

# WHAT NEW YORK ARTISTS PAY FOR A GOOD MODEL

## Rules That Obtain Among Those Who Gain a Livelihood by Posing in Schools and Studios.

MOST persons have a wrong impression about the pay of artists' models. The popular idea also is that they—the women—are necessarily beautiful. Both conclusions are unfounded, as any artist will admit. If one of these persons ever attended an art school he would soon dispel such an idea from his mind.

Except for the best-known models the average rate of pay in New York is 50 cents an hour. This rate obtains in nearly all the art schools as well as in the private studios, whether the model be posing for a life study or for illustration purposes. There are exceptions, but the dreams of some persons that artists often pay fabulous prices for beautiful women to pose for them are not borne out by any present-day examples.

Have you ever tried to sit in one position for twenty-five minutes? Have you ever tried to hold your hand out before you for that length of time? If you have not, then do so at once. When you have had fifteen minutes of it think whether you would care to make a living as a model at 50 cents an hour. Twenty-five-minute periods are the standard ones in the art schools and studios, and a rest of five minutes follows. This lasts for eight hours a day. Being a model, therefore, is no easy task.

Sometimes a newcomer in an illustration class or a life class will remark on the homeliness or angularity of some model. That expression will stamp him

as a beginner, for an artist will find "the beautiful" in the pose. To better explain it for the layman, however, it is the ability to be a good model—to hold a pose—that counts, and not looks. If an artist desires to make an idealistic portrait or picture he can make any ugly woman beautiful. All the "beauties" of pictures were not so in real life.

Thus, what is wanted is a model who can take a good pose and hold it for the twenty-five minutes. At times even the veteran ones shift themselves some because their muscles cannot retain the same position any longer. Then, again, as in every other business, contrariness will cause a model to "loaf on the job"—in other words, hold the pose one way for a minute and then change about at will. This is greatly disconcerting to the student or artist, for his sketch will be all out of "plumb."

Advertising a popular remedy not long ago was a well-known old woman model. She has been familiar to students and artists in New York for many years. She was advertising a cure for neuralgia, and the full length sitting photograph of her attracted much attention. It occupied billboards in the Subway and on the Ele-

vated platforms. Of course the students and artists recognized her. She probably was paid a large sum of money for this, but her pay as a model has been 50 cents an hour. She has always been considered the best old woman model in New York and has figured in innumerable pictures of fireside scenes in book and maga-

zine illustrations. She is at times very obstinate and her whims often cause her to become a bad model. But all in all, she has command over her muscles from the long apprenticeship she has served in her line of work. When she "holds a pose" no one could ask for more, because she does it with knowledge and ability.

As is the case with other models of experience, she often, during the 5-minute rest periods, goes about among the students criticising the likenesses of herself. Her acquaintance with so many of the leading instructors has given her the mastery of technical terms of criticism and has also made her somewhat of a real critic.

Although he has often received much larger wage for his work, the finest model in New York, when posing before art school classes and in studios, makes 50 cents an hour. He is a Corsican, and he was the model for "Elijah" in the Boston Public Library, as well as for some of the most notable heroic decorations in the country. His whims, too, make his posing at times exasperating, but when he chooses to do so, there is the stamp of the "best in the business" about his pos-

ing. Not only has this artist posed for such men as John Sargent, Edwin S. Abbey, William M. Chase, and other painters of note, but it is probable that he has appeared in more book illustrations, in more rôles, than any model of to-day.

No first-class model will ever take a pose which he knows it is impossible to "hold" for the twenty-five-minute period. The more difficult positions have rope or other accessories to assure their permanency. If in a life class he may be called on to take a pose which will require both arms to be extended above the head. In that event a rope from the ceiling will assist him. Even at that, he might not be able to retain the position for the period required.

The rule that prevails in most art schools is that a pose (which is always put to a referendum of the class) should be interesting, but simple. In time that has its effect on the model, for the young ones naturally want to strike heroic attitudes. After awhile the models acquire a repertoire, which is called on sometimes for suggestions for poses when the class itself is up a "stump" as to what the pose shall be. An experienced model soon falls into a position that pleases most students and his own muscles.

Whenever a model does not appear one of the class usually volunteers—if in an illustration class—to pose. When an art student is not particularly interested in the professional model he often makes a sketch of some other student at work. It is all in the game.