

# Art, Sport, and Propaganda: 1972 Munich Olympics

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## Director's Preface

This publication accompanies the exhibition *Art, Sport, and Propaganda: 1972 Munich Olympics*, organized by and displayed at the Williams College Museum of Art in the summer of 2021. The exhibition puts graphic materials, particularly posters, from the 1972 Munich Olympic Games in conversation with graphic materials from earlier in the twentieth century. In doing so, it traces both the visual aesthetic and the underlying ideology of the Olympic graphic design to earlier avant-garde art and design while also acknowledging the unique sociopolitical context of the years during which these materials were conceived. Although for many the most indelible memory of these Games is the terrorist attack that occurred in the middle of the event, on September 5–6, 1972, numerous visual design materials intended to present the Federal Republic of Germany as a modern, happy, and inclusive nation predated the catastrophic attack during which eleven Israeli athletes and one German police officer were killed. This exhibition and publication bring attention to the complex interactions between art, politics, and propaganda that underlay the Munich Games from the initial stages of planning in 1966. The exhibition is scheduled to coincide with this summer's Olympic Games in Tokyo, similarly delayed a year because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and raises issues, themes, and questions of continued relevance today, such as the role art can play in promoting particular agendas and identities—nationalist or otherwise.

The seeds of this project began in 2017 when the guest curator, Elissa Watters, MA '18, then an intern with Elizabeth Gallerani, Curator of Mellon Academic Programs, first saw several of the 1972 Munich Olympic art posters when she pulled them out for a music class visit to the Rose Study Gallery at the Williams College Museum of Art. Thanks to a gift from Williams alumnus Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, the museum owns most of the thirty-five art posters commissioned from international artists to advertise the Munich Games. Elissa first pursued research in a seminar paper for a class with Jay Clarke, now Rothman Family Curator in the Department of Prints and Drawings at the Art Institute of Chicago. Later, with the encouragement of Marc Gotlieb, Halvorsen Director of the Williams College Graduate Program in the History of Art, and the support of Lisa Dorin, Deputy Director of Curatorial Affairs and Curator of Contemporary Art, and Kevin M. Murphy, Eugénie Prendergast Senior Curator of American and European Art, the idea developed into this exhibition and publication. *Art, Sport, and Propaganda: 1972 Munich Olympics* is a wonderful example of the generative relationship between the Grad Art program and the museum since the MA program's inception five decades ago.

Five years in the making, this exhibition would not have been possible without the generous support of innumerable individuals. We are grateful to Merrill Berman and Tom Strong for lending posters from their personal collections, as well as to Jolie Simpson, assistant to Mr. Berman. We are also grateful to the three institutional lenders to the exhibition, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, LA84 Foundation, and Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute Library, and all attendant staff, including Caitlin Condell, Associate Curator and Head of the Department of Drawings, Prints and Graphic Design at Cooper Hewitt, Karen Goddy, Manager, Collections and Operations at LA84, and Karen Bucky, Collections Access & Reference Librarian at the Clark. In addition, we would like to thank the International Olympic Committee and United States Olympic Committee for their support. Finally, we are indebted to the entire staff at the Williams College Museum of Art, including Joellen Adae, Lisa Dorin, Rebecca Dravis, Diane Hart, Kevin M. Murphy, Nina Pelaez, Brian Repetto, Elizabeth Sandoval, Noah Smalls, Rachel Tassone, and Christina Yang, as well as the security staff and many others. We also recognize Christopher Swift and Teresa Waryjasz from the Williams College Office of Communications, both of whom were instrumental in the design and realization of this publication.

This exhibition marks a unique moment in our institutional history, as it heralds the reopening of the museum to the public after a pandemic closure lasting more than a year. While terrorism, racism, and injustice are still part of our national and global realities, we again look to the ideals of the Games—international cooperation, goodwill, and celebration of humanity's physical achievements and triumphant spirit—as reasons for hope in this moment of new beginnings. For this spirit of resilience and shared optimism for the museum moving forward, I am grateful for the visionary leadership and support of Williams College President Maud Mandel and Provost Dukes Love, the dedication and diligence of the entire museum staff, and the unflagging support of WCMA friends around the world.

Pamela Franks  
Class of 1956 Director



# Art, Sport, and Propaganda: 1972 Munich Olympics

Essay by Elissa Watters, MA '18

The official poster of the 1972 Summer Olympics, which took place in Munich, Germany, from August 26 through September 11, 1972, presents the Games' sleek, technologically advanced architecture in abstracted artistic form (fig. 1).<sup>1</sup> Composed of planes of purple, green, blue, and white, it depicts the 955-foot, concrete and steel Olympic Tower, which was, at the time, the tallest television and radio tower in Germany, rising above tent-like structures made of a lightweight cable mesh. Members of the National Olympic Committee (NOC) believed that the bright color palette presented the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG, commonly known as West Germany) as a place of "peace and casual carefreeness."<sup>2</sup>

Designed by Otl Aicher (1922–1991), a renowned German graphic designer appointed Visual Design Commissioner for the 1972 Munich Olympics, this poster is just one example of the program of graphic art and design that sought to instill "an image of Germany in foreign countries" which would "help to eliminate or to correct bad memories, reservations, mistrust and skepticism in regard to Germans."<sup>3</sup> Specifically, the NOC hoped to overturn ongoing associations with the ideology of the Nazi regime. This agenda aligned with the efforts of Willy Brandt, Chancellor of the FRG from 1969 to 1974, to strengthen the nation's relationships with the United States and Western European countries while also seeking reconciliation with Eastern European countries through his *Ostpolitik* policy. A letter written in 1970 by Vice Chancellor and Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs Walter Scheel to West German embassies and consulates around the world demonstrates the perceived opportunity and stakes of the Munich Games in repositioning the FRG on the international stage:

More than ever before, the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich and Kiel [where the sailing events took place] will attract the attention of the world to the Federal Republic of Germany. We must be aware that other nations will be more interested in and critical of us than they have been of other countries that have hosted the Games hitherto. The memory of the Olympics in Berlin in 1936, of our historical past, and not least the awareness of our peculiar political situation will play no insignificant part in this.

...This therefore offers us the unique opportunity to use the worldwide interest in sport to draw attention to the portrayal of our development and state and to project to the rest of the world the image of a modern Germany in all its political, economic, social, and cultural facets.<sup>4</sup>

The design program of the Munich Games was intended to convey joyousness, openness, and freedom, supporting the motto "Die heiteren Spiele" (The Happy Games). Moreover, it contributed to the NOC's aim of "creating a place of understanding, of genuine communication" between individuals, regardless of race, ethnicity, or nationality.<sup>5</sup> These utopian goals would, however, be shattered when nine members of the Palestinian terrorist group Black September breached the walls of the Olympic Village and murdered eleven members of the Israeli team and one German police officer on September 5–6, 1972.

The attack inevitably impacted the perception and legacy of the visual materials designed for the Games. However, the styles, standards, and objectives of these objects had been established several years earlier. The artistic skill and visual power of the graphic materials and their context within a highly intentional, albeit somewhat utopian, ideological framework is often forgotten. Abstract imagery, associated with Western conceptions of modernism, internationalism, and democracy, was especially important for the organizers, as its roots lay in styles of avant-garde art and design that had been condemned by the Nazis. An abstract aesthetic pervaded all visual aspects of the Games, including the architecture, uniforms, publications, sports and cultural posters, pictograms and signage, and informational graphics.<sup>6</sup>

The graphic design of the 1936 Berlin Games demonstrates the realist-figurative imagery typical of Nazi propaganda, with which abstraction and other avant-garde artistic styles came to be juxtaposed and from which the 1972 organizers wanted to distance the Munich Games. The 1936 Games—the only occurrence of the Olympics in Germany prior to 1972—were politically tense. Several countries, including the United States, had considered boycotting the event for fear that their participation would signify an endorsement of the Third Reich, despite the Berlin Olympic Committee's promise to follow the antidiscrimination rules of the Olympic Charter.<sup>7</sup> In one of the official Berlin Olympic posters, a muscular, nude man with shining golden skin and classical Aryan features—the image of the ideal German citizen promoted by the Nazis—dominates the composition (fig. 2). The laurel wreath of victory on the man's head and the silhouette of the four horses atop the Brandenburg Gate symbolize the triumph and supremacy of Germany in sports and politics, respectively. In the postwar period, a similar style, called Socialist Realism, continued to be used in political and cultural propaganda produced by the Soviet Union and its communist satellite states, including the German Democratic Republic (GDR, commonly known as East Germany).

In the postwar era, West Germany was not the only former Axis power to embrace abstraction. As exemplified by the official posters for the 1960 Rome and 1964 Tokyo Olympics, Italy and Japan did the same as part of parallel efforts to reshape their national images on the international stage. Unlike the official poster for the Munich Games, however, the Rome and Tokyo posters incorporate established national symbols. In the 1960 Rome poster, a Corinthian capital decorated with figures in a manner that recalls Athenian red-figure pottery supports an image of Romulus and Remus (the twin brothers who, in Roman mythology, founded Rome) suckling a wolf (fig. 3). The imagery roots Italian national identity in antiquity. The design of the primary poster used to advertise the 1964 Tokyo Olympics portrays the motif of Japan's national flag, adopted in 1890: a red circle symbolizing the sun (fig. 4). Whereas these two posters integrate past and present by rendering traditional iconography in modern artistic styles, Aicher's poster for the Munich Olympics focuses decidedly on the present.

Aesthetically and ideologically, the graphic design created for the Munich Olympics was rooted in European—primarily German—avant-garde art and design of the 1920s and '30s. Specifically, the abstracted imagery that the Olympic Visual Design team deployed recalled the geometric abstraction practiced by many artists and designers who studied or taught at the Bauhaus art and design school and who saw in abstraction the genesis for a new and universal visual language. The Olympic designers also employed many of the principles promoted by the New Typography group, including asymmetry, hierarchical arrangement of content, intentional use of negative space, and sans-serif letterforms. When the Nazis persecuted artists and designers who espoused these avant-garde styles, many fled. Some, like Max Bill (Swiss, 1908–1994), who actually left Germany in 1930, three years before Hitler became chancellor, put down roots again in Germany after World War II and aided in the revival of these styles.

The Ulm School of Design, where the aesthetic and ideological principles of the Bauhaus and New Typography movement flourished after the war, played a pivotal role in the development of the Munich Olympic design program. In 1953, Aicher and Inge Scholl (later Aicher-Scholl), both former members of the anti-Nazi White Rose resistance group in Munich, co-founded the Ulm School with Max Bill, taking the Bauhaus as a model. Although too young to have been part of the Bauhaus or New Typography, both Aicher and Scholl were greatly inspired by the aesthetic and ideological principles associated with each.<sup>8</sup> Many of the artists later recruited to

the Munich Olympic Visual Design team, including Rolf Müller (German, 1940–2015), Art Director and Deputy to Aicher, and British designers Michael Burke (born 1944) and Ian McLaren (born 1940), studied at Ulm and so were similarly inspired and trained.

A 1929 poster designed by Walter Dexel (German, 1890–1973) to advertise a sports exhibition held in Magdeburg, Germany, exemplifies the influential typography and graphic design championed by the interwar German avant-garde (fig. 5). A large red “S” that is angled on a slight diagonal unifies and animates the entire composition. All of the text that surrounds and overlaps the large “S” lies on the same axis, and all of the letters are capitalized; their varied sizes, colors, and arrangements make the composition dynamic and visually engaging. Using letters and numbers alone to compose the poster, Dexel employed alphabetical characters as pictorial elements as well as semantic ones. Bereft of images of sports activities, iconography, or art-historical references, Dexel's geometric composition epitomizes the avant-garde aesthetic of abstraction and the related goal of creating designs accessible to all.

A poster made by Aicher in 1950 to advertise a lecture by musicologist Jürgen Uhde on the composer Béla Bartók demonstrates the influence of Bauhaus-inspired geometric abstraction and typographic experimentation on Aicher's work and at Ulm more generally (fig. 6). The poster is composed of vertical red and black lines of varying lengths and widths placed at various angles. Six words cross the composition horizontally, uniting the eight lines. All of the words are consistent in their orientation, typeface, and letter height, but the spacing between letters varies slightly so that none overlap the lines. Like in Dexel's poster, the words are pictorial as well as semantic. The purely geometric, nonrepresentational composition of this poster epitomizes the principles that underlie Ulm School graphic design, eschewing any contexts outside the words themselves and thereby espousing the notion of a universal, democratic visual language.

The printed materials produced for the Munich Olympics by the in-house graphic design team, including schedules, programs, tickets, and other ephemera, share the abstracted, streamlined aesthetic seen in Dexel's 1929 and Aicher's 1950 posters. The designers followed guidelines (conceived by Aicher) that included a specific color palette, typeface (Univers), and set of pictographic symbols intended to communicate cheerfulness, openness, and individual freedom. All were intended to transcend linguistic barriers and foster easy and universal legibility. The grid-based pictograms,



which largely derived from those created for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, are notably the origin of those still used today—not only at the Olympics but ubiquitously (fig. 7); the universal signage for men's and women's bathrooms, for example, is based on these pictograms.<sup>9</sup> In creating the sports posters, which began as photographic images, the designers eliminated the half tone on the film negatives and painted certain areas opaque, resulting in reductive forms and bright, solid colors that obscure the details and identities of both the athletes and the surroundings in the final screenprints.<sup>10</sup> In the fencing poster, for example, two competitors appear in white with gray shading and green highlights set against a purple and light-blue background (fig. 8).

An edition of art posters commissioned from independent artists who were, according to the NOC, “world famous” and working in “established and avant-garde styles: expressionism, surrealism, neo-realism, and pop-art/op-art” also contributed to the agenda of casting West Germany as a cosmopolitan, democratic nation.<sup>11</sup> These posters further advertised the Games, demonstrated the synthesis between art and sport, and promoted the NOC's “artistic, cultural, political, and commercial” goals.<sup>12</sup> The project was of a type and scope unprecedented at any prior Olympic Games. Thirty-five international artists designed posters that were released between 1969 and 1972 in five issues of seven posters each. The posters were hung at schools, universities, museums, galleries, and other tourist sites throughout West Germany and at German embassies and Goethe Institutes abroad.<sup>13</sup> They were also sold internationally through the global art market. The posters were available in three grades:

- 1) An edition of 200 hand-signed and numbered lithographs or screenprints on high-quality papers, listed in sales catalogues for DM 340–1200 or \$550–\$650 each;
- 2) An edition of 4,000 lithographs or screenprints, signed in the stone or on the screen, on heavy papers, listed for DM 30–100 or \$55–\$75 each;
- 3) An unlimited edition of offset lithographs, listed for DM 12,50 or \$10 each.<sup>14</sup>

Two-thirds of the sales profits went to the NOC and one-third went to the publisher, F. Bruckmann KG München. Artists were paid either a single honorarium or a percentage from sales of the second and third grades of their posters.<sup>15</sup> The NOC ultimately had a net gain of only DM 2 million but even if the profit of DM 8 million initially anticipated to come from the sale of these posters had been realized, it would have contributed relatively little to the overall financing

of the Games, which cost a total of DM 1,972 million (over \$1 billion in today's dollars).<sup>16</sup> These numbers suggest that, even from the outset, the posters were created primarily as important ideological and advertising tools and only secondarily as commercial objects intended to raise funds for the Games.

All of the Munich Olympic art posters in WCMA's collection, donated in 1979 by Williams College alumnus Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, are from the hand-signed and numbered limited edition of 200. All include the Olympic spiral emblem designed specifically for the Munich Games and the printed text “Olympische München 1972,” usually placed in a white band along the bottom edge. The posters were produced by several different printers located across Europe and the United States. Differences in the glossiness, texture, and thickness of the papers add to the variation among the posters and further indicate that each was considered an individual, original print.<sup>17</sup>

Reflecting the various styles and themes of the commissioned artists, who represent several different generations, geographic regions, and art movements, the posters signaled West German support of an artistic avant-garde that extended throughout and beyond its borders. The inclusion of artists who had worked at the Bauhaus gestured to the ongoing, international influences of the school and created a narrative that elided the figurative, propagandistic art of the Third Reich, instead presenting Germany as a site of continuous artistic innovation and freedom. Comprised of a blue rectangle nested in two frames of off-white hues—a modification of his famous *Homage to a Square* works—the poster designed by Josef Albers (American, born Germany 1888–1976) explores the subjective visual experience of universal, objective color and form (fig. 9). The geometric pattern of solid-colored shapes in Max Bill's poster design similarly balances personal and imaginative freedom with logical order, meeting the artist's own criteria that his art “[call] for both feeling and reasoning” (fig. 10).<sup>18</sup> The poster by Viennese artist Oskar Kokoschka (1886–1980) reflects his signature style of rendering the human figure in seemingly spontaneous gestural marks and vibrant, expressive colors—a style that the Nazis deemed “degenerate,” leading Kokoschka to flee to England in 1938 (fig. 11).

The inclusion of postwar artists in the Olympic art poster edition asserted the continuation of a vibrant community of contemporary avant-garde artists both in Germany and across Europe. The nonrepresentational designs of Fritz Winter (German, 1905–1976) and Pierre Soulages (French, born 1919), for example, show types of postwar abstraction

that promote antigeometric, antinaturalistic, nonfigurative compositions and emphasize spontaneity, formlessness, and the irrational (figs. 12, 13). In contrast to the regular geometric forms favored by artists such as Albers and Bill, the designs by Winter and Soulages are composed of irregular forms that undulate and intersect in ways that suggest abstracted objects or human figures. In Winter's poster, vertical shapes lie on top of—and seemingly in front of—a background whose two shades of blue abut at a straight edge, suggesting the meeting of floor and wall and thereby heightening the sense of three-dimensional space. In Soulages's composition, black marks appear to hang, entangle, and drip. Exemplifying Soulages's signature style of *outrenoir*, or beyond black, nuanced variations of hue within the black ink underline the highly deliberate nature of the seemingly spontaneous, dynamic image. Vaguely and ambiguously alluding to the observed world, these two posters teeter between form and formlessness, rationality and irrationality.

The poster designs of younger artists demonstrate the aesthetic and conceptual interests of a generation born during the Third Reich. The figurative impulse hinted at by Winter's poster returns in full force, but the figures are distorted. In the poster designed by German artist Otmar Alt (born 1940), brightly colored biomorphic forms resemble a jigsaw puzzle and evoke the childlike imagination of an alternate universe (fig. 14). The playful composition exemplifies the spirit of fun and happiness that the NOC aimed to inspire. The poster of another German artist of the same generation, Horst Antes (born 1936), shows a deformed figure of a more cynical fantasy (fig. 15). The large, cycloptic eye of a torso-less human body stares vacantly out of the picture space as the "header/footer," as Antes called his signature figure, strides across the page from right to left. The yellow podium at bottom left alludes to the Olympic Games—a gesture towards sport like those many of the commissioned artists incorporated into their designs.

Another popular style among this younger generation of artists, Pop art, was strongly represented in the poster edition. The design by David Hockney (English, born 1937) portrays an athlete diving into an expanse of fractured water (fig. 16). The composition corresponds to Hockney's pool paintings of the time while evoking Olympic diving. Allen Jones (English, born 1937) similarly integrated his signature artistic motifs with the subject of sport in his poster design (fig. 17). Two pairs of muscular legs and feet stand in opposition. One wears Puma and the other wears Adidas sneakers, referencing the rivalry between the German sportswear companies founded by two brothers. Their skin appears dark, possibly

promoting racial harmony through sport—a theme taken up by a few other artists in the edition as well. The poster by Allan D'Arcangelo (American, 1930–1998) also portrays two abstracted figures, composed of stripes inspired by road signs, that appear locked together in what may be interpreted as either struggle or celebration (fig. 18).

The commissions of Polish artist Jan Lenica (1928–2001) and Japanese artist Shusaku Arakawa (1936–2010) indicate an attempt to expand the geographic lens of the poster edition, particularly to include Eastern Europe and Asia (figs. 19, 20).<sup>19</sup> That said, by 1972, both artists had long since relocated to the West; Lenica had moved to France in 1963, and Arakawa had moved to the New York in 1961. Lenica's design captures the style of the Polish School of Posters, in which he was a key figure. Cascades of varied shades of blue exemplify the fluid, painterly, vibrantly colored designs that characterized the school and also convey the feeling of water—apt given that the abstracted figure appears to be a swimmer. The poster design by Arakawa is strikingly unique in style and concept. An underlying grid, horizontal black line, and images of a man running, derived from the collotypes of nineteenth-century photographer and scientist Eadweard Muybridge (English, active in the United States, 1830–1904), suggest a scientific order that contrasts with the disorder of irregular splotches of ink and of the ghostly image of the viewer sometimes reflected in the silvery surface of the print.

The poster designs of African American artist Jacob Lawrence (1917–2000) and Jewish artist Ronald B. Kitaj (American, 1932–2007), which demonstrate realism in the service of inclusivity and social justice, provided the NOC with another opportunity to promote racial and ethnic diversity, acceptance, and equality (figs. 21, 22). Lawrence's depiction of five Black runners who, mid-stride, grimace in concentration and contort their bodies in physical effort presents a vision of Black athletes succeeding in sporting events. The image recalls the stunning performance of Jesse Owens at the 1936 Berlin Games, where the African American track and field athlete won four gold medals. Kitaj's portrayal of a dark-skinned swimmer similarly uses stylized figuration to put forward an image that challenges racial and ethnic biases. With head and arm oddly positioned in relation to one another and abruptly cut off at the water's surface, the poster's stylistic fragmentation eerily recalls both the grueling impact of sport on the human body and, more importantly, histories of racial violence in the world.

The fifth and final issue of art posters, which was released after the Games ended, includes seven

emergent artists, six of whom were born in Germany. The predominance of German artists in this last issue seems to proclaim (West) Germany to be the center of twentieth-century art once again. The proclamation fell flat, however, as these seven posters were largely overlooked, if their rarity is any indication. Regardless, their inclusion in the Edition Olympia is significant when reflecting on the nationalist agenda and narrative that the art posters and the other design elements of the Munich Olympics strove to convey.

While individually the art posters are unique designs representative of the working practices and oeuvres of their respective artist-designers, together as an edition, they demonstrate a diversity that aligns with the presentation of the FRG as a democratic nation. With roots in the aesthetics and ideologies of earlier avant-gardes, the idealist narrative promoted by these works presents West Germany as a progressive, modern nation committed to contributing to the international community. After the terrorist attack that took place in the midst of the Munich Games undermined this idealist vision, the in-house Olympic design team considered eliminating all color from their subsequent designs; ultimately, however, they decided to embrace the bright color palette all the more strongly.<sup>20</sup> Understood within the broader contexts in which they were conceived, the graphic art created for the 1972 Munich Olympic is a reminder of the complexities of constructing national identities, both domestically and on the international stage.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my personal thanks to Jay Clarke, Elizabeth Gallerani, and Marc Gotlieb, all of whom were instrumental in the initial stages of this project, and to Mark Resnick and Tom Strong, who provided ongoing support, advice, and knowledge throughout the planning of the exhibition. I am also grateful to 1972 Munich Olympic graphic designers Ian McLaren and Michael Burke and commissioned artist Peter Phillips for sharing their insights and memories, as well as to Margaret Timmers, Mark Holt, Matthew Gin, and colleagues at the Walker Art Gallery for sharing their research and additional thoughts on the design of the Munich Games. Similarly, I am indebted to colleagues at the Olympic Studies Center at the German Sport University in Cologne and to Andreas Fleck for providing select digital documents. Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to Professors Thomas Kohut and Roger Remington for their assistance, as well as to both my colleagues at the Williams College Museum of Art and our generous lenders, without whom this exhibition would not have been possible.

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Margaret Timmers, *A Century of Olympic Posters* (London: V&A Publishing, 2008), 88–9.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Kunze, ed., “The Organization,” in *The Official Report of the Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXth Olympiad Munich 1972*, vol. I (Munich: proSport GmbH & Co. KG, 1972), 30, <https://digital.la84.org/digital/collection/p17103coll8/id/24656/rec/7>.

<sup>3</sup> *The Official Report*, vol. I, 196.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Kay Schiller and Christopher Young, *The 1972 Munich Olympics and the Making of Modern Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 3.

<sup>5</sup> *The Official Report*, vol. I, 30.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on the visual design of the 1972 Munich Olympic Games, see: Mark Holt, *Munich '72: The Visual Output of Otl Aicher's Dept. XI* (London: Mark Holt, 2019).

<sup>7</sup> “The Nazi Olympics Berlin 1936: African American Voices and ‘Jim Crow’ America,” *Holocaust Encyclopedia, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C.*, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-nazi-olympics-berlin-1936-african-american-voices-and-jim-crow-america>.

<sup>8</sup> For more information on Otl Aicher, see: Markus Rathgeb, *Otl Aicher* (London: Phaidon, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> “The Olympic Pictograms, A Long and Fascinating Story,” *Olympic News*, March 11, 2019, <https://www.olympic.org/news/the-olympic-pictograms-a-long-and-fascinating-story>.

<sup>10</sup> Email from 1972 Munich Olympic graphic design team member Michael Burke to the author, January 20, 2020.

<sup>11</sup> *The Official Report*, vol. I, 257–8.

<sup>12</sup> *The Official Report*, vol. I, 258.

<sup>13</sup> *The Official Report*, vol. I, 201.

<sup>14</sup> Prices in deutsche marks come from the following magazine: Herbert Hohenemser, “Edition Olympia 1972: Mit weltweitem Effekt,” *Olympia in München: Offizielles Sonderheft 1972 der Olympiastadt München*, 70; prices in dollars come from the following pamphlet: *Olympic Art 1972*, published by the United States Olympic Committee, consulted at the LA84 Foundation Library. For comparison, \$10 in 1972 would amount to about \$62 in today’s dollars, and \$650, to over \$4,000.

<sup>15</sup> *The Official Report*, vol. I, 63.

<sup>16</sup> *The Official Report*, vol. I, 63.

<sup>17</sup> The term “original print” indicates that the artist created the image as an expression of creativity, artistry, and imagination intended specifically for print.

<sup>18</sup> Max Bill, “Concrete Art (1936–49),” in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists’ Writings*, ed. Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 74–5.

<sup>19</sup> The NOC commissioned posters from African artists, chosen through a juried competition, but they were not considered part of the Edition Olympia. *The Official Report*, vol. I, 206–7.

<sup>20</sup> 1972 Munich Olympic graphic design team member Michael Burke in a phone interview with the author, November 3, 2019.



Fig. 1  
Otl Aicher and Rolf Müller,  
Official Standard Poster,  
Munich Olympics, 1969–70





Fig. 2  
Franz Würbel, Official Poster,  
Berlin Olympics, 1936



Fig. 3  
Armando Testa, Official Poster,  
Rome Olympics, 1960



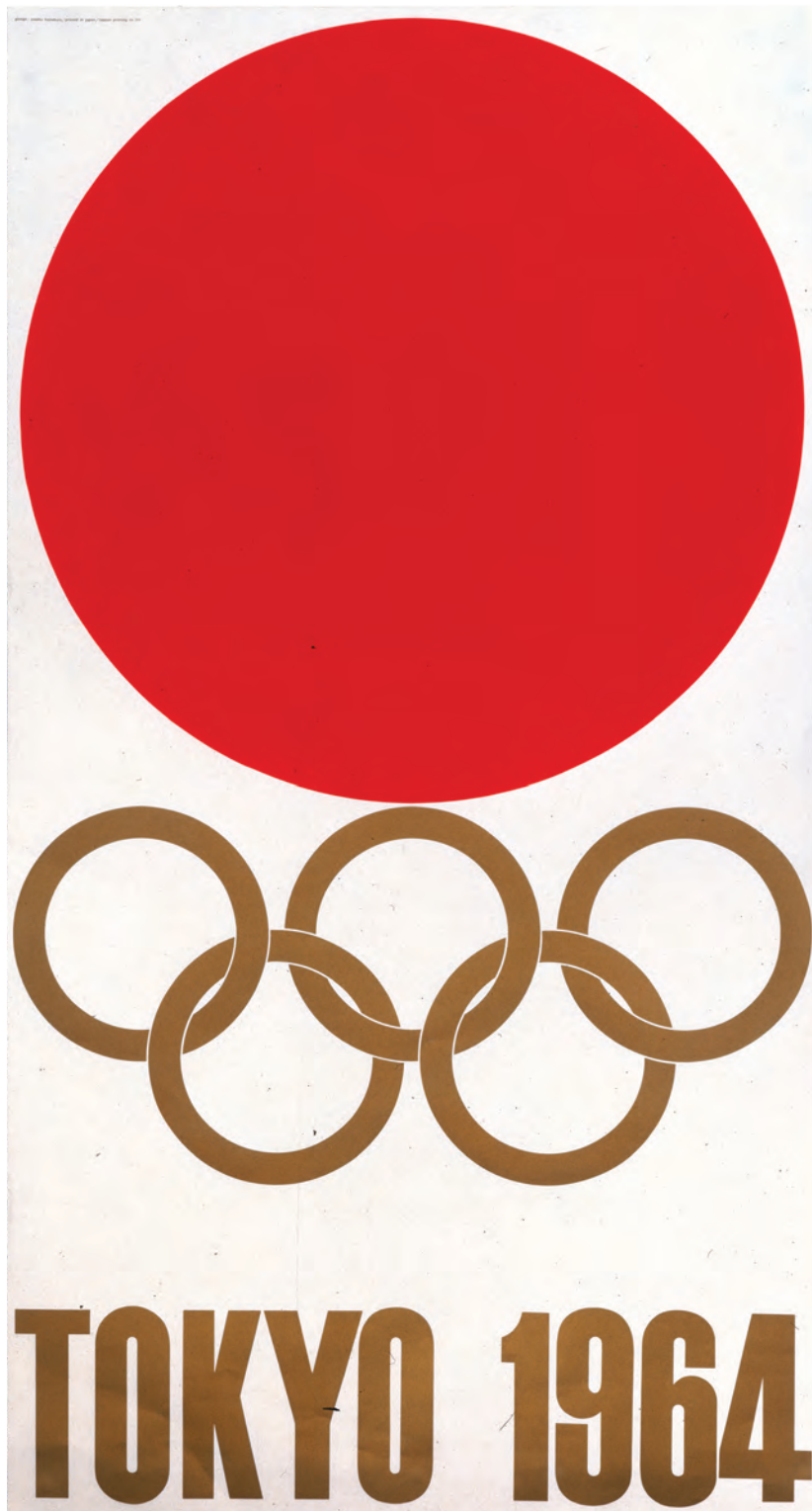


Fig. 4  
Yusaku Kamekura, Official  
Poster, Tokyo Olympics, 1964

Fig. 5  
Walter Dexel, *Die Sport  
Ausstellung Magdeburg* (*The  
Sports Exhibition Magdeburg*),  
1929







Fig. 6  
Otl Aicher, *Jürgen Uhde:  
Einführung in Bela Bartok*  
(*Jürgen Uhde: An Introduction  
to Béla Bartók*), 1950

Fig. 7  
Otl Aicher and Alfred Kern,  
*Zeichensystem (Sign System)*,  
Munich Olympics, 1971

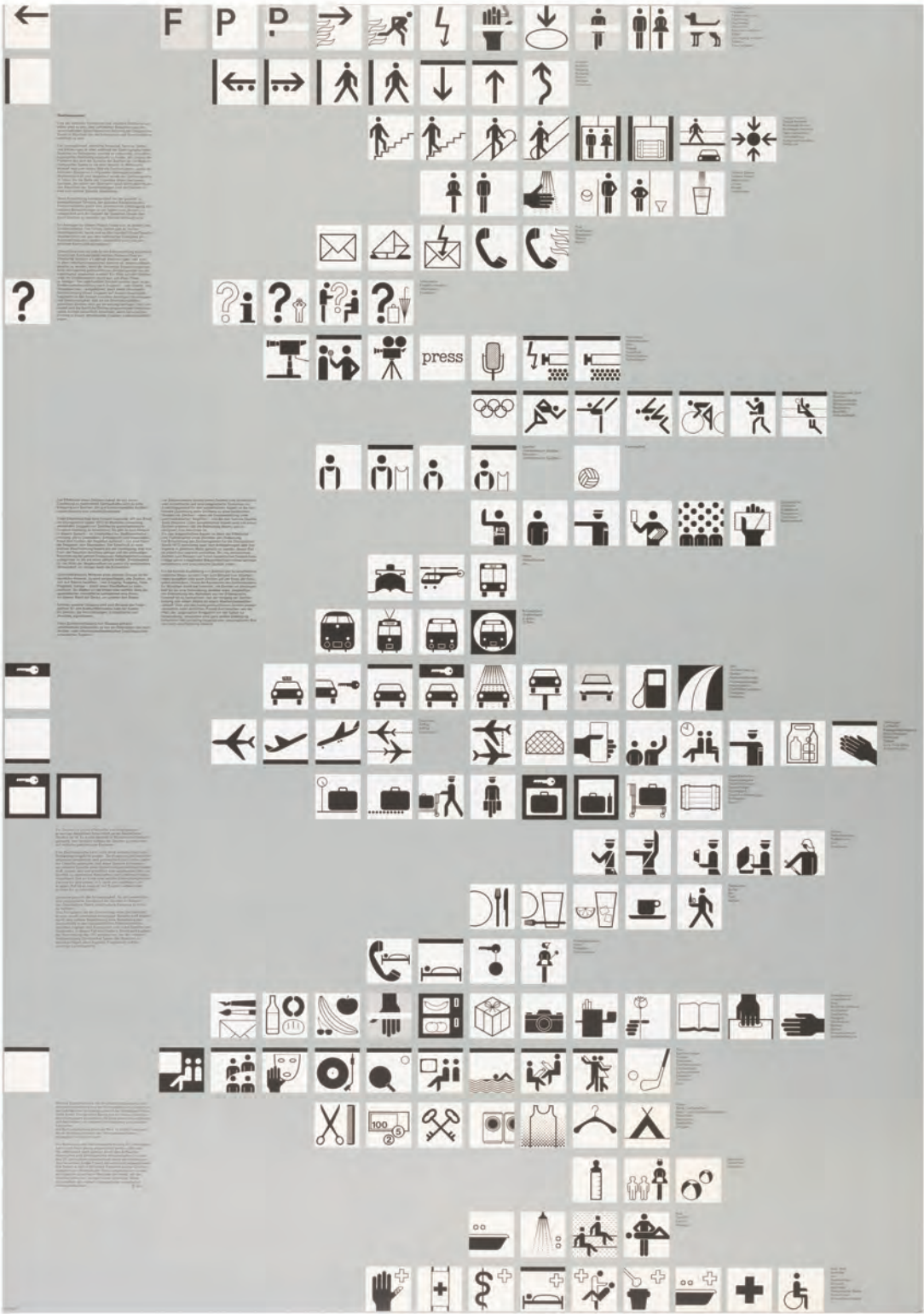




Fig. 8  
Gerhard Joksch and team,  
Sports Poster, Munich Olympics,  
1972

Fig. 9  
Josef Albers, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, 1970,  
pub. 1971

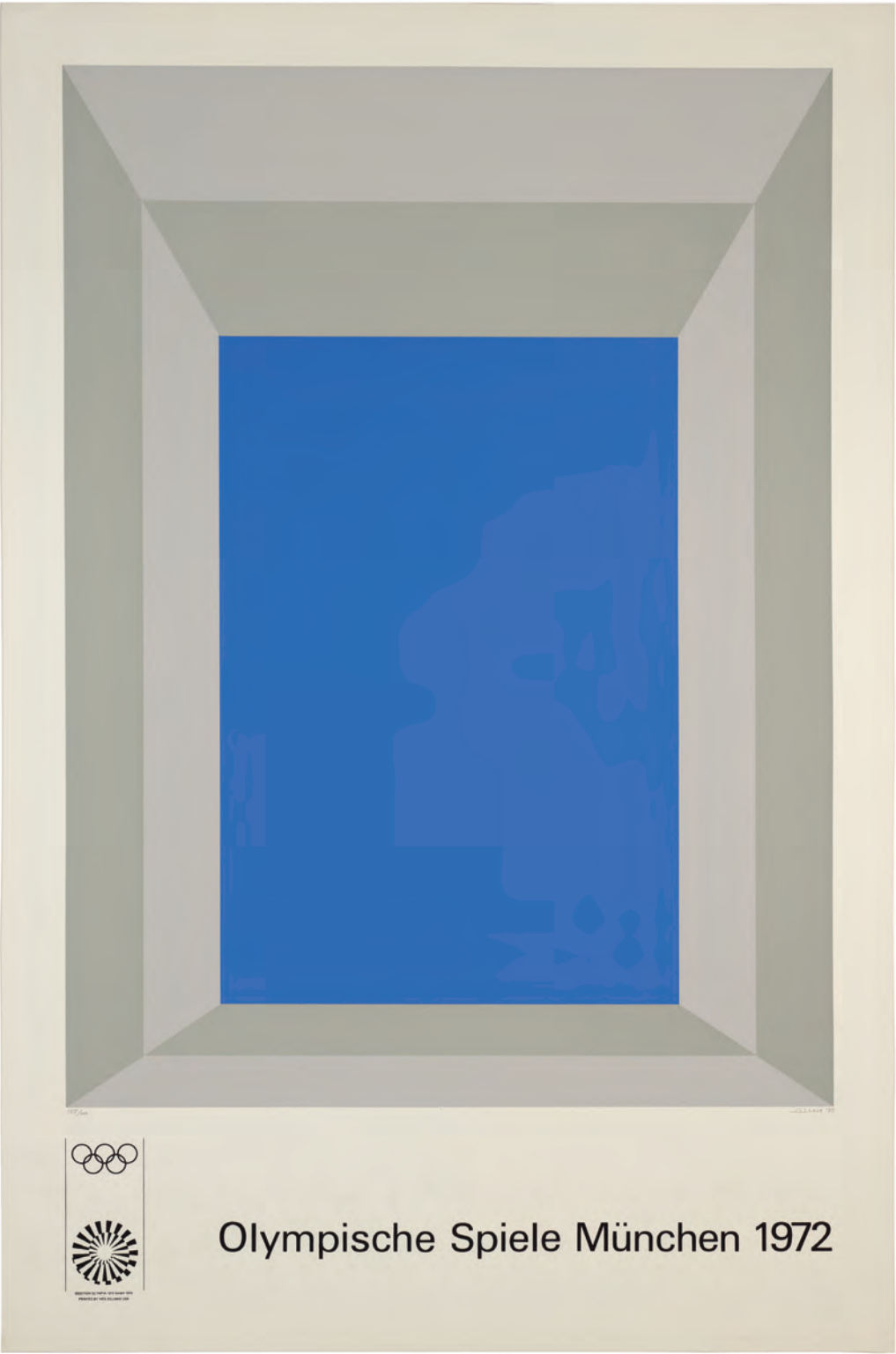






Fig. 10  
Max Bill, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, 1970,  
pub. 1971

Fig. 11  
Oskar Kokoschka, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, pub. 1969–70



Fig. 12  
Fritz Winter, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, pub. 1969–70

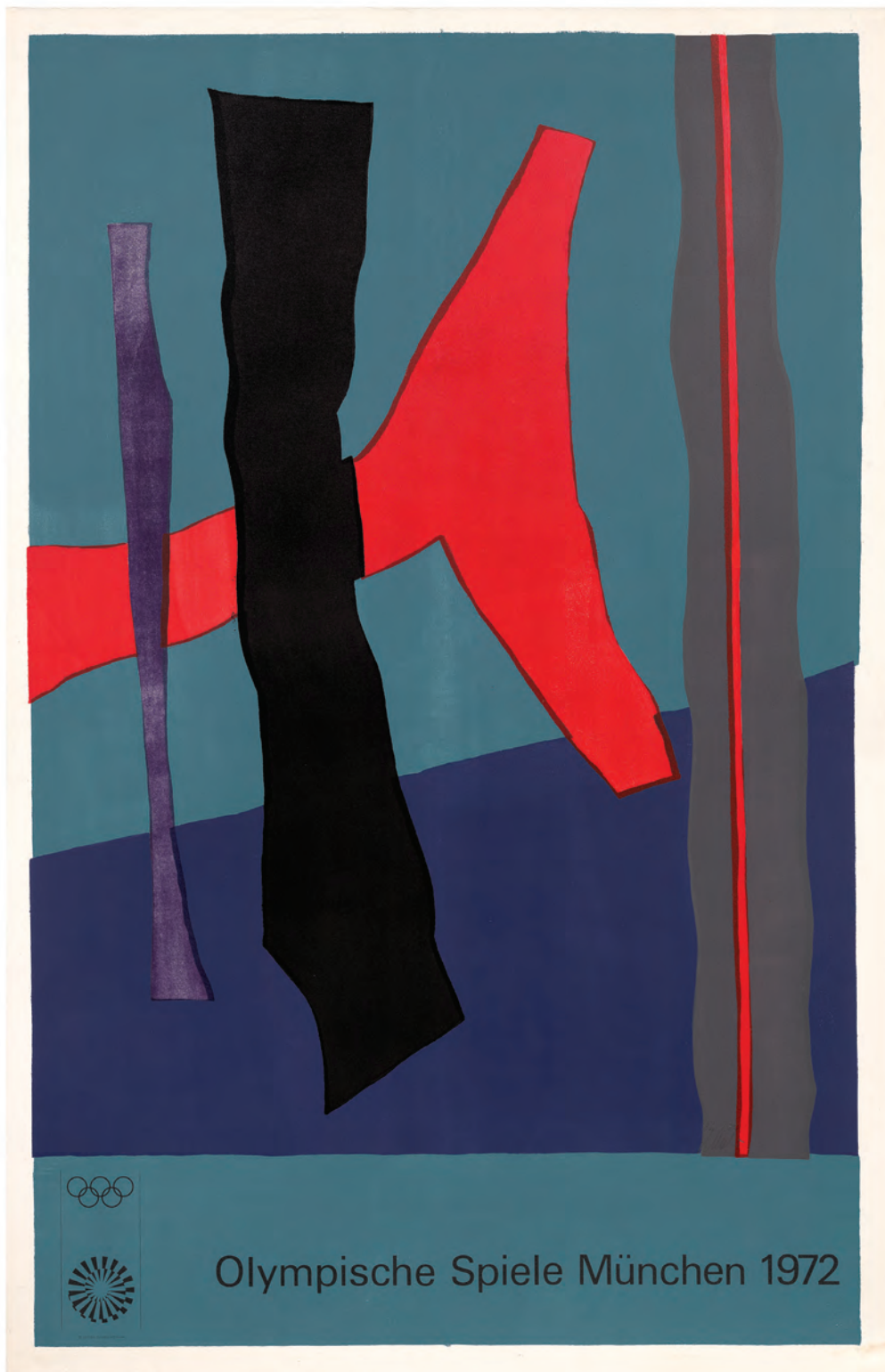




Fig. 13  
Pierre Soulages, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, pub. 1970





Fig. 14  
Otmar Alt, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, 1970,  
pub. 1971



Olympische Spiele München 1972

Fig. 15  
Horst Antes, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, pub. 1970





Fig. 16  
David Hockney, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, 1970,  
pub. 1971



Fig. 17  
Allen Jones, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, pub. 1970







Fig. 18  
Allan D'Arcangelo, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, 1970,  
pub. 1971

Fig. 19  
Jan Lenica, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics,  
pub. 1969–70





Fig. 20  
Shusaku Arakawa, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, pub. 1970

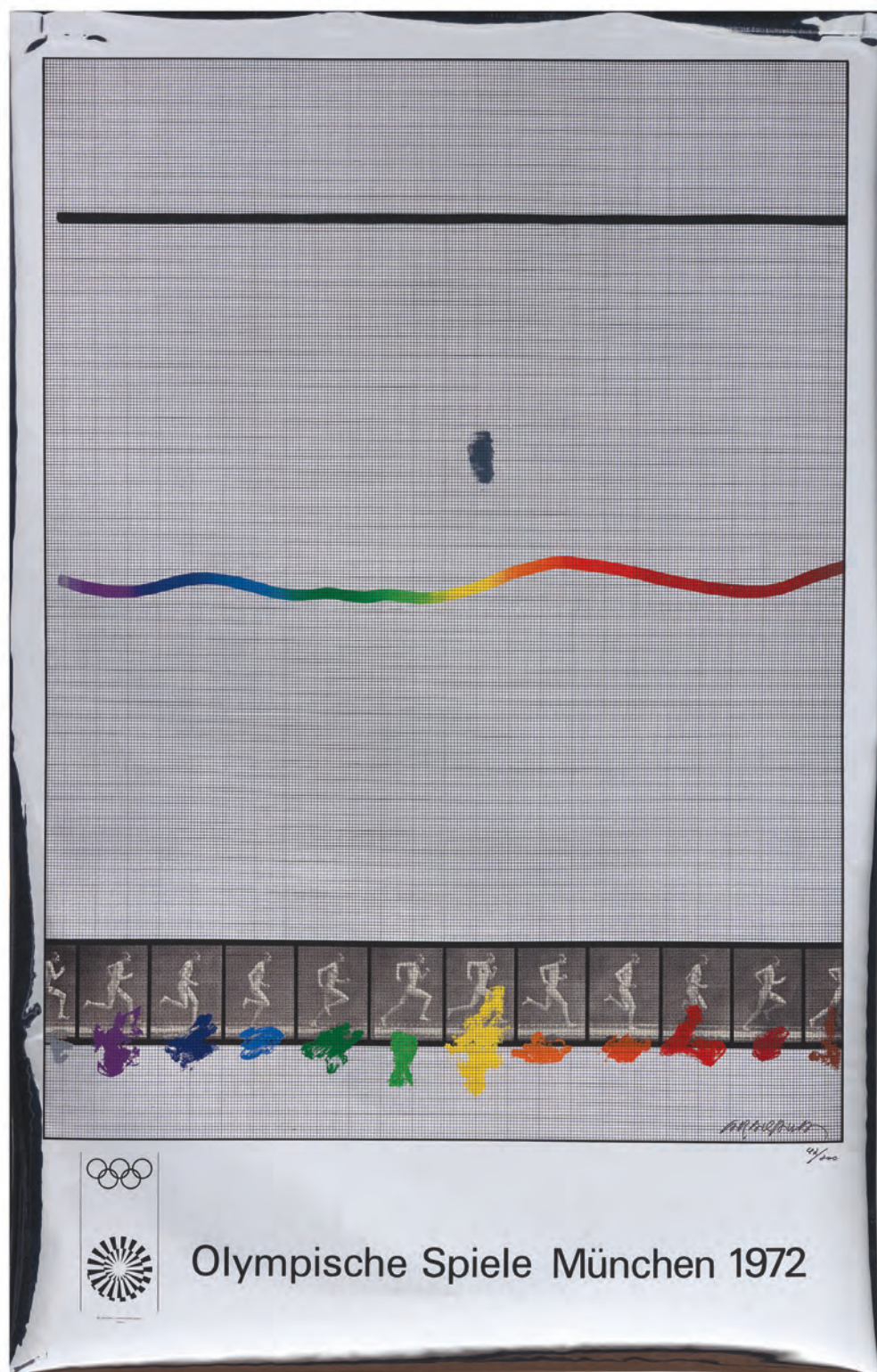


Fig. 21  
Jacob Lawrence, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, 1971,  
pub. 1972





Fig. 22  
Ronald B. Kitaj, Art Poster,  
Munich Olympics, pub. 1971



# Appendix 1

## Edition Olympia 1972<sup>1</sup>

*This poster edition consisted of five series issued jointly by the Organizing Committee for the Games of the XX Olympiad and the Munich-based publishing house F. Bruckmann KG.*

### First series, issued 1969–70

Hans Hartung (French, born Germany 1904–1989)  
Oskar Kokoschka (Austrian, 1886–1980)  
Charles Lapicque (French, 1898–1988)  
Jan Lenica (Polish, 1928–2001)  
Marino Marini (Italian, 1901–1980)  
Serge Poliakoff (Russian, 1906–1969)  
Fritz Winter (German, 1905–1976)

### Second series, issued 1970

Horst Antes (German, born 1936)  
Shusaku Arakawa (Japanese, active in the United States, 1936–2010)  
Eduardo Chillida (Spanish, 1924–2002)  
Piero Dorazio (Italian, 1927–2005)  
Allen Jones (English, born 1937)  
Pierre Soulages (French, born 1919)  
Victor Vasarely (Hungarian–French, 1906/1908–1997)

### Third series, issued 1971

Josef Albers (American, born Germany 1899–1976)  
Otmar Alt (German, born 1940)  
Max Bill (Swiss, 1908–1994)  
Allan D'Arcangelo (American, 1930–1998)  
David Hockney (English, born 1937)  
Ronald B. Kitaj (American, 1932–2007)  
Tom Wesselmann (American, 1931–2004)

### Fourth series, issued 1972

Valerio Adami (Italian, born 1935)  
Alan Davie (Scottish, 1920–2014)  
Friedensreich Hundertwasser (Austrian, 1928–2000)  
Jacob Lawrence (American, 1917–2000)  
Peter Phillips (English, born 1939)  
Richard Smith (English, 1931–2016)  
Paul Wunderlich (German, 1927–2010)

### Fifth series, issued 1972

Gernot Bubenik (Czech, born 1942)  
Günter Desch (German, born 1937)  
Alfonso Hüppi (Swiss, born Germany 1935)  
Hans-Jürgen Kleinhammes (German, 1937–2008)  
Werner Nöfer (German, born 1937)  
Wolfgang Petrick (German, born 1939)  
Gerd Winner (German, born 1936)

<sup>1</sup> The series groupings and issue dates in this appendix are from Margaret Timmers, *A Century of Olympic Posters* (London: V&A Publishing, 2012), 138.

# Works in Exhibition

## INTRODUCTION

Otl Aicher (German, 1922–1991) and Rolf Müller (German, 1940–2015), Official Standard Poster, Munich Olympics, 1969–70. Offset lithograph, 33 × 25 5/16 in. (83.8 × 64.3 cm). Collection Tom Strong, New Haven, Conn.

Franz Würbel (German, born 1896), Official Poster, Berlin Olympics, 1936. Lithograph, 40 3/8 × 25 3/16 in. (102.6 × 64 cm). LA84 Foundation, Los Angeles, OGE936.J0254

## PREWAR LEGACIES: THE BAUHAUS, 1919–1933

El Lissitzky (Russian, 1890–1941), *Die Kunstismen, 1914–1924 (The Isms of Art, 1914–1924)*, 1925. Letterpress printed book, overall (closed): 10 5/16 × 8 1/8 × 1/4 in. (26.2 × 20.6 × 0.7 cm). Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute Library, Williamstown, Mass., ND699 L5.8 c.2

Walter Dexel (German, 1890–1973), *Die Sport Ausstellung Magdeburg (The Sports Exhibition Magdeburg)*, 1929. Photolithograph, 33 1/8 × 23 1/2 in. (84.1 × 59.7 cm). Collection Merrill C. Berman, New York

## POSTWAR LEGACIES: THE ULM SCHOOL OF DESIGN, 1953–1968

Otl Aicher (German, 1922–1991), *Jürgen Uhde: Einführung in Bela Bartok (Jürgen Uhde: An Introduction to Béla Bartók)*, 1950. Lithograph, 16 1/4 × 15 7/8 in. (41.3 × 40.3 cm). Collection Merrill C. Berman, New York

Otl Aicher (German, 1922–1991), *Literarisches Leben in unserer Zeit: Kurs Hans Werner Richter (Literary Life in Our Time: Course with Hans Werner Richter)*, 1950s. Lithograph, 16 1/8 × 15 5/8 in. (41 × 39.7 cm). Collection Merrill C. Berman, New York

Max Bill (Swiss, 1908–1994), *USA Baut (USA Builds)*, 1945. Offset lithograph, 50 5/16 × 35 1/2 in. (127.8 × 90.2 cm). Collection Merrill C. Berman, New York

## OFFICIAL 1972 MUNICH OLYMPIC GRAPHIC DESIGN

Otl Aicher (German, 1922–1991) and Alfred Kern (German, 1941–2016), *Zeichensystem (Sign System)*, Munich Olympics, 1971. Offset lithograph, 46 3/4 × 33 1/16 in. (118.7 × 84 cm). Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, New York, Gift of Ken Friedman, 1997-19-167

Michael Burke (British, born 1944), *Schedule for All Sports Disciplines*, Munich Olympics, 1972. Offset lithograph, pamphlet (closed): 9 1/2 × 4 15/16 in. (24.1 × 12.5 cm). LA84 Foundation, Los Angeles, OLY COL GV 722 1972.E63 1970

Gerhard Joks (German, 1940–2020) and team, 3 Sports Posters, Munich Olympics, 1972. Screenprints, each: 46 3/4 × 33 1/16 in. (118.7 × 84 cm). Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, New York, Gift of Ken Friedman, 1997-19-164, 1997-19-165, 1997-19-169

Jürgen Hoffmann (German, born 1942), Sports Event Ticket, Munich Olympics, 1972. Offset lithograph, 4 1/8 × 5 7/8 in. (10.5 × 14.9 cm). LA84 Foundation, Los Angeles, OGE1972.K0148

Ian McLaren (British, born 1940), *Daily Program*, Munich Olympics, 1972. Offset lithograph, book (closed): 7 13/16 × 8 5/16 × 3/16 in. (19.8 × 21.1 × 0.5 cm). LA84 Foundation, Los Angeles, OLY COL GV 722 1972.O5ga 1972

Rolf Müller (German, 1940–2015), *Olympic Summer Guide*, Munich Olympics, 1972. Offset lithograph, book (closed): 9 7/16 × 5 × 4/5 in. (24 × 12.8 × 2 cm). LA84 Foundation, Los Angeles, OLY COL GV 722 1972.O53o 1972

Birgitt Willikens (German, active ca. 1968–72), *Strukturplan München 1972: Situation der Wettkampfstätten (Architectural Map Munich 1972: Location of Competition Sites)*, Munich Olympics, 1971. Offset lithograph, 46 7/16 × 32 15/16 in. (118 × 83.6 cm). Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, New York, Gift of Ken Friedman, 1997-19-166

Elena Winschermann (German, born 1948), *Olympia–Waldi*, Munich Olympics, ca. 1971. Fabric, 14 × 2 3/4 × 5 3/4 in. (35.6 × 7 × 14.6 cm). LA84 Foundation, Los Angeles, OGE972.X0079

## EDITION OLYMPIA POSTERS

Shusaku Arakawa (Japanese, 1936–2010), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, pub. 1970. Screenprint with mirror Alkorcrom-folio, 43 5/16 × 27 1/2 in. (110 × 69.8 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.19

Friedensreich Hundertwasser (Austrian, 1928–2000), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, 1971, pub. 1972. Screenprint with metal foil, 43 3/8 × 27 1/16 in. (110.2 × 68.8 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.16

Jan Lenica (Polish, 1928–2001), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, pub. 1969–70. Screenprint, 44 × 27 5/8 in. (111.7 × 70.2 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.9

## EDITION OLYMPIA POSTERS AS/AND FINE ART

Josef Albers (American, 1888–1976), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, 1970, pub. 1971. Screenprint, 42 11/16 × 27 13/16 in. (108.5 × 70.6 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.11

Josef Albers (American, 1888–1976), *Midnight + Noon V*, from the portfolio *Midnight and Noon*, 1964. Lithograph, 19 × 20 9/16 in. (48.2 × 52.3 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Jim Dine, 77.52.5

Josef Albers (American, 1888–1976), *Embossed Linear Construction 1-C*, from a portfolio of 8 inkless embossings, 1969. Inkless embossing, 20 × 26 1/16 in. (50.8 × 66.2 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Frederick M. Myers, Class of 1943, 81.46.6

Max Bill (Swiss, 1908–1994), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, 1970, pub. 1971. Screenprint, 43 3/8 × 27 5/8 in. (110.2 × 70.1 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.18

Allan D'Arcangelo (American, 1930–1998), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, 1970, pub. 1971. Screenprint, 43 1/8 × 27 1/2 in. (109.5 × 69.8 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.22

Allan D'Arcangelo (American, 1930–1998), *Untitled*, from the *National Collection of Fine Arts Poster Series*, 1968. Screenprint, 29 15/16 × 19 3/16 in. (76 × 48.7 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Susan W. and Stephen D. Paine, Class of 1954, 74.50.3

Allan D'Arcangelo (American, 1930–1998), *Constellation IV*, 1971. Screenprint, 25 15/16 × 25 15/16 in. (65.9 × 65.9 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Mark Jacobson, through the Martin S. Ackerman Foundation, 79.73.A

David Hockney (British, born 1937), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, 1970, pub. 1971. Lithograph, 41 5/16 × 27 1/2 in. (104.9 × 69.9 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.23

Allen Jones (British, born 1937), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, pub. 1970. Lithograph, 41 1/4 × 27 9/16 in. (104.8 × 70 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.3

Allen Jones (British, born 1937), *Janet Is Wearing...*, from the portfolio *11 Pop Artists, Volume III*, 1965, pub. 1966. Lithograph, 23 1/2 × 18 7/8 in. (59.7 × 48 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Museum Purchase, 71.10

Allen Jones (British, born 1937), *Untitled*, pl. 4 from the portfolio *Album*, 1971. Lithograph, 25 3/16 × 18 7/8 in. (63.9 × 47.9 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Richard J. DePiano, through the Martin S. Ackerman Foundation, 79.48.H

Ronald B. Kitaj (American, 1932–2007), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, pub. 1971. Screenprint, 43 3/16 × 27 9/16 in. (109.7 × 70 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.10

Ronald B. Kitaj (American, 1932–2007), *Civic Virtue All Over the Floor*, 1967. Screenprint and photoscreenprint, 21 × 26 in. (53.4 × 66.1 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Theodore W. Strauel, through the Martin S. Ackerman Foundation, 79.59.2

Ronald B. Kitaj (American, 1932–2007), *Setpiece 1*, from the portfolio *Struggle in the West: The Bombing of London*, 1967–9. Screenprint and photoscreenprint, 16 15/16 × 29 1/2 in. (43 × 74.9 cm). Williams College Museum of



Art, Gift of Fred R. Nederlander, through the Martin S. Ackerman Foundation, 79.53.D

Oskar Kokoschka (Austrian, 1886–1980), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, pub. 1969–70. Screenprint, 42 15/16 × 27 5/8 in. (109 × 70.2 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.14

Oskar Kokoschka (Austrian, 1886–1980), *Das reine Gesicht (The Pure Face)*, 1913. Lithograph, 14 × 19 1/16 in. (35.6 × 48.4 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Madeleine P. and Harvey R. Plonsker, Class of 1961, M.2015.25.5

Jacob Lawrence (American, 1917–2000), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, 1971, pub. 1972. Screenprint, 43 1/16 × 27 3/8 in. (109.4 × 69.6 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.5

Jacob Lawrence (American, 1917–2000), *Radio Repairs*, from the series *Builders*, 1946. Gouache on paper, 23 1/16 × 31 3/16 in. (58.6 × 79.2 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Anonymous Gift, M.2003.31

Peter Phillips (British, born 1939), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, 1971, pub. 1972. Lithograph with embossing, 41 1/4 × 27 5/8 in. (104.8 × 70.1 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.4

Peter Phillips (British, born 1939), *Gravy for the Navy*, 1968–75. Screenprint, 28 11/16 × 40 3/8 in. (72.8 × 102.5 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Saul Steinberg, through the Martin S. Ackerman Foundation, 81.13.51

Richard Smith (British, 1931–2016), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, 1971, pub. 1972. Lithograph with die cuts, 41 9/16 × 27 5/8 in. (105.5 × 70.2 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.21

Richard Smith (British, 1931–2016), *V*, from *Proscenium Suite*, 1971. Etching, 22 15/16 × 23 in. (58.2 × 58.4 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Renato Valente, through the Martin S. Ackerman Foundation, 80.26.3

Richard Smith (British, 1931–2016), *VI*, from *Proscenium Suite*, 1971. Etching, 23 × 23 1/16 in. (58.4 × 58.5 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Renato Valente, through the Martin S. Ackerman Foundation, 80.26.2

Pierre Soulages (French, born 1919), Art Poster, Munich Olympics, pub. 1970. Lithograph, 40 15/16 × 27 5/8 in. (104 × 70.2 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Gift of Lewis Scheffey, Class of 1946, 79.36.28

Pierre Soulages (French, born 1919), *Etching XVII*, 1961. Color etching, 22 9/16 × 30 in. (57.3 × 76.2 cm). Williams College Museum of Art, Museum purchase, 63.15

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