

**DRAWING FOR AN AUDIENCE OF ONE:
ART IN MURIEL DRAPER'S ARCHIVES**

by

Olivia Armandroff

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Olivia Armandroff

Approved: _____
Catharine Dann Roeber, Ph.D.
Professor in charge of thesis on behalf of the Advisory Committee

Approved: _____
Sandy Isenstadt, Ph.D.
Professor in charge of thesis on behalf of the Advisory Committee

Approved: _____
Martin Brückner, Ph.D.
Interim Director of the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture

Approved: _____
John Pelesko, Ph.D.
Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

Approved: _____
Douglas J. Doren, Ph.D.
Interim Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education and
Dean of the Graduate College

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ABSTRACT

Muriel Draper, a much-overlooked author and tastemaker in early-twentieth-century New York, was a cosmopolitan woman with eclectic interests, including mysticism, the Soviet Union, and the Harlem Renaissance. Today, Draper is best known through the voice of others and their reminiscences of her salon. Gatherings she convened and attended in Europe and America in the first half of the twentieth century set her and her work in dialog with a group of leading artists, writers, musicians, and social influencers. Not easily definable, her friends, including Mark Tobey, Carl Van Vechten, and Max Ewing, sought to come to terms with her uniqueness and capture her true nature through drawings, photographs, and sculptural portraits. But she never succumbed to their desires. Instead, in life and in death, Draper cannily crafted her own image, both participating in and rejecting the statuses assigned to her. She consciously curated her archive at Yale University by collecting and depositing correspondence, drawings, and photographs which provide evidence of a woman who enchanted nearly everyone who met her. As perhaps a final project of design, Draper created an arrival “portrait” of herself that left significant gaps, and an enduring air of mystery. The thesis asks whether we can identify a material trace of an ephemeral salon and its hostess. It interrogates how the intimate, collaborative relationships established between intellectual peers in such a salon setting can be recorded and preserved in artistic form. It also uses Draper’s example to explore larger notions about legacy, history, and remembrance. How could a woman who so carefully curated and bequeathed an archival record of her life be so quickly forgotten and erased from the annals of history? When she is remembered, is it as she desired?

Was Draper a woman of her time, or one distinct from it, and is it her more common traits or her unique eccentricities that survive today?

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Muriel Draper loved hats. She was also a woman of many hats. Endlessly active, she was a salon hostess, an author and critic, a mother and wife, a lecturer, an interior designer, an assistant manager to the Chicago Opera Company, a radio show host, and the list goes on. Born Muriel Sanders in 1886 in Boston into a family wealthy from the leather goods trade, Draper married Harvard student, Paul Draper, at twenty-three and spent the next six years of her life abroad, in Florence then in London. She arrived as a single, mother-of-two in New York City in 1915 and promptly assumed the role of tastemaker extraordinaire.¹ She was passionately invested in causes, and actively promoted George Gurdjieff's brand of mysticism, the Congress of American Women, the Soviet Union, the Harlem Renaissance, and Civil Rights. She was cosmopolitan and experienced in international fashions. Cultivating her reputation for this, she was not only credited with bringing European manners to New York, but as one *Town & Country* article notes, Asian ones as well (Fig. 1). The article outlandishly attributes New York City's introduction to gambling—China's "oldest international sport"—to her salon, despite its practice for decades in America's urban Chinatowns.² Her multiplicity and resistance of simplistic

¹ Betsy Fahlman, "The Great Draper Woman: Muriel Draper and the Art of the Salon," *Woman's Art Journal* 26, no. 2 (2005): 33-37.

² Harry A. Bull, "Panorama," *Town & Country* 93, no. 4188 (May 1938): 61.

categorization was noted in her lifetime by contemporaries such as one columnist who remarked that because she was “forty different kinds of a woman . . . any written report of her is hazardous.”³ But it is likely because she defies easy definition that she has been largely overlooked in histories of the period beyond Betsy Fahlman and Cecily Swanson, who have both researched and authored articles on her work.⁴

Despite Draper’s omission from the historical record, she not only cannily and carefully crafted her image while she was alive, she sought to guarantee its legacy by documenting and preserving her personal history in an extensive archive of her personal papers. Her close friends Carl Van Vechten and Lincoln Kirstein had encouraged curator Donald Gallup to connect with Draper in 1951 and persuade her to place her correspondence up to 1940 in the Yale University Library for safekeeping.⁵ Her collection became one amongst a cache of personal archives belonging to early-twentieth century modernist personalities she was close to, including Van Vechten, Mabel Dodge, and Gertrude Stein. Unlike some archives, like the James Weldon

Beverly Chang, “Gambling and Gaming Pieces in the Market Street Chinatown Community,” *CASA* 103 (Winter 2004).

³ “About People We Know,” *Town & Country* 84, no. 4006 (April 15, 1929): 47.

⁴ Betsy Fahlman’s article, “The Great Draper Woman” is an exception to this. In addition, Cecily Swanson’s “Conversation Pieces: Circulating Muriel Draper’s Salon,” evaluates Draper’s radio scripts.

Fahlman, “The Great Draper Woman,” 33-37.

Cecily Swanson, “Conversation Pieces: Circulating Muriel Draper’s Salon,” *Journal of Modern Literature* 36, no. 4 (2013): 23-43.

⁵ Donald Gallup to Muriel Draper, June 21, 1951, Box 10, Folder 337, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Johnson Memorial Collection which was born after its namesake's death and thus designed by librarians and his friend Van Vechten, Draper's donation occurred before her death, allowing her to assemble and select its contents and thus decide her own legacy.⁶

Draper was best known in her time as a salon hostess. Articles written after Draper had largely given up hosting during the Depression continue to make these associations. In 1938, Hilda Cole would write for *Women's Magazine* that despite Draper's various past vocations, as interior decorator and journalist, "it seems that her real gift was the gift of gab."⁷ And in a *Town and Country* article from 1937, "Could you use an Extra Woman?" which categorized well-known women into groups, from "Intellectuals" to the "Don't Phone Before Noon" type, Draper appears in the "Musical" and "Assiduous Hostesses" categories.⁸ Similarly, Draper survives in the historical record today as such, her salon-hostess status guaranteed by the reminiscences of her by her more enduringly famous conversation partners. Despite this, there is no explicit material trace of her salon in the archive she created, and it lacks invitations and guest lists made in preparation for specific gatherings or photographs and diary ruminations that record the convenings she directed. In fact, a mention of the word "salon" does not appear in Draper's hand, leading to the question

⁶ While a selection of letters between Draper and library curator Donald Gallup survive, demonstrating Draper's involvement in the decision process, we cannot know the full extent of the decisions she made before her death on August 26, 1952.

⁷ Hilda Cole, "Woman to Woman on the Air," *Woman's Day* 1, no. 8 (May 1938): 30.

⁸ Alice-Leone Moats, "Could you use an Extra Woman?," *Town & Country* 92, no. 4137 (February 1937): 56.

of whether we should even refer to the gatherings she hosted as such. This absence is significant; did Draper wish to be remembered as something other than a salon hostess? Draper's other roles and the productions that resulted from them is evident in her archive's preservation of her written manuscripts—which were published as articles and books, delivered as lectures, or aired on the radio—and her interior designs. But even if she didn't claim a legacy as a salon hostess for herself, Draper's magnetic power as a raconteur is evident. The largest section of the archive, the correspondence Draper received, demonstrates the passionate, informed, and witty conversations she engaged in and can serve today's readers as a virtual representation of her salon, carried out through a distance. As Michel Foucault theorizes in *Archaeology of Knowledge*, “the *archive* . . . does not have the weight of tradition; and it does not constitute the library of libraries, outside time and place—it reveals the rules of practice . . . its threshold of existence is established by the discontinuity that separate us from what we can no longer say.”⁹

While Draper sought to define herself, in life and death, as a unique and highly individual woman, her charisma was also captured by her peers, and three case studies of drawn, photographed, and sculptural portraits show how her close friends Mark Tobey, Carl Van Vechten, and Max Ewing attempted to define her. In some cases, she collaborated with the artists, performing the role of an eccentric. Occasionally she

⁹ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Vintage. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group), 129.

I first read this quote in:

Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 35.

embraced their representations of her, but her approval was not guaranteed. A fierce critic, she also denied that those closest to her knew her true self. By analyzing a combination of Draper's self-representation, with others' attempts to understand her, this thesis seeks to contribute to a better understanding of how a dynamic, stimulating, and forceful woman, who defied simplistic definition, participated in the solidification of her legacy as a significant cultural tastemaker of the early twentieth century.

Chapter 2

DRAPER STYLES HERSELF

While both the media and her closest friends continually sought to successfully capture her identity, Draper defied definition. There is a critical tension between how Draper sought to represent herself and how others captured her. Draper garnered attention for her unique look and was clearly recognized by her admirers and critics alike. But newspapers and magazines oftentimes depicted Draper as an elegant, society woman in anodyne images that deny her distinctiveness. The photograph used to announce the publication of her book shows Draper seated facing right but with her head turned to the camera (Fig. 2). While it may show her in her signature head wrap, and we can read Draper's bold and assertive stance in her posture, its elegance reflects the standards of established society portraiture, such as the work of William Merritt Chase. Years later, her radio show was advertised by an image NBC photographer William Haussler captured of her speaking into a microphone (Fig. 3). Again wearing her iconic hat, and less posed, with her distinctive jawline jutting out as she speaks, this photograph begins to reveal Draper's more provocative look, but it remains guarded, expected, and even formulaic. This Draper, as pictured by the popular press, risked being overshadowed by or purposely hidden alongside other figures, often male.

Although Draper was divorced, in keeping with the norms of the time, many articles written about her in her lifetime identify her not as an independent woman but through male ambassadors, as the friend of one social impresario, or the sponsor of another. Although she would assume various bylines for the many well-regarded male figures she affiliated with throughout her life, by the end of it, she was most frequently

identified as the mother of Paul Draper, her eldest son who had become a world-renowned dancer. Initially, the pattern had been reversed, and after laudatory articles about Paul's early successes, such his performances at Radio City in 1933, devoted the majority of their space to his mother, both he and she expressed frustration.¹⁰ But ultimately, the male figure triumphed. At society galas, she would be captured by his side, as in one image with the caption, "Famous mothers and sons" (Fig. 4).¹¹ One 1941 *Town and Country* piece shows Draper with a caption that notes she "bears a marked resemblance to her tap-dancing son," presuming the readers' knowledge and interest were in Paul Draper, not the photo's subject, an elegant woman, in a white columnar dress who bore little resemblance to any man.¹²

In contrast to the way she was captured in the media, Draper was an independent woman and emphasized this with her pursuit of a distinctive look. In some instances, Draper was able to take control of her public image and emphasize her uniqueness by posing for journalists' lenses, as in a 1939 *Town and Country* article. At a party in which Gilbert and Alice Selles "christened" their new Victorian Gothic home, photographs show the guests stylishly posed and composed on the porch, a stark contrast to Draper, who inexplicably mimed with a broom for the camera in a separate image (Fig. 5).¹³ Her experience modeling for her friends, the photographers

¹⁰ Wallace K. Ewing, *Genius Denied: The Life and Death of Max Ewing* (Grand Haven, Mich.: W.D. Ewing, 2012), 157.

¹¹ "Gala-Gala at the Pierre," *Town & Country* 92, no. 4172 (January 1937): 97.

¹² Eckert Goodman, "On the Night Shift," *Town & Country* 96, no. 4220 (January 1941): 20.

¹³ "Strawberry Hill Billies," *Town & Country* 94, no. 4203 (August 1939): 80.

Carl Van Vechten and Max Ewing, would have given her practice enacting such roles before the camera.

Draper, like other society women, expressed herself through fashion and the newspapers' society pages frequently commented on her attire. Today, 1920s evening dress designs by the Parisian designer Paul Poiret that belonged to her are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art collection, donated by her in 1943, one of which she appears to have been wearing at the society gala at the Pierre that she attended with her son, referenced above (Fig. 6). In addition, she wore clothing made by the theatrical designer Robert Edmond Jones and patronized the most elite Parisian fashion house of the period, Worth.¹⁴

But unlike many others, Draper sought to upset expectations and transgress boundaries with her look. In such a way, she claimed center stage for herself. George Christy remembered her in his 1961 article in *Cosmopolitan*, as “probably the greatest hostess I’ve ever known,” recounting how he had shown her a guest list for an event he was planning and she responded with disappointment, “but you haven’t invited any freaks.”¹⁵ Like those she invited to her own gatherings, Draper modeled herself after “a freak,” and her interest in the bizarre was known and remarked upon. In 1924, in the *Daily Sunday News*, Bernadine Szold described “a sensation . . . Muriel Draper, wearing a white velvet gown, draped up in the front, with a flowing cape of Venetian lace, also went about with one hand encased in a white kid boxing glove. Nothing less. No one had the courage to ask why, someone suggested that her hand was injured,

¹⁴ Fahlman, “The Great Draper Woman,” 33.

¹⁵ George Christy, “Always Have a Freak at Your Parties,” *Cosmopolitan* 150, no. 5 (May 1961): 24.

which might have annoyed the spectacular Mrs. Draper, whose effects are always sophisticated and chic to a degree, and exist for no other purpose other than her own amusement.”¹⁶ Draper’s good friend, Max Ewing, would frequently comment on her wardrobe in his letters, describing her Poiret evening dresses, including one worn to a 1930 Beaux Arts Ball. Ewing would bemoan what he saw as a deterioration in her style that accompanied the Depression in 1933 but would find cause to celebrate when Draper was given a new wardrobe, one she accessorized to make her own, by Blanche Knopf, who was responsible as president alongside her husband for the influential publishing house Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.¹⁷ This demonstrates Draper’s ability to creatively adapt unideal materials into a unique and highly personal style.

Like any fashion icon, Draper had a signature look, and central to it was her hat or turban. Sometimes, these headdresses would be described in ways suited to the image of an elegant hostess, as in 1927, when Geraldyn Dismond wrote in her column “New York Society” how Draper was “perfectly gorgeous in a white turban and a long, full vividly hand-blocked dress.”¹⁸ But some articles celebrate her hats, and therefore her, as peculiar: under the bold 1935 headline “Old Stockings Made Hat for Muriel Draper,” it was reported that Draper commanded ““Clothes should be fun,”” describing her creative impulse to “invent new ways of assembling things and utilizing odds and ends” which resulted in her stockinged turban.¹⁹ Her hats played a role in her

¹⁶ *Daily News*, December 21, 1924, 5.

¹⁷ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 126.

¹⁸ Geraldyn Dismond, “New York Society: The Week-end Formals,” *The Pittsburgh Courier*, February 19, 1927, 6.

¹⁹ *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, September 30, 1935, 2.

memories too. Draper recounts, in the famous scene from her memoir, when meeting Henry James, how he had remarked on the cruelty of her white satin hat with love birds.²⁰ Also in *Music at Midnight* Draper recalls a dramatic moment, when, confined to her London home during the beginnings of World War I, facing wartime restrictions as well as her family's desperate financial woes that preceded the onset of the violence, John McMulin had brought a man who made hats out of feather dusters and faded curtains to her home, and he "fashioned lovely nonsense" for her to wear.²¹ The author of a 1929 article in *Town & Country* described the many ways he had heard Draper described, including amongst his lengthy list of epithets "that she is a dangerous Nietzschean disguised as a turbaned Madonna."²² Ewing, who frequently incorporated ironic references into his letters by pasting decontextualized news clippings onto the sheet, would once send Draper an announcement for the book, *Heaven is a Hat* (Fig. 7). So important were her hats, several are preserved in Draper's archive today.

For Draper, fashion was not only playful, it was political. When she went to Russia, she wrote about the state of Russian women, commenting on their lifestyle, including their clothing. Returning from her trip, she maintained a bobbed haircut that

²⁰ Muriel Draper, *Music at Midnight* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1929), 89.

²¹ Draper, *Music at Midnight*, 230.

²² "About People We Know," *Town & Country* 84, no. 4006 (April 15, 1929), 47.

had been popularized in the USSR, and among her most popular lecture tour subjects was one that spoke to socialist ideals, “We All Wear Clothes.”²³

Draper was most able to differentiate herself not through dress but through a trait she was born with: full lips. Frequent comments are made about Draper’s mouth, and it appears she consciously emphasized the feature with makeup and gesture. Marian Seldes recollects how she always noted Draper’s lipstick and how Draper would bare her teeth when she smiled.²⁴ Seldes and others remarked on how this striking feature made her both unusual but also uniquely beautiful. As much as Draper evaded any common description, as has been described above, those authors who ventured to do so consistently returned to the subject of her voice. As the leader of a salon, and host of a radio program, it is hardly a surprise that she was a charismatic speaker, and by emphasizing her lips and mouth, she subtly brought attention to her talent.

As an interior designer, Draper also styled herself, and her image as a salon hostess, through her home environment, where we can presume she hosted her salons. Draper’s precarious finances and the charged relationships she maintained with several of her landlords guaranteed her ever-shifting address which included apartments on 38th Street, 40th, and 89th. A set of photographs taken by Walker Evans

²³ “Muriel Draper,” *Intimate Circles: American Women in the Arts*, Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, <http://brbl-archive.library.yale.edu/exhibitions/awia/gallery/draper.html>.

St. Louis Globe-Democrat, September 30, 1935, 21.

²⁴ Marian Seldes, “Marian Seldes Remembers Muriel Draper,” May 24, 2009, Youtube, video, 2:56, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vR4NEDTkIpU>.

on May 29, 1934, seemingly in the aftermath of an evening of entertainment, allows us to conjure the space in which Draper cohered her guests (Fig. 8 and Fig. 9). In some ways, these photographs act as a pseudo-portrait of Draper, capturing her identity through the environment she commanded. Descriptions of Draper's living space contrast with the immaculate interiors she would have been responsible for as an interior decorator. Observers emphasize its deterioration and decay and even citing "yawning holes in the ceiling."²⁵ It may have been this sense of poverty that Max Ewing intended to suggest when he mailed her a postcard of a painting by the nineteenth-century Russian realist painter, Klavdy Lebedev, retitled to relate it to "A scene of a Draper Thursday for Incurables" (Fig. 10). Although devoid of figures, there is the palimpsest of life in Evans's photos which draw upon the precedent of sixteenth-century Dutch still lives and the techniques of *memento mori*. One image of the mantelpiece focuses on a dramatic cow skull, perched above wasted candle tapers and match packs, partially finished glasses of wine—one of which has been broken, a crescent from its rim dangerously resting on the table—and the withered greenery in a bouquet. The skull recalls those embraced by modernists, most notably Georgia O'Keeffe, who used them to decorate her deep windowsills in her home at Ghost Ranch in New Mexico.²⁶ In addition to performing a decorative role for Draper, the skulls likely had a unique symbolic significance for her. Evans would write to Draper about finding a skull on the beach of an uninhabited island, and thinking of her,

²⁵ Fahlman, "The Great Draper Woman," 34.

²⁶ Wanda Corn, "Artists' Homes and Studios: A Special Kind of Archive," *American Art* 19, no. 1 (2005): 8.

sending it as a gift.²⁷ It may be this very skull that he later photographed. Perhaps such allusions to death were purposeful, meant to lend an air of gravitas to the salon discussions.

At the same time as Evans's photographs endow the space with weighty significance, they are rich with suggestions of pleasure, joy, and exuberance too. The empty bottles on the table at the fore suggest that the discussions were fueled by alcohol. This sense of abandon is also captured in two drawings by Mark Tobey representing the mornings after such events (Fig. 11 and Fig. 12). While one drawing features Draper awaking in her bed, alongside a male figure, another captures her stretched on the couch, with other guests reclining around her. Much like the Evans photograph, this second drawing incorporates remnants from the night before, including a collection of bottles and glassware on tables. Between the central and right window, Tobey could be representing the iconic skull as an ovoid form with curling lines to resemble antlers, as it would have been positioned in a different apartment. That the figures have lost track of time and fallen asleep, their reveling extending across multiple days, suggests the captivating power Draper's events held.

Another photograph in Evans's series captures the room from a different angle, its title referencing the piece of furniture at its center: a throne chair. Draper's correspondents frequently referred to her "throne," a chair in her apartment from which we can presume she led her salon. Such an object emphasizes the power and control Draper would have possessed while presiding over an event. In one frantic letter, Draper's close friend Ellery Larsson reported that against all odds, he was

²⁷ Walker Evans to Muriel Draper, Monday, May 23, Box 3, Folder 99, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

convinced he had encountered her very chair being unloaded from a van on Fifth Avenue, arguing that despite it having blue fabric and a newly tufted back, along with pale pink paint, that it was her original throne, for he would “of course . . . recognize it anywhere, any time, in any colour of upholstery or disguise of paint.”²⁸ He recalls its original state, as “the little gold settee which used to be in front of the window in the drawing-room of 53rd Street, and in the upper hall, between the front and back drawing-rooms of Lexington Avenue!” Although it seems impossible that this chance encounter on a Manhattan sidewalk was with Draper’s actual chair, the note underscores how this important space and memory of it, lived on in imaginary form for Larsson even after it had been dismantled. The photograph reveals the chair’s style, one of ornate luxury that complemented the opulent sheen of silk window coverings and a profusion of floral decorations. These were the types of fixtures that most frequently occupied Draper during her time as an interior decorator, according to what remains of her sketches in her archive. Among the work are photographs and clippings that seem to have served as her inspiration, including a *House & Garden* article on the furniture of Louis XV that illustrates the same rococo carving seen in Draper’s throne.²⁹ Draper’s talents as an interior decorator were even acknowledged in the 1921 renewal of a lease for her apartment on Eighty-Ninth Street which she signed under the condition that she would undertake its redecoration, including its

²⁸ Raymond E. F. Larsson to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 6, Folder 169, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

²⁹ Mr. and Mrs. G. Glen Gould, “The Furniture of Luis XV: One of the Most Exquisite Periods in French Furniture History Lies in this Reign—1715–1774,” *House & Garden* 45, no. 1 (January 1924): 77, 104, Box 15, Folder 520, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

wallpapering and painting.³⁰ Draper seems to have gone to lengths to guarantee that her salon was well-outfitted. After her time entertaining musicians in London, and despite her financial situation, she set about leasing a piano for \$38 each month in 1925 for her apartment on East 40th Street.³¹ This grandeur, in combination with the sense of dilapidation and disorderliness discussed previously, would have created a jarring space of highs and lows. Much like Draper herself, her home environment was one revealing contrasts, refusing to be easily defined.

Finally, Draper was perhaps best able to style herself, defy normative images asserted by the press, and control her reputation in her lifetime through her writing. Like her contemporaries who led salons, including Mabel Dodge and Gertrude Stein, Draper authored a memoir—*Music at Midnight*—dedicated to her life in London, prior to 1915. A bestseller, news reports referred to the book as evidence of Draper's renown across America and Europe, and it frequently figured in her correspondence, in which her friends would note their encounters with admirers of it. Despite this, the book covered only Draper's time in London, begging for a sequel and forcing even her contemporary readers to imagine her style as a hostess after she had arrived in America between 1915, when it cuts off, and when the book was published, fourteen years later.

Draper brought her salon style to New York City in the aftermath of the First World War in a time when salons were an especially popular venue for culture

³⁰ Muriel Draper to Harris, Vought & Co., September 22, 1921, Box 4, Folder 132, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

³¹ WM. Knabe & Co. to Muriel Draper, November 1925, Box 5, Folder 149, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

makers. After experiencing Mabel Dodge's salon in Florence, Draper had launched her own in London. It was upon her return to New York City from London, and the simultaneous departure of Dodge, who had reestablished her Florentine role in New York, for Taos, New Mexico, that Draper was called upon to fill a void. Salons of the post-war era were most commonly hosted by women as a means in which the traditionally feminized domestic realm was being reconstituted as an intellectual, learned environment. Among the most celebrated salon hosts of the period was Gertrude Stein who brought together Parisian luminaries from Pablo Picasso to Ernest Hemingway along with the many visitors to the City of Lights. Such salons, held in private, had a mythic quality, and their status as an unknowable inner sanctum continues to attract attention today, as Tirza Latimer demonstrates in her discussion of a Faith Ringgold quilt that reimagines the interior of Stein's salon.³² Although photographs help document the details of Stein's salon, as Latimer and Wanda Corn demonstrated in their 2011 exhibition and catalogue, Ringgold's 1991 representation of the space is unfaithful to the historical record, incorporating figures who never attended but that she imagines would have had fruitful discussions with Stein, including the African American artists Zora Neale Hurston, James Baldwin, Richard Wright, and Langston Hughes.³³

Stein's precedent was not just a generative force for later artists; inspired by her, New York City's tastemakers, including Carl Van Vechten; Walter and Louise

³² Tirza True Latimer, "'We Can Make It Come True': Faith Ringgold's Dinner at Gertrude Stein's," *English Language Notes* 51, no. 1 (2013): 129–35.

³³ Wanda M. Corn, Tirza True Latimer, Contemporary Jewish Museum (San Francisco, Calif.), and National Portrait Gallery (Smithsonian Institution), *Seeing Gertrude Stein: Five Stories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

Arensberg; Robert Winthrop Chanler; Virgil Thomson; Julien Levy; Florine, Ettie, and Carrie Stettheimer; and A'Lelia Walker among others, brought together their peers for intellectual conversations in the form of a salon. The practice bourgeoned in New York in the nineteen-teens when American expatriates returned in the wake of the first world war, bringing the European fashion with them.

Draper socialized with many other salon hosts, most frequently Van Vechten, suggesting a relationship of conviviality and shared values between them. But the competition between salon hosts is also evident in her correspondence. Draper reputedly maintained a more tense relationship with the Stettheimer sisters, friction possibly inherited from Mabel Dodge who would write to Draper that she didn't "find any amusement in Stettheimer affections," and would express her dislike, in the context, for "worn out sophisticated people or new un-worn-out effortful sophisticates."³⁴ When Draper's salon was less active, or when she traveled abroad, several wrote to her of their attempts to make up for her absence, including James Amster, who was managing the antiques department for Bergdorf Goodman at the time, when he noted that others had failed to have success when they "tried to recover the 53rd – 40th Street salon idea" including her "friend Mrs. Lindley" and Esther Murphy Strachey, concluding in all capitals, "you really have been MISSED."³⁵ Nonetheless, he found that Julien Levy's salon "is progressing nicely," venturing "I bet they are glad you are away." Kirstein would express his faithfulness to Draper,

³⁴ Mabel Dodge Luhan to Muriel Draper, July 1933, Box 7, Folder 218, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

³⁵ James Amster to Muriel Draper, February 12, 1935, Box 1, Folder 3, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

writing that ‘Lorna is “taking over” “your” “Thursdays” – but I haven’t been yet.’³⁶ The loyalties Draper’s associates felt for her salon underscores the unique environment she fostered.

Although no record of salon discussions survives, correspondence in her archive endows Draper with an identity as a conversationalist and implies the powerful sway she held over her acquaintances. We can understand their letters to her as an attempt to maintain a virtual salon; when distance separated Draper from her intellectual peers, the conversation could be continued with pen and paper. As a masterful writer and communicator, Draper gave her correspondents a gift, one they sought to reciprocate. Some did so with newsy, gossipy letters of their own; others crafted fine prose, incorporating poems into their notes or sharing attachments of their writings; and finally, some illustrated the sheets of correspondence with art. Many would ask her how it could have been that they had maintained a daily correspondence with her. Others wrote her without hearing back, expressing their yearning for a response. Attempts to foster an enduring correspondence with Draper were sometimes made in vain: only six letters survive in Draper’s archive from D. Tryfillis, who grew increasingly desperate from his first inquiry, which he refers to as “just a note”³⁷ to his fifth one days later, when he fears “I do hope you not think me too persistent but you are the only person I have met who could do really much good to me; it is because you know me so well,—I feel much consoled before your presence, I see you, before

³⁶ Lincoln Kirstein to Muriel Draper, October 26, 1934, Box 5, Folder 157, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

³⁷ D. Tryfillis to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 10, Folder 313, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

my minds' eye,"³⁸ to his final letter, which he concludes with a "goodbye,"³⁹ but begins with "I think you are beautiful, perfectly beautiful." Similarly, Irving Drutman not only wrote Draper poems, jealously evaluated her relationships with other men, and sent her gifts of charcoal gum folded within the letter sheets, but also explicitly referenced his desire to marry her in numerous letters.⁴⁰ Both Max Ewing and Ellery Larsson would express their effusive passion for her by simply writing her name repeatedly as the content of their letters, filling entire sheets, and, in one of Ewing's letters titled "A Perpetual Potion," suggesting the name "Muriel" was the sole ingredient (Fig. 13, Fig. 14, and Fig. 15). Powerful men, such as Samuel Courtauld, would praise her intellect, humbly referring to how it surpassed their own.⁴¹ Larsson would quote Tobey, who remarked to him that "one afternoon with Muriel is worth a year in France."⁴² Draper's charisma was perhaps never more ebulliently expressed than on August 5, 1925 when Stanley Field wrote to her that after her "last bit of fairy-

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Irving Drutman to Muriel Draper, October 12, 1941, Box 3, Folder 95, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Irving Drutman to Muriel Draper, October 21, 1941, Box 3, Folder 95, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁴¹ Samuel Courtauld to Muriel Draper, May 26, 1934, Box 2, Folder 51, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁴² Raymond E. F. Larsson to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 6, Folder 198, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

tale,” “I don’t know whether you are a magi, a seer—or a child, but whatever else you are, I know you are the last incarnation of the dramatic muse.”⁴³

Like the attempt to maintain Draper’s presence, and the stimulation of her salon, from afar through correspondence, it was a common practice among Draper’s associates to procure portraits of her, which performed the role of simulacra, recreating her presence. The desire of many to possess and display a fitting likeness of Draper demonstrates the inspirational role she performed. Several letters from Stanley Field describe his expectation and anticipation for a commissioned portrait dedicated to Draper. When it finally arrived, the letters continue, one describing the image as cute and adorable, and another relating where he had chosen to place it so that he could easily see it when looking up (presumably from his desk).⁴⁴ In some instances, Draper herself initiated commissions that would commemorate her friendships. Kirstein would send Draper the catalogue for an exhibition of artwork by a “Mr. Styka,” likely Adam Styka, offering to arrange for her to have her portrait done by him.⁴⁵ Ultimately, it seems they decided to jointly commission a portrait that would

⁴³ Stanley Field to Muriel Draper, August 8, 1925, Box 2, Folder 47, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁴⁴ Stanley Field to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 4, Folder 113, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Stanley Field to Muriel Draper, Wednesday, Box 4, Folder 114, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Stanley Field to Muriel Draper, Thursday, Box 4, Folder 114, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁴⁵ Lincoln Kirstein to Muriel Draper, April 20, 1942, Box 5, Folder 160, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

depict them together.⁴⁶ In one notable example, Draper was painted by Romaine Brooks, a wealthy expatriate artist who lived primarily in Paris and whose painted portraits—referred to as her “Amazons”—most frequently capture the lesbian members of the salon of her partner, Natalie Barney (Fig. 16).⁴⁷ From late 1935 to May of 1938, Brooks resided in New York, and beginning in February of 1938, Draper sat for her. Betsy Fahlman speculates the publisher Samuel Putnam was responsible for recommending Draper’s salon to Brooks who would have sought out an equivalent experience to Barney’s salon while she was away from Paris.⁴⁸ Before Brooks had made plans to travel to New York, she was already aware of Draper, and wrote to her complementing *Music at Midnight* in 1933.⁴⁹ In New York, Brooks painted two portraits, Draper’s and a portrait of Van Vechten two years prior, in 1936. Although Draper appears to have been unable to pay for the portrait and its history is unrecorded, beyond a letter from Alice de la Mar, a mining heiress and patron of the arts, wrote to Draper from Paris in 1946, describing how the portrait was then hanging in Brooks’s apartment, ultimately, it seems Van Vechten acquired the painting for himself, and it now resides his archive today.⁵⁰ These portraits served as avatars of

⁴⁶ Lincoln Kirstein to Muriel Draper, April 25, 1942, Box 5, Folder 160, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁴⁷ Whitney Chadwick, *Amazons in the Drawing Room: The Art of Romaine Brooks* (Berkeley: University of California, 2000).

⁴⁸ Fahlman, "The Great Draper Woman," 36.

⁴⁹ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 118.

⁵⁰ Alice de la Mar to Muriel Draper, 1946, Box 2, Folder 62, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Draper in her absence, for a growing number of admirers who wished to be in her presence, and they also took three-dimensional form.

Nathaniel and May Sanders, Draper's brother and sister-in-law, would express their desire to acquire a bust Jo Davidson had created of Draper, impatiently asking in a letter to Draper, "God's sake can't you get Jo Davidson to quote me a price on your bust? . . . I asked him on the Ile de France but he was just hoity-toity. I don't want to live any longer without it."⁵¹ It seems Davidson, the sculptor of presidents and the period's most influential businessmen and celebrities, initially chose to render Draper, like his other famous sitters, in order to enhance his own name.⁵² The bust was featured in Davidson's exhibition at Wildenstein Galleries in 1922 and was prominently illustrated in an article on his work in *The International Studio* (Fig. 17).⁵³ Through the image of the bust, Draper's visage would have become known to the art world afar. The artist worked in a realist style and was known for his success accurately capturing his sitters. While the article begins by describing Davidson's sympathetic rendering of Gertrude Stein, its author, the painter Guy Pene du Bois, finds that "the portrait of Muriel Draper will shock with the force of the ego it

⁵¹ Nathaniel Sanders to Muriel Draper, July 25, 1934, Box 9, Folder 280, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁵² Another photograph in Draper's archive shows a bust by Roy Sheldon, and the artist has inscribed a note at its base, dedicating the image to Draper. Sheldon's figuration of Draper bears a striking resemblance to Davidson's, a carved onyx bust with the same distinctive head wrap. But, in contrast, Sheldon makes Draper's lips fuller and tilts her gaze upward, emphasizing her jawline and cheekbones. Did Sheldon choose to render Draper in order to compete for an equal standing with Davidson?

⁵³ "Beyond Good and Evil," *The New York Times*, April 9, 1922, 131.

Guy Pene du Bois, "Art by the Way," *The International Studio* 76 (November 1922).

presents. There is no question of doubt here. We are not given an opportunity to fill in vague moments with concrete matter of our creation. We are very plainly told that this is the woman. Anything that we may try to add to the original statement will be thrown off.”⁵⁴ Davidson was using his ability to capture Draper’s striking look as an advertisement of his skill.

While Nathaniel Sanders initially sought out the bust, it seems he ultimately was forced to make do without, compromising for a photograph of the bust, for he wrote to Draper: ‘I have the framed photograph of the Jo D bust where I can see it by simply “lifting” my eyes,’ a report of his hanging that bears a striking resemblance to that of Stanley Field’s.⁵⁵ Another photograph of the bust, a large format print, is preserved in Gertrude Stein’s archive at Beinecke today, and it seems likely that she kept the image as a commemoration of her friendship with both the sculptor and the sitter (Fig. 18). In the article in *The International Studio*, the bust is shown like an object, forward facing, severed at the neck, and silhouetted against a blank background. Eerily, Davidson had elected not to carve pupils into Draper’s eyes, and the bust appeared haunting and lifeless in the magazine. Instead, Stein’s photograph, and possibly the one belonging to Nathaniel Sanders as well, showed the bust positioned in profile, much more like how Draper posed herself, and thus a more lifelike and evocative portrayal of her.

The exchange went both ways, and Draper’s correspondents hoped she would remember them in the same way. The artist Ivan Opffer, who published characters in

⁵⁴ Du Bois, “Art by the Way,” 181.

⁵⁵ Nathaniel Sanders to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 281, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

The Dial and *Bookman*, would send to Muriel a photograph of his drawing of Larsson in 1934 (Fig. 19).⁵⁶ And in periwinkle crayon Marsden Hartley would write a letter—in third person—to Draper atop a drawing Opffer had made of him in red crayon (Fig. 20).⁵⁷ Hartley even adds his own hand, embellishing Opffer's drawing by highlighting his eyeball and cravat. These instances demonstrate Draper's friends' desire for her to have a visual portrayal of their visage that would serve as a substitute for their presence in their absence from her salon too.

While we cannot know and recreate the ephemeral, real-time discussions that occurred in Draper's salon and garnered such a devoted following, we can postulate about their subjects based upon Draper's intellectual investments. Draper's salon was unique in many ways, chief among them her philosophical slant. George Gurdjieff, the Armenian mystic who prolifically authored many books as guides to awakening the conscious, referred to Draper as his "premier friend in America."⁵⁸ While he lived afar in Versailles, France, he maintained a profile in America through his official representative for a period, Alfred Orage, and his many devoted followers. Jon Woodson has written about Gurdjieff's influence among Harlem Renaissance cognoscenti including Aaron Douglas, Richmond Barthé, Harold Jackman, and most notably Jean Toomer, but his theories also held sway for other circles of New York

⁵⁶ Ivan Opffer to Muriel Draper, 1934, Box 7, Folder 241, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁵⁷ Marsden Hartley to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 4, Folder 138, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁵⁸ Mark Tobey to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 307, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

modernists and among his followers were Donald Corley, Jane Heap, and Mabel Dodge.⁵⁹ Also involved were those who were passionate sponsors of artists, such as Lincoln Kirstein, co-founder of the New York City ballet, and Carl Zigrosser, the director of New York City's Weyhe Gallery in the 1920s and 30s, who would write an obituary for Gurdjieff. Draper offered her home for weekly, and for a period even biweekly, sessions that gathered his New York disciples. She was close with Orage, serving as the godmother of his children,⁶⁰ and initially was his administrative assistant, collecting dues and maintaining membership lists, until a falling out between Gurdjieff and Orage meant that the mystical leader entrusted Draper with "The Book" and authorized her to perform readings from it at the weekly sessions. Draper received many letters from Gurdjieff's visitors in France, acknowledging the philosopher's inquiries after her.⁶¹ Toomer would even write to Draper that after Gurdjieff had suffered an accident in which he could only remember three people, Draper was among them.⁶² Draper's affiliation with Gurdjieff offers concrete evidence about the intellectual space she created; a discussion would include weighty topics such as those related to the conscious.

⁵⁹ Jon Woodson, *To Make a New Race: Gurdjieff, Toomer, and the Harlem Renaissance* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999), 9.

⁶⁰ Alfred Orage to Muriel Draper, October 7, 1930, Box 8, Folder 245, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁶¹ Raymond E. F. Larsson to Muriel Draper, September 1926, Box 6, Folder 180, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁶² Jean Toomer to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 10, Folder 313, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

It was Draper's role as a salon hostess that brought her into contact with artists. Like other salon hostesses of the period, notably the Stettheimer sisters, Draper provided an intimate space for artists to express their opinions and experiment with their ideas. The salon would also have been a point of inspiration for these artists, where they were introduced to and inspired by other attendees. Draper not only linked herself with dynamos of the European musical world, as her story in *Music at Midnight* tells, she also was an unsung sponsor of young American artists. Writing biographical articles for *Creative Art*, Draper was responsible for bringing attention to several underrecognized artists including Robert Locher, Charles Demuth's lifelong partner.⁶³ She held an expansive definition of art, as her typescript for an essay, "Art," demonstrates. In it, she argues that engineers ought to be considered artists alongside the day's greatest modernists. She finds that radiojet air pumps have "elements of design eminently adaptable for legs of tables and backs of chairs" and that "spur gears of steel, brass and pitch iron offer startling possibilities for textile design."⁶⁴ Some of Draper's interior designs reflect a more radical, modernist taste, using industrial materials for aesthetic ends, as would have been in keeping with the contemporary embrace of Art Deco design, such as her tin cylinder light; small steel trestle hoop table which used black glass; and her steel finish trestle table that had thick glass, brass propeller screws, brass rosettes, and a nickel border (Fig. 21, Fig. 22, and Fig. 23). While the majority of her sketches feature more traditional fixtures, her typescript suggests that they would have reflected the tastes of her commissioners rather than her

⁶³ Muriel Draper, "Robert Locher," *Creative Art* 9, no. 1 (July 1, 1931): 53.

⁶⁴ Muriel Draper, "Art," typescript, Muriel Draper Papers, Box 11, Folder 349, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

own design preferences. Her radical argument in favor of redefining art to encompass design and engineering work suggests how open Draper was to debating traditional classifications of aesthetic merit.

While she did not refer to herself as an artist, Draper's interior design sketches more closely resemble impressionistic work than what might be expected of the job: pen and ink drawings. Instead, her femininely hued watercolor renderings have a whimsical air that in many ways recalls the faux-naïve style of her fellow-salon hostess, Florine Stettheimer (Fig. 24 and Fig. 25). While Draper was diverse in her own production and interior design work, she was equally varied in her artistic preferences, embracing a range of media, including sculpture, painting, and photography, and a diversity of styles, both conservative as well as modern and abstract. But she was not indiscriminating. In one letter, Kirstein refers to his brother-in-law, the painter Paul Cadmus, about whom he regretfully notes, "I wish you liked better."⁶⁵ It was a sign of success for a young artist to achieve Draper's endorsement.

Draper's good friend, Ellery Larsson, who was already well regarded as a writer and poet, would send her some of his crayon drawings, tentatively testing her opinions of his visual art capabilities under the guise of instructions to tear the first one he sent her apart (Fig. 26).⁶⁶ He expressed his joy at her positive response that did

⁶⁵ Lincoln Kirstein to Muriel Draper, August 25, 1944, Box 5, Folder 161, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁶⁶ Raymond E. F. Larsson to Muriel Draper, September 29, 1938, Box 6, Folder 192, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

‘too much honor in finding it “bewildering.”’⁶⁷ It was likely Draper’s endorsement that inspired Larsson to share his drawings with others and become increasingly bold in marketing them. He would attempt to sell them to his and Draper’s mutual friend, Alice de la Mar, and seek out James Johnson Sweeney, a curator at the Museum of Modern Art, with the hopes that they warranted exhibition.⁶⁸ At the same time, Larsson continued to share his work with Draper, and 150 drawings by him were among the first set of objects Draper gave to the library for her archive in 1951.⁶⁹

She facilitated connections between wealthy patrons and struggling artists, bringing artists such as Donald Corley commissions from the likes of Samuel Courtauld.⁷⁰ And during her tenure as an interior designer, she had a special advantage at this, requesting that Joseph Stella send his work to her office for her to show to her clients.⁷¹

Her correspondence demonstrates her and her friends’ attention to art. Cary Ross would write to Draper of his attempts to introduce Alfred Stieglitz to the artwork

⁶⁷ Raymond E. F. Larsson to Muriel Draper, October 9, 1938, Box 6, Folder 192, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁶⁸ Ellery Larsson to Gil, n.d., Box 2, Folder 63, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁶⁹ Donald Gallup to Muriel Draper, August 1, 1951, Box 10, Folder 337, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁷⁰ Donald Corley to Muriel Draper, June 21, 1925, Box 2, Folder 45, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁷¹ Muriel Draper to Joseph Stella, February 10, Box 9, Folder 297, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

of Zelda Fitzgerald, the wife of the well-known writer.⁷² After his success arranging for an exhibition of Fitzgerald's work, Ross would continue to rely on Draper, requesting she contribute as the architect and engineer of the exhibit, working pro bono.⁷³ The extensive letters she exchanged with Lincoln Kirstein are rich with musings on art ranging from Latin American murals to the French photographer, Henri Cartier-Bresson. In one striking note, Kirstein would recount his visit to Constantin Brancusi's studio for Draper, lyrically describing his most recent sculpture as being "like black velvet poured into a cream of granite," and adorning the letter with illustrative sketches (Fig. 27).⁷⁴ Both shared an eye for emerging figures, identifying lesser known artists and seeking to foster their introductions to New York's moguls. Kirstein would introduce Draper to the noted photographer Walker Evans, who later took the aforementioned images of her apartment.⁷⁵ And Draper, in turn, would refer Carl Van Vechten—who himself was a photographer—to Evans's work.⁷⁶ Like reading recommendations, which also occupied the minds of Draper and her correspondents, shared aesthetic tastes were the foundations of friendships and fresh artistic inspiration was a means of connecting deeper with others. As a result,

⁷² Cary Ross to Muriel Draper, June 29, 1932, Box 8, Folder 263, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁷³ Cary Ross to Muriel Draper, January 15, 1934, Box 8, Folder 263, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁷⁴ Lincoln Kirstein to Muriel Draper, June 29, 1937, Box 5, Folder 158, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁷⁵ Fahlman, "The Great Draper Woman," 35.

⁷⁶ Muriel Draper to Carl Van Vechten, November 20, 1930, Box 41, Folder 540, Carl Van Vechten Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

emerging artists were introduced to patrons and supporters, leading Evans to describe Draper as “the great mother of all artists.”⁷⁷

While some of the discussions between Draper and her closest associates refer to now-obscure artistic figures, others seem prescient. Most notably, in an exchange beginning in October 1938 with Larsson, who had moved to Florida to manage a newspaper, he lyrically describes his new home, noting race relations as a startling contrast to his experiences in New York and California. He urges Draper to send Walker Evans to the South to document it. This discussion suggests Larsson was unaware of his friend’s work two years prior, in 1936, when Evans cooperated with the writer James Agee to document Hale County, Alabama. Their resulting social commentary was so provocative, *Fortune Magazine* declined to publish it, and it was only in 1941, three years after Larsson’s correspondence with Draper, that the work reached the public and was published in the now renowned book, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*.⁷⁸ Larsson and Draper saw the potential the South held as inspiration for an artist like Walker Evans, envisioning a body of work that, although already realized, remains a touchstone in the history of American photography today.

From artists, to patrons, to critics, Draper built relationships with a cohort of people invested in the artworld and she fueled its dynamism, transforming it into a network and facilitating connections between individual members with like interests. She demonstrated a keen aesthetic awareness when playing matchmaker, drawing links between unlikely characters, both the known and the unknown, for inspirational

⁷⁷ Fahlman, “The Great Draper Woman,” 35.

⁷⁸ James Agee and Walker Evans, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941).

results. Given Draper's intimacy with the art world, it is no surprise that she became the subject of artistic representations, some of which would earn her approval and others of which would not.

Perhaps it was the fear that these dynamic artists and thinkers who participated in her salon would overshadow her own legacy that led Draper to ultimately deny explicit mention of her role as a salon hostess in her archive. A salon hostess was someone whose identity became a collaged amalgam, reflecting those who he or she were in conversation with more than the inner self. Despite Draper's effort to define her own identity through a memoir, the book did more to promote the image of Draper's associates than Draper herself. In it, Draper describes many eccentric personalities, mostly music aficionados associated with her then-husband, the singer Paul Draper, who frequented her salon in the British capital. She capitalized upon these personal connections, writing articles such as "Buffeting in the South Winds: Some Memories of Norman Douglass" and "When I Met Henry James" for *Harper's*, in anticipation of the book's release, which offered a taste of what was to come. While these articles proved Draper's connections with respected writers of the day, she cast herself as secondary to their super-human intellect.

As an interior designer, she received attention in ways that similarly elided her own modernist, avant-garde tendencies with those of her patrons. Her reputation was read and understood in tandem with those of her clients. She cooperated with Paul Chalfin, a designer best known for marshaling a large team of artists, including Draper as well as Robert Chanler, Samuel Yellin, Robert E. Locher, Gaston Lachaise, and Alexander Stirling Calder, to creatively fashion components of the extensive and

multifaceted estate, Vizcaya, belonging to Miami's James Dearing.⁷⁹ For the patron, Chanler, and the artists involved, the social spectacle of the project served to enhance their reputations as much as the finished artistic product. Similarly, Draper's own designs for the Whitney Studio Club were prominently featured in *Vogue*, in an article that highlighted her creative use of brilliant colors—turquoise walls, sapphire and red violet carpets, and pale green yellow lined curtains were used in the office; orange walls, sapphire carpet, blue webbed seats were features of the writing room; and gray walls bordered with scarlet blue and yellow (Fig. 28).⁸⁰ Blue and scarlet webbed chair seats appeared in the library. Draper's own artistic voice became one of a chorus, reflecting the tastes of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney and her other artistically inclined patrons and coworkers. Her extraordinary and vibrant designs masked her personal biography.

In a similar way, many of Draper's friends and closest associates were as much defined by the intellects of those who they chose to sponsor as they were by their own minds. Among Draper's closest friends was Lincoln Kirstein, who, among his many other significant contributions to the New York art world, was intimately associated with the creation of the New York City Ballet and celebrated for his genius recruiting the talent, George Balanchine, to America. Although not a ballet dancer himself, Kirstein came to embody the profession. Tastemakers have similarities to collectors,

⁷⁹ Eve M. Kahn, Joel M. Hoffman, Lauren Drapala, Mary Betlejeski, J. Winthrop Aldrich, and Robert Winthrop Chanler, *Robert Winthrop Chanler: Discovering the Fantastic*, ed. Gina Wouters and Andrea Gollin (Miami, Fla.: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, 2016), 135.

⁸⁰ "Decorations: The Whitney Studio Club Offers Hospitality to Greenwich Village Art Students," *Vogue* 52, no. 11 (December 1, 1918): 53.

circulating in spheres of influence and accumulating creative productions. Among her friends and associates, people like Stanley Field and Samuel Courtauld, also would come to be identified with those artists they patronized. These comparisons to other tastemakers and collectors serve as corollaries, revealing how Draper was operating in a common practice of building relationships with others; but they also explain why she was so difficult to define, her identity being an amalgamation of the personalities of her associates. Despite her best efforts to control her image, Draper's role as a salon hostess meant others too had a desire and investment in offering their own versions of her identity.

Chapter 3

CASE STUDY I: DRAWING DRAPER

As Draper's peers sought to understand her, they put their hand to the page. Sketching and drawing, or drafting Draper, it is as if her friends are formulating various hypotheses about her identity. Many of these sketches and portrayals appear in her letters, and they represent a chief way in which her correspondents would demonstrate their respect for her. This artwork brings Draper's world—both its reality and an imagined one—to life. A drawing by Wyndham Lewis claims to capture the moment he “views Moolie for the first Time” (Fig. 29). The cubist representation of Draper with arcs and spirals emerging from her angular body, and winged projection at her feet, shows her as a supernatural object of fascination. The artist captures his own awe by showing his eyes bulging from his head. While the life of the letter is unknown, it seems to have passed from the artist to John Quinn given that an inscription in the lower left corner proprietarily asserts, “LOANED BY JOHN QUINN,” who critic Walter Pach referred to as having “probably the greatest modern collection in this country or in Europe,” which included, among its over two-thousand-pieces, work by Americans such as Maurice Prendergast and Arthur Davies and Europeans such as Picasso and Cezanne when it was exhibited in a 1926 memorial exhibition.⁸¹ Draper's image, loosely sketched by Lewis, was clearly prized by this art collector, but it seems Draper chose not return this depiction of herself to Quinn despite his insistence, and its preservation in her archive suggests it held a significant value to her as well.

⁸¹ Walter Pach, “Mr. Quinn as a Collector,” *Memorial Exhibition of Representative Works Selected from the John Quinn Collection* (New York: Art Center, 1926), 5.

While the epistolary remains of her devotees are abundant, some of these mini-archives reflect her most ardent admirers. For Mark Tobey, Draper was clearly a muse. Sixty-two drawings of Draper by Tobey survive in her archive, many of them caricatures. The sketches allow us to see how, when distanced from Draper, Tobey continued to long for her. By incorporating visualizations of Draper into his correspondence, Tobey created a virtual salon that overcame geographic boundaries. Although scholarship on Tobey is largely dedicated to his abstract expressionist works, and the distinctive style known as “white writing,” Tobey’s origins in art were commercial, and after moving to New York City in 1911 he began work as a fashion illustrator for *McCall’s*.⁸² While Tobey may not be remembered as a caricaturist, he drew a portrait of himself which survives in Draper’s archive and above his face scrawled a description: “MARK – The alpine climber – author of Moolie’s Memoir – cartoonist of renown” (Fig. 30). For Tobey, Draper’s influence in his life was intimately connected with his birth as an artist and his identity as a cartoonist.⁸³

⁸² William Chapin Seitz, *Mark Tobey* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1962), 42

⁸³ In part, the omission of Tobey’s caricatures from the art historical record is the result of a lacuna of materials. The period of Tobey’s closest friendship with Draper predated his national, and international renown as an artist, and when he was likely creating these caricatures, he had not been recognized by powerful curators such as Alfred Barr at the Museum of Modern Art who would first see his work at a showing at Romany Marie’s café gallery in Greenwich Village in 1929. No examples of correspondence and artwork remain in Tobey’s own archive from his time in New York, in the 1910s and twenties. Draper’s correspondence with the Yale Library demonstrates that it is no surprise that few of Tobey’s early drawings seem to survive. Reporting on a recent correspondence with Tobey regarding any materials he had preserved related to Marsden Hartley, Donald Gallup, the curator of the Yale University Library, wrote to Draper that ‘he has not so much as lost or thrown away his letters as just “neglected” them, with the result that he has nothing at all of Hartley’s except one small painting of “Pears.”’ As a result, Draper’s preservation of

The resulting cartoons of Draper were a body of work she too connected with her personal identity. Draper's correspondence with the Yale University Library reveals the early history of the preservation of these images and her dogged attempts to include them in her archive. When Draper gave her first collection of artwork, including Larsson's drawings to the library in 1951, the caricatures by Tobey were a subject of discussion, and seemingly misplaced.⁸⁴ Gallup would ask Draper, "Surely you couldn't have given the Tobey caricatures to Lincoln – and what would he have done with them pray?"⁸⁵ That Draper and Gallup were seeking out these drawings demonstrates the importance she invested in them remaining attached to her name and a part of her archive. The drawings' presence in the collection today demonstrates their ultimate success in the hunt.

Draper was an early supporter of Tobey. While the origins of their relationship are unclear, it is certain they were in each other's confidence by 1917 when a portrait of Draper was shown in Tobey's first one-man show, held at Knoedler & Company. At this time, Tobey was experimenting with making his living through refined charcoal portrait commissions, and while this 1917 portrait remains unlocated, it might

Tobey's works serves as an important and rare collection, documenting the artist's early career.

Seitz, *Mark Tobey*, 43, 48, 89, 92.

Donald Gallup to Muriel Draper, March 17, 1952, Box 10, Folder 337, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁸⁴ Donald Gallup to Muriel Draper, August 1, 1951, Box 10, Folder 337, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁸⁵ Donald Gallup to Muriel Draper, March 21, 1952, Box 10, Folder 337, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

have resembled his other realistic portrayals of her in her archive (Fig. 31). Also in the exhibition was a portrait of the operatic singer Mary Garden, described as a patroness of Tobey and Draper's employer for a period of time. It is possible Draper and Tobey were introduced through Garden. Draper and Tobey were pursuing parallel interests, and at this time, when Draper was still working as an interior designer, Tobey received a commission to decorate the apartment of *Vogue* editor Edna Woolman Chase.⁸⁶ His success led him to consider abandoning art for the world of design. While it is unclear if Draper assisted him in the work, they corresponded about interior design and in one letter, Tobey rendered a Parisian interior with descriptions of the cloth that adorned its walls, lighting fixtures, and furniture (Fig. 32).⁸⁷ While their letters are undated, Tobey and Draper's friendship continued for years after their early encounter in the teens and into the 1930s, well after Tobey had departed from New York City and settled in Seattle. Despite the distance, the camaraderie established through Draper's salon was able to survive.

Tobey and Draper's intimacy can be realized through the many pet names he used to address her (a common feature throughout Draper's correspondence with others as well) including Mools/ Mooles, MoolBalla, Molle, Muladona, Mooladoorraa, Mulandina, Draperette Mools, and "Queen Mamamoolia and Fire-Blue Lantern" and his own signing as Markee. Some letters include Tobey's poetry for Draper. Much of Tobey's letters to Draper feature significant discussions about art. Draper supported Tobey's art career, even when he had left New York City, finding

⁸⁶ Seitz, *Mark Tobey*, 90.

⁸⁷ Mark Tobey to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 311, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

buyers for his work, coordinating its transportation to New York for an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, and serving as a reference for his Guggenheim fellowship application. During his time in Paris, Tobey wrote to her about the impact artistic attractions had on him, describing himself as “under the effect of the Louvre at present” but with “an eye open at the Modern,” referencing Picasso’s work and in a later letter including a description of seeing “Puvis” (Pierre Puvis de Chavannes)—“a great master of the wall”—at the Pantheon.⁸⁸ Draper seems to have facilitated his introduction to the Parisian art world from afar, for when he wrote at length to her of his visit to Constantin Brancusi’s studio, much like Lincoln Kirstein, describing how he “left a wiser and more conscientious man,” he concluded by sharing how Brancusi “sent his love, his heart” to Draper.⁸⁹ While Tobey was living in Chicago, she also connected him to the aforementioned architect, artist, and designer Paul Chalfin, and Tobey wrote to Draper afterward that “Chalfin interested me greatly—I admired him,”⁹⁰ and in later letters that “Chalfin helped me a great deal”⁹¹ and that, after a lunch with Chalfin, he “came away much encouraged by everything his knowledge

⁸⁸ Mark Tobey to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 311, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁸⁹ Mark Tobey to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 307, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁹⁰ Mark Tobey to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 307, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁹¹ Mark Tobey to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 308, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

and discriminating taste.”⁹² Tobey also wrote to Draper of his own artistic practice, such as his progress on portraits of Winthrop—likely Winthrop Parkhurst, whose portrait by Tobey is in the Museum of Modern Art collection—and his brother, about which he relates how he was “making them rather decorative” and how “I think or rather pray that I shall be able to express what I see and feel.”⁹³ Draper was Tobey’s artistic ally.

Their shared experiences led Draper to write the first article dedicated to Tobey as an artist, which she published in 1930 in *Creative Art*. In it, she draws on her personal experience, citing his diverse media and willingness to work with “crayon, charcoal, colored chalk, bland and colored inks on paper any paper, brown wrapping paper or scraps of note paper.”⁹⁴ She describes his experimentation with a range of subjects, including caricature among them, and later notes that his caricatures are “disturbing and destructively humorous enough to wrench a government or business.”⁹⁵ Although she describes how Tobey was resistant to the notion of being an “important artist,” she concludes with his impact on the many places he had lived, determining that “this makes him, in spite of himself, an important painter, and one of

⁹² Mark Tobey to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 309, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁹³ Mark Tobey to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 308, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁹⁴ Muriel Draper, “Mark Tobey,” *Creative Art* 7, no. 4 (October 1, 1930): 42.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 43.

the significant artists in America.”⁹⁶ Sixteen years later, the Museum of Modern Art would concur when it featured Tobey amongst its *Fourteen Americans*.

Tobey used a range of styles to capture Draper’s likeness, showing she was an endless font for inspiration in his artwork. One sheet shows several representations of her head, as if he was sketching from life, recalling the look of studies completed by students in life drawing classes (Fig. 33). We can assume Tobey worked on some of the drawings in Draper’s presence because they are done on the reverse of her letterhead and interior design sketches, likely scraps Tobey discovered while visiting her in her living or work space. Tobey was an eager student of art history. During his earliest experimentations with art in Chicago, art historian William Chapin Seitz describes Tobey’s introduction to the Italian Renaissance, Zuloaga, Hals, Sargent, and Sorolla at the Art Institute of Chicago.⁹⁷ Furthermore, Tobey was an art instructor. In the 1930s, as he began to teach students at the Cornish Academy in Seattle, he became more familiar with art historical precedent, citing this moment as his pivotal encounter with cubism. Tobey’s diverse stylistic range throughout his career demonstrates his experimentation as an artist and it was through Draper’s body that Tobey was able to practice these many techniques. The drawings are done in a vast array of styles, and several are refined and endowed with a sense of realism, much like, one would expect, the now unlocated charcoal portrait of Draper Tobey exhibited alongside his other portraits in 1917 at Knoedler & Company. But others seem to have the palimpsest of other artists Tobey was looking at; one clearly mimics hard-lined cubist aesthetics, and

⁹⁶ Ibid., 44.

⁹⁷ Seitz, *Mark Tobey*, 89.

another shows her with a muscularized body composed of rounded forms that recall Fernand Léger's style (Fig. 34 and Fig. 35). In one letter, Tobey would write to Draper, "you are my symbol through which I pass into my state of abstraction."⁹⁸

In several of his drawings, Tobey equates Draper with art itself. In one, Tobey imagines Draper with an elongated, projecting beard that recalls ancient Egyptian statues, including the burial mask of King Tutankhamun, and wearing an elaborate hat that resembles the one worn by King Menkaura on Old Kingdom, Egyptian statues such as one in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston (Fig. 36, Fig. 37, and Fig. 38). Here Tobey seems to have transformed Draper into an Egyptian sculpture or a piece of art. One drawing shows Draper in an enveloping coat with a full collar that rises from her shoulders and curls around her neck; addressed by "Max" (Ewing) to "Muriel Arc de Triomphe Paris," Tobey and Ewing seem to have been arguing for a resemblance between Draper and the structure at the heart of the Parisian landscape (Fig. 39 and Fig. 40). Another caricature makes a more explicit reference to Draper as a piece of art, positioning her on a pedestal in an avant-garde pose while an all-male audience gazes upward at her (Fig. 41). By all accounts, her statuesque figure and affinity for fashion furthered this slippage between her human form and that of monumental artworks.

It was Draper's closest associates who recognized her uniqueness and were able to exaggerate it in their depictions of her. Unlike the cover girls of the *Saturday Evening Post* that Tobey had come to New York to capture, in Draper he sought out atypical beauty. His caricatures conform to the stylistic signatures she herself

⁹⁸ Mark Tobey to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 309, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

cultivated, showing her eccentric fashion and her full lips and even exaggerating them. Tobey was acutely aware of Draper's love of hats and included drawings of ones he encountered in Paris in a letter beneath "Oh! I forgot the Hatz!" (Fig. 32). The metaphoric power of the hat is evident in the ones Tobey imagines for her in his caricatures. One representation of her with a loosely tied turban is captioned, in all capital letters "A HAT!" (Fig. 42). Other Tobey designs are playful and even fantastical: one showing a fish atop her head and another an entire city (Fig. 43 and Fig. 44). The second likely represents Draper's New York City home, with twin gable-roofed towers potentially invoking the Upper West Side's art-deco complex, the Eldorado, and the cabled bridge recalling the city's landmark Brooklyn Bridge. It is as if her accessories have a life, and a massive gear at the center of the hat suggests movement while the steamboat that dangles as an earring emits a steady stream of smoke. Perhaps the most elaborate hat is worn by a Draper with a heavily tattooed, naked body, spurred boots, and gloves (Fig. 45). The cup-shaped hat contains a monkey-like figure who grasps a mallet as if he is in the act of making noise against the side of his container. Perhaps it is the sound that the hat makes that contributes to Draper's status, according to the title, as "The New American Poet." Not only has Draper's hat fully transformed into a live being, in this caricature, but given Draper's tall boots and her companion's devilish nature, both recall comic book characters, with the hat serving as her side-kick or alter ego.

In two drawings, Tobey shows Draper wearing a crown, in one as a gargantuan bowing figure spanning either side of the Pacific Ocean with her legs (Fig. 46 and Fig. 47). In the other drawings, Draper's hats and turbans might have served an equivalent status, evoking an association with royalty. Recalling the "throne" in her entertaining

space, Tobey's portrayals of Draper as a queen have the deeper meaning of suggesting she occupied a divinely sanctioned station as a leader when presiding over her gatherings. Tobey was not alone among Draper's acquaintances in associating her with a queen, and it is likely Draper's evocation of royalty in her salon, seated on this throne, inspired Larsson to begin collecting lost and discarded playing cards showing queens for Draper. The first was mailed to her on the ninth of June 1946, and she chose to preserve a total of seven playing cards that Larsson sent to her in her archive (Fig. 48).⁹⁹ Furthermore, it was as a caricature of the Queen of Hearts that Draper would appear in Peggy Bacon's book of caricatures, *Off With Their Heads!* in 1934 (Fig. 49).¹⁰⁰ With pursed full lips and cropped hair, Bacon uses the same visual shorthand as Tobey to immediately communicate that Draper is her subject. Unlike common depictions of the Queen of Hearts, Bacon's version of the queen takes on Draper's occupation, performing the role of a hostess by offering a cup of tea to the admirer who kneels before her. This figure seems an appropriate choice. Like the Queen of Hearts, Draper was often the center of attention in the room and her strong will was notorious.

In addition, by concealing her hair beneath a turban or hat, and showing her with strong facial features, Tobey effectively masculinizes Draper. Even in depictions that don't represent her with a hat, Draper is shown with cropped or pinned up hair (she is noted as having frequently worn a hairnet, as in a photograph by George Platt Lynes of her). And in the Tobey's rendering of her as an Egyptian statue, Draper takes

⁹⁹ Raymond E. F. Larsson to Muriel Draper, June 9, 1946, Box 6, Folder 194, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹⁰⁰ Fahlman, "The Great Draper Woman," 36.

on a male character. Most of Draper's closest associates were men. As a divorced woman, an independent head of household who supported herself, Draper embodied the image of the New Woman. In the representation of her with a naked tattooed body and tall boots, previously referenced, Draper is shown with a turned back so that her gender is undistinguishable (Fig. 45).

At the same time as Draper appears androgynous in some renderings, others emphasize her sexuality. She is frequently shown naked, or implied to be naked, as in one caricature, entitled *Early morning*, in which Draper and a figure with a gargantuan head lie beneath the covers of a bed, while pants, a shirt, and a turban are scattered on the floor below (Fig. 11). Even in Tobey's cubist representation of Draper, which focuses on a hat and other geometric shapes, her nude body is entrapped in a box at the center of the composition (Fig. 34). Although overtly sexual, Tobey did not employ the naked body like an artist who was invested in the femme fatale. Instead, he shows Draper reclining on a chaise on a seaside cliff, his caption reading "Damn those mermaids!" as if to suggest that a woman's sexuality should not exist for male pleasure (Fig. 50). In many caricatures, Draper's breasts are prominently featured. Tobey shows her in an outfit with spikes protruding from the chest and pelvic region while in other images, when her torso is bare, floral elements or sparks dangerously burst forth from them (Fig. 51 and Fig. 52). This was a woman who derived power from her sexuality, not one who surrendered it. While Draper's romantic relationships are rarely featured in her correspondence, she defied societal expectations early in life when her pregnancy preceded her marriage to Paul Draper. And she would continue to do so in her marriage, reportedly having an affair with Arthur Rubinstein in

Florence.¹⁰¹ Likewise, by embracing friends who were openly gay, she worked to break down traditional mores of sexuality.¹⁰² Max Ewing, who publicly identified as a gay man, would jokingly send Draper a clipping about “gay parties,” ironically reframing the phrase with his comment, “Because you like GAY things” (Fig. 53). Refusing prudish traditions and standards of respectability in his images, Tobey rendered politically provocative subjects to demonstrate Draper’s liberal attitudes toward gender and women’s rights. With spiky breasts, Draper became a dangerous, politically active feminist, anticipating Jean Paul Gaultier’s cone bra by decades.¹⁰³

Like the previously discussed standard of representation for Draper that emphasized her large lips, many of Tobey’s drawings draw special attention to Draper’s mouth. Although color does not appear in the majority of Tobey’s pen and ink or pencil drawings of Draper, an exception is made in the reds and pinks he used to attract the eye to her mouth (Fig. 11 and Fig. 54). As has been discussed, Draper was known for wearing intensely hued lipstick. But the use of color might also be a veiled evocation of her unique, personal identity. Although the origins of the references are unclear, pink was an important color to Draper. “Pinkie” was a moniker

¹⁰¹ Fahlman, “The Great Draper Woman,” 33.

¹⁰² Christopher Reed discussed Mark Tobey’s sexuality in the context of the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s symposium for the exhibition, “Hide/Seek.”

Christopher Reed, “Imagining Identity: Sexuality, Regionalism, and Legacy in Mid-Twentieth-Century American Art,” filmed January 29, 2011, Youtube, video, 33:51, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6NxjABHn7uA>.

¹⁰³ Thierry-Maxime Lorient and Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, *The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk* (Montreal: Museum of Fine Arts, 2011).

for her, and letters from her family and Larsson would be addressed as such.¹⁰⁴ Letters to her frequently refer to pink items. Artist Donald Corley would write, “I wanted to tell you I found a pink pencil on the beach the other day, in search of driftwood and surcease, and thought of you—its faded stabbing colour—do we, I wonder, ever get beyond colour?”¹⁰⁵ Kirstein sought to lure her back to her writing, offering to pay her for an article so she “could get something pink.”¹⁰⁶ Larsson would deliberately send her notes on pink paper, or with pink crayon highlights, once arranging the word “Pink” numerous time across a sheet, in the guise of concrete poetry (Fig. 55). In one note collaged with pink paper, he comments that he had sent her the new shade to be added to her “collection.”¹⁰⁷ Perhaps for this implied collection of pink items, Walter

¹⁰⁴ Farley and Jane Gannett to Muriel Draper, July 6, 1928, Box 4, Folder 123, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Raymond E. F. Larsson to Muriel Draper, June 22, 1937, Box 6, Folder 191, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Raymond E. F. Larsson to Muriel Draper, June 24, 1937, Box 6, Folder 191, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Teddy Sanders to Muriel Draper, 13 1923, Box 8, Folder 270, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹⁰⁵ Donald Corley to Muriel Draper, 1922, Box 2, Folder 44, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹⁰⁶ Lincoln Kirstein to Muriel Draper, Wednesday, Box 5, Folder 169, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹⁰⁷ Raymond E. F. Larsson to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 6, Folder 201, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Lowenfells would even send Draper a pink shell.¹⁰⁸ Mabel Dodge describes thinking of Draper in her small pink bedroom,¹⁰⁹ and Larsson inquired after its exact shade from California, frustrated that while he had heard from many about her decision to paint it pink, none had been more specific in their descriptions of its color.¹¹⁰ And Ewing too, was likely inspired by Draper, when he painted his bathroom a shell pink which he extensively described for her in one letter.¹¹¹

In addition to his use of color, Tobey frequently exaggerates the size of Draper's mouth. In no case was this more apparent than one drawing showing *Moolie* in "*Her Red Abyss*"— which replaces a stage and proscenium arch with a gaping jaw (Fig. 54). Draper stands at center stage, addressing an audience, referenced with a man in balcony seating. At the same time as Draper's talent for speaking, her implied articulateness and charisma, are evoked by her large mouth, there is also an underlying sense of critique in Tobey's depictions of Draper. Her gaping jaw, and his decision to show her standing inside of it, are made unattractive or even repulsive as if to suggest Draper herself was taken up by her "gift of gab," that her identity was consumed by it, and perhaps even that she was a speaker but not a listener. While these caricatures were made as friendly gifts, not satirical critiques intended to publicly malign, there is

¹⁰⁸ Walter Lowenfells to Muriel Draper, August 16, 1932, Box 7, Folder 216, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹⁰⁹ Mabel Dodge Luhan to Muriel Draper, March 31, Box 7, Folder 219, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹¹⁰ Raymond E. F. Larsson to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 6, Folder 199, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹¹¹ Max Ewing to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 3, Folder 106, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

room to see criticism in them, and who might be able to offer a more insightful, nuanced appraisal of her character than her closest friends?

Tobey's decision to draw attention to Draper's lips is easily explained by her vocation. But in the history of caricature, exaggerated, full lips are often assigned to African American "types." Descriptions of Draper sometimes drew a connection between her looks and those traditionally ascribed to African Americans. In the full chapter devoted to Draper in her 1935 memoir, *European Experiences*, Mabel Dodge describes how "bending slightly backwards, she was like a hard, slender, polished ivory figure carved from an elephant's tusk . . . Her outline followed the tusk's curve and her blond profile negroid, with its crushed long nose, met the circumference of the jutting bone jaw with its thick protuberant, intelligent lips, painted scarlet."¹¹² In another instance, Arthur Rubinstein noted how "her face was disquieting: her narrow, long head, topped by hair that she kept closely under a net, her high cheekbones, her short, slightly flat nose, and exuberantly large mouth with thick red lips made her look like a white Negress."¹¹³

While many society beauties have been described as having full lips, few are equated, as a result, with another race. Tobey's decision to do so suited his genre, that of caricature. These connections between Tobey's drawings and minstrel-inspired caricature may also have been inspired by Draper's affiliations. Draper, like her friend Carl Van Vechten, was a sponsor of the Harlem Renaissance. She invited African Americans to her salons, including Jean Toomer to her nights dedicated to Gurdjieff.

¹¹² Fahlman, "The Great Draper Woman," 33.

¹¹³ Ibid.

Draper was bold in crossing racial lines in her patronage, and articles such as one in the *New York Amsterdam News* noted how Aaron Douglas, a “Harlemite,” “Gets courtesy in Midtown.” Draper partnered with Rockwell Kent, Richmond Barthé, and Godfrey Nurse to host the now well-regarded Douglas for a cocktail hour discussion about his visit to Haiti on a Rosenwald fellowship where he completed a series of ten paintings on the history of the country.¹¹⁴ Given her connections to the world of music, George Antheil would write to her, requesting she introduce him to Harlem when he arrived in New York. And she would be responsible for finding Paul Robeson his first singing teacher. Draper was allied in her sponsorship of the Harlem Renaissance with her friend Carl Van Vechten and they would collaborate, Draper writing the introduction and Van Vechten the foreword, for the 1929 autobiography of Taylor Gordon—a Harlem Renaissance singer. Tobey’s caricature of Draper with stereotypically African American features demonstrated her ability to transgress racial boundaries. The same references would be made by Miguel Covarrubias, well regarded for his caricatures, who endowed Van Vechten with the caricatured features of an African American, and even a darkly shaded complexion, in the sketch, *A Prediction* (Fig. 56). Van Vechten referred to this as his favorite portrait.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ “Paintings By Aaron Douglas Displayed At Sterner Home,” *New York Amsterdam News*, February 4, 1939, 8.

¹¹⁵ While Covarrubias was operating according to standard tropes, Lauren Kroiz argues that others in his circle of modernists surrounding the Stieglitz school, specifically the Mexican artist Marius de Zayas, were rethinking and offering new interpretations of caricature.

Lauren Kroiz, *Creative Composites: Modernism, Race, and the Stieglitz Circle*, The Phillips Book Prize Series, 4 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

In addition to emphasizing her lips, representations of Draper also endow her with an atypically strong jawline and cheekbones. These recalls a convention in modernist photographs like those of Alfred Stieglitz and Man Ray which paired women's faces—here Claudia O'Keeffe and Kiki de Montparnasse—and African masks (Fig. 57 and Fig. 58). The mask had powerful evocations for authors of the Harlem Renaissance, including Paul Laurence Dunbar, who used the image in his poem, "We Wear the Mask." The aforementioned portrayals of Draper and Van Vechten might have served as claims that they too wore masks. Stieglitz and Man Ray's photographs, in turn, have an important parallel in the photographic work of Van Vechten who featured Jimmie Daniels, a Harlem actor, cabaret performer, and nightclub owner, alongside his bust by sculptor Richmond Barthé (Fig. 59). Because Barthé worked in a classical style, Van Vechten reverses the pattern exemplified by Stieglitz and Man Ray, proposing that African Americans equally resembled the ancient Greek ideal. As part of the series, some photographs included Kenneth Macpherson—a Scottish-born novelist, photographer, critic, and film maker—alongside Daniels and his bust. It seems Van Vechten was suggesting similarities in Daniels's and Macpherson's physiognomy, brought out by the whiteness of the bust (Fig. 60). Perhaps Van Vechten's parody of the conventions of other modernists reached its peak in another portrait series dedicated to Richmond Barthé himself in which the sculptor appears not with one of his own sculptures but instead with a caricatured head (Fig. 61).¹¹⁶ It seems Van Vechten was referencing caricature in

¹¹⁶ James Smalls makes a similar argument, of Van Vechten's tongue-in-cheek reference to his own modernism, in regards to his photographs of the Senegalese dancer, Féral Benga,

order to demonstrate its inaccuracies, and perhaps Tobey had the same motivation, suggesting its preposterousness by arguing that if black minstrels were endowed with gaping red mouths, Draper, a performer, ought to be too. But while this was an exciting time in New York, when members of the black and white artistic communities were engaging in discussions and debates, alongside intellectual leaders like Arturo Alfonso Schomburg and Alain Locke, and Covarrubias and Tobey's work reflects this fluidity, it still must be acknowledged that traditional racial frameworks, including stereotyped depictions, were being perpetuated.

In addition to a mask, Draper's strong jawline and cheekbones, recall a skull, something also evoked in Mabel Dodge's description of her which emphasizes her whiteness and compares her to ivory. As has been discussed, a dramatic skull perched on her mantelpiece—possibly a gift from Walker Evans—would have presided over her salons (Fig. 8). Whatever the significance of the skull in her home environment, it was not merely a reference shared between Draper and Evans. The theme of bones also appears in her correspondence. Kirstein would write to her multiple times about the depictions of skulls by the artist Pavel Tchelitchew,¹¹⁷ and after visiting the British

James Smalls, "Féral Benga: African Muse of Modernism," filmed November 6, 2013, Youtube, video, 1:31:14, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWu5XkmAiPQ>.

¹¹⁷ Lincoln Kirstein to Muriel Draper, March 8, 1944, Box 5, Folder 160, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Lincoln Kirstein to Muriel Draper, March 10, 1947, Box 5, Folder 164, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Lincoln Kirstein to Muriel Draper, June 23, 1950, 1947, Box 5, Folder 164, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Museum, describe his attempts to have its crystal skull photographed for her.¹¹⁸ Later, he would share the news that “Hartford,” likely the Wadsworth Athenaeum, had purchased a crystal skull finer than the one in the British Museum.¹¹⁹ By showing her with a gaunt, chiseled face, reminiscent of a skull, could Tobey have been arguing for her timelessness, her endurance, her powerful legacy?

Tobey not only drew upon precedents in caricature to exaggerate racialized stereotypes, he also referenced the long history in caricature of creating hybrid animal and human bodies. Such composite figures were a common feature in political cartoons in the previous century. Tobey set Draper’s head atop a fearsome snake, emerging from a pot while a stereotypical Middle Eastern mystic character plays a flute before an Islamic-style arch (Fig. 62). On a postcard showing cows “in quiet pastures, Woodstock N.Y.,” Tobey superimposed Draper’s characteristic turban and large lips on the animals’ bodies (Fig. 63). And he would address one letter “You old” then draw an image of a cow in sunglasses (Fig. 64). In a caricature that aligns most closely with the stereotyped depictions of African Americans, Tobey shows Draper seated in her bed, with her hands curled beneath opposite arms (Fig. 65). With a caption, “Mools scratching Herself,” Tobey seems to be equating her to an ape or other primate. Tobey shows her room full of “Moolettes”—flower stems topped with Draper’s caricatured face—and “Zepherettes—hot or cold”—which have spiraling slinky bodies attached to Draper’s caricatured head and seem to evoke fleas or insects.

¹¹⁸ Lincoln Kirstein to Muriel Draper, July 20, Box 5, Folder 155, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹¹⁹ Lincoln Kirstein to Muriel Draper, September 26, 1933, Box 5, Folder 156, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Not all of these caricatures have positive associations. They could be intended to suggest Draper had an “animalistic” quality, a common trope in stereotyped imagery of African-Americans or more generalized negative associations.

Finally, Tobey shows Draper like a bird, as in one caricature of her perched on a branch above a landscape (Fig. 66). Tobey’s drawing of Draper is ripe with anticipation, showing her in a state of surveillance and suggesting her attentive watchfulness, a characteristic appropriate for her role as a New York City tastemaker. But birds also evoke a sense of freedom, which is suited to Draper’s defiance of societal norms. In one letter he would begin “Moolalus” then, below a drawing of a bird in spectacles, curling its long neck and head backwards, ask her, “Which way are you going?” (Fig. 67). Her hats’ embellishments—feathered plumes, or, in the case of the one Henry James remembered, birds themselves—would have enforced this connection. Even Alice B. Toklas would note her wearing “an exaggeratedly tall and large turquoise bleu aigret,” referring to the turn-of-the-twentieth-century fashion for wearing hats adorned with egret or white heron feathers that resulted in the endangerment of the species and the banning of the trade.¹²⁰

Others too saw a resemblance between Draper and a bird. Mary Garden, the opera star who employed Muriel in the 1910s, referred to her as a “Delightful Wild Bird” in a letter.¹²¹ And Max Ewing would send her and her son Paul postcards from Florida of birds he believed she resembled (Fig. 68 and Fig. 69). In another letter, Ewing wrote “Dear Bird,” enclosing a clipping that had inspired him to reassess his

¹²⁰ Fahlman, “The Great Draper Woman,” 34.

¹²¹ Mary Garden to Muriel Draper, December 21, 1921, Box 4, Folder 124, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

earlier identification of Draper with a gillyloobird in favor of a wandervogel, celebrating the news that she “is more exotic than a cocoo clock.”¹²² He requested she send the clipping on to Van Vechten, a member of a society for cast iron birds, and Van Vechten’s archived correspondence reveals Draper was responsible for passing on other bird-related information for his “cast iron pigeon file” as well.¹²³

In caricatures, human-animal hybrids are used to reveal the true, unvarnished nature of a politician. By playfully relating Draper to a bird, her friends implied that they could see through her polite, proper façade to her essential spirit. Like the decision to endow her with African-American features, these caricatures suggest Draper’s hybrid nature. In her ability to cross boundaries, between races and even species, it is as if Draper could not be defined as a mere human but rather superhuman, giving her the transformative powers of a superhero. Instead of editing these depictions from her archive, Draper signaled her appreciation for, if not full acceptance of, the multiple interpretations of her personality her admirers created.

Tobey’s earliest artistic memories were of his father drawing animals which he would cut out with scissors. In addition, his early interest in the animal is evident in his desire to be a taxidermist.¹²⁴ But while his father devoted his career to carving animals out of red stone, Tobey rarely featured animals in his mature, professional artwork. As has been discussed, Tobey’s better-known work was in his abstract style,

¹²² Max Ewing to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 3, Folder 107, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹²³ Muriel Draper to Carl Van Vechten, January 11, 1938, Box 41, Folder 540, Carl Van Vechten Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹²⁴ Draper, “Mark Tobey,” 44.

but among his representational scenes, his depictions of Seattle's market people that have received recognition have been described as drawing the animal-like nature out of their subjects.

Tobey himself would conclude a letter instead of with a signature with a bird-human hybrid and "Your Old English Hen" (Fig. 70). While Tobey's drawings adopt the conventions of cartoons and caricature, they were not intended for reproduction, or to effect social and political change. Instead, as gifts, they functioned as art made for an exclusive audience of one. Rather than generalized references that would have been decipherable to the masses, Tobey knew his audience and was able to make more abstract, veiled allusions. What was his intent when he drew Draper standing atop an owl with the caption "Why people don't understand Moolie" and "The enigmatic Balance" (Fig. 52)? A general audience may never know. But these were not the images Tobey intended to have his artistic identity associated with by the world at large. Much like the privacy of a salon discussion, the drawings exchanged between Tobey and Draper are ephemeral, and the absence in the record of the original context for their exchange means their full significance cannot easily be deciphered.

It can be argued that these represent a unique body of work that should be analyzed separately from Tobey's professional paintings, which he intended for a public audience. Designed to succeed as a gift, the caricatures and cartoons functioned like a secret language, using coded references that would only be recognized by friends. But it is also important to acknowledge that Tobey's other artwork has typically been analyzed with an eye to deciphering his veiled references. His enigmatic, abstract white writing is said to evoke the principles of his Bahai faith, and scholars have endlessly debated where inspiration from the East ends and the West

begins. By the end of Tobey's life, he expressed frustration at the scholarly emphasis on the Asian influence in his art. Instead, he argued that its largely monochrome palette was rooted instead in his attempt to achieve "linear clarity."¹²⁵ This avoidance of color and emphasis on the line is something that can be traced back to his depictions of Draper, predating his travels to China and Japan in 1934. Although they may initially stand apart from his later work, these early caricatures demonstrate Tobey's origins as an artist and have much in common with his subsequent preoccupations when working in his "mature" style. Under Draper's wing, Tobey learned to speak in a coded language.

Ultimately, Tobey demonstrated his deep familiarity with Draper, and intuition into her interior mental makeup, in the allusions his sketches make. A stark contrast to Draper's more polished presentation in news photographs, Tobey's vision of Draper emphasizes the idiosyncratic, concluding that by defying traditional gender and racial binaries, she occupied a superhuman quality. Ultimately, the collection's inventiveness and diversity attest to Draper's malleability, undeterminability, and eternal air of mystery.

Tobey shared his caricatures with those who would have appreciated the references. Draper and Tobey's mutual friend, Rody Hall wrote to Draper from his diplomatic post in Tokyo that he had hung the caricature of her by Tobey on his wall, describing how "every morning I bring the baby in and show it the picture, but it a

¹²⁵ Lucretia H. Giese, "Mark Tobey's 1939 Murals for the John A. Baillargeons: A Transition," *Archives of American Art* 23, no. 2 (1983): 9.

good crack, and say, “Be like that, ou bastard.””¹²⁶ Hall’s desire for his child to grow to adopt Draper’s uniqueness show how he, like others, saw Draper as a model or exemplar. In another letter, Hall relates an unexpected encounter with Tobey at the Chicago Art Institute. He shares how Tobey, who is known to have produced about one hundred soap stone sculptures between 1927 and 1929, gave him one of Draper. In the letter, Hall alludes to previously seeing another head Tobey had carved of Draper which was in her possession.¹²⁷ At the time, Hall was stationed for a diplomatic post in faraway Japan and wrote to Draper, longing to return to her for a visit. His personal collection of images of Draper by Tobey demonstrates how important representational relics were for people who were distanced from her in order to perpetuate her physical presence.

¹²⁶ Monroe “Rody” Hall to Muriel Draper, October 5, Box 4, Folder 135, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹²⁷ Monroe “Rody” Hall to Muriel Draper, Saturday, February 9, Box 4, Folder 137, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Chapter 4

CASE STUDY II: DRAPER IS SHARED WITH THE PUBLIC IN PHOTOGRAPHS

Unlike Tobey's sketches, which are probing and experimental in testing possible identities for Draper, the medium of photography would at first seem an assured means to achieve an accurate portrayal of Draper. Ultimately though, the many session, clothing changes, and poses hazarded by Draper's close friends, the photographers Carl Van Vechten and Max Ewing suggest they, like Tobey, were captivated by the challenge of accurately representing her. Both Van Vechten and Ewing surpassed all in their circle in the investments they made, amassing images of their friends. Both worked as passionate amateur photographers, producing images not for professional purposes but for their own pleasure, staging their friends in their private homes with the intent of keeping the artistic products for their own records. Ewing would describe how after Van Vechten took up photography, at about the same time he had in 1932, he abandoned his role as a social entertainer, devoting himself to his new pastime so that few people saw him in the winter of 1933.¹²⁸ For both, the challenge of image making became, at times, an all-consuming obsession.

As has been described, Draper and Van Vechen were close companions and shared many interests, including in hosting salons and patronizing artists of the Harlem Renaissance. Van Vechten played an important role in guaranteeing her legacy, as has been mentioned, facilitating the early formation of her archive and authoring a remembrance of her in the Yale University Library Gazette, more than a decade after her death in 1963, entitled "Ma-Draper," his affectionate nickname for

¹²⁸ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 111.

her, while she in turn had referred to him as “Carlo-Pa.” In it, he would recount the story of their friendship, including their initial dislike of one another at their first encounter at Mabel Dodge’s Florence home, and describe the impact she had had on New York, concluding that there was “something symbolic about her, something enchanting.”¹²⁹

Like for Tobey, Draper acted as muse for Van Vechten. At least fifty-one photographs of Draper survive in Van Vechten’s archive from image sessions on July 30, 1934; November 30, 1937; and March 30, 1952. These photographs demonstrate a collaboration between Van Vechten and Draper. Like Tobey, Van Vechten highlights the signature style Draper defined for herself. By wearing feathered head wraps, short brimmed fedoras, and wide brimmed sun hats, Draper demonstrates diverse experimentation with the fashion item. In one image by Van Vechten, Draper conceals her face beneath the brim of her downturned hat, equating her identity to her hat (Fig. 71). Seated before tinfoil in another image taken, Draper may wear the same felt hat that is featured on her mantelpiece in Walker Evans’s photographs of her apartment (Fig. 8 and Fig. 72). After her death on August 26, 1952, she remained a subject for Van Vechten’s lens and on September 23, 1952 he would photograph seven of her hats in still life compositions, set on the head of a mannequin (Fig. 73). He titles ones with known makers accordingly, reflecting a design by Edward Pain and two by John-Frederics. Here, her hat had become a surrogate, a way of remembering her spirit and identity after her death.

¹²⁹ Carl Van Vechten, “Ma-Draper,” *The Yale University Library Gazette* 37, no. 4 (1963): 125-29.

Her theatrical poses suggest she as much as he was responsible for the final results and include images of her drinking, turning her back to the camera, gazing defiantly over her shoulder, and shrinking into a full feathered boa (Fig. 74). Draper describes the results of a 1932 session as “interesting and some of them most affecting” citing which ones she especially favored, including one in which she is “plunged in doom” and another showing the “Macbethian horror emanating from my countenance in one where I seem to see a huge spider on your wall + can’t conclude whether it is a design or an insect”¹³⁰ (Fig. 75). Draper’s preferences appear to have been for the dark and unexpected. Betsy Fahlman has described what she sees as Draper’s unease before Van Vechten’s camera in a 1934 session, something she also finds in Brooks’s portrait of her, but from Draper’s response in her letter to Van Vechten, it seems it was this very effect of disquietude that she was hoping to achieve in her poses.¹³¹ This pursuit of an unsettled look is an instance that perfectly exemplifies Draper’s desire to flout societal norms and common expectations.

After another session in 1938, Draper appears to have initially expressed her displeasure with the results, for she would follow up in a letter: ‘I am letting myself be just a fraction too fussy, when, I make someone I love as much as you “cross” . . . I liked some of the photographs very much, and am very grateful for the talent and sympathy with which you created them.’¹³² This demonstrates how Draper was not a

¹³⁰ Muriel Draper to Carl Van Vechten, April 15, 1932, Box 41, Folder 540, Carl Van Vechten Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹³¹ Fahlman, “The Great Draper Woman,” 36.

¹³² Muriel Draper to Carl Van Vechten, January 11, 1938, Box 41, Folder 541, Carl Van Vechten Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

voiceless subject, forgoing her role in deciding how her identity would be effectively captured. She was not afraid to criticize and to voice her preference for certain representations of herself over others.

Draper's letters to Van Vechten, in his archive at Beinecke Library, frequently thank him for sending photographs to her. When Draper was abroad, traveling in Moscow, Van Vechten sentimentally responded to her absence by sending her photographs of herself and Max Ewing. Furthermore, his letters to Draper were frequently written on the backs of postcards that reproduced his photographs, showing not only himself but others as well. It is possible Van Vechten wrote to other correspondents, using photographs of Muriel as his support, and thus disseminating her image. Many have written about the tokenistic quality the portrait took on when the rise of photography meant it became accessible to a greater stratum of society. The medium's emergence, coinciding with the Civil War, meant that as families were separated, the portrait photograph became a means of remembering loved ones.¹³³ Picture albums and the fashion for collecting and amassing portraits was embraced by the American middle class. Beyond these bespoke drawings and portrait commissions, we can imagine Draper's image residing in her acquaintances' albums.

In addition to having her likeness captured by Van Vechten, Draper was the subject of her friend Max Ewing's lens. Draper and Ewing were described as the closest of friends, and it was Ewing that Florine Stettheimer set Draper next to in her

¹³³ Others have argued that portraiture occupied this role even earlier, including Katie McKinney in her study of portrait miniatures in early America.

Katie E. McKinney, "Double Vision: Portrait Miniatures and Embedded Likeness in Early America," (PhD diss., University of Delaware, 2015).

painting *Cathedrals of Fifth Avenue*, dedicated to New York's avant-garde luminaries.¹³⁴ Myths surrounded their initial introduction, and Ewing would reveal that while many "claimed to have brought us together, from Bob Chanler to Robbie Nederhoed . . . it was Vadim [Uraneff] who really arranged it."¹³⁵ Ewing was one of the select few who Draper would disclose her whereabouts to when she slipped from the public eye for extended periods of seclusion which allowed her to focus on her writing.¹³⁶ They shared in their diverse interests and investments in the musical, literary, and artistic worlds of New York—Ewing originally pursued a career as a professional pianist, but after damaging a nerve during his vigorous performance at the premier of George Antheil's avant-garde *Ballet Mécanique*, he supported himself with his writing.¹³⁷ Likewise, they both shared a passion for Harlem and would accompany one another to occasions such as the funeral of A'Lelia Walker.¹³⁸ In a rare moment of separation during their near constant companionship, when Draper was visiting Mabel Dodge at her New Mexico home, Ewing would write to his mother expressing his frustration at not hearing from Draper for three weeks: "she and you are my two most

¹³⁴ Fahlman, "The Great Draper Woman," 35.

¹³⁵ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 178.

¹³⁶ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 126.

¹³⁷ Steve Watson, "Foreword," in *Genius Denied: The Life and Death of Max Ewing* (Grand Haven, Mich.: W.D. Ewing, 2012), xi.

¹³⁸ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 36.

valuable connections and I want to keep you both in order, and to know all about you all the time!”¹³⁹

Draper’s role as muse for Ewing is immediately evident in his letters addressed to her as “Ideal Sitter,” and in his decision not only to dedicate his only novel, *Going Somewhere*, to Draper but also to base its heroine, Aurora Overhaul, after her.¹⁴⁰ The novel was inspired by what Ewing saw as the restless, transient nature of New York society, something he described in a 1932 letter as “a mania to go somewhere, anywhere to get away from where they are.”¹⁴¹ In it, his storyline charts characters’ constant dissatisfaction with and thus departure from the city concluding with Overhaul’s removal to another planet. Ewing described it as a deeply moral novel, with Overhaul as “the only entirely admirable character” who “finds the whole scene so wrong and so empty that she packs up and leaves the whole planet in disgust.”¹⁴² Like Tobey, who created hybrid depictions of Draper with alternative races and species, Ewing seems to have thought of Draper as different from the average person, and in his novel he finds her more suited to unhuman beings and at home among extraterrestrials.

Similarly to Van Vechten, Ewing staged photographs of all his friends in his home, and he assembled them in collections, including one known as the “Carnival of Venice” in which he featured his sitters posed against a backdrop showing Venice’s

¹³⁹ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 166.

¹⁴⁰ Max Ewing to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 3, Folder 107, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹⁴¹ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 47.

¹⁴² Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 53.

Piazza San Marco as it opens up onto the Grand Canal. While Ewing had purchased this backdrop—which was actually a window blind—from Draper in 1926, he only began the series six years later at the end of 1932.¹⁴³ Among Draper’s interior design sketches in her archive, which demonstrate her own artistic talent, is a pencil drawing of the very background used by Ewing, showing the view of the square from the perspective of the canal and including telling details such as a gondolier at work in the foreground and a flock of birds flying in a V-shaped formation at the center of the sky (Fig. 76). In many ways, with this contribution, Draper has a presence in each of the photographs produced in the series.

The series’ title, “Carnival,” evokes the Venetian tradition, and in the series Ewing thematizes the masquerade by asking his sitters to dress in costumes and pose.¹⁴⁴ Ewing had long been interested in masquerading, and he would sketch and describe how he and his cousin Doris had dressed as Carmen and Theda in a diary from 1917, when he was only fourteen (Fig. 77).¹⁴⁵ In order to achieve the look of the silent film actress, Ewing donned his aunt’s earrings, makeup, coat, and hat. But the inspiration for the series may also have come from Draper. As has been discussed, Ewing wrote extensively about Draper’s wardrobe and he even compared her extravagant gowns to what would be worn to a masquerade, writing that “when a

¹⁴³ Watson, “Foreword,” in *Genius Denied*, xi.

Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 51.

¹⁴⁴ Watson, “Foreword,” in *Genius Denied*, xi.

¹⁴⁵ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 9.

costume ball is at hand she never needs to make an effort.”¹⁴⁶ Regardless, her effortless everyday play with fashion would have made her his “Ideal Sitter” for the series.

Among those who Ewing invited to pose were modernist artists such as Isamu Noguchi and Bernice Abbott as well as those who have been discussed previously as part of Draper’s circle, including Paul Robeson, Lincoln Kirstein, and Draper herself. Like Van Vechten’s collection of portraits, which assemble a visual archive of his milieu, Ewing’s photographs recreate and preserve the social currents he and Draper navigated.

Many were photographed in clothing they had selected and arrived in, although periodically, Ewing deemed their outfits unacceptable, as in the case of Lou Tellegen who he found “didn’t look very Venetian” and instead provided him with his own cape and top hat.¹⁴⁷ For the series, Draper donned multiple outfits, in one, cocooning herself in a golden cape, her turban crowned with a halo of large round pearls, and in another wearing a black lace dress and gloves, her hands curled inward and resting, fingers splayed, upon her chest (Fig. 78). The portraits often capture moments of elaborate playacting, and many show preposterous juxtapositions between the sitters and the scene behind, most notably when Ewing featured nude men, but also when he staged people posing in Asian dress or in leopard robes meant to recall Tarzan, and puppets representing Gary Cooper and Greta Garbo, a reference to the Gary Cooper

¹⁴⁶ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 31.

¹⁴⁷ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 63.

fan-club, the Garyflappers, that Ewing began.¹⁴⁸ Among the bizarre props Ewing provided were telephones, skeleton cut-outs, toy guitars, and Christmas trees. The startling juxtapositions between foreground scenes and the elegant backdrop suggest a fissure between the more elegant costuming traditions of the Venetian masquerade and the more commercial ensembles emerging in early-twentieth-century America which presage the disguises we might associate with Halloween today. At the same time as his series is intended to be slapstick and bizarre in nature, aligning with Draper's interest in "freaks," Ewing also attempted to create continuity when he compiled the images in scrapbooks, interspersing postcards of Venice to add context, as he does on one page that features Draper's two sons, Paul and Saunders, in sailors' costumes on either side of the Ponte dei Sospiri or Bridge of Sighs. In this way, he created a narrative with his photographic series.

Despite his personal motivation, and initially private intent, with his photographs, Ewing received public attention for his work, so that, unlike Tobey's drawings, these representations functioned as a more public kind of portrait of Draper. Their first exhibition occurred in a one-day-only showing of seventy-six photographs at the Julien Levy Gallery on January 26, 1933, including one of Draper. The exhibition better resembled a society event than an customary, static display and had an exclusive guest list for its opening of only seventy-five people, something that Ewing described inspired furor.¹⁴⁹ As rationale for this private showing, it was

¹⁴⁸ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 78.

¹⁴⁹ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 64.

suggested that the subjects would “puzzle” the general public.¹⁵⁰ Guests, especially those who were featured in the artwork, were encouraged to attend in the costumes in which they had been photographed. Reviews of the opening described the gallery as being filled with people in anything from fur coats to bathing suits.¹⁵¹

Despite the festive atmosphere, the work was treated with the same seriousness as other art exhibitions. Ewing’s close friend, the author, critic, and editor of *The Dial*, Gilbert Seldes, was responsible for writing the introductory text for the exhibition and its brochure. In the introduction, Seldes differentiates Ewing from other artists given “something totally unexpected and disarming about him: he always tells the truth.”¹⁵² His description features Ewing as a photographer with an insightful eye, capable of seeing through any guise. But ultimately, in the brochure text, Seldes concludes, “I doubt whether Mr. Ewing was trying to penetrate to the subconscious desires of his subjects. I think that he wanted to make a series of entertaining and admirable photographs.”¹⁵³ This flippant characterization was something Ewing himself embraced, as in a letter in which he referred to how his series had begun “as a joke,” expressing joy and delight at how “everything in life seems so casual and so accidental.”¹⁵⁴ But in attendance was also the art critic Henry McBride, and although

¹⁵⁰ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 67.

¹⁵¹ "So You're Going Somewhere," *Town & Country* 87, no. 4097 (February 1, 1933): 15.

¹⁵² Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 64.

¹⁵³ Gilbert Seldes, “The Carnival of Venice: Photographs by Max Ewing,” Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections.

¹⁵⁴ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 85.

his article also suggests the undertaking emerged from a desire for amusement, he ultimately concludes Ewing “has merits.” These merits included how “he is subtle in choosing sitters and still more subtle in encouraging them to psychoanalyze themselves while posing. Each print on the walls could have been handed in to a doctor who could thereupon indicate the exact medicine necessary to that particular case.”¹⁵⁵ Despite Seldes and McBride’s contrasting conclusions, there seems to have been room for understanding Ewing’s photographs as part of a body of larger work by other social photographers who sought to capture the innate and unvarnished human essence of their sitters. McBride would quote the evenings’ guests who gushed “Wouldn’t you call it brilliant?” The body of work indicates how those who occupied the salon would seek to demonstrate their personal appreciation for their associates’ innermost thoughts. Like Draper, who demonstrated her keen awareness for those she corresponded with, Ewing sought to do the same.

Draper’s image, along with those of her circle, went on display not only at Levy’s Gallery but elsewhere in New York, spreading public awareness of her social network. Ewing’s debut as a photographer accompanied the publication of his book, and the publicity he received for one only fueled the success of the other. Other displays of Ewing’s work emphasized its social rather than artistic merits. The celebration of Ewing’s photographs was so widespread in the early months of 1933 that the photographs went on display in other venues as well, and three were included in a 1933 exhibition *New York Beauty* at Bergdorf Goodman’s.¹⁵⁶ In addition, *Vogue*

¹⁵⁵ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 66.

¹⁵⁶ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 55.

and *Town and Country* vied for an article on Ewing, and the latter would ultimately feature his work in its February 1933 issue, “So You’re Going Somewhere,” which included four photographs from his series of Lois Moran, Princess Chavchavadze, Mrs. Tiffany Saportas, and Ewing himself.¹⁵⁷ After Ewing’s novel, *Going Somewhere* attracted the attention of Edward Paul England III, the owner of the Waldorf-Astoria, his photographs again found a public forum.¹⁵⁸ At what Ewing saw as the most distinguished venue—he would describe the Waldorf-Astoria’s equivalency in the eyes of an artist to the White House for a politician—his photos were hung during a tea and dance held in his honor on February 18, 1933 under the sponsorship of Mrs. Whitney, Mrs. Morgan, the Princess Chavchavadze, Mrs. Tiffany Saportas, and Mary Garden.¹⁵⁹ Strikingly, the Waldorf-Astoria elected to display all of the photographs shown at Julian Levy’s except those capturing black sitters.¹⁶⁰ Ewing boastfully wrote in a letter that his publicity representative at the Knopf publishing house had never heard of such an honor being bestowed upon an author.¹⁶¹ At the same time, Ewing undertook other profiteering ventures, intended to attract attention, such as a midnight showing of his puppets of Hollywood celebrities which he described as a gala, attracting news attention and photographs in the papers of Ewing alongside celebrities

¹⁵⁷ “So You’re Going Somewhere,” 15.

¹⁵⁸ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 76.

¹⁵⁹ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 73–74.

¹⁶⁰ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 85.

¹⁶¹ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 78.

such as Peggy Fears.¹⁶² He even reported interest, given his recent celebrity as a portrait photographer, from “England,” presumably Waldorf-Astoria owner Edward Paul England III, who requested he produce a series of images of Russian nobility to be shown at a forthcoming Russian Ball.¹⁶³ Not only did Ewing share the portraits from his series in an exhibition environment, he also distributed them to acquaintances. George Platt Lynes, a friend of both Ewing’s and Draper’s who is part of the series, amassed a collection of images from “Carnival of Venice” including the two of Draper.¹⁶⁴ These became part of his scrapbooks that served as inspiration for his own work as a photographer.

Even before his success as a photographer, Ewing was invested in portraiture. Ewing transformed his apartment into a display space, and in his closet, he hung the “Gallery of Extraordinary Portraits,” a composite of photographs, drawings, and paintings (Fig. 79). The portraits ranged from images of bygone aristocrats, such as Sophie Arnould in a bust by Houdon and Lady Peel in a portrait by Thomas Lawrence, but the vast majority showed contemporary celebrities, from the authors—James Joyce, Ford Madox Ford, Ezra Pound, Marcel Proust, Edith Wharton, and Aldous Huxley—to royalty, including several images of the Prince of Wales and Lady Diana Manners, to the philanthropist Emily Vanderbilt, to countless actresses, most frequently Tallulah Bankhead, and also Mae West. By placing these important figures in a single space, Ewing was, in a sense, creating an imaginary salon, likely inspired,

¹⁶² Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 78, 89.

¹⁶³ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 89.

¹⁶⁴ George Platt Lynes scrapbooks, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

in many ways, by Draper's real one. As a closed off space, the closet recalled the interiority of a cerebral mind, suggesting the closet was a physical manifestation of Ewing's thoughts and preoccupations.

On the wall were many original works of art, signed by artists ranging from John Singer Sargent, Marcellus Hawkins, Pablo Picasso, Marguerite Zorach, Jean Cocteau, Pedro Pruna, Mary MacKinnon, Drian, Hans Stengel, Miguel de Covarrubias, Robert Chanler, and self-portraits by e. e. cummings, Cecil Beaton, and George Platt Lynes. While many would be considered traditional portraits, and even showed their sitters masquerading in costume, such as the Prince of Wales in a kimono and wig, they ranged from professionally produced pieces to family photographs, such as an image of Taylor Gordon as a child, to impromptu snapshots, including group gatherings and tourist shots, to an X-Ray of Carl Van Vechten, and finally to film stills which never would have been intended to serve as portraits. Ewing expressed his creativity in expanding the common definition of portraiture. While Ewing must have sought some of the images out, many had been expressly given to him, both by their makers and their sitters, and were inscribed accordingly, including one which Ewing noted was a "reluctant gift of Mr. Sansone," its subject, the bodybuilder Anthony Sansome. Another would be inscribed more eagerly by its nude sitter, the dancer Robert Gorham: "Knowing that being in your gallery will make my position immortal, I give it gladly, Bob." Like George Platt Lynes's scrapbooks, this gallery seems to have functioned as a font for Ewing's artistic inspiration.

Writing to his family on November 29, 1928, Ewing requested that as his Christmas gift they finance the printing charges for a catalog of his gallery.¹⁶⁵ The resulting pamphlet lists at its cover's base "On Exhibition in Gallery 19 West Thirty-First Street," his own personal address. Ewing would express the hope that, with the pamphlet, visitation to his gallery would increase. Multiple editions of the catalog exist, including a more abbreviated one, which includes two-hundred and one entries, as well as a supplement and an expanded subsequent edition, listing three hundred portraits.¹⁶⁶ This suggests the changing nature of the display: as Ewing encountered and acquired additional portraits, he seems to have augmented the arrangement. In the catalog, Ewing includes notes specifying details, such as the designers of the clothing of the sitter, any captions or signatures, and even details about placement, such as one image located beneath a sink, which made it challenging to view. As early as January tenth, in the year following its Christmas-time commission, Ewing had had the catalog produced, printed, and distributed, and was reflecting on responses in a letter. He wrote that he had heard from George Platt Lynes that it had "caused high commotion in Paris" and that the "chief topic at Gertrude Stein's is the absence of Muriel from its pages."¹⁶⁷ It seems those in Stein's company would have recognized this as a representation of Ewing's social circle, one which mapped onto Draper's salon, and what would it have been without the inclusion of the salon hostess? Was Draper's presence so obvious, Ewing hadn't felt it necessary to include? While those at Stein's

¹⁶⁵ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 30.

¹⁶⁶ Max Ewing, *Max Ewing Collection of Incredible Portraits*.

¹⁶⁷ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 31.

salon must have received the shorter catalog, which doesn't list any images of Draper, it seems Ewing responded to their surprise. Draper appears four times in the expanded edition: in a painting by Mark Tobey, *Draper's Training School*, showing her "red, lying on [an] elevated track with [an] *entourage* of acrobats, tents, negroes and trains;" "Muriel Draper in two poses . . . shown wearing two undescrivable gowns, designed for her purposes, made from Poiret prints, and executed by Kramer, New York. Drawings by M'laga Grenet, exhibited here in Lucy Strike box, were designed for reproduction in Harpers Bazar;" and a photograph by Ralph Steiner of Ewing's own sculpture of her entitled *Muriel Draper with Head Held High*. A photograph of the exhibition shows an additional image of Draper, on the left wall: the publicity image she had used upon the release of her book (Fig. 2 and Fig. 79). In addition, Draper appeared in the catalog as the donor of a portrait of Mary Garden wearing a turban, an inclusion which would have evoked Draper herself given her own habit of wearing turbans. By printing and distributing a catalog of his closet display, Ewing was sharing with the public an encapsulation of his artistic stimuli and associating himself with the day's greatest luminaries, much as Draper had done in her memoir, *Music at Midnight*. When he ultimately moved and was forced to dismantle the gallery, he would carefully file the images in their proper order with the expectation of their future exhibition, writing: "I hate taking down each separate picture, because it is like taking part of myself down."¹⁶⁸

Ultimately, both Van Vechten and Ewing's portraits of Draper contrasted from Tobey's, enmeshing her image into a larger network, one that resembled the audience

¹⁶⁸ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 150.

she would have had for her salon gatherings. Although they were not selected to be part of her archive like Tobey's caricatures, there is evidence of her participation in and endorsement of the photographs, validating their vision today, and their success at encapsulating her unique identity.

Chapter 5

CASE STUDY III: DRAPER DENIES HER SCULPTURAL REPRESENTATION

Tobey's drawings and Van Vechten's and Ewing's photographs of Draper seek to capture her uniqueness, transforming her into an icon. But these two-dimensional images cannot serve as an actual physical embodiment of Draper. Perhaps it was in sculptural form that Draper's presence could best be simulated, and like her two-dimensional portraits that resemble icons, these sculptural ones recall talismans. They were objects that could be touched, held, and even manipulated. As has been discussed, Tobey created and distributed soap stone carvings of Draper. Ewing too departed from his traditional photographic medium, creating sculptures of Draper in a practice that seems not to have extended to his other sitters. The uniqueness of this work demonstrates Ewing's special investment in Draper.

Ewing's sculptures were not gifts, like Tobey's caricatures, or in some cases Van Vechten's photographs. Instead, Ewing intended to keep these objects for himself. A series of portraits of Ewing in his apartment features him alongside his sculptures of Draper (Fig. 80 and Fig. 81). In one, Ewing sits at his desk writing, with a bust of Draper resting beyond his arm. While the Draper figure points outward and away from Ewing, she also seems to be in communication with Ewing's reflection in the glass base of his desk lamp. In another, Ewing reclines on his sofa, below a ledge on which he has repositioned the head from his desk and added another. A shot showing the same sofa setting, and Ewing in the company of Zena Naylor, shows the ledge occupied by two bottles instead, suggesting the sculptures were in constant motion around his apartment (Fig. 82). Such movement endows the sculptures with a life, furthering the sense that they embodied Draper's actual company. Furthermore,

their presence while he read and wrote, but not while he entertained, directly associates Draper with the power to influence and inspire his creative, cerebral potential. In addition, Ewing had sculptural busts of himself, as is evidenced by a photograph of Lois Moran in his “Carnival of Venice” series, cradling a portrait bust of Ewing by Roy Sheldon (Fig. 83).¹⁶⁹ The bust would also be featured in the “Gallery of Extraordinary Portraits,” in a 1927 photograph taken in Paris showing Ewing, Sheldon, and the bust. This bust likely occupied the same space as his own busts of Draper and would have been in an artistic conversation with them, visually invoking their constant companionship.

Ewing extensively describes these sculptures of Draper in his letters, each of which he considered superior to the last, frequently referring to subsequent creations as his new “masterpiece.” In one letter, from February 21, 1930, he remarks how he was forced to write “on the bench” given that his desk had been consumed by his work on his fifth statue of Draper.¹⁷⁰ He would describe one—a full-length depiction of her in a gold costume and Woolworth jewelry—as “a scream, and I am secretly very proud of it.” This recalls the tension in reviews of his Venetian photographic series between the images’ status as entertainment versus fine art. By acknowledging his underlying pride, the quote suggests that while Ewing may have publicly suggested to others that his artistic representations of Draper were made in jest, he actually took his production as a sculptor and portrait artist of Draper seriously.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ “So You’re Going Somewhere,” 15.

¹⁷⁰ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 33.

¹⁷¹ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 44.

In many ways, the sculptures used the same visual language as Tobey's caricatures. Ewing would describe in his catalogue for the "Gallery of Extraordinary Portraits," how one, *Muriel Draper with Head Held High*, had the head of Draper "attached to [a] body not her own," transforming her into a hybrid figure much as Tobey had. A photograph, entitled *Muriel enlightening the world*, shows a sculpture composed of a curious assemblage of materials, many seemingly found and repurposed objects (Fig. 84). Immediately recognizable as Draper, the figurine wears a turban with a tall feather springing from it. The statue of Draper also dons a long shimmering dress, and, by stretching her arms, showcases the long dangling fringe of its sleeves. Similar to the ways Tobey calls attention to Draper's sexuality, Ewing highlights her breasts with perforated cups that may be thimbles and her genital region, on which he places a butterfly. The pedestal seems intended to evoke a garden, with the recreation of a row of flowering plants, a cat, and a vase of flowers. These inclusions of floral elements and a cat recall Tobey's and Evans's representations of Draper's apartment and entertaining space as an environment decorated with bouquets.

Ewing describes this statue as his "biggest and best." He writes about its origins, following his fourth statue, *Muriel More So*, which had been inspired by a quote in her book in which Draper, when visiting Mabel Dodge in Florence, was being painted by Robert Edmond Jones who remarked: "Muriel, everything about you should be more so, your aigrettes in your turban should be higher, your earrings should be longer, EVERYTHING about you ought to be MORE SO."¹⁷² In the statue, Ewing had represented Draper's breasts with electric flash light bulbs and was

¹⁷² Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 33.

frustrated by his audience's curiosity of whether they could be illuminated, given that he had not thought to incorporate electricity into the statue. In response, Ewing began this fifth statue, which he described as originally being modeled after the Statue of Liberty, a reference-point he later departed from. Working from the framework of a purchased desk lamp, Ewing left only the standard and the bulb and added clay around the original wiring. In the final sculpture, lightbulbs are featured on both front corners and on the top of four rising columns surrounding the figure of Draper, evoking the ironic title "enlightening." The largest column towers over Draper and in its shape, is decidedly phallic. With one arm, Draper reaches towards it, and with another she wields an axe, as if to suggest her power, over men, and, as the title suggests, over the world. While the photograph is in black and white, Ewing makes notes of the color in his letter, describing her figure as being painted in black and red, the feathered headdress as red, the large column beside her in gold, and the axe being red, again. The emphasis on red again parallels Tobey's use of color in his drawings. In his letter, Ewing noted that he had been in need of a desk lamp for some time, and, given that he found he had made one "far better than anyone could buy" which "lights the whole room," it is easy to imagine this sculpture became a permanent fixture in his living space.

Like his photographs, Ewing shared his sculptures of Draper with others. Alice de la Mar, who had written to Draper about her portrait by Brooks, also wrote her in regard to Ewing's sculptures, worrying that although she had made an appointment to see his "opus" she had lost the time and expressing her eager hope that she would still

be able to see the collection.¹⁷³ The British writer Harold Acton described Ewing's apartment as "a shrine to Muriel. On every piece of furniture there was a head or figure of her, in some places surrounded by candles."¹⁷⁴ In an August 16, 1932 letter, Ewing writes after a showing of his apartment, including his gallery and statues of Draper, that his guest left remarking, "you will be a rich man, you will be a rich man."¹⁷⁵ Ewing took active steps to guarantee their preservation. Like Davidson's sculptures, Ewing's sculptures of Draper were photographed and became secondary, replicated portraits, or avatars, of her. While it would seem logical that most were photographed by Ewing himself, the one shown in his "Gallery of Extraordinary Portraits" is attributed to Ralph Steiner, a pioneering documentary photographer at the time. Could it be that Ewing so valued his sculptures, he did not merely photograph them himself but pursued professional, commissioned work, much like one would for a live human's portrait? When he moved to Los Angeles in 1933 to pursue screen writing he made the monumental decision to abandon his long-enduring lease in New York and divest himself of much of his belongings, but he guaranteed his statues of Draper would go into safe keeping with Alice de la Mar.¹⁷⁶

Van Vechten would write to Draper after Ewing's death, sharing with her that a complete set of photographs of the statues had become part of Ewing's archive at the

¹⁷³ Alice de la Mar to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 2, Folder 63, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹⁷⁴ Fahlman, "The Great Draper Woman," 36.

¹⁷⁵ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 44.

¹⁷⁶ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 148.

Yale University Library.¹⁷⁷ He understood the closeness Draper and Ewing shared, and sought to capture this in the archive he was arranging. He emphasized how, after going through and organizing Ewing's letters, he had a new appreciation of the intimate knowledge each had about the other, writing to Draper that "when he wrote to you he wrote to YOU. In a strange way he was obviously in LOVE with you. All he wanted from you, however, was ALL your time, and ALL your attention."¹⁷⁸ But while the photographs of the sculptures survive in Ewing's archive today, they are not a part of Draper's. Her archive contains the Tobey's caricatures and the other artwork she herself selected. Draper suggests in a letter to Van Vechten on September 2, 1930 that the sculptures were more a fantasy of Ewing's than a reality and that they were serving as an inaccurate substitute for her real self in Ewing's life. She wrote: "He finds me easier to live with on his own terms, either in words or sculpture, and in a few years will not know MY me at all. I on the other hand, find HIS me an embarrassing stranger."¹⁷⁹ In Ewing's mind, these statues were a compliment to Draper. He would write of her praise on February 21, 1930: "Muriel says these statues will be the greatest record of and comment on her life when she is dead!"¹⁸⁰ But if these sentiments were sincere, only months later, Draper's opinion seems to have

¹⁷⁷ Carl Van Vechten to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 10, Folder 317, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹⁷⁸ Nathaniel Sanders to Muriel Draper, June 8, 1946, Box 10, Folder 317, Muriel Draper Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹⁷⁹ Muriel Draper to Carl Van Vechten, September 2, 1930, Box 41, Folder 540, Carl Van Vechten Papers, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹⁸⁰ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 33.

changed. Unlike Tobey's caricatures, which were made to be evocative for Draper's own delight, Ewing cast Draper as a character that suited his own personal desires. Despite her power, Draper lost control of her representation when it came into Ewing's hands, just as she often did when depicted in the media or by other friends and associates. Outside of her personally curated archive, she had no control of how she would be recorded, remembered, and preserved. In the days before his suicide in 1934 Ewing would write to Draper, expressing his need for her: "I have basked in your light for so long, and I have been deluded into thinking I was part of the light. I know now that I never was. But I will still cling so to the illusion You have thought for me and felt for me so long, I haven't needed to think or feel, and have done neither, ever. Now that I must learn to."¹⁸¹ It was through Draper's presence that Ewing imagined his own identity.

¹⁸¹ Ewing, *Genius Denied*, 274.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

In her many artistic representations, often translated through the mail and traded photographs, we can see Draper's closest acquaintances attempting to stretch her salon so that it extended to their own sphere when they could not be physically present in it. In this token form, even as an inanimate object, the memory of Draper still seems to have had the power of serving as an inspiration for artistic creation. Some, like Ewing, became desperate to behold her and hold her. But Draper did not wish to be defined as one, or to be seen as static. As much as her closest friends tried, Draper could not truly be replicated. Despite their scattered origins, Draper pulled together a collection that was to serve as her legacy after her death. The archive and Tobey's representations of Draper in it testify to Draper's investment in intellectual philosophical debates, a defense of women's strengths, and the culture of the Harlem Renaissance. Unlike Ewing's totems that he understood to be "masterpieces," Tobey's creations were made on the scraps of paper, meant to be ephemeral. Rich with symbolism, and intended for a specific time and place, they speak to Draper, having only an audience of one. But their conscious preservation by Draper demands their historical analysis, and we can attempt to decode their secret language to better appreciate her eccentricities: her passions for hats, the color pink, skulls. Most importantly, while her letters and caricatured depictions capture her uniqueness, they also suggest her ineffability with their undecipherable references. Through them, we get only a hint of what was a complex and dynamic woman leader. And it seems this was her own preference, to court mystery in life and death. Only Muriel Draper could fully know herself.

FIGURES



Fig. 1. Muriel Draper's Chinese Gambling Party, May 1938. Image from *Town & Country*.



MURIEL DRAPER

Author of the best-seller "Music at Midnight," a fascinating reflection on famous contemporaries; the commentary of a witty personality who prefers to see peacocks where others see guinea-fowl

Fig. 2. Muriel Draper Portrait. Image from "About People We Know," *Town & Country* 84, no. 4006 (April 15, 1929): 28.

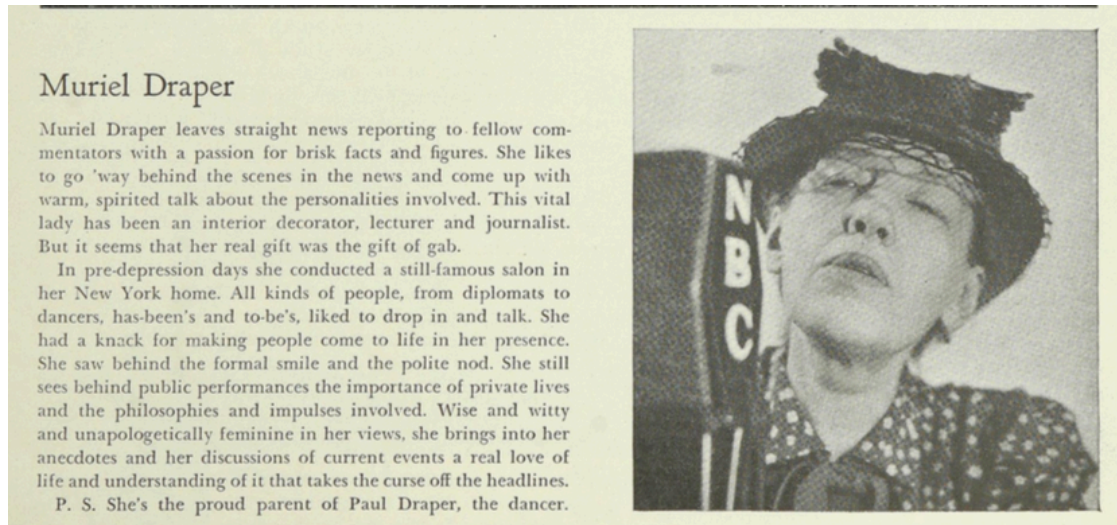


Fig. 3. William Haussler, Muriel Draper Portrait. Image from Hilda Cole, "Woman to Woman on the Air" *Woman's Day* 1, no. 8 (May 1938): 31.



Fig 4. Muriel and Paul Draper. Image from Goodman, Eckert, "On the Night Shift," *Town & Country* 96, no. 4220 (January 1941), 20.



Fig. 5. Muriel Draper Sweeping the Steps. Image from "Strawberry Hill Billies," *Town & Country* 94, no. 4203 (August 1939), 80.



Fig. 6. Paul Poiret, Dinner dress donated by Muriel Draper, ca. 1923, silk. Image from the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

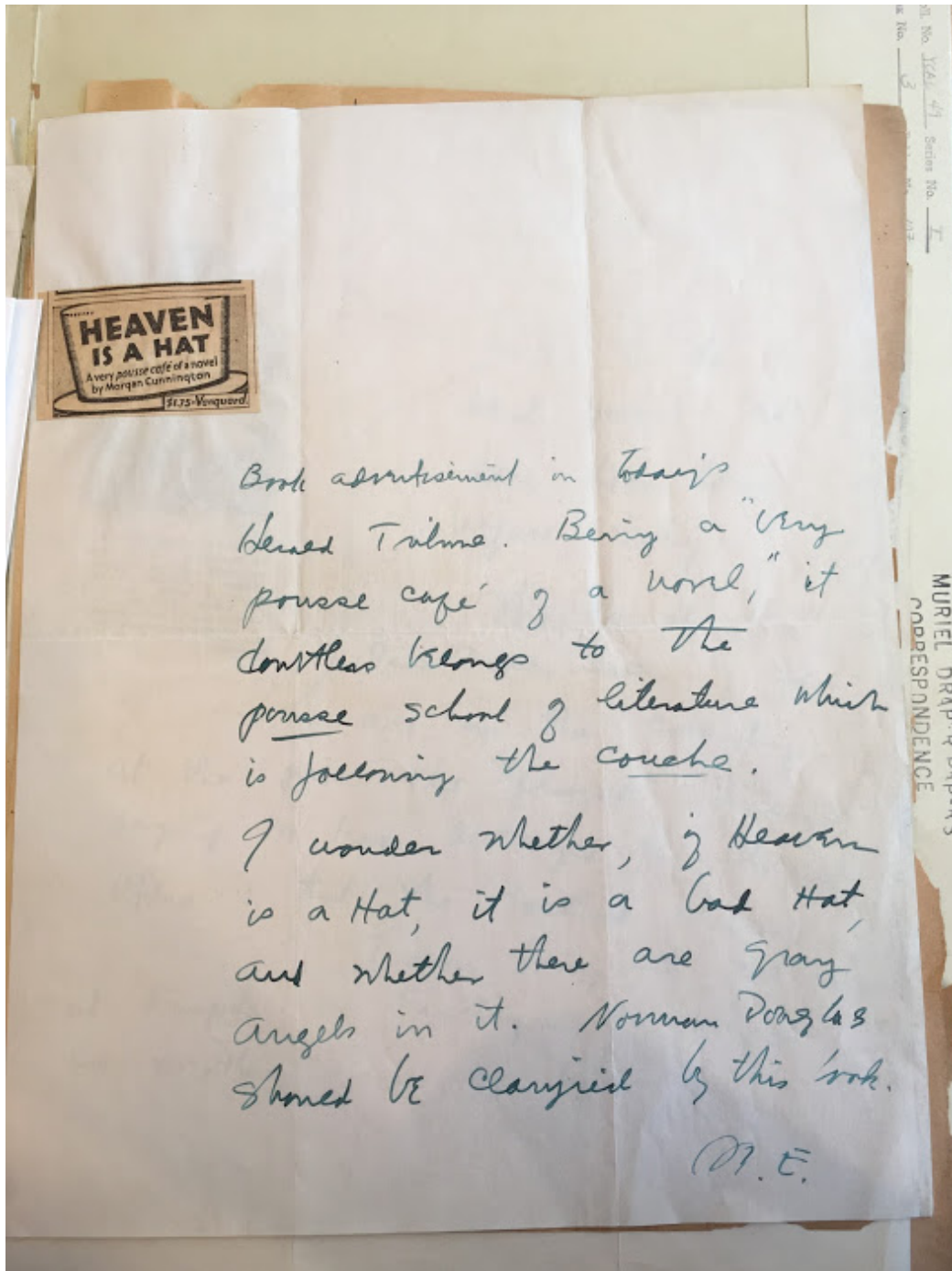


Fig. 7. Max Ewing, Letter to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 3, Folder 107, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 8. Walker Evans, [Drawing Room in Muriel Draper's Apartment, New York City], May 29, 1934, Film negative, 6 1/2 x 8 1/2 in. Image © Walker Evans Archive, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Fig. 9. Walker Evans, [Table Setting and Throne Chair in Muriel Draper's Apartment, New York City], May 29, 1934, Film negative, 6 1/2 x 8 1/2 in. Image © Walker Evans Archive, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Fig. 10. Max Ewing, Postcard to Muriel Draper, *A Scene of a Draper Thursday for Incurables*, Showing painting by Klavdy Lebedev, n.d., Box 3, Folder 105, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 11. Mark Tobey, *Early Morning*, n.d., Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

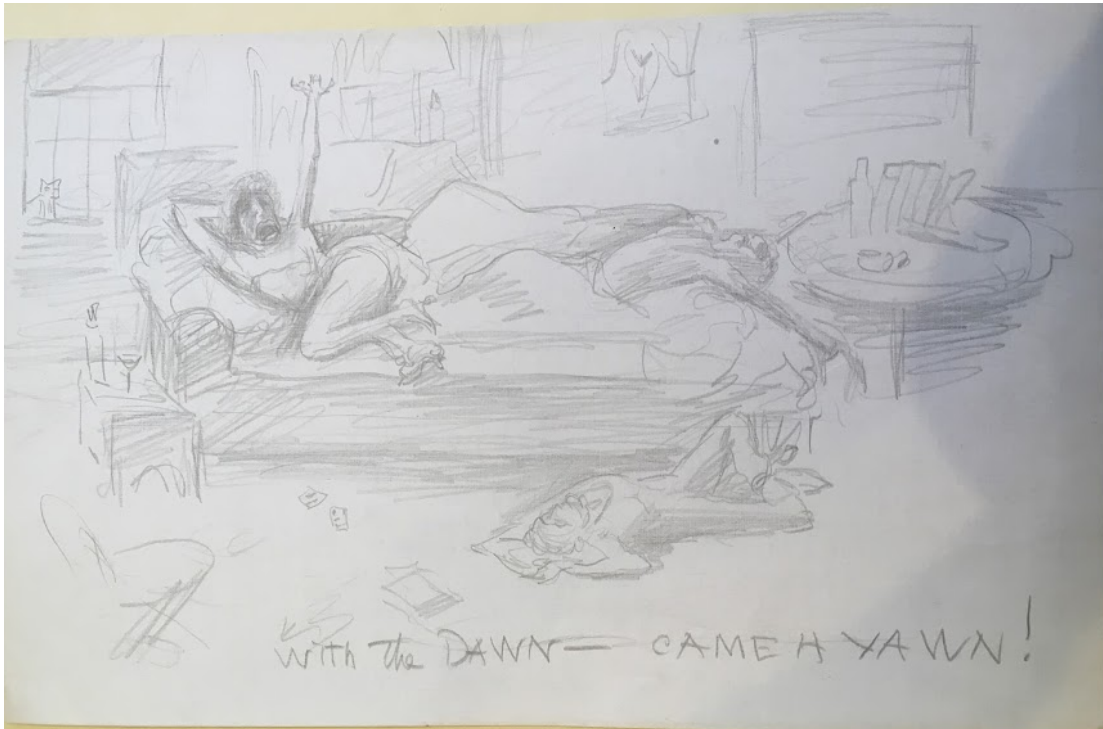


Fig. 12. Mark Tobey, *WITH the DAWN—CAME A YAWN!*, n.d., Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

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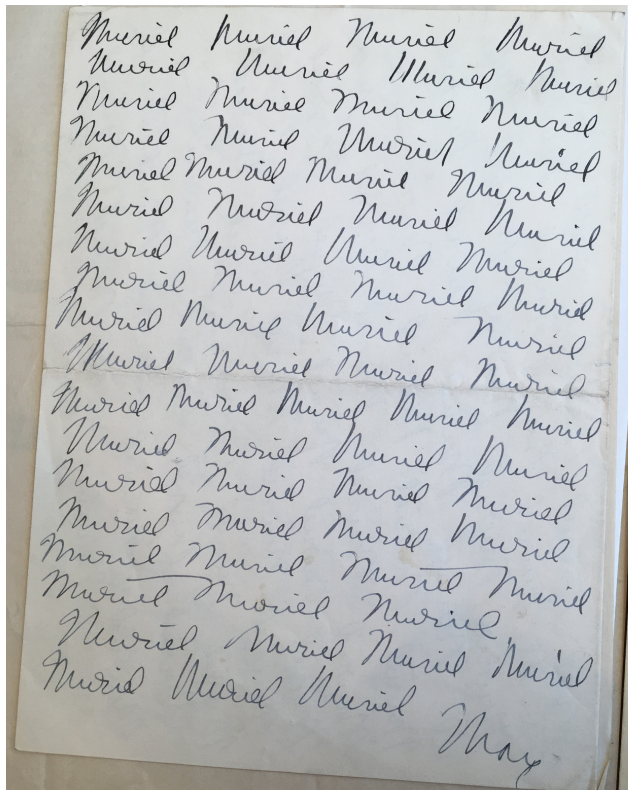


Fig. 13. Max Ewing, Letter to Muriel Draper Repeating Her Name, 1926?, Box 3, Folder 108, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

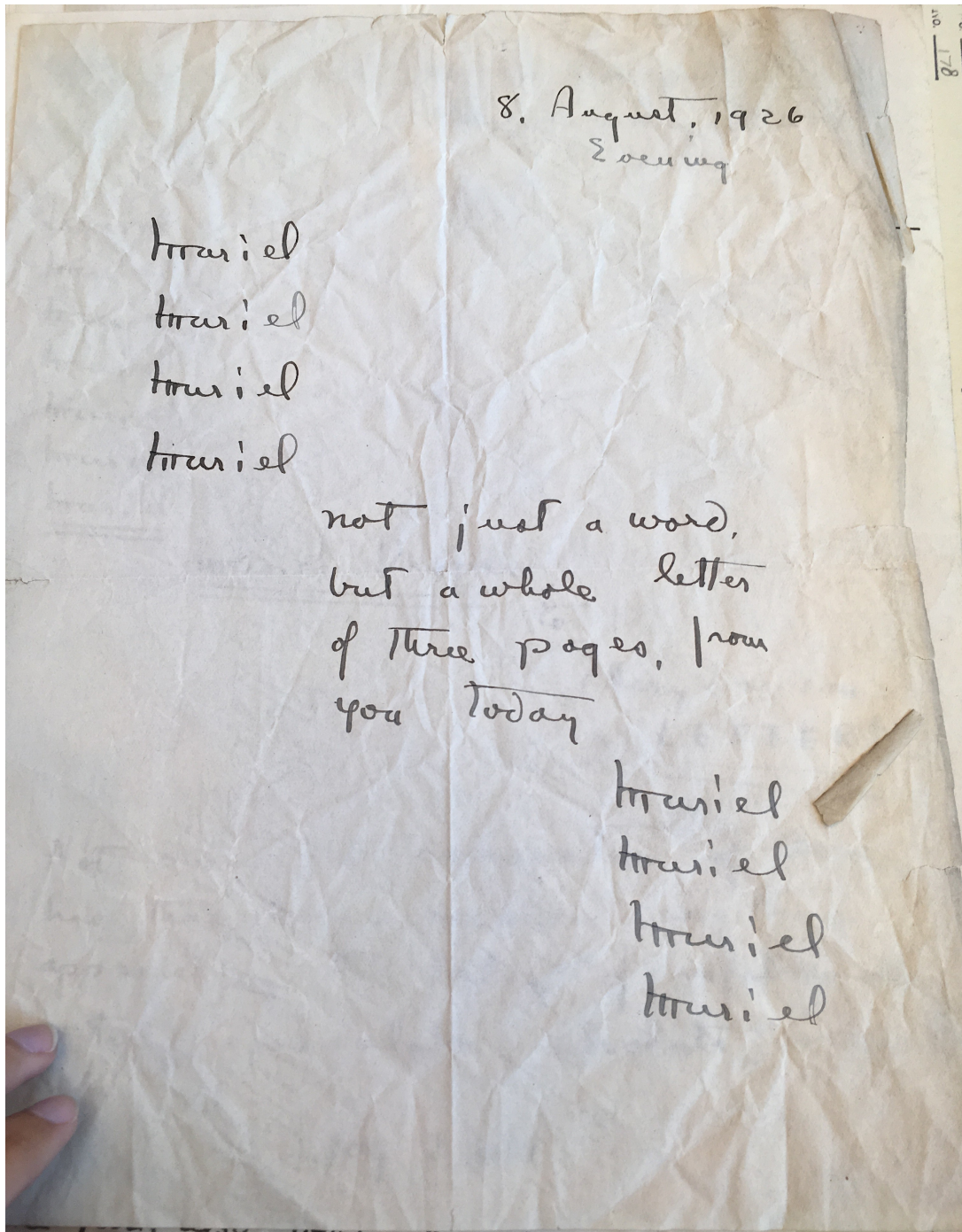


Fig. 14. Raymond E. F. Larsson, Letter to Muriel Draper Repeating Her Name, August 8, 1926, Box 6, Folder 178, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

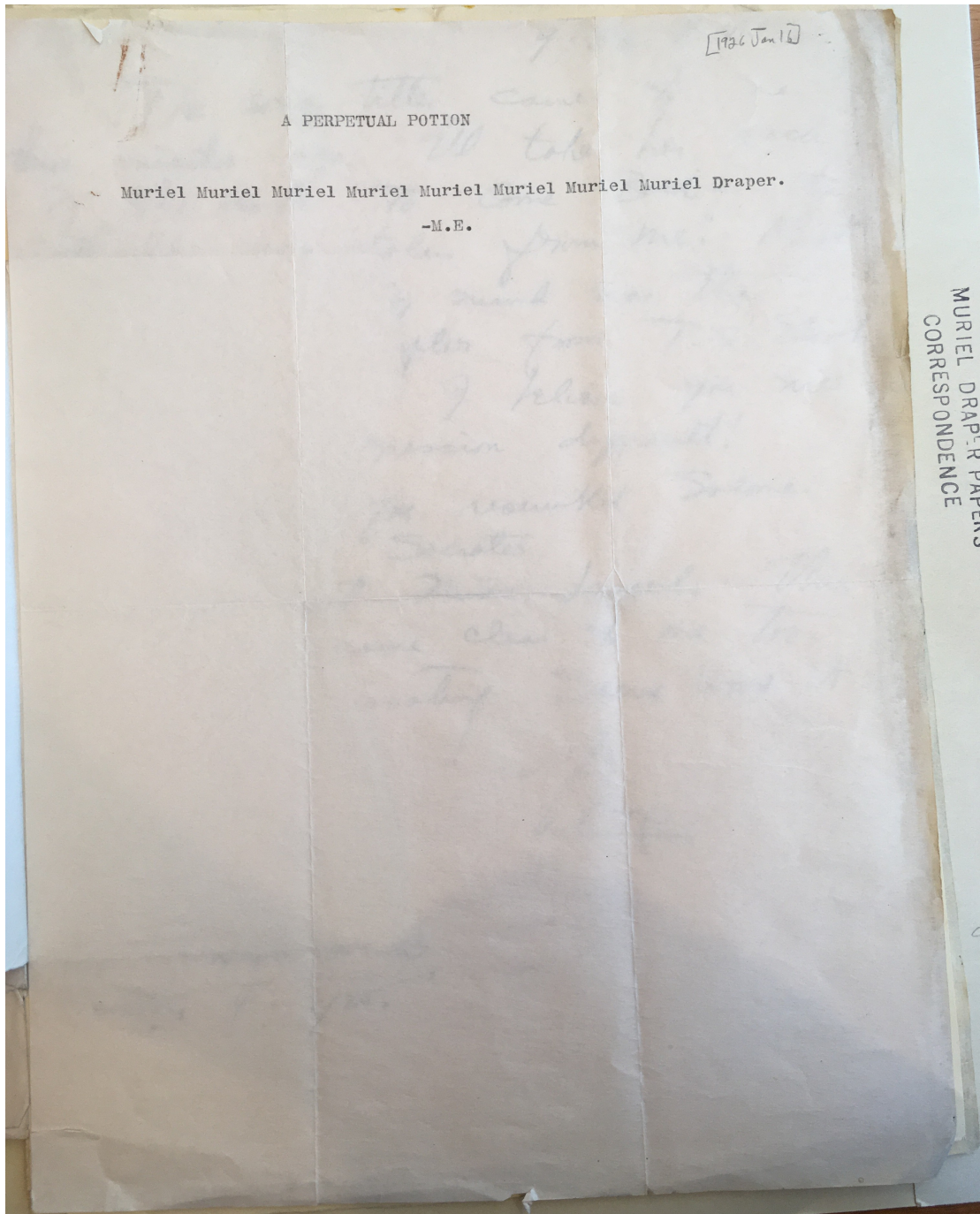


Fig. 15. Max Ewing, Letter to Muriel Draper, "A Perpetual Potion," January 16, 1926, Box 3, Folder 103, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 16. Romaine Brooks, *Muriel Draper*, 1938, Box 257, Carl Van Vechten Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections.

the fact remains that Davidson has modeled nearly all the famous heads of the world. He has made some of these seem to be the heads of very small people, others of men of tremendous energy, still others to be the containers of practical which is to say of superficial minds. Only a few have suggested dignity, poise, ease, the symbols of a fundamentally sound mind. Miss Stein, in this portrait, might well be the mother of us all. She has sympathy, an understanding that will not be disturbed by the fences erected for moral and traditional reasons. She might not be irritated by whimsicalities of the long-haired faddists, by the people who turn exotic somersaults in order to attract attention to themselves or to enjoy a skinny laugh behind their hands, but it is impossible to imagine her dealing in these playful or idiotic things. She is, here, a very real person. Perhaps we have done her an injustice. Perhaps we are wrong in supposing that gold is of no use without the stiffening aid of an alloy. Miss Stein seems to ask that we supply our own alloy. In that case her portrait of Jo Davidson will mean different things to different intelligences and each one will supply its own literary interpretation. Nothing is forced upon us.

Jo Davidson's portraits are another matter. To him the surface is the symbol of the soul, a thing written in plain words which go in a definite direction. He is a reporter and an interpreter. The direction he reports is his own interpretation of the sitters. The portrait of Muriel Draper will shock with the force of the ego it presents. There

is no question of doubt here. We are not given an opportunity to fill in vague moments with concrete matter of our own creation. We are very plainly told that this is the woman. Anything that we may try to add to the original statement will be thrown off. Water will roll off this duck's

back. There are more subtleties in Anatole France the man and in the portrait. We imagine things here. We may suppose, as an example, that while intellectual processes create something akin to dignity, they destroy faith. This portrait is nebulous. What kind of man is this? The face is full of mystery or of evasions. Everything that has been written has been balanced

by its contradiction. Beliefs are the sins of narrow minds and of uneducated people. Anatole France is a master juggler of ideas. He is shorn of both faith and ignorance.

There is something of this quality in all Jo Davidson's work. He is essentially sophisticated. Like France also, his sophistications have not jaded his spirit. His reactions are enthusiasms. His sophistry merely does away

with the poses, attitudes, conventional mannerisms of the burlesque alderman. His monumental sculpture will not play with the sentimental saws which are the protective propaganda of governments. He will see in Marshal Joffre, as an example, the man instead of the popular idol. The popular idol is a creature of fiction, a device like the waving of flags and the beating of drums. The real man is more than that. Davidson will find him because he will come to him free of all *a priori* notions.



HEAD OF MURIEL DRAPER
BY JO DAVIDSON

Fig. 17. Jo Davidson, *Muriel Draper*. Image from Guy Pene du Bois, "Art by the Way," *The International Studio* 76 (November 1922), 181.

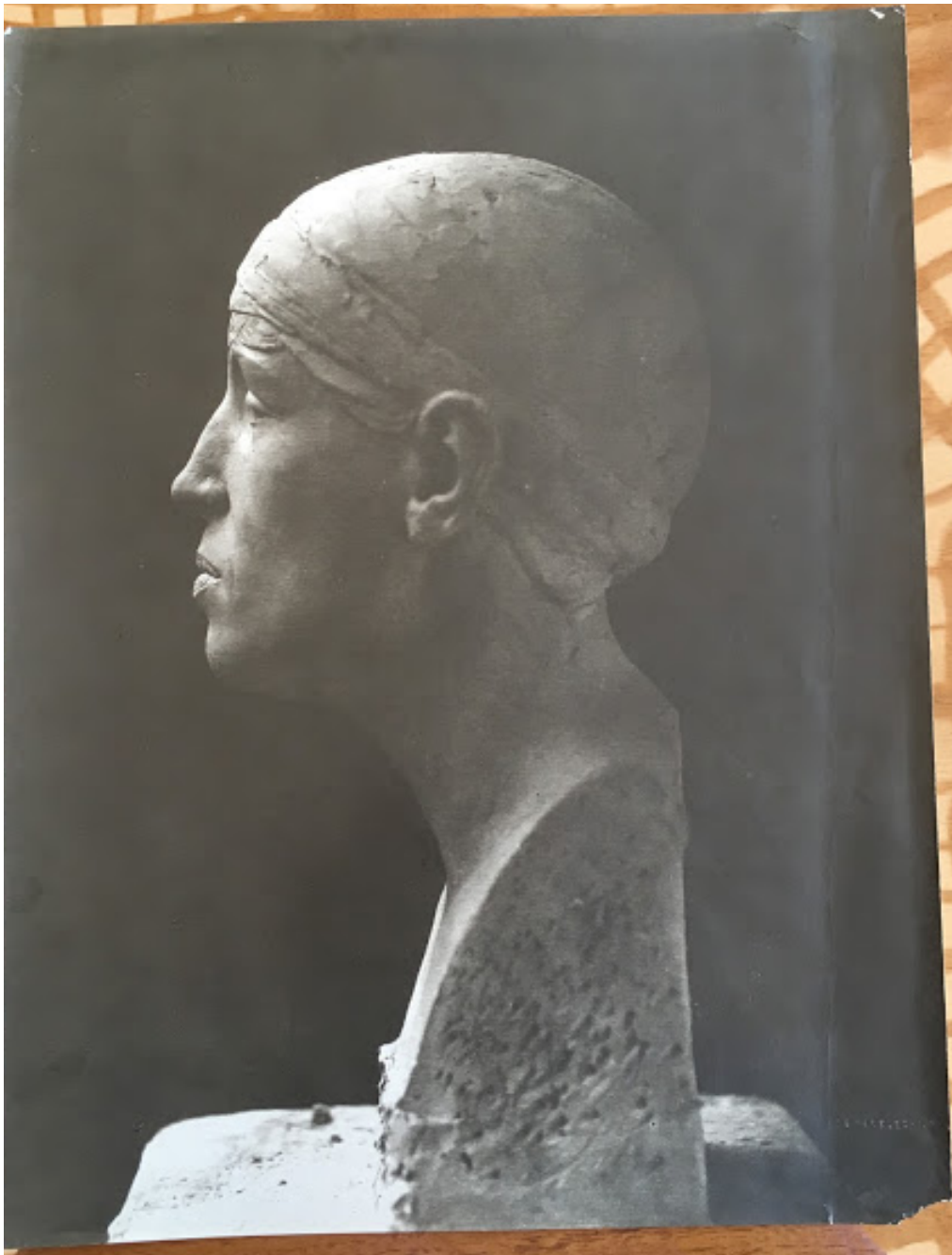


Fig. 18. Jo Davidson, Photograph of Bust of Muriel Draper, Box 177, Folder 4348, Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

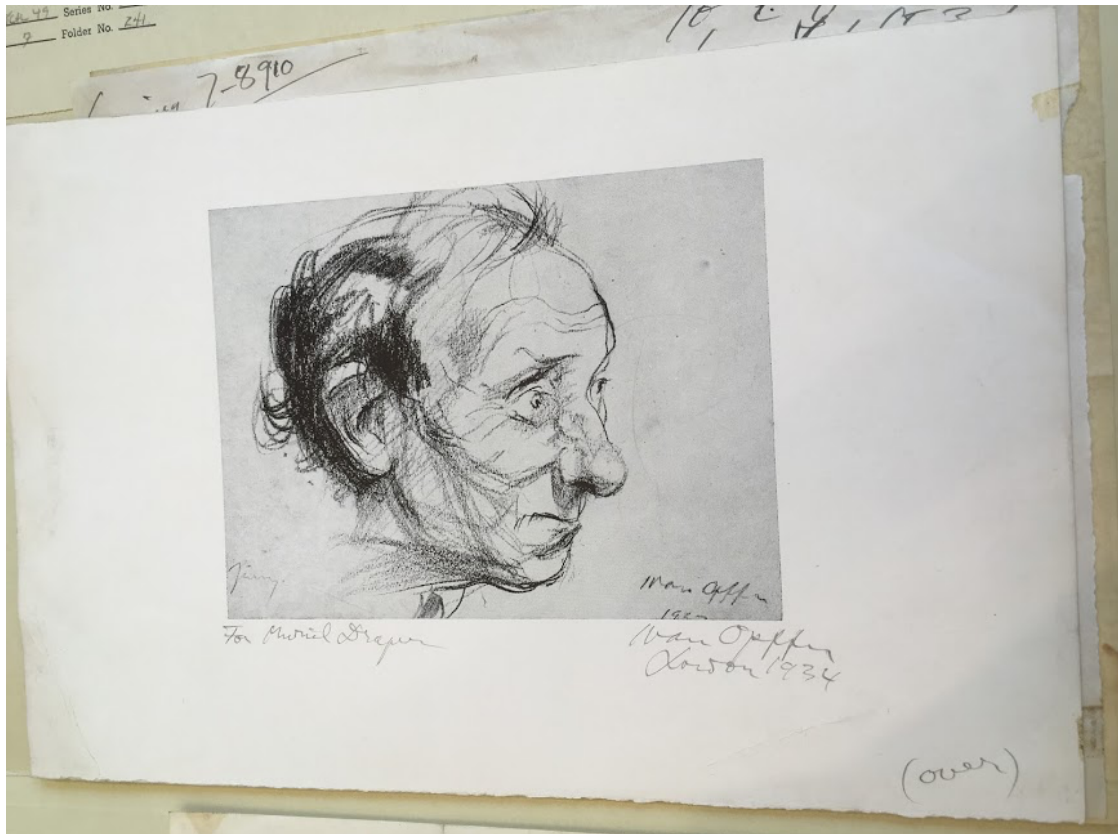


Fig. 19. Ivan Opffer, Photograph of Drawing of Larsson, 1934, Box 7, Folder 241, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

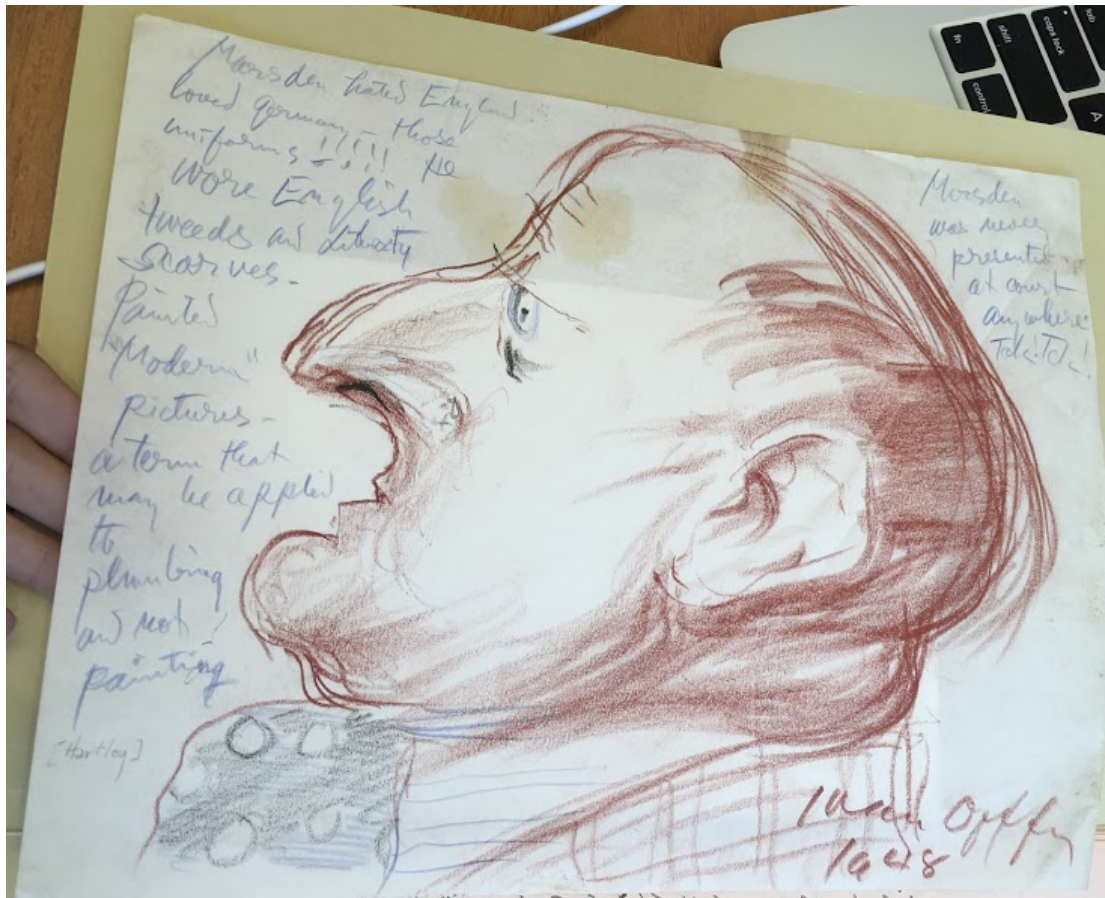


Fig. 20. Ivan Oppfer, Drawing of Marsden Hartley annotated by Hartley, 1948, Box 4, Folder 138, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

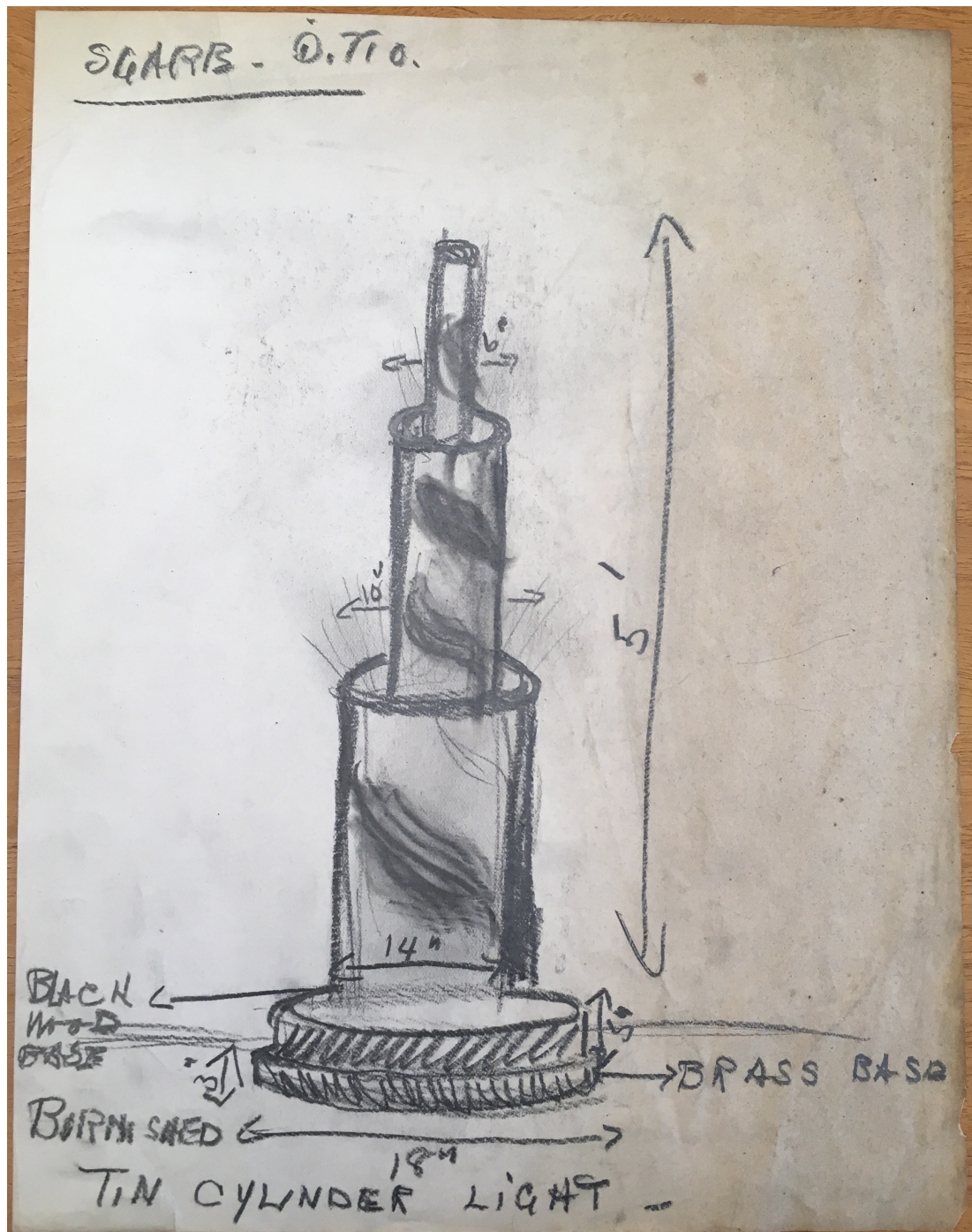


Fig. 21. Muriel Draper, Tin Cylinder Light, Interior Decoration Completed Sketches, Box 15, Folder 515, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 22. Muriel Draper, Small Steel Trestle Hoop Table, Interior Decoration
Completed Sketches, Box 15, Folder 515, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of
American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the
author.

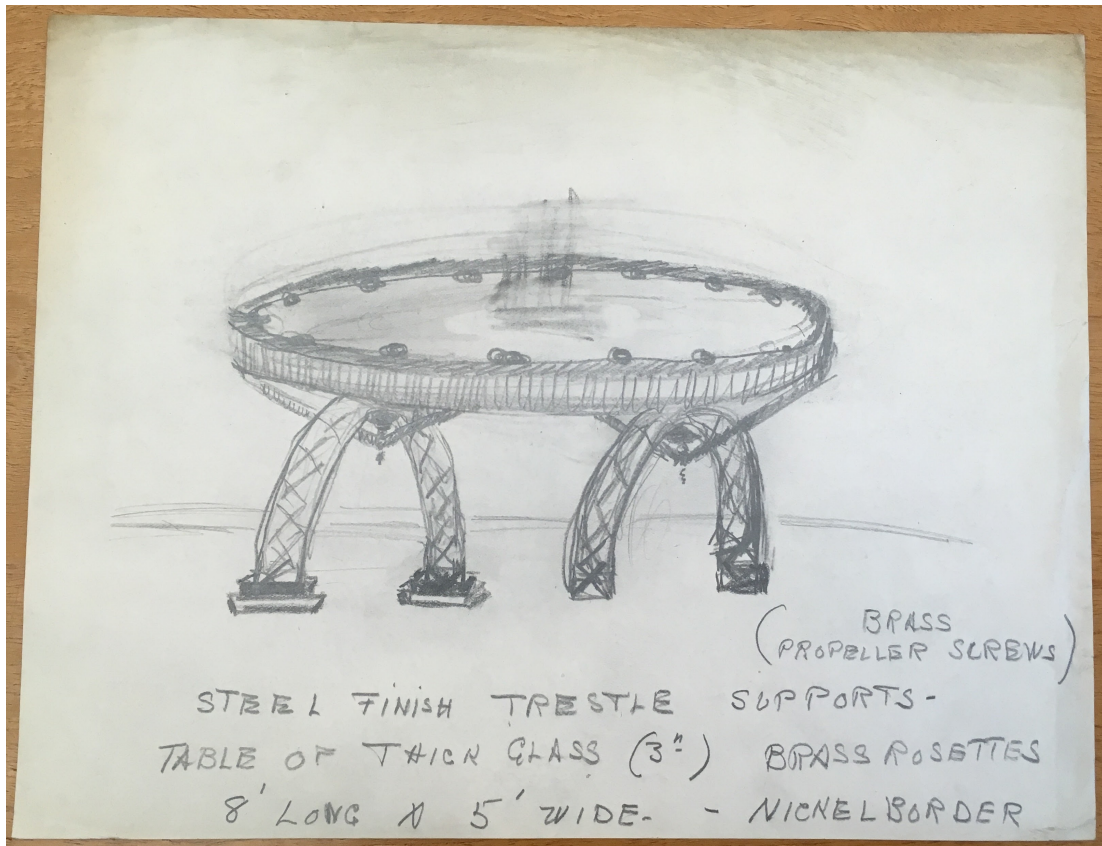


Fig. 23. Muriel Draper, Steel Finish Trestle Table of Thick Glass, Interior Decoration Completed Sketches, Box 15, Folder 515, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 24. Muriel Draper, Interior Decoration Completed Sketch, Box 15, Folder 515, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 25. Florine Stettheimer, *Studio Party, or Soiree*, n.d., oil on canvas, 81 x 85 cm, Florine and Ettie Stettheimer papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections



Fig. 26. Raymond E. F. Larsson, *The Impure in Heart*, Box 23, Folder 660, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

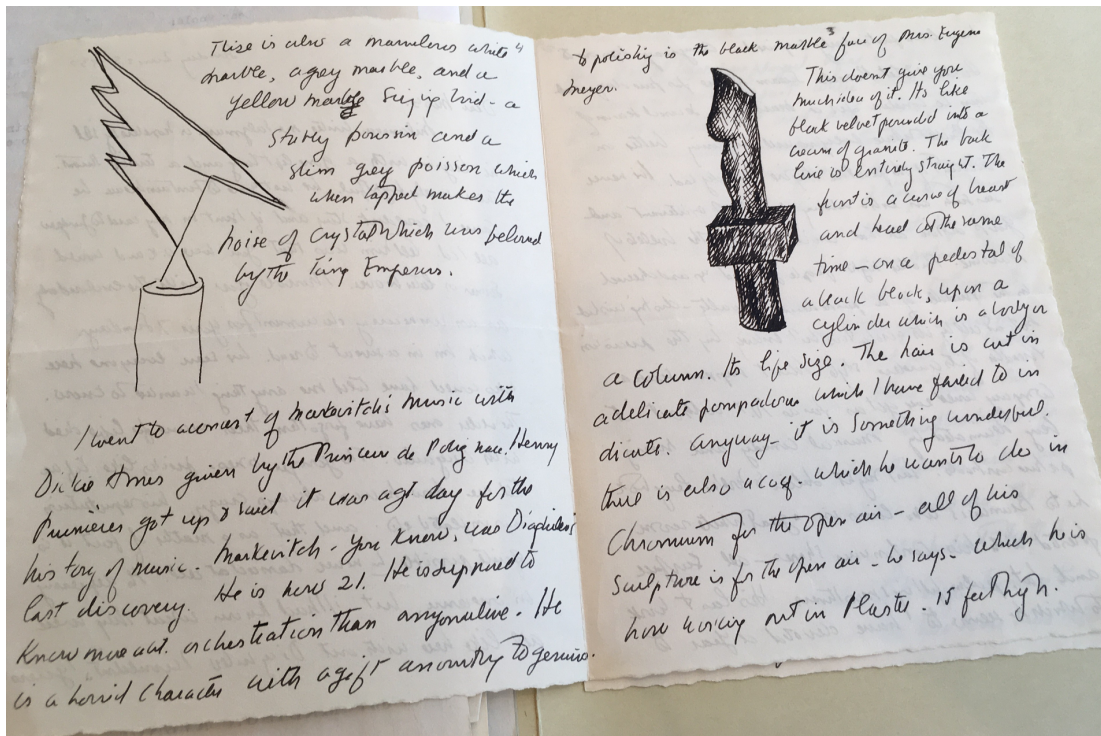


Fig. 27. Lincoln Kirstein, Letter to Muriel Draper Showing Brancusi Sculptures, June 29, 1937, Box 5, Folder 158, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

December 1

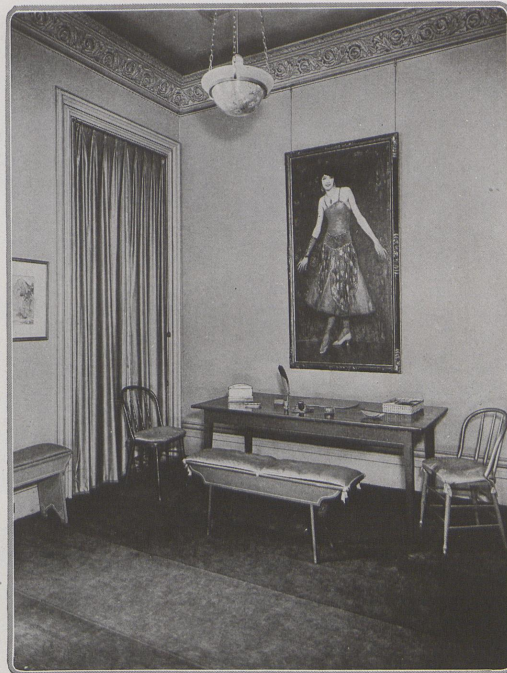
THE WHITNEY STUDIO

CLUB OFFERS HOSPITAL-

ITY TO GREENWICH VIL-

LAGE ART STUDENTS

DECORATIONS BY MURIEL DRAPER



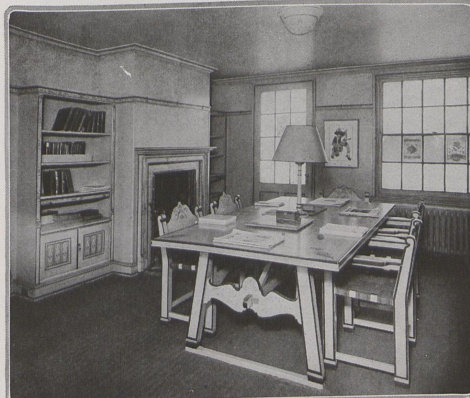
The very office of the Whitney Studio Club shows that it was made by and for artists. Its walls are turquoise blue, its carpet striped in sapphire and red violet. The curtains are of sapphire satin lined with pale green yellow silk and bound with scarlet cord from which the eye passes to a scarlet table with a gay border of fruits and flowers. The benches are scarlet, orange, and pale green yellow with satin cushions of red violet and sapphire bound with scarlet and turquoise tape. The ceiling is the colour of a pale yellow sunset

The walls of the library are grey with a border of scarlet and blue and yellow. The tables, too, are grey, outlined with a scarlet design that hails from Greenwich House, and they stand on a carpet of rope along with the grey chairs with their seats of blue and scarlet webbing. One might not know it from this little vista, but the library is very well stocked, indeed, with everything that the art student needs

MRS. HARRY PAYNE WHITNEY, well-known as a patron of art, is that rare and wonderful person—an artist with money. She doesn't have to dream on paper. She says, "Let there be a Studio Club," and there is a Studio Club that is just what a Greenwich Village Studio Club ought to be, from office to exhibition room. This last is always full of ambitious canvases, for the Village is ambitious to a degree undreamed of by uptown New Yorkers who, if they wanted to exhibit and had anything worth showing, would never hesitate for

lack of the wherewithal to hire a room. A room, however, is all that the Village ever lacked, and now it has one that costs nothing but club membership dues which are very moderate indeed, but which support its needs. There is a library, too—the only one downtown, and a great time-saver to those who live far from Forty-second Street. Here the current magazines may be seen and the illustrations duly criticized. And, in the writing-room, great and glorious ideas may be put into permanent form between orange walls on a sapphire blue carpet.

The primary colours unite in a writing-room where the walls are orange with a small design in blue and scarlet as a border. The carpet is sapphire, the benches are orange with cushions of scarlet satin, the desk fittings are scarlet and blue. The chairs with their interesting blue webbing seats and sturdy orange lines were made from designs by M. de Faulla of Greenwich House by boys of that settlement



Mattie Edwards Hewitt



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Fig. 28. Muriel Draper's Designs for the Whitney Studio Club, December 1, 1918.

Image from *Vogue*.



Fig. 29. Wyndham Lewis, *WYNDHAM LEWIS VIEWS MOOLIE for the first time*, Box 15, Folder 520, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 30. Mark Tobey, *Self-portrait as an Alpine Climber . . .*, n.d. Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 31. Mark Tobey, Realistic portrait of Muriel Draper, n.d. Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

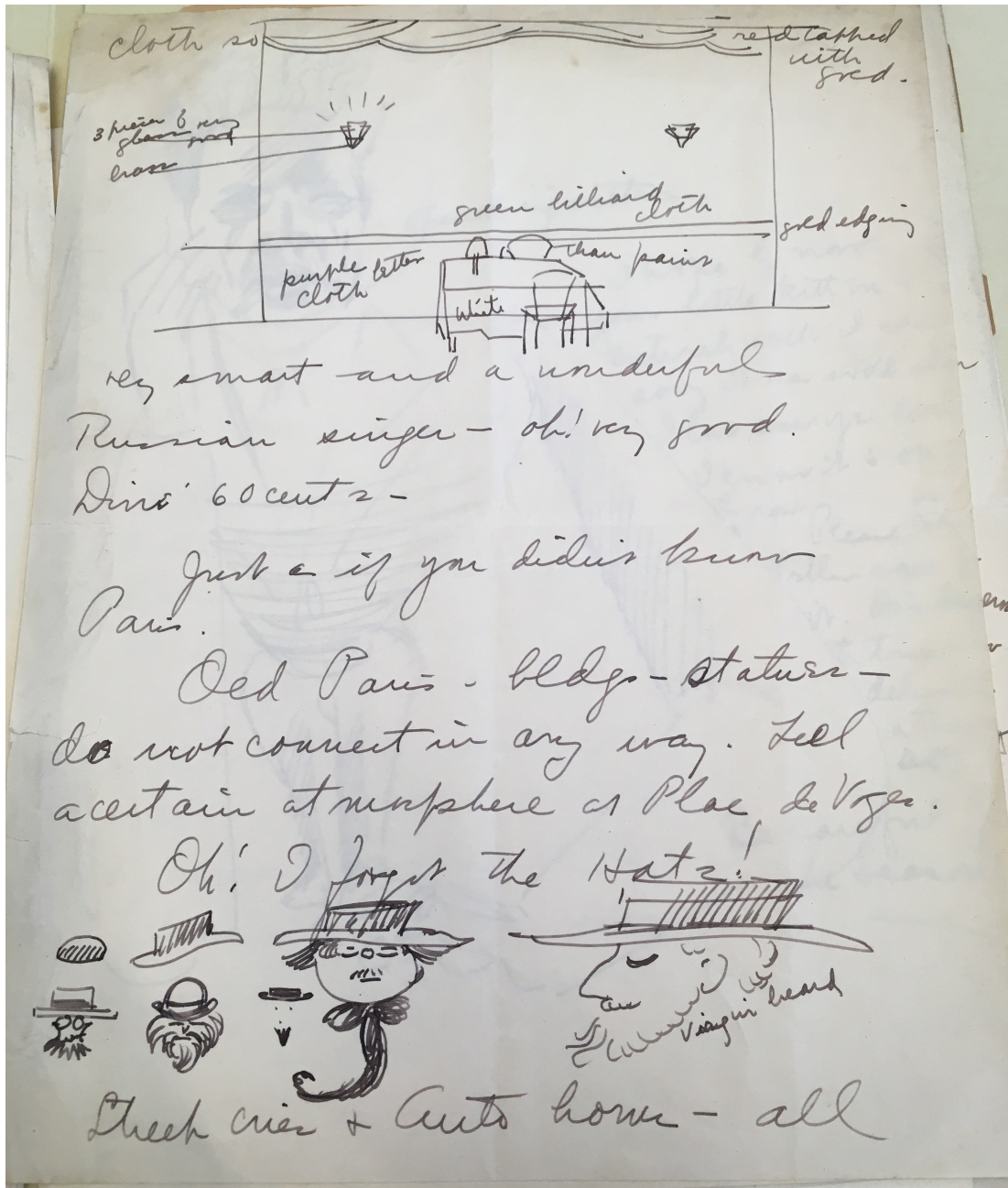


Fig. 32. Mark Tobey, Letter to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 311, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

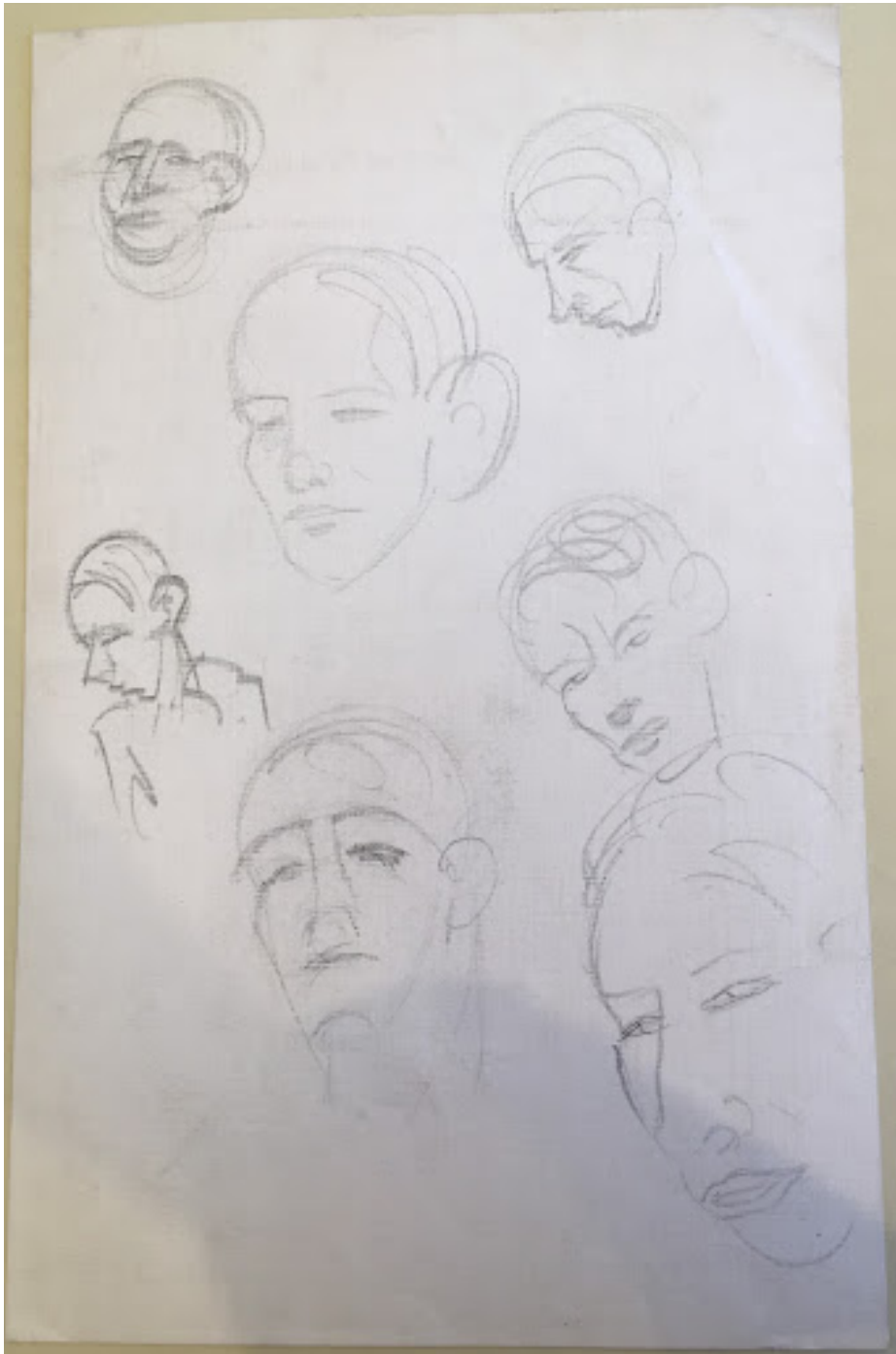


Fig. 33. Mark Tobey, Head Studies, n.d., Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 34. Mark Tobey, Cubist Representation of Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 35. Mark Tobey, Image of Muriel Draper Recalling Ferdinand Leger, n.d., Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

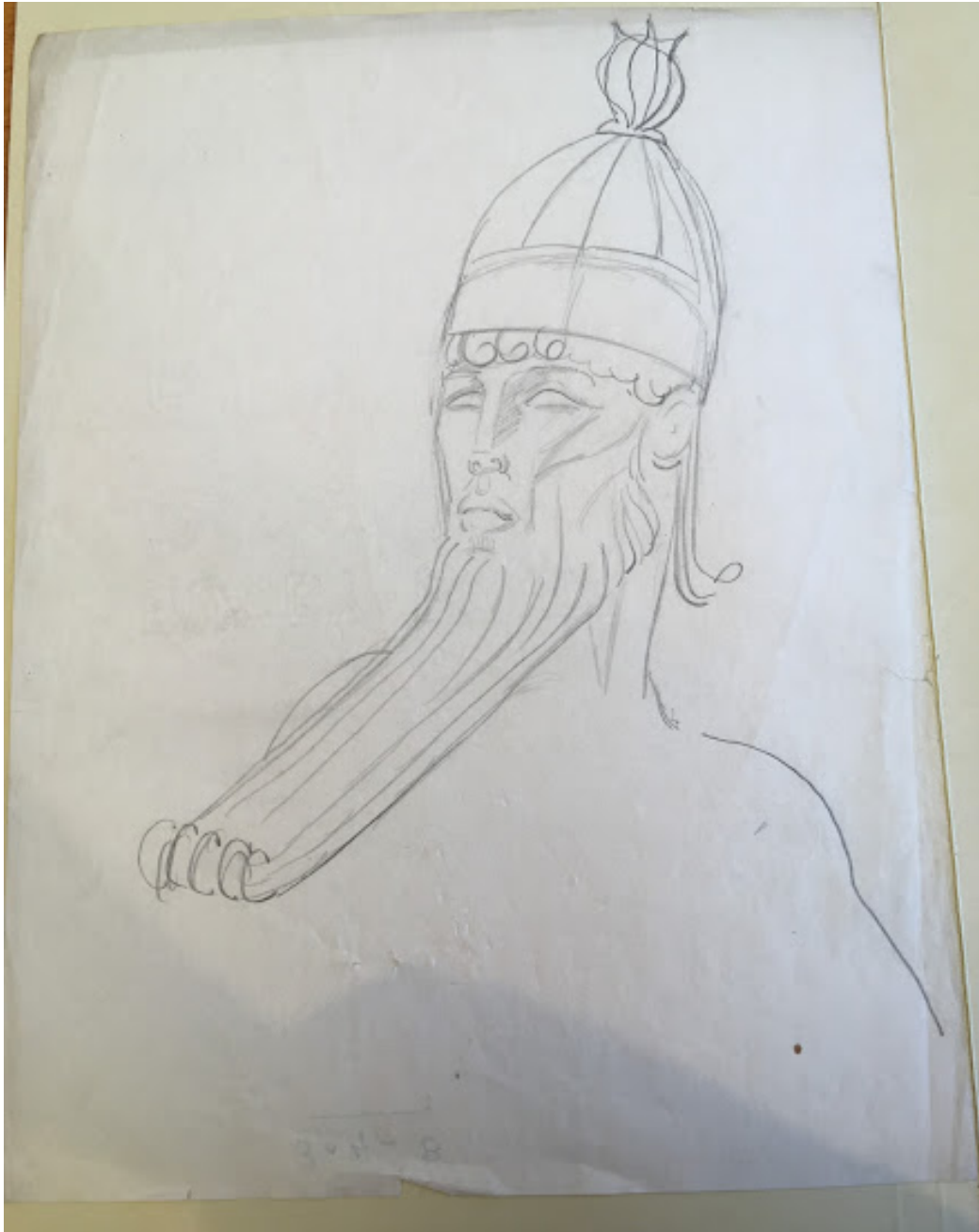


Fig. 36. Mark Tobey, Image of Muriel Draper as an Egyptian Statue, n.d. Box 22, Folder 712, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 37. Funerary Mask of King Tutankhamun, ca. 1323 BCE, Gold, $54 \times 39.3 \times 49$ cm. Image from Wikipedia Commons.



Fig. 38. *King Menkaura, the goddess Hathor, and the deified Hare nome*, 2490–2472 BCE., Greywacke, 17 1/8 x 33 1/4 x 19 5/16 in. Photograph © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

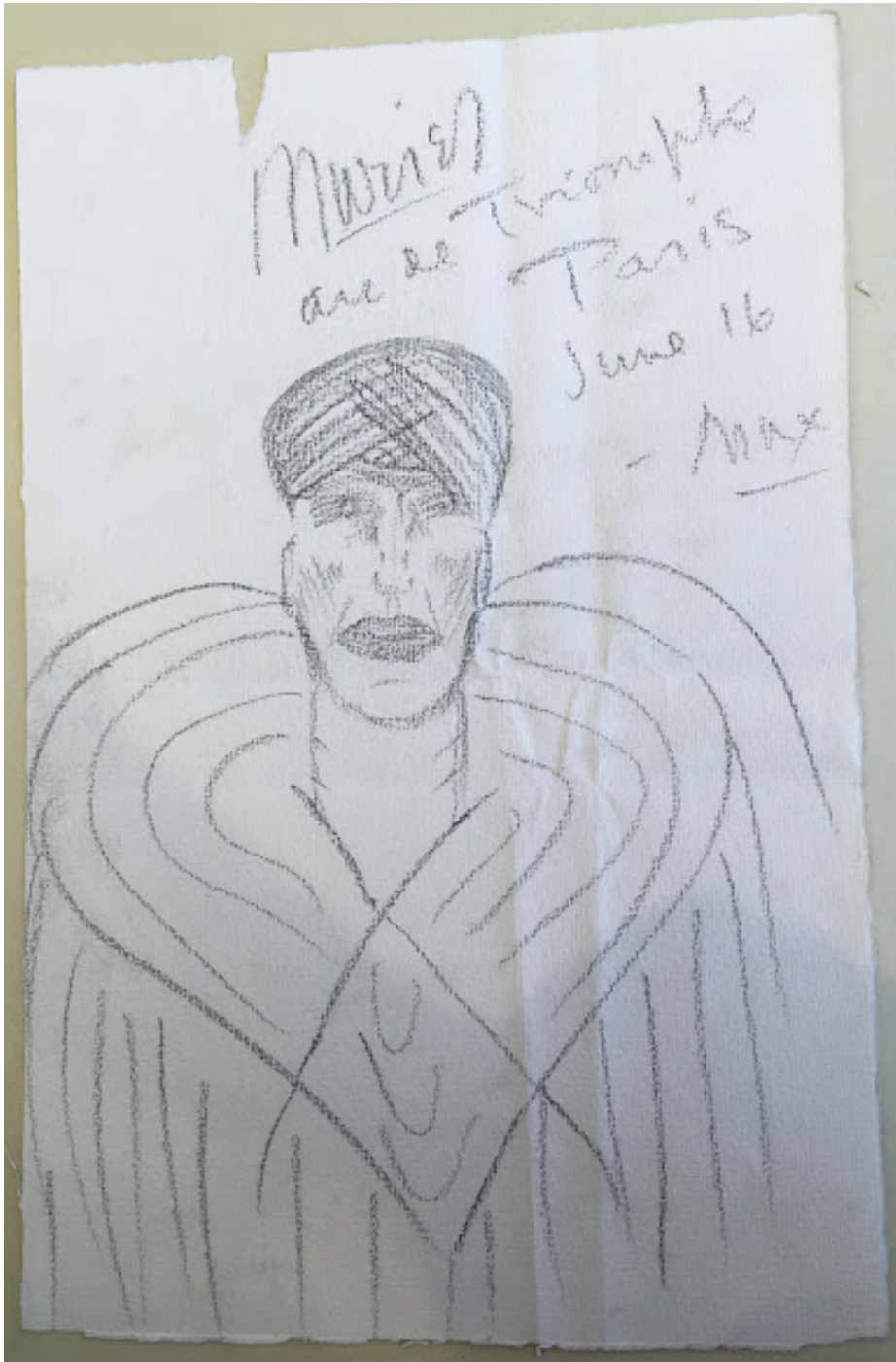


Fig. 39. Mark Tobey, *Muriel Arc de Triomphe Paris*, June 16, Box 22, Folder 712, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 40. Arc de Triomphe, 1806–36. Image from Wikipedia Commons.



Fig. 41. Mark Tobey, *Muriel Draper on a Pedestal*, n.d., Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

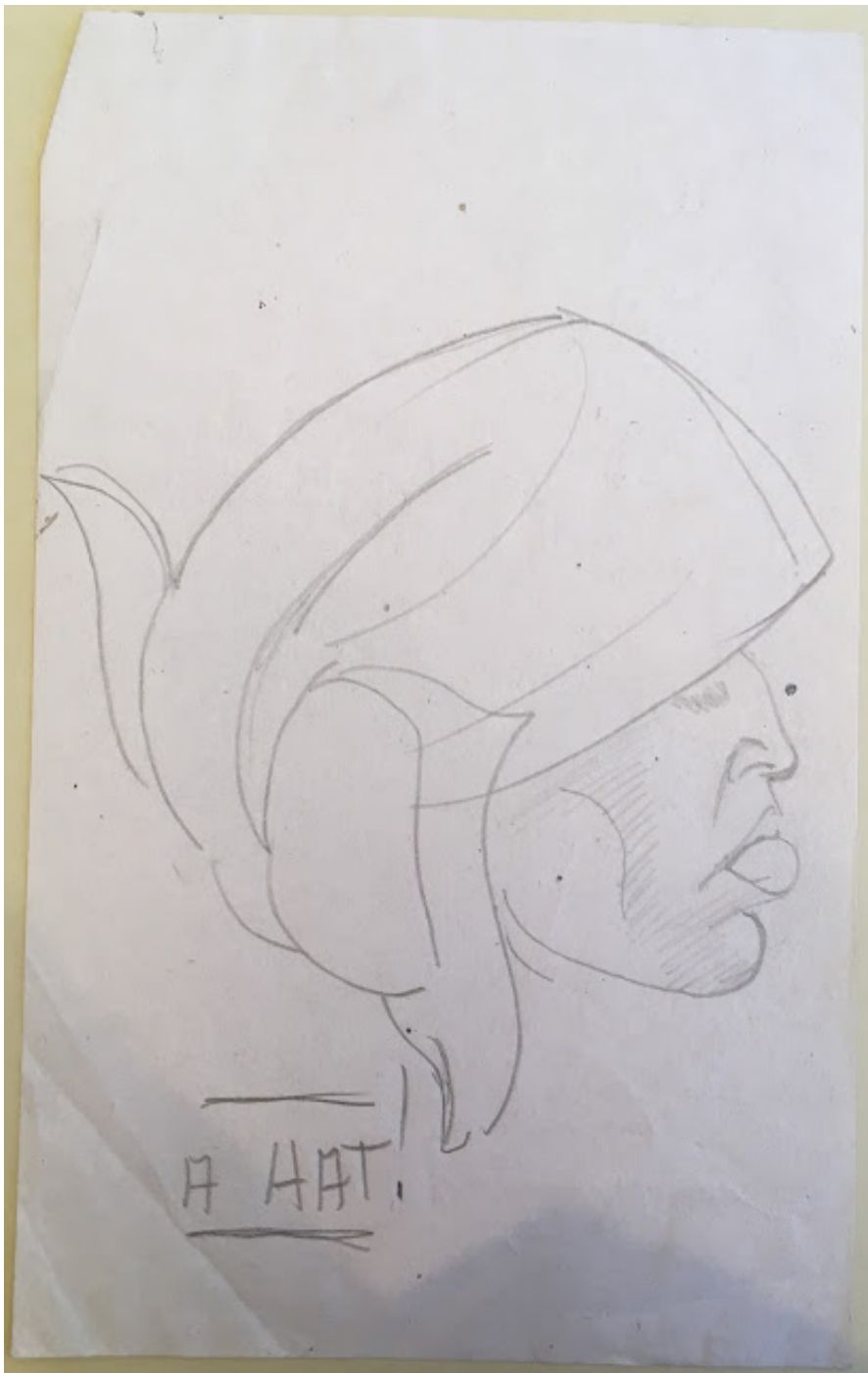


Fig. 42. Mark Tobey, *A HAT!*, n.d., Box 22, Folder 712, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.
Image by the author.



Fig. 43. Mark Tobey, *Paris Murder*, n.d., Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

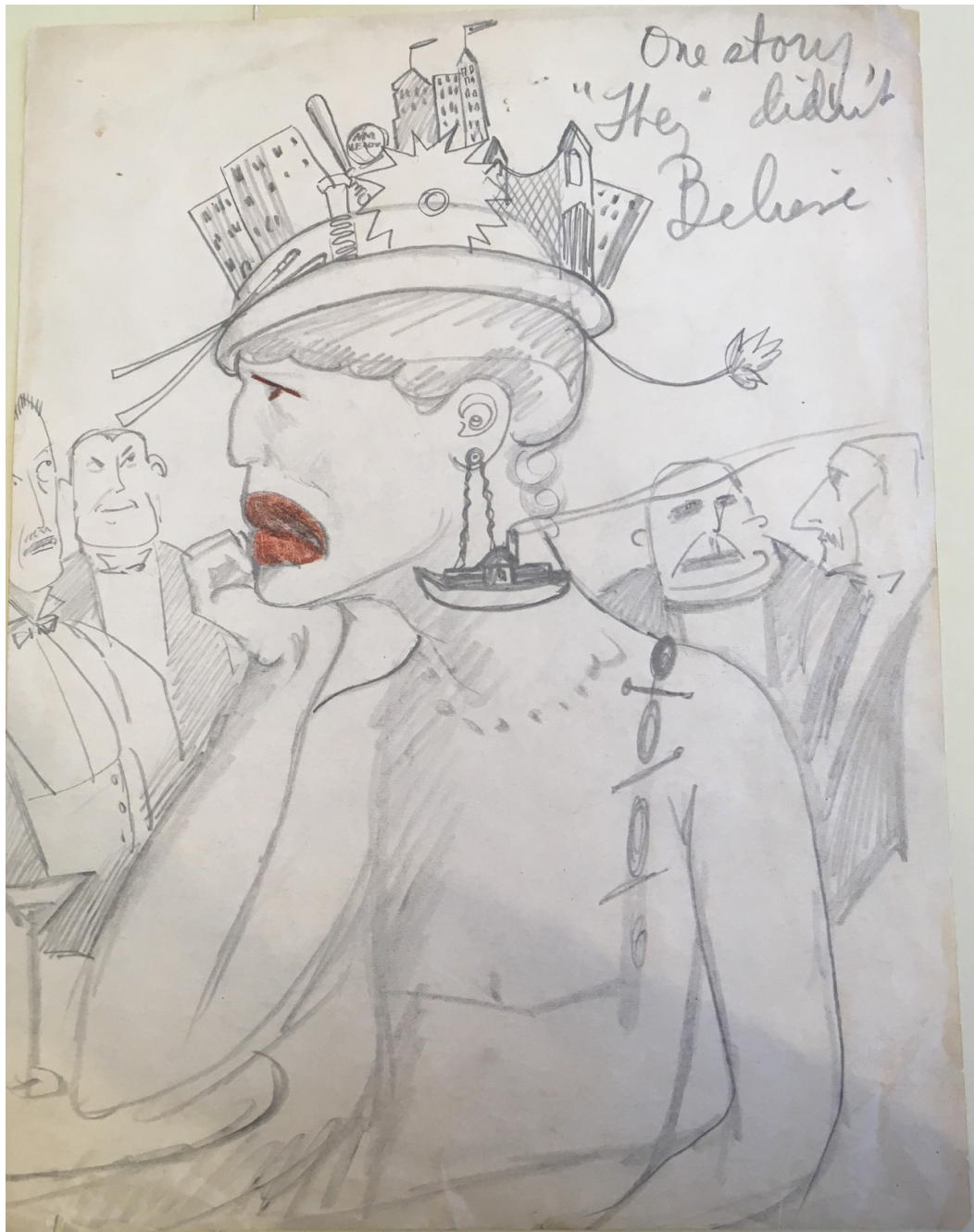


Fig. 44. Mark Tobey, *One story "They" didn't Believe*, n.d., Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 45. Mark Tobey, *The New AMERICAN POET*, n.d., Box 22, Folder 712, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

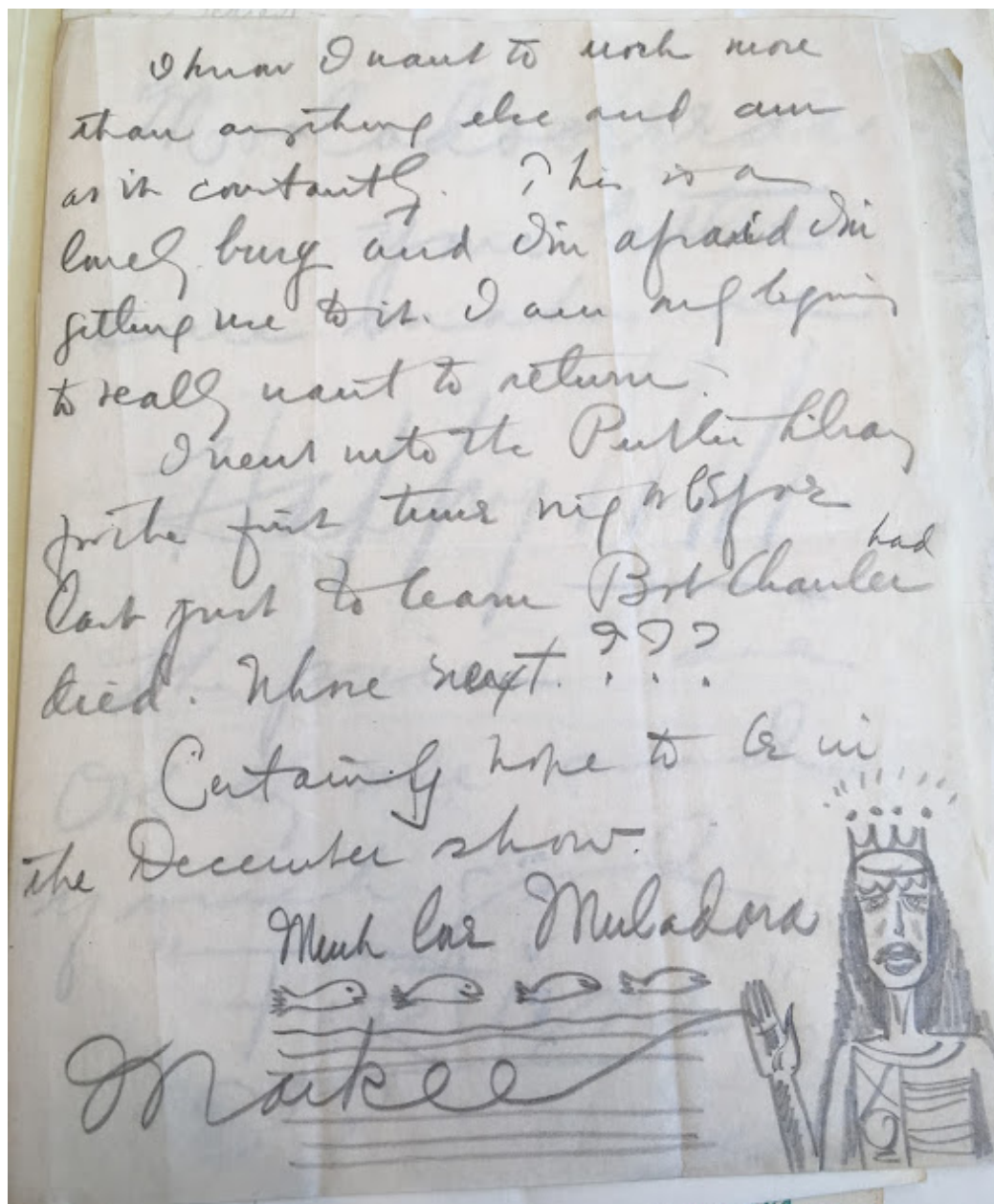


Fig. 46. Mark Tobey, Letter to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 306, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

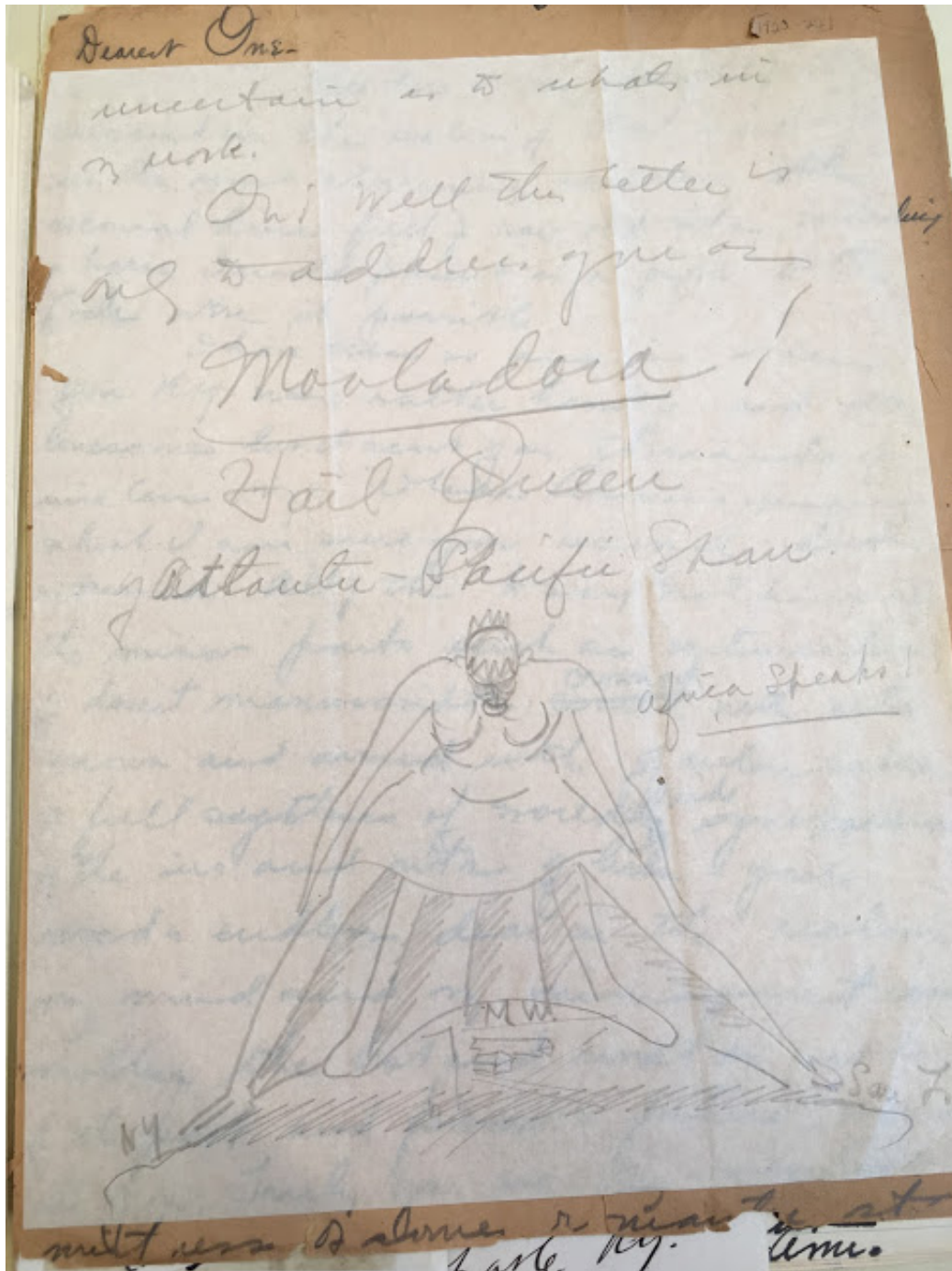


Fig. 47. Mark Tobey, Letter to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 305, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

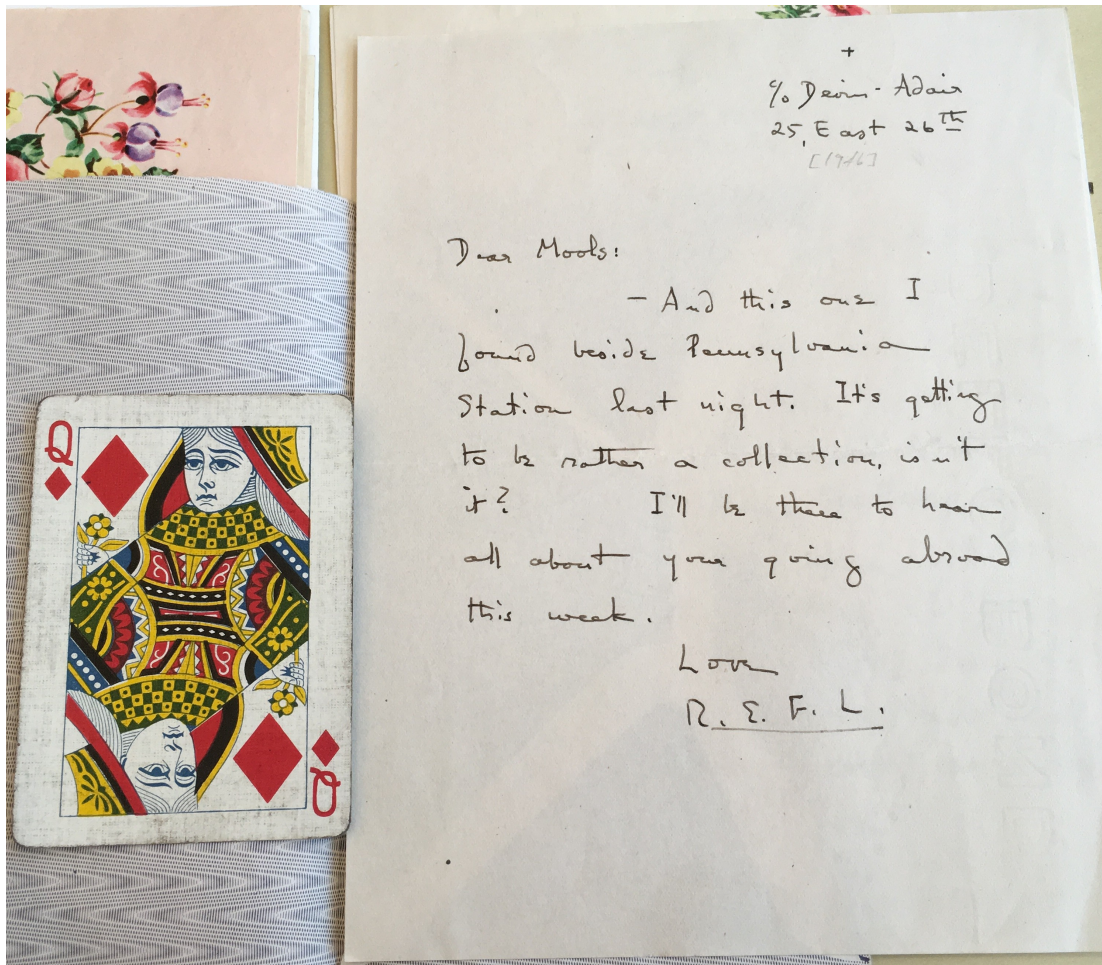


Fig. 48. Raymond E. F. Larsson, Letter and Queen of Diamonds Sent to Muriel Draper, 1946, Box 6, Folder 194, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 49. Peggy Bacon, Cartoon of Muriel Draper as the Queen of Hearts, in *Off With Their Heads!* (New York, R. M. McBride & Company: 1934). Image from Betsy Fahlman, "The Great Draper Woman: Muriel Draper and the Art of the Salon," *Woman's Art Journal* 26, no. 2 (2005): 34.



Fig. 50. Mark Tobey, *Damn the Mermaids!!!*, n.d., Box 22, Folder 713, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 51. Mark Tobey, Drawing of Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 22, Folder 711, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 52. Mark Tobey, *Why people don't understand Mools. The enigmatic Balance*, n.d., Box 22, Folder 712, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 53. Max Ewing, Letter to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 3, Folder 108, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 54. Mark Tobey, *Moolie in "Her Red Abyss"*—, n.d., Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

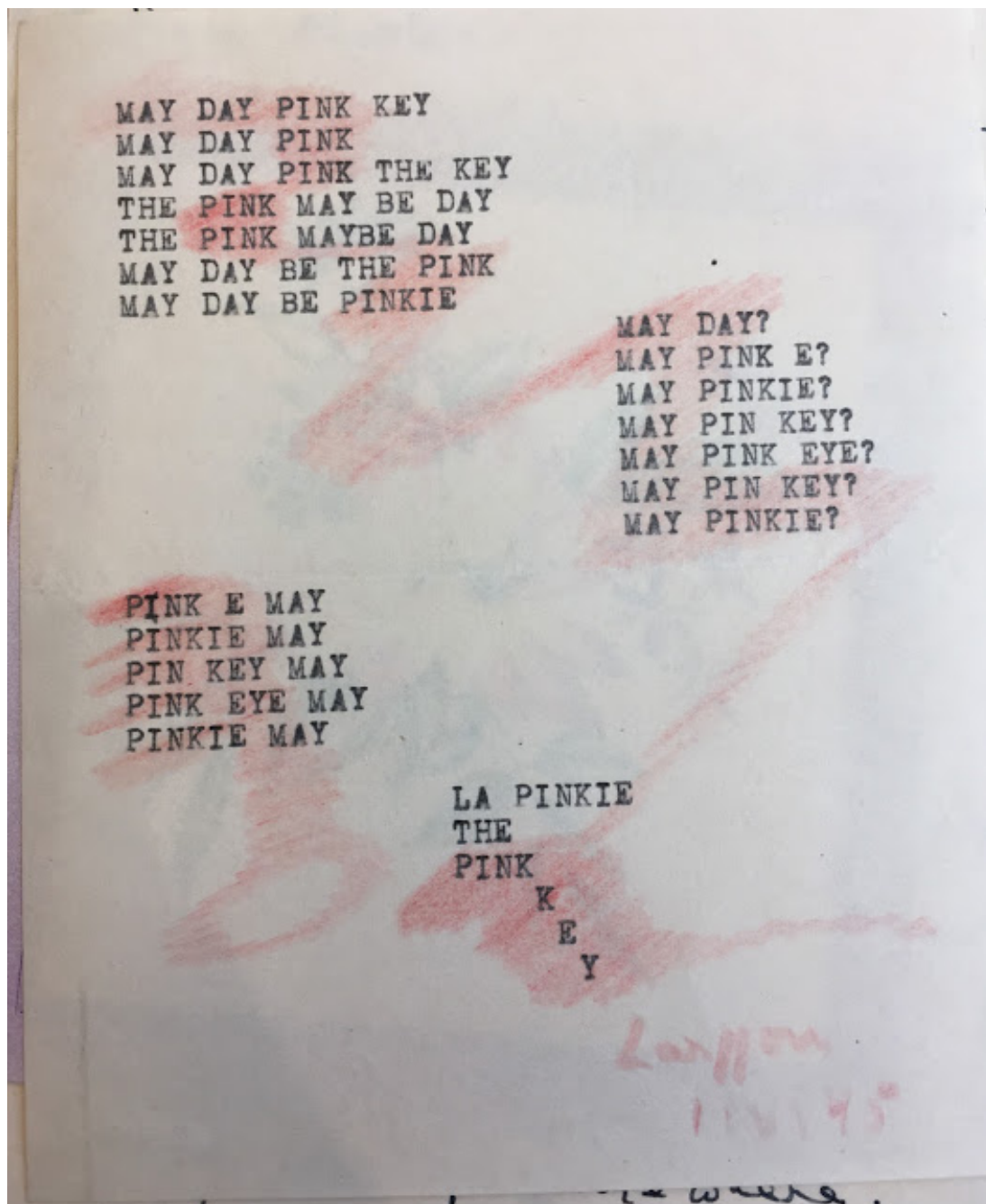


Fig. 55. Raymond E. F. Larsson, Letter to Muriel Draper, May 1, 1945, Box 5, Folder 201, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

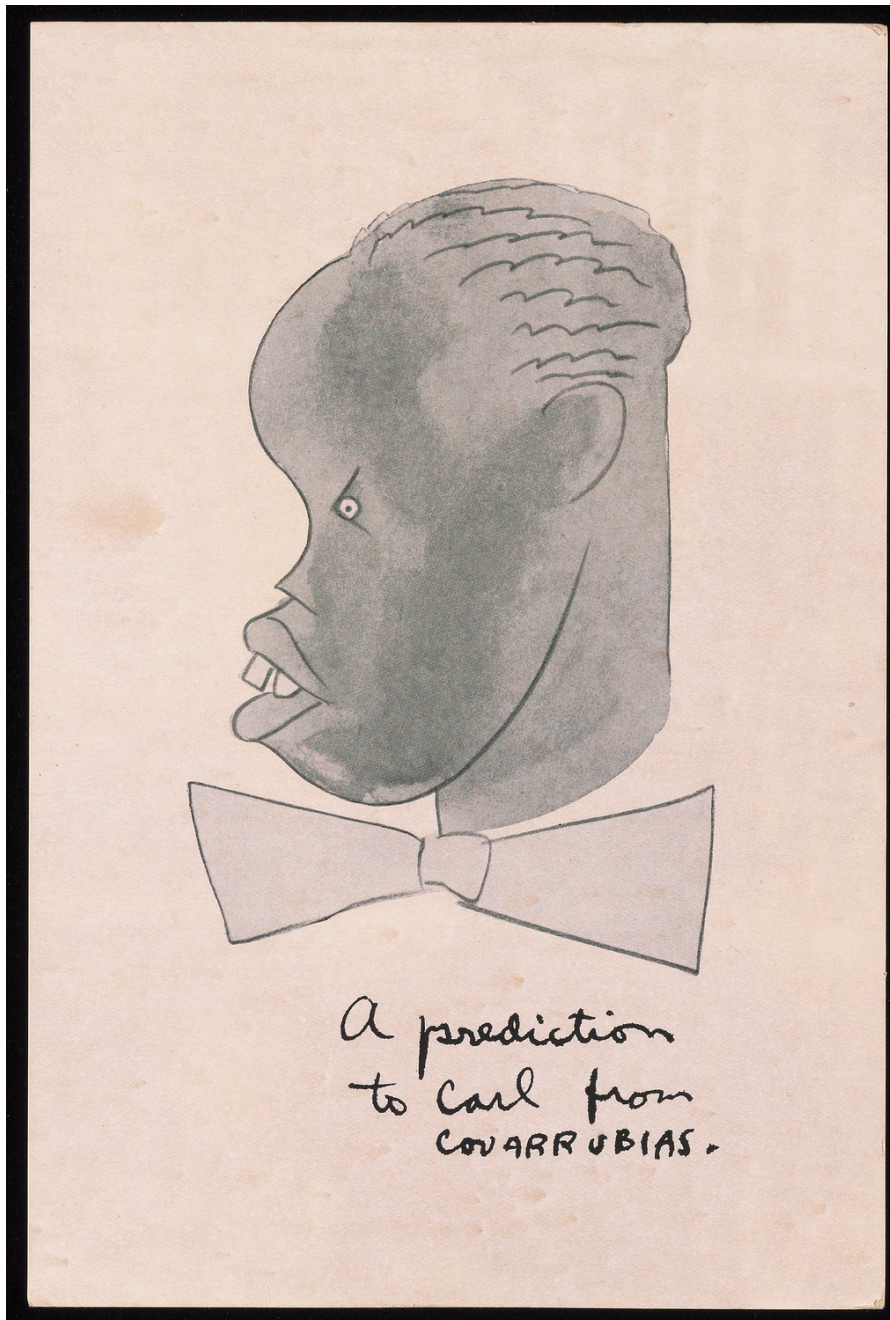


Fig. 56. Miguel Covarrubias, *A prediction*, n.d., 23 x 16 cm, Box 21, Folder 504, James Weldon Johnson and Grace Nail Johnson papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections.



Fig. 57. Alfred Stieglitz, *Claudia O'Keeffe*, 1922, Gelatin silver print, 7 1/8 × 7 5/8 in.
Image from the National Gallery of Art, Washington, Alfred Stieglitz Collection.



Fig. 58. Man Ray, *Noire et blanche* (*Black and White*), 1926, Gelatin silver print, 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 3 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. Image from the Getty Museum © Man Ray Trust.

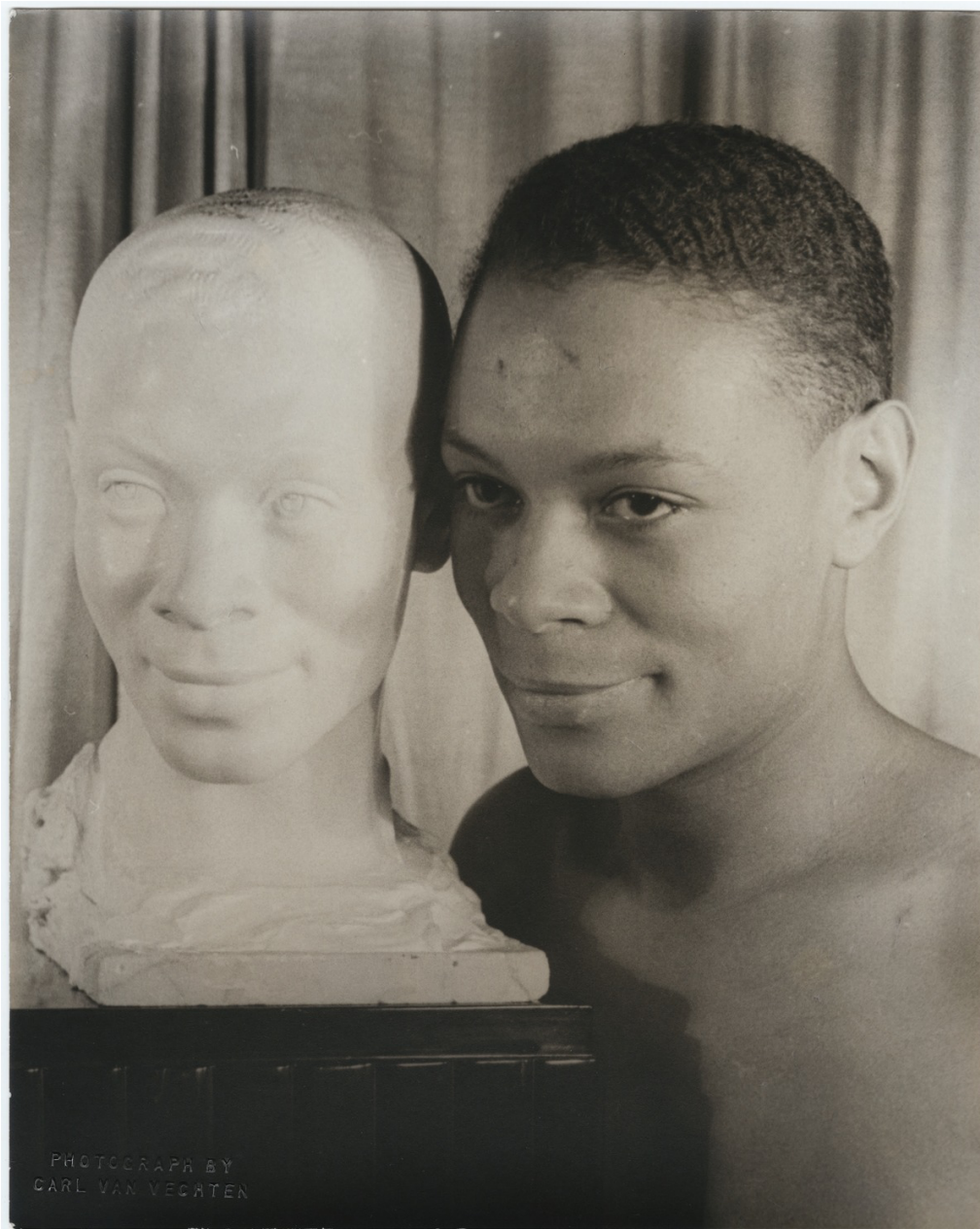


Fig. 59. Carl Van Vechten, *Daniels, Jimmie, with sculpture, Head of Jimmie Daniels*, by *Richmond Barthé*, December 21, 1938, Black and white photographic print, 24.5 x 18 cm, Box 88, Folder 1514, Carl Van Vechten Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections.

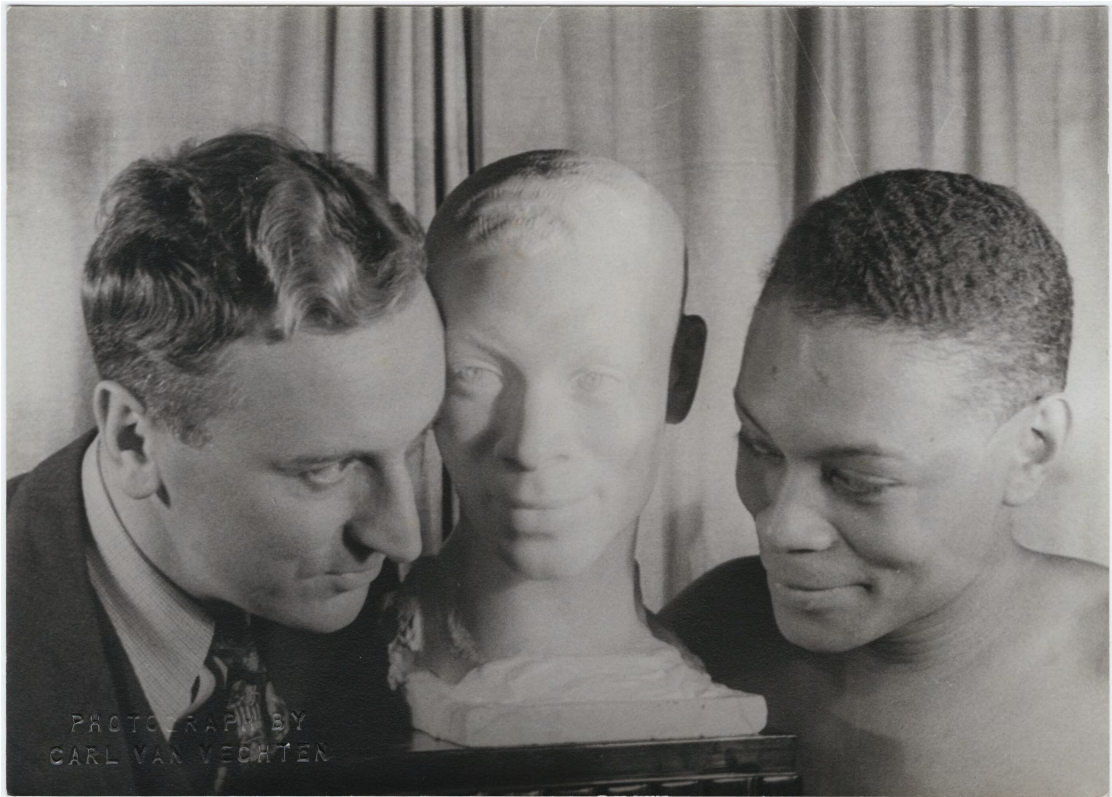


Fig. 60. Carl Van Vechten, *Daniels, Jimmie, and Kenneth Macpherson with a Head of Jimmie Daniels by Richmond Barthé*, December 21, 1938, Black and white photographic print, 12.5 x 17.5 cm, Box 88, Folder 1511, Carl Van Vechten Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections ©Van Vechten Trust.



Fig. 61. Carl Van Vechten, *Barthé*, *Richmond*, March 1, 1933, Black and white photographic print, 12.5 x 17.3 cm, Carl Van Vechten Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections ©Van Vechten Trust.



Fig. 62. Mark Tobey, Drawing of Muriel Draper as a Snake, n.d., Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 63. Mark Tobey, Postcard to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 305, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

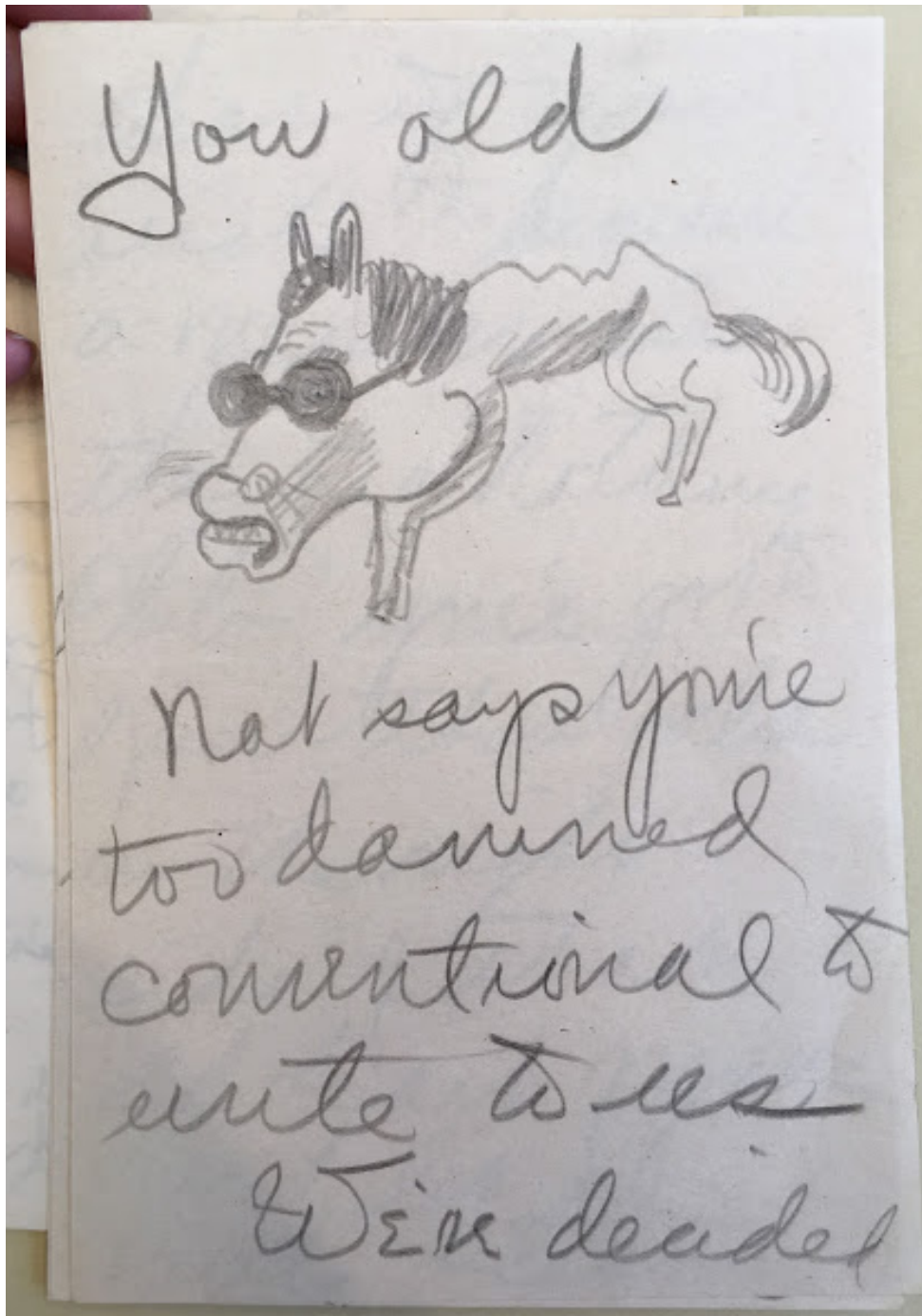


Fig. 64. Mark Tobey, Letter to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 306, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

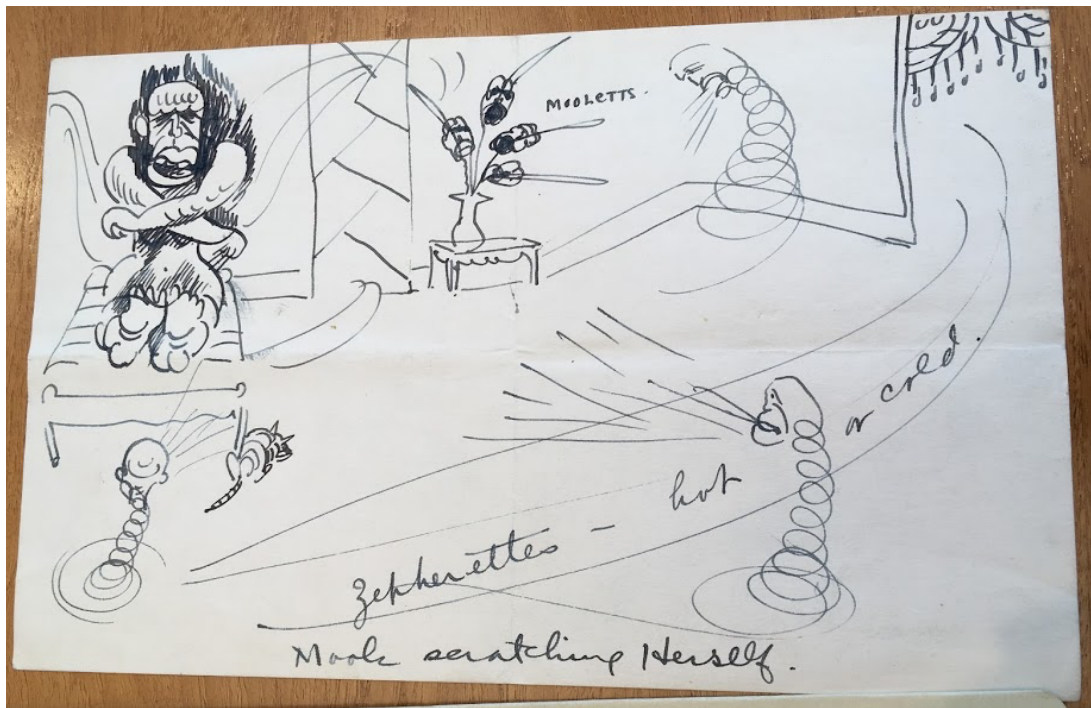


Fig. 65. Mark Tobey, *Mools scratching Herself*, n.d., Box 9, Folder 306, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

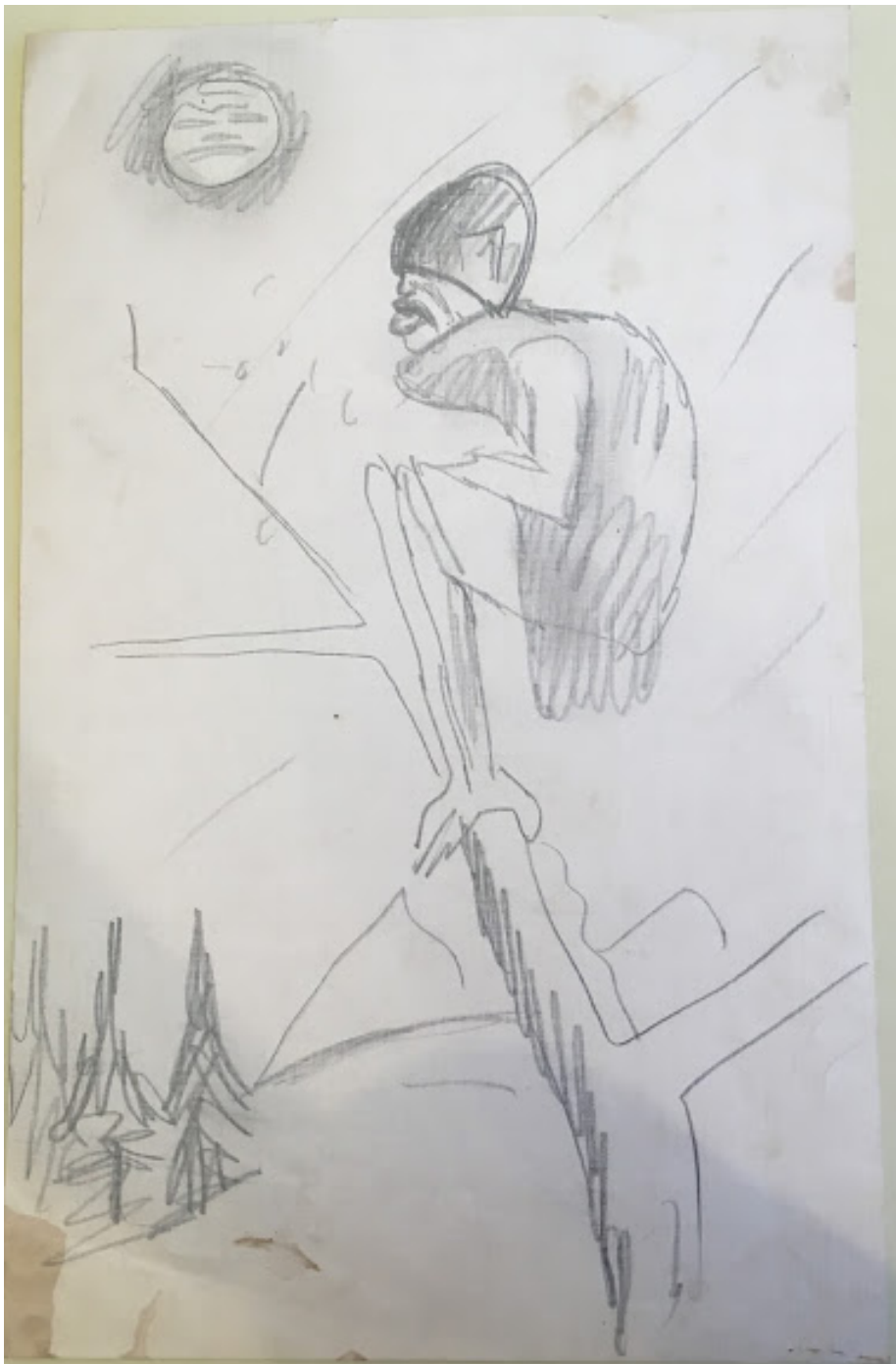


Fig. 66. Mark Tobey, Drawing of Muriel Draper as a Bird, n.d., Box 22, Folder 714, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

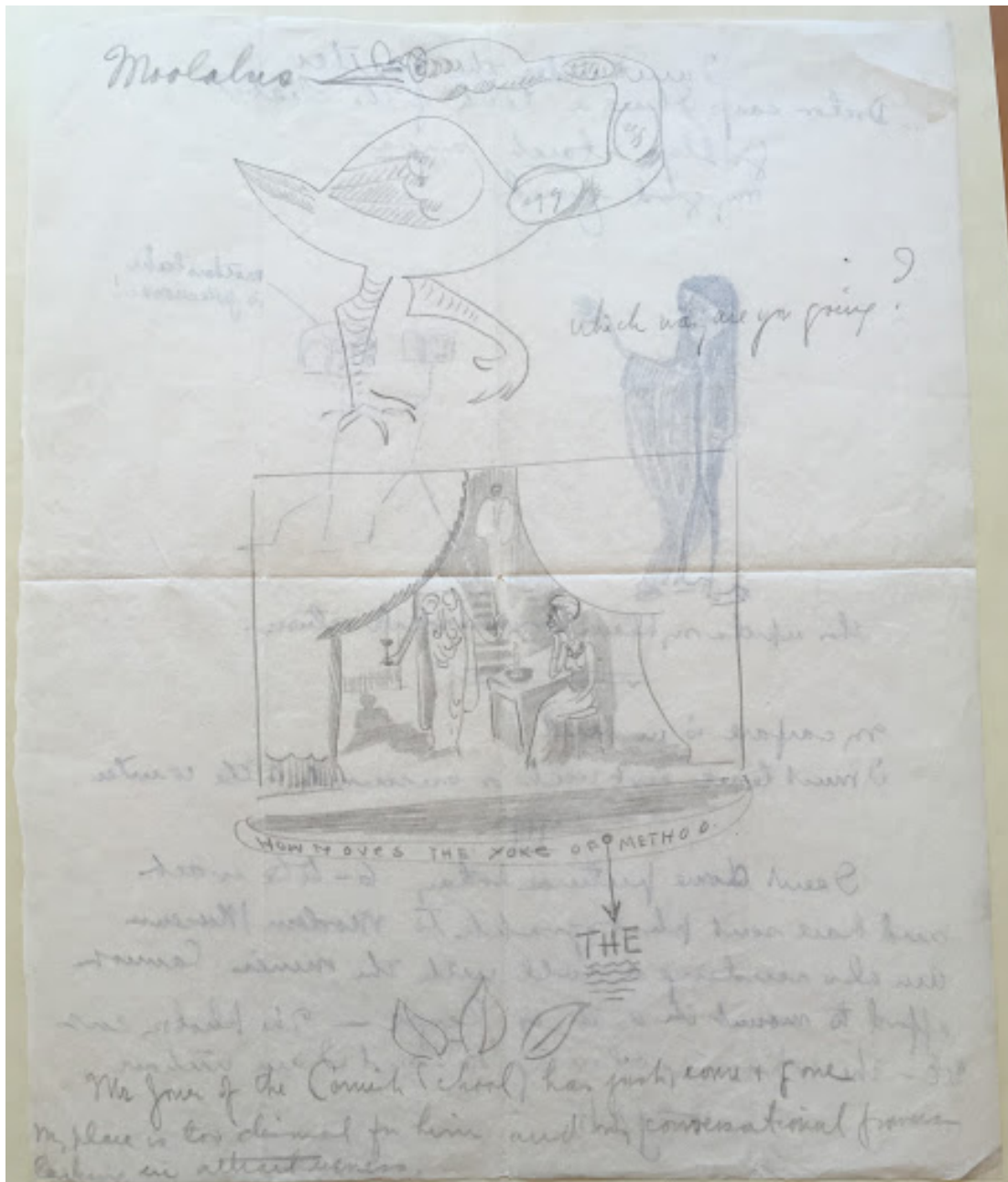


Fig. 67. Mark Tobey, Letter to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 26, Folder 843, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

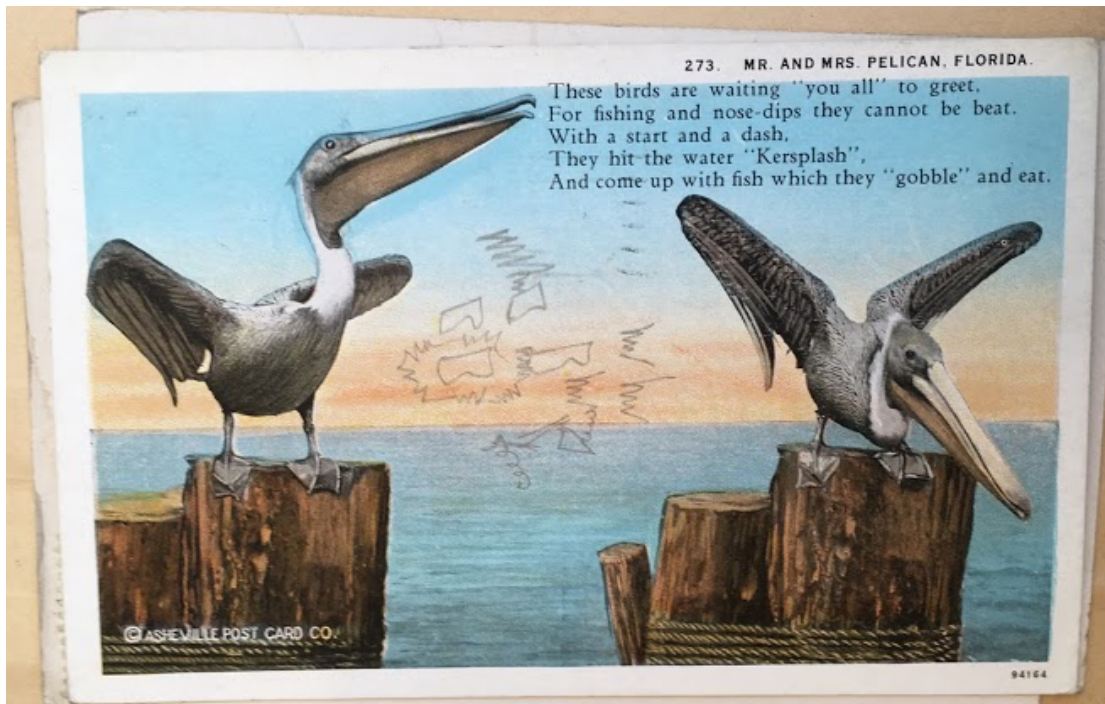


Fig. 68. Max Ewing, Postcard to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 3, Folder 105, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 69. Max Ewing, Postcard to Paul Draper, n.d., Box 3, Folder 105, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

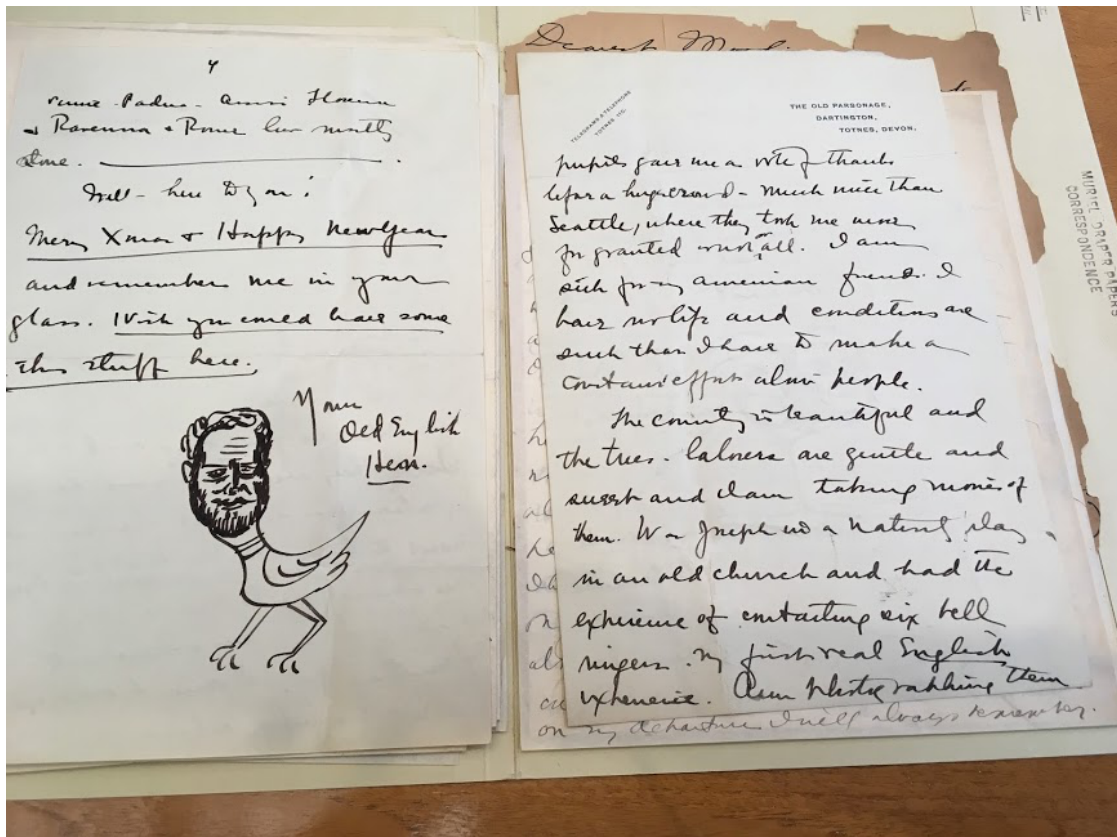


Fig. 70. Mark Tobey, Letter to Muriel Draper, n.d., Box 9, Folder 311, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.



Fig. 71. Carl Van Vechten, *Muriel Draper*, July 30, 1934, Black and white photographic print, 24.2 x 16.6 cm., Carl Van Vechten Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections ©Van Vechten Trust.



Fig. 72. Carl Van Vechten, *Muriel Draper*, November 30, 1937, Black and white photographic print, 25.3 x 19.7 cm., Carl Van Vechten Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections ©Van Vechten Trust.



Fig. 73. Carl Van Vechten, *Muriel Draper's Hat by Edward Pain*, September 23, 1952, Black and white photographic print, 23.9 x 16.6 cm, Carl Van Vechten Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections ©Van Vechten Trust.



Fig. 74. Carl Van Vechten, *Muriel Draper*, July 30, 1934, Black and white photographic print, 24.3 x 16.7cm, Carl Van Vechten Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections ©Van Vechten Trust.



Fig. 75. Carl Van Vechten, *Muriel Draper*, March 30, 1932, Black and white photographic print, 21.5 x 13.9 cm, Box 345, Folder 4515, Carl Van Vechten Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections ©Van Vechten Trust.



Fig. 76. Muriel Draper, Drawing of Venice, Interior Decoration Completed Sketches, Box 15, Folder 515, Muriel Draper Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image by the author.

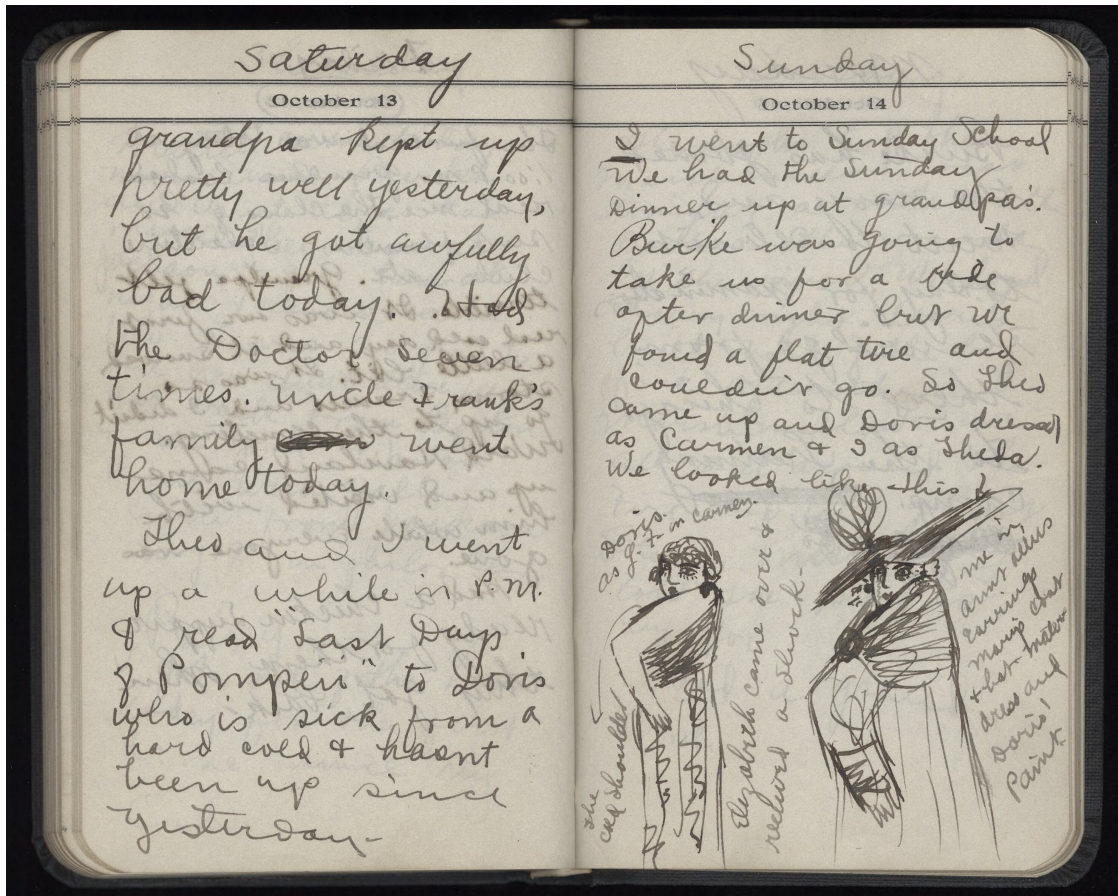


Fig. 77. Max Ewing, Diary Entry, October 1917, Max Ewing Collection, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections.



Fig. 78. Max Ewing, "Muriel Draper," in *Les amants de Venice*, Volume 2, Box 21, Max Ewing Collection, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections.



Fig. 79. Max Ewing, Photograph of clippings and photograph portraits tacked to a wall, n.d., Black and white photographic print, 16.8 x 11.5 cm, Box 15, Folder 145, Max Ewing Collection, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections.



Fig. 80. Max Ewing, Portrait of Max Ewing at writing desk, n.d., Black and white photographic print, 11.9 x 14.8 cm, Box 15, Folder 149, Max Ewing Collection, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections.



Fig. 81. Max Ewing, Portrait of Max Ewing reading, n.d., Black and white photographic print, 12.5 x 17.3 cm, Box 15, Folder 149, Max Ewing Collection, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections.



Fig. 82. Max Ewing, Max Ewing and Zena Naylor, n.d., Black and white photographic print, 11.9 x 14.8 cm, Box 15, Folder 149, Max Ewing Collection, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections.



Fig. 83. Max Ewing, Lois Moran with a Bust of Max Ewing, in *Les amants de Venice*, Volume 3, Box 21, Max Ewing Collection, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections.



Fig. 84. Max Ewing, *Muriel enlightening the world*, n.d., Black and white photographic print, 16.6 x 11.4 cm, Box 15, Folder 145, Max Ewing Collection, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Image from Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Digital Collections.

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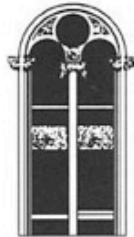
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1 message

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