

The Museum of Modern Art

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NO. 40
FOR RELEASE:
JUNE 3, 1975

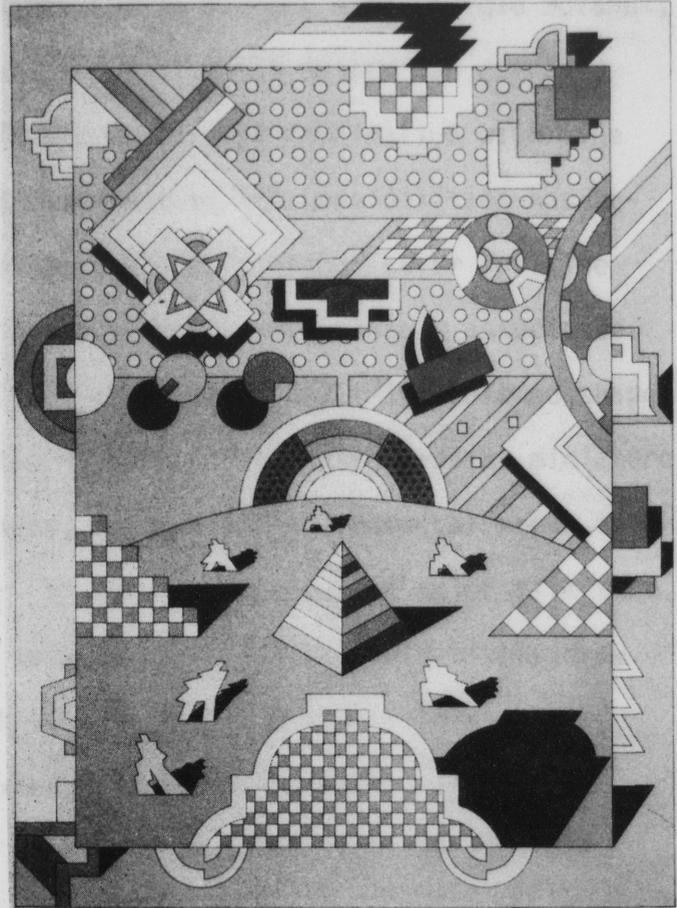
MILTON GLASER

An exhibition of about 100 works by Milton Glaser, one of America's best-known graphic designers and illustrators, will be held at The Museum of Modern Art from June 3 through September 14 in the second-floor Goodwin Galleries. The exhibition, which has been directed and installed by Emilio Ambasz, Curator of Design, includes posters, book jackets, record covers, book and magazine layouts, stationery and typography design.

The youth-oriented iconography and irreverent attitude of Push Pin Studios, which Glaser formed with Seymour Chwast, helped change the imagery of America in the 1960s. Many of the country's most promising graphic designers were attracted there. "By the early seventies, Milton Glaser had become the nearest thing to a cultural hero America's graphic design had produced in many years. His stylistic versatility and fertile imagination have influenced countless designers the world over....," writes Emilio Ambasz.

"He has created a delightful graphic garden where Piero della Francesca talks to Matisse, and Marie Cassatt nods to Hokusai.... It is a most urbane paradise, with Milton as its gardener, pruning and transplanting, always developing new hybrids,

(more)



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a rake in one hand and in the other a watering can filled to the brim with inks of many colors."

Glaser studied at New York's Cooper Union, and in Bologna with Giorgio Morandi, where he learned the technique of hard ground etching, which Glaser has compared in its simplicity to drawing with a stick in the sand. His fascination with line extends beyond this technique, however, and the range of its possibilities has remained a recurring motif of many of his designs. Glaser's record cover for "The Sound of New Orleans" is an example of the style which is most closely associated with him. The use of thin, flowing, black lines to define broad, flat colored shapes was influenced by such diverse sources as the drawings of Matisse, Persian miniature painting, Japanese prints, and American comics, as well as by economical needs and technological developments in the industry. By using a transparent color film that could be cut out and rubbed down to adhere to a drawing, Glaser could simply draw an outline and indicate to assistants which colors should be used. This enabled him to greatly increase his output and is used in much of his work. In several cases both the original art work, with the applied color film, and the finished, printed product are exhibited.

Glaser uses art historical material as visual ready-mades, and visual cliches as fundamental sources of information, often juxtaposing one cliché against another in order to achieve new meanings, as in his famous poster of Bob Dylan. This was inspired by a cut paper silhouette self-portrait by Marcel Duchamp, Glaser's interest in Islamic painting, and by American comics. Glaser has also been inspired by comics in his use of sequential images, often on different pages of a publication, so that flipping through a book or magazine becomes somewhat like watching a film, as in his illustrations for an article on amphetamine abuse for New York magazine.

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