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Affordable collectibles: vintage poster show in Hong Kong

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More than 40 examples of poster art dating to early 20th century on display

Lovers of vintage posters are in for a treat at an exhibition in Central.

The show at Picture This Gallery, “The Art of Advertising - An exhibition of 20th Century Original Vintage Advertising Posters”, comprises more than 40 vintage original posters from Europe and Asia.



Banque Industrielle de Chine (1920). Artwork by Georges Duval, HK\$45,000

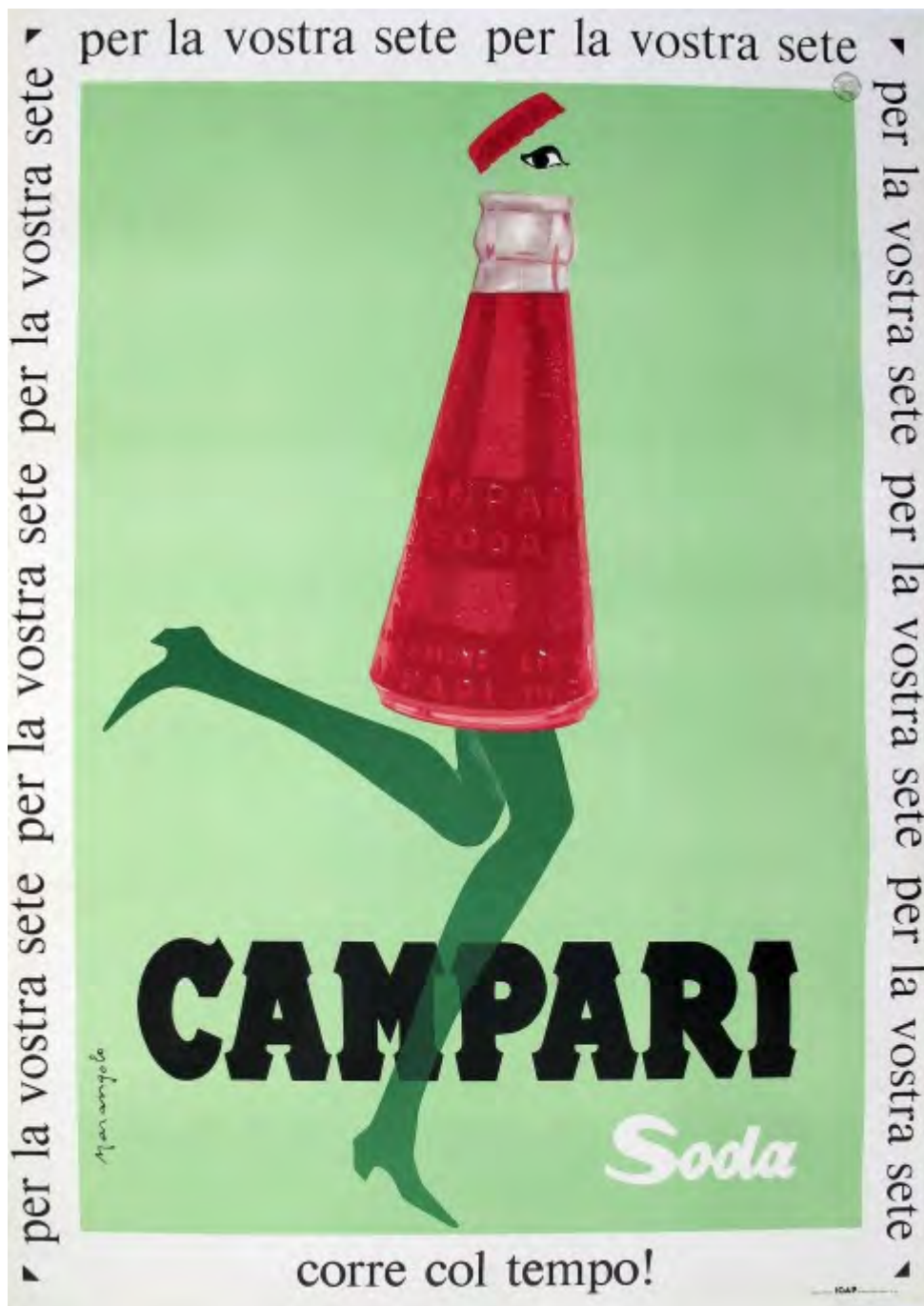


Pneu Velo Michelin le Meilleur le Moins Cher (1910). HK\$25,000

The oldest in the collection is a Michelin tyres poster litho-printed in Paris in 1910. Featuring the French tyre company's globally recognised ambassador, Bibendum – better known as Michelin Man – it promotes its bicycle tyres as *Le Meilleur, Le Moins Cher* (“The Best, the Least Expensive”). The mascot was conceptualised by brothers and company founders Édouard and André Michelin when they took part in the Lyons Universal Exhibition in 1894 and noticed an evocatively shaped pile of tyres on their stand. Years later André added some limbs and a head to the image, forming the iconic character that's been integral to the company's brand since then.

Also in the collection is a rare poster advertising a bond issue for the French-owned,

Chinese-based Banque Industrielle de Chine. Made in 1920, it uses Chinese script and a huge gong to deliver a “roll up, roll up, come and buy some bonds” message.



Campari Soda (1968). Artwork by fashion illustrator Franz Marangolo. HK8,000



Champagne Joseph Perrier (1930s). Artwork by J. Stall. HK8,000

It's an eye-catching collection, featuring bright, bold and upbeat posters by artists including Bernard Villemot, Henri Matisse, Victor Vasarely, Guy Georget and Hervé Morvan - for brands including Guinness, Campari, Martini, Perrier, Gitanes, Bally, BP and London Buses.

Poster advertising has a relatively brief history, beginning in the 1870s when Paris-based artist and lithographer Jules Chéret developed a break through printing process allowing artists to mass-produce intensely coloured and textured images in a large and economical format. By the end of the 19th century posters had become a dominant means of advertising and communication throughout European and American cities. They were a striking and cost effective way for companies and other promoters to communicate with their audience.



Wing Hop Chinese Candies – High Grade Assorted (1954). HK,400



Louis Vuitton Classic – Waddesdon Manor (2004). Designer: Razzia. HK\$4,800

“Able to reflect the changing culture of the times, original poster art is much more than just decorative art – it captures the essence of bygone eras,” says the gallery’s owner, Christopher Bailey. Bailey says it’s not surprising vintage poster art is becoming increasingly popular and collectible. “They are now highly sought after by collectors and investors and the rarer and most highly prized posters are becoming increasingly expensive and difficult to find.”

The show runs until August 22. All posters are available for viewing and purchase online or at Picture This Gallery, 13/F, 9 Queen’s Rd Central. Tel: 2525 2820.

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