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Contact:

Robyn Wise, 415.357.4172, rwise@sfmoma.org
Libby Garrison, 415.357.4177, lgarrison@sfmoma.org
Sandra Farish Sloan, 415.357.4174, ssloan@sfmoma.org

**THE ART OF DESIGN: SELECTIONS FROM THE ARCHITECTURE AND
DESIGN COLLECTION**

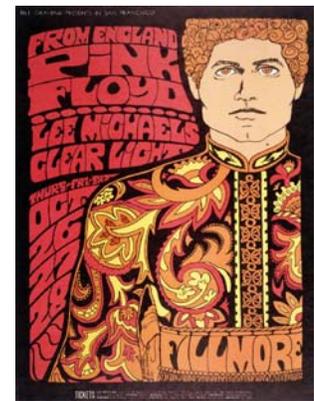
**SFMOMA HIGHLIGHTS EXTENSIVE PRINT DESIGN HOLDINGS WITH
NEWLY ROTATED GRAPHIC DESIGN EXHIBITION**

In the latest installment of its ongoing exhibition *The Art of Design: Selections from the Architecture and Design Collection*, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) will highlight more than seventy landmark examples of twentieth-century print design, with an emphasis on suites of work by leading visionaries and a remarkably vivid array of new acquisitions in commercial poster art. On view from February 26 through August 7, 2004, this exhibition combines selections from the Museum's extensive holdings of more than four hundred American psychedelic-era rock posters of the 1960s and 1970s with recently acquired Japanese poster art from the 1960s by legendary Pop art icon Tadanori Yokoo. Newly accessioned suites of posters designed by Michael Bierut of Pentagram and Jennifer Morla of Morla Design will also be on view, in addition to a display of works by Steve Tolleson of Tolleson Design and Amy Franceschini of Futurefarmers.

Organized by Joseph Rosa, Helen Hilton Raiser Curator of Architecture and Design, with the assistance of Curatorial Associate Darrin Alfred, this exhibition traces the trajectory of design sensibility within individual artists' careers and presents progressive graphic design from the Museum's collection in a fresh context. Describing how these works shape the collection, Rosa comments: "Building on SFMOMA's strengths in experimental California graphic design—demonstrated in part by the layered arrangements of Jennifer Morla and the hallucinatory collection of 1960s rock posters—we continue to broaden the scope of our holdings by presenting parallel relationships between both national and international designers such as Michael Bierut and Tadanori Yokoo."

Psychedelic-Era Rock Posters

The exhibition's centerpiece is a series of twenty-six rock posters commissioned between 1966 and 1971 by impresarios Chet Helms and Bill Graham to announce shows at San Francisco's fabled Avalon Ballroom and Fillmore Auditorium. The collection features many works by the most famous of these designers: **Alton Kelley**,



Bonnie MacLean, *Pink Floyd; Lee Michaels, Fillmore Auditorium, October 26-28, 1967*; offset lithography; Collection SFMOMA; © Bonnie MacLean

Bonnie MacLean, Victor Moscoso, Stanley Mouse, and Wes Wilson. Graham’s inaugural artist, Wes Wilson, was inspired largely by Viennese Secessionist lettering, adapting the style to his fit his own ambitions. With a bulbous, intentionally illegible typeface, unorthodox juxtapositions of electric colors and sensual imagery, his designs for groups such as Jefferson Airplane, Captain Beefheart, and the Byrds perfectly capture the revolutionary essence of the music they promoted. As Wilson’s successor at Bill Graham Presents, artist Bonnie MacLean became know for her distinctive use of culturally diverse images including Native American totems and Nehru jackets, most notably incorporated in her poster design for a Doors concert at the Fillmore in 1967. Victor Moscoso, who was influenced by his studies at Yale University under Josef Albers, worked in a style marked by optical effects and color contrasts with vibrating edges and borders. And for legendary band the Grateful Dead, Alton Kelley and Stanley Mouse collaborated to create the infamous “Skull and Roses” emblem that would become one of the world’s most recognizable music icons—an image that was, in part, taken from E.J. Sullivan’s nineteenth-century illustration for the twenty-sixth quatrain of *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*. Once considered only a disposable form of public notice, these convention-breaking graphic works have become symbolic images of American culture. In late 1976, the Museum’s poster collection was given its first full-scale public display as part of an exhibition of modern California art.

Internationally Acclaimed Japanese Graphic Artist



Tadanori Yokoo, *A La Maison de M. Civeçawa*, 1965; silkscreen on paper; Collection SFMOMA; © Tadanori Yokoo

Displayed in the gallery opposite the American rock posters, two recently acquired silkscreens from the 1960s by Japanese cult figure Tadanori Yokoo embody a radical departure from the prevailing Japanese modernist style. Appropriating images from classic Japanese wood-block prints, Yokoo juxtaposed them with Far-Eastern, Christian, modernist, and popular iconography to produce a striking montage of influence. In his well-known work *A La Maison de M. Civeçawa*, 1965, bold collages of cutout figures from both Eastern and Western popular culture float on a vivid red-and-white striped rising-sun background, which has become his signature leitmotif. Dubbed the Andy Warhol of Japan by the West, Yokoo has been recognized in hundreds of formal museum exhibitions and is in the permanent collections of more than eighty museums worldwide.

American Contemporary Graphic Compositions

A suite of posters from Michael Bierut, principal of the New York–based design firm Pentagram, exemplify the evolution of poster art into the present. Designed in 2001 as part of a graphic identity rebranding for the Yale Graduate School of Architecture, these works employ an unorthodox multiplicity of typeface styles, eschewing a dogmatic Neo-Classical approach for one of dynamic pluralism—exactly mirroring the school’s goal of reinvigorating its public image as a hotbed for innovative architectural practice. Also featured in the exhibition are several works by San Francisco–based designer Jennifer Morla, including her poster for Alliance Graphique Internationale’s 2002 student symposium *Right Brain/Left Coast*. Her design references the conference’s theme of

West Coast design style versus East Coast aesthetic by alluding to the “opposite halves” of a designer’s brain: classical design motifs (right brain) versus radical California icons (left coast). The typography also mirrors these opposing aesthetics: a traditional gothic typeface versus contemporary sans serif.

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Hours: Open daily (except Wednesdays) 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; open late Thursdays until 9 p.m.; summer hours (Memorial Day to Labor Day) 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; closed Wednesdays and the following public holidays: Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day. The Koret Visitor Education Center is open Thursdays 6 to 8:30 p.m. and on Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Admission prices: Adults \$10; seniors \$7; students with ID \$6. SFMOMA members and children 12 and under are admitted free. The first Tuesday of each month admission is free. Thursday evenings, 6 to 9 p.m., admission is half price.

SFMOMA is easily accessible by MUNI, BART, Golden Gate Transit, SamTrans and Caltrain. Hourly, daily and monthly parking is available at the SFMOMA Garage at 147 Minna Street. For parking information, call 415.348.0971.

Visit our Web site at www.sfmoma.org or call 415.357.4000 for more information.

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