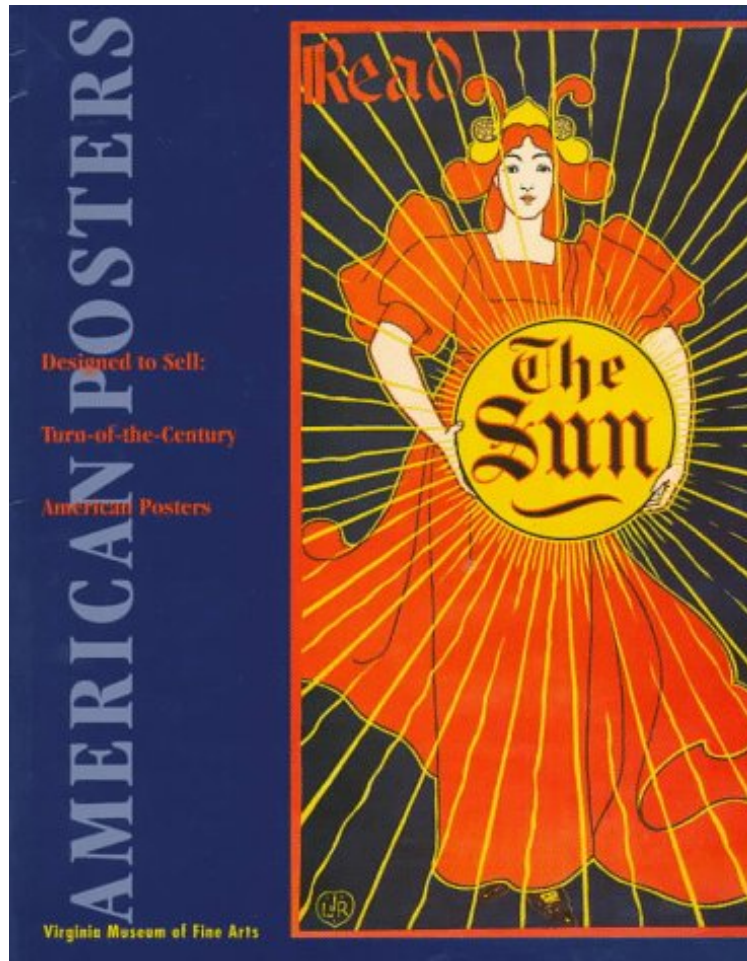


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## Designed to Sell: Turn-Of-The Century American Posters in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

*Frederick R. Brandt, Robert Koch, Philip B. Meggs*  
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**Frederick R. Brandt, Robert Koch, Philip B. Meggs : Designed to Sell: Turn-Of-The Century American Posters in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Designed to Sell: Turn-Of-The Century American Posters in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts*:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. If you want to know more about "the poster craze," here's a good resource. By Editchief: Yes, this is an old book, and it's only 110 pages, and not all of the posters are illustrated in color--but if you're intrigued by the posters created during the American Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau eras, this used book is a valuable resource. The first half of the book contains essays by Frederick Brandt ("Posters, Patrons, and Publishers"), Robert Koch ("Signs of the Times: The Artists") and Phillip Meggs (of Design History textbook fame; his essay is "Turn-of-the-Century American Posters: Art + Technology = Graphic Design" and he also contributed 3 pages of

"Technical Notes" about print production). These essays describe why posters that were intended to promote books and magazines became "collectables" in their own right at the turn of the 20th century, why works by U.S. poster artists such as Will Bradley, Edward Penfield, Maxfield Parrish, and Ethel Reed were admired worldwide, and how emerging technologies for printing assisted the "poster craze." The rest of the book is a catalog of 111 posters, created in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and collected by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (Richmond) from the 1970s to the 1990s. There's a small black-and-white illustration of each poster (many of the posters appear in color in the first half of the book), as well as biographical information about 45 poster artists. I have not visited this museum, and I gather from their website that American posters are just one small portion of their collection. However, I'm glad this catalog was published, and glad it's still available via for those with interest in a fascinating period of American design history.

America between 1885 and 1905 was in the heat of a poster craze. The country's finest artists and illustrators were commissioned to design advertising posters whose popularity soon overshadowed the products they were meant to promote. *Designed to Sell* presents vintage posters by 45 artists, including Maxfield Parrish, Blanche McManus, and Maurice Prendergast. Essays describe innovations in printing, compare American and European posters, and explain the emergence of a new profession -- graphic design. Biographical notes on the artists include eight women. Special technical notes outline historic printing methods and explain how an artist's drawing becomes a poster.