

WILLIAM MERRITT CHASE, (1849-1916),
b. Williamsburg, Indiana (now Nineveh)

William Merritt Chase, *A Study in Pink (Mrs. Robert McDougal)*, 1895,
oil on canvas

EDUCATION/INFLUENCES

- showed early interest in art, early studies with local self-taught artists.
- Studied at National Academy of Design in New York, Academy of Fine Arts, Munich. and in Venice
- Member of “Tilers”-group of artists and authors including Winslow Homer and Augustus Saint-Gaudens
- Part of new wave of European-trained artists working America

BIG IDEAS/THEMES

- Father, artist, teacher, sophisticated cosmopolitan. Known for flamboyance in dress, manners and studio (decorated with lavish furniture, decorative and exotic objects which fit clientele coming for a portrait).
- Known for plein-air paintings showing the leisure activities of the upper class (influenced by French Impressionists) and for portraits of the upper classes and famous people. He also did portraits of his family.
- Technique: vigorous handling, fresh, bright colors, spare backgrounds for most portraits
- One of the most important teachers at the turn of the 20th century. Opened Shinnecock Hills Summer School on eastern Long Island, NY in 1891 and taught there until 1902. Also taught at Pennsylvania Academy (1896-1909), Art Students League (1878-1896 and 1907-1911), Brooklyn Art Association (1887, 1891-1896).
- Instructed artists like Charles Demuth, Marsden Hartley, and Georgia O’Keeffe.
- Worked in all painting media-most fluent in oil painting. But also did pastels and etchings.

KIA Work-A Study in Pink (Mrs. Robert McDougal), 1895, oil on canvas

- painted at the height of his popularity as a society portrait painter
- work was exhibited at the Society of American Artists exhibit in 1900. It served as advertising for other commissions. But it shows that he was pleased with this portrait.
- Mr. and Mrs. Robert McDougal of Orange, NY commissioned this portrait. It was in the family until it was bought by Dick Manoogian, in Detroit, MI. He put it up for auction at Sotheby’s and we purchased it from Sotheby’s.

