

BRIEFLY NOTICED

Drawings of Mucha. 70 Works by Alphonse Maria Mucha. New York: Dover Publications, 1978. \$4.50.

Mucha has too long been regarded as an exponent of Art Nouveau or of the Viennese Sezession movement so potently (and ingeniously) represented by Klimt. Actually his affinity to either of these groups is highly questionable. Mucha's peculiar elegance of line as well as his pictorial arrangements point in a different direction: his drawings and posters suggest a conflation of Pre-Raphaelite -- especially Burne-Jones's -- formal patterns and those of Toulouse-Lautrec, with the Pre-Raphaelite influence predominating, both in his early work (e.g. "Sketch for the Program of a Charity Performance by Sarah Bernhardt", 1899, which might easily be mistaken for a design by Millais or, conceivably, one by Rossetti) and during the latter part of the artist's career (e.g. the sketch for "The Coronation of Dushan", 1925, with its echoes of Burne-Jones and -- oddly enough -- the early Ford Madox Brown). For all his eclecticism, Mucha was not only a highly gifted but also a fundamentally original artist whose contribution ought to be more widely known and appreciated. Dover's sampling from his large oeuvre, with its excellent reproductions and mercifully cheap price, bids fair to serve that end quite admirably.

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We recommend Fred Kaplan's recent study of Carlyle (Thomas Carlyle: A Biography. Cornell University Press. 1983. 640 pp. 49 photos. \$35.00) for the solidity of its workmanship and, specifically, for the light -- however, fugitive -- thrown on Carlyle's relations with Allingham, Ford Madox Brown and Millais.

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