



Olympic Summer Games Posters from Athens 1896 to Rio 2016

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> INTRODUCTION¹

The modern Olympic Games have always had a close relationship with image, which, alongside photography, official films and TV broadcasts, is apparent in the posters created to help promote the Olympic Games. However, for the very early editions, the organisers did not produce any official poster ahead of the Games. The covers of official publications or posters for a particular sport would be used retroactively to fulfil this function.

It was on the occasion of the 1912 Games in Stockholm that an official poster for the Games was created for the first time, through an artistic competition. Since then, posters have been systematically produced through the intermediary of the Organising Committees for the Olympic Games (OCOGs).

Until the middle of the 20th century, it was customary for the OCOGs to design only a limited number of Games promotional posters. From then on, the number of posters has tended to increase, with different series, each one focusing on a particular aspect of the event. It became common to publish for example one series of posters related to the sports, another on the cultural events and another purely artistic series, allowing the creativity of multiple occasions to be expressed.

All the posters published by the various OCOGs are, in a certain way, “official posters”. However, this term is now usually used for the main, emblematic poster of the Games that is used and recognised as such by the IOC. For some editions, the official Games poster is the one produced and presented as such by the OCOG at the time. For other editions, it is chosen from among the different Games posters, sometimes by the IOC President himself.

While they do explore a variety of styles and techniques, the Olympic posters reflect the artistic, political and social context of their era. They play a double role: in addition to announcing the Games, they provide a foretaste of their visual identity.

In the first half of the 20th century, the posters provided a privileged means of publicity. More than simple artistic works, they provided the public with the necessary practical information on the Olympic Games. This is why the same poster can exist in different languages. Radio was not used before the 1928 Summer Games in Amsterdam, while TV appeared for the first time at the 1936 Games in Berlin. The first Olympic posters were therefore essential for the communication and promotion of the Games.

From the fifties onward, both the design and the function of the posters evolved under the impetus of two key turning points.

Firstly, a cultural expansion, because, starting with Melbourne 1956, and Sapporo 1972 for winter, and Mexico for summer, editions of the Games have been held outside Europe and North America, territories which had systematically hosted them until that point. This expansion into Oceania, Asia and Central America favoured the introduction of new artistic influences and approaches with respect to the visual identity of the Games.

¹ Sources: Afshan Heuer, “Painting a True Picture”, *Olympic Review*, January- March 2004, no. 50, [pp. 44-45](#); *Olympic Games Posters*, The Olympic Museum, Lausanne: IOC, 2nd edition 2007, pp. 2-5, 13 (3rd edition 2013, [pp. 3-6](#)); Margaret Timmers, *A Century of Olympic Posters*, London: V&A Publishing, 2012, p. 8.

Secondly, the entry into the digital age offered artists unusual techniques and practically unlimited creative possibilities, able to generate designs that were previously unachievable. The arrival of new technologies meant a real rupture in the textual content of the Olympic posters and their use as a means of information. Certain information such as the dates and places of the Games, which once would have necessarily been featured, is now easily accessible via other media. Consequently, the recent Olympic posters have generally contained minimal text and focused more on images and symbols. Like their predecessors, the posters continue however to convey the ambiance and style belonging to each Games, as well as disseminating their values and ideals. They also remain an integral part of the marketing strategy implemented for each edition of the Games. As former IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch said: “Even in this day and age when electronic communications predominate, when visual images are broadcast instantaneously, the message contained in graphic art cannot be supplanted. Perhaps it is even all the more essential”.²

This document presents the official poster of each edition of the Olympic Summer Games. The poster is accompanied by a brief description of the work and, when available, information related to the artist, the printer, the design process, as well as the creation and dissemination context. It also includes examples, not necessarily exhaustive, of other promotional posters published in connection with an edition of the Games. All the posters which appear in this document are preserved in The Olympic Museum Collections.

Discovering the Olympic posters is therefore an invitation to retrace the history of the Games in a pictorial journey through the ages and the continents.

² Monique Berlioux [dir.], *Olympism through posters*, International Olympic Committee, Lausanne, 1983, p.7.

> ATHENS 1896



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Unknown
Printing:	Reproduction of the cover of the Official Report
Description:	<p>The image contains a number of references to Antiquity. At the top, the year 776 BC is traditionally given as the date of the first ancient Olympic Games.</p> <p>The young woman representing the goddess Athena holds in her hands a branch and a foliage crown. At the ancient Panhellenic Games, a foliage crown was awarded as the highest prize, and the type of foliage varied depending on the location of the competition. At the first Olympic Games of the modern era in 1896, the first prize included an olive branch, and the second included a laurel branch.</p> <p>The goddess stands before a view of the Acropolis and the Panathenaic Stadium. As with the Acropolis, the Stadium dates back to Antiquity, when it hosted the Panathenaic Games, which paid homage to Athena. It was restored for the first modern Olympic Games in 1896 and became the showpiece for the event. In 2004, the stadium, built from white marble and designed to resemble a horseshoe, hosted the Olympic archery competitions.</p>

Context of creation: There is no known official poster for the Olympic Games Athens 1896. The cover of the Official Report later became the image used as the official poster for this first edition of the modern Olympic Games.

SOURCES

- *Die Olympischen Spiele 776 - 1896 The Olympic Games*, Athens: Ch. Beck [ed.], 1896, part 2, [pp. 20-22, 34-36, 112 & 114](#).
- Margaret Timmers, *A Century of Olympic Posters*, London: V&A Publishing, 2012, p. 14.
- Monique Berlioux [dir.], *Olympism Through Posters: 1896-1984*, Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1983, p. 10.
- *The Olympic Games in Antiquity*, The Olympic Museum, Lausanne: IOC, 3rd edition 2013, [p. 11](#).

> PARIS 1900



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist: Jean de Paléologue

Printing: Imprimerie Chardin / Lithograph

Description: The poster shows a female fencer dressed in black, holding the traditional weapons of sports fencing: foil, epee and sabre. In the context of the history of sport, showing a female athlete was unusual at the time. Moreover, women did not take part in the Olympic fencing competitions in 1900. Their first appearance in this sport at the Olympic Games came in 1924.

Context of creation: The 1900 Games were held during the World's Fair in Paris. In reality there were various international sports competitions, including some that were recognised as Olympic. The Olympic nature of the competition is not mentioned on the poster above. There was no main poster produced for the general promotion of these Games. However, specific posters were created by the organisers for some of the sporting contests. As well as fencing, examples include posters promoting athletics, rowing and gymnastics. It is the fencing poster that is now used as the official poster for this edition of the Games.

SOURCES

- Margaret Timmers, *A Century of Olympic Posters*, London: V&A Publishing, 2012, p. 15.
- Monique Berlioux [dir.], *Olympism Through Posters: 1896-1984*, Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1983, p. 12.

> ST. LOUIS 1904



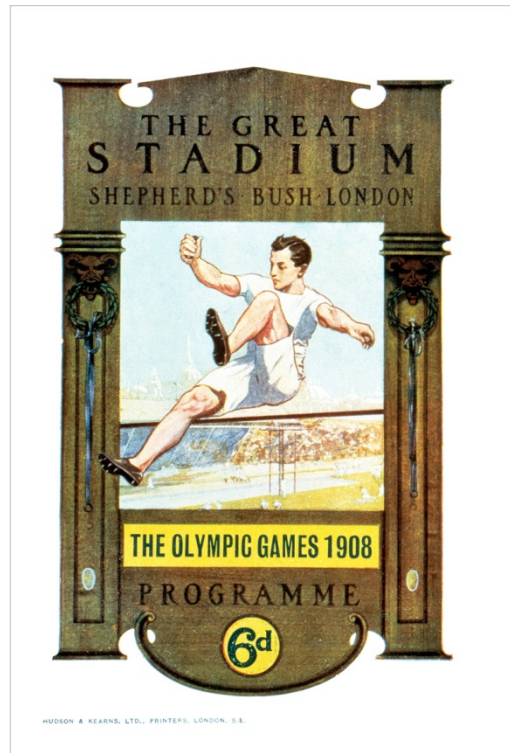
OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	St. John
Printing:	Reproduction of the daily programme cover
Description:	With its curved lines, the image has an Art Nouveau style, offering an overall view of the city of St. Louis.
Context of creation:	The 1904 Games were held within the framework of the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition. The Olympic events were included as part of this World's Fair and were spread out over several months. It is the cover of the daily programme of the Fair that became the official poster for the 1904 Games.

SOURCES

- Margaret Timmers, *A Century of Olympic Posters*, London: V&A Publishing, 2012, p. 17.
- *Olympic Games: Daily Official Program: World's Fair, St. Louis*, [s.n.]. St. Louis, 1904.

> LONDON 1908



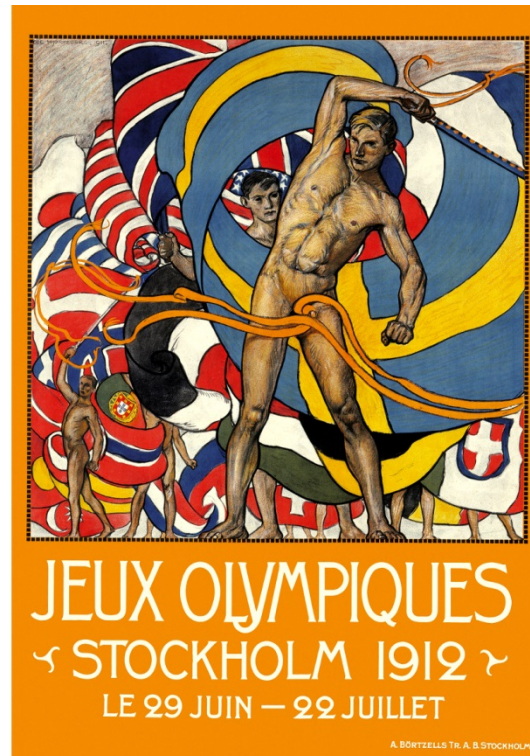
OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	A.S. Cope
Printing:	Reproduction of a programme cover
Description:	The poster shows a high jumper in the Stadium at Shepherd's Bush. Behind him are the swimming pool and the cinder running track.
Context of creation:	As with 1904, it is a programme cover that became the image used as the official poster for the Olympic Games London 1908.

SOURCES

- Monique Berlioux [dir.], *Olympism Through Posters: 1896-1984*, Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1983, p. 18.
- [Olympic Games of London, 1908: IV. International Olympiad: Programme](#), British Olympic Council, London, 1908.

> STOCKHOLM 1912



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist: Olle Hjortzberg

Printing: A.Börtzells Tryckeri A.B., Stockholm / Lithograph

Description: The poster shows athletes twirling their country's flag, with that of Sweden in the foreground. It represents the march of nations towards the common objective of the Olympic Games. Although its artistic quality was not disputed, the poster was the subject of criticisms when it was published. The nudity of the figures caused shock, despite the addition of ribbons on the original design. For this reason, the poster was, for example, banned in China. The order of the flags featured on the poster was also a cause for concern. As these were arranged according to artistic criteria and not diplomatic, there was a fear of offending certain sensibilities. This concern was justified, as the organisers met with reluctance by some to display the poster.

Context of creation: For the first time, a poster was specially created with the aim of promoting an entire edition of the Olympic Games.

An artistic contest was organised to create the official poster. Having examined the projects of renowned Swedish artists, the Organising Committee chose Olle Hjortzberg's project.

Distribution: The poster was made available six months before the Games. Although the OCOG would have liked more time to circulate the poster, it was nevertheless widely distributed. For example, posters were sent to 2,200 hotels across 636 cities in 30 countries. Originally available in eight languages, the official poster was, at the request of various countries, finally printed in 16 languages, with 88,350 copies distributed.

Mini posters in three colours were also produced, and 30,900 copies were distributed in five different languages. The poster was also turned into a promotional stamp, and was distributed in Sweden and overseas in 16 languages.

MORE POSTERS FROM STOCKHOLM 1912

As part of a local publicity programme, posters were also produced to promote the swimming competitions (see below) and equestrian events (see the Official Report).



SOURCES

- Afshan Heuer, “Games Posters”, *Olympic Review*, January-March 2004, no. 50, [p. 44](#).
- *The Official Report of the Olympic Games of Stockholm 1912: the Fifth Olympiad*, Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1913, [pp. 263-274](#), [282-284](#).

> ANTWERP 1920



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Walter Von der Ven and Martha Van Kuyck
Printing:	Four firms: E. Stockmans et Cie, Van Dieren et Cie, J. Colassin et Cie, J.-E. Goossens / Lithograph
Description:	In Belle Epoque style, the poster shows a discus thrower in the foreground. Behind him are various swirling flags, attached to each other. In the background we can see the symbolic monuments of Antwerp: Notre Dame Tower, the Grote Markt, the Town Hall, and at the top right the coat of arms of the city.
Context of creation:	In 1914, while Antwerp was still a candidate, the Provisional Committee of the Games of the VII Olympiad produced a document entitled <i>Aurons-nous la VIIe Olympiade à Anvers en 1920?</i> (Will we have the Games of the VII Olympiad in Antwerp in 1920?). The aim was to convince the IOC that Antwerp could host the Olympic Games. Once Antwerp was elected, the Games organisers decided that the design featured on the cover of this document would become the official poster.

Distribution: 90,000 copies of the poster in the 85 x 62cm format were produced in 17 languages, including a bilingual French / Flemish series, uniquely destined for Belgium.
40,000 small posters of 30 x 20cm size were also distributed, inspired by the design of the official poster, but offering a view of the port in the background instead of the original city panorama.
In addition, a promotional stamp featuring a reduced-size version of the poster (4 x 6cm) was produced in five colours, with 2,500,000 copies distributed.

SOURCES

- *Aurons-nous la Ville Olympiade à Anvers en 1920 ?*, Comité provisoire Anvers 1920, Antwerp, 1914.
- Margaret Timmers, *A Century of Olympic Posters*, London: V&A Publishing, 2012, p. 31.
- Monique Berlioux [dir.], *Olympism Through Posters: 1896-1984*, Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1983, p. 24.
- *Rapport officiel des Jeux de la VIIème Olympiade Anvers 1920*, Belgique : Comité exécutif des Jeux d'Anvers, ca 1920, [pp. 17-20](#).
- Roland Renson, *De Ville olympiade Antwerpen 1920 : de herboren Spelen*, Brussels: Comité Olympique et Interfédéral belge, 1995, p. 17.

> PARIS 1924



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Jean Droit
Printing:	Hachard & Cie, Paris, imp. / Lithograph
Description:	The poster shows a group of athletes making the Olympic salute. In front of them are palm leaves, a symbol of victory, and the Paris coat of arms. The French flag floats in the background.
Context of creation:	Of the 150 projects received by the OCOG, two were kept and used to promote the Games: that of Jean Droit (above) and that of Stephano Orsi. Jean Droit's poster is now used as the official poster of the Games for Paris 1924.
Distribution:	Some 10,000 copies of each of the posters by Droit and Orsi were printed, over half of which were destined to be sent abroad.

MORE POSTERS FROM PARIS 1924

Below is the second poster that was selected by the OCOG, designed by the poster artist Stephano Orsi.



SOURCES

- *Les Jeux de la VIIIème Olympiade: Paris 1924: rapport officiel: Comité olympique français*, Paris: Librairie de France, 1924, [p. 64](#).
- “[Paris 1924-Poster](#)”, website of the International Olympic Committee.

> AMSTERDAM 1928



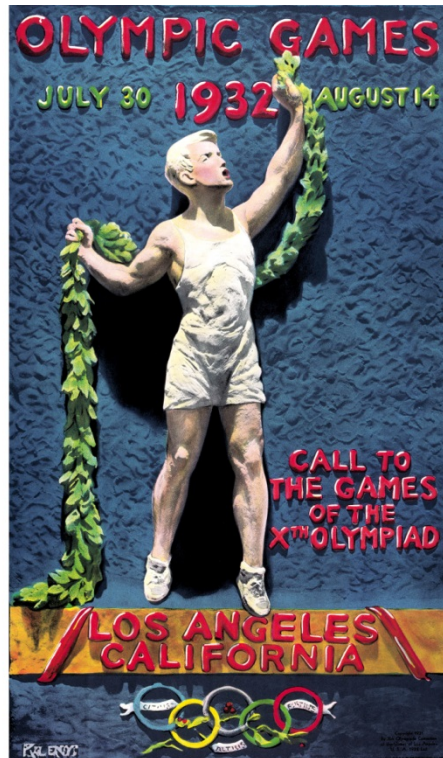
OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Emil Huber
Description:	The image shows a runner brandishing a laurel branch, a symbol of victory. The wording <i>Olympische Spiele 1928 – Amsterdam</i> appears on a blue background. The flag of the Netherlands floats at the bottom of the image.

SOURCE

- [“Amsterdam 1928-Poster”](#), website of the International Olympic Committee.

> LOS ANGELES 1932



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Julio Kilenyi
Printing:	Union Litho Co. Inc. / Lithograph
Description:	<p>The poster shows the Ancient Greek custom of sending a young athlete to announce when the next Games would be held.</p> <p>The image was created using a clay model that was photographed then painted to give a 3D effect.</p> <p>The artist, Julio Kilenyi, also created the commemorative medal of the Olympic Games Los Angeles 1932.</p>
Distribution:	Several thousands of copies were displayed, and the poster also appeared in other formats, such as the daily programme.

SOURCE

- *The Games of the Xth Olympiad Los Angeles 1932: official report*, Los Angeles: Xth Olympiade Committee of the Games of Los Angeles, 1933, [pp. 174, 213-215, 217, 220 & 334](#).

> BERLIN 1936



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Werner Würbel
Description:	The poster shows the four-horse-drawn chariot on the Brandenburg Gate, a symbolic monument of the city of Berlin. In the background is the figure of a crowned winner. In the foreground the place and date of the Games are mentioned. The Olympic rings feature at the top of the poster.
Context of creation:	<p>The OCOG organised an artistic contest that brought together 49 German artists, 44 of whom submitted a total of 59 poster projects. However, none of these projects corresponded to the three instructions given by the OCOG: to indicate the importance of the Games, attract attention to the city of Berlin, and promote the Olympic Games in an effective and understandable way abroad.</p> <p>To have an official poster of the Games, the OCOG subsequently held a second contest with other artists, and in the end it was Werner Würbel's project that was kept.</p>
Distribution:	243,710 copies of the poster were distributed in 19 languages in 34 countries.

MORE POSTERS FROM BERLIN 1936

The two posters shown below present the sailing competitions, which were held in Kiel, and the Olympic torch relay, which took place for the first time at the Games of the XI Olympiad Berlin 1936.



SOURCE

- *The XIth Olympic Games Berlin: official report*, Berlin: Organisationskomitee für die XI. Olympiade Berlin 1936, 1937, vol. 1, [pp. 124, 355-356](#).

> LONDON 1948

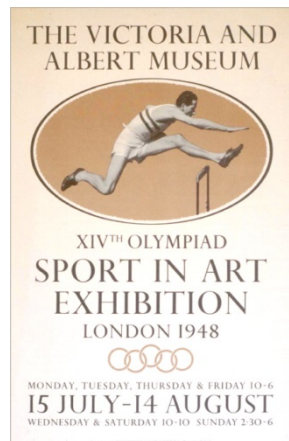


OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Walter Herz
Printing:	McCorquodale & Cie Ltd.
Description:	The poster presents an image of the marble statue of the Townley Discobulus (original displayed at the British Museum), with the Olympic rings, superimposed over a view of the Palace of Westminster in London. The classic and modern symbols of the Olympic Games are combined with one of the most symbolic monuments of the host city: the Clock Tower and Big Ben.
Context of creation:	Due to a lack of time, no contest was organised to design the official poster of the Games. The OCOG chose from the small number of projects that were submitted to it.
Distribution:	100,000 copies of the poster were printed in three different formats. They were distributed by the governing bodies of sports on the Olympic programme, travel agencies with branches in London and airlines operating in Great Britain. Contact was also made with 300 British towns and cities, almost all of which agreed to distribute the poster.

MORE POSTERS FROM LONDON 1948

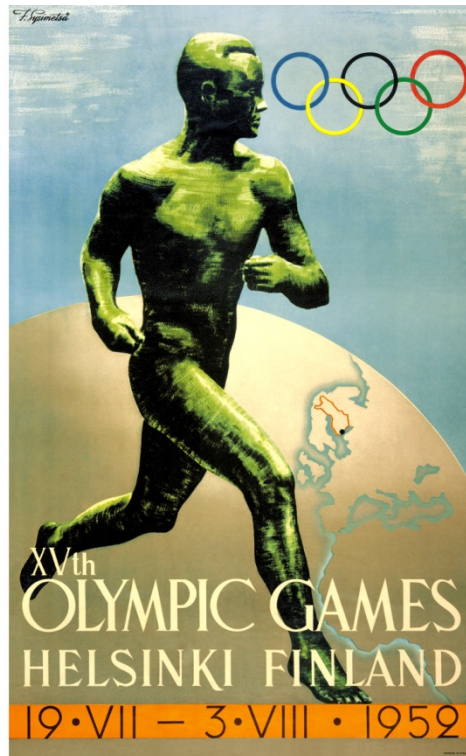
A poster was published to promote the exhibition organised by the OCOG at the Victoria and Albert Museum in conjunction with the Olympic Games London 1948 art competitions.



SOURCES

- Margaret Timmers, *A Century of Olympic Posters*, London: V&A Publishing, 2012, pp. 56-57.
- *The Official Report of the Organising Committee for the XIV Olympiad*, London: the Organizing Committee for the XIV Olympiad, 1951, [pp. 112, 195](#).
- "[The Townley Discobolus](#)", website of the British Museum.

> HELSINKI 1952



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist: Ilmari Sysimetsä

Printing: OY. Tilgmann AB

Description: The poster shows a bronze statue of Finnish runner Paavo Nurmi, a famous athlete who won a total of twelve Olympic medals, including nine gold, at three editions of the Summer Games (1920, 1924 and 1928). The statue was realised by the well-known Finnish sculptor Wäinö Aaltonen. It was commissioned by the Finnish government following the feat achieved by Nurmi at the 1924 Games, where he won five of his Olympic gold medals. The figure of the runner is superimposed over a part of the Earth, which shows Finland outlined in red. The original version of the poster, which dates from 1939, was modified slightly to reflect the context of 1952: the dates were changed and the borders of the country were adapted.

Context of creation: The organisers already had a poster project that had been produced for the 1940 Olympic Games that were cancelled owing to the Second World War. However, they decided to organise a contest to produce a

new poster for the Summer Games in 1952. In 1950, 277 projects were sent to them, but they felt that none succeeded in equalling the one created 11 years earlier by Ilmari Sysimetsä. It was therefore decided that his would be the official poster of the Games.

Distribution: The poster was published in two formats and 20 different languages, with 115,000 copies distributed. In Finland, it was originally displayed in train stations, post offices and sports clubs in the summer of 1951. It was then widely distributed in the spring of 1952.

MORE POSTERS FROM HELSINKI 1952

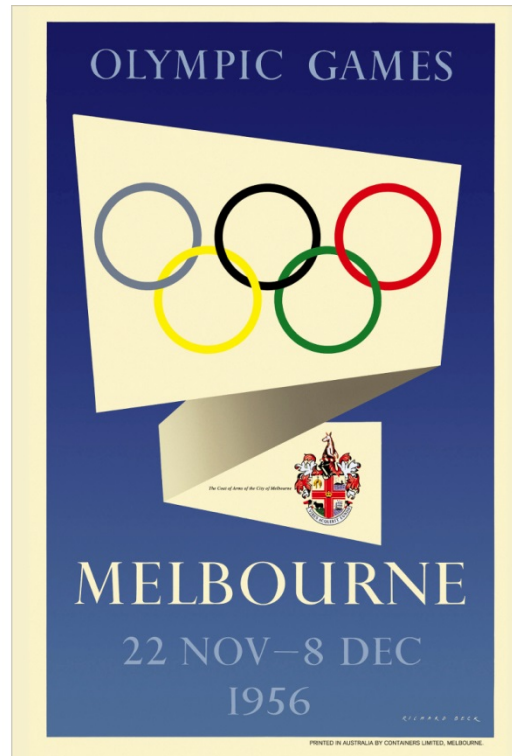
A welcome poster, produced in 25 different languages, was displayed in the bedrooms of the Olympic Village. It shows a photograph of the countryside, below the Finnish flag and the Olympic flag.



SOURCES

- Arno Seino, “Sportsmen set in stone in the capital”, *Helsingin Sanomat* (international edition), 13 November 2009.
- Monique Berlioux [dir.], *Olympism Through Posters: 1896-1984*, Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1983, p. 58.
- “Olympic News”, *Olympische Rundschau*, April 1939, [p. 29](#).
- *The Official Report of the Organising Committee for the Games of the XV Olympiad*, Porvoo, Helsinki: W.Soderstrom, 1955, [pp. 113-115](#).

> MELBOURNE 1956



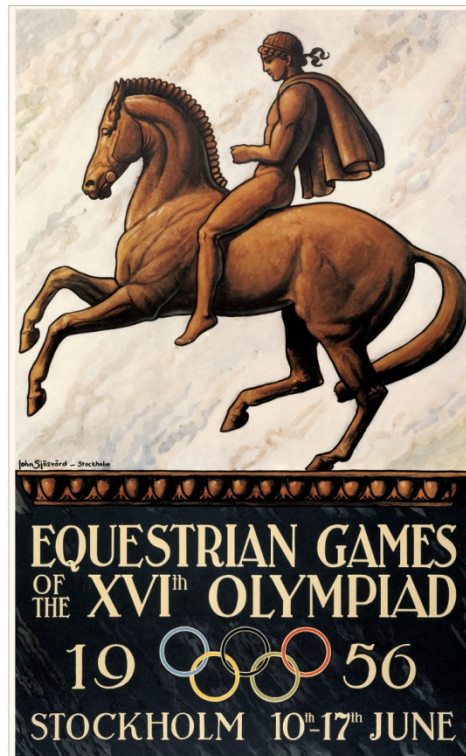
OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Richard Beck
Printing:	Containers Limited, Melbourne / Lithograph
Description:	The poster moved away from the figurative style frequently used in previous Olympic posters. With a pure design, it presents a three-page invitation that opens up towards the reader, standing out on a bright blue background. The Olympic rings feature on the first page, and a colour reproduction of the coat of arms of Melbourne appears on the last page.
Context of creation:	The OCOG asked five artists to submit their poster projects. It was the one by Beck that was selected.
Distribution:	In total, 70,000 copies of the poster were printed in two different sizes. They were distributed in Australia and overseas by a range of bodies, including shipping companies and airlines, National Olympic Committees, banks, tourism agencies, sports clubs, post offices, the Australian local authorities and Australian overseas offices.

SOURCES

- Monique Berlioux [dir.], *Olympism Through Posters: 1896-1984*, Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1983, p. 64.
- *The Official Report of the Organizing Committee for the Games of the XVIth Olympiad Melbourne 1956*, Melbourne: Organizing Committee for the Games of the XVIth Olympiad, 1958, [p. 142](#).

> STOCKHOLM 1956



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist: John Sjösvärd

Printing: Esselte

Description: The bottom half of the poster shows the wording *XVI Olympiadens Ryttartävlingar 1956 Stockholm 10-17 Juni* on a black background. The upper half, set against a marble background, shows the figure of an ancient rider on his horse. This figure recalls those which, for example, are depicted on the Parthenon frieze that is generally thought to have been sculpted in the 5th century BC under the direction of the sculptor Phidias. John Sjösvärd, who created the poster, also designed one of the faces on the winners' medals, which also depicted the figure of the rider.

Context of creation: Due to the Australian veterinary rules on equine quarantine, the equestrian events could not take place in Melbourne. They took place in Stockholm, Sweden. It was on this occasion that the Organising Committee of the Equestrian Games of the XVI Olympiad published the poster.

Distribution: 40,000 copies in four languages: English, French, German and Swedish.

SOURCES

- Karl Lennartz, Walter Borgers, Andreas Höfer, *Olympische Siege – Medaillen, Diplome, Ehrungen*, Sport Verlag. Berlin, 2000, p. 288.
- *The Equestrian Games of the XVIth Olympiad: a retrospective survey in text and pictures* [The Official Report of the Organizing Committee for the Equestrian Games of the XVIth Olympiad], Stockholm: [s.n.], 1959, [n.p.](#)

> ROME 1960



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist: Armando Testa

Printing: IGAP, Milano-Roma

Description: This poster is a modern adaptation of the Belvedere capital, which was originally found at the Baths of Caracalla in Ancient Rome. In addition to the pools, the baths housed spaces to practise sport. The capital shows a scene of acclamation of a victorious athlete, who, in line with Roman custom, is crowning himself with the right hand and holding the palm of victory in his left hand. The Capitoline Wolf, the symbol of Rome, feeds the twins Romulus and Remus, the legendary founders of the city. The image was inspired by the famous bronze statue exhibited at the Palace of the Conservators in Rome.

Context of creation: Several stages were necessary to obtain an official poster that would correspond to the organisers' wishes. An initial competition, open to Italian artists, was organised by the OCOG's Arts Committee. The images submitted had to represent an allegory encompassing the idea of Olympic sport in Rome, the Olympic rings and the words *Games of the XVII Olympiad – Rome – MCMLX*.

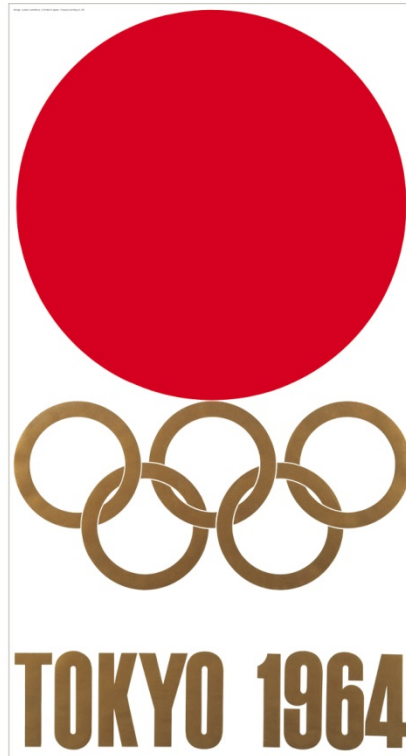
The contest saw 212 participants enter 249 projects, but none was judged to have met the specified requirements. The Arts Committee therefore organised a second competition. The works of 7 out of the 12 Italian artists invited to take part were assessed. Armando Testa's project was judged the most convincing. However, for its part, the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI) was not fully convinced. While the Arts Committee asked the artist to modify his project, the CONI Executive Committee established once and for all what features it wanted to be displayed on it. Testa's poster was ultimately chosen for the final version.

Distribution:	290,000 copies (including 120,499 destined for abroad) in 11 languages. The distribution of the poster in Italy was realised in two stages: first, 60,000 copies were displayed in April 1960. During the second stage in July and August, copies were displayed on the route of the Torch Relay and in the cities that hosted the eliminating rounds of the Football Tournament: Florence, Grosseto, Livorno, Pescara, L'Aquila and Naples.
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SOURCES

- “[Hall of the She-wolf](#)”, website of the Capitoline Museums, Rome.
- “The Games of the XVIIth Olympiad in Rome - 1960”, *Bulletin du Comité International Olympique*, February 1960, no. 69, [pp. 58-61](#).
- *The Games of the XVII Olympiad Rome, 1960: the official report of the Organizing Committee*, Rome: Organizing Committee of the Games of the XVII Olympiad, 1963, vol. 1, [pp. 299-302, 344-353](#).

> TOKYO 1964



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Yusaku Kamekura
Printing:	Toppan Printing Co. Ltd. / Lithograph
Description:	The poster uses the emblem of the 1964 Games in Tokyo. It is a simple and dynamic reinterpretation of the Rising Sun of the Japanese national flag, associated with the Olympic rings.
Context of creation:	<p>Four main posters were published successively for the 1964 Games. They were all created by Kamekura. The first was called <i>The Rising Sun and the Olympic Emblem</i>, and it was this one that remained the official poster of these Games.</p> <p>These posters were produced using a multi-coloured photo engraving. They were the subject of much praise, for both the quality of the printing and the design, and won the Milan Poster Design Award.</p>
Distribution:	Approximately 100,000 copies.

MORE POSTERS FROM TOKYO 1964

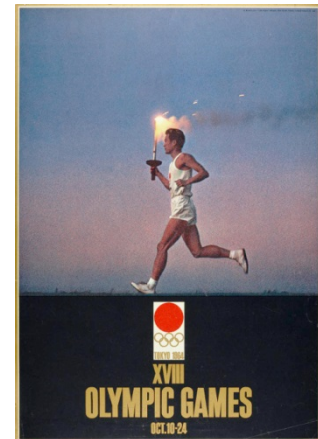
Here, in publication order, are the three other posters belonging to the set produced by Yusaku Kamekura, assisted by the photographers Osamu Hayasaki and Jo Murakoshi.



The Start of the Sprinters' Dash is a photograph of the start of an athletics race. The models were athletes from the US forces stationed at the air base in Tachikawa, and Japanese amateur athletes. The shot was taken in the National Stadium on an icy cold night, and over 60 attempts were required to obtain the perfect result. For Hayasaki, it was one of the most challenging undertakings he had ever attempted.



For this photograph entitled *A Butterfly Swimmer*, an initial set of photos was taken in February 1962, at the Tokyo Metropolitan covered pool, but none of the photos was deemed good enough. A second attempt was made in which photos were taken of three students from the University of Waseda. One of these students, Iwamoto, appears on the final version of the poster.

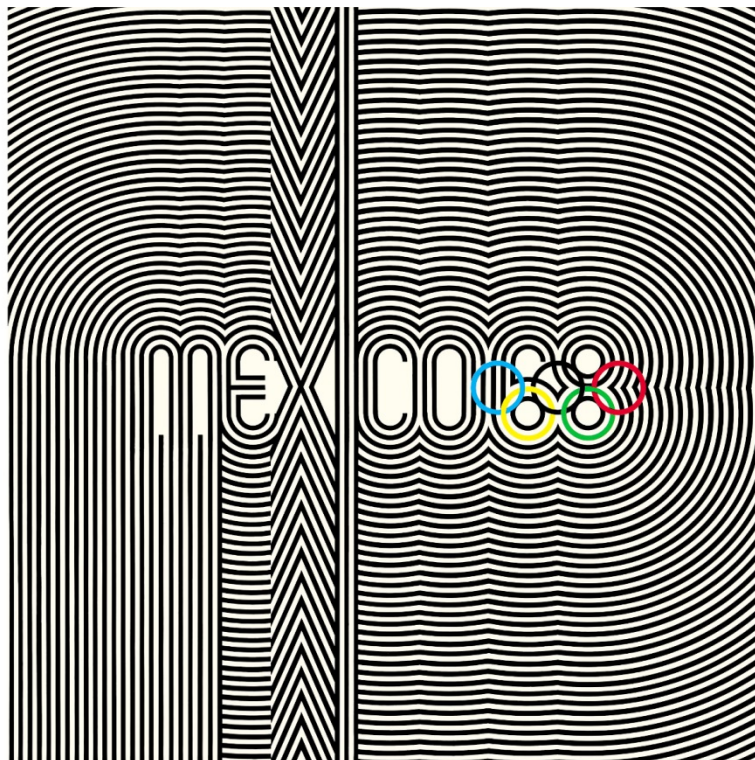


The final poster in the set, created in early 1964, is called *An Olympic Torch Runner*. The model was the athlete Tanaka from the athletics team of the University of Juntendo. The granularity of the image is magnified to produce an original effect which is further enhanced by the framing. The overall composition and the colours seek to add a solemn and serene quality to the torch relay.

SOURCES

- “News in brief – Fourth official poster published”, *XVIII Olympiad, Official Bulletin*, 10-24 October, no. 17, p. 9.
- “The Games of the XVIIIth Olympiad, Tokyo 1964”, *Bulletin du Comité International Olympique*, May 1963, no. 82, [pp. 50 & 52](#).
- “The Games of the XVIIIth Olympiad, Tokyo 1964”, *Bulletin du Comité International Olympique*, May 1964, no. 86, [p. 76](#).
- *The Games of the XVIII Olympiad, Tokyo 1964: the official report of the organizing committee*, Tokyo: The Organizing Committee for the Games of the XVIII Olympiad, 1966, vol. 1, [pp. 353, 358-359](#).

> MEXICO 1968



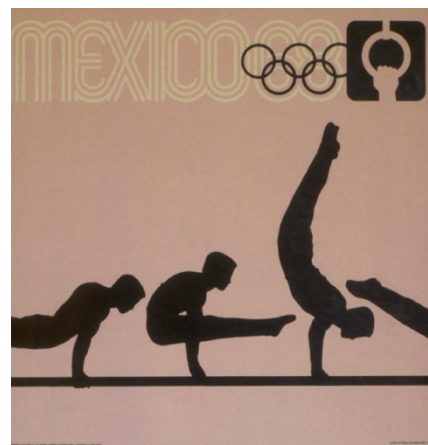
OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Pedro Ramirez Vazquez, Eduardo Terrazas, Lance Wyman
Printing:	Miguel Galas Impresores S.A. de C.V. / Offset
Description:	The Mexico 68 emblem appears in the centre of the poster. The elements that make up the emblem appear to be radiating outwards, spiralling out in all directions with black and white parallel lines that give the impression of movement and recall the motifs of the Indian Huichol people.
Context of creation:	From the combination of the five rings and year of the Olympic Games, an idea devised by Pedro Ramirez Vazquez, Eduardo Terrazas and Lance Wyman designed the Mexico 68 emblem. It was then developed to create the official poster and was reflected in all aspects of the Look of these Games. Simplicity, aesthetics and functionalism were part of the broad outlines and aims of the Mexico 68 Identity Programme, and therefore also influenced the official poster.
Distribution:	The Mexico 68 poster featured in the Word and Image exhibition organised by the Museum of Modern Art in New York in early 1968.

The Mexico 68 Program of Olympic Identity was also present at the 14th Triennale in Milan, in June and July 1968. Approximately 25,000 copies of the poster were printed in one of five colours: blue, red, yellow, green and black.

MORE POSTERS FROM MEXICO 1968

A significant number of posters were created for this edition of the Games. According to the Official Report, there were more than 150 different posters, with over 2 million copies distributed. Some 287,000 copies of the set of 18 sports posters were made.



Nineteen posters – of which 190,500 copies were made – were devoted to the cultural programme and 58 to other cultural events.



Michel Gross



David Palladini

Some 1,694,000 copies of 41 special posters were printed to promote the Games.



SOURCES

- *Mexico 68*, Mexico: Organizing Committee of the Games of the XIX Olympiad, 1969, vol. 2, [pp. 298-300](#), [306](#), [314-321](#), [352 & 354](#).
- Monique Berlioux [dir.], *Olympism Through Posters: 1896-1984*, Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1983, p. 84.
- *XIVe triennale de Milan*, Comité organisateur des Jeux de la XIX Olympiade [textes Juan Vicente Melo], Mexico, 1968, n.p.

> MUNICH 1972



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Otl Aicher
Printing:	Mandruck GmbH / Offset
Description:	<p>The poster shows the silhouette of the roof in the shape of a tent of the Olympic installations. The Olympic tower stands in the background. At the top are the dates of the Games, as well as the official emblem, which was also designed by Otl Aicher and was selected ahead of some 2,332 other projects.</p> <p>The poster was based on a photograph whose colours were re-worked to correspond to the palette established for the visual identity of the Games. A nylon texture was used to simulate the roof structure.</p>
Context of creation:	<p>In June 1969, a contest was organised by the OCOG to create the Munich 1972 official poster. Eleven artists were invited by the organisers to participate. They could propose a maximum of two projects each. The posters had to comprise: an iconic scene from Munich (preferably the silhouette of the roof in the shape of a tent), the emblem of the Games created by Otl Aicher and the words <i>München 1972</i>. In addition, the poster had to be adapted to the overall image of</p>

the Games and adopt the primary colour and the three complementary colours.

In November of the same year, the jury selected a number of projects from the proposals received, but none of them managed to convince the OCOG executive board. The OCOG then asked Aicher to create a poster from the design he himself had developed that included the famous tent-shaped roof and which had provided the impetus for the contest.

MORE POSTERS FROM MUNICH 1972

In a bid to make the posters corresponding to the 21 sports on the Olympic programme as appealing as possible to all cultures, they were designed using photographs. Particular care was taken to select the most typical still shots for each sport, and work was done to filter out and simplify the shapes and colours in order to capture the essence of each image. The use of horizontal lines and deliberately truncated images showing movement from left to right seek to convey the action of the sport. For each poster, one dominant colour was selected from the colour palette used for the visual identity. Two to four other colours were then added to complement the effect.



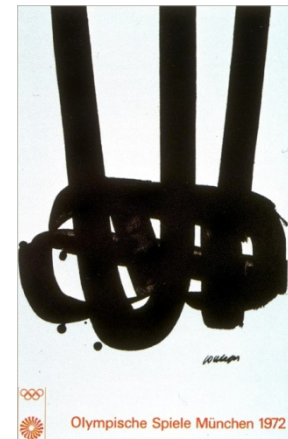
For the organisers, the synthesis between art and sport is found at the heart of the vision for the Olympic Games Munich 1972. The OCOG produced a set of art posters to promote the cultural aspects of the Games, using world-renowned artists and, as the project progressed, other lesser-known artists. Primarily aimed at an informed audience, the posters were mainly distributed in cultural institutions such as universities, museums, embassies and tourist centres.



Oskar Kokoschka

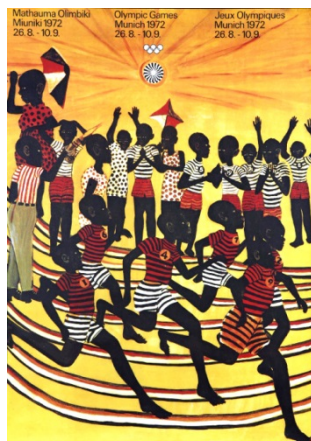


David Hockney



Pierre Soulages

A publicity campaign was organised specifically for Africa. An artistic contest was set up in collaboration with the Deutsche Afrika-Gesellschaft (German African Society), and called on African artists to propose posters that would stimulate interest in the Olympic Games across the whole continent. The theme and the style of the posters were left a free choice of the competitors. Among the many projects submitted, that by Kenyan Ancient Soy won the top prize. The poster, *Young Runners* alluded to black Africa. The poster that took second prize represented the Arabic countries of North Africa. This was the artwork by Algeria's Kamardine Krim, which shows a dove. Some 50,000 copies of each of the two posters were produced in March 1972.



Ancient Soy



Kamardine Krim

SOURCES

- Die Spiele: *the official report of the Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXth Olympiad Munich 1972*, Munich: Prosport, 1974, vol. 1, [pp. 201, 206-207, 257-258, 269-270, 288, 290 & 296](#).
- Margaret Timmers, *A Century of Olympic Posters*, London: V&A Publishing, 2012, p. 89.
- "Munich", *Olympic Review*, June 1970, no. 33, [p. 333](#).

> MONTREAL 1976



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Ernst Roch and Rolf Harder
Printing:	Litho Canada / Offset
Description:	Entitled <i>The invitation</i> , the poster shows the five Olympic rings resounding symbolically in successive waves, thus inviting athletes from every continent to the 1976 Olympic Games.
Context of creation:	The OCOG produced a visual programme that brought together an aesthetic and graphic unity capable of reflecting the particular character of Montreal 1976. The main colour of the visual identity of these Games was red, and seven other colours: blue, grey, green, orange, yellow, lavender and purple. The official poster was originally part of a set of eight themed posters.

MORE POSTERS FROM MONTREAL 1976

Each of the eight themed posters shows a key theme of this edition of the Olympic Games.



Poster promoting the sailing competitions in Kingston. The six boat classes on the programme appear in the poster.



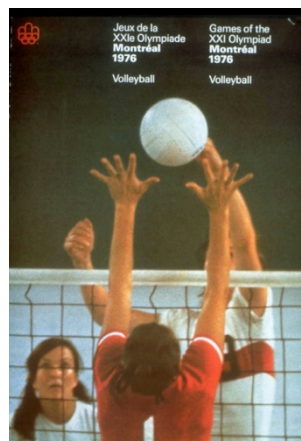
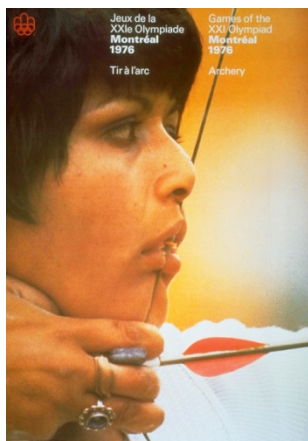
The official emblem of the Games is seen floating in the breeze on this poster, as a rallying sign.



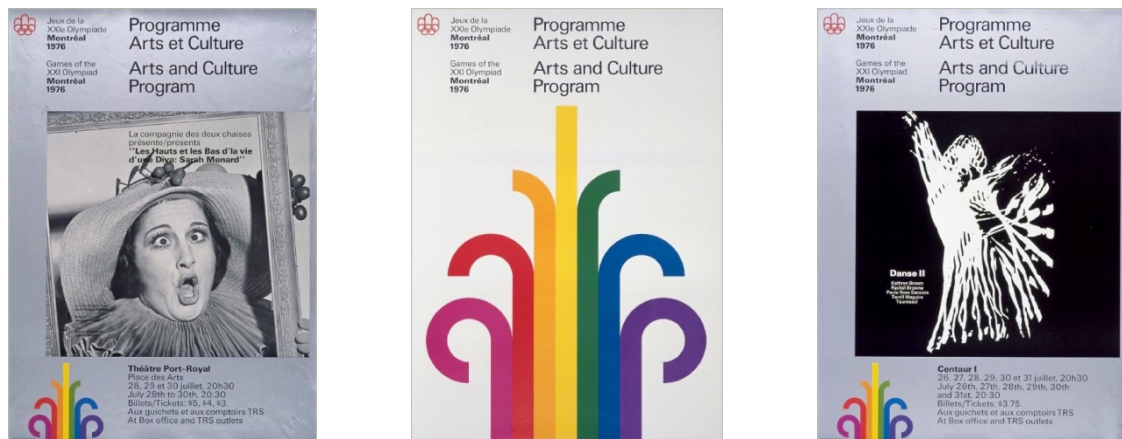
Poster promoting the Montreal 1976 International Youth Camp. It symbolises the profusion of ideas and attitudes characteristic of young people.

The set of posters corresponding to the 21 sports on the Olympic programme aimed to communicate the action and instantaneity of the sport that they illustrated. The OCOG therefore opted for photographs instead of drawings.

For the elaboration of these posters, the artists went to the site of the Olympic Games Munich 1972 to select 21 snapshots from the 200,000 photos. Each photo had to fulfil precise criteria: be easy to reproduce and enlarge, clearly show a movement that respected the rules and techniques of the sport in question, and be as spectacular as possible.



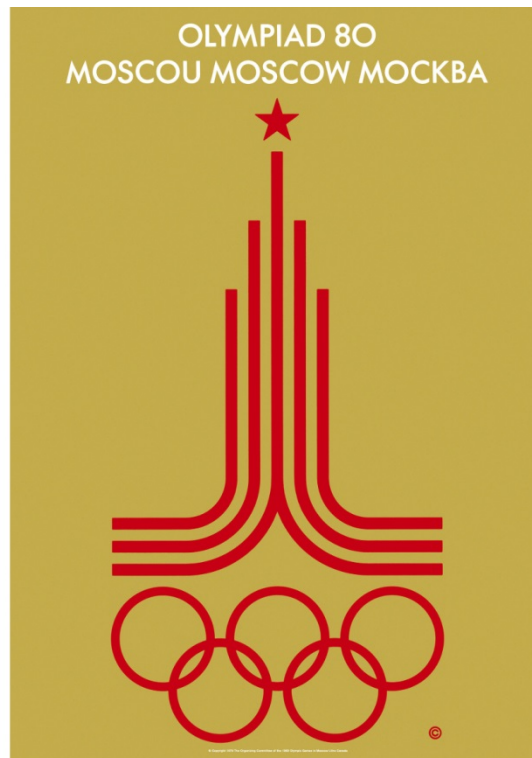
The poster promoting the Arts and Culture programme used the symbol of the programme – a stylised sheaf of wheat in the colours chosen for the Look of the Games, representing the creative vitality of the Canadian people. This symbol also appeared on the specific posters used for the programme's various events.



SOURCE

- *Montreal 1976: Games of the XXI Olympiad Montreal 1976: official report*, Ottawa: OCOG 76, 1978, vol.1, [pp. 314, 319-324, 336-337](#).

> MOSCOW 1980

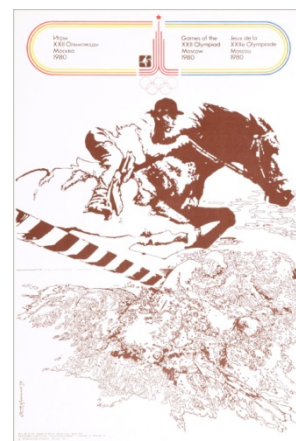
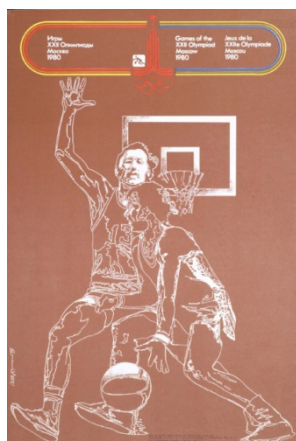
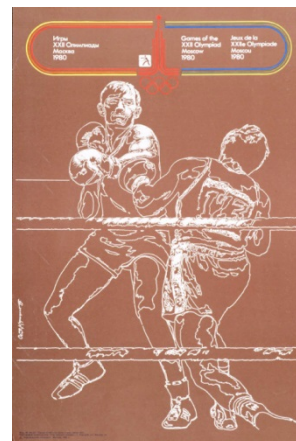
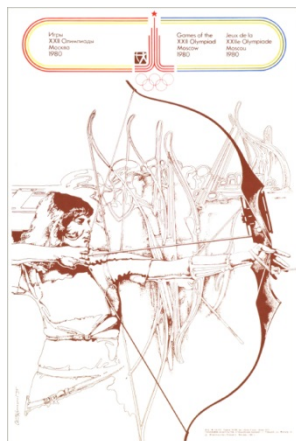


OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Vladimir Arsenyev
Printing:	Litho Canada / Offset
Description:	The poster features the Games emblem, which is made up of three elements: the Olympic rings, the track of a stadium, which also forms the silhouette of a typical Moscow building, and a five-pointed star placed above.
Context of creation:	The emblem of the Olympic Games Moscow 1980 was designed by Vladimir Arsenyev. It was selected following a competition which saw 26,000 proposals submitted by Soviet and foreign artists.

MORE POSTERS FROM MOSCOW 1980

Plakat Publishers, in collaboration with the OCOG, published 250 different Olympic posters, for a total of 18,750,000 copies. Famous Soviet artists were among those behind the various designs. The set presented below is devoted to the sports disciplines.



SOURCE

- *Games of the XXII Olympiad: official report of the Organising Committee of the Games of the XXII Olympiad*, Moscow, 1980, Moscow: Fizkultura i Sport, 1981, vol. 2, [pp. 371-372, 416-418](#).

> LOS ANGELES 1984



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist: Robert Rauschenberg

Printing: Offset

Description: The poster includes the emblem of the 1984 Games in Los Angeles, the star in motion, and recreates the horizontal lines using various images. Its design of three interlocked star shapes evokes the spirit of competition between equals. At the same time its horizontal bars are intended to represent the speed of the athletes' pursuit of excellence. The stars convey both the national and international aspect of the Games as they are present on the US flag, as well as on the flags of more than 47 other nations.

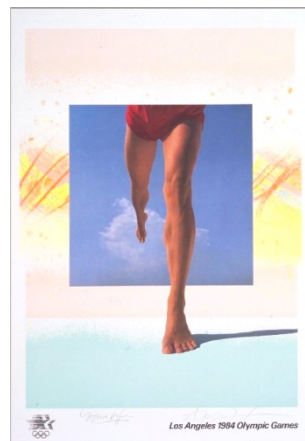
Context of creation: 16 famous Los Angeles artists were invited to produce posters as part of the Olympic Art Festival. Among these, the work by Rauschenberg subsequently became the official poster of the Games for Los Angeles 1984.

MORE POSTERS FROM LOS ANGELES 1984

The Olympic art posters set, which included the poster by Robert Rauschenberg (see previous page), comprises 15 works in total. The style, which ranges from abstract to photorealism, was left up to the artists. The only requirement was for the works to be reproduced as posters.



Carlos Almaraz

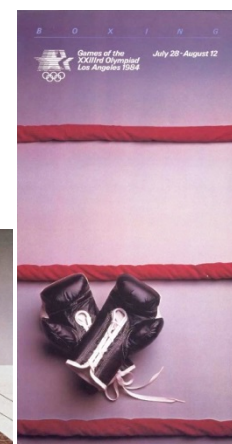
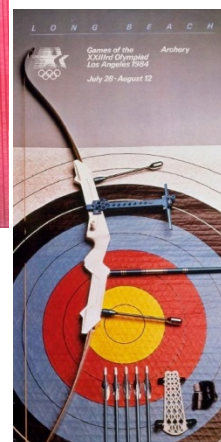
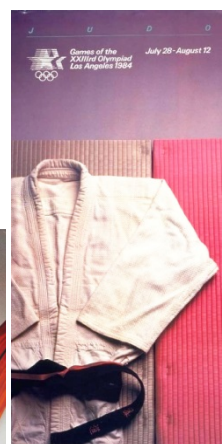
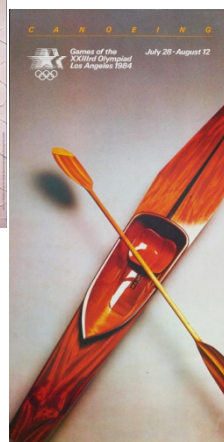


April Greiman & Jayme Odgers

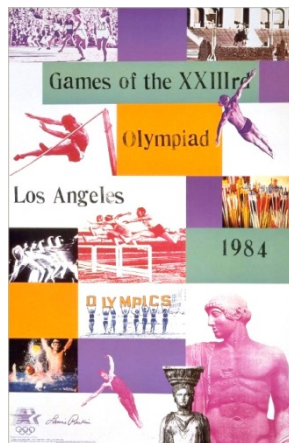


Jennifer Bartlett

Each sport is illustrated by a poster taken from the cover of the respective explanatory brochures that were published by the OCOG.



The OCOG chose 12 artists from the Los Angeles area to create a series of *Signature* posters each representing a specific theme.



Laurie Raskin



Ken Parkhurst



John Von Hammersveld

Ernie Barnes, an athlete who became an artist, was asked by the OCOG to create posters based on his sporting experience. These works evoke the ethnic diversity of Los Angeles, the emotion of the sports competitions and the virtues of champions – concentration and idealism. Four posters have sport as the central theme, and one illustrates community involvement.



The Rhythmic Gymnast



The Finish

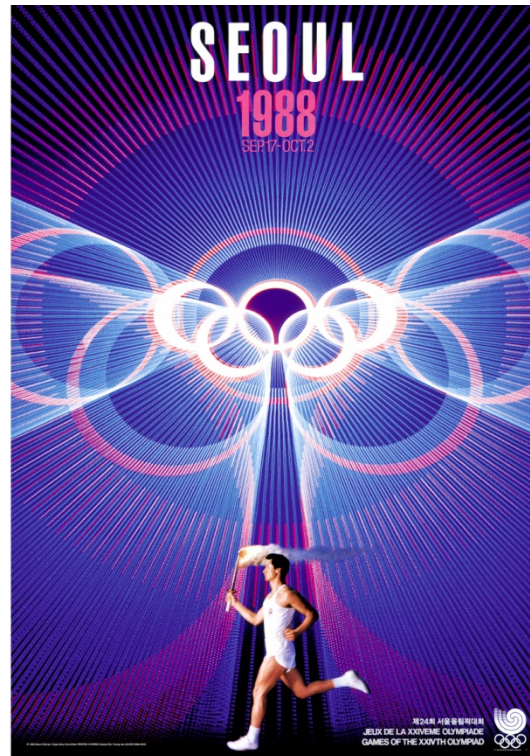


The Neighborhood Games

SOURCE

- *Official Report of the Games of the XXIIIrd Olympiad Los Angeles 1984*, Los Angeles: Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee, 1985, vol. 1, [pp. 32, 244-245, 288, 297, 300, 534, 550-552](#).

> SEOUL 1988



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Prof. Cho Yong-je
Printing:	Offset
Description:	<p>The poster symbolises the motto of this edition of the Games: <i>Harmony and Progress</i>. The rings are in bright colours to show that the Olympic ideal promotes peace worldwide. The image of the athlete carrying the Olympic torch symbolises mankind's progress towards happiness and prosperity. The design was produced by computer and the colours used are a mix of light blue and bright orange, which symbolise the Land of the Morning Calm.</p>
Context of creation:	<p>In June 1984, the OCOG asked Prof. Cho Yong-je of the National University of Seoul to produce the official poster for Seoul 1988. In January 1985, the artist proposed two projects from which a selection committee chose the official poster in April of the same year.</p>

MORE POSTERS FROM SEOUL 1988

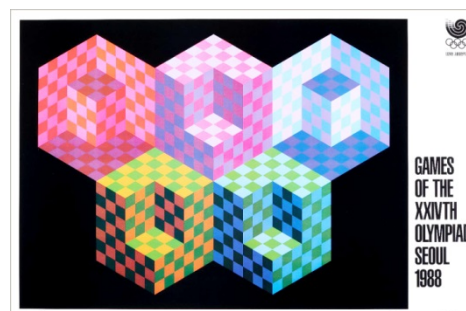
One of the two below posters uses the official emblem of the Olympic Games Seoul 1988. The second features the mascot Hodori.



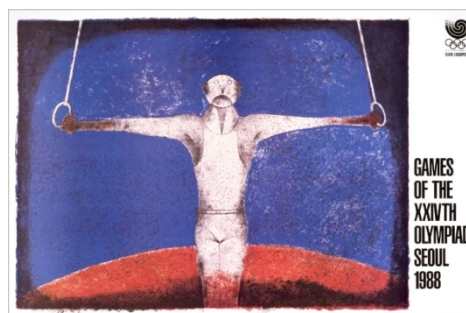
At the request of the OCOG, Lloyd Shin Gallery selected 20 masters of contemporary foreign art and five Korean artists recommended by local art organisations to create a set of art posters.



Human Mask,
Nam Kwan, (Korea)

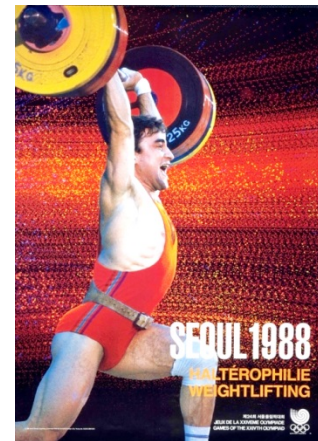
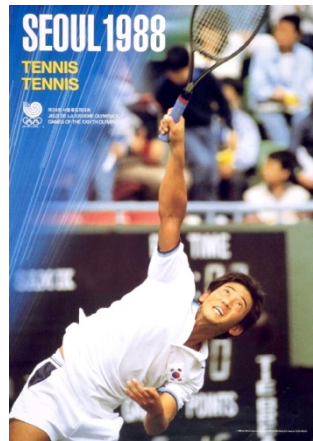
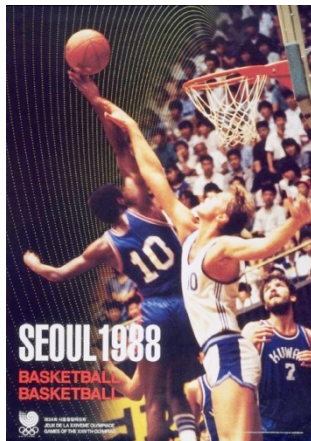


Hexas, Victor Vasarely (Hungary)



Iron Cross, Rufino Tamayo (Mexico)

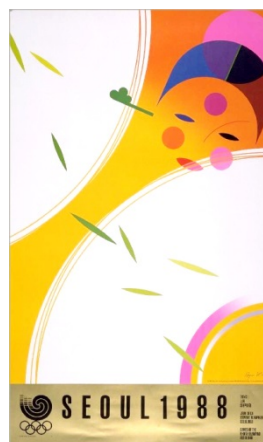
The set of 27 sports posters was produced by Prof. Cho Yong-je and his associates. The posters combine action shots of athletes with computer-animated designs symbolising the tireless energy of humankind. The photographs were taken during the Asian Games in Seoul (1986) and the Olympic Games in Los Angeles (1984).



The set of cultural posters was made up of 12 works produced by 12 Korean artists. It aimed to present Korean culture to the rest of the world.



*Royal Folding Screen
Painting, Yang Sung-Chun*



*Woman Fan Dancer,
Kim Hyun*



*Drum dance,
Kim Yong-ki*

SOURCE

- *Official Report: Games of the XXIVth Olympiad Seoul 1988*, Seoul: Seoul Olympic Organizing Committee, 1989, vol. 1, [pp. 640-649](#).

> BARCELONA 1992



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist: Josep Maria Trias

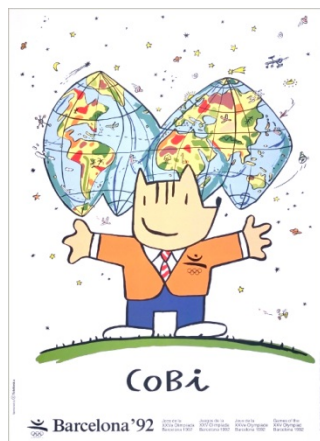
Description: Four “official” posters were produced by the OCOG to promote the overall event. The poster featuring a dynamic version of the Barcelona 1992 emblem is now used as the official poster for this edition of the Games.

The emblem was designed by Josep Maria Trias. It evokes an athlete leaping over an obstacle which is represented by the Olympic rings. The simple lines of the silhouette reduce it to a head (from the blue of the Mediterranean), arms (bright yellow and open as a sign of hospitality) and legs (bright red, a symbol of life).

Context of creation: At each inflection point on the emblem and on the Olympic rings, a grading of colours was added to accentuate the dynamic aspect of the image.

MORE POSTERS FROM BARCELONA 1992

The OCOG published a total of 58 different posters grouped in four series, and a total of 2,940,000 copies were made. In addition to the poster featuring the emblem designed by Josep Maria Trias (see previous page), the official Olympic posters set included the three posters presented below:



Javier Mariscal



Antoni Tàpies



Enric Satué

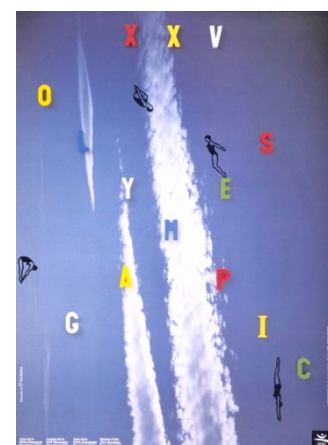
For the set of 18 “designers” posters, the most famous design institutions in Spain selected artists who represented the various fashionable trends in Barcelona, Catalonia and the rest of the country.



Josep Pla-Narbona

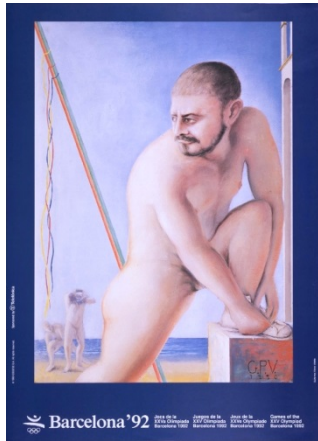


Pere Torrent



América Sánchez

To produce the set of eight “painters” posters, the OCOG called upon artists in Spain and overseas.



Guillermo Pérez Villalta



Antoni Clavé



Jean-Michel Folon

The set of 28 sports posters combines images of athletes in action and the Earth to evoke the universal nature of the Olympic Games. These photographs were selected from a batch of 5,000 images from photographic archives worldwide. The images of the Earth were provided by NASA.



SOURCES

- *Official Report of the Games of the XXV Olympiad Barcelona 1992*, Barcelona: COOB'92, 1992, vol. 3, [pp. 321, 333-337](#).
- Xavier Corretjé Ventura, *Los carteles olímpicos : oficiales, diseñadores, pintores, deportes*, Barcelona: COOB'92, ca 1992, p. 52.

> ATLANTA 1996



OFFICIAL POSTER

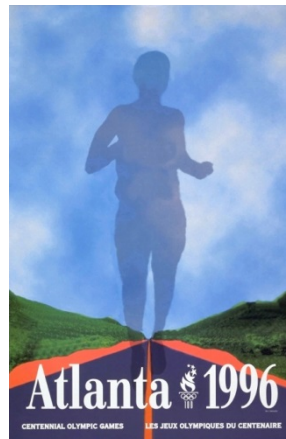
Artist:	Primo Angeli
Description:	To celebrate the centennial of the modern Olympic Games, the poster combines classic and contemporary symbols. The athlete is at the centre of the illustration, on a background of the Olympic colours. A light grey version of the torch from the Atlanta 1996 emblem can be seen on the athlete's torso. Through this drawing, the artist's intention is to represent equally a man and a woman, as well as all the ethnicities of the participants at the Olympic Games.
Context of creation:	The poster programme for the 1996 Games in Atlanta comprised a total of 63 works, divided into four series. One of these contained posters produced by companies commissioned for the visual identity of the Games. It was from that series that the then-IOC President, Juan Antonio Samaranch, chose the poster by Primo Angeli as the official poster.

MORE POSTERS FROM ATLANTA 1996

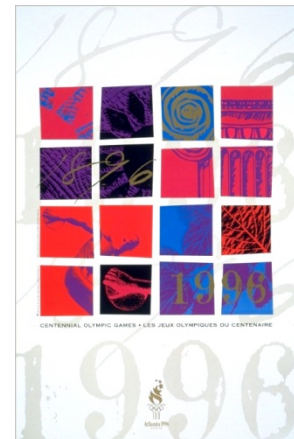
Each of the six companies appointed to develop the visual identity of the Olympic Games Atlanta 1996 had to produce a poster. The subject was a free choice, which is why these works have very different themes, such as the athletes, the dove of peace and the pictograms. This “Look Team Series” includes the poster that was chosen as the official poster of this edition of the Games (see previous page).



Malcolm Grear Designers



Favermann Design



Jones Worley



Copeland Hirthler Murrell Design &
Communication



Turner Associates Design

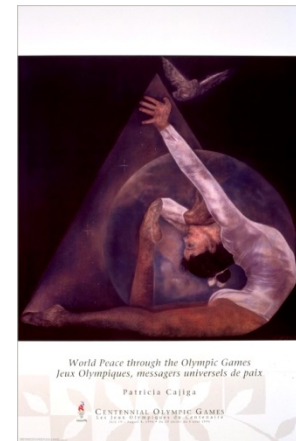
The “Artist Series” comprising 11 posters by different artists was the fruit of a free approach, aiming to convey the Olympic spirit. They address themes such as women and sport or the Olympic Village. Most of these posters were produced as limited edition prints.



Emma Amos

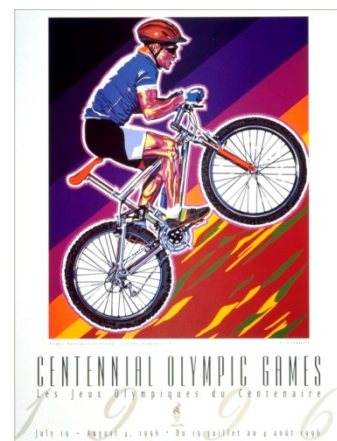
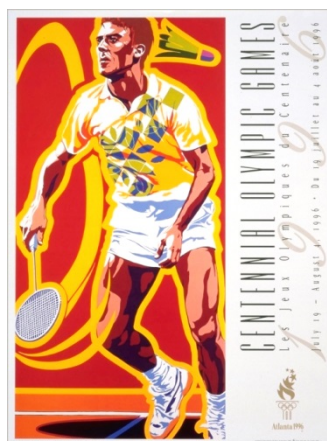
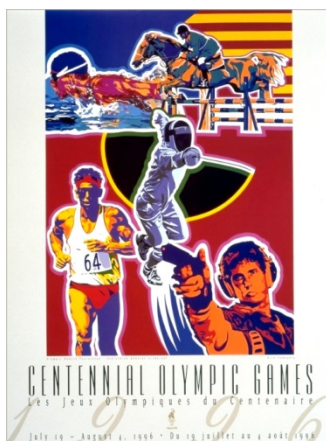


Paul Goodnight



Patricia Cajiga

The “Sports Series“, corresponding to the sports on the Olympic programme, was created by the artist Hiro Yamagata. Each poster includes the name of the sport, the artist and the dates of the Games.



SOURCES

- “[Book](#)” section, website of Primo Angeli.
- *The Official Report of the Centennial Olympic Games*, The Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 1997, vol. 1, [pp. 129 & 140](#).

> SYDNEY 2000



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist: FHA Image Design

Printing: Offset

Description: The poster features Millennium Man, the figure in motion – formed by boomerangs, in a reference to the country's indigenous culture – that was the emblem of the Games. Above him, a white flash representing the smoke of the Olympic torch evokes the peaks of the famous Sydney Opera House, which also appears at the bottom of the image. Millennium Man is placed against a blue background on which a human silhouette is seen running, and the names of the participating cities appear in tiny letters.

Context of creation: The firm FHA, which was behind the poster, provided consultancy services to the OCOG to design the Look of the Games.

MORE POSTERS FROM SYDNEY 2000

The OCOG commissioned several creative artists with a range of different styles to design posters for its posters programme. This can be seen with the “design” posters set.



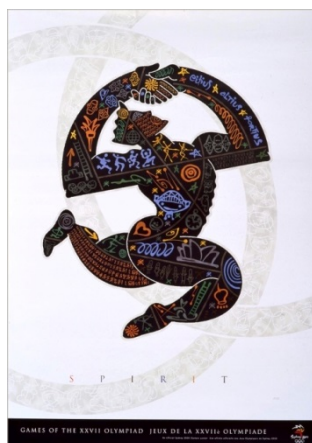
Ken Cato



Lynda Warner



David Lancashire



Mimmo Cozzolino and Phil Ellett

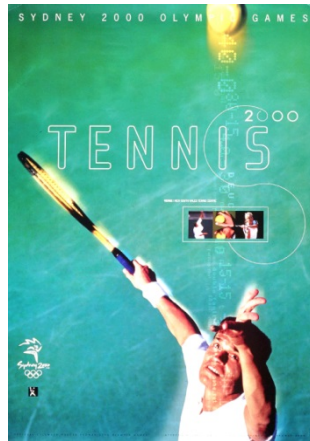


Michael Leunig

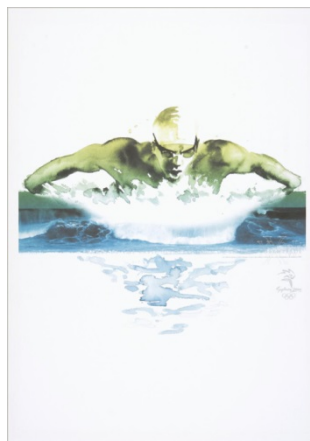
This poster shows the three mascots of this edition of the Games: Syd, Millie and Olly. It was designed by their creator, Matthew Hatton, and by the illustrator Mark Sofias. The motto of the Olympic Games Sydney 2000 – “Share the Spirit” – appears at the top.



The sports posters feature athletes in action, on different coloured backgrounds.



The eight posters of this special series commissioned by the OCOG to Ing Design (artistic director David Terrazas) each represented a sporting discipline and reaffirmed the blue water line that was central to the visual identity of these Games.



SOURCES

- “Australian Style for Olympic Posters”, *Olympic Review*, April-May 1999, vol. XXVI, no. 26, pp. 32-33.
- Margaret Timmers, *A Century of Olympic Posters*, London: V&A Publishing, 2012, p. 125.
- “Poster, ‘Sydney 2000 Olympic Games / Share the spirit / Syd, Millie, Oly’”, website of the Museum of Applied Arts & Science.
- “Sydney 2000 logo poster”, website of the Museum of Applied Arts & Science.
- *Sydney 2000 Olympic Games image guidelines*, SOCOG: Sydney, 1998, n.p.
- “Sydney Olympics print ‘Athletics’”, website of the Museum of Applied Arts & Science.

> ATHENS 2004



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist:	Wolff Olins Consultants. Red Design Consultants
Description:	<p>The poster features the emblem of the Games, created by two graphic arts studios: Wolff Olins and Red Design Consultants. It shows a crown of olive leaves – an allusion to the ancient Olympic Games, where it was awarded to the victors. This sacred tree was also the symbol of the ancient city-state of Athens.</p> <p>A symbol of peace, the olive branch forms an open circle – an invitation to come together and espouse the Olympic ideals. The blue and white colours recall the sea and the sky of the country.</p>

MORE POSTERS FROM ATHENS 2004

The series of 28 sports posters uses the sports pictograms for this edition of the Games as a recurring theme. The pictograms themselves were inspired by the Cycladic figures and black-figure vases of Ancient Greece.



At the OCOG's initiative, a panel of leading figures from the art world was established to select 28 Greek artists to create an art series consisting of the same number of posters.

SOURCES

- “The Athens olive wreath”, *Olympic Review*, October-November 1999, vol. XXVI, no. 29, [p. 4](#).
- *Official Report of the XXVIII Olympiad: Athens 2004*, Athens: ATHOC, 2005, vol. 1, [pp. 319, 323 & 329](#).

> BEIJING 2008



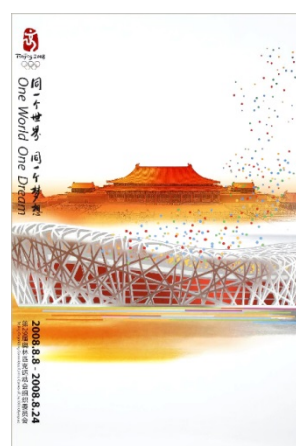
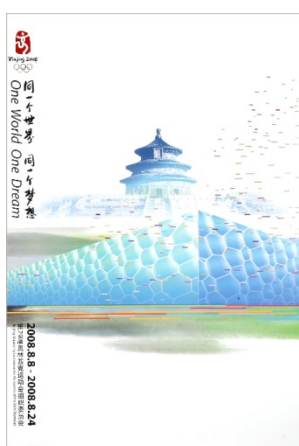
OFFICIAL POSTER

Description:	<p>The official poster is one of the posters from the set of three themed posters (see following page).</p> <p>Its shows birds flying above a mountainous landscape.</p> <p>The Dancing Beijing emblem of the Games is featured at the top of the poster. It represents a running, dancing human silhouette formed from the Chinese character jing (which means “the capital”).</p>
Context of creation:	<p>The selection of the official posters was the result of a process that took place in several stages, starting in May 2007 with a brainstorming session which brought together 71 design studios. Some 930 designs were subsequently selected to be assessed. In the end, it was the artistic team of Prof. He Jie, Vice-Dean of the Academy of Arts and Design of Tsinghua University, which was chosen.</p>
Distribution:	<p>The <i>Beijing Morning Post</i> was designated as the official publisher of the posters produced by the Organising Committee.</p>

MORE POSTERS FROM BEIJING 2008

The posters produced by the Organising Committee reflect the concepts of *Green Games*, *High-tech Games* and *People's Games*, all embodying the slogan of the Games *One World, One Dream*.

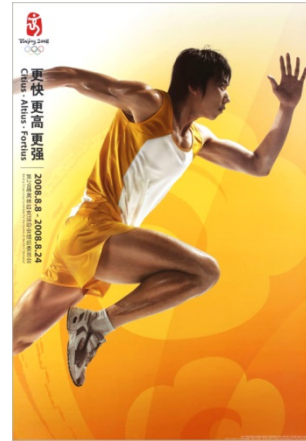
The set of three themed posters includes the one that became the official poster of the Games (see previous page), and employs the style of traditional Chinese painting. On the two other posters in this set (see below), we find the classic landmarks – the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven – and the modern venues of the Games – the National Stadium (also known as the Bird's Nest) and the National Aquatics Centre (the Water Cube). This combination underlines the link between sport and culture, between the Olympic Games and China.



There are three posters in the “people” posters set. The hospitality of the Chinese people is seen on the smiling faces of various generations. In the background are some of the country's symbolic landmarks: the Forbidden City, the Great Wall and the Temple of Heaven.



On the sports posters, the image of an athlete in action is set against a light background featuring the pictogram of the sport concerned, or a coloured background in line with the visual identity of Beijing 2008.



SOURCES

- “Beijing 2008 Olympic Games posters available July 20”, news, website of Beijing 2008, 18 July 2008.
- "[Beijing Olympics 2008 – The official posters](#)", website of chinese posters.net.
- *Official Report of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games*, Beijing: BOCOG, 2010, vol.3, [p. 265](#).

> LONDON 2012



OFFICIAL POSTER

Artist: Rachel Whiteread

Description: The poster, named LOnDOn 2012, shows circles in the Olympic colours superimposed over each other. It is a clear reference to the five rings that make up the Olympic symbol. These circles, which appear as marks made by bottles or glasses left on a table, symbolise the memory of a social meeting, such as the gathering of Olympic Games spectators or the meeting of athletes in the stadium at the Opening Ceremony.

Context of creation: The Organising Committee worked in collaboration with Tate and the Plus Tate Group – a group of 19 regional art galleries across the UK – to select artists responsible for creating the official posters of London 2012. Together, they established a list of over 100 artists to be considered. A jury composed of renowned experts in the arts field reduced this list to 12 individuals of whom six each designed a poster for the Olympic Games.

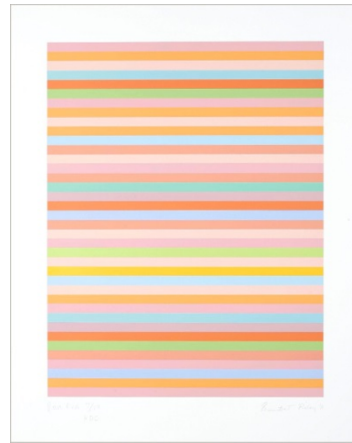
The jury's main objective was artistic excellence. Three of the six individuals who designed posters for the Olympic Games, including Rachel Whiteread, had won the Turner Prize.

Distribution: The original works were reproduced as posters and in limited edition formats, and went on sale for the general public. Sets of the posters were also sent to prestigious British art galleries and were promoted at various exhibitions.

MORE POSTERS FROM LONDON 2012



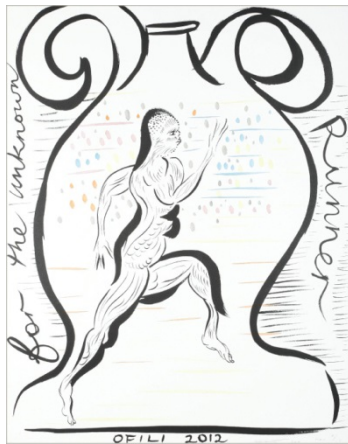
Anthea Hamilton, *Divers: Beneath the Olympic rings, two legs evoking those of a diver or synchronised swimmer emerge from a pool.*



Bridget Riley, *Rose Rose: Multi-coloured, horizontal stripes call to mind the lanes of an athletics track or a swimming pool. The relationships between the colours create a sensation of movement capturing the energy of sport and the Games.*



Martin Creed, *Work No. 1273: Using a colour palette derived from the five Olympic rings, the artist depicts ascending rectangular forms to represent an extended podium, offering places beyond third – a testament to the artist's respect for the excellence of all competing Olympic athletes.*



Chris Ofili, *For the Unknown Runner*: An athlete resembling a superhuman or mythical being sprints past the crowd. The vase is a reference to the ancient Olympic Games.



Howard Hodgkin, *Swimming*: A deep, swirling mass of blue water floods across the page. The fluidity of the brushstrokes captures the movement of water and the sensation of swimming.

SOURCES

- [“Anthea Hamilton – Divers \(2011\)”](#), [“Bridget Riley – Rose Rose \(2011\)”](#), [“Chris Ofili - For the Unknown Runner \(2011\)”](#), [“Howard Hodgkin – Swimming 2011”](#), [“Rachel Whiteread - LOnDOn 2012 \(2011\)”](#), [“Martin Creed - Work No. 1273 \(2011\)”](#), website of the Counter Editions.
- “Official Olympic and Paralympic Posters for London 2012 by UK’s top artists unveiled today”, media releases, website of London 2012, 4 November 2011.
- [“Olympic and Paralympic Posters”](#), Tate Britain Exhibition – Past Event, website of [tate.org.uk](#).

> RIO 2016



OFFICIAL POSTER

Description: On a white background, the poster features the emblem of the Olympic Games Rio 2016, created by the design agency Tátil. The emblem, which evokes the shape of Rio's iconic Sugarloaf Mountain, depicts athletes and figures coming together, with an individual and collective movement, in a warm embrace. Reflecting the core concepts of passion and transformation, the emblem conveys the notions of the Olympic spirit, exuberance, harmonious diversity and contagious energy.

MORE POSTERS FROM RIO 2016

Thirteen artists – one Colombian and 12 Brazilians – were involved in designing a set of posters for Rio 2016.



Rosa de Ouro
Beatriz Milhazes



Cores em Competição
Guto Lacaz



Umbra A-Rio
Olga de Amaral



Vibração Olímpica
Rico Lins



Pipas e Sonhos
Kobra



Olimpiadas Rio 2016
Juarez Machado

SOURCES

- “Rio 2016 Olympic Games emblem is launched during the Copacabana Beach New Year’s Eve party”, news, website of Rio 2016, 1st January 2011.
- “Rio 2016 unveils official posters for Olympic Games », news, website of Rio 2016, 12 July 2016.

> CREDITS

ABOUT THE OSC

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IMAGES

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