



Exhibition highlights

summer of love - art, fashion, and rock and roll

Wes Wilson: Association, Quicksilver Messenger Service, Grass Roots, Sopwith Camel, 1966

Wes Wilson is attributed with developing the psychedelic rock poster style, distinct for its fluid and often unreadable lettering, which broke every rule of conventional design. This illegibility was intentional; the self-designed, hand-drawn fonts of the poster artists forced audiences to stop and stare in order to fully absorb their message. In 1967, Wilson explained: "The poster is supposed to involve people in a sort of self experience." And if a person was intrigued enough, he might just find his way to the Fillmore, the Avalon, the Matrix, or any one of the other venues where the San Francisco Sound was finding a voice.



Wes Wilson (*1937), Association, Quicksilver Messenger Service, Grass Roots, Sopwith Camel, 1966

Color offset lithograph poster. Published by Bill Graham. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Gift from the estate of Fred A. Countryman, 2005.3.13. Image courtesy of Wolfgang.com © Bill Graham Archives – all rights reserved.

Bill Ham: Kinetic Light Painting, 2016–2017

The installation is an arrangement of abstract, painterly images created by the light-show artist Bill Ham specifically for the de Young Museum's presentation of the present exhibition. It involves the unique use of a transparent overhead projector, which is deployed as a tool for direct spontaneous abstract painting in improvised studio sessions.

Ham began his art of projected imagery in 1964, sharing his earliest experiments with the artists and musicians of the Pine Street neighborhood, where he settled after moving to San Francisco in the early 1960s. He is widely heralded as the originator of the psychedelic light show in the United States, first performed at the Red Dog Saloon in Virginia City, Nevada, in 1965. His work was always conceived of as part of a live theatrical performance that included music and dance. It



required simultaneous composition, execution, and viewing. Ham describes his practice as “the ultimate in participatory art,” with spaces blanketed in swirling, pulsing colored light projections that seek to unite the viewer and the work in an integrated, harmonious experience.



Bill Ham (*1932), Kinetic Light Painting, 2016–2017
Four films (color). Duration: 64 minutes. © Courtesy of the artist

Linda Gravenites: Handbag, ca. 1967

A true master of chain-stitch embroidery—a skill she learned as a young girl growing up in a Quaker community in Southern California—Linda Gravenites, alongside Jeanne Rose, emerged as a preeminent Haight-Ashbury couturier. Gravenites painstakingly crafted made-to-measure garments for her inner circle of friends, including her roommate the singer Janis Joplin. As Joplin told *Vogue* magazine in 1968, Gravenites “turns them out slowly and turns them out well and only turns them out for those she likes.”



Linda Gravenites (1939–2002), Handbag, ca. 1967
Goatskin with silk embroidery (chain stitch) and glass beads. Made for Janis Joplin. Museum purchase, Gift of the Volunteer Council, L18.98.1 Image Courtesy of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

Eva Orsini: „Watergate“-Jeans, ca. 1973

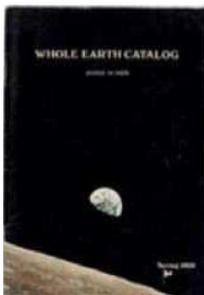
At the time Eva Orsini made these “Watergate” jeans, America was in the throes of the Watergate scandal, which ultimately revealed that President Nixon’s staff members had broken into the Democratic National Committee headquarters, leading to his resignation. The comically oversized jeans, appliquéd in patriotic red, white, and blue stars-and-stripes fabrics, show an exaggerated profile of the infamous “Nixon nose” and the words “I am not a crook” stamped along the waistband.



Eva Orsini (1931–2007), „Watergate“-Jeans, ca. 1973
Cotton denim with printed, hand-drawn, stamped cotton plain weave appliqués. A submission for the Levi’s® Denim Art Contest. © Collection of Levi Strauss & Co. Archives. Image courtesy of Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

Stewart Brand, *Whole Earth Catalog: Access to Tools*, 1969

As members of the counterculture relocated from the Haight-Ashbury into surrounding communities, a new publication—the *Whole Earth Catalog* developed by Stewart Brand in 1968—served as a link, joining together those with a shared interest in sustainable lifestyles through a textual “information service” that appeared biannually until 1970.



Stewart Brand (*1938), *Whole Earth Catalog: Access to Tools*, 1969
Offsetlithografie, Buchcover. © Courtesy of Mickey McGowan, San Raphael, CA. Image courtesy of Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

Victor Moscoso, „Incredible Poetry Reading“, Ferlinghetti, Wieners, Meltzer, Whalen, Welch, McClure, Ginsberg, 1968

Victor Moscoso’s masterful manipulation of color culminated in his “animated posters.” The artist overlapped red, yellow, and blue images in successive positions. When lights of alternating blue and red are flashed on these posters, they cancel out the corresponding printed color giving the illusion of animation. Moscoso readily admits that the idea was not at first deliberate: as the story goes, a friend hung one such poster near flickering Christmas lights and Moscoso noticed



that the image appeared to be moving. He is also quick to note that it was an accident only once—in subsequent posters the effect was quite intentional.



Victor Moscoso (*1936), „Incredible Poetry Reading“, Ferlinghetti, Wieners, Meltzer, Whalen, Welch, McClure, Ginsberg, 1968

Facsimile reproduction of color offset lithograph “animated” poster. Published by Neon Rose. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Gift of the Gary Westford Collection, in honor of Victor Moscoso and all the poets, 2017.7.27. © Neon Rose, 1967. victormoscoso.com

Birgitta Bjerke (100% Birgitta): Wedding dress, 1972

The Swede Birgitta Bjerke is not really a child of the Summer of Love, but of Carnaby Street. In 1967, she was still in Swinging London when Twiggy and the Rolling Stones ruled. But in her crochet fashion she combined psychedelic folk hippie flair with rich color combinations that clearly allude to Nordic modernism. She travelled to hippie meeting places, including Amsterdam, Positano, Morocco, and Ibiza, where she taught Joni Mitchell how to crochet. She herself crocheted vests for Eric Clapton and The Who singer Roger Daltrey, designed a collection for the Paris couturier Louis Féraud, whereupon she met Danny Rifkin, the manager of the Grateful Dead, in London, who brought her to San Francisco. She had her most productive creative period there. Her wedding dress from 1972 breathes the spirit of the coming Art Nouveau revival and glam rock.



Birgitta Bjerke (100% Birgitta): Wedding dress, 1972
Crocheted wool, Collection of Barbara Kayfetz



Herb Greene, *The Charlatans*, 1967, from the Portfolio *The Acid Age of San Francisco Rock*

A 1965 poster designed by Charlatans autoharpist George Hunter and keyboardist Michael Ferguson to announce their band's folk-rock residency at the edge of the civilized world at the Red Dog Saloon in Virginia City, Nevada, is now recognized as the first example of what would become known as the psychedelic rock poster. Long before the Charlatans rehearsed their musical set, band members worked to cultivate public personae rooted in San Francisco's storied past. From their wide-brimmed hats, bandanas, and bolo ties down to their three-piece suits, watch chains, and cowboy boots, the Charlatans assumed the air of Victorian cowboys. Over the next few years they would continue to refine this look, eventually posing for a series of images.



Herb Greene (*1942), *The Charlatans*, 1967, from the portfolio *The Acid Age of San Francisco Rock*, printed 2006

Gelatin silver print. Printed by Palm Press, Inc. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Gift of the Lasdon Foundation, 2016.87.13. © Herb Greene

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