

Wilhelmi, Paul, b. 3-12-1858 in Duesseldorf, d. 5-26-1943 in Detroit. Wilhelmi was the son of Heinrich Wilhelmi a well-known artist in Duesseldorf. Growing up in Duesseldorf, Wilhelmi studied at the academy there from 1880 to 1886 as academy records indicate. He arrived in Milwaukee in 1886, and the following year went to Detroit, where he was briefly in partnership with two other artists in an art school. He then moved to Chicago, where local city directories indicate that he was living from 1890 to 1898. Among other things, he was involved during this period in work for the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. In 1899 he returned to Detroit a few years, however, he had again left Detroit, this time going to Australia, where he spent two years as a panorama painter. Returning to the United States, he established a portrait studio in New York, but in 1933 returned to Detroit with his wife and daughter and remained there the rest of his life.

Around 1911, during Wilhelmi's New York period, he went to Annapolis, Maryland and painted portraits of a number of naval officers. One of these, a portrait of a naval chaplain, is currently in the collection of the United States Naval Academy Museum in Annapolis. While in Detroit, Wilhelmi painted a portrait of the German-born sculpture Julius Melchers (1830-1903). The portrait was hung for some years in the hall of a local German choral society but has since disappeared. Wilhelmi was well acquainted with the Melchers family, including the painter Gari Melchers (1860-1932) the son of Julius Melchers.

Wilhelmi had a few private students of which the best known was the Detroit architect Albert Kahn (1869-1942). When Wilhelmi died in Detroit in 1942 his passing was noted by an obituary in the New York Times.
