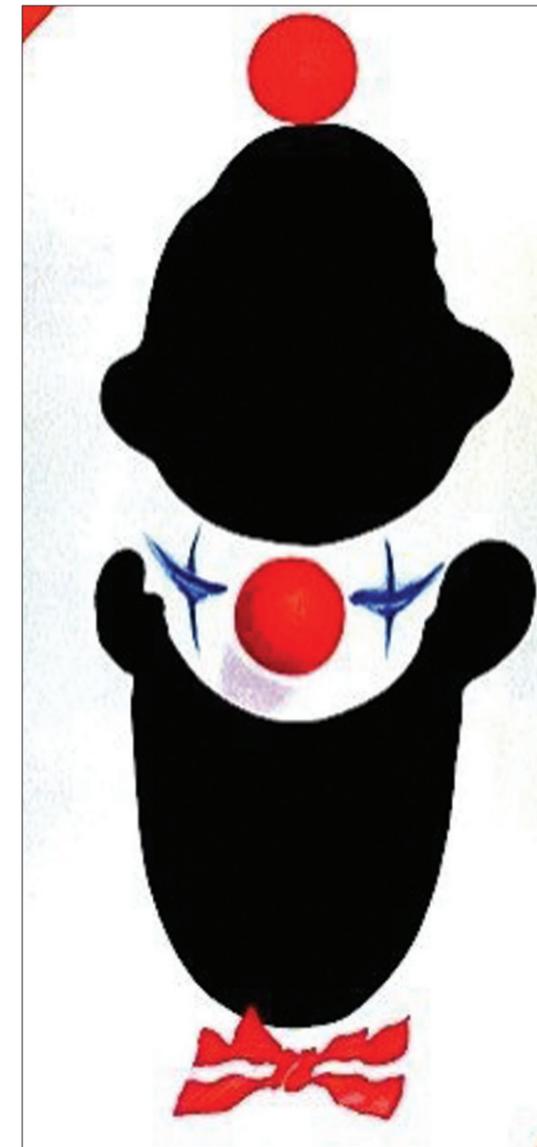
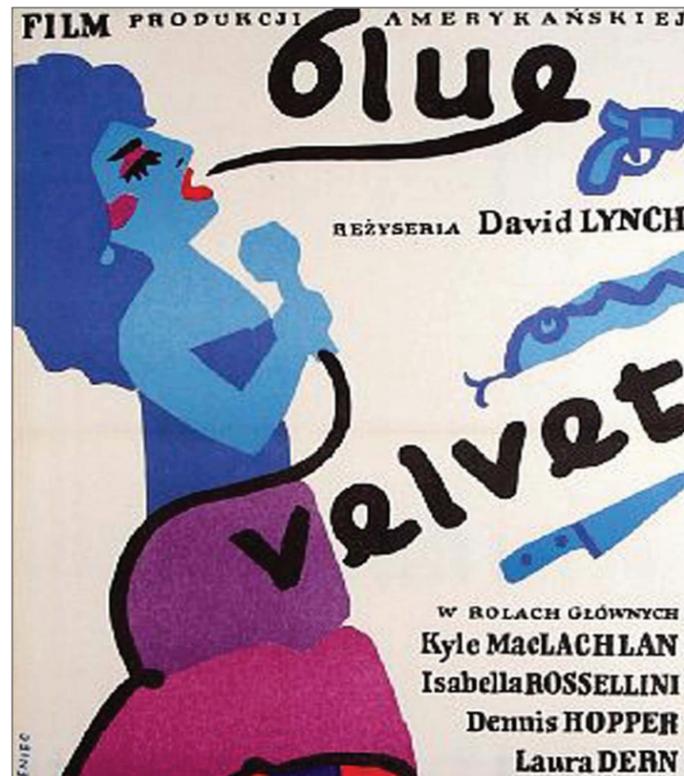


POLISH POSTERS

& THE TREATY OF POSTWAR ART

Polish poster art became an organized movement between 1890 and 1914. This period was called the Young Poland era or Młoda Polska. Most of the pieces were heavily influenced by the preceding movement of Polish folk art, woodcuts, and were created by painters. Over in Western Europe—Art Nouveau was all the craze and sparked an intrigue to revive Polish Modernism. Early poster artists were pioneer Teodor Axentowicz (1859–1938) and Stanisław Wyspiański (1869–1907). Wyspiański, a painter who traveled all over Europe, set the standard with his posters for what was to become Polish poster art. Another early artist was Karol Frycz (1887–1963), a theater and set designer whose posters were heavily influenced by Art Nouveau. World War I (1914–1918) and its political turmoil ended the Young Poland period. After the war ended, Poland regained its independence in 1918 from Russia, Austria and Germany. During the 20's and 30's, the poster began to come into its own as an art form. Polish posters were enriched by a steady stream of progressive European art movements –



cubism, constructivism, futurism, and surrealism. Warsaw became the center of poster art in Poland. The Poles started to realize and understand the power of the poster as an advertising tool. The greatest master during this time was Tadeusz Gronowski (1894–1900), who brought the ideas of modern design and art deco from Paris to Poland. They say he's the first Polish artist to dedicate his work solely to posters. At the same time, in the early 1930's, Edmund Bartłomiejczyk (1885–1950), a prominent book illustrator and engraver started experimenting with poster art. In 1935, Bartłomiejczyk began teaching at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts where a more painterly approach to poster art developed and competed with the Polytech Institute and the geometric style they had going on over there. Gronowski, who was a fan of the geometric look, pushed cubism for the next 5–10 years in Polish poster art. In 1937, one of the most influential Polish poster artists, Tadeusz Trepkowski (1914–1954) came onto the scene. A largely self-taught artist, he exhibited a simple layout aesthetic that favored the literal object. Soon after came World War II (1939–1945). Poland lived through the occupation of the Nazis and Soviets and was devastated with its effects.

In 1945, post WWII, the arts were restored and there was Tadeusz Trepkowski right where he left off. He became known as the father of postwar political posters. From 1945 until his death in 1954, Trepkowski produced some of Poland's most memorable posters, Last Stage (1948) and Nie! (1952). Right around this time is when Polish movie posters began to evolve. On the other side, the posters in post-war Poland were commissioned by the communist government and turned out looking like bland homages to the dreams of communism. They were less concerned with advertising and centered more around public services and events. By the end of 1950—socialist realism had unloaded itself into Polish art. A perfect time for the Graphics Arts Department at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts to divide the departments into fine arts, visual communications, applied arts, and poster art. Now entering the beginning of the Poster Art School. In the early 60's, the posters of Polish poster school, the height of the Polish school of poster art, were full

