

Images available upon request.

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Psychedelic Experience Arrives at the Denver Art Museum

Full sensory exhibition debuts March 21, 2009

(Denver, Colo.) January 23, 2009 — The Denver Art Museum (DAM) gives a nod to the social revolution that celebrated free love, rock music and experimental design in *The Psychedelic Experience: Rock Posters from the San Francisco Bay Area, 1965-71*. The exhibition will feature approximately 300 works from the DAM's newly acquired collection of posters promoting dance concerts and other gatherings that have become iconic symbols of 1960s and '70s youth culture. In addition, album covers, underground newspapers and comics, and other material will round out the presentation, accompanied by music, film and activities to evoke the era. Organized by the DAM and curated by Darrin Alfred, DAM's AIGA assistant curator of graphic design, the exhibition will be on view March 21 through July 19, 2009.

"It all began with the music; as the San Francisco sound grew more popular, a poster-making industry came into being to promote it," Alfred explains. "Like the rock music they served, these posters remain a record of the consciousness of some of the most perceptive, intelligent and creative youth of the 1960s."



Bonnie MacLean, Yardbirds, Doors, Fillmore Auditorium, San Francisco, 1967. Partial gift of David and Sheryl Tippit; partial purchase with Architecture, Design & Graphics Department Acquisition Funds; and Volunteer Endowment Funds in honor of R. Craig Miller. © Bill Graham Archives, LLC. www.Wolfgangsvault



Victor Moscoso, *Top Hat*, Avalon Ballroom, 1966. Denver Art Museum: Partial gift of David and Sheryl Tippit and purchased through the Architecture, Design & Graphics Department Acquisitions Funds and the Volunteer Endowment Funds, in honor of R. Craig Miller. Family Dog © 2009 Rhino Entertainment.

The exhibition will take visitors through the psychedelic poster movement's early years, where artists were inspired by the sensory overload of the dancehall environment, and reproduced it in their work. This was a time when rock music was differentiating itself from rock 'n' roll, and the San Francisco music scene was stirred by multiple musical influences including the British Invasion, the American folk music revival, Chicago electric blues and soul sounds from Memphis and Detroit. In later years, the posters took on a surrealistic tone, with dreamlike and hallucinatory designs that appealed to the era's drug-oriented youth culture.

Visitors are invited to immerse themselves in the era of experimentation and free thinking through video, music and interactive components in the Martin & McCormick Gallery. Day trippers can share their memories from the period, experiences with the music and their take on the visual culture of the time. A poster-making station, outfitted with all of the materials and inspiration needed to create a modern-day psychedelic poster, will be on hand.

Do-It-Yourself light shows and '60s music listening stations complete the psychedelic journey.

Included in the exhibition are prominent poster patrons, including renowned dance promoters Bill Graham of the Fillmore Auditorium and Chet Helms of Family Dog. Artists featured in the exhibition will include the movement's major contributors: Wes Wilson, Bonnie MacLean, Alton Kelley, Stanley Mouse, Victor Moscoso, Rick Griffin, Lee Conklin and David Singer.

In January 2008, DAM announced it had acquired 875 psychedelic posters from Boulder, Colo., collector David Tippit. The collection consists of five sets, including a full first-print set of the Bill Graham and Family Dog series (1965-1970); a first-print set of Russ Gibb/Grande (1966-1970); a set of Neon Rose (1966-1968); and a fifth set comprised of important miscellaneous posters and handbills from 1965-1973. The DAM is the first museum to acquire a full collection of first-print sets of this size. Complete sets of these posters are rare and virtually impossible to assemble today.

The Psychedelic Experience: Rock Posters from the San Francisco Bay Area, 1965-71, is organized by the Denver Art Museum.

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The exhibition will be on view in the Anschutz Gallery and the Martin & McCormick Gallery in the Hamilton Building from March 21 through July 19, 2009.



Alton Kelley and Stanley Mouse, *Skull and Roses/Grateful Dead, Oxford Circle, Avalon Ballroom, San Francisco*, 1966. Denver Art Museum: partial gift of David and Sheryl Tippit and purchased through the Architecture, Design & Graphics Department Acquisitions Funds and the Volunteer Endowment Funds, in honor of R. Craig Miller. Family Dog © 2009 Rhino Entertainment

Department of Architecture, Design & Graphics at the Denver Art Museum

In 1990, the Denver Art Museum created what became the department of architecture, design & graphics, addressing issues in a field that has radically changed over the last quarter century. An inclusive collections policy encompasses architecture, decorative design, graphic design, industrial design and "functional" craft within the department. In less than 20 years, the collection has grown to include more than 11,000 objects including the AIGA Design Archives, comprising the world's most comprehensive collection of American graphic design from 1980 to present.

Denver Art Museum

The Denver Art Museum is located on 13th Avenue between Broadway and Bannock streets in downtown Denver. Open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Friday 10 a.m.-10 p.m., Sunday noon-5 p.m.; closed Mondays, the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Admission for this exhibition, which includes general Museum admission: FREE for museum members, \$15 adults, \$12 seniors and students, \$7 for visitors aged 6 to 18, free for children under six. General Museum admission is free the first Saturday of the month, thanks to Target and the citizens who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). The Cultural Complex Garage is open; enter from 12th Avenue between Broadway and Bannock or check the DAM website for up-to-date parking information. For information in Spanish, call 720-913-0169. For more information, visit www.denverartmuseum.org or call 720-865-5000.

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