

Newsletter No 15, July 2017



Jim Love Paul Bunyan Bouquet No2 1968 (l); Ruth Pershing Uhler Day Lilies c1941 (r)

Flowers!

Here it is July already, and much too hot to be out working in the garden. But all that work we did (or that our spouses, partners or lawn folks did) through the spring is paying off. We can sit inside, sipping something tall and cool as we listen to the heavenly whir of the air conditioner, while looking out at all the beautiful flowers of a Houston summer. Houston artists have been doing that for decades, so this month the HETAG Newsletter is featuring flowers by Earlier Houston Artists. I can almost smell the fragrance, can't you?



Emma Richardson Cherry [Modernist Flowers] c1919; Virgie Claxton [Modernist Flowers] c1930s

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Agnes Lilienberg Muench *[untitled]* nd (l); John Clark Tidden *Bittersweet* 1923 (r)

Upcoming Talk on Earlier Houston Art:

Join **Tam Kiehnhoff** and me on Monday, July 31, at 6pm, when we'll be guests of the **Friends of the Texas Room** at Houston Public Library, giving a preview of the exhibition "**Planned, Organized and Established: Houston Artist Cooperatives in the 1930s.**" If you're wondering what the exhibition will be about, or if you'd like to meet the Friends of the Texas Room (and maybe become a Friend yourself) come on down – all are welcome. Details are here: <http://www.friendsofthetexasroom.org/meetings.html>

What's in Woodson? (that's Woodson Research Center at Rice University Library):

Another great piece about archival resources relating to an Earlier Houston Artist, by HETAGer **Dara Flinn** – this time football hero and sculptor, William Mozart McVey (think San Jacinto Monument bas-reliefs, among many other works). McVey's sculpture will be included in the exhibition **Planned, Organized and Established** – and you can see one of his watercolors below.

[Art in the Archives – William Mozart McVey \(1905-1995\)](#)



William McVey *Compositional Study* 1927, MFAH permanent collection.

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Upcoming Exhibitions:

Planned, Organized and Established: Houston Artist Cooperatives in the 1930s

An exhibition to be presented in the Julia Ideson Building, Houston Public Library
August 12 – November 9, 2017

Opening reception Wednesday, August 16, 2017, 5-7pm
The Julia Ideson Building All are welcome Details to follow



Arts & Culture Texas's Devon Britt-Darby has done a great preview of the show:
[Parallel Lines: Uniting Jim-Crow Era Works by Black, White artists at Houston Public Library](#)



Just a few of the great paintings that will be in the show.

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Emily Langham *Day Lilies* nd (l); Pat Colville [untitled] 1957 (r)

Opening September 23 at the Art Museum of Southeast Texas, Beaumont

[Sense of Home: The Art of Richard Stout](#)

On view September 23 through November 26, 2017

Opening Reception: 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., Friday, September 22, 2017

Current Exhibitions:

[Dignity in Labor: Texas Regionalism from the Bobbie and John L. Nau Collection](#)

Pearl Fincher Museum of Fine Arts

6815 Cypresswood Drive
Spring, TX 77379
Phone: 281.376.6322
June 10 – September 9, 2017

Out of town exhibitions:

[Mentoring a Muse: Charles Umlauf & Farrah Fawcett](#)

[Umlauf Sculpture Garden & Museum, Austin](#)

February 16-August 20, 2017

Exhibition explores the powerful relationship of sculptor Charles Umlauf and legendary actress Farrah Fawcett.

Jose Arpa: A Spanish Painter in Texas

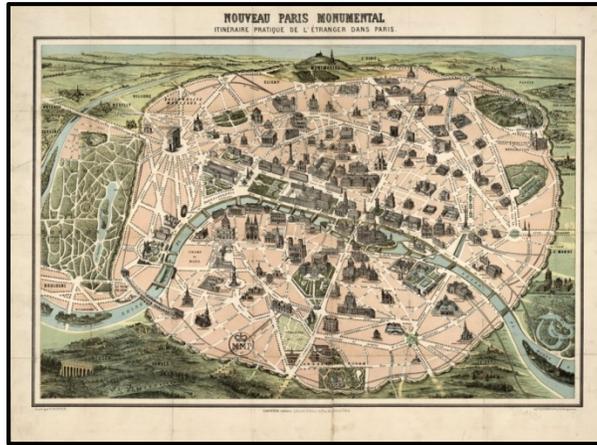
[Witte Museum, San Antonio](#)

June 14 through August 27, 2017

This is the last stop for this major touring exhibition of Arpa's work – don't miss it!

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Houston Art History Travel Notes: The Emma Richardson Cherry Tour of Paris



When other people go to Paris they may be going for the food or the fashion, the risqué nightlife or fabulous French art. But when we HETAGers go – being a more enlightened lot – we have only one thing in mind: following the Emma Richardson Cherry Paris trail. Am I right? You know I am.

Mrs. Cherry LOVED Paris. She went first as a new bride in 1887. Mr. Cherry stayed at home, but don't draw any conclusions from that; they were married – lovingly, judging from their letters – for 50 years. He just didn't like to travel.

On that first trip she stayed for almost two years. She went back again in 1900, 1912, 1925/26, 1928 and 1930. Altogether she spent almost four years there. She once said, in a letter home to her daughter, Dorothy: *After all it seems good to be back again in Paris where I feel more at home than in New York – I walked all the way to the Grand Palais – to see the Retrospective Independents – 1890 to 1926. And I went through all the by streets and looked into all the book shop and antique shop windows ... and decided Paris is some interesting ville – for about the hundredth time!*

My husband, Rick, and I have done the Cherry tour in segments over several years, so I thought it might be helpful, as you plan your trip, if I charted it out for you. As you wander “through all the by streets,” keep an eye out for her paintings in those “antique shop windows.” I'm sure there are some around. Remember, she signed some of her Paris works *Cerise*. Happy hunting! I hope you find, as we have, that exploring ERC's Paris makes it an even more “interesting ville.”

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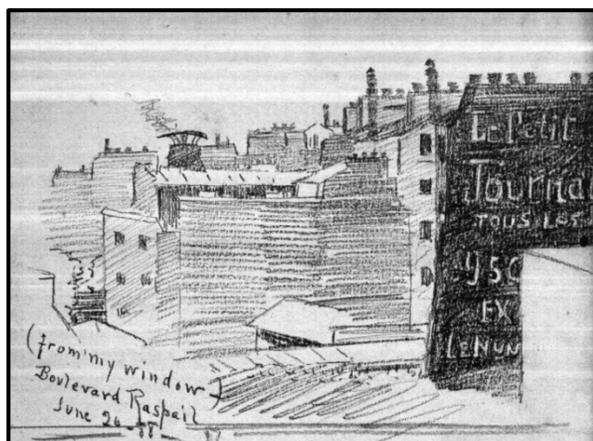
Part1: Mostly Montparnasse, 1888/89



Emma Richardson Cherry in about 1887

As I mentioned, Cherry went to Paris first shortly after she married, at the age of 28, in October 1887. She was on the ship by December, and in Paris to see the new year in. She went there to study at the Académie Julian, one of the few places where women could get formal art training on a par with that available to men.

Her letters from those early days have not survived (or were perhaps buried with her husband, as a note from 1938 suggests), so details of her Paris life on that trip are scarce. From the address on a letter Mr. Cherry sent her in February, 1888, we do know that she was then in a hotel at 203 Boulevard Raspail, which in 1891 was the site of the Hotel de la Haute Loire, in Montparnasse, on the Left Bank. There's still a hotel at that address – from the look of it a rather posh one – but keep in mind that Paris street numbers may have changed over the centuries. She gave us this drawing of her view from the hotel window, dated June 20, 1888.



Emma Richardson Cherry (*from my window*) – Boulevard Raspail June 20, 1888 (l); 203 Blvd. Raspail, in 1888 the Hotel de la Haute Loire (r)

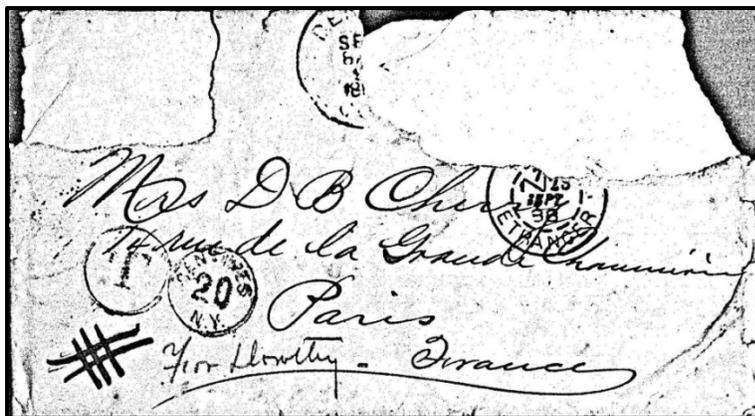
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From a note in her sketchbook, we know that she had her classes in the branch of Académie Julian located in the Passage de Panoramas on the Right Bank. Though the students in this contemporary photo of the Julian women's class aren't identified, I think it's just possible that the woman in the center is our Mrs. Cherry.



Académie Julian women's class in 1889 (l); Passage de Panoramas (r)

The address of a letter from her husband tells us that by September, 1888, Cherry was receiving mail at 14 Rue de la Grande Chaumière, not far from her hotel on Boulevard Raspail. The address has long been the site of artist studios, so it's likely she was studying with someone there. In his letter, Mr. Cherry says: *There isn't any doubt in my mind that we are pursuing the right course and sometime will be all the happier for our little sacrifices.* Even so, in a letter from February he had said "I am uneasy all the time," because of the "evils" he knew existed in a great city like Paris, and the low level of the "average mans morals," both of which he feared as dangers to his innocent new bride.



DB Cherry to Emma Richardson Cherry, September 8, 1888 (l); 14 Rue de la Grande Chaumière (r)

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We're very lucky that two of Cherry's sketchbooks from that trip survive. She often identified, and even dated, the Paris places and people she sketched.



Emma Richardson Cherry *Cluny* – Jun 25 88



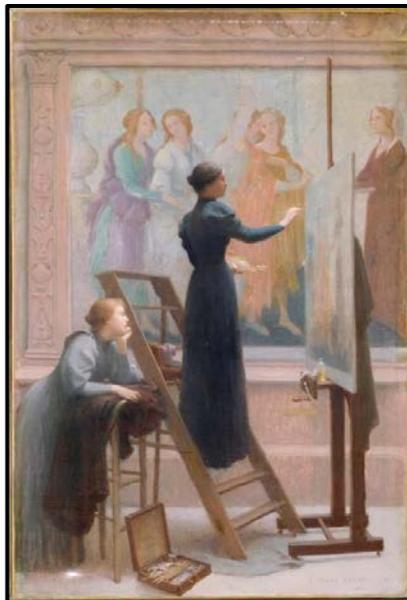
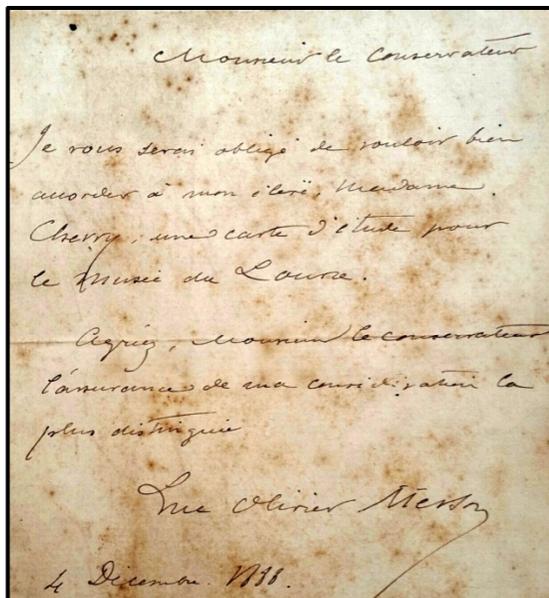
Emma Richardson Cherry *Luxembourg Gardens* May 27 – 88



Emma Richardson Cherry *B. Raspail* c1888 (l); and *B. Raspail* today (r)

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On your visits to the Louvre, you may have noticed students copying the paintings of the masters. In her day, Mrs. Cherry was one of them. Some of her copies remain, as does the letter from artist, Luc Olivier Merson, one of her teachers, requesting admission to the museum for her. And here's a painting showing just the sort of thing she would have been doing – along with Cherry's own copy of the Botticelli being copied in the painting!



Luc Olivier Merson to the “Conservateur” at the Louvre requesting “une carte d’étude” for “Madame Cherry” 4 Decembre 1888 (l); Etienne Azambre *At the Louvre* 1894 (r)

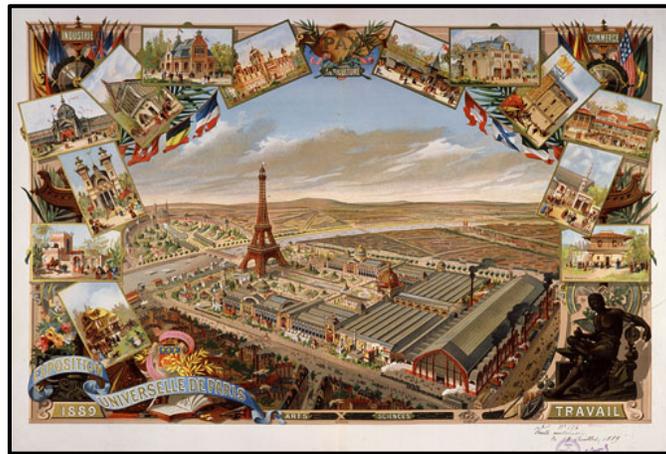


Emma Richardson Cherry [Copy of Botticelli in the Louvre] c1888 (l); viewing Botticelli's *Venus and the Three Graces Presenting Gifts to a Young Woman* in the Louvre (r)

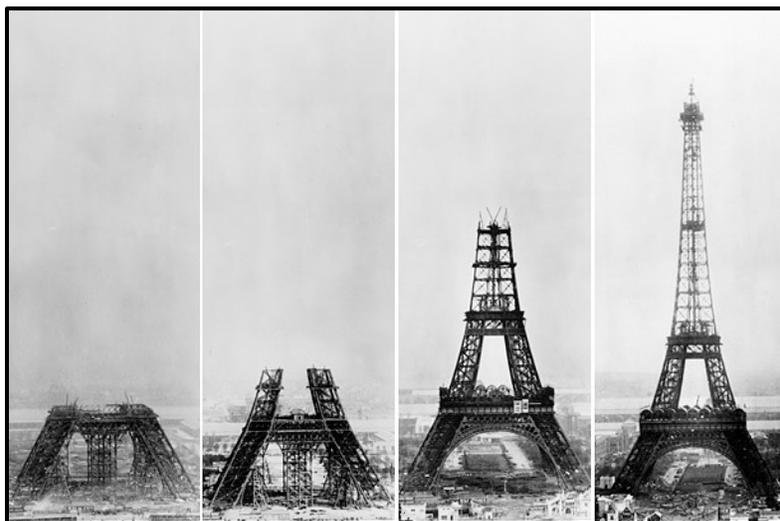
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There's so much more of the Emma Richardson Cherry Tour of Paris. This is just the first of her visits; we've still got five more to cover. We haven't even been everywhere she went that first time, in fact, so we'll have to continue this adventure in future issues of the HETAG newsletter.

I'll end Part 1 with a site that we can assume she visited, even though we don't have the letters to be certain. But who in Paris in 1889 would *not* have gone to the fair? The *Exposition Universelle*, that is. Certainly not Cherry, who loved world's fairs and went to half a dozen throughout her life.

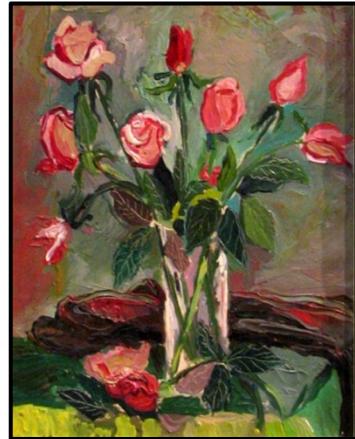


And how could anyone in Paris in 1888 and 1889 have overlooked one of the most spectacular sites in the world at the time – the construction of the Eiffel Tower for that selfsame fair. What a thrilling sight that must have been, every day!



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So many beautiful Houston flowers, so little space!



Emma Richardson *Cherry Narcissus in Studio* c1923 (l); Carden Bailey [*Callas Lilies*] c1930s (c); Gene Charlton *Roses* c1942, MFAH permanent collection (r)



Frances Skinner [*Girl, Cat and Flowers*] c1940s (l); Stella Sullivan [*bouquet*] 1970 (c); Leila McConnell [*bouquet*] 1958 (r)



Ruth Pershing Uhler *At the Window* c1930s (l); Emma Richardson *Cherry Oleanders (for Pres. Roosevelt)* 1937 (c); Gene Charlton *Bird and Flower Movement* 1953 (r)

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Henri Gadbois [*Small Bouquet*] c1960s (l); Bertha Louise Hellman [*Big Magnolia*] nd (r)

The mission of HETAG is to illuminate Houston's art history by providing viewing opportunities for art, by supporting and doing research on the artists and art communities working in Houston through the years, and by spreading the word.

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Texas Art Group
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Emma Richardson Cherry *Jonquils and Cornflowers* 1921