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The Paris Of Toulouse-Lautrec: Prints And Posters From The Museum Of Modern Art



Synopsis

Though he was deeply engaged with painting and drawing, Toulouse-Lautrec's lasting contribution to artistic practice was as a graphic artist. Through his prints and posters, he brought the language of the late-nineteenth-century French avant-garde to a broad public, through editioned prints, advertisements and contributions in reviews and magazines. He ushered in the first print boom of the modern era; taking advantage of lithography's new potential for color and scale, he made both posters for the streets of Paris and prints for the new bourgeois collector's living room. During his short career, he created more than 350 prints and 30 posters, as well as lithographed theater programs and covers for books and sheet music. The Museum of Modern Art's collection of this material is stellar, encompassing over 100 prints and posters, his most important book projects, and many magazines, journals and other examples of printed ephemera. A cultural nexus, Toulouse-Lautrec connected artists, performers, authors, intellectuals and society figures of his day, creating a bridge between the brothels and society salons of the Belle Époque. His work allows entry into many facets of Parisian life of the period, from politics and economics to visual culture and the rise of popular entertainment in the form of cabarets and café-concerts. Featuring an overview essay by Sarah Suzuki, Associate Curator in the Department of Drawings and Prints at MoMA, this publication presents thematically organized groupings of Toulouse-Lautrec's prints from the Museum's collection, each accompanied by an illuminating essay on the theme. Inserted into the book is a 20" x 17" poster titled "Mademoiselle Eglantine's Troupe." Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901) is best known for his portrayals of late-nineteenth-century Parisian life, particularly working-class, cabaret, circus, nightclub and brothel scenes. He was admired then as he is today for his unsentimental evocations of personalities and social mores. His greatest contemporary impact was his series of 30 posters (1891–1901), which transformed the aesthetics of poster art.

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Customer Reviews

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec was one of France's most important figures during the impressionist period. Although a prolific painter, he was considered a greater printmaker, especially in the field of lithography. His prints, posters, and magazine and book illustrations depict life in late nineteenth century Paris ranging from dancehall scenes to the private lives of prostitutes to horse racing. This book is the catalogue of an exhibit highlighting over one hundred of his most important graphic pieces. After a brief biography, the works are thematically discussed and reproduced (the café concert, performers on stage, brothel life, creative circles, and other joie de vivre scenes). Some of the most recognizable works include portraits of Jane Avril, "Le Divan Japonais", "The Jockey", and selections from his "Elles" series. However, I found the prints in the fourth section the most interesting. This chapter highlights a number of theater programs, illustrations from literary journals, and lithograph advertisements publicizing popular books. I didn't know how involved the artist was with theater producers, publishers, and writers until I saw the exhibit. A major bonus is the inclusion of the poster of a group of can can dancers which is large enough to frame. The text is informative and I strongly recommend it if you want to learn more about this aspect of Toulouse-Lautrec's artistic career.

a great memento of a great exhibit. colors very good

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