

Posters of Paris: Toulouse-Lautrec and his Contemporaries

Mary Weaver Chapin



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From crowded dance halls to smoky cabarets, this vibrant collection of posters from the Belle Epoque explores the birth, development, and continued popularity of a graphic genre. Thanks to innovations in color lithography, the streets of fin-de-siècle Paris were punctuated with brightly hued posters featuring bold typography and playful imagery. Many of these posters were torn down almost as soon as they were pasted up, finding their way into private homes and, eventually, museums and collections all over the world. Although many artists contributed to the affichomanie, or "poster craze," one of the most famous among them was henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. This gorgeous book offers exquisite reproductions of more than one hundred posters, including those by Lautrec and his contemporaries Bonnard, Picasso, Chéret and Mucha. Advertising everything from tony theater productions to the licentious cancan, bicycles to biscuits, these posters range from cheerfully exuberant to slyly decadent. In her essay, Mary Weaver Chapin captures the voices of the artists, collectors, and critics who fueled the poster craze of the 1890s. The result is a visual spectacle, a lively discourse on the value and purpose of art, and a celebration of a historically and creatively dynamic era.

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