.

(See illustration inside back cover)

17

“Comte de Tous Les Pays” by Xavier Marmier, design for the cover

Pencil, pen and ink and watercolour, signed

11½×7½in.

18

Le Genie de la Houille Blanche

Pastel, signed

31×25in.

19

Apocalyptic Rider, illustration for “Bosnian Fairytales”

Pastel, signed, Paris c. 1898

24×15in.

20

Christ on Mount Olive

Pastel, signed, c. 1878, arched top

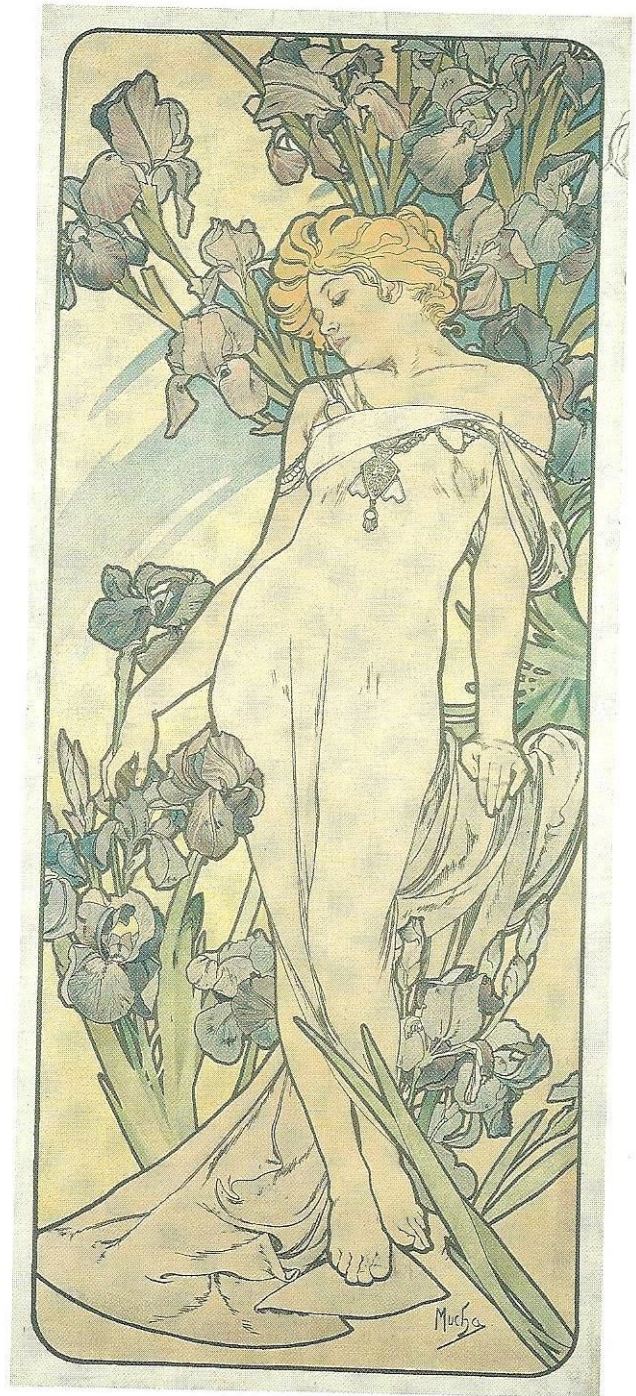
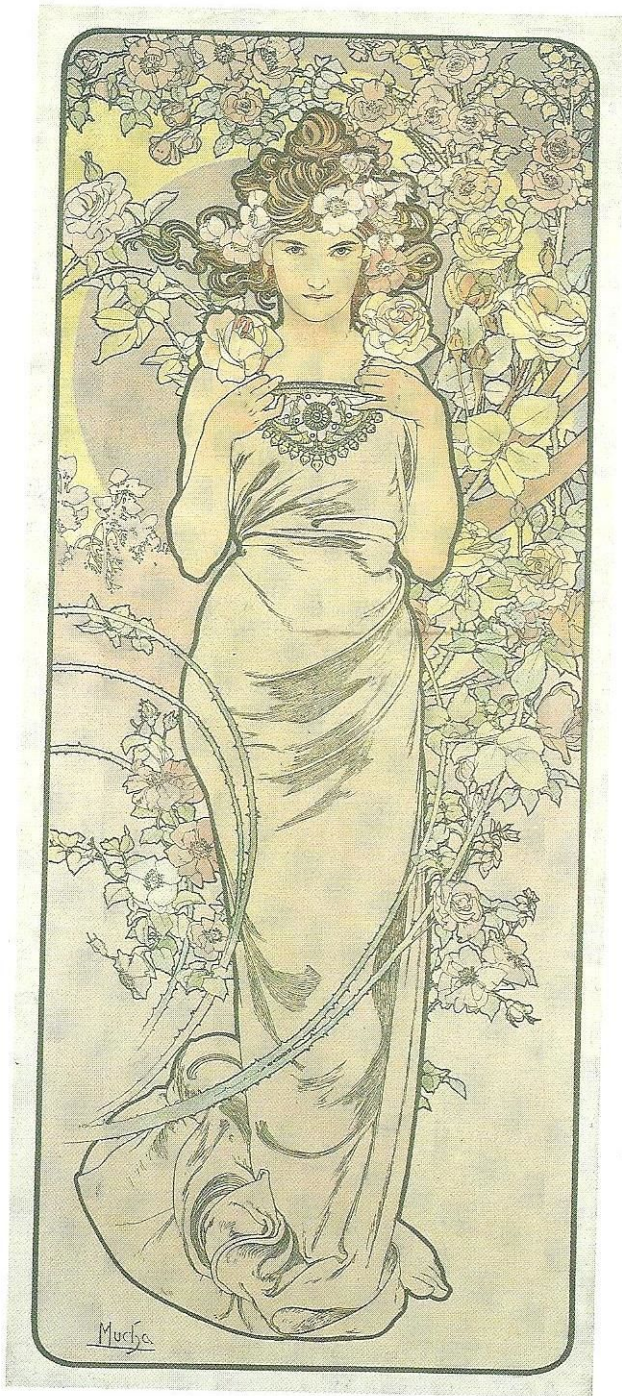
24×17½in.



21

21

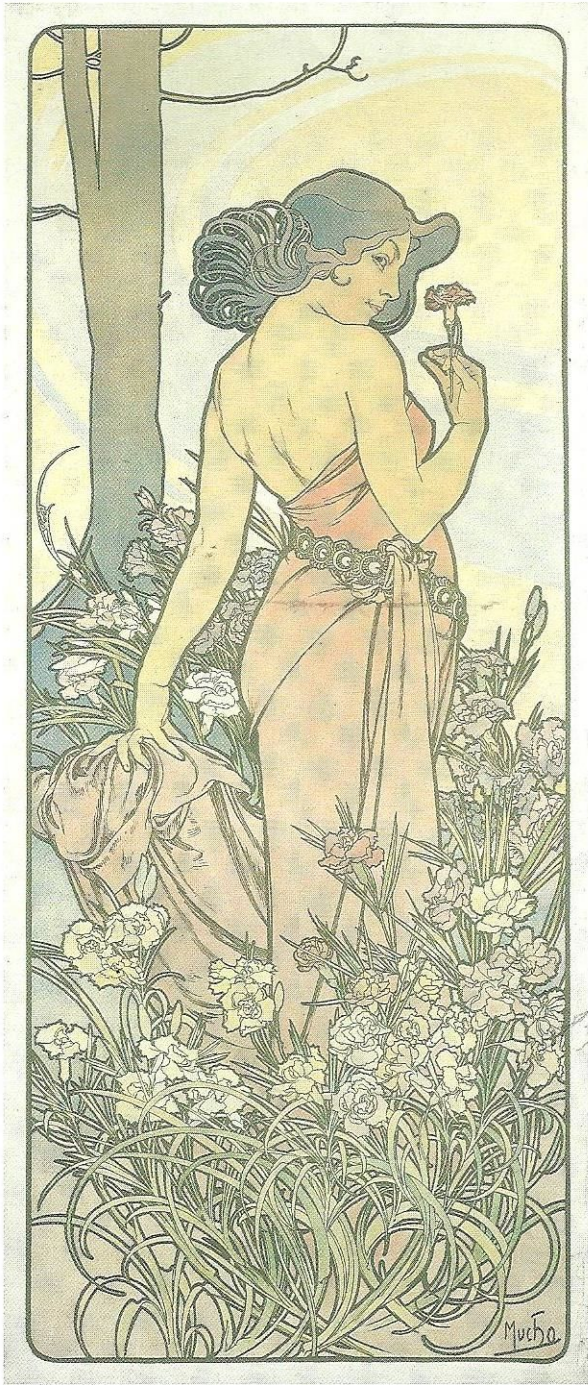
“The Ivy”, Final Drawing for the *panneau décoratif* “The Ivy”
Pencil and watercolour, Paris, 1901
12¾×12in.

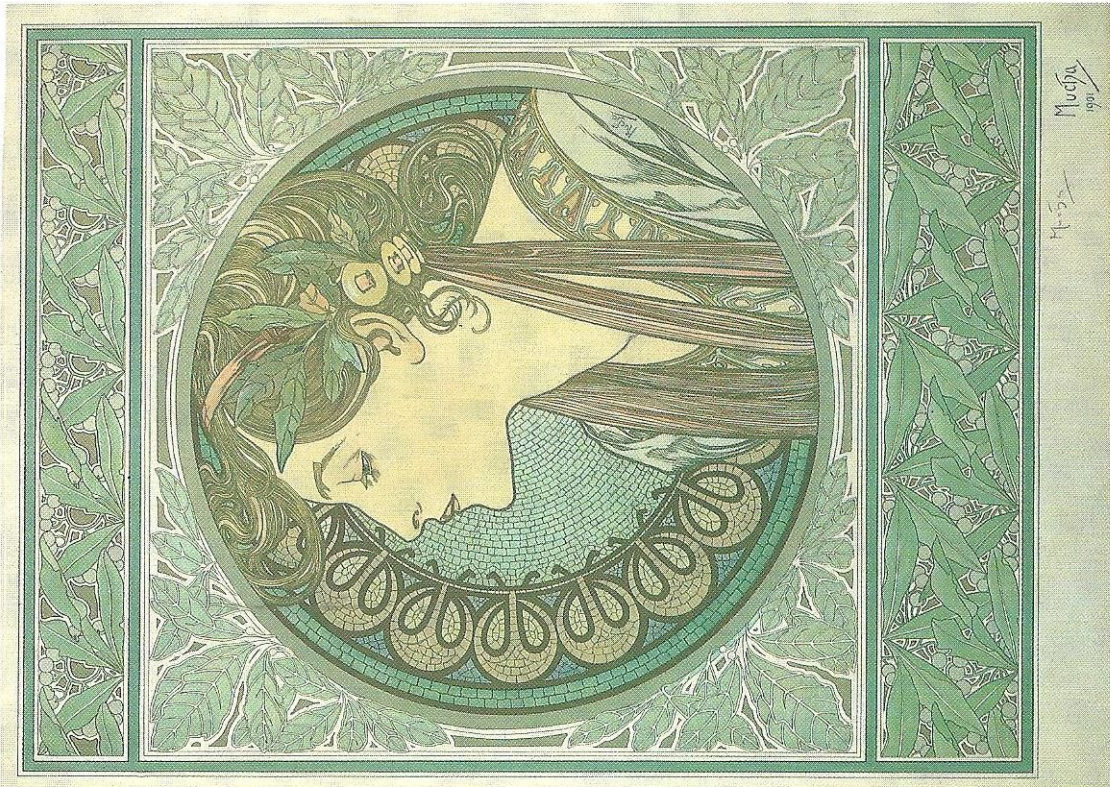


22

22

"The Flowers", the Rose, the Iris, the Carnation, and the Lily, *panneaux décoratifs*, 1898
 Lithographs in colours printed by F. Champenois, some losses and repairs (4)
 40¾×17in.





23

“The Ivy” and “the Laurel”, *panneaux décoratifs*, 1901
Lithographs in colours printed by F. Champenois, some tears in margins (2)
20×15in.

24

Three Girls in Reeds, proof for plate 3, *Documents Décoratifs*
Lithograph in blue, c. 1901
17¾×13in.

25

Squirrels and Birds, plate 35, for *Documents Décoratifs*
Tinted etching
13½×9½in.

26

Three Studies of a Woman for plate 36, *Figures Décoratives*
Reproduction
13½×10½in.

27

Studies of Women in Geometric Outlines for plate 27, *Figures Décoratives*
Tinted reproduction
14×10½in.

POSTERS



28

“Medée”, Théâtre de la Renaissance, Sarah Bernhardt

Lithograph in colours, 1893

Printed by F. Champenois, Paris, on two sheets, some losses and repairs, a fine impression

81×30in.

Ref.: Bridges A33 p. 65; Rennert/Weill p. 208

29

“Gismonda”, Théâtre de la Renaissance, Sarah
Bernhardt

Lithograph in colours, 1894

Printed by Lemercier Paris on two sheets, *some
minor tears and repairs*

84×29in.

Ref.: Bridges A1, p. 47; Rennert/Weill p. 48



30

"Zdenky Cerny"

*Lithograph in colours 1913*Printed by V. Neubert, Prague, *without lettering panel, some tears and repairs*

(See illustration)

57×43in.

Ref.: Bridges A63/GP; Rennert/Weill p. 346

31

Exhibition de St. Louis

*Lithograph in colours, 1903*Printed by F. Champenois, *some tears and repairs*

40×30in.

Ref.: Bridges p. 74; Rennert/Weill p. 310

32

Bénédictine

*Lithograph in colours 1898*Printed by F. Champenois, Paris, on two sheets, *some creases and defects, a fine impression*

81×30in.

Ref.: Bridges A8 p. 52; Rennert/Weill p. 224

33

Krajinska Vystava v Ivancicich

*Lithograph in colours, 1912*Printed by V. Neubert, Prague, *some minor creases*

23½×36½in.

Ref.: Bridges A62/GP; Rennert/Weill p. 344

34

Loterie Narodni Jednoty Pro Jihozapadni Moravu

*Lithograph in colours, 1912*Printed by V. Neubert, Prague, *without lettering panels*

49½×38in.

Ref.: Bridges A60/GP; Rennert/Weill p. 342

35

Slovanska Epopej

*Lithograph in colours 1928*Printed by V. Neubert, Prague, *some tears, repairs and pin holes, a fine impression*

49×33in.

Ref.: A71/GP; Rennert/Weill p. 366

36

Russia Restituenda

*Lithograph in colours, 1922*Printed by Melantrich, Prague, *minor tears and repairs*

31×18in.

Ref.: Bridges A68/GP; Rennert/Weill p. 358



PAINTINGS



37

37

Portrait of Madame Berges

Oil on canvas, signed

61×39in.

38

Lovers, a sketch for the Hearst Magazine

Oil on board, signed

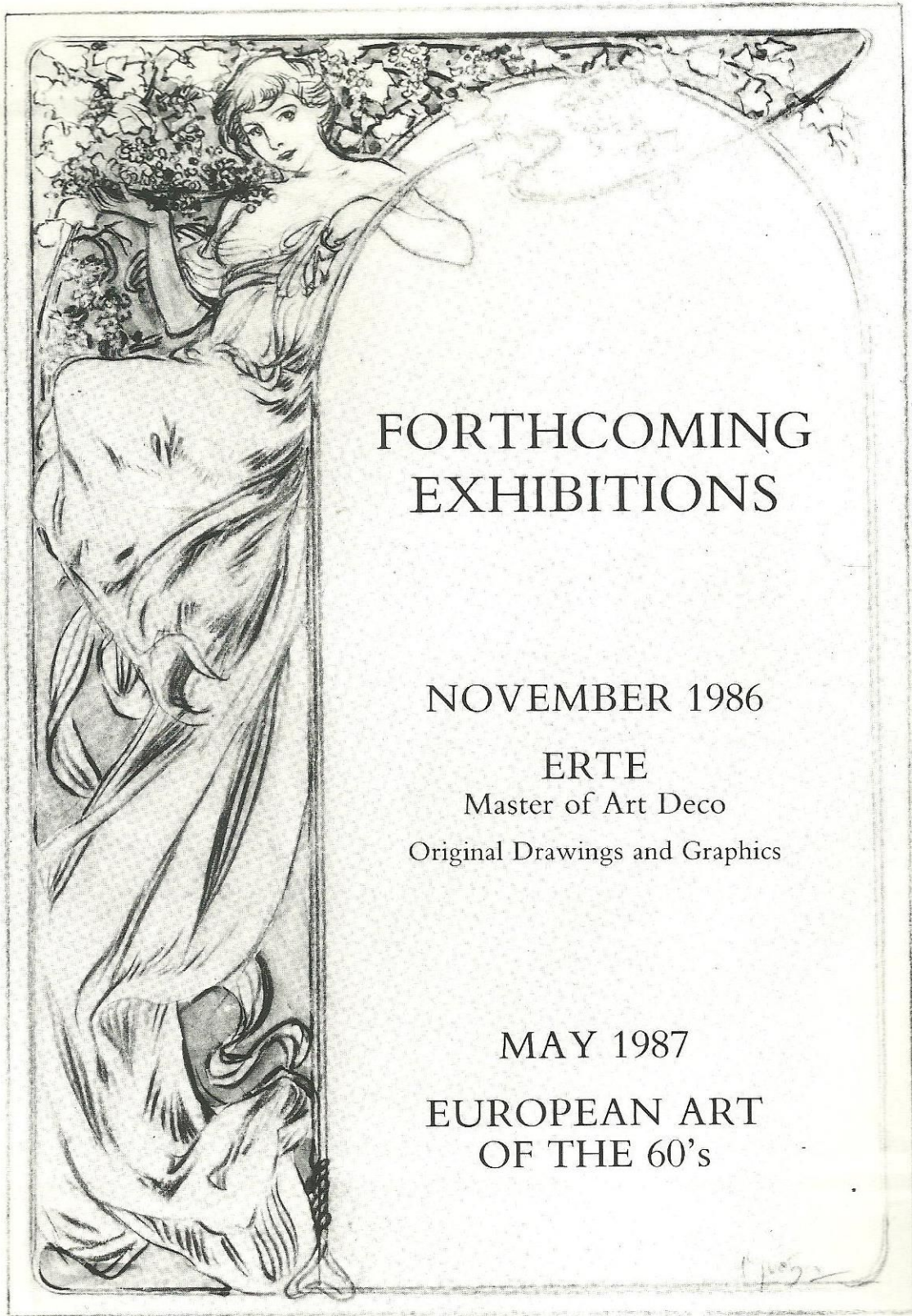
5½×7½in.

39

The Organist

Oil on board, signed

8½×11½in.



FORTHCOMING
EXHIBITIONS

NOVEMBER 1986

ERTE

Master of Art Deco

Original Drawings and Graphics

MAY 1987

EUROPEAN ART
OF THE 60's

