

## THE ART OF PORTRAIT IN MODERN POSTER: ASPECTS OF CREATION

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The analysis of the artistic features of the portrait poster, the main means of its expressiveness, and the identification of its role in the culture of modern society have been provided. The compositional schemes, and visual and technical methods used in creating social and advertising portrait posters, with the aim of a certain sociocultural influence on the target audience, have been identified.

**Keywords:** portrait poster, graphic design, artistic expressiveness, image creation, information society.

### Introduction.

The most important features of the modern world are systemic changes in the communication space. Preference in public communication is given to bright visual images as powerful means of communication to influence the emotional state of a person, the motives of his activity, actions, and the formation of new social norms and values. An important place in social communication and social advertising is given to the portrait genre in poster art.

A portrait poster is a unique type of poster art which has characteristic pictorial, decorative, symbolic, and compositional features and needs thorough analysis and systematization.

The interdisciplinary scientific discourse considers the portrait poster as a certain transformation into the mass culture of the artistic portrait, which is a special form of humanities where social, aesthetic, ethical, and philosophical ideas about the individual in the history of culture are expressed. The portrait genre has a unique artistic language that enables a visual understanding of a person. Art widely uses the conventional language of cultural stereotypes of perceiving a person by others, and highlighting or

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hyperbolizing some features of a person's appearance helps to identify the image with a specific personality. Culture, style, and era act as a whole set of restrictions and rules for the artist, who, by his worldview and talent, manifests his individuality in the portrait. Accordingly, the portrait poster, although to a lesser extent, also has the mentioned contexts. The main field of its application is advertising and politics, sociocultural in particular. So, for example, poster graphics with a portrait image are often used on banners, exhibition stands, and posters dedicated to important dates.

### **Setting objectives.**

Poster art is a type of artistic creativity that ideally represents an inseparable unity of social and aesthetics. Social gives the designer the topic of the poster. Aesthetic determines the choice of visual media, among which are artistic techniques of graphics, painting, text, font, and color. Creating a social poster begins with the idea of creating an artistic image. The formation of an artistic image in a poster starts with the topic selection. As a kind of propaganda art, the poster cannot be dedicated to the past or project the future – it should only speak “about today”. The poster topic must not only be contemporary but also viable. Otherwise, the poster loses its leading persuasive function. The genre-thematic specificity of the poster is inseparable from the idea as its main content; therefore, among the genre of portraits, the posters that convey a significant social context, concept, hypothesis, or the inner world of the depicted person, but also with a particular meaning, prevail. A poster, in fact, is nothing more than the realization image of a vital idea with the help of its inherent visual means. It is critical that the idea in a social poster can be quickly read by the viewers, as they are unlikely to have much time to consider the poster. For this, the poster often has a verbal component, and sometimes it dominates. In this case, the text should be concise, readable, and meet the task.

The central image of a person in most posters mainly plays the role of an allegory, a symbol, that carries an emotional load, which actually reveals the meaning and intention of the artist [3].

Through the human image, the author reveals not only various concepts, but also points to objects that are different from a portrait image. A portrait image of a specific person in poster art: a historical figure, a prominent figure, or a famous creator through graphic design, aims to create a certain idea, which is

embodied through the artistic image of a specific person, his personality traits, and this type of poster art belongs to the poster genre – a portrait.

A vivid example of the above is the cultural project of Professor V. Lesnyak's (KSADA) workshop "Born in Ukraine", represented by a developed portrait posters gallery of famous people (Figure 1). The project is the author's understanding of personalities; it demonstrates generalization, attention to folk traditions, and a sense of time. The presented highly professional works aim both at specialists in the field of graphic design and at the general public, which significantly expands the social impact of the posters. The artistic language of these posters is not overloaded with unnecessary meanings, which ensures easy reading of the artistic and figurative semantic interpretations laid down by the author by a wider audience.

The project goal is to acquaint the general public with the fate of many outstanding Ukrainians: cultural figures, scientists, and artists, who made a significant contribution to the development of humanity with their knowledge, talent, and life. Some of the characters became a real discovery for the project authors as they were the ones who encouraged us to talk about those who can and should be considered the personification of Ukraine.

So, we interpret the term "poster" as a large-format paper publication that combines pictorial and font elements and is intended for graphic communication. As synonyms of this term advertisers and graphic designers often use the term "poster" in the sense of "modern advertising poster", and the term "print" which more closely conveys the nature of the circulation poster and marks the technological difference of the poster among other carriers of information about the brand, such as Internet banners, TV commercials, small carriers of advertising information.

If the poster has an artistic appeal, it inspires aesthetic pleasure, but if the communication in the poster is built effectively, and thoughtfully, the poster motivates to action. The method of attracting attention to the poster is one of the most important professional problems of the graphic designer. Therefore, new methods of psychological involvement of the viewer in the communicative process are currently being actively searched for. One of these ways is to use a portrait.

It should be noted that the traditional form of the poster is undergoing significant changes under the pressure of Internet advertising. In this



Figure 1 – A series of posters by Professor Volodymyr Lesnyak (KSADA) “Born in Ukraine”

regard, designers are actively looking for innovative communication moves. The same bright poster image with variations in color and graphic elements can be used not only in traditional size posters but also on a wide variety of advertising media: on billboards, T-shirts, packages, small stickers, flyers, and other advertising information media, as well as on advertising banners in a virtual environment, which generally has a stronger effect on the target audience.

### **Research results and discussion.**

Graphic designers use a variety of portrait solutions that convey emotions and mood in different ways, which serve as a method of communicating certain informational content to the target audience. The symbolic language of the image, color, shape, and silhouette actually imparts a variety of meanings. It should be emphasized that any portrait poster should focus attention on itself since it is created precisely for the purpose of making a certain impact on a wide audience, containing images, in particular, faces that make an impression, are memorable, and their use is understandable to the audience and connoisseurs. In addition, this art object should pursue a specific goal, because in the multifacetedness of this type of graphic design there is a risk of losing the clarity of the idea that needs to be conveyed to the viewer.

The main structural and compositional elements of posters are slogans, color scheme, and artistic image, which actually conveys the main idea of the visual content.

When creating a symbolic painted image of a portrait poster, the designer focuses on the idea of people for people. That is, a drawn portrait of a person, an abstract silhouette, or a stain is always an emotional and figurative symbolic speech of a person, which is directed to the relevant social community with a specific informational purpose.

A portrait photo poster is considered by the authors as a separate category and is not taken into account in this article. In our time, political and church graphic images are often contrasted in order to highlight the extent to which a portrait poster affects a person's emotional state. Such a comparison most clearly conveys the meaning of the image of emotions and symbols that complement the portrait. The presence of a nimbus near the head as a symbol of the holiness of the depicted character is one of the

main features of the Orthodox poster. Such a symbol affects the viewer's subconscious, making them immediately feel the spirituality of the image, and also affects the person's emotional state.

In contrast to the church image, political posters need the reproduction of positive emotions for greater persuasiveness; therefore, only the characters belonging to the highest echelons of power are strictly emotionless. There are many images of smiling faces of ordinary citizens on the posters. At the same time, a monumental portrait or a generalized figure occupies most of the poster's space to emphasize the importance of this person in the ordinary people lives. All other characters, objects, or subjects serve only as entourage or staffage [4].

The formation and development of the poster are determined by the following factors: socioeconomic, political, ergonomic, typological (functional), technical, and aesthetic (cultural). Understanding the specific design of the advertising portrait poster of the 20th-century beginning and the clarification of its role in forming a positive image of the region, in particular in European countries, proved that tourist posters clearly reflect the features of the time when they were created. One of the main poster art characteristics is its high visual expressiveness. For this, the following artistic means are used: stylization, illustrativeness, decorativeism, image simplification, and identification of the object features. The poster as a means of visual communication uses such techniques as metaphor, symbol, and sign, which reveal certain problems by means of emotional load and metaphorical meaning. A leading role in the development of the advertising portrait poster in the 20th-century beginning was played by the French school, which was followed by artists all over the world.

Later, other poster schools with their own stylistic features emerged (for example, in France and Belgium, the decorative and floral style prevails). Based on the style evolution in the European poster of the early 20th century, it can be concluded that the general feature of the poster of that time was free interpretation and metaphorical understanding of the content. The art poster, rooted in the culture of many European states, is one of the defining sociocultural phenomena today, representing a significant number of different artistic approaches, experiments, political views, and positions regarding the phenomenon of art itself, the features of "national eidetics", etc., which outlines the vectors for further research and makes it possible

to use new approaches and means of the image in the art of portrait poster. The understanding of the European poster art of the early 20th century, its diversity, originality, and stylistic features contributes to the forecasting and defining modern trends in the development of the portrait poster using the ethnographic and national features of the depicted country or region.

When creating portrait sketches of officials and business elites to discredit them, opposition periodicals use stable, negatively colored metaphoric characteristics of the visual modality, which are based on such qualitative semantic features as indifference, lethargy, inability to feel, and cruelty.

Graphic designers are quick to respond to technological innovations. Not so long ago, the technology of laser cutting of various materials has appeared and makes it possible to cut a stack of paper along the line specified by the designer and obtain poster sheets of the most complex configuration. The unusual form of a poster sheet, of course, attracts the viewer's attention and helps to carry out effective communication. Such innovative posters, created by young graphic designers, people saw in 2008 at festivals in the Italian city of Turin (Torino PosterFestival).

In the systematization of non-verbal communicative signs of ethnologist, biologist, and anthropologist M. L. Butovska, a symbolic channel of communication is distinguished, capable of transmitting such signs as clothes, jewelry, tattoos, and other outwardly visible manifestations. However, last class of signs is recognized with the help of a visual analyzer. But the very idea of the need for a semiotic understanding of these observed signs is beyond doubt. G. E. Kreidlin singles out a special section of non-verbal semiotics – “systemology”, that is, the science of objects surrounding the world (the appearance of people around, their anatomical features, clothes, shoes, accessories, hairstyles, etc.), about their content and functions in process of social communication to denote the entire set of visual semiotic objects typical for the subject.

Petrova E. A. is a theorist in psychology who studies the psychology of a person based on a portrait image. The appearance of a person on a poster medium is considered in Ukrainian psychology “as a set of anatomical, functional, and social features accessible to certain sensory reflection. Appearance includes physical appearance (external body), social design of appearance (clothing, hairstyle, etc.), and expressive and impressive depicted movements, which, being external characteristics of a person, become the



subject of interpretation in interpersonal communication as a single “visual text of communication”. The latter provides meaningful information that conveys the mood of the entire poster. Psychosemiotics of appearance, according to E. Petrova, includes three visual and communicative systems:

- 1) habitus (physical appearance, anatomical features of the face, other parts of the body, constitution, etc.);
- 2) social design of appearance (clothes, shoes, jewelry, hairstyle, accessories, glasses, etc.);
- 3) any significant depicted movements (facial expressions, gestures, walk, postures).

It follows from the foregoing that in a phrase, the image with its psychological and cognitive meaning also finds an artistic aesthetic relevance, and therefore is filled with a pragmatic essence. We represent images of the character’s visual behavior through mass media, aimed at actualizing the sensory fabric of the image of consciousness, i.e. aimed at restoring perceptual and emotionally experienced traces in the reader’s memory and arousing predictable associations.

The embodiment of the image in the portrait poster takes place through naturalistic portraiting, its combination with additional images, the use of various graphic techniques, the formation of a portrait from small objects or raster spots, and symbolic and associative interpretation.

Iconic representatives of visual behavior images correspond to the main properties broadcasted by modern mass media: spectacularity and theatricality (Figure 2, Figure 3). In the texts of modern media, they perform functions similar in many respects to verbal representatives of visually observed non-verbal forms of behavior: evaluative, factual and symbolic, affiliation, creation of a visual communicative portrait of a person (correspondingly, the function of typification and individualization), replacement of verbal information, modeling of things, gestural behavior of the text characters, mythological manipulation, modeling of emotional situations. The iconic component of the political code text, complicated by codes of visual behavior, enriches the media text with pragmatic content and therefore has a special stylistic significance [9].

It should be noted that the impact of the depicted portrait often depends on the perspective, according to the way it is presented in the graphic medium. The perspective from below adds greatness and significance to the allegoric



character symbol of a generalized (or particular) human hero. The lowered horizon line in such compositions accordingly affects the reduction of the size and scale of the background elements, staffing, entourage, and other auxiliary elements, thus creating a clear hierarchy of images and contrasting the personified greatness of the surrounding everyday life diversity [4].

Poster art expresses its individuality and uniqueness as a carrier of a visual image and is one of the most effective means of forming and influencing mass culture. Definitely, this is the value of a cultural portrait poster. Through visual portrait images of prominent figures, poster artists seek to reveal the essence and significance of their activities. Using the graphic design means in the concise and comprehensive forms of the poster, the poster artists reveal the inner world of the hero and the nature of his creativity. Art connoisseur Lyudmila Rozhko-Pavlenko noted: “It is known that a poster is a work of art, which is characterized by the laconicism of the depicted means, the dynamism and sharpness of the composition, and decorativeness. The poster attracts the attention of artists with the freedom of visual language, and the possibility of direct appeal to the audience. Of course, in order for this dialogue to occur, the poster must fully reveal the idea that conveys the whole aim of the artist, and it is performed in the most accessible, concise, and symbolic forms” [3]. Undoubtedly, in order to properly recreate a historical figure, poster artists do extensive research work. Except for the artistic study and outline of the individual’s physiological nature, knowledge and insight into the legacy of this figure are of particular importance.

A portrait image in poster art is distinguished by the way the image is embodied and the means of artistic expression. The traditional method of depicting a person (face or bust) is naturalistic. The basis of the artistic quality of such posters is the aesthetic load, composition of the image and text, as well as highly professional execution technique. For example, the portrait poster for the movie “The Neon Demon”, which won the nomination “Best Conceptual Solution”, emphasized the idea of using color, which is one of the most impressive features of the film, and it was most emphasized when creating the poster (Figure 4, a).

Portrait poster for the biographical film “de Palma”, winner in the nomination “Artistic Value”. This artistic poster conveys the feeling that the audience is watching the events of his life together with the main character,

which creates an atmosphere of understanding the basics of the entire biographical film (Figure 4, b).

In the modern portrait poster, the combination of a realistic graphic or photographic image with details and objects that reveal the essence or occupation of the individuals is common. In some cases, the collage technique is used.

In the research, another popular technique for the embodiment of character portrait images was discovered – the mosaic formation of a portrait from objects or symbols indicating the character’s activity [5].

The use of various technical and stylistic techniques of easel graphics in the poster has a huge aesthetic and emotional load. The portraits embodied in the technique of wood engraving, and etching, executed as a living ink sketch are endowed with high artistic expressiveness. Such tools affect the emotional state of a person, bringing warm emotions associated with manual production, unlike the use of photos in a poster. Representatives of this style are Otto Kummert (in the poster for his exhibition “Show Your Face” (1988)) (Figure 5, a, b).

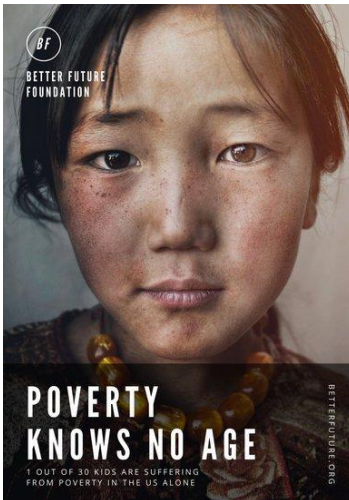
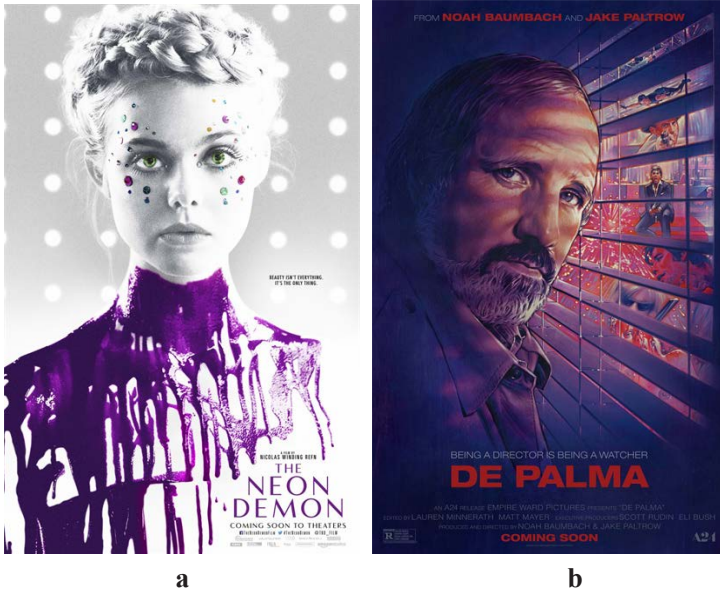


Figure 2 – Poster for the protection of homeless children in the “Better Future” project



Figure 3 – World No Tobacco Day ad compares two sides of a woman’s face to show the devastating effects of smoking



**Figure 4 – Portrait posters, winners of the 2019 film poster art competition: a – to the «Neon Demon» movie; b – to the biographical film “de Palma”**

The Ukrainian graphic artist who used this style is Bohdan Pukiya with a series of posters “Outstanding Graphics of Ukraine” (2010) (Figure 6) [6]. Such poster images are usually supplemented with a font signature, which is associatively connected with personalities and their creativity.

The symbolic method of filling the outline of a person with images that indicate the characteristics of the hero is often used. They can have a substantive or ornamental character. An example is Shapoor Hatami’s poster dedicated to the 800th anniversary of the Persian poet and thinker Rumi (2007) (Figure 7) [7].

The conventional silhouette of the writer is taken from an old miniature; a decorative oriental ornament forms the outlines of an open robe. Arabic elm with a Rooney quote fills the chest, and they are the composition center of the whole sheet. At the same time, the face remains a clean plane, echoing the book in the hands [8].



Figure 5 – Otto Kummert “Show your face”, 1988

### Conclusion.

Art widely uses the conventional language of the stereotypical perception culture of a portrait image of a person on a poster and a community by highlighting (or hyperbolizing) some external features of an individual, helping to identify it with a specific event, or action. That is why it can be stated that the portrait poster has a significant impact on the consciousness of society. The embodiment of a particular person’s image in a poster through interpreting his image in the graphic and symbolic language of the poster is a separate type of this art form, which we define as a “portrait poster”.

Having studied the effect of the portrait poster on the target audience, it should be noted that:

- a humorous portrait image or an indirect portrait advertising image loses its impact faster than ordinary portrait posters;
- portraits with transparent advertising text immediately give a sense of reliability;
- the use of portrait images without an accompanying text signature is unacceptable; signatures must contain the name of the advertising offer and its essence;

– a color photograph on a portrait poster is much more effectively perceived and remembered than black and white; portrait photos in advertising attract more attention than painted portraits.

The main requirements for portraits in poster art are a clear display of the inherent features of the depicted people and the transfer of their character, as well as the conformity of the image and technique of presenting the portrait in the poster to the expected perception by the audience. The target audience of poster art depends on the design and content of the graphic medium.

Young people prefer bright and dynamic posters, while the older generation prefers calm and static ones. A portrait image in a poster has the following psychological effect on viewers: it holds more attention, and the mood of the depicted character is reflected on the viewer, which helps to control the correct perception of additional information.

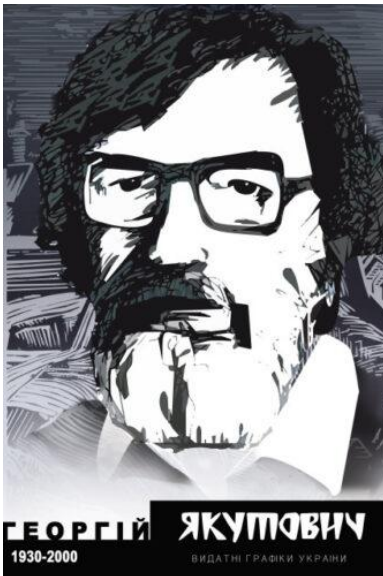


Figure 6 – Portrait poster of Georgiy Yakutovych. From the series “Outstanding graphics of Ukraine” by Bohdan Pukiya



Figure 7 – Poster by Shapoor Hatami, dedicated to the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Persian poet and thinker Runi, 2007

The optimal rules for developing a poster are as follows:

- a clear concept of the poster;
- the main source of information is an illustration with a short text;
- minimal use of images;
- a lot of free space;
- use of bright and contrasting colors;
- preparation for printing according to all layout standards.

It should also be noted that the same bright poster image with variations in color and graphic elements can be used not only in traditional-sized posters but also on a wide variety of advertising media: on billboards, T-shirts, packages, small stickers, postcards, tableware, etc., as well as on advertising banners in the virtual environment, which generally has a stronger impact on the target audience.

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