

## Elizabeth Nourse: Cincinnati's Most Famous Woman Artist

Mary Alice Heekin Burke

Elizabeth Nourse graduated from the School of Design of the University of Cincinnati in 1880, went to Paris in 1887 when she was twenty-eight years old, and lived there until her death in 1938.<sup>1</sup> During her career she achieved all the honors to which an expatriate artist could aspire. She was the second American woman elected a member of the Société Nationale des Beaux Arts (hereafter the New Salon), one of two important Salons at the time. (The Salons were annual exhibitions of contemporary art held each spring in Paris, the international center of art during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They derived their popular name, Salon, from having been held in the Salon Carré at the Louvre when they were originated in the seventeenth century by the French government. After 1881 they were organized by French artists, the first of these being the Société Nationale des Artistes Français (hereafter the Old Salon). Nourse showed her work in the Old Salon for two years until the New Salon was formed. The concept of the commercial gallery was very new then so exposure at the Salon provided thousands of artists from all over the world their best opportunity to be noticed by important people—art critics, dealers, collectors—and gave them the experience of being compared with the leading contemporary artists. The exhibition was juried by famous artists and their acceptance of an art work gave it the guarantee of quality that collectors and museum curators required to make their purchases.

Nourse also won many awards in the international expositions: Chicago, Nashville, Paris, Saint Louis, and San Francisco. She was consistently invited to enter the annual juried exhibitions that were a prominent feature of the American art scene, at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, the Carnegie Institute, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Cincinnati Art Museum, and the Corcoran Gallery. As a final accolade the French government bought her painting, *Les Volets Clos* for its permanent collection of contemporary art to hang in the Musée du Luxembourg with the work of such artists as Whistler, Winslow Homer, and Sargent.

Nourse's career parallels that of other expatriate

artists of the pre-World War I period, but certain aspects of it are unique. With Mary Cassatt and Cecilia Beaux, she was one of the few women painters to achieve international recognition for her work and, like them, faced certain obstacles that male artists did not encounter. She first had to prove that she was a serious professional since most women painters eventually marry or become teachers and fail to produce a significant body of work. To acquire professional status she had to be recognized by the all male juries of the Salons and international exhibitions and to be favorably reviewed by the art critics, who also were mostly men. As a Victorian lady she could not easily advance her career by forming friendships in these groups, as a male artist could. The social interchange of the café, so much a part of the artistic life of Paris in her day, was denied her. To compensate for these disadvantages, she always had the total support of her family and of a large network of women friends who admired her work, publicized it, and bought it.

Unlike Cassatt, Nourse did not have an independent income nor did she teach, as Beaux did. Yet from 1883 until her death, a period of fifty-five years, she earned her living as a professional artist and supported her older sister, Louise, as well. She was also unusual among both men and women expatriates in being almost entirely American trained. Except for a few months' study in New York and later in Paris at the Académie Julian, her style was formed at the School of Design in Cincinnati.

Another problem women artists share is that their work has never commanded the market as has that of male artists since it is thought that they are not serious professionals. This means that their paintings tend to be found one to a collector making them difficult to evaluate, and that they have rarely been the subject of one-person exhibitions and catalogs that would bring their work to public notice.

The life and work of Elizabeth Nourse was indeed fascinating. In 1859 she and her twin, Adelaide, were the last of ten children born to Caleb and Elizabeth Rogers Nourse, both descendants of pioneer New England families who were married in Cincinnati in 1833. The city was still a western outpost then since it had only been incorporated in

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1812 and had a population of just 25,000.

Due to its location on the Ohio River which facilitated both North/South and East/West trade, Cincinnati attracted a tremendous number of German and Irish immigrants and, by 1860, it was the sixth largest city in the United States. Caleb Nourse prospered with it and became a banker. The Civil War, however, disrupted the town's river commerce and his bank failed as a result of its financial decline. The three youngest children, the twins and Louise, who was six years older than they, always knew that they must prepare to earn a living. Louise became a teacher, one of the few occupations open to educated women, and the twins studied at the School of Design at the University of Cincinnati which was open to all qualified residents tuition free. (It became part of the present Art Academy in 1887).

Elizabeth undertook the full curriculum taking five years of drawing and painting and four years of training in sculpture. Her painting teacher was Thomas S. Noble, the director of the school, who had studied under Thomas Couture in Paris for three years. One can see in Nourse's work the application of Couture's precepts that Noble passed on to his students—rapid sketching to capture the first fresh idea of a subject, firm drawing, and strong contrasts of light and shadow. She also studied wood carving, china painting, and engraving, and, after her graduation in 1881, returned to study for two years in the first life class offered to women only. During her school years a nude model was available solely for the male students.

Her twin Adelaide studied only wood carving and china painting in the classes inaugurated by Benn Pitman, a widower whom she married in 1882 when she was twenty-three and he was sixty. Pitman, an Englishman, was the younger brother of Sir Isaac Pitman, inventor of shorthand writing, who settled in Cincinnati to teach this method. His avocation was design reform and he devoted himself to teaching literally hundreds of Cincinnati women to value simplicity and originality in design and fine craft work in order to counteract the use of shoddy machine-made home furnishings made available by the industrial revolution. He taught women because he believed that they influenced public taste through the decoration of their own homes.

From its inception in 1873 the Wood Carving Department of the School of Design was overwhelmingly female in enrollment and most of the women came from families of social prominence.<sup>2</sup> Pitman also initiated a class in china painting in 1874 and many of the women in this class went on to become decorators at the Rookwood Pottery.<sup>3</sup> Adelaide became proficient in both arts while Elizabeth was

more interested in the design aspects. Her painting style was obviously influenced by the movement's emphasis on simplicity and originality, but the most important result for her was the lasting friendships she formed among the Cincinnati women carvers and potters who became part of the women's club movement of the late nineteenth century. The first enterprise of these energetic women students was the funding and organization of the Cincinnati Room at the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876 and the carving they exhibited there received national acclaim.<sup>4</sup> One feminist, Mary Livermore, saw it as a new career opportunity for women. She published a book in 1883 with the poignant title *What Shall We Do With Our Daughters? Superfluous Women and Other Lectures* in which she pointed out "... one of the most serious dangers to which inefficient women are liable, the danger of regarding marriage as a means of livelihood. The theory is that all men support all women, but some men are incompetent, some are invalids, some are dissolute, and some die leaving their wives destitute."<sup>5</sup> Her thesis was that women needed training to qualify for decent jobs and she praised Cincinnati for having one of the oldest schools of design in the United States. She also stated: "The beautifully carved furniture from Cincinnati was a great surprise, revealing the possibilities of woman in a new and remunerative field of industry."<sup>6</sup> In addition, she commended the Rookwood Pottery as a source of employment for women.

The Cincinnati women were certainly aware of these possibilities because in 1878 they had reorganized their Centennial Committee into an incorporated association known as the Women's Art Museum Association of Cincinnati (hereafter the WAMA). Their stated objective was to establish an art museum training school "in order to advance women's work. . . ."<sup>7</sup> They must have felt that the emphasis on industrial design at the School of Design provided employment primarily for men and that the field of decorative art offered more opportunity for women. By sponsoring classes, exhibitions, and lectures, they enlisted public support so effectively that in four years the money for the Museum and Art Academy was subscribed and they disbanded.

They came together once again in 1890 to organize the Cincinnati Room at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago as one of only three cities in the country to respond to Mrs. Potter Palmer's request to fund a room in the Woman's Building for the display of women's work. They included two Nourse paintings on loan for this exhibition, the first of many of Nourse's works that Cincinnati women purchased.

Of the many women who supported Nourse,

however, the two most important were her sister, Louise, and her Cincinnati friend, Anna Seaton Schmidt. Louise was indispensable as her companion, housekeeper, secretary, and business manager and Anna served as her chief publicist. The latter was a successful writer and lecturer on art and wrote enthusiastic articles about Nourse for international art periodicals and for her newspapers in Cincinnati, Boston, and Washington, D.C. She frequently visited the Nourse sisters in Paris and joined them on painting trips to Picardy, Brittany, Italy, and Switzerland.

In 1880 both of Nourse's parents died, then Adelaide married, and the two sisters, Elizabeth and Louise, lived together and saved their money to finance further study for the artist in Paris. Elizabeth was offered a position as teacher of drawing at the School of Design when she graduated, but she refused because she was determined to be a professional artist. Her *Self Portrait* demonstrates that she thought of herself primarily as a serious painter. To reject the security of a teaching position was a courageous decision because she had to support herself and Louise so she earned



Nourse's *Self Portrait* demonstrates that she thought of herself as a serious painter.

money in a variety of ways—illustrating magazine articles, painting portraits and flower paintings, and executing murals for private homes.

Nourse was unaware that her technique was sound enough that she would be able to compete successfully with other young artists in Paris. Her early Cincinnati works prove that she could already represent the weight and mass of a figure, place it realistically in space and light, and capture a convincing pose and facial expression. They also demonstrate the realism that seems to have been her natural form of expression from the beginning and the type of subject matter that appealed to her most—ordinary, hard-working women. One has to compare her naturalistic paintings to the academic work of the established artists of the day in order to understand that Nourse's style represented the reaction of the young, modern artist against that of the older generation.

In August 1887 the Nourse sisters arrived in Paris where Elizabeth enrolled at the Academie Julian, one of three schools M. Julian organized where artists practiced drawing under the tutelage of Parisian masters. All three had separate studios for men and women because propriety forbade their sharing a class with a nude model and the women were charged exactly double what the men paid for half the instruction time.<sup>8</sup> The justification for this was that the women were considered amateurs.

After three months' study Nourse was advised that she needed no further instruction and she set to work preparing *La mère* for the spring Salon. This is a beautiful painting, but done in a more finished technique than any Nourse had painted previously, a style designed to appeal to the academic Salon jury. With small brushstrokes she carefully blended the tones and used rich, dark colors. The jury not only accepted it, but hung it "on the line," that is, at eye level, a special honor for an unknown artist. Nourse was always able to express sincere emotion in such subjects and avoid sentimentality. Characteristically, she omitted any anecdotal details that would relate it to a specific mother and child and thereby infused it with a universal feeling, that of any mother's tenderness for her baby.

This was an auspicious beginning for the young artist in Paris, but the next important step was to sell her work. It is interesting to trace the history of *La mère* to see how difficult this could be. It took seven years and exposure at five exhibitions to do so, presumably for \$300. It was bought by Parker Mann, a local artist, at an exhibition in Washington, D.C. in 1894 and by 1914 hung in the Princeton study of Woodrow Wilson, then governor of New Jersey, along with Mrs. Wilson's own paintings. Mann was the first

of a number of artists who purchased Nourse's work—evidence of the high regard she enjoyed among her fellow professionals.

The artist signed this work E. Nourse, as she did all her early paintings. She apparently felt it would be received more favorably by the Salon jury and the public if they did not know she was a woman. By 1891 she felt secure enough in her reputation to sign her full name on her Salon entries, and by 1904, this became her standard signature.

The Nourses made their headquarters in Paris for the next four years but they traveled widely. Elizabeth took her only trip without Louise in 1889 when she spent six weeks with a friend in the Russian Ukraine. In 1889 and 1890 the two sisters spent a year and a half in Italy and it was in Rome that Elizabeth received an invitation to join the New Salon. This new group was organized by the modern French artists, such as Rodin and Puvis de Chavannes, in reaction to the conservative standards of the established artists who made up the jury of the Old Salon. Nourse promptly joined the rebels although she took the risk that the new group might fail to gain acceptance and she would lose the opportunity to become a Salon painter.

The Nourses spent six weeks in Assisi where Elizabeth worked on two of her rare religious paintings. Assisi had special significance for them since both were members of the Third Order of St. Francis, a lay group that

observes a modified version of the Franciscan rule. The primary requirement is that members perform acts of personal charity, a pledge that the two sisters took very seriously and incorporated into their daily lives. The result was that they became deeply involved in the lives of Elizabeth's models, feeding their children, helping the sick and elderly in their homes, assisting them whenever they were needed. This affected the way the artist saw her models. Because she shared their lives, she was able to portray the urban and peasant poor with a depth of understanding that eluded artists who knew them only as picturesque subjects.

After this Italian sojourn the sisters spent six weeks in Borst, a mountain village in southern Austria so remote that they arrived there in an ox cart. One canvas painted there, *Peasant Women of Borst*, was bought the following year by seventeen prominent Cincinnati women and donated to the Cincinnati Art Museum. Most of the donors were members of the WAMA that had previously given the new museum a collection of pottery because this specialty promised "to open an abundant field of work for women."<sup>9</sup>

The sisters returned to Paris for the winter, but, in July 1892 they were off again to work in Holland for three months. They shared a cottage and studio in Volendam with the Wachman sisters, expatriate friends from Cincinnati who lived in Paris, Tunis, and eventually settled in Rome. Henriette Wachman and Elizabeth had been classmates at the School of Design and the four sisters remained good friends over the years.

In April 1893 the Nourses returned to Cincinnati because Adelaide was ill with consumption. She died on September 12 and this left Elizabeth and Louise as the only surviving members of their immediate family since all their brothers and sisters had died earlier. It was a tragic loss for the artist who had been especially close to her twin and it affected what we know about her today. She had always written detailed letters to Adelaide and she never again wrote so intimately to anyone.

From this time on she apparently decided to make Paris her home. It provided an art community second to none and the Nourses also found that they could live with greater freedom as single women there. As foreigners they were not expected to conform to French customs, and they could also maintain a higher standard of living. By selling her paintings to Americans Nourse benefited from the exchange rate of five francs to the dollar, and the sisters reported in 1900 that they could live simply on \$1,000 a year, and, if they had any more, they considered themselves rich.

Before their departure, however, the assistant



In her painting *La Mère*, Nourse used small brush strokes and carefully blended the tones and rich dark colors, a style designed to appeal to the academic Salon jury.



director of the Cincinnati Museum, Joseph H. Gest, invited Nourse to exhibit her work. She showed 102 works that she had painted in Europe and sold eighteen of them and then had a somewhat smaller exhibition, sixty-one of the same works, in Washington, D.C. where another twenty-one were sold. The Nourses had a gay social life in the capitol that included tea at the White House with Mrs. Grover Cleveland, an invitation that was probably extended through their niece who had married the son of John Carlisle, Secretary of the Treasury.

They spent a week in New York and then returned to France after a brief stay in England. That summer Elizabeth worked in Brittany for the first time, at Saint Gildas de Rhuys. They had first visited the famous art colony of Pont Aven, but it was characteristic of Nourse that she preferred to work alone in an isolated village. It became their custom during many trips to Brittany to board in a local convent both because it was inexpensive and because it

afforded them the opportunity to become a part of village life. They reported that they could vacation in this way and have three excellent meals a day at a cost of only five francs (\$1.00) each for board and room. Nourse's Cincinnati friend, Maria Longworth Storer, founder of the Rookwood Pottery, came to visit them in Saint Gildas with her second husband, Bellamy Storer, then ambassador to Belgium. During their visit Mrs. Storer purchased a painting Nourse had just finished, a light-filled scene of one of the nuns teaching two of the orphan girls in her care how to sew.

On their return to Paris in the fall of 1894 the Nourses found the studio where they were to live the rest of their lives, at 80 rue d'Assas facing the Luxembourg Gardens. This quartier contained numerous artists' studios and was a particular favorite of the American expatriates. Just around the corner, on the rue de Chevreuse, was the clubhouse of the American Women Artists Association of Paris. Elizabeth served as its president in 1899-1900 and it was probably then that Mary Cassatt gave her a pastel inscribed: "To my friend Elizabeth Nourse." Nourse was also the founder and first president of a group named the Lodge Art League in Paris which held annual exhibitions of French and European exhibition groups for women only. The fact that these groups were considered necessary speaks for itself. The women artists found that their work was not given adequate exposure in the exhibitions as available to them so they organized independent shows.

In 1897 the Nourses spent three months in Tunis visiting the Wachman sisters who were teaching there and, in 1901, they were the guests of Helen and Mary Rawson, another pair of Cincinnati friends who became expatriates, at their villa in Menton. The three pairs of Cincinnati sisters remained fast friends over the years and frequently visited each other.

During these years the Nourses also enjoyed their favorite country retreat near Paris, Saint Leger-en-Yvelines, a village in the forest of Rambouillet some forty-five miles southwest of Paris. Over the years Saint Leger became a second home to them and they eventually chose to be buried in the cemetery adjacent to the village church there. They were always happiest in the countryside and living close to nature seemed to stimulate Elizabeth's creativity. They lived there in a simple cottage rented from the Lethias family and their friendship with this family continued throughout their lives to include their children and grandchildren. One son, Daniel, still remembers fondly and recalls with gratitude one example of the personal charity they practiced. When he was ten years old they brought him to

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Seventeen prominent Cincinnati women purchased *Peasant Women of Borst* and donated it to the Cincinnati Art Museum.

Paris to have some much needed dental work done, paid for it out of their limited resources, and then took him sight-seeing for ten days in the city.

From 1894 to 1903 Nourse concentrated on rural themes, becoming almost exclusively a painter of peasant women. She rarely emphasized their picturesque qualities despite the different countries and circumstances in which she found her subjects. Instead, her figure paintings show aspects of her subjects' lives common to all cultures—women tending their children, working, or resting after their chores were done.

Nourse's straightforward approach to her subjects is evident in *Normandy Peasant Woman and Child*. This painting, now in the Cincinnati Museum collection, was bought by a Cincinnati woman, Mrs. James W. Bullock, who also commissioned Nourse to paint a double portrait of herself and her daughter in 1906 in Paris. In the peasant painting Nourse made the child the focus of attention as she usually did and she contrasted the woman's rough, reddened hands with the child's soft skin, something she liked to emphasize. Anna Schmidt reported that several dealers objected to subjects like this as ugly and urged the artist to paint something pretty that would sell more readily. Nourse simply replied: "How can I paint what does not appeal to me?"<sup>10</sup>

Nourse frequently exhibited drawings, watercolors, and pastels in the Salon as well as oils and it was her works on paper that first brought her recognition there. In 1901 she was elected societaire in that category and in 1904 a societaire in oil painting as well. This meant that her work was no longer juried and that she herself could serve as a juror. As a result of this official approval her reputation spread and she received an increasing number of invitations to exhibit her work.

By 1904 Nourse began to paint fewer peasant subjects, but she continued to concentrate on female imagery. A fine example of her drawing technique can be seen in the pastel *Mother Feeding Her Baby* which was acquired by the Smith College Museum of Art in 1911. This work has never been located since it was sold at auction in New York in 1949 with a new signature on it, that of Mary Cassatt.

Through the years Nourse was preoccupied with capturing light and she experimented with the depiction of the light of every day and season, such as lamplight, firelight, and twilight. *Closed Shutters*, a work that features bright sunlight streaming through shutters into a dim interior where a woman stands before a mirror, is a remarkable rendering of both exterior and interior light. It became the most famous work of her career when it was purchased at the

1910 Salon by the French Ministry of Fine Arts for the state's contemporary collection. It is currently on view at the Palais de Tokio in Paris and will be shown in a new museum devoted to nineteenth century art, the Musee d'Orsay, when renovation on the Gare d'Orsay is completed.

Nourse was encouraged to try an even bolder experiment with light for the next Salon in *La réverie*. In it, the figure, posed for by Louise in front of their studio window, is almost dissolved by the light as in an Impressionist painting. Interior and exterior spaces merge and divide while at the center of the composition the woman is reflected in the glass behind her as she contemplates yet another illusion, goldfish swimming through the translucent water of a crystal bowl. Painted in vivid strokes of blue, green, and violet, this painting demonstrates the skill Nourse brought to the illustration of the complex reflecting elements of glass and water.

Nourse was at the peak of her career in these years just before World War I, but in July 1914, when the Germans invaded Belgium, it marked the end of the art world as she knew it. The Salon lost its importance as dealers in London, Paris, and New York attracted the public by showing a rapid succession of modern styles.

When the war broke out almost all of the American expatriates in France went home, but the Nourses felt an obligation to their adopted country. In December 1914 Elizabeth described the siege of Paris in a letter to a Cincinnati friend and said: "We shall stick it out and retire to the cellar"<sup>11</sup> and Louise wrote to their niece: "All the Americans are going but we will stay right here. I should feel an ungrateful wretch to run away—as though I fled from some hospitable roof when small pox breaks out."<sup>12</sup>

The sisters worked tirelessly for the refugees who flooded into Paris and Elizabeth raised money for clothing, coal, and food by appealing to her American women friends. She was especially concerned with aid to artists whose careers had been disrupted by the war, and, in 1919, the board of the New Salon presented her with a silver plaque in grateful recognition for this work.

In 1916 Elizabeth and Louise worked so hard that their doctor ordered them to the country for a rest and they went to Penmarc'h in Brittany. There, they found that more than sixty village women had been widowed by the war and all the remaining able-bodied men had been conscripted, leaving the women with all the farm work as well as the care of their homes and children. The Nourses proceeded to help out. Elizabeth wrote to a friend: "It is quite a sight to see us bringing in the cows and tossing the



hay, besides feeding ducks, chickens and picking beet and cabbage leaves for the cattle."<sup>13</sup>

Elizabeth had been unwell for some time, and in March 1920 she underwent surgery for breast cancer. She was unable to paint at her easel for a long time and in the 1921 Salon she exhibited works that had been painted some years earlier. By 1924 she had ceased to exhibit at all and painted thereafter only for her own pleasure. She was then sixty-five years old and her professional career had spanned forty-four years.



In 1921 Nourse received one last public honor that must have gratified her. The University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana awarded her the Laetare Medal, given annually to a Catholic layperson for distinguished service to humanity. The Paris edition of the *New York Herald* described the ceremony, presided over by the Papal Nuncio in Paris, and called Nourse "the dean of American women painters in France and one of the most eminent contemporary artists of her sex."<sup>14</sup> The *Chicago Tribune* simply referred to her as "the first woman painter of America."<sup>15</sup> Elizabeth was probably not completely happy with such tributes because she once told her friend, Anna Schmidt,

In the peasant painting, *Normandy Peasant Woman and Child*, Nourse made the child the focus of attention and contrasted the child's soft skin with the woman's rough reddened hands.



that she wanted to be judged as an artist, not as a woman.<sup>16</sup> Still, she became accustomed to seeing reviews of her work in which critics complimented her for painting like a man.

Louise died in 1937 at the age of eighty-four and Elizabeth, who apparently could not imagine living without her, immediately became ill. She lingered on for a year and a half and died in October 1938. She was buried beside Louise in Saint Leger and the contents of her studio were returned to Cincinnati.

Elizabeth Nourse was born with great natural ability and received excellent training at the School of Design, but more than this was needed for her to achieve international prominence at a time when few women artists were taken seriously. She brought to her work a spiritual dimension that enabled her to express deep personal convictions about beauty and about the importance of the daily life and work of ordinary women whom she portrayed with sympathy and respect. In spite of the fact that she was a Victorian lady, not the bohemian artist of legend, she proved to be independent and courageous. Her life attests to the fact that her dedication to a unique vision was an inspiration to the many women who supported her, and admired and purchased her work.<sup>17</sup>

The Smith College Museum acquired the pastel, *Mother Feeding Her Baby*, in 1911.



1. Unless otherwise noted all information on Nourse is taken from "Cincinnati *Sociétaire*," essay by Mary Alice Heekin Burke in the catalogue *Raisonné Elizabeth Nourse, 1859-1938: A Salon Career* (Washington, D.C., 1983). The process of rediscovering Nourse began with the Elizabeth Nourse Papers at the Cincinnati Historical Society, a donation of the artist's niece, Melrose Pitman. They first revealed the quality and variety of Nourse's work and the extent of her fame during her career. These manuscripts contain photographs of her best-known paintings, reviews, sketches, her estate inventory that lists some seventy-four paintings returned to Cincinnati in 1938, and seventy-two letters in her correspondence dated from 1890 to 1919. Then a Nourse descendant produced a scrapbook, dated 1880-1911, that had been maintained by the artist's devoted sister, Louise, who lived with her all her life. In chronological order it contains press clippings, photographs of important paintings that are dated and marked with the names of the buyers, and lists of paintings entered in exhibitions. One of the marked paintings led to a Cincinnati collector who not only had a complementary scrapbook, dated 1911-1932, but had also inherited eighteen of Nourse's sketchbooks. These beautiful sketches are likewise dated and annotated giving a record of the artist's travels in France, Holland, Italy, Austria, Russia, Switzerland, Spain, Tunisia, and Alsace. In addition, sketches that served as the basis for paintings are outlined and signed, so that the compositions of paintings that have never been located can be determined.

2. Kenneth R. Trapp, "Toward a Correct Taste: Women and the Rise of the Design Reform Movement in Cincinnati 1874-1880," *Celebrate Cincinnati Art*, Cincinnati Art Museum, 1982, p. 51.

3. Anita Ellis, "Cincinnati Art Furniture," *Antiques*, April 1982, p. 183.

4. Kenneth R. Trapp, "Cincinnati Women's Woodcarving," *Nineteenth Century* (Vol. 8, Nos. 3-4), The Victorian Society in America, 1982, p. 183.

5. Mary Livermore, *What Shall We Do With Our Daughters? Superfluous Women and Other Lectures* (Boston, 1883), p. 62.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

7. Cincinnati Art Museum, *Art Palace of the West: A Centennial Tribute 1881-1882*, p. 17.

8. Lois Fink, "Elizabeth Nourse Painting the Motif of Humanity," *Elizabeth Nourse, 1859-1938, A Salon Career*, p. 93.

9. Cincinnati Art Museum, *Art Palace of the West*, p. 29.

10. Anna Seaton Schmidt, "Elizabeth Nourse: The Work of an Eminent Artist in France," *Boston Evening Transcript*, July 12, 1902.

11. Elizabeth Nourse, "Extracts from the Diary of an American Artist in Paris," *Art and Progress*, August 24, 1914, p. 44.

12. Letter from Louise Nourse in Paris to Melrose Pitman in Cincinnati, August 22, 1914, Elizabeth Nourse Papers, Cincinnati Historical Society.

13. Anna Seaton Schmidt, "A Letter from Elizabeth Nourse," *Boston Evening Post*, September 2, 1916.

14. Marcus Selden Goldman, "In the World of Art," *New York Herald* (Paris), October 1, 1921.

15. "Miss Elizabeth Nourse Given Laetare Medal," *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, March 6, 1921.

16. Anna Seaton Schmidt, "Elizabeth Nourse: Great Honor Paid an American Artist by France," *Boston Transcript*, May 11, 1910.

17. William H. Truettner, Introduction to *Elizabeth Nourse, 1859-1938, A Salon Career*, 1938, pp. 12-13. The rediscovery of Nourse's work resulted in a major retrospective, *Elizabeth Nourse, 1859-1938, A Salon Career* shown at the National Museum of American Art in Washington, D.C. January-April 1983 and at the Cincinnati Art Museum later that year. It contained 104 oils, watercolors, pastels, and drawings—portraits of women working, mother and child themes, landscapes, and genre paintings. The lavish catalogue *raisonné*, published by the Smithsonian Press, lists some 700 works and illustrates 300 of them. It comprises the broadest survey of European subject matter yet recovered from an American artist of this period.

*La Reverie* represents a bold experiment with light that Nourse did for the Salon.