



JUNE 7, 2023

Under Cover: J.C. Leyendecker and American Masculinity at New-York Historical Society, May 5 – August 13, 2023

“This spring, a new exhibition at the New-York Historical Society examines the work and influence of J.C. Leyendecker (1874–1951), a preeminent illustrator and commercial artist who helped shape American visual culture in the first three decades of the 20th century through captivating advertising campaigns including the legendary ‘Arrow Collar Man’ and countless covers for the *Saturday Evening Post*. As a gay artist whose illustrations for a mainstream audience often had unspoken homoerotic undertones, his work is especially revealing for what it says about the cultural attitudes towards homosexuality of the period. *Under Cover: J. C. Leyendecker and American Masculinity*, on view May 5–August 13, 2023, is organized by New-York Historical from the collection of the National Museum of American Illustration, Newport, RI.” — New-York Historical Society

“*Under Cover: J.C. Leyendecker and American Masculinity* deepens our understanding of the struggle for full civil rights as Americans of the LGBTQ+ community,” said Dr. Louise Mirrer, president and CEO of New-York Historical. “The exhibition is part of New-York Historical’s ongoing commitment to tell stories of Americans whose lived experience, though important and consequential to our history, is so often absent from textbooks in schools and colleges. New-York Historical’s collaboration with the American LGBTQ+ Museum, which will be housed in our institution’s new wing, will further enable meaningful conversations about LGBTQ+ history and its rightful place within the American narrative.”



J.C. Leyendecker (1874–1951.) *Men with Golf Clubs*. Painting for Arrow Collar advertisement, ca. 1909. Oil on canvas. National Museum of American Illustration, Newport, RI



J.C. Leyendecker (1874–1951). *Men and Woman, Arrow Shirts with Golf Clubs and Collie*. Painting for Arrow Collar advertisement, 1910. Oil on board. National Museum of American Illustration, Newport, RI



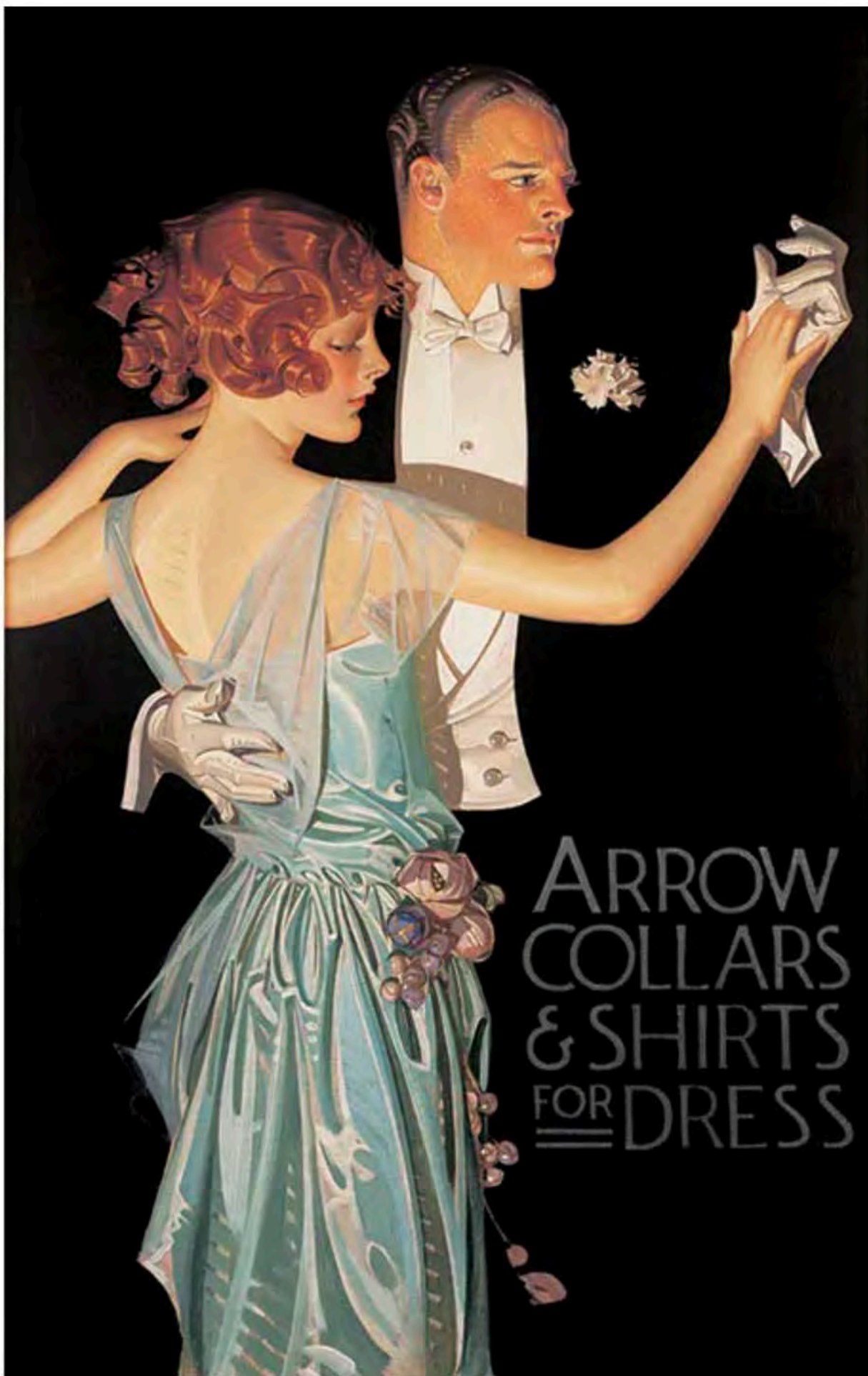
J.C. Leyendecker (1874–1951). *Couple in Boat*. Painting for Arrow Collar advertisement, 1912. Oil on canvas. National Museum of American Illustration, Newport, RI



J.C. Leyendecker (1874–1951). *Ivory Soap It Floats*. Painting for Ivory soap advertisement, 1900. Gouache on board. Private collection, Image courtesy of the National Museum of American Illustration, Newport, RI



J.C. Leyendecker (1874–1951). *Thanksgiving: 1628-1928 (Pilgrim and Football Player)*. Painting for cover of *Saturday Evening Post*, November 24, 1928. Oil on canvas. Private collection, Image courtesy of the National Museum of American Illustration, Newport, RI



J.C. Leyendecker (1874–1951). *Man and Woman Dancing*. Painting for Arrow Collar advertisement, 1923. Oil on canvas. National Museum of American Illustration, Newport, RI

“J.C. Leyendecker was an amazingly talented artist whose illustrations have come to embody the look and feel of the first half of the century while simultaneously demonstrating how fluidity in gender expression and gay representation were actually quite common at the time, contrary to current assertions that they are unique to our own moment,” said Donald Albrecht, guest curator. “Not only did his work exemplify the zeitgeist, but it depicts a deeply nuanced view of sexuality and advertising that broadens our understanding of American culture.”

Under Cover is guest-curated by Donald Albrecht, and coordinated at New-York Historical by Rebecca Klassen, curator of material culture. Drawing on three decades of scholarship, the exhibition is aided by a committee of advisors: Dr. Elspeth Brown, Professor of History at the University of Toronto; Dr. Monica L. Miller, Professor of English and Africana Studies, Barnard College; and Dr. Michael Murphy, Associate Professor of Gender and Sexuality Studies at the University of Illinois Springfield.

Images courtesy New-York Historical Society.