

Related Programming

All programs listed below are free and open to the general public. Programs, exhibitions, dates, and locations subject to change.

Visit www.smith.edu/artmuseum for updates and details.

Thursday, June 13 | 12–12:45 PM
MEMBERS' EXTRAS Art Insights Gallery Talk | Museum of Art
Join curator Aprile Gallant for a Members-only behind-the-scenes preview of this exhibition. Detailed program description: www.smith.edu/artmuseum/Events

Members: \$5 | Student Members: FREE
Members may bring up to two guests. Space limited.
Please reserve by June 12: SCMAmembers@smith.edu or 413.585.2777

Thursday–Sunday, June 13–16 | Museum hours
June Members' Double Discount Days
SCMA members enjoy 20% off all Museum Shop purchases (in store and online) w/current membership card

Thursday–Sunday, June 13–30 | Museum hours
Museum Shop Overstock Bag Sale (in store and in stock only)
Up to 50% off a diverse selection of pocketbooks, totes, and satchels

Friday, June 14 | **secondFRIDAY** 4–8 PM
OPENING PROGRAM
Peace, Love and Rock 'n Roll ~ A Community Art Happening

4–6 PM **Hands-on!** Art-making for ages 4+ w/adult (while supplies last)
6–6:30 PM **Open Eyes** Informal guided gallery conversation about an art object in the exhibition

And... *dance to tunes from the psychedelic sixties*

Museum Shop open 10 AM–8 PM
Light refreshments by Tryon Common 4–6:30 PM

Friday, July 12 | **secondFRIDAY** 4–8 PM
4–6 PM **Hands-on!** Art-making for ages 4+ w/adult (while supplies last)
6–6:30 PM **Open Eyes** Informal guided gallery conversation about an art object

Museum Shop open 10 AM–8 PM (Tryon Common will close at 3 PM.)

Friday, August 9 | **secondFRIDAY** 4–8 PM
See July 12 for details.

Friday, September 13 | **secondFRIDAY** 4–8 PM
CLOSING PROGRAM
4–6 PM **Hands-on!** Art-making for ages 4+ w/adult (while supplies last)
6–7 PM **Gallery talk with Steve Waksman**, Professor of Music and American Studies, Smith College
Museum Shop open 10 AM–8 PM | Light refreshments by Tryon Common 4–6 PM



IMAGES: All objects purchased. Photography by Petegorsky/Gipe. COVER Victor Moscoso, American, born Spain, 1936. *The Chambers Brothers*, 1967. Lithograph printed in color on paper. **INSIDE (left to right)** Bob Schnepp, American, born 1937. *Summer of Love City of San Francisco*, 1967. Lithograph printed in color on paper. Victor Moscoso, American, born Spain, 1936. *Sopwith Camel*, 1967. Lithograph printed in color on paper. Wes Wilson, American, born 1937. Larry Keenan Jr., American, born 1943. *Allen Ginsberg: Who Be Kind To*, 1967. Lithograph printed in color on paper. Bob Schnepp, American, born 1937. *Lothar and the Band People, The Doors*, 1967. Lithograph printed in color on paper. Published by Family Dog Productions, San Francisco, California. Stanley Mouse, American, born 1940. *Jefferson Airplane*, 1966, published 1967. Lithograph printed in color on paper. Published by Berkeley Bonaparte, Berkeley, California. Bonnie MacLean, American, born 1949. *Martha and the Vandellas*, 1967. Lithograph printed in color on paper. Published by Creative Lithograph Company, Oakland, California. Peter Max, German, born 1937. *Prana*, 1967. Photolithograph printed in color on paper. Dana V. Johnson, American, 20th century. *Bill Graham Presents (113) Country Joe and the Fish; Steppenwolf, Fillmore Auditorium*, 1968. Lithograph printed in color on paper. John Thompson, American, born 1945. *Flower Child*, 1967. Lithograph printed in color on paper. Published by Astro Posters, Berkeley, California. **INSIDE (right, bottom)** Poster artists backstage at Avalon Ballroom, Fillmore Auditorium. **ABOVE** Wes Wilson, American, born 1937. *Byrds, Byrds, Byrds*, 1967. Lithograph printed in color on paper. Published by West Coast Lithograph Company, San Francisco, California. **MAILING PANEL** Roberta Bell, American, 20th century. *#475 Window to the Universe*, 1967. Black light screenprint printed in color on paper. Published by The Third Eye, New York, New York.

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Elm Street at Bedford Terrace
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Tues–Sat 10–4; Sun 12–4
Second Fridays 10–8 (4–8 FREE)
Closed Mondays and major holidays

MEMBERSHIP Matters
Become a Member and view program updates:
www.smith.edu/artmuseum



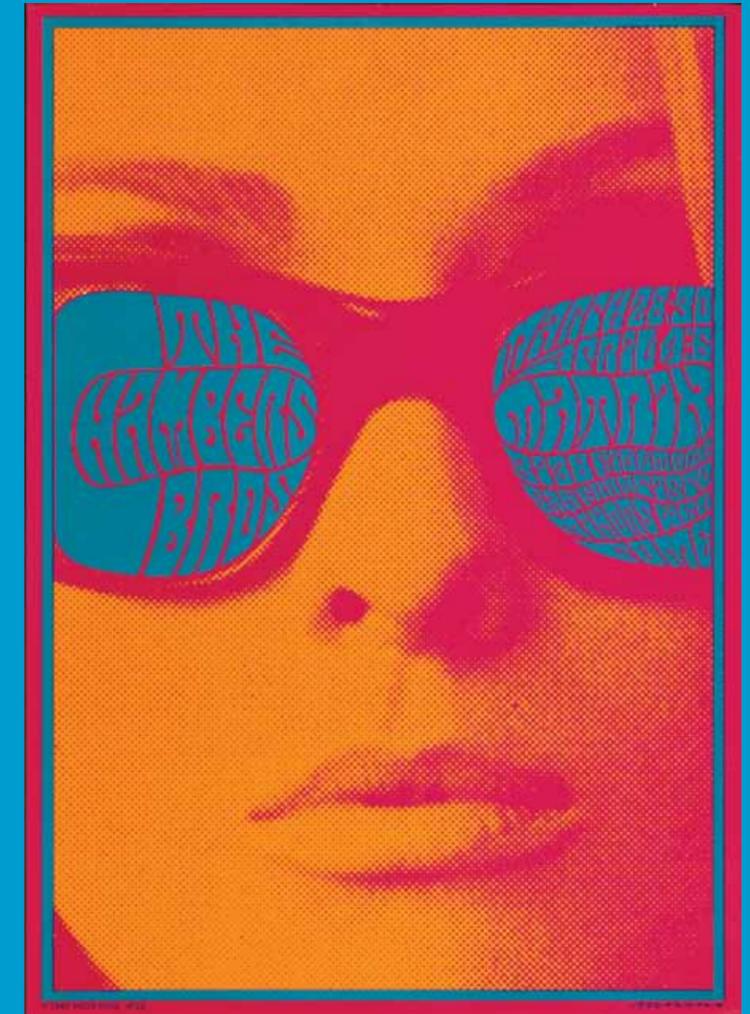
Printed on recycled paper with vegetable based inks.

Summer of Love

Psychedelic Posters from SCMA

JUNE 14–SEPTEMBER 15, 2013

A trip to San Francisco in the sixties



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Exhibition Guide

www.smith.edu/artmuseum

Summer of Love

Psychedelic Posters from SCMA

Introduction

Featuring designs by some of the major California poster artists of the 1960s, **Summer of Love: Psychedelic Posters from SCMA** explores the American counterculture through a popular visual medium that vividly evokes a particular place and time.

In their attempts to target disaffected youth in the Bay Area, the artists responsible for the 70 posters in the exhibition graphically captured life in San Francisco during the late 1960s through the lens of the era's rock concerts, drug use, and cultural gatherings. The psychedelic aesthetic, which features bright, often clashing colors, freely drawn lettering styles, and dream-like imagery, was meant to mimic and capture the visual experience of mind-altering drugs.

During the 1960s, poster art underwent a radical transformation, emerging as an important means of communication. This time saw a crucial shift from the mass-produced poster as an advertising vehicle to an art form whose goal was to spark social and political change.

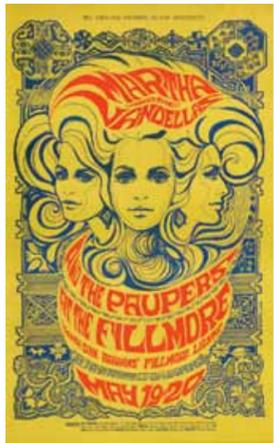
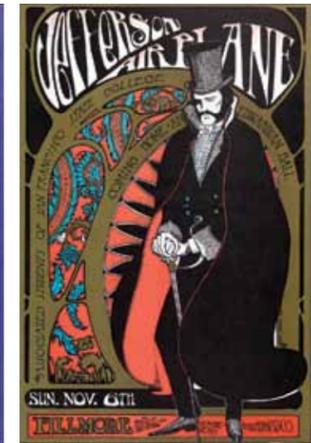
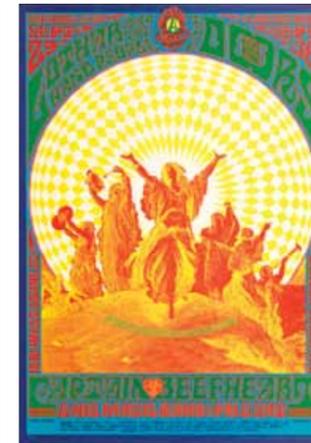
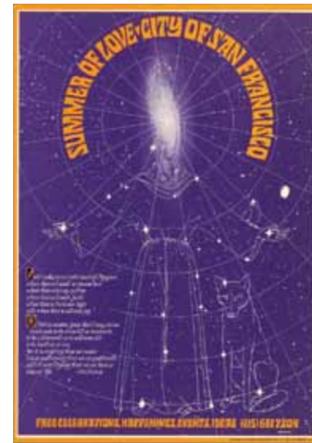
In their day, psychedelic posters served as a kind of visual social media of their time, attracting and linking their main audience: young people in San Francisco. At the same time—with their provocative imagery and messages, inventive typography, and distinctive palette—the posters gained attention far beyond the city where they were first posted and distributed.

Summer of Love showcases posters from the SCMA collection that were created to promote a diverse range of cultural pursuits, including dance-concerts at iconic Bay Area venues such as the Fillmore Auditorium and Avalon Ballroom, art shows, human "be-ins," and events supporting the legalization of so-called consciousness-expanding drugs. Most of the works in the exhibition date to 1967, the pivotal period known as the "Summer of Love."

Several posters in the installation will be displayed under black light, as they would have been seen in teenagers' bedrooms. Visitors can also experience the sounds and sights of San Francisco around 1967 by viewing footage of music performances and cultural events from that era.

For further information about this exhibition please visit www.smith.edu/artmuseum/On-View

Summer of Love is supported by the Judith Plesser Targan, class of 1953, Art Museum Fund.



1960s American Counterculture Movement

The counterculture blossomed in the Bay Area during the mid-1960s as the direct result of the tumultuous events marking that decade. This youth-based rebellion grew out of dissatisfaction with the moral and political values embodied by post-war American conformist consumer society.

The promise of social change heralded by the election of John F. Kennedy in 1960 failed to bear fruit, and his assassination in 1963 threw the country into chaos. The pressures of the Cold War, continued nuclear testing, the escalation of the Vietnam War, and a growing awareness of social and racial inequalities provoked two different responses: active political engagement, and "dropping out" by refusing to participate in mainstream society.

Those who sought to develop new lifestyles embraced a different way of engaging with the world, often using consciousness-expanding drugs. Just over a decade after LSD was developed by Swiss chemist Albert Hoffmann in 1938, it became popular among college students as well as counterculture and literary figures. Smoking marijuana also became widespread, as drug use became an easy escape from conventional ways of living.

A new strain of rock music emerged to augment and imitate the effects of psychedelic drugs on the consciousness. The musical style incorporated extended solos, distinct electronic effects, and in some cases exotic, nonwestern instruments. The songs had various agendas, at times explicitly and implicitly referencing psychedelic drug use and sociopolitical topics. In the San Francisco area, this genre was forged by bands such as Jefferson Airplane, Big Brother and the Holding Company, and the Grateful Dead, among others. A graphic aesthetic that included bright colors, organic letterforms, and a mixture of historical styles developed along with this emerging utopian drug culture.

Iconic Concert Venues ... and Rivals

The 1960s Bay Area rock music scene owed much of its success to devoted promoters Chet Helms and Bill Graham. Independent of one another, Helms and Graham appreciated the musical talent blossoming in the Haight-Ashbury district, but noticed that there was no communal space in which musicians could perform. Helms found a basement in the area, and began organizing small weekly dance hall concerts for the newly formed Big Brother and the Holding Company. He founded Family Dog Productions in 1966, and hosted weekend concerts at the Fillmore Auditorium, whose lease was held by Graham. After a brief period of cooperation, Graham and Helms became business rivals. Helms moved Family Dog Productions to the Avalon Ballroom, while Graham continued to promote shows at the Fillmore.

Emergence of the Psychedelic Aesthetic

Psychedelic posters were first commissioned as advertisements for Graham's and Helms' concerts, and were crucial to the success of these venues. Free copies of the posters were often given to fans as they exited shows. Some artists of the era also used posters to create mass-produced fine art. In these posters, the psychedelic aesthetic—neon colors of clashing vibrancy, the use of sylphlike female figures, overt references to spirituality, and a contrast between angular and curved lines—became an end unto itself. These visual qualities, which first emerged in underground newspapers, were quickly adopted by poster publishers across the United States, as seen in the black light posters issued by The Third Eye in New York in the late 1960s.

Post-Woodstock

The psychedelic scene in the Bay Area was short lived. The Haight-Ashbury district was in decline by 1968, and both the Avalon Ballroom and the Fillmore were closed by 1971. Rates of crime, violence, and homelessness rose, and many of the movement's founding figures and musicians moved out of the area. The counterculture lingered in other parts of America, culminating in Woodstock (Woodstock Music and Art Fair) in upstate New York in August 1969. The Charles Manson murders and the premature deaths of key members of the psychedelic rock scene, including Jim Morrison, Jimi Hendrix, and Janis Joplin, shook members of the counterculture and increased public rejection of the movement.

Psychedelic posters, which were widely collected, stand as tangible reminders of the musical and cultural scene from a vibrant place and time in American history.

