



Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films

August 20, 2017–January 7, 2018



Lisandro Trepeu, *Singin' in the Rain*, 2009. Silkscreen, 29 15/16 x 20 1/16 inches. Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematográficos (ICAIC).
Courtesy of the Center for the Study of Political Graphics

Pasadena, CA — *Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films*, on view at the Pasadena Museum of California Art (PMCA) August 20, 2017–January 7, 2018, assembles approximately 40 Cuban posters publicizing Hollywood films from the 1960s to 2009. Astonishing in their design, stylistic diversity, and artistic skill, these bold and vibrant posters helped create visual literacy among the Cuban population in the decades following the Cuban Revolution. The screenprints go beyond the glossy and celebrity-filled film posters that are ubiquitous in Los Angeles today and reawaken viewers to the nuanced visual signs that inform and shape their worldviews.

Produced by the Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematográficos (ICAIC) or the Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Art and Industry, the posters were part of an initiative of the revolutionary government to develop cultural awareness and consciousness after Fidel Castro and the guerrilla forces overthrew the dictatorship of Fulgenico Batista in 1959. Today, the posters stand independent of the films they represent. Their magnetism and innovative use of design elements continue to spark conversation and understanding about the role of film, culture, art, and politics in Cuba as well as California.

PASADENA MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA ART

Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films

Page 2/6

Poster designers working during the early years of the Revolution had few material resources and operated in an almost artisanal manner, using the silkscreen technique. While the limited resources imposed by the U.S. embargo inspired many of the design decisions, revolutionary ideals can also be cited as source material. Screenprints created for Cuban audiences to promote iconic American films, such as *Modern Times*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *Cabaret*, *Schindler's List*, and *Silence of the Lambs*, are in striking contrast to the vast majority of Hollywood posters for the same films, which formulaically feature faces of the movies' stars. Instead, the imagery depicted often relates to an iconic element or moment in the film, such the umbrella in *Singin' in the Rain*. ICAIC posters employ creativity and free expression as well as a variety of art styles, including Art Nouveau, abstraction, Pop, and Op, many of which mirror the American counter-culture of the times.

Selected from the collection of the Center for the Study of Political Graphics (CSPG), the exhibited posters showcase the range and ingenuity of Cuban screenprinters and provide audiences an opportunity to understand a complex culture from a new perspective. "Based on a shared love of films, *Hollywood in Havana* identifies commonalities between Cubans and Californians," says Carol A. Wells, curator of the exhibition and Founder and Executive Director of the CSPG. "The exhibition creates a dialogue not only about these visually stunning and easily approachable posters, but also regarding longstanding stereotypes about Cuba and its government."

During a time when momentous changes are underway for Cuban-American relations, *Hollywood in Havana* adds to the discourse between the two countries. Presenting Cuban film art in the film capital of the world encourages viewers to consider the power of these posters as well as the printed media and graphic designs that permeate their daily lives. The exhibition demonstrates how art, entertainment, and politics intersect and integrate to influence and reflect cross-cultural communication.

Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films is co-organized by the Pasadena Museum of California (PMCA) art in partnership with the Center for the Study of Political Graphics (CSPG), curated by CSPG Founder and Executive Director Carol A. Wells, and accompanied by a brochure. The exhibition is supported by the PMCA Board of Directors, PMCA Ambassador Circle, and the California Visionary Fund. Media sponsorship is provided by LALA.

The exhibition is part of Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA, a far-reaching and ambitious exploration of Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles, taking place from September 2017 through January 2018 at more than 70 cultural institutions across Southern California. Pacific Standard Time is an initiative of the Getty. The presenting sponsor is Bank of America.



LALA



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Left to Right: Claudio Sotolongo, *Cabaret*, 2009. Silkscreen, 29 15/16 x 20 1/16 inches. Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematográficos (ICAIC). Courtesy of the Center for the Study of Political Graphics; Antonio Reboiro, *Moby Dick*, 1968. Silkscreen, 29 15/16 x 20 1/16 inches. Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematográficos (ICAIC). Courtesy of the Center for the Study of Political Graphics

Related Programs

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are free with admission and reservations are not required.

Opening Day

Sunday, August 20 | 12-5pm

Join us as we proudly unveil our three new exhibitions to the general public. See impressionist and modernist landscapes paired with the liturgical designs by one of California's most significant artists in *E. Charlton Fortune: The Colorful Spirit*; vibrant Cuban film posters that create understanding about the role of film, culture, art, and politics in Cuba and California in *Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films*; and retro icons of classic Los Angeles by a native Angeleno and one of the country's foremost reduction linocut artists in *LA Redux: Reduction Linocuts* by Dave Lefner.

Intersection: A Playhouse District Festival

Saturday, August 26 | 4-10pm

Drop by the PMCA table during the Playhouse District Association's Intersection festival, a free, end-of-summer street party. Enjoy live music, food and drink vendors, and craft activities, and contribute to the PMCA's community art mural inspired by our current exhibitions. Wisdom Arts Lab joins us for this free, public event.

Please note: This off-site event takes place on Colorado Boulevard between Madison Avenue and Oak Knoll Avenue.

Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA Free Day

Sunday, September 17 | 12-5pm

Enjoy free admission in celebration of the Getty-led initiative Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA thanks to Bank of America. See PMCA's contribution to this exploration of Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles, *Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films*, in the South Gallery as well as our other exhibitions on display, *E. Charlton Fortune: The Colorful Spirit* and *LA Redux: Reduction Linocuts* by Dave Lefner. Plus enjoy independent art-making activities in the Project Room. Free Day sponsored by Bank of America.



Smithsonian Magazine Presents Museum Day Live!

Saturday, September 23 | 12-5pm

Museum Day Live! is an annual celebration of boundless curiosity hosted by *Smithsonian* magazine. Participating museum and cultural institutions across the country provide entry to anyone presenting a Museum Day Live! ticket. Get yours at smithsonianmag.com/museumday.

Exhibition Walkthrough: From California to Cuba

Saturday, September 30 | 2:00pm

Curator Carol A. Wells leads a tour of the bright and bold prints in *Hollywood In Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films*. Compare the Cuban posters to their U.S. counterparts and learn about the process and intentions behind these revolutionary advertisements.

iFiesta Cubana! Fall Benefit

Saturday, October 7 | 7-10pm

Celebrate Cuba's history and affinity for film with traditional Cuban music, food, and a lively fiesta inspired by our *Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films* exhibition. The event honors PMCA and art education patrons Christine & Reed Halladay and artist and arts educator Dave Lefner. Tickets start at \$150.

Visit bit.ly/fiesta_cubana_2017 for more details.

PASADENA MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA ART

Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films

Page 4/6

ArtNight Pasadena

Friday, October 13 | 6-10pm

Enjoy free admission, extended hours, and complimentary shuttle transportation at the PMCA and other cultural institutions around Pasadena. CalArts SPRAWL presents "Car Plays," an interactive performance, in our *Kosmic Krylon Garage*.

Pasadena ARTWalk

Saturday, October 14 | 11am-6pm

Visit our art-making booth to design a Hollywood film poster and create block print designs inspired by *Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films* and *LA Redux: Reduction Linocuts* by Dave Lefner. Present your ARTWalk sticker or program to receive free Museum admission.

Please note: This off-site event takes place on Colorado Boulevard between Madison Avenue and Oak Knoll Avenue.

PUSD Student & Educator Appreciation Day

Saturday, October 21 | 12-5pm

PMCA offers free admission all day long for Pasadena Unified School District educators, students, and their families.

Family Day

Saturday, November 4 | 12-5pm

Participate in fun art projects and gallery tours for the whole family based on our current exhibitions: *E. Charlton Fortune: The Colorful Spirit*, *Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films*, and *LA Redux: Reduction Linocuts* by Dave Lefner. Activities include printmaking, poster design, and more. Wisdom Arts Lab joins us for a family-friendly woodworking activity. At 1:00pm and 3:00pm, join us for family-friendly tours of artwork on view in the galleries.

Drop-ins and all ages welcome! Caregivers must accompany children

In Dialogue: Film in Cuba

Saturday, November 11 | 2:30-3:30pm

Following the Second Saturday Spotlight Talk, join curator Carol A. Wells, Sandra Levinson, and other scholars as they discuss the history and culture surrounding the inception of the Cuban film posters in our South Gallery exhibition *Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films*.

Film Screening & Panel Discussion: *Strawberry and Chocolate*

Monday, November 13 | 7:30pm

Following a screening of pivotal Cuban film *Strawberry and Chocolate* (1993) directed by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea and Juan Carlos Tabío, *Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films* curator Carol A. Wells leads a panel on the creativity and free expression employed by the Cuban artists who reinterpreted Hollywood posters for Cuban audiences.

Attend this offsite event at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences's Samuel Goldwyn Theater: 8949 Wilshire Blvd, Beverly Hills, CA 90212. \$5 available through the Academy. Presented in partnership with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Silkscreen Printing Workshop

Saturday, November 18 | 2-4pm

Learn the basic techniques of silkscreen printing from the founder of Serigraphy Laboratory, a creative imprint collaborative based in Los Angeles. Make a custom poster inspired by the bold color and imagery in *Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films*.

Space is limited to 15 people. Appropriate for ages 15 and up.

\$45; \$35 for PMCA members. Register at bit.ly/pmcaworkshops.

Printmaking Workshop with Ernesto Vazquez

Saturday, December 16 | 1:00-5:00pm

Join Boyle Heights native Ernesto Vazquez for an in-depth printmaking workshop. Create a 5 x 7-inch linocut relief and prints to take home.

Space is limited to 15 people. Appropriate for ages 15 and up.

\$45; \$35 for PMCA members. Register at bit.ly/pmcaworkshops.

Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA Pasadena/San Marino Regional Day

Sunday, December 17 | 12:00-5:00pm

Enjoy free admission at the PMCA and visit other Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA cultural institutions (Armory Center for the Arts, The Huntington, and Pacific Asia Museum) for this regional celebration of Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles.



PMCA 1234

MONTHLY PROGRAMMING

Free First Fridays • 12:00–5:00pm

Enjoy free admission all day!

September 1 • October 6 • November 3 • December 1 • January 5

Second Saturday Spotlight Talks • 2:00pm

A PMCA docent leads an engaging and insightful 20-minute discussion about a work of art currently on view in the Museum.

September 9 & October 14 • *E. Charlton Fortune*

November 11 • *Hollywood in Havana* (with exhibition curator Carol A. Wells)

December 9 • *LA Redux* (extended talk and demo with exhibition artist Dave Lefner)

Free Third Thursday Evenings (& Then Some) • 5:00–8:00pm

Enjoy free admission, extended hours, and free programs!

Latino Los Angeles Reading • September 21 • 6–7pm

Gather together for a showcase of some of Southern California's most talented Latino writers. Hear Red Hen Press authors read their work in a range of genres and celebrate the traditions of Latin American literary heritage.

“Looking Out” • October 19 • 6–7:30pm

CalArts SPRAWL presents “Looking Out,” which includes artistic collaborations through readings, performances, and discussions led by CalArts students and alumni. The evening connects members of different creative communities, including artists from local university art programs.

Charlie Chaplin Movie Screening • November 16 • 5:30pm

In partnership with the Playhouse District Association's Hi Neighbor program and The Frida Cinema, Bob and Arlene Oltman host a screening of a Charlie Chaplin film in the Founders Gallery. Enjoy popcorn and snacks! Bring pillows and blankets to reserve the front rows or take a seat in one of PMCA's chairs. RSVP to rsvp@pmcaonline.org.

PASADENA MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA ART

Hollywood in Havana: Five Decades of Cuban Posters Promoting U.S. Films

Page 6/6

Holiday Cheer • December 21 • 6:00pm

Enjoy a free holiday concert amidst art in the Main Gallery exhibition *E. Charlton Fortune: The Colorful Spirit* with vocalists and musicians from Fuller Theological Seminary, and sing along to classic Christmas carols.

Free Fourth Wednesdays Wee-Reads • 10:30–11:30am

After a kid-friendly exhibition tour, return to the Project Room to read children's literature that connects art and learning. Then get creative during PMCA-led activities that integrate the themes of specially selected stories, basic elements of art, and the artwork in the PMCA galleries.

Recommended for children ages 2-5. Caregivers must accompany children.

Museum open for Wee-Read participants only.

August 23 • Drawing the Family

September 27 • A Wheel of Colors

October 25 • Think Outside the Box

November & December • Wee-Reads are canceled due to the holidays. Please take the time to read a book with a child in your life!

Museum Information

MISSION

The mission of the Pasadena Museum of California Art (PMCA) is to present the breadth of California art and design through exhibitions that explore the cultural dynamics and influences that are unique to California.

HOURS

Open Wednesday–Sunday, 12:00–5:00pm; third Thursday of each month, 12:00–8:00pm; closed Monday, Tuesday, July 4, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

ADMISSION

\$7 for adults; \$5 for seniors (62+); \$5 for students & educators; free for PMCA members & children (12 & under); free the first Friday of each month (12:00–5:00pm); free the third Thursday of each month (5:00–8:00pm). Access for people with disabilities is provided.

PLAN YOUR VISIT

The Museum is located at 490 East Union Street. From the 210 Freeway, take the Lake Avenue exit. Go south and take a right on Union Street. From the 110 Freeway/Downtown Los Angeles, follow the freeway until its end, then take Arroyo Parkway and turn right at Colorado, then left at Oakland to get to Union Street. Free parking is available in the street-level garage at the Museum.

DOCENT TOURS AND GROUP RATES

The Museum offers docent tours on the second Saturday of each month (2:00pm; free with admission). Docent tours are also available Wednesday–Friday, 12:00–5:00pm, to private groups for a fee of \$75. A non-refundable deposit of \$40 is due two weeks prior to the scheduled date. Self-guided tours for K-12 students are offered for free. We regret that we are unable to accommodate docent tours for groups larger than 35 people. Before requesting a tour, please check the exhibition calendar to see which exhibitions will be available during your visit.

A discounted group rate of \$3 per person is available for groups of 20 or more (K-12 student groups are free). Please call to notify us at least one week in advance for these special admission rates. For any questions or to make reservations for a tour or group rate, call our Bookstore & Membership Manager, Aya Lehman, at 626.568.3665 x14 or email alehman@pmcaonline.org.

For more information, please call 626.568.3665 or visit pmcaonline.org.