

John and Mable Ringling Teaching Poster

The portraits of John and Mable Ringling were painted by the Russian-American, Savely Sorine. Sorine painted society portraits, and this pair of works is unusual in that they are not the typical oil paintings, but are executed in watercolor. They were commissioned by the Ringlings, to be displayed in their Sarasota winter residence, Ca d'Zan.



About John and Mable Ringling

John Nicholas Ringling was born on May 31, 1866, in McGregor, Iowa, and he died December 2, 1936. He was the son of a German immigrant harness maker, and he was the second youngest boy in a family of seven brothers and one sister. In 1882, when John was 16 years old, the Ringling family moved to Baraboo, Wisconsin. In 1884, five brothers (including John) joined with an experienced circus showman to create "Yankee Robinson and Ringling Bros. Double Show." In 1885, the Ringling brothers became the sole proprietors of the "Yankee Robinson and Ringling Bros. Double Show." John became the "advance man" for their circus. He scheduled, contracted, and arranged circus bookings. In

addition to the circus, John Ringling invested in railroads, oil wells, real estate, and theaters, and he collected works of art. His vast art collection, museum, grounds, and winter residence were bequeathed to the State of Florida when he died. In his heyday, his estimated worth was \$200 million in capital assets.

Mable Burton Ringling was born March 4, 1875 in Moons, Ohio, and died on June 8, 1929. Little is known about Mable during her youth. On December 29, 1905, John and Mable Ringling were married in Hoboken, New Jersey. She was 30 and he was 39. Mable loved Italian architecture and she worked closely with the architects and designers of Ca d'Zan. Mable was the first president of the Sarasota Garden Club, and she hosted many a society event at Ca d'Zan.



The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, in its affiliation with Florida State University, is the largest museum/university complex in the nation. It preserves the legacy of John and Mabel Ringling, educating and enabling a large and diverse audience to experience and take delight in a world-renowned collection of fine art; Ca d'Zan, the Ringling historic mansion, the Circus Museum; the Original Asolo Theater, and historic architecture, courtyard, gardens and grounds overlooking Sarasota Bay.