

The Art of Advertisement

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Tomorrow (Aug. 12) the Newcomb Art Gallery will debut *American Letterpress: The Art of Hatch Show Print*, an exhibition that fuses Americana with the art of advertisement.



Vivid posters from Hatch Show Print translate print advertisements into works of art. The pieces are on display in Newcomb Art Gallery's new exhibition. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

The exhibit of 121 posters and 29 hand-crafted wooden printing blocks will be on display courtesy of Nashville's Hatch Show Print, one of the nation's oldest continuously operating letterpress shops.

Founded in 1879, the company is recognized for producing vibrant depictions of music royalty, from Elvis Presley to Herbie Hancock, as well as everyday ads. The exhibit provides a glimpse into the nation's past, as whimsical advertisements for vaudeville shows and coffee brands boast products of a different time.

"The posters act as a window into American popular culture and as a reference to

the culture of the South," says Shelley Boles, Newcomb Art Gallery's senior program coordinator for education.

The pieces are on display through the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Services in partnership with the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum. Additional funding is provided by the Smithsonian Community Grant Program supported by the MetLife Foundation in order to host a variety of events complementing the exhibition.

Charles Lovell, director of the Newcomb Art Gallery, predicts, "The Smithsonian's prestigious program will have broad appeal not only for the university community but also for the greater New Orleans community as themes of the show tie into the city's music and culture."

The exhibition runs from Aug. 12 through Oct. 11. A number of special events are scheduled in conjunction with the show including a talk by Hatch Print designer and manager Jim Sherraden on Sept. 2, a reception featuring live music by Gal Holiday and the Honky Tonk Revue on Sept. 9, and a panel discussion on Sept. 30. These and other programs will take place on Wednesday evenings when the gallery is open until 8 p.m.

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