(Mostly) Typographic Posters 1873–2008

Introduction
—Typography preceeds the poster by thousands of years but they are nonetheless a useful vehicle for observing the most important developments in typography over the last 100 years or so.
—Selection of posters represents my subjective point-of-view as a designer (not comprehensive)

1873–1900
—Massive increase in printed media/mass communication – result of industrialization on large scale
—Color lithography (invented 1796, common by 1830-40s) enables spectacular and cheap form of printing
—Industrialization led to an abundance of innovations in type design for display
—Ads begin to promote not just goods and services but lifestyles
—Effects of image saturation are simultaneous diversification as well as homogenization of styles
—Distinction between fine and applied arts is murky, many artists do both
—Commercial art/graphic design orginated in this period of specialization (artists separate from printers)

Art Nouveau – Vienna Seccesion
— Looked to create a new style that owed nothing to historical influence
—Bridge between the historicism of Neoclassicism and Modernism
—Wholistic approach to art/design/architecture. Integration of art & everyday life
—Seamless integration of image and text (enabled by Lithography)
—Characterized by organic, plant-inspired motifs. Highly-stylized, flowing curvilinear forms

1900–1940
Constructivism
—Artistic and architectural movement in Russia from 1919 onward
—After Russian Revolution, new definitions of art sought to reflect new way of life and values
—Rejected "art for art's sake", favored art as a practice directed towards social purposes
—Influenced by aerial photography
—Many Constructivists would teach or lecture at the Bauhaus

Lucian Bernhard
—Used reductive imagery and flat-color to make Sachplakat ('object poster')
—Restricted the image to simply the object being advertised and the brand name
—Watershed moment in the evolution of poster design (significant precedent)

De Stijl
—Dutch art/design movement founded in 1917 (describes work produced in the Netherlands from 1917 –1931
—Influenced by Cubism and mystical ideas about "ideal" geometric forms
—Sought to express a new utopian ideal of spiritual harmony and order
—Works avoided symmetry

Art Deco
—Originated in Paris in 1910, flourished in the 20s and early 30s, particularly in the U.S. (e.g. Chrysler buidling)
—Similar, aesthetically, to other movements, but had no ideological underpinning, primarily style-based
—Characterized by complex geometric forms inspired by Islamic and Mexican art and architecture
—Associated with luxury and a reaction against austerity of life after World War I

Otto Baumberger
—Swiss deisgner, precursor of Swiss minimalism

Hans Arp
—Swiss artist, sculptor, designer, co-founder of the Dada movement in Zürich in 1916

Jan Tschichold
—Spearheads modernist, asymmetrical typogaphy, writes the influential book 'The New Typography'
—Work serves as foundation for later refinements in Swiss Design in the 1960s

Milton Glaser
—American Graphic Designer, founder of Push Pin Studios in 1954
—Famous for 'I Heart New York' logo
—Known for highly ecletic use of styles and ideas. Work is direct, simple, witty, and commercial

Grapus (1970–1991)
—Collective of graphic designers that sought to use design to promote social (Marxist) causes
—Work is characterized by directness, use of hand drawn typography and symbolic imagery

1940–1983
The 'International' or 'Swiss Style'
—Emphasizes orderliness, 'objective' and rational communication, legibility
—Hallmarks are asymmetric layouts, use of a grid, sans-serif typefaces (e.g. Akzidenz Grotesk, Futura)
—Preference for 'objective' photography in place of 'subjective' illustrations or drawings
—Typography rather than imagery is often primary or only visual element

1983–2000
April Greiman
—One of the first designers to embrace computer technology as a design tool (1984)
—Exploited pixelation and "errors" in digitization
—Decorative eclecticism
—introduced New Wave (pop) aesthetic to the United States

Paula Scher
—Beginings of direct appropriation as a legitimate tool

Neville Brody
—explosion of digital typeface creation

—exploring issues of legibility plus synthetic aesthetic
—Superfluity, excess, non-communication are embraced

Katherine McCoy (Cranbrook)
—Semiotics, cultural intrepretation of signs, viewer participation in construction of meaning
—Deconstruction (Derrida), fragmentation
—Embraces historical or vernacular graphic languages

Sagmeister
—Performative, cult of personality, fetishization of the body (Chris Burden inspired)

2000–
Pluralism, Interdisciplinarity (Design Art)
—Rediscovery and appreciation of analog processes, imperfection, crudeness
—Intellectualization of graphic design, merging with fine art

MM Paris
—Influenced by Swiss school graphic design and the more emotional and sensitive Polish school
—Handdrawn; illustrative and expressive

Jonathan Pukey
—Explores half manual, half automated design processes
—http://www.jonathanpuckey.com/projects/lettering-tool

Build Helvetica Poster
—A poster whose main idea positions in in a very specific place and time

Experimental Jetset
—Neo Modernist or Post-Neo-Modernist, their work is intellectualized/conceptual and formal

Forms of Inquiry Exhibition
—Conceived at the AA, expores the relationship of graphic design to space/architecture

Julia Born & Alexandra Bachzetsis
—Exploring graphic representation of movement in space (choreography)