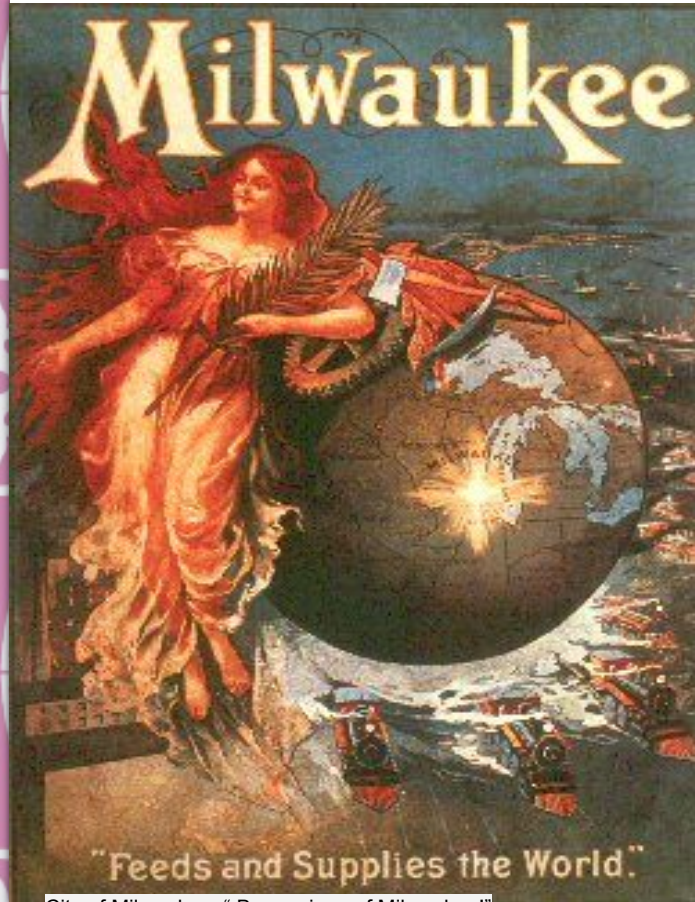


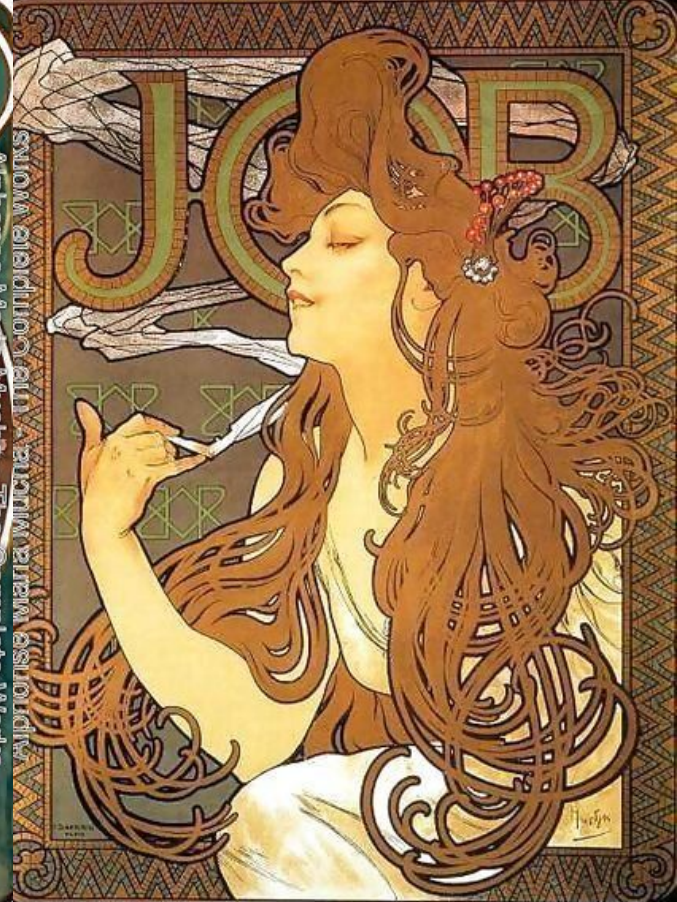
A Comparative Study on Alphonse Mucha and Jan Kotowicz by Evelyn Guerra



City of Milwaukee. "Buy a piece of Milwaukee!"
Neighborhood posters,
city.milwaukee.gov/posters#.WqjCmejwblU.



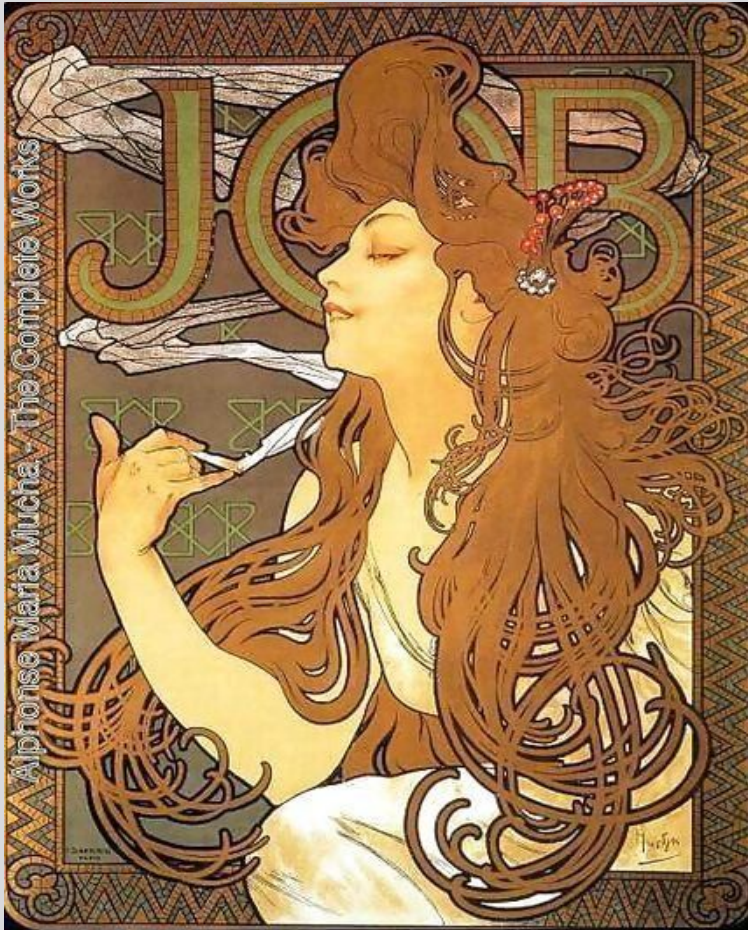
Mucha Foundation. "Mucha Foundation." Mucha
Foundation, www.muchafoundation.org/.



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This comparative study will focus on analyzing the works of Alphonse Mucha, an Art Nouveau artist, and Janice Kotowicz, a local Milwaukee artist, through their works. I will be analyzing *Job* and *Daydream* by Mucha and *City Poster* by Kotowicz. I will be comparing their themes and how their cultures influence them since Mucha was influenced by his French Culture while Kotowicz was influenced by her American Culture.

Cultural Context of Alphonse Mucha



Mucha Foundation. "Mucha Foundation." Mucha Foundation, www.muchafoundation.org/.

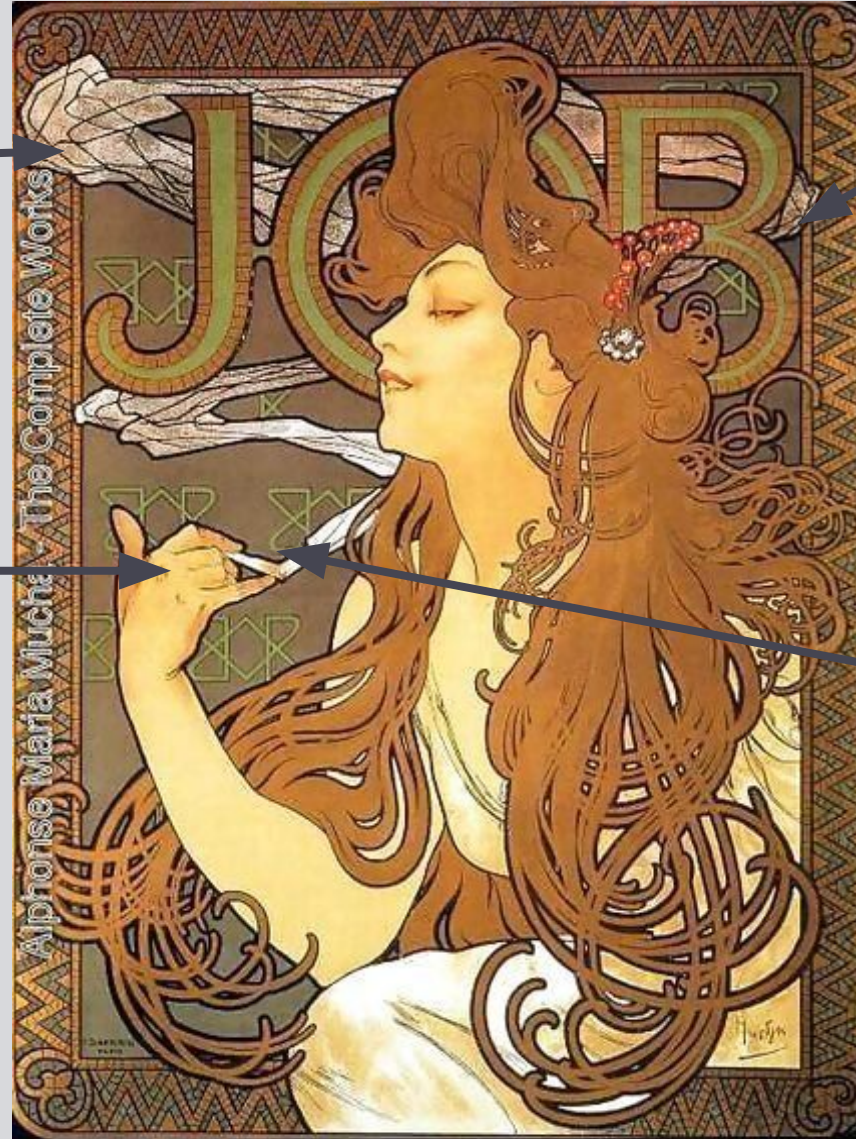
Alphonse Mucha was a French painter and poster artist in the 1850's and early 1900's. His influence in the Art Nouveau **movement** was significant with the key idea in his work being the idea of femininity in an over-industrialized world. His poster prints used light-hued **colors** to bring out the femininity of the women in his works. The **form** of the decorative details around the posters and at times in the background of the posters served to show the femininity of women in his pieces.

Throughout history his works have seemed to influence advertising posters for both products and events since his revolutionary Jobs cigarette advertising poster was such a staple piece of art. His use of body position and strong contrast between **colors** made his work stand out, especially since most of his works seemed to have a visible outline from the lithographs he made. Alphonse Mucha's influence on lithograph work showed how he was able to master and control the **shapes** and **patterns** he wanted to his desire.

Analysis of Formal Qualities

The **colors** are important since the yellow, being a warm **color**, of the hair dominates the majority of the frame making the green, a cool **color**, of the logo of the brand stands out more from the background.

The smoke, hair, and position of the body of the figure provide **movement** and make the cigarette be the final point where the eye lands after looking at the poster which was the aim of the piece as it was advertising the cigarette paper.



The frame the figure seems to be in provides the piece with **unity** by pulling it together as a whole piece. The **color** of the frame blends in with the rest of the print yet still providing a border by showing a pattern similar to that of a picture frame.

The use of the smoke in the poster provides the poster with **movement** and even **texture** since the smoke has an opacity that reminds one of smoke's realistic look.

Analysis of Formal Qualities

The **lines** seen in the picture not only help the piece maintain balance from the top to the bottom but also provide **movement** from the bottom of the piece to the top making the title be the last thing seen.

The vibrant use of **color** in the circle **shape** behind the figure makes her become more **emphasized** in the piece due to the simplicity of her garments in **contrast** to the detail of the patterns in the circle behind her.



The pose the figure gives shape to the piece as a whole as well as **unity** by skillfully using **space** on the piece and by having her head towards the left towards the top to make up for the book towards the right towards the bottom which again **emphasises** her.

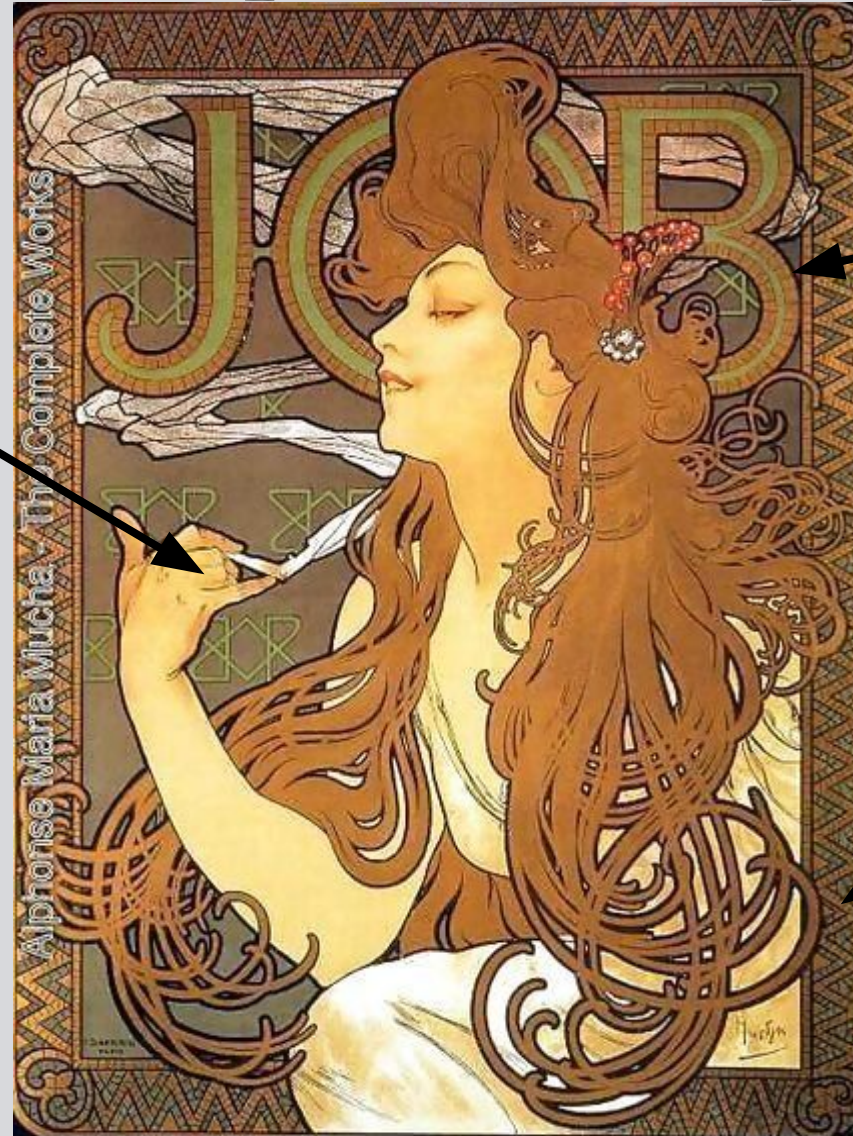
The **shape** of her garments symbolize both her femininity and her modesty as a woman by both not covering the very top of her torso well and being loose on the rest of her body, therefore, not outlining her figure. This relates back to the original intentions of having it be a design for a calendar and at the times modesty in women was valued.

Function and Purpose of Alphonse Mucha

The poster *Job Cigarette Papers* (1896) was a poster meant to advertise cigarettes for the company JOB. The smoke closest to her hand which is lighter than the rest of the smoke brings **emphasis** to her and gives the idea to the people seeing it that seeing someone smoking has a certain beauty to it. .

“Job”, Alphonse Mucha, 1896,
Color Lithograph, 66.7 x 46.4
cm

Mucha Foundation. “Mucha Foundation.” Mucha
Foundation, www.muchafoundation.org/.



A beautiful woman is depicted smoking a cigarette which depicts smoke with the company's Logo behind it so that people know what specific brand of cigarettes is being advertised.

The **color** palette used for the lithograph is particularly plentiful in warm **colors** as well as browns which helps make the white skin, and dress of the woman as well as the smoke be **emphasized** by the **contrast**.

Function and Purpose of Alphonse Mucha

The poster was originally intended to be a design for a company calendar, however, it became so popular it was later published in the magazine *La Plume* as a decorative panel. The logo of the calendar it was intended for can be seen over the white banner above the figure. However, when the picture was printed in the magazine *La Plume* the name of the company, year number, and all other text referring to the company was removed.



The year in which the calendar was meant to be printed, 1898, is at both the right at left sides of the lithograph on the white spots left by the white decoration. This decoration brings **emphasis** to the top of the page so that more attention is brought to the text on the piece.

Movement of the piece is linear with the circle always leading to the figure and the figure being in a straight position that makes the viewer look up onto the logo of the company, F. Champenois.

“Rêverie”, Alphonse Mucha, 1898, Color Lithograph, 55.2 x 72.7 cm

Cultural significance of Alphonse Mucha



Alphonse Mucha's artworks and commission not only served the purpose of advertising well to others but also advocating for those in greater need. In various works he advocates citizens of countries going through important events for their respective countries such as Russia during the collapse of the Russian provisional government to the Soviets.

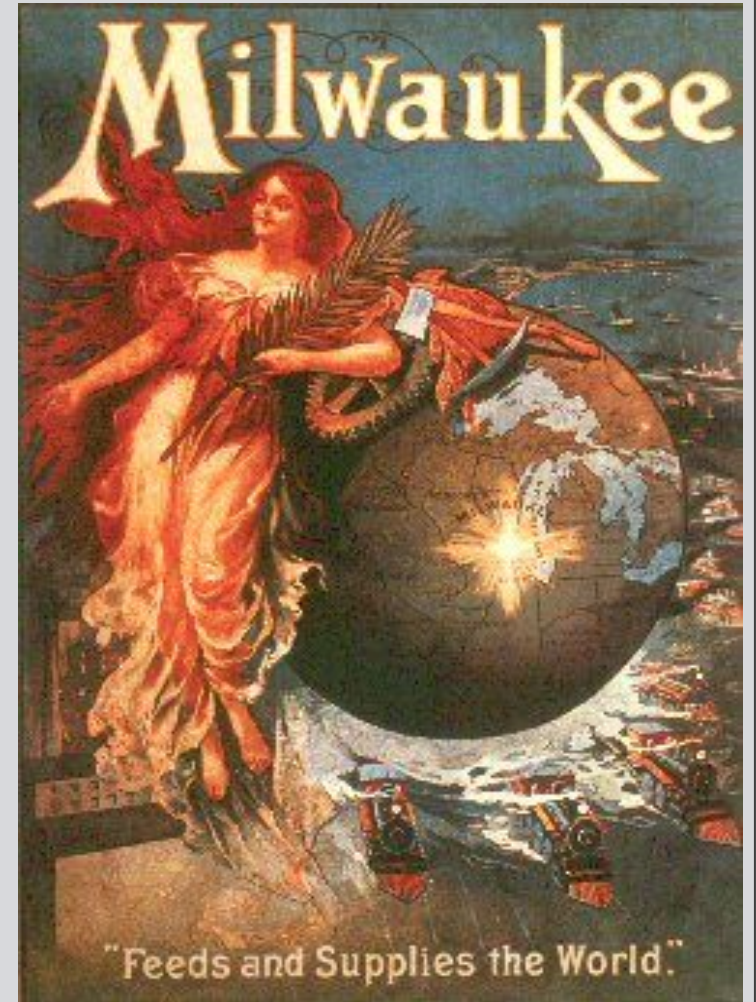
After the war left the countries without much food Mucha made the Russia Restituenda to advocate for those in Russia to western countries so that they could send shipments of food to those in Russia. Although Mucha was influenced mostly by the art movement of art nouveau he influenced artists such as Bob Masse, Naoko Takeuchi, and Paul Harvey through the way he designed his posters.



Cultural Context of Jan Kotowicz

During the 1980's a project led by local historian, John Gurda, made Jan Kotowicz want to join in on making Milwaukee a stronger city in regards to the neighborhoods in it. The project consisted of having every residential area have clear borders so that everyone living in the city of Milwaukee would be able to have a sense of pride and belonging relative to where they live as well as gain a new appreciation for their neighborhood and the history to it.

The project included making posters of each neighborhood as well as this Milwaukee poster for the city of Milwaukee to be able to sell. On the back of the poster John Gurda would then write a brief history of the neighborhood. Although there had been previous projects in Milwaukee's history that attempted to give a clear layout of Milwaukee neighborhoods John Gurda's project was the one that really succeeded in making them clear and unique through 37 posters with one dedicated to each neighborhood with 26 being made in the 1980's and 11 being made in 2015.



Analysis of Formal Qualities

The **lines** used to draw the figure create **texture** for the dress and the general appearance of the figure making her look youthful and radiant.



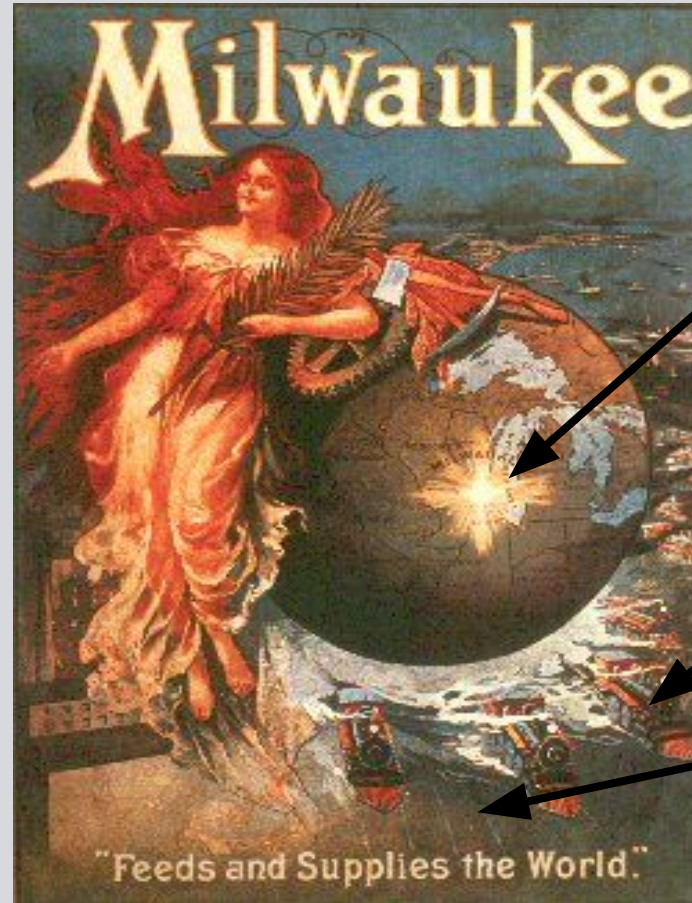
The font and use of **space** regarding the text in the photo show the importance of the name in the city in the poster which is important considering the poster was meant to advertise the city so a font size that took over the piece as well as a distinguishable color from the background was important.

The use of **value** in the background of the picture is important because of the context of both the city as an industrial city, which is depicted through trains and factories, and the piece as a whole making the foreground more noticeable than the background yet still making the details in the background noticeable.

The **movement** in the piece is mostly established through the globe at the center which guides the viewer around the entire piece through its borders from the figure of the woman to the trains underneath the globe and finally to the image of the city in the background.

Function and Purpose of Jan Kotowicz

The poster *City Poster* was made along with a series commissioned by the city of Milwaukee to accompany the historical articles on Milwaukee neighborhoods by John Gudha, a local historian. All thirty-seven posters were made by Jan Kotowicz, a Department of City Development (DCD) staff member at the time, used her deep roots of the city to design a unique poster for each neighborhood. She used a unique architectural style for each neighborhood depending upon the history of the neighborhood. The Milwaukee poster wraps together all the neighborhood posters by taking into consideration the history of the city and its history as a whole.



In the middle a woman is depicted leaning on a globe from which light seems to shine in the exact geographical location of the city. This brings **emphasis** to the geographical location of the city of Milwaukee.

The trains represent the industrialization and the essential role that they played in Milwaukee's economy for such a long time due to the big industries of leather, tractors, motors, and beer.

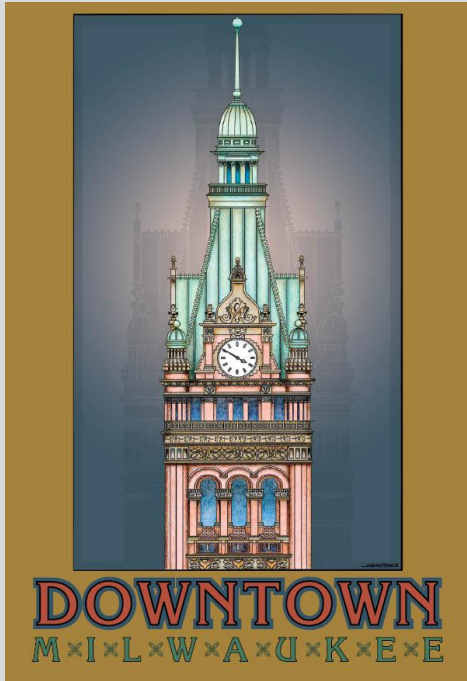
This is also represented by the water which represents lake Michigan. Lake Michigan has also been an important resource for the city not just for fresh water but for crops among other industries.

City of Milwaukee. "Buy a piece of Milwaukee!" Neighborhood posters, city.milwaukee.gov/posters#.WqiCmejwblU.

City Poster, Janice Kotowicz, 1983,
poster, 38.1 x 55.88 cm

Cultural significance of Jan Kotowicz

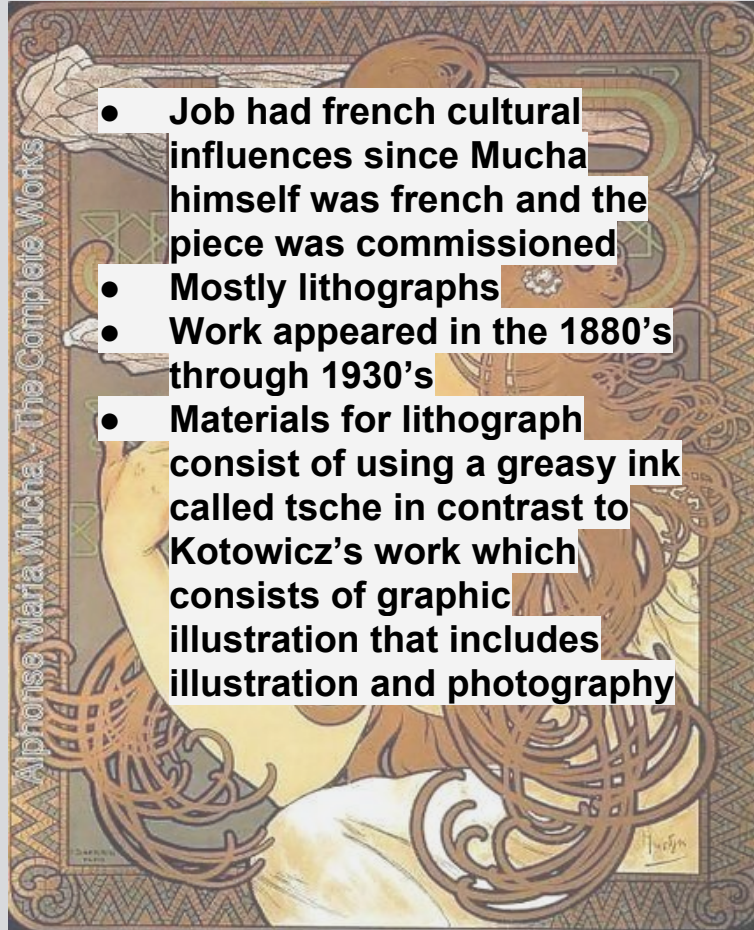
Janice Kotowicz is a local Milwaukee artist who did the majority of her work during the 1980's especially when she began the series of neighborhood posters for John Gurda book on the history of Milwaukee and it's neighborhoods. She worked on the collection for seven years. Since the images were commissioned for a book she made sure they all had a similar aesthetic given that they were pieces that would all be part of a series instead of being individual pieces. Since the book was meant to explore the history of all the different neighborhood around Milwaukee she cleverly chose to interpret each neighborhood through a symbol that represented that neighborhood such as a landmarks other symbols.



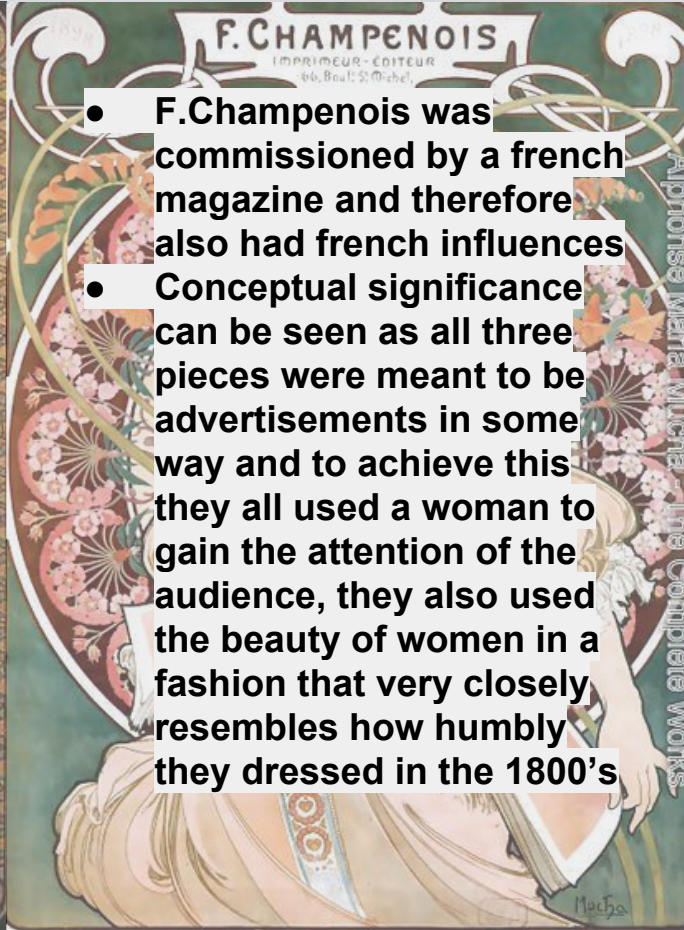
Her works helped to cast the uniqueness and personality each neighborhood has on its own along with some of their most important traits. For example, the downtown poster features the tower of Milwaukee's city hall which is symbolic of Milwaukee's politics and political community involvement. Another example is the sixth ward, or as it is more commonly known, Brewer's Hill, was a German enclave one century that turned into a stronghold for African-Americans the next. The poster for Brewer's Hill is therefore not a symbolic building in the area but rather a horse to represent the old Schlitz Brewery Stables, which were located on Walnut and N. Third Street.



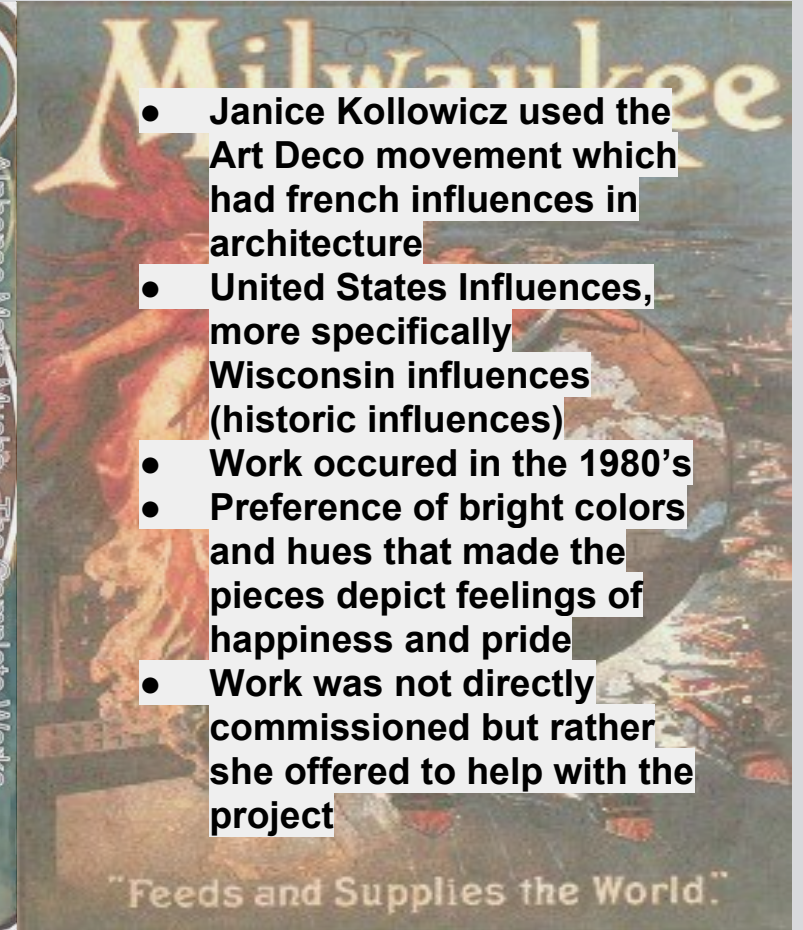
Comparison of Mucha and Kotowicz



- Job had french cultural influences since Mucha himself was french and the piece was commissioned
- Mostly lithographs
- Work appeared in the 1880's through 1930's
- Materials for lithograph consist of using a greasy ink called tsche in contrast to Kotowicz's work which consists of graphic illustration that includes illustration and photography

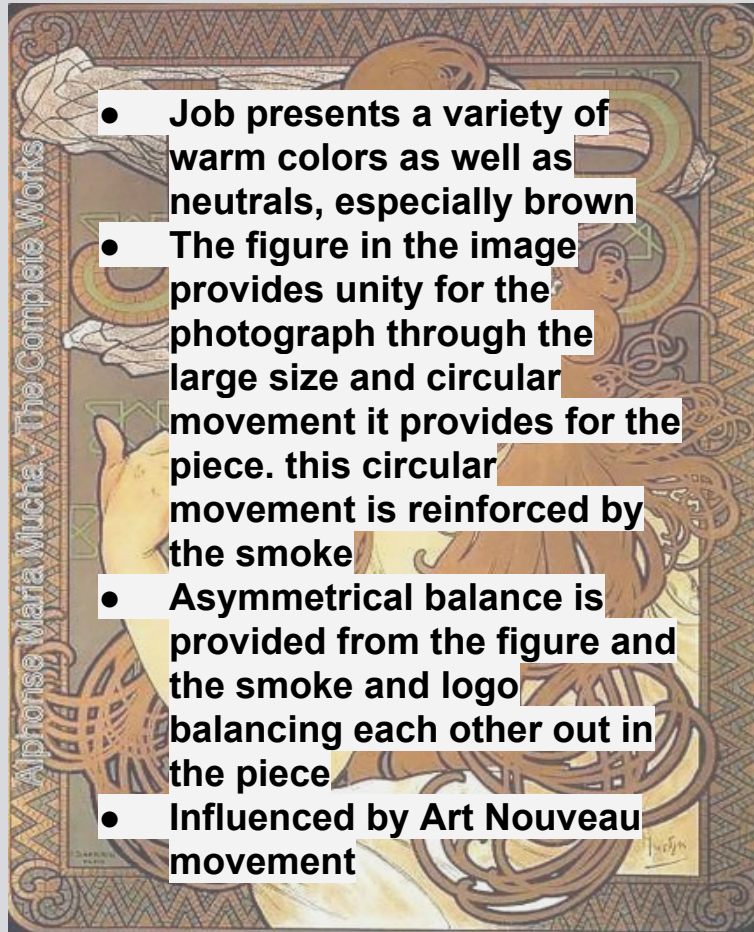


- F.Champenois was commissioned by a french magazine and therefore also had french influences
- Conceptual significance can be seen as all three pieces were meant to be advertisements in some way and to achieve this they all used a woman to gain the attention of the audience, they also used the beauty of women in a fashion that very closely resembles how humbly they dressed in the 1800's

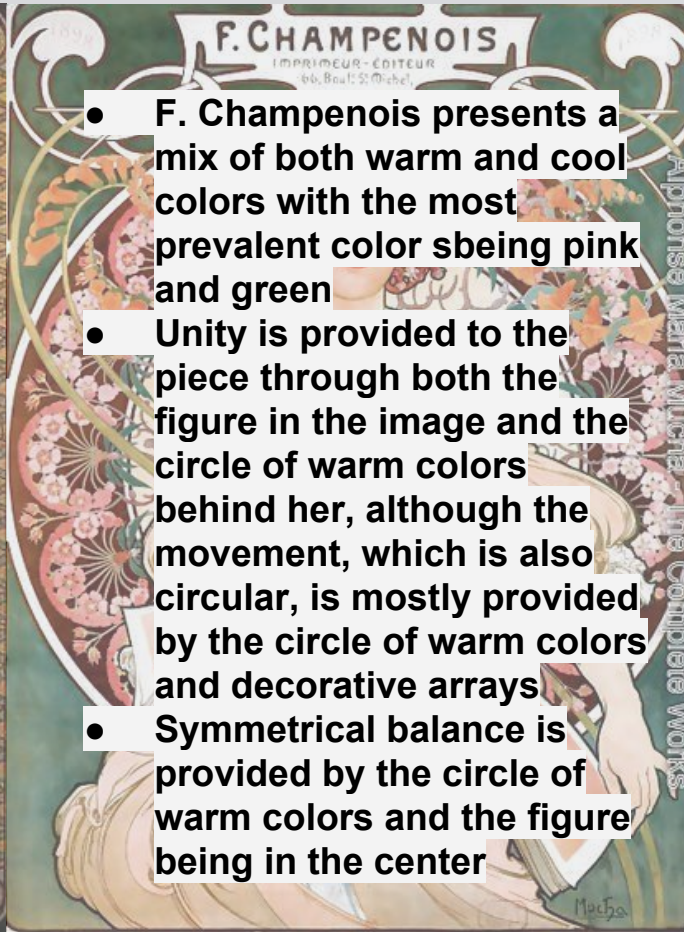


- Janice Kollowicz used the Art Deco movement which had french influences in architecture
- United States Influences, more specifically Wisconsin influences (historic influences)
- Work occurred in the 1980's
- Preference of bright colors and hues that made the pieces depict feelings of happiness and pride
- Work was not directly commissioned but rather she offered to help with the project

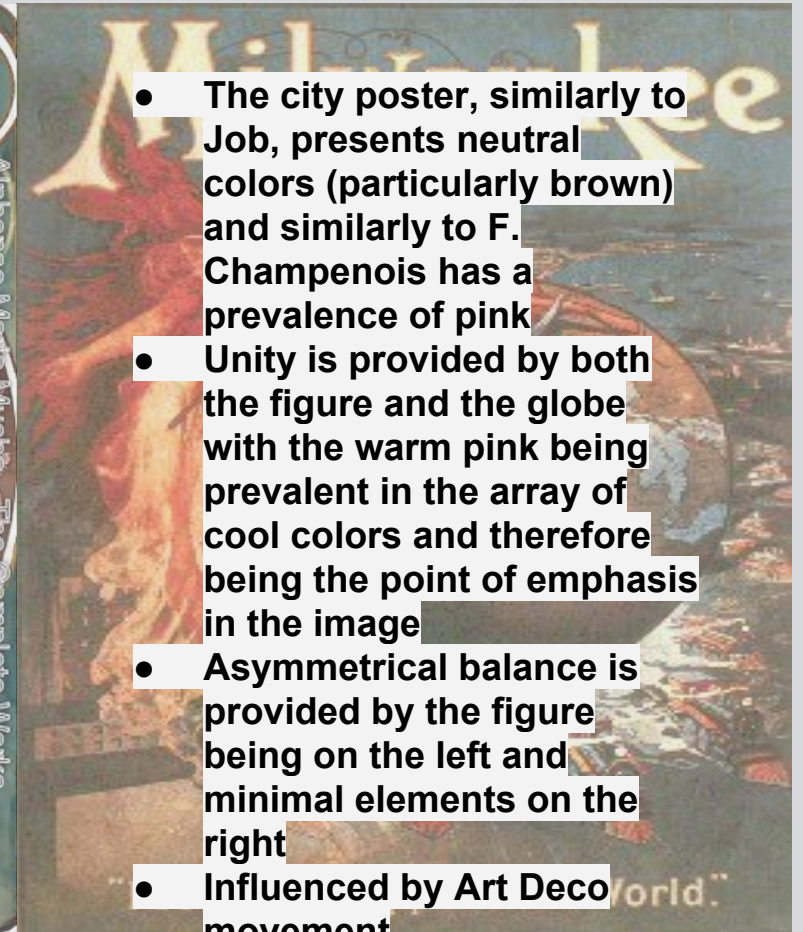
Comparison of Composition



- Job presents a variety of warm colors as well as neutrals, especially brown
- The figure in the image provides unity for the photograph through the large size and circular movement it provides for the piece. this circular movement is reinforced by the smoke
- Asymmetrical balance is provided from the figure and the smoke and logo balancing each other out in the piece
- Influenced by Art Nouveau movement

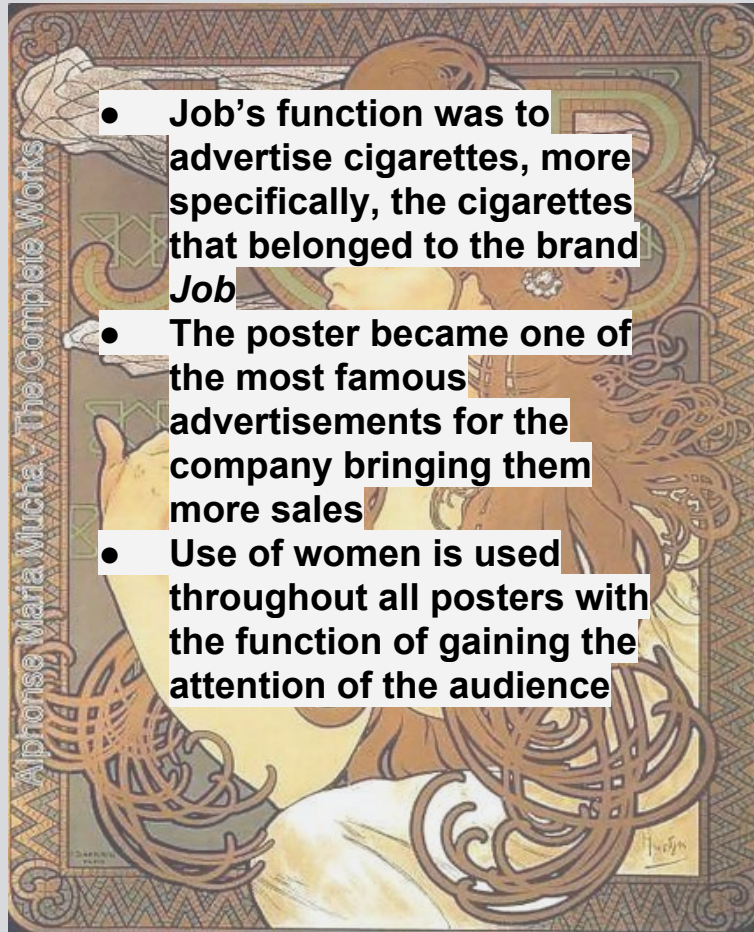


- F. Champenois presents a mix of both warm and cool colors with the most prevalent color sbeing pink and green
- Unity is provided to the piece through both the figure in the image and the circle of warm colors behind her, although the movement, which is also circular, is mostly provided by the circle of warm colors and decorative arrays
- Symmetrical balance is provided by the circle of warm colors and the figure being in the center

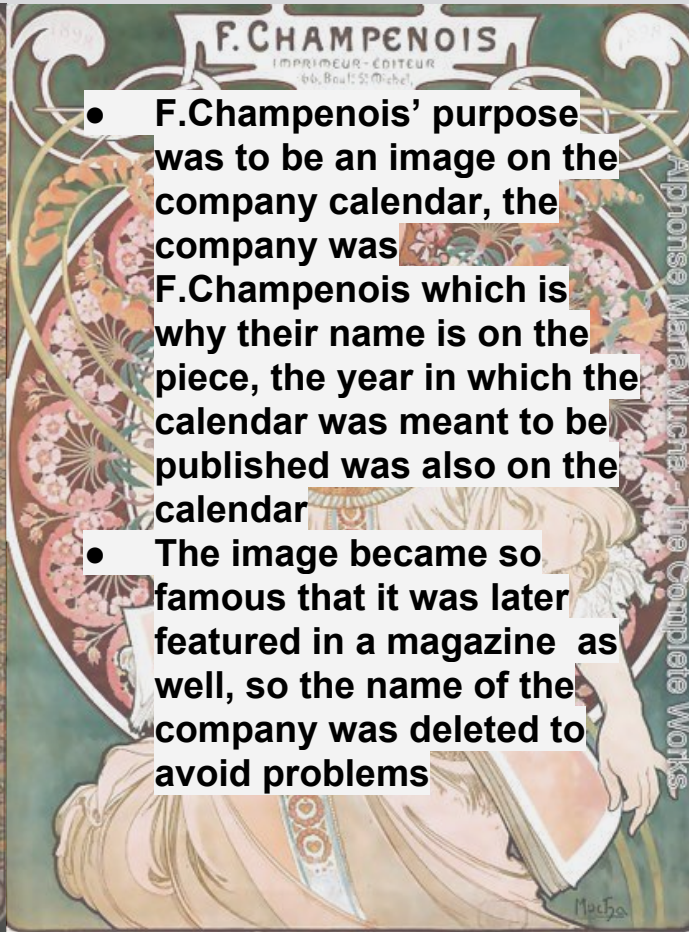


- The city poster, similarly to Job, presents neutral colors (particularly brown) and similarly to F. Champenois has a prevalence of pink
- Unity is provided by both the figure and the globe with the warm pink being prevalent in the array of cool colors and therefore being the point of emphasis in the image
- Asymmetrical balance is provided by the figure being on the left and minimal elements on the right
- Influenced by Art Deco movement

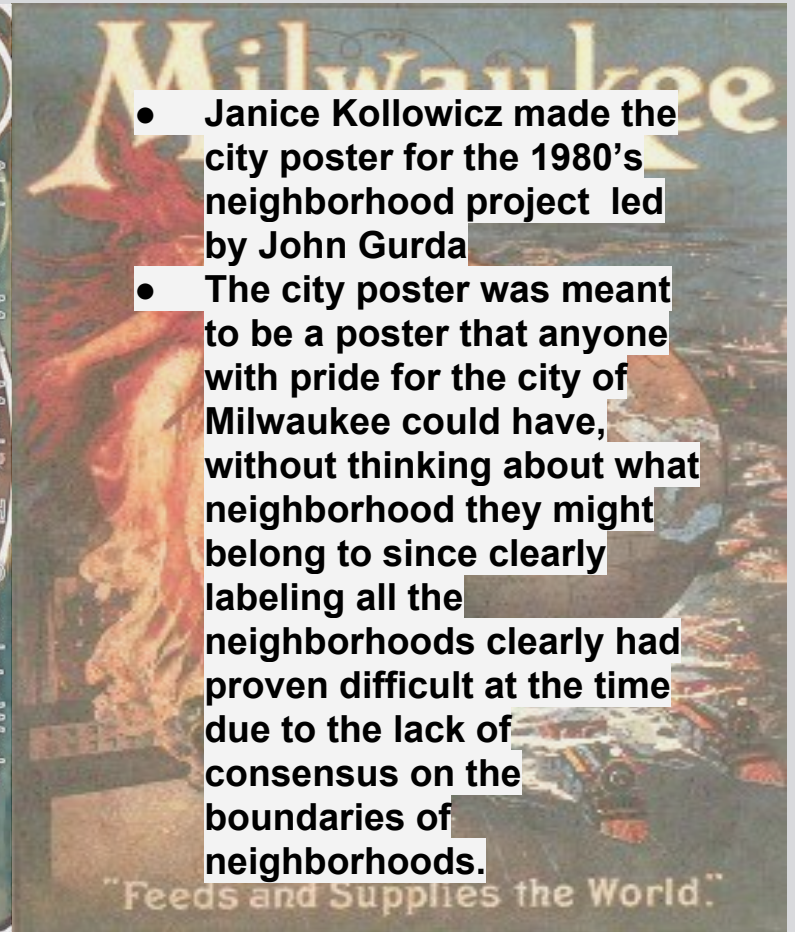
Comparison of Function and Purpose



- Job's function was to advertise cigarettes, more specifically, the cigarettes that belonged to the brand Job
- The poster became one of the most famous advertisements for the company bringing them more sales
- Use of women is used throughout all posters with the function of gaining the attention of the audience

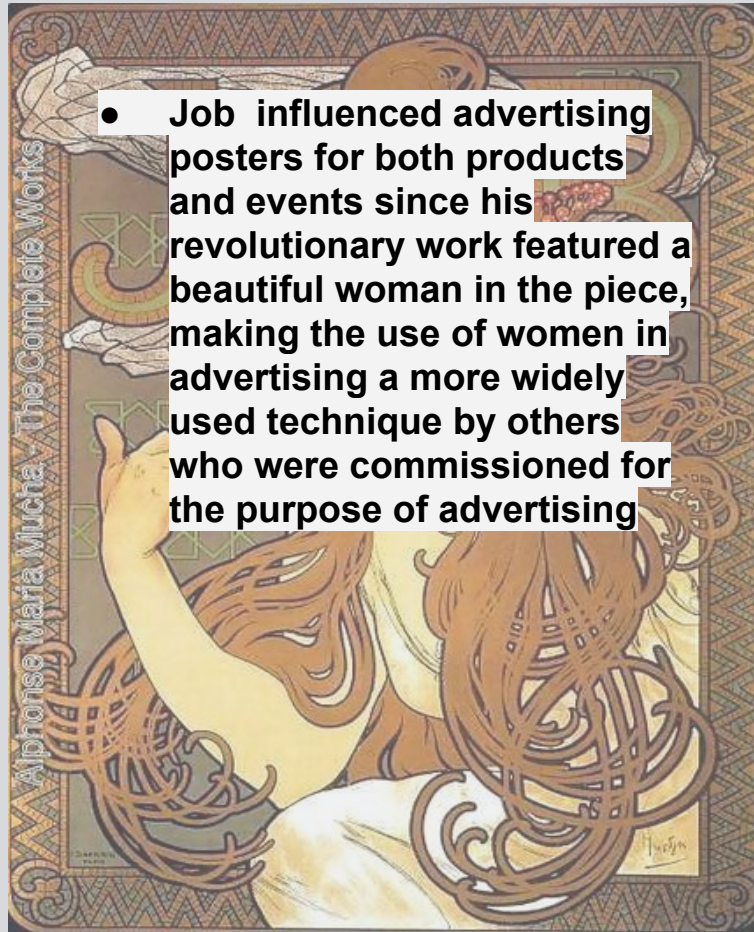


- F.Champenois' purpose was to be an image on the company calendar, the company was F.Champenois which is why their name is on the piece, the year in which the calendar was meant to be published was also on the calendar
- The image became so famous that it was later featured in a magazine as well, so the name of the company was deleted to avoid problems

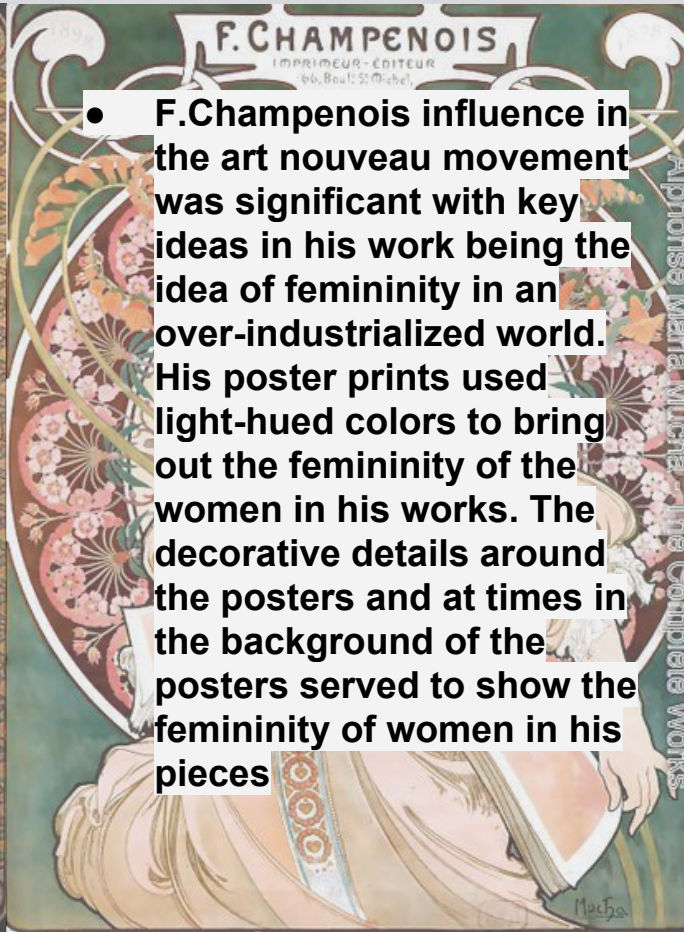


- Janice Kollowicz made the city poster for the 1980's neighborhood project led by John Gurda
- The city poster was meant to be a poster that anyone with pride for the city of Milwaukee could have, without thinking about what neighborhood they might belong to since clearly labeling all the neighborhoods clearly had proven difficult at the time due to the lack of consensus on the boundaries of neighborhoods.

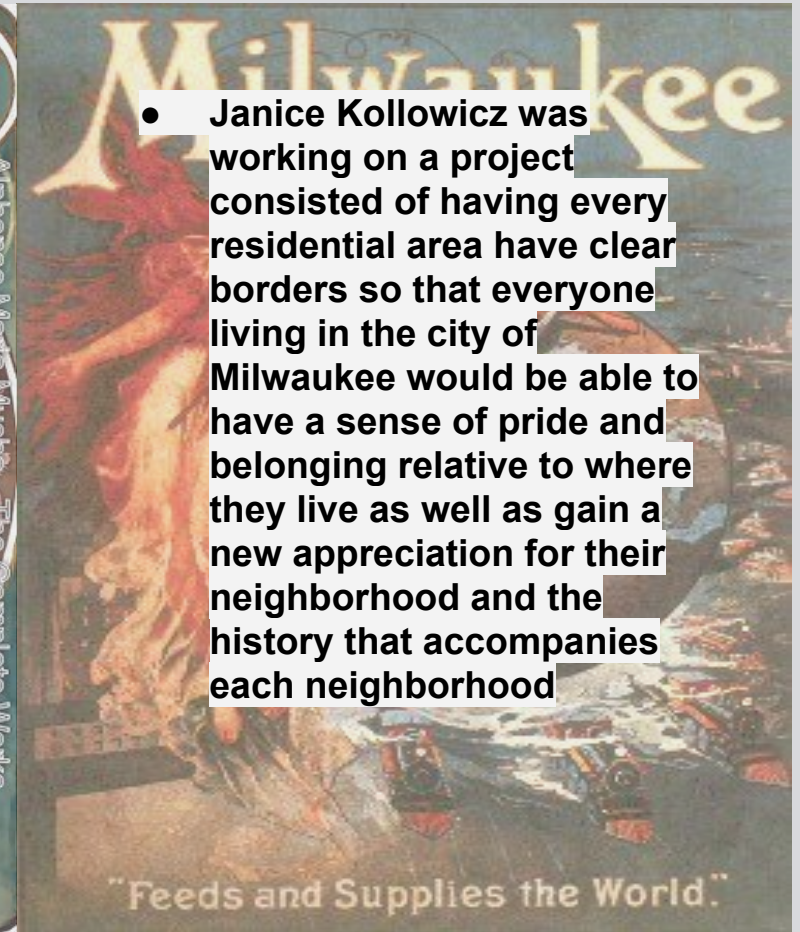
Comparison of Cultural Contexts



- Job influenced advertising posters for both products and events since his revolutionary work featured a beautiful woman in the piece, making the use of women in advertising a more widely used technique by others who were commissioned for the purpose of advertising



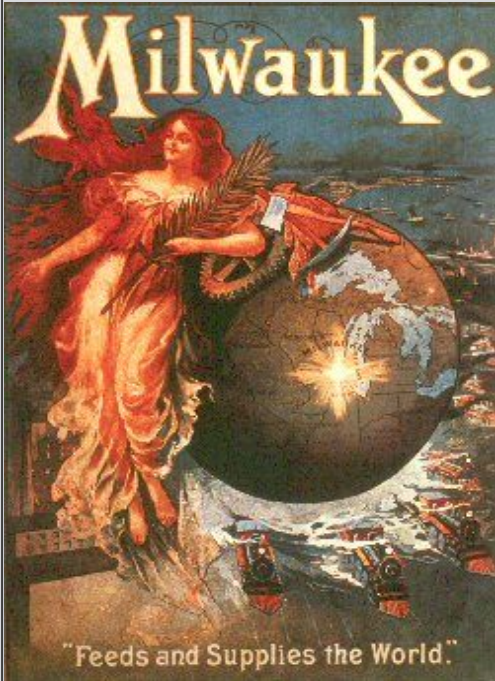
- F.Champenois influence in the art nouveau movement was significant with key ideas in his work being the idea of femininity in an over-industrialized world. His poster prints used light-hued colors to bring out the femininity of the women in his works. The decorative details around the posters and at times in the background of the posters served to show the femininity of women in his pieces



- Janice Kollowicz was working on a project consisted of having every residential area have clear borders so that everyone living in the city of Milwaukee would be able to have a sense of pride and belonging relative to where they live as well as gain a new appreciation for their neighborhood and the history that accompanies each neighborhood

Connection to own artwork: Jan Kotowicz

There is a similar theme of identity in both pieces that derives from identifying from the origins of the artist. In Kotowicz's piece, this identity is the identity of the Milwaukeean, a person born and/ or raised in the city of Milwaukee. In my piece this is the identity of the minority. The flower species, black-eyed susans, was chosen because black eyed susans represent justice which is what I wanted to get across to the audience when they came across my piece. Although the **symbolism** in my piece is an **allusion**, since the connections I attempted to make would not be clear unless the audience knew about the aforementioned connotations involved with the *Rudbeckia hirta* species, I tried to show this message of justice not just in the allusion of the flower species but also in the **composition** of the piece. For example, I created circular **movement** in the piece to represent equality and even though each flower is seemingly at different height this was only to show perspective in the piece, that is to show that some flowers were closer to the view than others. A similar component of circular **movement** is seen in Kotowicz's piece although is provided by the globe at the center of the piece.



A major difference between both pieces is that Kotowicz's piece theme is more easily interpretable since there is text in the piece that helps understanding the meaning behind it. Not only this, but the globe is clearly pointing out the place on the map where the target demographic for the piece resides. In my piece however, the target demographic is not so clearly known since the **symbolism** to the piece and therefore the demographic for the piece is hidden behind the meaning of the *Rudbeckia hirta* flower species (black eyed susans). Although I considered adding text to the piece to clarify the message of the piece is a Barbara Kruger style banner I decided against it since I thought it would keep from the overall aesthetic of the piece. This is not a worry for Kotowicz's piece since there are various other elements that **balance** the weight of the text out so that the text isn't **emphasized** too much and become the center of focus of the piece.



Connection to own artwork: Jan Kotowicz

Similarly to Jan Kotowicz, I used highly decorative detail in my work to provide **symbolism** for the meaning of the piece. Although the movement used for inspiration in Jan Kotowicz's piece was the Art Deco movement, which is an architectural style that is sleeker than Art Nouveau due to its strong geometric **shapes**, the decorative style in both pieces is still very much similar since the Art Deco movement shares various similarities to the Art Nouveau movement, which my piece is based upon. The decorative details can be seen by the outline on both pieces that while thin uses the dark **color** black to **emphasize** what the artist wants the audience to focus on upon initial glance. In Jan Kotowicz piece this would be the building which she also placed in the center to give the piece symmetrical **balance** and **emphasize** that this is the element that was meant to be **emphasized**. In my own piece the element that I wanted to give the most **emphasis** to were the black eyed susan flowers.



DOWNTOWN
M×I×L×W×A×U×K×E×E

This is the element I wanted to **emphasize** the most since the piece has asymmetrical **balance** due to the position in which each individual flower is placed, bringing **emphasis** to the center since both the petals and the stems of the flowers create **movement** to the center of the piece. This was planned so that the piece would have circular **movement** overall. The flowers are all in a perfect circle with the exception of the flower on the left bottom corner and the flower towards the center of the piece. These flowers were placed in those places to make sure to fill as much of the **space** as possible. For example, the flower on the left bottom corner was placed there since flowers grow at different heights, so not all the flowers were placed towards the same height to bring a realistic element to the piece. In Jan Kotowicz's piece she also attempted to bring a realistic element to her piece by designing the building to look like the city hall building in the city of Milwaukee. The poster also has the text "DOWNTOWN" written on it since Milwaukee's city hall building is located downtown. This building was chosen to represent the downtown neighborhood since it is an iconic structure that every Milwaukee recognizes for its iconic presence in Milwaukee's downtown skyline. Jan Kotowicz represented the building by designing it so that it includes every iconic element of the tower such as the clock and the victorian and renaissance revival **architecture** which are particularly well shown by the victorian style windows and the renaissance revival style top to the tower.

Connection to own artwork: Alphonse Mucha

My piece is similar to Alphonse Mucha's piece *Daydream* since they are both provided circular **movement** by the flowers around the figure in the piece. My piece is inspired by Alphonse Mucha's piece *Flower* which was made with the rest of his lithographs centered around flowers, in particular, the flower series which includes another five posters that were featured in *Les Maîtres de l'Affiche* between 1895 and 1900. The **color** in the pieces is a little different since the colors in Mucha's *Flower* piece are more muted down and cool and the **colors** in my piece are warmer and a little less muted down. This is because I changed the **color** of the background from light green to pastel pink which changed overall aesthetic of the piece from looking like it has more cool colors to make it look like there are more warm colors.

This was intentional because given that my piece was a self-portrait my goal was depict myself in a piece that had a mood similar to that of *Daydream*. The mood in *Daydream* is a positive and happy mood which is being given by the warm **colors** in the piece. Warm colors are usually associated with happiness and warmth therefore I chose to use this type of **color** scheme for my piece. In *Flower* as well as in *Daydream* the use of flowers brings a theme of flower decorat detail that makes the piece appear more feminine and delicate whether the flowers are surrounding the figure in the piece through the action of having the figure hold them or having them be behind her.



In both pieces the garments of the figure in the piece are resemblant of garments worn in the Roman Empire at around 50 BC. This gives the piece a look that although highly decorative makes the pieces look as if they could have been created at around that time. The physical pose that the figures have is similar to that of pieces in which greek mythology was interpreted, most significantly, pieces in which Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty, was interpreted therefore giving both pieces an aura of mystical beauty.



Mucha Foundation. "Mucha Foundation." Mucha Foundation, www.muchafoundation.org/.

Connection to own artwork: Alphonse Mucha

In Mucha's piece *Job* he attempted to persuade the audience to buy Job's cigarettes since that is what the purpose of the poster was. The poster was created to be an advertisement for a retailer, and therefore he chose to attempt to captivate the audience's attention by using a **theme** of beauty and femininity. Similarly to this, I chose to do the same in my self-portrait piece. I wanted to use the same technique of using an interpretation of beauty and femininity to captivate the audience's attention. Throughout the entirety of both pieces feminine elements such as a constant use of flowers and long hair are used as well as interpreting the figure as wearing garments that are traditionally feminine such as off the shoulder dresses. Although the figure in Mucha's *Job* has blond hair, which is often interpreted in American culture as being more feminine and attractive, I decided to use my own features and hair color regardless since it was after all a self-portrait.



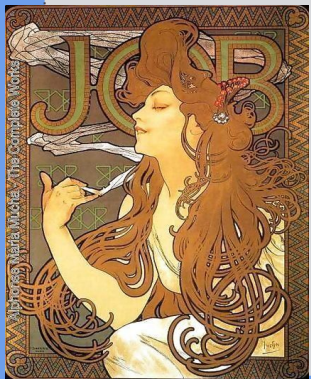
Other feminine features in both pieces include features of well groomed women such as neat and/ or painted nails, well styled hair, and on both pieces the faces of both women seem to be wearing make up as can be seen by the strong **contour** on the cheekbones on both pieces and the darker **sienna brown color** on the eyes of the figure in Mucha's piece and the bright raspberry **color** on the lips of the figure in my piece. Similarly to Mucha's technique for the contour and eye make up, I used the same shade the background had on the lips to keep the **color** palette centered around the same types of shades of warm colors or in Mucha's case neutral **colors**.



Mucha Foundation. "Mucha Foundation." *Mucha Foundation*, www.muchafoundation.org/.

Alphonse Mucha

- Themes often corresponding to advertising which are enhanced by use of femininity to bring the public's attention to the pieces
- Use of background **color** throughout the piece to bring **unity** to piece
- French cultural influences
- Surplus of decorative detail throughout entirety of pieces including background and foreground
- Lithograph use (printmaking technique) almost exclusively
- Frequent use of bold and neutral **colors** to create **balance**



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Own Artwork

- Decorative patterns on borders and decorative **themes** in artwork such as floral themes
- Constant use of warm **colors** and theme of femininity
- Frequent use of light pastel **colors**
- Frequent use of asymmetrical **balance**
- Moderate amount of decorative detail especially in foreground
- American cultural influences (Particularly wisconsinite influences)



Jan Kotowicz

- Decorative elements and patterns from Art Deco movement
- American cultural influences (Particularly wisconsinite influences)
- Use of Art Deco movement for majority of series to create **unity** and **repetition** throughout the different pieces in the series (allows for pieces to be clearly labeled as belonging to the same series)
- Frequent use of bold and neutral **colors** to create **balance**
- **Balance** between warm and cool **colors** throughout pieces in series



City of Milwaukee. "Buy a piece of Milwaukee!" Neighborhood posters, city.milwaukee.gov/posters#.WqiCjwU.