

[Cognac Monnet](#) by [Leonetto Cappiello](#) (On Sale!)

Fine Art Print - Main Subject: Art Deco



Item Number

3775530297

Retail Value

\$15

ArtRev.com Price

\$7

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Dimensions (As Shown)

8W x 10H Inches

20.32W x 25.4H cm

Medium

Fine Art Print

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About Leonetto Cappiello

Born in the Italian resort town of Livorno, Cappiello (1875 - 1942) had a natural talent for drawing and his first ambition was to be a great painter. Leonetto Cappiello is often called the father of the Modern Poster. His posters are a sequel to the works of the

artists such as Villemot, Cheret and Pal. The Italian born artist, became famous in 1900 and created posters in Paris for over forty years. Leonetto Cappiello started his career working as a caricaturist. After 1900 he devoted himself to painting and advertising poster design. Soon he became the most acclaimed European artist of that period. He became an innovator of advertising poster techniques, often painting the figures on a monochrome background, achieving an impressive aesthetic effect in combination with vividly colored graphics. In the beginning, he became quite popular as a caricaturist working for magazines. His style was humorous and joyful, with bold colors and he went on to become a successful posterist just at a time when the output of the 1890's had begun to slow. Cappiello was the poster artist to work in the traditions of the nineteenth century. Cappiello had a clear antecedents in his style but he developed an entirely original approach to the means of portraying the pictorial message. By means of wide color planes and highly exaggerated colors and situations, he shocked, surprised and moved. He began his career with a very gestural style and then went on to lead the bold graphic style of the Art Deco movement as it flowered in the 1902's and 30's. He designed posters for ballets, literature, plays and music halls, champagne and spirits bottles and even travel. He produced approximately 3,000 lithographic posters, making him the most prestigious artist in the history of the lithographic poster.

As a painter he decorated many halls of the Galeries Lafayette in Paris and in 1922, he took part in the Biennale of Venice. Later, in 1939, he participated in the Exposition des Arts Decoratives in Paris. He started studying art with a painter's career in mind, but meanwhile, purely as a hobby, he would make a quick sketch of anybody who caught his attention- relatives, home town characters, an occasional interesting tourist. Soon, he found that these quick caricatures were always favorably received, and by the time he was 21, he was able to make a little money by having the best of these homespun drawings published in booklet form. That may not have swayed him in itself, but two years later, in 1898, he took a trip to Paris to visit his older brother who happened to be working there at the Stock Exchange. Leonetto found Paris intoxicating, and wanted to put off returning to his sleepy little seaside hometown for a while; the only way to it, of course, was by finding a way to support himself. Why not utilize his gift for caricature again? His brother told him that various magazines might pay a good price for caricatures of celebrities, particularly ones that have not been done to death already. Since that was true of most of the regularly Paris stars, Leonetto approached two famous visitors who were just then staying in town, and who, being fellow Italian, might be willing to give an untried kid a break: actor Ermete Novelli and composer Giacomo Puccini. They obliged, and Leonetto promptly sold the sketches to *Le Rire*; they were so well received that within weeks, he became the favored caricaturist of theater and cabaret stars of Paris.

One of the major reasons for the quick acceptance of Cappiello was the fact that his caricatures were never offensive: where other caricaturists would grossly distort their subjects' facial features and hold them up for ridicule, Cappiello used only subtle exaggeration to spotlight their outstanding characteristics. This gave him access to the one group of performers who previously fought tooth and nail not to be caricatured: the prominent ladies of the stage. When they saw that he meant them no harm, even the most famous names of the day-Sarah Bernhardt, Rejane, Jeannie Granier- were suddenly willing to sit still for caricatures, and the young man from Livorno became the darling of the foremost beauties of Paris. This prompted Alexandre Natanson, co-publisher of *La Revue Blanche*, one of the magazines that had been using his sketches, to commission Cappiello to publish a portfolio of these drawings under the title *Nos Actrices* (Our Actresses), which came out in 1899 and launched his career in earnest.

But he might have remained a professional illustrator if one of the editors to whom he routinely submitted sketches had not asked him to prepare a poster for a new humor magazine he was launching, *Le Frou-Frou*. Cappiello used a simple caricature in his usual style - a can-can girl kicking up her skirts - but now he had to use color, so he opted for a plain yellow background and a dab of red on the pantaloons peeking out from under the petticoats.

The poster, prepared so quickly in such an offhand way, made a provocative splash on the billboards that no passer-by could resist. Instinctively, Cappiello hit on the right formula: create an eye-catching character and make a bold, loud statement-and everything else becomes immaterial. It brought him immediate further offers from various advertisers, and made him aware of the enormous power of effective communication: he found the field in which he would labor the rest of his life. His technique evolved fundamentally from that of British posterists like Hassall, Hardy and the Beggarstaff Brothers, who used simple drawings and flat colors-only Cappiello added dynamic zest and dramatic impact they had never dreamed of. The designs, for the first few attempts, are firmly rooted in his caricature style; but gradually, he frees his imagination and begins to develop a poster language even more compelling.

In 1981, a major retrospective of Cappiello's work was presented at the Galerie Nationale du Grand Palais in Paris.

Fine Art Print

Fine art prints are printed using sophisticated printing techniques such as lithography, serigraphy, or giclee prints. They are printed on thick archival quality paper or canvas with inks that last for decades. Besides the exquisite quality of a fine art print,

limited edition prints are valuable and may appreciate in value depending on certain factors.

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