



THE CHARLES HOSMER  
MORSE MUSEUM  
*of American Art*

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### **The Morse Museum's Exhibition on American Portraiture Opens March 3**

*Note to editors: High-resolution images are available by contacting us at [pubaffairs@morsemuseum.org](mailto:pubaffairs@morsemuseum.org).*

WINTER PARK, FL—On March 3, The Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art will open *Selected Portraits from the Morse Collection*. The exhibition will feature about a dozen paintings by leading American portraitists and a number of photographs by early American studios. Works date from the 1790s to the 1930s.

At their most basic level, portraits record a person's physical appearance on a specific date. When done well these records do more, revealing the psychological characteristics of a subject. The tension in portraiture is between the insights of a talented artist and the often unclear expectations of a sitter. The compelling personalities of figures ranging from powerful business executives to lovely women—both of genteel and working classes—are presented in the works on view in *Selected Portraits from the Morse Collection*.

A charming and arresting portrait of Sylvester S. Marvin (1841–1924), the founder of Nabisco, was commissioned around 1905 from the well-known artist William Merritt Chase (1849–1916). Chase and other painters like Gilbert Stuart (1755–1828) and Robert Henri (1865–1929) created interpretive renderings with inimitable styles that brought the artists themselves a level of celebrity. Stuart, for example, is famed for his portrait of George Washington that graces the dollar bill. Two painted portraits on display by Stuart capture the costume and personae representative of the early years of the republic.

A photographed portrait reflected a modern worldview in the growing American society of 1900. Photography studios such as Matzene Studio (1900–1937) seized on the opportunities this medium afforded in Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles. The photographs taken by this firm, founded by Jens Rudolph Matzene (c. 1870–1950), include an image of Chicago socialite Elizabeth Morse, later Genius, (1872–1928), the mother of Morse Museum founder Jeannette Genius McKean (1909–89). Also contained in Matzene Studio’s portfolio is the elegant stage and film star Julia Dean (1878–1952).

*Selected Portraits from the Morse Collection* presents painted and photographic portrayals of Americans over a period of transition in both style and medium. Regardless of the medium or tradition, the concept of the portrait remained the same, to capture the qualities of a sitter through the skilled interpretation of an artist—painter or photographer.

The Morse Museum, located at 445 N. Park Avenue, is open 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday and Saturday; 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday; and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Regular admission is \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors, \$1 for students, and free for children younger than 12. All visitors are admitted free 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday, November through April. For more information, call (407) 645-5311 or visit [morsemuseum.org](http://morsemuseum.org).

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