

Baha'i Artist Draws Crowds At Art Institute

The current exhibition of paintings by Mark Tobey, a Baha'i artist whose belief in the "oneness of mankind" has profoundly influenced his work, is drawing large crowds daily to the Chicago Art Institute.

Born in Centerville, Wis., Tobey and his family moved to Hammond, Ind, when he was 16 years old, and his father enrolled him in art classes at the Chicago Art Institute.

After working as an illustrator and fashion artist, both here and in New York, he turned to making charcoal portraits, and had his first one-man show in November, 1917.

The following year he met a portrait painter, Juliet

Thompson, who introduced him to the teachings of the Baha'i Faith, which he investigated and joined later that year.

A book on Mark Tobey, authored by William E. Seitz for the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and available at the Chicago Art Institute, cites the profound effect the acceptance of the Baha'i Faith had on Tobey's style.

In a chapter headed "Tobey's World View," it is stated: "Tobey sees the highest reality as spiritual rather than physical. His world view is theological . . . as well as aesthetic. Tobey readily acknowledges the debt his art owes to his religion . . ."