

Prof. Erin Harmon Designs Memphis in May International Festival Poster

A design by Professor Erin Harmon of the Department of Art and Art History has been chosen for this year's Memphis in May International Festival. Memphis in May is recognized as one of the leading festivals held in the U.S. Lasting throughout the month of May, the festival's signature events include the Beale Street Music Festival, World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest, and Great American River Run. In addition, the festival honors the culture and history of a chosen country with events featuring artists, speakers, celebrities, and dignitaries from the honored country, opening doors for international commerce and exchange. This year's international salute goes to the Czech Republic.

In a tradition that dates back to 1980, Memphis in May produces a fine art poster to commemorate the honored country. The posters are used at events throughout the city, including a special exhibit at the National Civil Rights Museum, and will be distributed to embassies around the world.

Harmon joins a notable list of Mid-South artists who have created poster designs for Memphis in May, including Burton Callicott, Carroll Cloar, George Hunt, Mary Simms, and Nancy Cheairs. "I am honored to be a part of the Memphis in May International poster series," says Harmon. "It's really meaningful that the Memphis in May organization commissions local artists each year in celebration of different cultures, and so many of our city's outstanding artists have produced original artwork over the years. I am excited to be included in such an esteemed cohort."



Harmon's artwork for the poster (*above*) is filled with references to the Czech Republic, including allusions to the curvaceous qualities of art nouveau and the paintings and posters of Alphonse Mucha; an homage to Czech soprano Jarmila Novotna, star of the Metropolitan Opera; and images depicting famous Czech products such as bohemian art glass and beer bottles. **R**

Web extra: For a full explanation of the elements contained in the poster, visit rhodes.edu/harmon-poster