

VINTAGE POSTER

Publication Of The International Vintage Poster Dealers Association

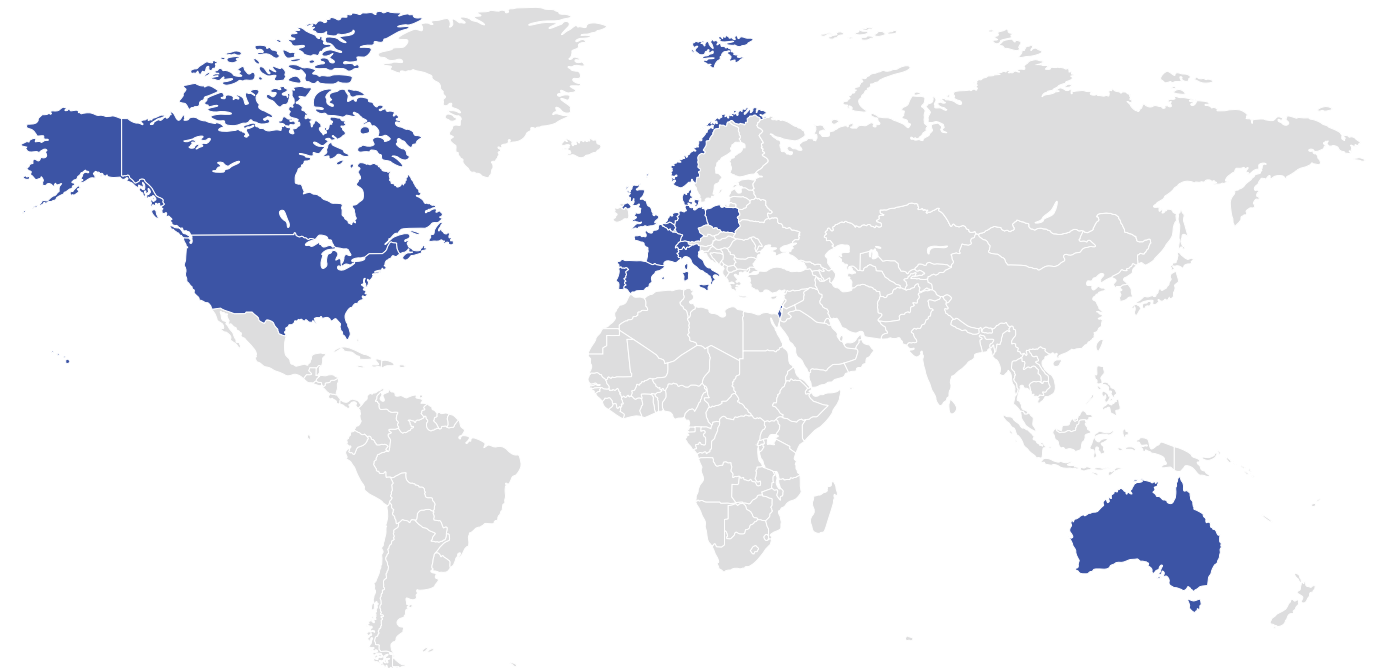
Issue 2 (2019)



Focus on Designer

Abram
Games

Poster Events / Focus on Style Art Nouveau Posters / Collector Profile William W. Crouse / Focus on Designer Abram Games /
Collection of The Danish Poster Museum / Psychedelic Poster Art / IVPDA Directory



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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the second issue of Vintage Poster, a magazine purely devoted to the art, history and design of vintage posters. We received a positive response from our first issue, and I hope that you enjoy this selection of articles and topics. Please get in touch with us if you would like to contribute an article for one of our future issues. This publication is produced by the International Vintage Poster Dealer Association (IVPDA). Our association was created to inform, educate and promote the appreciation of the wide variety of antique and vintage posters from around the globe, and this publication was one of my initiatives when I became the President of the IVPDA. We aim for this magazine to become a platform for the exchange of information between collectors, dealers, museums and anyone interested in original vintage posters.

Kirill Kalinin, President of the IVPDA / AntikBar, London, UK

Editorial Board: Angelina M. Lippert, Poster House, USA; Lisa Tyler, Gallerie Rouge, USA; Mark J. Weinbaum, USA; Karen Etingin, L’Affichiste, Canada; Karen Lansdown, Travel on Paper, UK

International Vintage Poster Dealer Association

The International Vintage Poster Dealers Association (IVPDA) is a non-profit association, founded in 1996 by a group of highly respected poster dealers from North America and Europe. The Association was created to inform and educate the public, collectors and other buyers and to help promote the appreciation of the wide variety of vintage posters from around the globe. The Association members have strict guidelines to ensure the authenticity of the posters they offer for sale and to promote ethical and fair business practices. Our members have many years of professional experience and are respected throughout the arts community for their knowledge and integrity.

When buying an original vintage poster look for Members displaying the IVPDA logo and buy with confidence.

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Exhibitions & Events

Exhibitions at Museums and other Institutions

February 1, 2018 - December 31, 2019
Poster Stories
Museum für Gestaltung, Zürich, Switzerland

May 12, 2019 - December 31, 2019
Art Between the Lines: Typography in LACMA's Collection
LACMA, Los Angeles, USA

August 31, 2019 - December 31, 2019
Leyendecker and The Golden Age of American Illustration
Reynolda House Museum of American Art, Winston-Salem, USA

July 13, 2019 - January 5, 2020
It's Alive! Classic Horror and SciFi Movie Posters
Royal Ontario Museum, Canada

September 6, 2019 - January 5, 2020
Creating Othello and Falstaff: The Riccordi Archive
The Morgan Library, NYC

October 19, 2019 - January 12, 2020
Affichomania
Vero Beach Museum of Art, Florida, USA

October 31, 2019 - January 12, 2020
Slovenia on Posters from the Salce Collection
Prešernova 24, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

October 12, 2019 - January 13, 2020
Mucha to Manga
Museum of Kyoto, Japan

August 29, 2019 - January 19, 2020
The Fall of the Wall: German Posters before and after 1989
The Danish Poster Museum, Aarhus, Denmark

October 13, 2019 - January 19, 2020
Master of Art Nouveau: Alphonse Mucha
University of Rochester, New York, USA

Until January 19, 2020
Designed in Cuba: Cold War Graphics
House of Illustration, 2 Granary Square, London N1C 4BH, UK

September 21, 2019 - January 20, 2020
1919 Exhibition
The Huntington Library, Los Angeles, USA

October 9, 2019 - January 27, 2020
Toulouse-Lautrec: Resolutely Modern
Grand Palais, Paris, France

October 7, 2019 - February 1, 2020
100 Years of KLM
Stichting Design Museum Dedel, The Hague, Netherlands

August 31, 2019 - February 2, 2020
Stories to Tell: Magic Poster Selections
Harry Ransom Center, Austin, USA

September 7, 2019 - February 2, 2020
Colorful Japan
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands

October 17, 2019 - February 16, 2020
20/20 InSight: Posters from the 2017 Women's March
Poster House, 119 West 23rd Street, New York NY 10011, USA

October 17, 2019 - February 16, 2020
Baptized By Beefcake: The Golden Age of Hand-Painted Movie Posters from Ghana
Poster House, 119 West 23rd Street, New York NY 10011, USA

October 17, 2019 - February 16, 2020
Posters of the Japan Red Cross Society
Poster House, 119 West 23rd Street, New York NY 10011, USA

September 14, 2019 - February 23, 2020
Soviet Posters from the TMORA Collection
The Museum of Russian Art, Minneapolis, USA

May 10, 2019 - April 1, 2020
Art of the Dance: Posters from Hollywood
National Museum of Dance, Saratoga, USA

November 20, 2019 - April 26, 2020
Punk Graphics: Too Fast to Live
ADAM, Brussels, Belgium

February 27 - August 23, 2020
The Sleeping Giant: Posters & The Chinese Economy
Poster House, 119 West 23rd Street, New York NY 10011, USA

February 27 - August 23, 2020
The Swiss Grid: How the International Typographic Style changed Graphic Design
Poster House, 119 West 23rd Street, New York NY 10011, USA

November 16, 2019 - June 21, 2020
The Art of Reading: American Publishing Posters of the 1890s
Portland Art Museum in Oregon, USA

February 28, 2020 - September 20, 2020
The Poster: 200 Years of Art and History
The Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg, Germany

IVPDA Member Fairs and Events

VintageAutoPosters, Carmel Valley CA, USA
February 29, 2020: Los Angeles Porsche Literature Meet, LA Airport Hilton, 5711 West Century Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90045, USA

VintageAutoPosters, Carmel Valley CA, USA
August 10 - August 12, 2020: Automobilia Monterey 2020, Monterey, USA

Focus on Style

Art Nouveau

by Angelina M. Lippert

Chief Curator
Poster House Museum
New York, USA



Known by various names throughout Europe, Art Nouveau was a short-lived but hugely influential design style that emerged in the late 1880s.

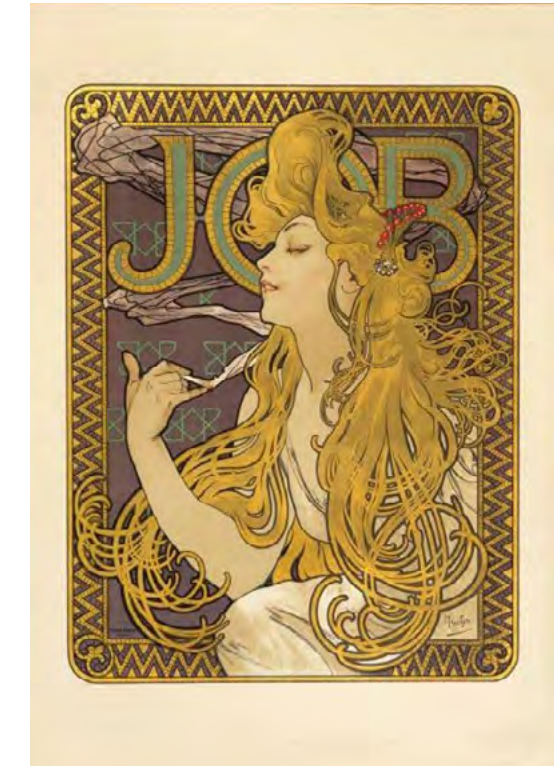
It was a direct reaction to the cult of mechanization brought about by the Industrial Revolution, as well as a rejection of the pervasive rules of the academic art world. Turning to nature, Art Nouveau embraced organic forms, sinuous lines, and a sense of sensuous movement. It also attempted to blur the barriers between high and low art, elevating aspects of design typically seen as beneath the supremacy of painting and sculpture. In fact, the most interesting examples of Art Nouveau appear in jewelry, ceramics, interior design, architecture, and, of course, posters – all common items traditionally thought of as functional rather than aesthetic. Art Nouveau merged that utilitarianism with fine design, bringing beauty to the everyday.

As mentioned previously, Art Nouveau went by many names, and each country had its own particular take on the style. In Germany, Jugendstil artists like Thomas Theodor Heine and Julius Klinger brought eerie sexuality and humor to the medium, while in Austria, Secessionists like Koloman Moser harkened back to Byzantine forms. In the United Kingdom, Charles Rennie Mackintosh became the leader of the Glasgow School, combining the restraint of Japanese minimalism with whiplash curls, while in America William H. Bradley brought an unprecedented level of detail and patterning to the country's advertising scene. The greatest poster artist of the period, however, was Alphonse Mucha, a Czech national living in Paris, who single-handedly brought Art Nouveau to the streets.

Looking at other posters from the period in France, most are still stuck in the tropes of the Belle Époque, having developed out of caricature and illustration in the 1870s. They generally rely on broad, gestural strokes, simple outlines, and bright, primary colors. Jules Chéret is perhaps the best example of this holdover, continuing to work through the Art Nouveau period without really altering his signature touch. Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen and even the infamous Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec also failed to fully embrace this new aesthetic movement, making Mucha and his ilk more the exception than the rule. This is perhaps why Art Nouveau posters were so captivating at the time – they stood apart from what other posterists were doing. Intricate, pastel gems quietly glistening against the loud, often garish, posters papering the city.



Theophile-Alexandre Steinlen, Chat Noir Ce Soir, France, 1896 / Source: International Poster Gallery, USA



Alphonse Mucha, Job, France, 1896 / Source: Mark J. Weinbaum, USA



Albert Castille, Abeille d'Or, Belgium, 1899 / Source: Classic Posters, Switzerland



Weiluc (Lucien-Henri Weil), Frou Frou, France, 1900 / Source: The Ross Art Group, Inc., USA



Nonni, Fonte Meo, Italy, 1910 / Source: The Ross Art Group, Inc., USA



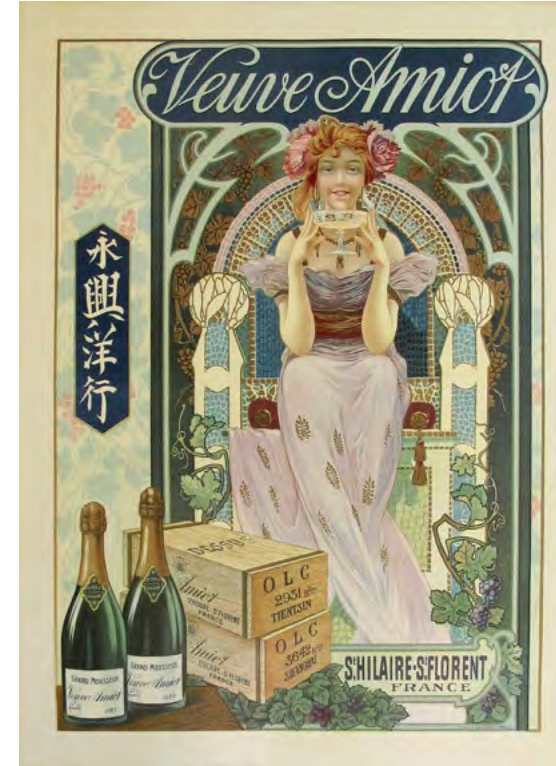
Henry van de Velde, Tropon, Holland, 1899 / Source: Mark J. Weinbaum, USA



Privat Livemont, Absinthe Robette, Belgium, 1896 / Source: International Poster Gallery, USA



Peter Behrens, Die Kuss (The Kiss), Germany, 1898 / Source: Mark J. Weinbaum, USA



Unknown, Veuve Amiot Tientsin Shanghai, France, 1910s / Source: Picture This Gallery, UK



Jules Cheret, Cleveland Cycles, France, c.1901 / Source: La Belle Epoque Vintage Posters, Inc., USA

“Whether tongue-in-cheek or viciously biting, the poster serves as a commentary on the perceived pretention of Art Nouveau.”

Rarely discussed, though, is the elitism engrained within Art Nouveau posters. As with many artistic movements, its primary audience as a genre at large was the upper-middle class. All the gorgeous décor and fashions were not meant for the average person, nor would anyone outside of certain economic strata have necessarily seen examples of Art Nouveau in the regular world. It was aimed at a particularly intellectual, artistic, wealthy clientele. Meanwhile, the style of the Belle Époque poster was visually synonymous with bohemian street culture. These posters promoted cabarets and newspapers -- popular, accessible pastimes. While Mucha certainly designed images for simple commodities like Job rolling papers or Lefèvre-Utile biscuits, the style of the design is shockingly unfamiliar to its intended audience. It is like coming across a Gutenberg Bible in a comic book shop -- what do you even do with it? This is perhaps why Steinlen so geniusly pokes fun at one of Mucha's signature flairs in his iconic Chat Noir poster. In it, the black cat sports an elaborate halo, something ever-present in many Mucha posters. But instead of crowning a gorgeous, ethereal woman representing the noblest parts of nature, this halo crowns a mangy feline promoting a seedy nightclub in Montmartre. Whether tongue-in-cheek or viciously biting, the poster serves as a commentary on the perceived pretention of Art Nouveau.



Maxfield Parrish, Century Midsummer Holiday Number, USA, 1897 / Source: Mark J. Weinbaum, USA



Unknown, Wetterwald Freres, France, 1898 / Source: I Desire Vintage Posters, Canada



Arthur Foache, La Garonne [before letters], France, 1898 / Source: Mark J. Weinbaum, USA



Johan Thorn-Prikker, Niederländisch-Indische Kunstausstellung (Dutch East Indies Art Exhibition) Krefeld, Netherlands, 1906 / Source: Josef Lebovic Gallery, Australia



Manuel Orazi, La Maison Moderne, France, 1900



Henri Thiriet, Absinthe Betholot, France, 1899



Georges de Feure, Affiches et Estampes Pierrefort, France, 1898

All of this would change, however, in 1900 when the Exposition Universelle in Paris presented Art Nouveau to almost 50 million people, instantly making the genre familiar, exciting, and downright trendy. Every major artist and designer within the movement created something spectacular to showcase, including Mucha who designed the pavilion representing Bosnia-Herzegovina. Even the posters promoting individual parts of the event revealed in Art Nouveau glory, most especially Privat Livemont's design for the Palais de la Femme and Manuel Orazi's image for the Théâtre de Loie Fuller. The popularity and accessibility of Art Nouveau had reached its peak.

By 1910, however, the main poster designers within the field would move on to other things. Mucha relocated back to Prague where his style took on more elements of Czech folk art, while other leading Art Nouveau posterists like Livemont, Eugene Grasset, and Paul Berthon either stopped producing work or attempted to evolve their style toward the growing trend of what would become Art Deco. By the dawn of World War I, Art Nouveau was passé, a symbol of a decadent, more naïve and optimistic time. Its contributions to graphic design, however, have influenced generations of artists, most interestingly those from the San Francisco psychedelic scene who co-opted those signature organic forms and languid ladies sixty years later to promote concerts and clothing for the Flower Power era. It remains one of the most powerful, rare, and sought-after styles of poster design today.



Alphonse Mucha, Cycles Perfecta, France, 1902

“By the dawn of World War I, Art Nouveau was passé, a symbol of a decadent, more naïve and optimistic time.”

ORIGINAL VINTAGE POSTERS

Stunning artworks in a variety of styles

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Focus on Collector

William W. Crouse

USA

When did you start collecting posters and what was your inspiration?

I started collecting posters more than 30 years ago. I had been collecting Cubist paintings when one of the dealers began to get involved with posters. I bought a few and got hooked!

Please describe your collecting interests.

My wife and I collect just about anything Art Deco made between the two World Wars. We have an extensive vintage cocktail shaker collection, Hagenauer sculptures, and prohibition era stemware. We also have furniture, lighting, and many other Deco objects.

What is the most prized poster in your collection?

I have too many favorite posters to pick just one, but I have all six Rural Electrification Administration posters, the large Dubonnet triptych by Cassandre, Black Birds and LeRoy Opticien by Paul Colin, the Man Ray Underground poster, and The Daily Herald by McKnight Kauffer.



Tato (Guglielmo Sansoni), Ala Littoria, Italy, 1934



Adolphe Mouron Cassandre, Au Bucheron, France, 1926



Gert Sellheim, Australia Surf Club, Australia, c.1936

“My wife and I collect just about anything Art Deco made between the two World Wars.”



Roger De Valerio, Chrysler, France, 1930s



Paul Colin, Moulin Rouge La Revue Black Birds, France, 1929



Jean Carlu, CAF Voyages Aeriens, France, c.1926



Adolphe Mouron Cassandre, Coupe Davis, France, 1932



Edward McKnight Kauffer, Soaring To Success Daily Herald, UK, 1918

What has been your most interesting poster purchase so far?

My most interesting purchase was the CAF poster that I found at an estate sale for very little money. It is an extremely rare and a very interesting poster by Jean Carlu.

Do you have a dream poster you'd love to add to your collection?

As a collector, I am always looking for great pieces that I have never seen before, except possibly in a book. I would be happy to add a few more to my permanent collection.



Adolphe Mouron Cassandre, Dubonnet triptych, France, 1932



Robert Faluccci, Monaco Grand Prix, Monaco, 1931



Paul Colin, Leroy Opticien, France, 1938



Adolphe Mouron Cassandre, Dubonnet triptych, France, 1932



Adolphe Mouron Cassandre, Dubonnet triptych, France, 1932



Man Ray, Keeps London Going, UK, 1938



Unknown, Lyra Extra, Germany, 1932

“As a collector, I am always looking for great pieces that I have never seen before...”

Have you got any tips or advice for new poster collectors?

When I started collecting posters, as do most, I made many mistakes. My advice is to select an area of focus, learn as much as you can about that area, and try to buy the very best examples. There are many, many ways to focus a poster collection—by country, by artist, by subject matter, by style, by time period, etc.

Do you display your posters around your house and/or at work?

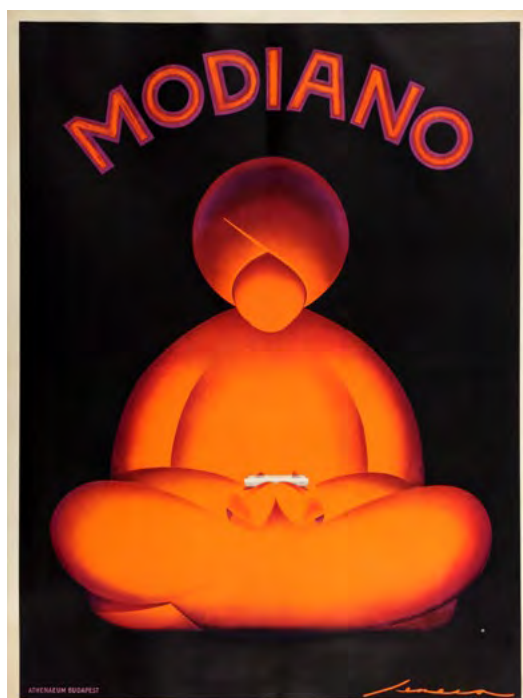
I display about 150 posters in my residences and have the rest in storage.

Classic car or latest model with all the technology?

As our collections are from 1919-1939 our cars are new!



Alexandre Alexeieff, The Night Scotsman, UK, 1931



Federico Seneca, Modiano, Hungary, 1929



Robert Bereny, Modiano, Hungary, 1929

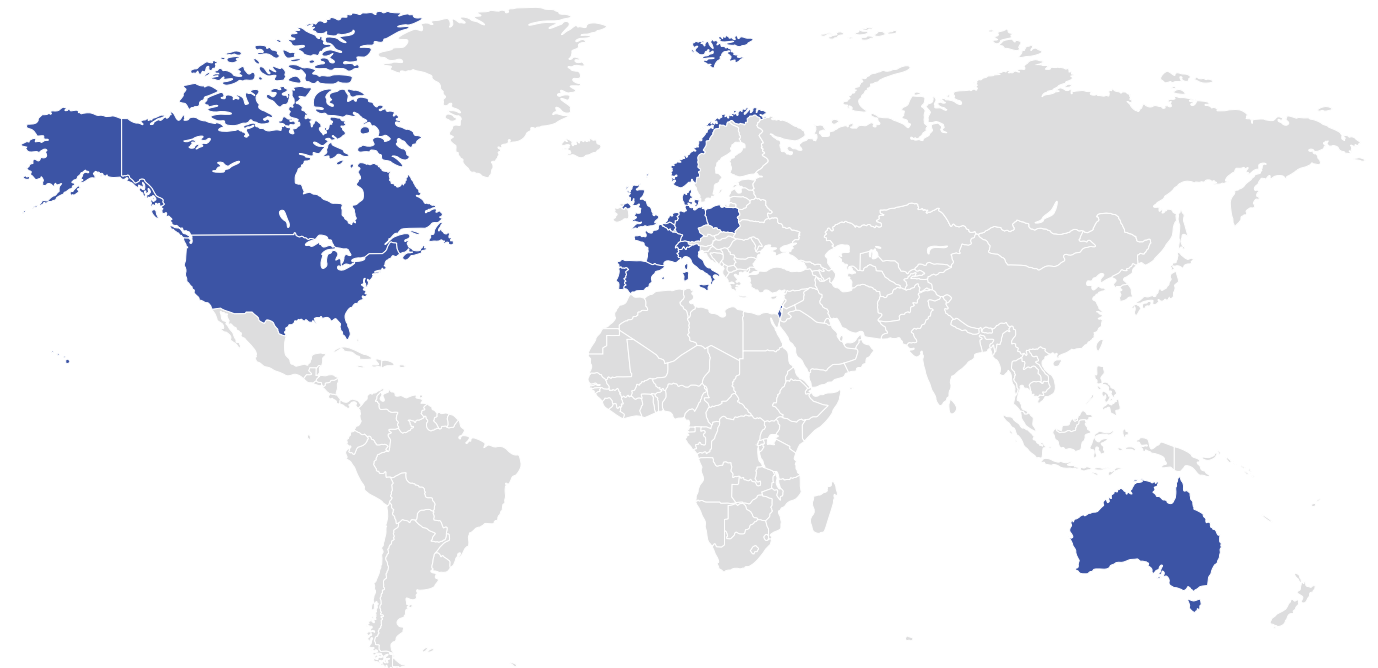


Robert Louis, Pierce Arrow, Belgium, 1929



Lester Beall, Rural Electrification Administration
Farm Work, USA, 1937

“My advice is to select an area of focus, learn as much as you can about that area, and try to buy the very best examples.”



Lester Beall, Rural Electrification Administration
Heat Cold, USA, 1937



Lester Beall, Rural Electrification Administration
Light, USA, 1937

- Trusted source of original vintage posters
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- ◆—
- Knowledge and expertise on posters from around the world
covering a wide variety of topics
- ◆—
- Looking for a specific poster? Easily contact all our members
through the IVPDA website

All images are from the collector's personal archive.

Focus on Designer

Abram Games

by Naomi Games



Abram Games entered the world on July 29, 1914; the day after the Great War was declared.

His father was a photographer and, with pencils and paper omnipresent in his studio, Abram began to draw. At the age of eleven, his school report stated that his drawing skills were weak, but he already knew that he was going to be an artist - perhaps even a poster designer - and nothing was going to stop him.

He left school aged fifteen but continued to work as his father's assistant. He built a wooden shed in the yard, and there he created a portfolio of designs. He enrolled at Saint Martin's School of Art, but soon realised that he was untalented compared to the other students. He was also shocked at the half-hearted teaching methods, and left full-time education after only two terms.

During the 1930s, posters were the kingpins of publicity media. There was little colour photography in advertising and no domestic television available. Alternatively, posters were entirely hand-drawn and reproduced by skilled chromolithographers. Each colour was identified and painstakingly redrawn onto to a printing plate. An average of sixteen separate printings was not unusual in reproducing the posters, and the hand of the craftsman was palpable. Advertising and billboard agencies commissioned leading painters and artists to paint a figure, landscape, glass of beer, or a bar of soap. Lettering was added later by an anonymous studio artist, and the poster submitted to a likely customer. If rejected, the name of the product, company, and probably the slogan would be changed to suit another client. Games commented, "Rarely did the result merit a signature and usually none was evident."

However, when Games studied the posters of Austin Cooper, Tom Purvis, and American-born Edward McKnight Kauffer, they deeply impressed him. The posters of the "3 Cs" - the Frenchmen Adolphe Mouron Cassandre, Jean Carlu, and Paul Colin - captivated him. They were the modernists who gave posters new content and meaning.

Intent on conquering the hoardings, Abram set himself the daily exercise of designing six posters to a theme, and he soon devised a new genre. Contemplating "bespoke" design to fit one advertiser only, his posters would implant the advertiser's name and product in the mind of the viewer directly by either association



©Estate of Abram Games, 1935, unpublished project



©Estate of Abram Games, 1936/7, unpublished project



©Estate of Abram Games, 1941, War Office



©Estate of Abram Games, 1942, War Office

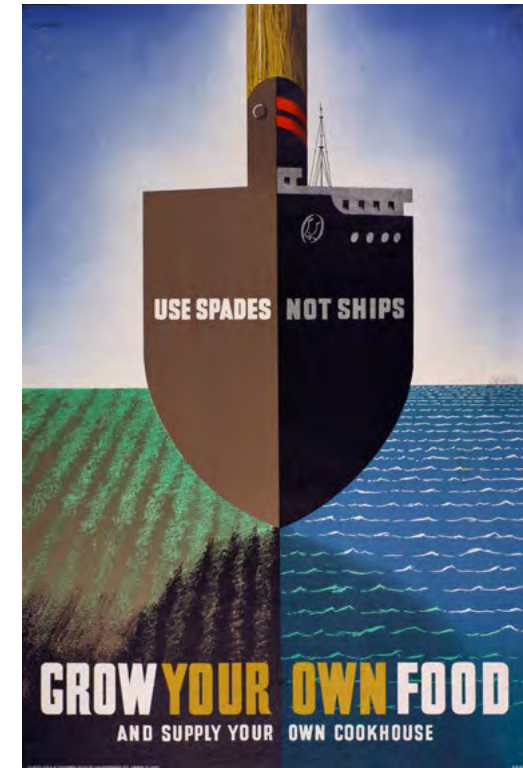
or suggestion. He wanted to create memorable posters with forceful, compact designs. Their function was to be so striking in appearance that no one could ignore them, appealing to both the intellect and the eye. Once intrigued by the poster, the viewer would then participate in helping the design fulfil its purpose. "I wind the spring and the public, in looking at the poster, will have that spring released in its mind," he said.

Display lettering at the time was mostly hand-drawn with only small text set in metal type. The less lettering, the better the design - besides, lettering was never Games's forte. He wanted to be responsible for the execution of the entire poster, and said, "to be truly effective, it should tell its story with little or no text." Believing the ultimate objective of poster design to be the maximum power of individual comment expressed in minimum terms, his philosophy of "maximum meaning, minimum means," which ceaselessly governed all his work, was born.

...“to be truly effective, it should tell its story with little or no text.”



©Estate of Abram Games, 1942, War Office



©Estate of Abram Games, 1942, War Office



©Estate of Abram Games, 1942, War Office

Determined to become a great poster artist, and to pay his way, Games sought work. Traipsing through London carrying a bulging portfolio in the Great Depression years, he was lucky to find a job at £1 a week. The work was uninspiring, with many hours of unpaid overtime. At the Askew-Young commercial art studio, he was forbidden to do anything creative and was repeatedly reminded that he was neither talented nor humble enough to become a poster designer.

Four years later, an insubordinate Abram Games was thrown out of the studio. Beginning the London tour again, he left his portfolio with the artists' agents Harding and Giles. Reclaiming his work from them nine months later, he was told that his posters were ten years ahead of the public. "I can't wait ten years," he impatiently replied.

In 1937, Games visited Frank Mercer, the influential editor of Art and Industry, who subsequently wrote an article entitled "Fitting Posters to the Product." This double-page spread set out the philosophy of the tenacious young designer. He bought seventy copies to send to likely clients accompanied with a handwritten letter asking for work. Within a few months he received his first assignment from London Transport. Commissions followed from the General Post Office and the Royal Society for the Prevention Accidents (RoSPA), and he was thrilled that he was allowed to produce his own interpretation of each brief. As a committed socialist, Games welcomed the prospect of designing for a democracy. He would rather inform and educate than produce propaganda and advertising work, and he realised he was lucky to find clients who knew better than to interfere with their artists' creations. He would always remember with gratitude the few discerning men with vision: Frank Pick at London Transport, Jack Beddington at Shell, Alexander Hight from the Post Office, and Ashley Havinden from WS Crawfords, who championed Games's work.

Now established as a freelancer, Games became friends with British poster artist Tom Eckersley and a group of European émigré designers including Hans Schleger (Zero), Hans Arnold Rothholz, FHK Henrion, George Him, Jan Le Witt, and Hans Unger. He was proud to be part of this creative group. However, all careers were to be put on hold when the Second World War broke out.

Games was twenty-five when he entered the army as an infantry private in 1940. His artistic skills were limited to painting backcloths for army concerts and drawing charcoal sketches of his comrades at work and leisure. Much of their time was spent in gloomy wooden barracks where the walls, preserved with dark brown creosote, were covered with black-and-white information diagrams, which were largely ignored.



©Estate of Abram Games, 1944, War Office



©Estate of Abram Games, 1948, Festival of Britain symbol

At the start of the Second World War, the Government reflected back to a 1914 style of poster publicity. With the limitation of private advertising, Government - instead of commercial posters - hung on the hoardings. But Games considered their messages outdated. He realised the poster had to become a social force and educate a complacent and demoralised population, one that had seen its foundation destroyed, physically and metaphorically. Instead of selling soap, it had to sell unpopular ideas and urge people to acquire new, inconvenient habits. The poster was fast becoming the spearhead of the nation's publicity and an instrument of social change.

On his first leave, Private Games visited Jack Beddington, then in the Ministry of Information (MoI), and complained about the lack of design within the army. Beddington, perceptive and always encouraging towards young designers, proposed he offer Games's memorandum "Army Poster Propaganda" to the War Office. Recommending anonymity, he explained, "We can't have privates telling the War Office what to do."

On parade in 1941, a sergeant major handed the surprised young soldier an order to report to the War Office in



©Estate of Abram Games, 1951, British Rail

London. The next morning, Games, who had been listed as a poster designer in army records, stood to attention in the corridor of a newly-bombed Whitehall building. The public relations department confided that it was in "a bit of a fix." The clerk (not a designer) responsible for information had been transferred and a recruiting poster was urgently needed. In accordance with War Office requirements, Games was given two stripes and classified as a "draughtsman," as no other category existed for this type of work.

Word that a designer was working in the War Office brought a demand from the MoI for an Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) recruitment poster. Games's popular ATS "Glamour Girl" poster was banned five weeks after publication because it resembled a "beauty product advertisement." It has since become a design classic, but Games was reluctant to be remembered as "the man who designed the 'Blonde Bombshell'," as he believed he had produced better work.

Inundated with extraneous work demands, Games asked his boss to search army pigeonholes for the "Poster Propaganda" memorandum. When found, it was agreed he would work on a six-month trial basis. The public



©Estate of Abram Games, 1954, Financial Times

relations department of the War Office was originally formed for the purpose of producing recruiting posters and pamphlets, but it was Games who instigated the idea of internal army information posters. Given a free hand and access to officers willing to listen to his ideas, Games, in turn, listened to their suggestions as to what was needed.

As the new instructional posters reached barrack rooms, requests came from MI5 (the security service) and MI1 (the department responsible for code breaking). Games designed posters guarding against careless talk, instructing economy and anti-waste, medical and dental care, weapon and ammunition handling, safety, anti-pilfering, education, trades training, aircraft recognition, the growing of food, and recruitment. Able to develop as a designer and tackle subjects unique to the poster, he insisted on acquainting himself with every possible aspect of a brief. The majority of his work was produced for army encampments, training centres, and munitions factories rather than for civilians. In 1942, not only did he produce thirty-two posters (ten in one month), but also wall-charts twice monthly for the Army Bureau of Current Affairs (ABCA). He was also made "Official War



©Estate of Abram Games & Transport for London, 1975, London Transport

Poster Artist," the only person ever to be given this title. Difficulties beset the designer during the war; ink, paper, and reproduction restrictions were formidable obstacles. However, Games enjoyed the challenge of solving a design difficulty - and thereby discovered a new discipline. Responsible for checking and approving all proofs, he insisted on the highest reproduction quality possible under war conditions. Posters were distributed within Britain and often overseas. Metal-based printing inks, such as chrome and bright green, were forbidden by 1942. Undeterred, Games used earth colours, such as ochre and sienna, and used his airbrush to spray a large area with the same charging of the brush, thus making considerable savings on paint. Posters were printed on fragile paper, yellowing quickly and sometimes printed on the backs of others. Photolithography, with its less precise interpretation of original artwork, replaced chromolithography, which had begun to die out as artisans enlisted.

Unlike peacetime posters, wartime counterparts were concerned with matters of national interest, demanding clarity and urgency. They had to speak louder than words. The MoI adapted several designs for civilian use, the US Office of War Information placed a standing order for each new Games poster, and the Israel Defence Forces of 1948 borrowed his unique concept of posters for their military. To Abram's dismay, an order was issued to pulp the artwork and remaining copies of all his posters after the war.

Although he designed in many disciplines, Abram Games will be remembered for six decades of poster design, many of which are still relevant today. In April 2019, an English Heritage blue plaque was unveiled on his family home in North London. He is the first British poster designer to be honoured with one.

When asked which of his 300 poster designs were his favourite, he replied, "they are like my children - I have no preferences. But if you ask which posters I want to be remembered by, they are; 'Your Talk May Kill Your Comrades,' 'Guinness G,' and 'Freedom from Hunger.' If I can say I designed three good posters, it is enough.'

It was more than enough.

© Naomi Games
www.abramgames.com



©Estate of Abram Games, 1956, Guinness



©Estate of Abram Games, 1942, War Office



©Estate of Abram Games, 1960, United Nations

Books:

Abram Games: His Wartime Work
Publisher: Amberley Publishing
ISBN: 9781445692456

Twentieth Century Graphic Designer: Abram Games
Publisher: Pallas Athene
ISBN: 139781843681779

Focus on Collection

The Danish Poster Museum

Home to a world of posters

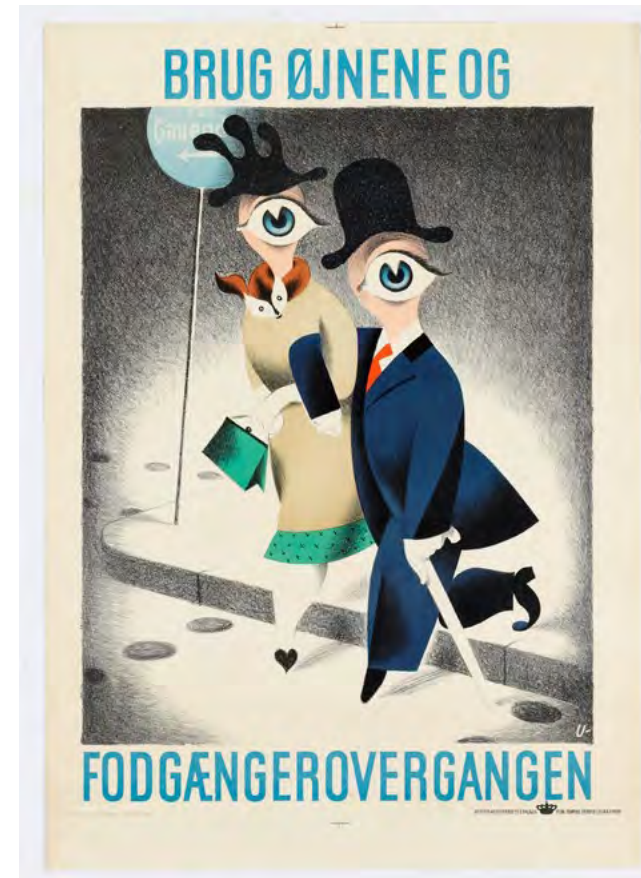
by Elsebeth A. Schanz

Museum Head and Curator
The Danish Poster Museum
Aarhus, Denmark

All photos courtesy of
The Danish Poster Museum

“Use your eyes and the Pedestrian Crossing,” says an admonishing Danish poster from 1941, issued by the Ministry of Justice Committee for greater Safety in Traffic.

The words are backed up by a somewhat surreal picture of a man and a woman whose faces are dominated by a single eye like a Cyclops. There is no doubt that they are doing as they are told. Even the fur collar around the woman’s neck is looking out as she cautiously steps out on the road in heart-shaped shoes. This highly imaginative and humorous poster was designed by one of Denmark’s most outstanding poster artists, Arne Ungerman (1902-1981). It was commissioned during World War II, when the streets were dark because of the obligatory blackout.



Campaign poster from Denmark: “Use your eyes and the Pedestrian Crossing” from 1941 designed by Arne Ungermann. During the Occupation in Denmark, the streets were dark because of the obligatory blackout, and this resulted in a series of posters advising people to be careful in the dark. This is one of them, and it approaches the subject with refined humour in almost surrealistic lines.

Another notable Danish poster artist is Aage Rasmussen (1913-1975), who was extremely productive and especially active with tourist posters. In 1946, he had a poster for Denmark printed with a luxuriant cornfield forming an embracing – or threatening? – wave, rising high above the blue sea, a little cow and a typical Danish village church nestled below. Aage Rasmussen’s great idol was the brilliant French/Ukrainian poster artist, Adolphe Mouron Cassandre (1901-1968). That is clearly obvious in this poster, where one graphically dominant element appears to spring out of the poster frame – precisely as in Cassandre’s imagery. It must have been a wonderful moment for Aage Rasmussen when his poster won a competition, and Cassandre himself was on the jury that nominated Rasmussen’s poster as the winner.



Tourist poster “Denmark” from 1946, designed by Aage Rasmussen, who still stands out as one of Denmark’s predominant and talented poster artists. Aage Rasmussen was especially known for his tourist posters, but also made a large number of transport posters for the Danish State Railways. He made his breakthrough in 1937 with an express train poster for DSB.



Tourist poster from Denmark, "Wonderful Copenhagen", dating from about 1968, designed by Ib Antoni. Although Ib Antoni (1929-1973) died far too young, he succeeded in producing a wealth of posters, all with characteristic humour and a varied and experimental feeling for colour. He was particularly occupied with tourist posters, but also touched on a large number of other areas in his work.



Campaign poster from Denmark: "Stop Gossip and Rumours. Don't tell others what you have heard..." from 1940, by an unknown artist. During World War II there was sharp focus on "careless talk", meaning gossip and rumours that could be dangerous for others. This applied in all the countries that were at war, and thus in Denmark during the Occupation too. The poster shows a cosy residential area under Dannebrog flags, which were an important national symbol for the population during the Occupation.



Advertising poster from Denmark: "Everyone reads Politiken" from 1911, designed by Gerda Wegener. The poster shows Gerda Wegener's (1886-1940) typically decadent and humorous line, influenced by Art Deco, which she had become familiar with when she moved to Paris in 1912. She frequently drew female figures, ranging from the sensual and sometimes directly erotic to depraved decadence. The artist's model for these women was often Gerda Wegener's husband, Einar Wegener, who later underwent a sex-change operation to become Lili Elbe.

Both the examples described here are chosen from the rich collection at the state-recognised Danish Poster Museum, a section of the open-air museum Den Gamle By situated in Aarhus. The museum holds a collection of about 200,000 posters, including works from Denmark and the rest of the world. There are countless topics, extending from political and propaganda posters, informative posters, tourist posters, advertising and product posters, film and theatre posters – in short, the entire spectrum of possible subjects. From Hungary, for example, there is an information poster from 1953 campaigning against alcohol abuse. The motif originated from 1912, when a competition was held for posters on the subject; but this motif was so effective that it was still in use more than 40 years later.



Exhibition poster from Denmark: "National Exhibition Aarhus 1909", designed by Valdemar Andersen. In 1909, Aarhus was host for the National Exhibition, for which a large number of posters were produced. The competition for the official exhibition poster was won by Valdemar Andersen (1875-1928). He was nicknamed "father of the modern poster", because he was one of the leaders in introducing modern posters to Denmark.

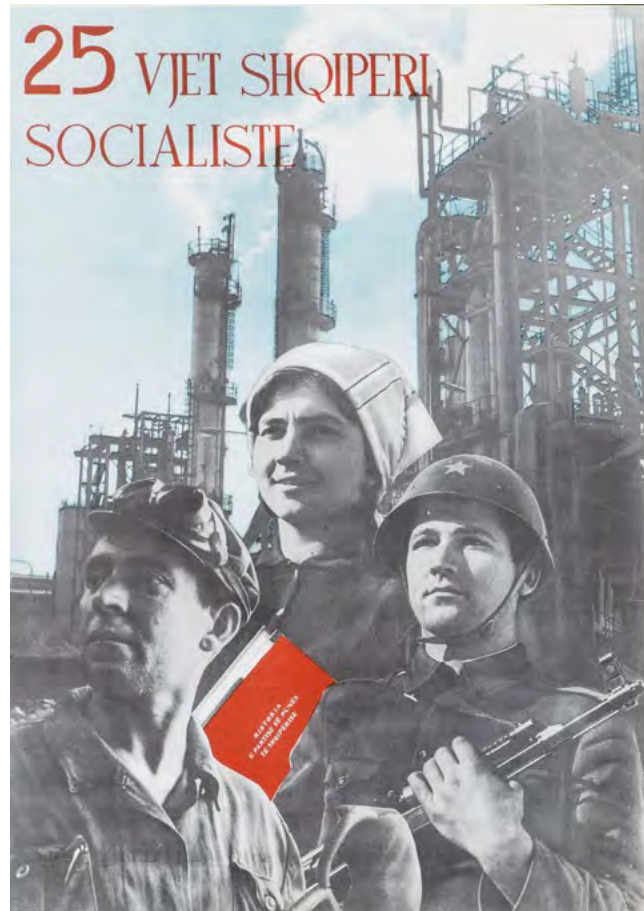


Exhibition poster from Denmark: "Exhibition for rational housekeeping - Woman and Home - Copenhagen Forum 1-17.Sept." from 1950, designed by Marlie Brande. There are only a few women among the classic Danish poster artists. Marlie Brande (1911-1979) is one of them, and she was best known for her posters dealing with caring, health, hygiene and sport. On this poster she takes an ironic look at the housewife's overwhelming burden of work.



Film poster from Denmark: "Fy and Bi larking about", stamped 1957-58 by the film censor, designed by Sven Brasch. The "Lighthouse and the Trailer" (Fyrtårnet og Bivognen), shortened to Fy and Bi, were a pair of comedians who reached the height of their activities in the 1920s. Known as Long and Short in English, they played on the same slapstick elements as Laurel and Hardy. Well into the 1950s, after both actors were dead, their silent films were still shown in dubbed and often shortened versions.

"The museum holds a collection of about 200,000 posters, including works from Denmark and the rest of the world."



Propaganda poster from Albania, probably from 1971, by an unknown artist. The poster appears to have been printed to celebrate the jubilee of the liberation of Albania from occupation during World War II, and the establishment of the Communist regime. The idiom is typically Soviet, showing the worker and the soldier as heroes defending their country and its ideology. The smoky industry in the background symbolises progress, improvement and success.



Transport poster from Norway, 1935, designed by Paul Lorck Eidem. The poster was issued by the Norwegian State Railways, which explains the railway tracks prominently in the foreground, where they disappear into the mountainside. The most dominant impression, however, is of the magnificent Norwegian landscape.



Campaign poster from Hungary, 1953, by an unknown artist. The original poster dates back to 1912, when it attempted to take up the battle against alcoholism and its tragic consequences. The poster was the result of a competition on the subject, and the motif is so strong and effective that it was re-used in a new campaign in 1953.



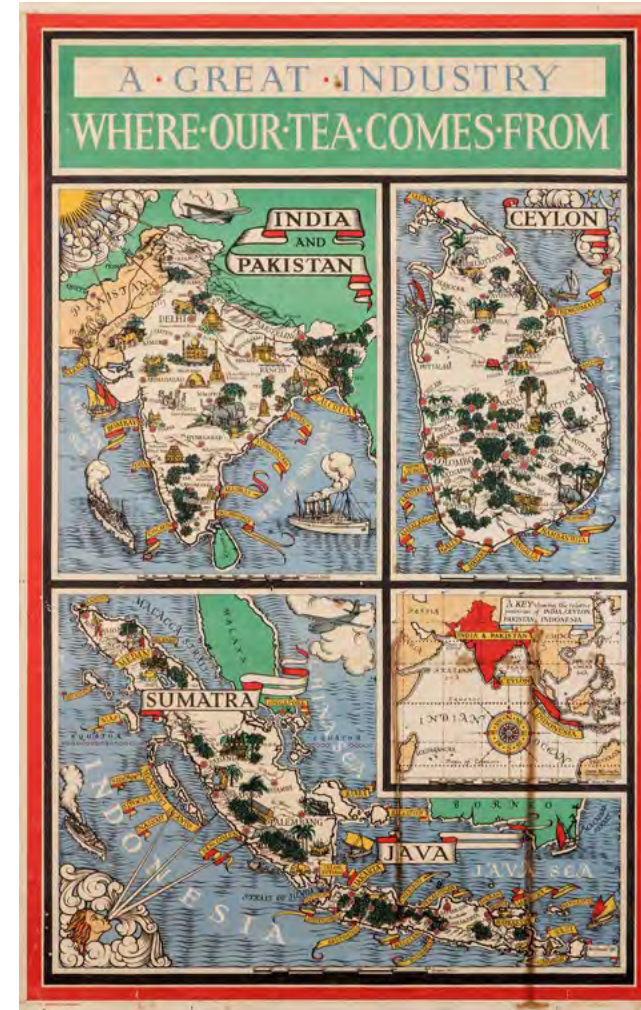
Tourist poster from the region of Macedonia in Yugoslavia in 1955, by an unknown artist. The heritage from antiquity, the architecture, fishing, and a relaxed holiday in the sun by the deep blue sea are all shown in a harmonious artistic interpretation and fine graphic composition.

All the posters in the Poster Museum collection are registered as museum items in an electronic system and stored on a shelving system in large cases. The oldest poster in the collection is purely typographic and dates from the beginning of the 19th century, while the collection's oldest modern poster with a picture medium dates from the 1890s. Contemporary posters are also collected, and thus the most recent acquisition in the collection is from 2019.

In 2009, the Poster Museum moved into a completely new exhibition building in Den Gamle By, conceived and purpose-built for the posters. The building has two storeys with a total exhibition area of 360 m², and was designed by the C.F. Møller firm of architects. Here the Danish Poster Museum shows a selection of more than a hundred classic Danish posters, which we have named "The Joy of Recognition" because many of the posters bring back pleasant memories for our visitors. This is a

permanent exhibition, while on the ground floor there are new special exhibitions twice a year. Just now you can see "The Fall of the Wall: German posters before and after 89." Next year we will be illustrating how the national border was drawn through Schleswig, with Danish and German plebiscite posters from 1920, and posters about other borders that were delineated in Europe after World War I from Poland, Austria, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. In the autumn of 2020, the museum will show propaganda posters from World War II – both the Allies' posters and those of the Axis Powers.

Thus, the Danish Poster Museum is a museum under constant change, and it is brim-full of posters with a story to tell, simply waiting to be folded out and explained. Even though posters have come in from the streets to the respectable museum area, they still reach out to a wide audience, and still retain their special characteristics from the street forum.



Advertising poster from Great Britain: "Where our tea comes from", 1920s, designed by Leslie MacDonald Gill. The poster dates from a time when the British Empire was larger than any other European empire ever formed, and it leaves no doubt that at that time Great Britain was a major power. MacDonald Gill (1884-1947) was a talented cartographer and artist.



Tourist poster from Austria, 1947, designed by W. Hofmann. The poster is addressed to a Danish audience, and was made just after World War II, when Austria was divided into four zones under Great Britain, France, the USA and the Soviet Union. There is no sign of division in the poster, however; on the contrary, it focuses on peace, stillness and harmony, and an extremely cute fox dominates the motif.

"... because many of the posters bring back pleasant memories for our visitors."



Propaganda poster from East Germany: "The Future belongs to Socialism - working farmers become members of the LPG", 1958, by an unknown artist. The GDR issued multitudes of idealised propaganda posters showing happy and energetic mothers, children, industrial workers and farmers. This poster glorifies socialism and collectivisation of agriculture.



Political poster from Portugal: "No to Fascism - the fight continues" from 1974, by an unknown artist. On 25 April 1974 there was a coup in Portugal - known as the Carnation Revolution - which overthrew the dictatorship. This poster with its dramatic and aggressive expression dates from this event, and was produced at the request of the United Trade Unions of Lisbon.



The Danish Poster Museum's collection includes posters from countries all over the world, and also posters of recent date, where the artistic style is primarily significant in the work. Among other things, the museum has a large collection of Japanese posters. "Ueno Zoo", designed by Kazumasa Nagai in 1993.

Focus on Topic

The Psychedelic Poster Art and Artists of the late 1960s

by Ted Bahr

Bahr Gallery
New York, USA

1960s

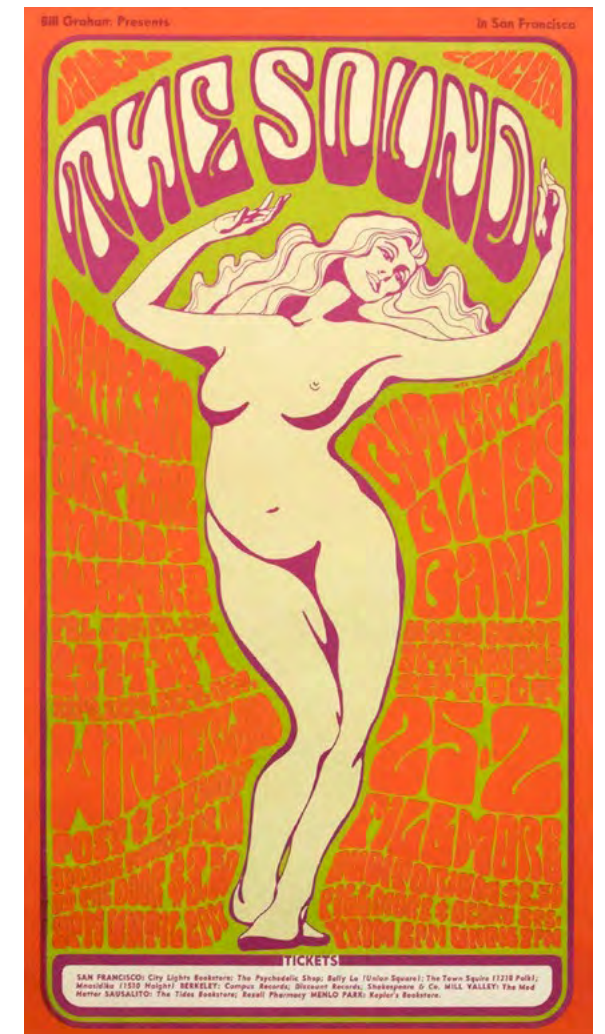
The stylistic trademarks of the 1960s psychedelic poster were obscured and disguised lettering, vivid color, vibrant energy, flowing organic patterns, and a mix of cultural images from different places and periods -- anything to confuse, enchant, thrill, and entertain the viewer. The style was also tribal in the sense that if you could decipher and appreciate these posters then you were truly a member of the hippie subculture - you were hip, man.

The psychedelic poster movement coincided with the rise of hippie culture, the use of mind-altering drugs like LSD, and the explosion of rock and roll. San Francisco was the center of this universe, and while prominent psychedelic poster movements also developed in London, Detroit, Los Angeles, and Austin, Bay Area artists both initiated and dominated the genre.

San Francisco had long-been a center of Bohemian culture. In the 1950s and early 60s, the Beat Generation blossomed in the city's North Beach neighborhood, home to a multitude of jazz clubs and the infamous City Lights bookstore. Meanwhile, 40 miles south at Stanford University, the CIA was experimenting with LSD and other psychoactive drugs. Two of their volunteers were future Grateful Dead members - lyricist Robert Hunter and the writer Ken Kesey. Kesey would go on to organize a number of events in late 1965 and early 1966 called "Acid Tests" -- freeform collages of music, movies, dance, recording, performance art, and light shows fueled by LSD. In January 1966, a Trips Festival produced in San Francisco by Kesey and Stewart Brand was attended by 6,000 people. The movement was gaining momentum fast.

Meanwhile, Bill Graham had promoted several benefit concerts for the San Francisco Mime Troupe that were similar to Kesey's "Acid Tests." Graham saw an opportunity to bring the nascent psychedelic bands into concert halls - specifically the Fillmore Auditorium, which he began renting every other weekend to produce "dance concerts." Another promoter, Chet Helms of The Family Dog, also rented the Fillmore for rock shows in early 1966, presenting bands like the Jefferson Airplane, Grateful Dead, and Big Brother and the Holding Company, featuring a young Janis Joplin.

To advertise these concerts, both promoters turned to Wes Wilson at Contact Printing, who had been laying out the primitive handbills used to advertise the Mime Troupe Benefits and the Trips Festival. Wilson took LSD at the Festival and was impacted by the music, the scene, and the sensuous free-love sensibilities of the hippie ethos. His posters quickly evolved to match the flowing, tripping, improvisational nature of the developing psychedelic music -- or "acid rock" -- and his lettering began to protrude, extend, and squeeze into every available space, mimicking and reflecting the totality of the psychedelic experience. His early style culminated in the July 1966 poster for The Association which featured stylized flame lettering as the image itself, a piece that Wilson considered to be the first truly psychedelic poster.



Wes Wilson, The Sound, USA, 1966 / 62x34cm

By the fall of 1966, Wilson had developed his own inscrutably psychedelic typeface inspired by the lettering style of Viennese Secessionist Alfred Roller. Wilson altered Roller's style to fit his own vision, rendering the characters with almost indistinguishable similarity by expanding their outlines and inset shapes, while concurrently employing the sensuous, organic forms and images found in Art Nouveau. The October 1966 poster for "The Sound" would become Wilson's most iconic work, with a free-flowing, powerful, and uninhibited nude dancer as its central image. While Wilson is generally considered the Father of the Psychedelic Poster, by late spring 1967, a dispute over money led to a falling-out with Graham, and he was replaced by Bonnie MacLean.



Wes Wilson, The New Generation, USA, 1966 / 51x36cm



Wes Wilson, The Association, USA, 1966 / 51x36cm

Meanwhile, Chet Helms had been using the team of Stanley Mouse and Alton Kelley to create posters for shows at the Avalon Ballroom. Mouse, trained at the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts, was an illustrator with a background in hot-rod graphics, while the self-taught Kelley's strength was collage. The two formed Mouse Studios, and the pair would frequent the San Francisco Public Library looking for images they could employ in their poster-making. "Stanley and I had no idea what we were doing," Kelley told the San Francisco Chronicle in 2007, "but we went ahead and looked at American Indian stuff, Chinese stuff, Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Modern, Bauhaus, whatever. We were stunned by what we found and what we were able to do. We had free rein to just go graphically crazy. Before that, all advertising was pretty much just typeset with a photograph."

The work of Mouse and Kelley has come to be recognized as a 20th-century American counterpart to the French poster art of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec during the Belle Époque, although the two psychedelic artists never imagined that they were creating anything of enduring value, anything more than another crazy poster for that week's Avalon show. "We were just having fun making posters," said Mouse. "There was no time to think about what we were doing," said Mouse. "It was a furious time, but I think most great art is created in a furious moment."

Mouse and Kelley were the main drivers behind the use of everyday commercial images in concert posters, and their June 1966 poster for Big Brother included a large picture of the Zig-Zag rolling paper man as well as the following disclaimer: "What you don't know about copying and duplicating can't hurt you." Mouse and Kelley also borrowed other images for some of their most iconic posters: an Edward Joseph Sullivan illustration for the Grateful Dead "Skeleton and Roses" poster in September 1966, and October 1966's "Woman with Green Hair," where they psychedelized one of Alphonse Mucha's Job Rolling Paper girls.

“...I think most great art is created in a furious moment.”



Stanley Mouse & Alton Kelley, Zig Zag, USA, 1966 / 51x36cm



Stanley Mouse & Alton Kelley, Skeleton & Roses, USA, 1966 / 51x36cm



Stanley Mouse & Alton Kelley, Woman with Green Hair, USA, 1966 / 51x36cm

Chet Helms used Spanish-born, Cooper Union- and Yale-educated Victor Moscoso for occasional posters in 1966, until December when he became part of the regular Family Dog poster rotation. An instructor at the San Francisco Art Institute, the classically trained Moscoso was hesitant to jump on the poster art bandwagon. He finally realized, though, that he had to forget everything he had learned in art school about conventional graphic design. "I was trying to make the lettering legible," he recalled. "I was trying to get the message across quickly and simply. Because I was such a good student and learned the rules of good poster making, I was doing all the wrong things."

The psychedelic formula was to create posters that were nearly illegible, keeping the viewer as engaged (or confused) for as long as possible. Moscoso became adept at integrating electric colors and arranging them in ways that made his posters look as if the images were moving on the paper. He said, "The musicians were turning up their amplifiers to the point where they were blowing out your eardrums. I did the equivalent with the eyeballs." Some of Moscoso's most stunning pieces include the Blues Project poster from February 1967, the iconic Chambers Brothers "Sunglasses" poster that was used as the inspiration for the 2000 movie, *Almost Famous*, and October 1967's "Flowerpot."

The last of the Big Five psychedelic poster artists was Rick Griffin, who produced his first concert poster in January 1967. Griffin was professionally trained in Southern California, and was a staff artist at *Surfer Magazine* before moving to San Francisco in 1966. Drawing on influences like Native American culture, the California surf scene, and the burgeoning hippie movement, he incorporated beetles, skulls, surfing eyeballs, torches, hearts, mushrooms, serpents, and flames into his art.

Griffin produced posters for both Helms and Graham, and was a noted perfectionist with a wildly ornamental and ornate, often visually challenging, lettering style. Some of his posters are among the most iconic of the period, including the February 1968 Jimi Hendrix "Flying Eyeball" and the January 1969 Grateful Dead "Aoxomoxoa."

Instead of delivering clear messages, psychedelic posters advertising rock concerts often had to be deciphered by audiences. The main principle of psychedelic posters was not to deliver messages succinctly and efficiently, but rather to engage and entertain the viewers for as long as possible. The posters advertised the music, and in San Francisco of 1966-1968, creativity was the essence, borrowed from a



Victor Moscoso, Blues Project, USA, 1967 / 51x37cm



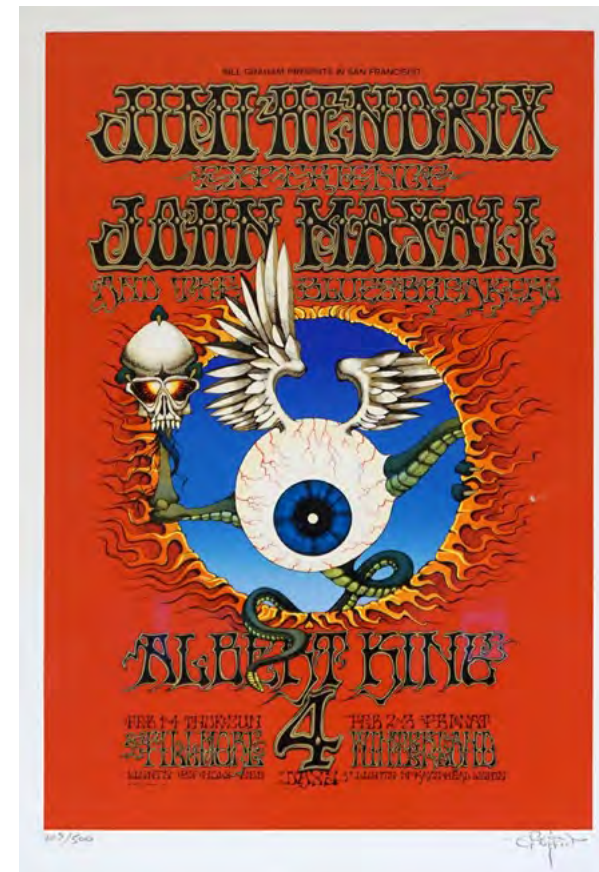
Victor Moscoso, Flowerpot, USA, 1967 / 51x36cm



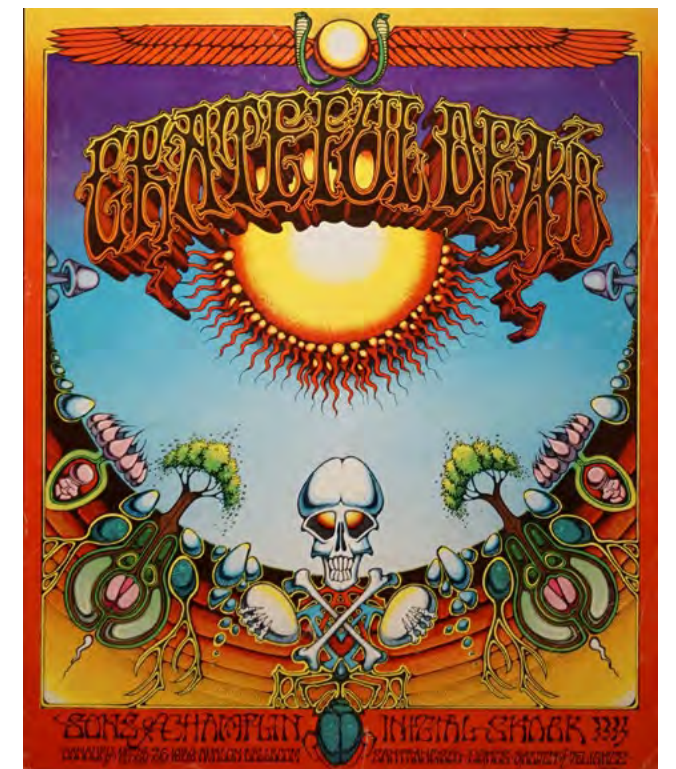
Victor Moscoso, Chambers Brothers, USA, 1967 / 51x36cm

vast spectrum of musical idioms, including R&B, East Indian raga, pop, blues, country, bluegrass, newfangled rock and roll, and jazz.

“The visual characteristics of psychedelic posters are manifold. Probably the most important factor is distortion, particularly as regards the information-bearing text of what is, after all, supposed to be an advertisement. Lettering was stretched and morphed, melted and compressed, inverted and more. This set the base level for the reception of the work, slowing comprehension, privileging the visual over the verbal, mandating a contemplative period followed by an Aha! moment of gestalt comprehension.” - Doug Harvey



Rick Griffin, Jimi Hendrix Flying Eyeball, USA, 1968 / 54x36cm



Rick Griffin, Axomoxoa, USA, 1969 / 67x55cm



Bonnie MacLean, Blues Project, USA, 1967 / 54x35cm

While the Big Five created and dominated the psychedelic rock poster style from 1966-1968, other artists were lugging in their portfolios to promoters and trying to become part of the scene. Several were notable, starting with Bonnie MacLean who replaced Wes Wilson in May 1967. Married to Bill Graham, she introduced a more nuanced psychedelic style with some of the most beautiful posters from the period. Lee Conklin, who designed 33 posters for Graham from 1968 to 1969, was the master of hidden pictures, with intricate drawings within drawings (or lettering) that delighted the likely-stoned viewer. His "Santana Lion" in August 1968 was a high point for Conklin and the movement.

Psychedelic posters began to wane after 1969, as Chet Helms had gone largely out of business and Bill Graham was migrating to artists who were more straightforward and could sell more tickets. Other promoters started using radio and newspapers to advertise concerts, as rock and roll had moved from what had been a cottage industry to Big Business. The era of psychedelic posters was largely over, but the impact of the Big Five and their artistic legacy continues to impact poster artists and aficionados to this day.

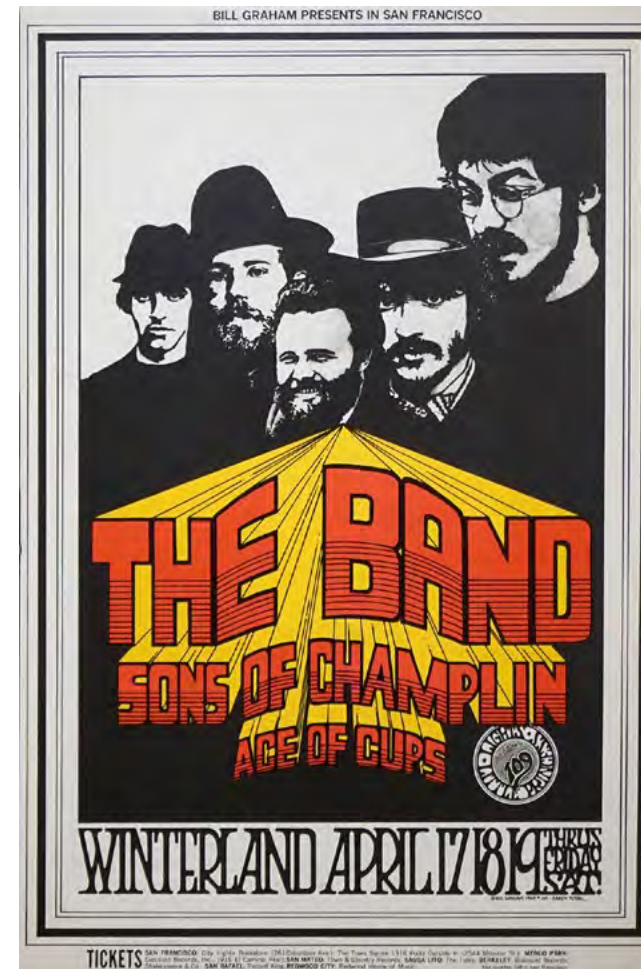
While the psychedelic poster movement was relatively short-lived, extending only from 1966 to 1972, more than 700 posters were created under the umbrella of either Bill Graham/Fillmore or Family Dog/Avalon. All of these and some additional independently-printed posters are listed in the seminal (and out of print) poster reference *The Art Of Rock* by Paul Grushkin.

The vast majority of the psychedelic posters were offset lithographs, meaning that the artist was typically present while the posters were printed and that there was a great deal of collaboration between the two. Unlike posters printed before the 1950s, psychedelic posters were typically smaller and often printed on thick paper stock or vellum, and rarely require linen backing.

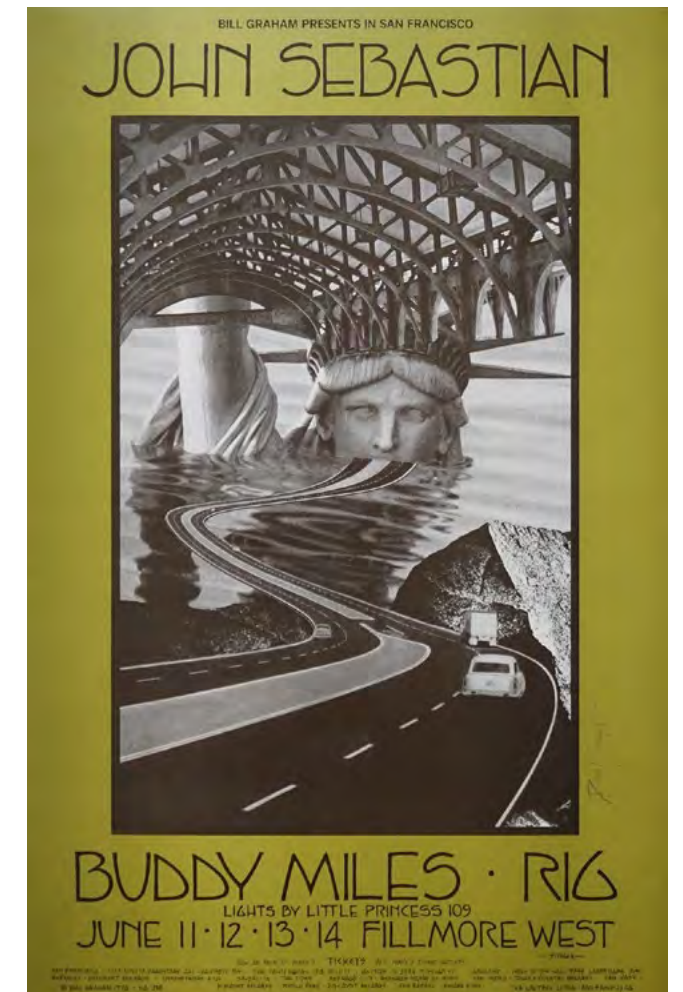
By mid-1967, many posters were being printed in runs of 5,000, allowing for prices to be as low as \$100 today. Earlier posters were printed in much lower quantities and are therefore more expensive. A lot also depends on condition, scarcity, and collectability, with some exceptional images commanding over \$10,000. While not all posters were stapled to telephone poles - many were handed out to concert-goers to advertise next week's show - how many survived the drafty attics and moldy basements in decent condition is an open question.



Lee Conklin, The Santana Lion, USA, 1969 / 53x36cm



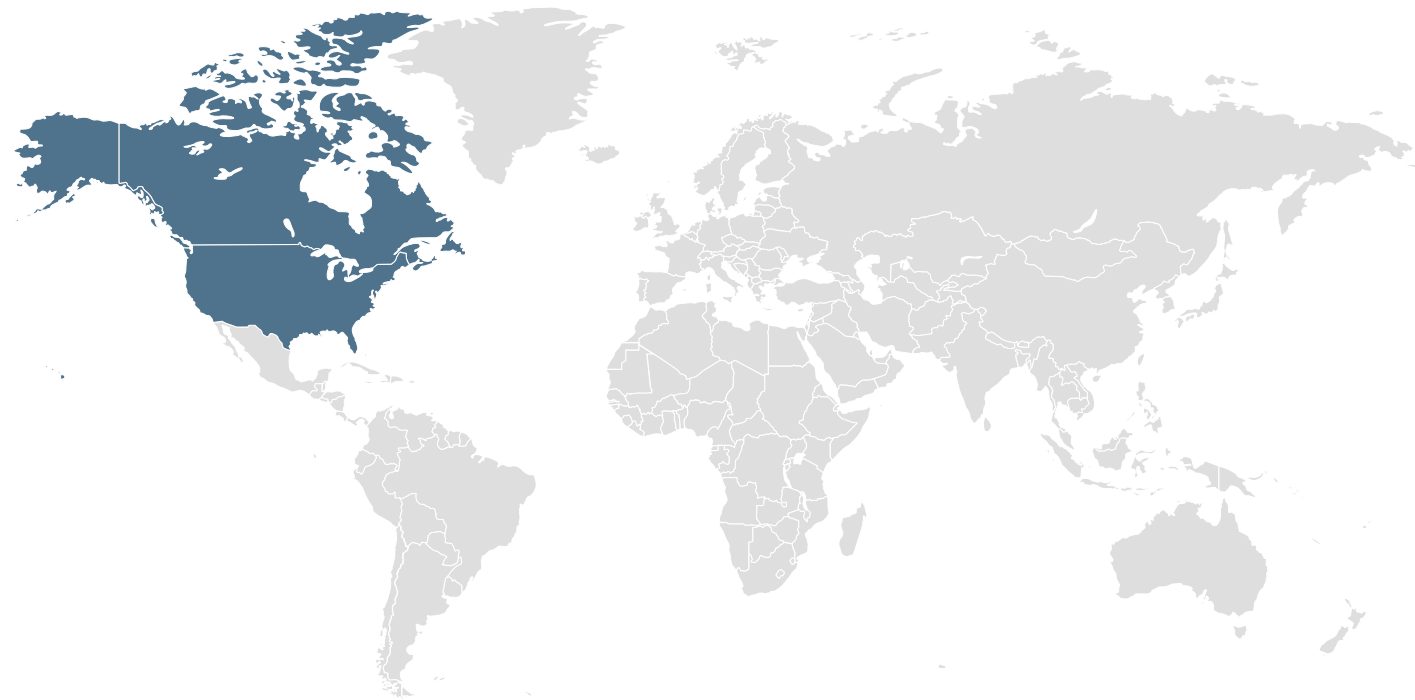
Randy Tuten, The Band, USA, 1969 / 53x35cm



David Singer, John Sebastian, USA, 1970 / 53x36cm

“...the impact of the Big Five and their artistic legacy continues to impact poster artists and aficionados to this day.”

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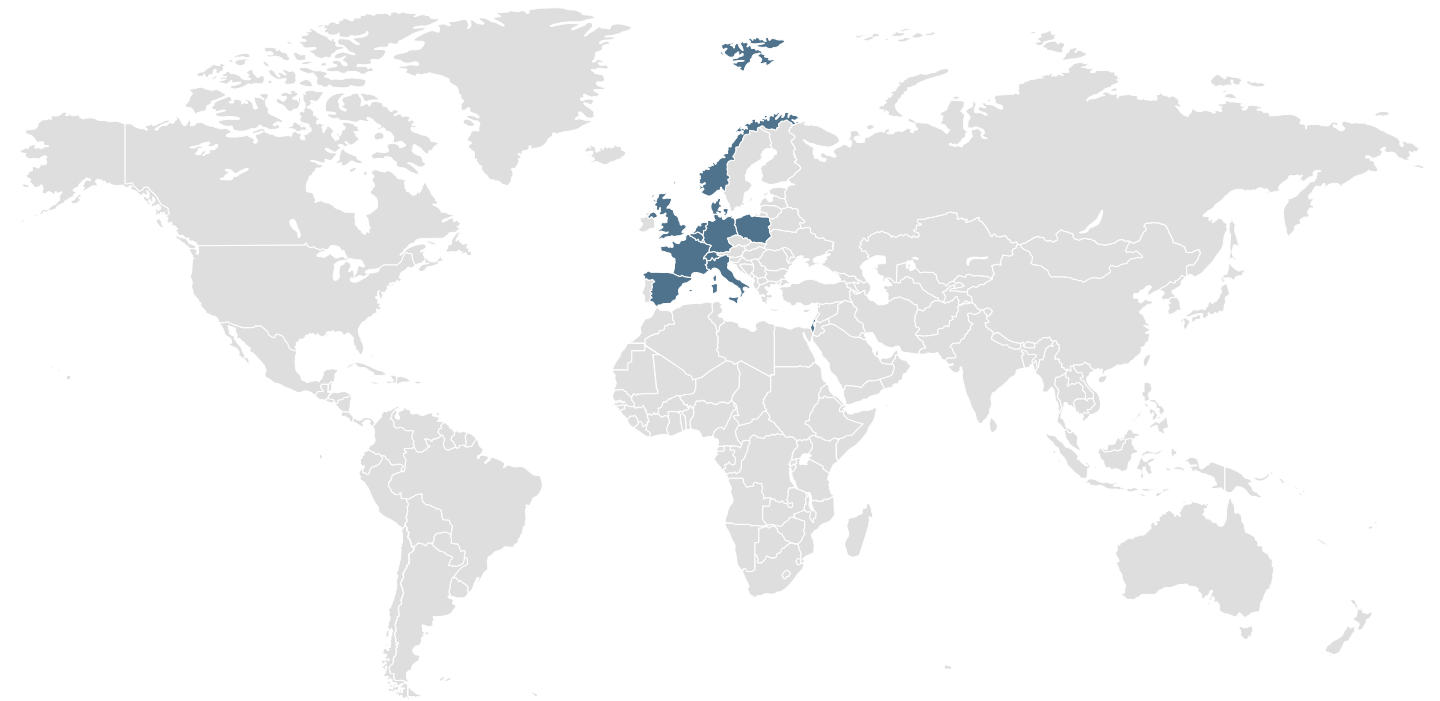
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