11.9: Art Nouveau (1890 – 1914)

The Art Nouveau (1880-1905) was an international movement producing fine decorative arts using traditional craftsmanship. The movement was a direct result of the industrial revolution and how it improved people's lives socially and economically. The industrial revolution brought hundreds of thousands of workers from surrounding farm communities into large cities with deteriorated living conditions and a sense of loss of their old communities. People began to make items by hand again, believing it to be superior to the machine-made products. Numerous Arts and Crafts guilds were formed to inspire and train artisans.
Walter Crane (1845-1915), William Morris (1834-1896), and Alfonse Mucha (1860-1939) were three artists who influenced the arts and crafts movement. During the revival of handcrafts such as textiles in Britain, Morris founded a decorative arts company to reinstate fine arts as affordable and anti-elitism. His company produced textiles patterned in the Snakeshead printed textile used to paper walls. Walter Crane was considered one of the best and most influential writer and designer of children's books. The colorful and detailed drawings in Illustration for the Man that Pleased None, depicted iconic British garden designs surrounded by nursery rhymes, the alphabet, or Aesop's fables.

11.51 Illustration for the *Man that Pleased None*

Alfonse Mucha created exquisite posters with vivid colors, swirling garden motifs, and provocative women as viewed in *Poetry* (11.52). The posters are similar to those by Toulouse-Lautrec with the addition of flowing, twirling lines, giving highly dramatic looks to the posters. Mixing natural imagery took the place of the Post-impressionism look. The elongated depictions of women in *Bieres de la Meuse* (11.53) were his typical illustrations of the organic forms we still see today. The title curves over her head, which is covered in flowing flowers, her face bearing amused expression.
11.53 Bieres de la Meuse
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