

PRESS RELEASE

MONTREAL THROUGH THE EYES OF VITTORIO: 50 YEARS OF CITY LIFE AND GRAPHIC DESIGN AT THE McCORD MUSEUM

Work by internationally celebrated Montreal poster artist Vittorio Fiorucci is presented at the McCord Museum

Montreal, September 23, 2015 – From September 25, 2015 to April 10, 2016, the McCord Museum presents *Montreal Through the Eyes of Vittorio: 50 Years of City Life and Graphic Design*, an exhibition inviting the public to discover the graphic work of Vittorio Fiorucci.

An internationally renowned Montreal artist of Italian origin, Vittorio Fiorucci marked great moments in the exciting social and cultural life of Montreal from the 1960s to the end of the last century. His style is distinguished by its simple shapes, bright colours, humour and amazing characters. Vittorio is well known for creating *Victor*, the little green man of the Just for Laughs Festival.

Curated by Marc H. Choko, the exhibition consists of almost 125 posters, photographs, illustrations, magazines, toys and comics, most of them from the collection of Judith Adams, Vittorio's partner. Screenings, videos and interview excerpt are also part of the presentation.

"Vittorio's work is that of one of the greatest contemporary poster artists. It not only marked the Montreal landscape for several generations, it also reflected changes in our city and society," says Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord Museum.

The love affair between an artist and his city

Divided into five zones, the exhibition offers a journey through the unique world of Vittorio Fiorucci.

The zone entitled *Montreal, cultural metropolis* immediately plunges the visitor into Montreal's flourishing cultural world in the early 1960s, during which Vittorio's vocation as a poster artist emerged. The development of a many artistic disciplines in Montreal at the time opened unexpected horizons for the artist: first cinema, then theatre, contemporary dance and popular music. The public will see the fruit of many collaborations, particularly with the Opéra de Montréal, the Just for Laughs Festival, the Montreal International Film Festival, and in the making of album covers for major Quebec artists, such as Pierre Létourneau and the group Offenbach.

Vittorio always worked from his passions and interests. The next zone, *Vittorio's passion*, introduces visitors to the social environment in which he evolved and his great passions: the Montreal of European restaurants and cafés, sexual liberation, women, friendship, cars and the mixing of cultures. These themes were sources of inspiration and gave him an opportunity to experiment with photography, comics and collages.

Nearly 15 years after his arrival in Quebec, Vittorio spoke of his attachment to Montreal, saying he never wanted to leave. He quickly became recognized as a Montreal artist, and his career contributed to the international reputation of the city. The zone *Vittorio the ambassador* highlights photographs taken by the artist for publications and famous magazines, including *Time*.

The zone *Montreal, close to Vittorio's heart* reflects Vittorio's commitment to humanitarian and charitable concerns. Vittorio was not a man of great causes, but he liked to create posters

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Exhibition Poster © Paprika 2015



Vittorio Fiorucci
Verdi – Un bal masqué
Opéra de Montréal
1990
Silkscreen
Lent by the Collection of Judith Adams



Vittorio Fiorucci
Mort accidentelle d'un anarchiste
Théâtre Jean-Duceppe
1980
Silkscreen
Lent by the Collection of Judith Adams

flavoured with social and political criticism, even taking positions on international issues. The public will have a chance to see two of his most memorable creations: *Hold-up à Mirabel* and *Keep the Atomic Bomb White*.

The exhibition ends with the zone *Vittorio, prodigal son*, which takes the visitor into the colourful childlike world that greatly inspired his creative process. Among other objects, visitors will see Vittorio's toy robots.

In collaboration with Les Éditions de l'Homme, the McCord Museum has published a beautifully illustrated book on the life and career of the artist, *Through the Eyes of Vittorio*, written by Marc H. Choko, Curator of the exhibition. The book is available in French and English. Activities and lectures are also available in conjunction with the exhibition. A description and full schedule are included with this release.

About Vittorio Fiorucci

Vittorio Fiorucci was a Canadian poster artist from Montréal. He was born on November 2, 1932 in Zadar, Croatia (then Zara, Italy). During World War II, when Zara was bombed, Fiorucci and his family fled to Venice, Italy, where his father came from. In 1951, after deciding to emigrate to the New World, Fiorucci arrived in Montréal, Canada. In the mid-1960s, he was an established artist and by 1980 had become one of the most renowned poster designers in the world. His exhibitions were seen in North America as well as Europe. In 1982 he entered the Encyclopaedia Universalis and in 1994 the Who's Who in Graphic Design. Besides posters, Fiorucci did illustration works for magazines, cartoons, children's books, animation. Vittorio Fiorucci died in Montreal on July 30, 2008. A Montreal street was named in memory of him in 2011.

About the McCord Museum

The McCord Museum is dedicated to the preservation, study and appreciation of Montreal's history, as recounted by its people, artists and communities living in the city's past and present. The McCord Museum is home to one of the largest historical collections in North America, consisting of First Peoples objects, costumes and textiles, photographs, decorative and visual artworks, and textual archives, totalling more than 1,450,000 million artefacts. The McCord Museum produces exciting exhibitions that engage visitors from Montreal, Canada, and beyond by offering them a contemporary look at the world. The McCord Museum also offers educational and cultural activities, as well as innovative projects on the Internet. ***McCord Museum: Our People, Our Stories.***

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Interviews possible with Suzanne Sauvage, President and Chief Executive Officer of the McCord Museum, and Marc H. Choko, Curator of the exhibition.

Photographs available at bit.ly/1FXMakn

Source and information:

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The McCord Museum is grateful for the support of the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec, the Conseil des arts de Montréal, Accès Montréal, CAA, and its media partners, *24 Heures*, *The Gazette* and *La Vitrine Culturelle*. The Museum also thanks the exhibition's major sponsors: Astral Out of Home, Infopresse, Panoram Italia and the Italian Cultural Institute of Montreal, as well as its exhibition partners: Leonardo da Vinci Centre, National Congress of Italian-Canadians, National Film Board of Canada (NFB), Opéra de Montréal, Société de transport de Montréal, and Le Cochon Caché Porchetta Comptoir Gourmand.



ACTIVITIES AND TALKS OFFERED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS EXHIBITION:

Montreal Through the Eyes of Vittorio: Meet Marc H. Choko

Wednesday, September 30, 2015, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Marc H. Choko reveals the inspiration and process behind this unique project. An expert in poster art, he will share his thoughts with the public on the use of the medium in both Montreal and Vittorio's work. This conversation about the exhibition will be in French and followed by a bilingual question period.

McCord After Hours: Urban Montreal

Thursday, October 15, 2015, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The evening's theme is graphic art, design and street art, and members of the public are invited to soak up Montreal's dynamic cultural life while exploring their artistic side! A silkscreen workshop, gifts and a group fresco await attendees. Museum admission is free for Members, and a free beverage will be offered. Appetizers will be available in limited quantities. Members of the public are invited to purchase advance tickets at \$16 on LaVitrine.com, \$20 at the door.

Montreal Through the Eyes of Vittorio: Montreal's Artistic Community in the 1950s – 1960s

Wednesday, November 11, 2015, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The McCord Museum will show the NFB short documentary *Artist in Montreal*, with the screening attended by artists and other speakers who will shed light on the leading figures, meeting places and ideas that inspired the city and its creative community in the 1950s and 60s. The film, produced in English and directed by NFB filmmaker Jean Palardy, himself a painter and art historian, recounts a time of artistic excitement and dynamism in Montreal. The film will be shown in English and followed by a bilingual question period.

Les Belles Soirées

Presented at the McCord Museum, in collaboration with the Université de Montréal.

2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

To make reservations or find more information, please visit bellessoirees.umontreal.ca.

Paid activity.

Reservations available at special rates for McCord Museum Members. Please call 514-343-2020.

Through the Eyes of Vittorio

Wednesday, November 18, 2015

By Marc H. Choko, curator of the exhibition *Montreal Through the Eyes of Vittorio:*

50 Years of City Life and Graphic Design

A visit to the exhibition is included following the lecture.

A self-taught poster designer who loved life in the city, Vittorio Fiorucci was inspired by the cultural dynamism of his adopted city, Montreal. His style was outside the mainstream, which set his art apart and gave it a timeless quality. This talk by Mark H. Choko will illustrate, through the artist's posters, a key period in the history of Montreal, a city in full swing.

Winter 2016 (date TBD)

Round Table on the Future of the Poster

Building on its presentation of the major exhibition of works by renowned poster artist Vittorio, the McCord Museum is bringing together representatives of the design and communications communities to discuss issues surrounding this advertising medium. How is the career of a poster artist defined in 2016? What is the future of the poster in a media landscape dominated by social media and electronic devices?

Make a stop at the Boutique!

To mark this exhibition, the McCord Museum, in collaboration with Les Éditions de l'Homme, has published *Through the Eyes of Vittorio*, a beautifully illustrated book written by Marc H. Choko, Curator of the exhibition, on the life and career of the artist. Available in English and French versions at the Museum Boutique for \$39.95, the book contains many of the artist's works and creations, some never before displayed or published.

A limited-edition run of 100 calendars featuring a number of highly original, never-before-published drawings by Vittorio, will be offered by the Boutique. Posters and postcards displaying the artist's works round out the selection carried.

An appetizing offer from the McCord Museum's Café Bistro

For the occasion, the Museum's Café Bistro is preparing a themed menu of delicious dishes inspired by Italy and its Mediterranean cuisine.