

• Greenwich Time, Monday, January 21, 2002

The ARTS

The art of Vintage posters

Collection of advertising art to be on display at Flinn Gallery

Get a glimpse of colorful, old advertising when the "Vintage Posters" exhibit opens Jan. 31 at the Flinn Gallery at the Greenwich Library. There is a gala opening of the show, that runs through March 14 and is open during regular library hours, from 6 to 8 p.m.

"Vintage Posters" is sponsored by the Friends of the Greenwich Library and presented in conjunction with the Ross Group Inc. and Poster Conservation Inc. It includes large and small scale posters printed from the 1890s through the 1950s.

Many of the works are from Europe, where posters have long been used for outdoor advertising. Some are marked with the government stamp denoting the payment of a tax for public display.

Many of the posters were created by well-known artists to sell products ranging from cars, wine, cigars and breath mints to theatrical and opera productions, champagne and olive oil. They hark back to a time when advertising was an art form, not a hard sell.

These posters, imbued with colorful and dramatic graphics, not only turned the heads of pedestrians but also caught the attention of art dealers who sensed a market for them among private clients seeking to decorate their homes. The market still exists, especially among people searching for an affordable way to enhance their walls with

works of art. Most of the posters in the Flinn Gallery will be for sale, with a portion of the proceeds going to support library programs.

Among the most colorful posters are those printed by a process called stone lithography, using a different stone for each color. Some of the posters lack words. These so-called "blanks" were printed to advertise an event and were distributed to locals who then wrote in the pertinent time and place.

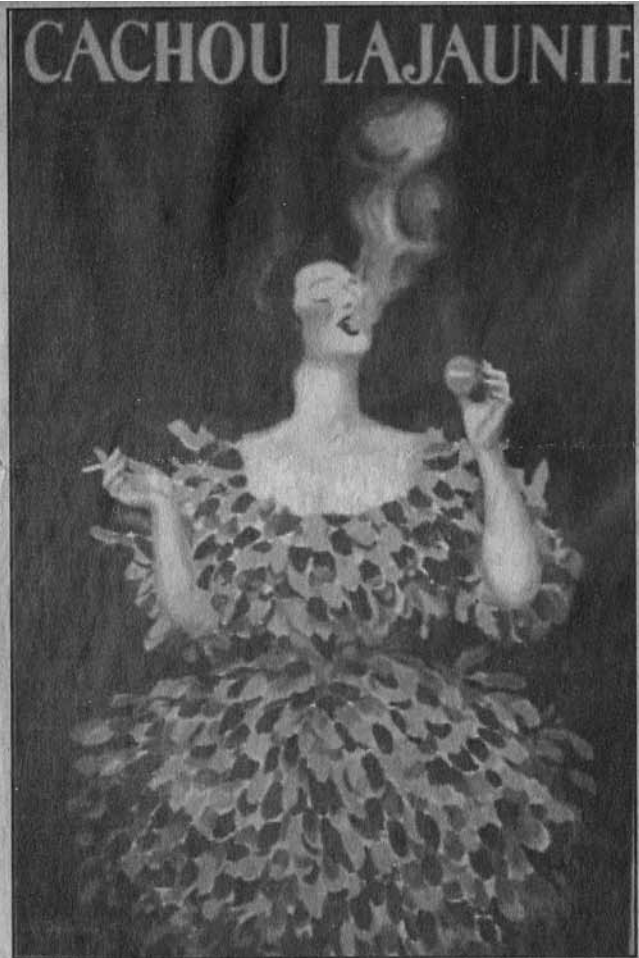
Conservation is an important part of poster art. Since paper is a fragile material, many older posters are torn, dirty or otherwise damaged. Poster restorers sometimes wash, patch and touch up the damaged sheets. The best way to preserve them is to glue the poster with wheat paste to acid-free paper and light cotton canvas.

This process known as "Linnen backing" was developed in the 1970s and can increase a poster's value.

Local restorer Lee Milazzo, who operates Poster Conservation in Stamford, will give a demonstration of these techniques at the library at 10:30 a.m. Feb. 11.

The Flinn Gallery is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Wednesday, and Friday; 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday.

For more information, call 622-7947.



Three examples of vintage foreign advertising posters that will be on display at the Flinn Gallery of Greenwich Library.

/Contributed photos