

How Poster Art of the “Long 1960s” Fueled International Solidarity

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WITH INTERNET AND CELL PHONE connectivity enabling instant worldwide dissemination of information, many individuals presume that communication between international social justice activists during the twentieth century was tedious, insular, and ineffective. Yet analysis of the vast output of published graphics from that period reveals a different story, one of dynamic interchange and cross-national support.

Let us look at the state of the world in the 1960s. The baby boom after the Second World War meant that by 1969, 19 percent of the U.S. population was between 14 and 25 years old—an increase of 44 percent over this age group in 1960.¹ Youth culture was exploding and exploited. The increasingly successful U.S. civil rights movement mirrored a post-war geopolitical turnover in which third-world nations shed their colonial legacies and sought new ones. Two of the most powerful countries on earth—the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China—were socialist or communist, and a distinct sense of social change filled the air. The period was intoxicating and full of optimism.

But graphic art in the service of social change was just reawakening from a forced slumber. The 1930s public art posters of the Works Progress Administration Federal Arts Program had been followed by powerful patriotic exhortations during the Second World War—followed by nothing. The “long 1950s” of the

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Cold War was a bleak era for social justice artwork due to anti-communism and McCarthyism. Rarely have the carrot and the stick been so transparently used to shape cultural policy. On the one hand, the CIA teamed up with concerned art elites in an organized campaign to promote abstract expressionism over social realism, distorting the United States' already-dysfunctional modes of art patronage.² On the other hand, artists found that there were serious consequences for those who challenged the status quo. One such artist was Frank Rowe, a decorated Second World War veteran who had just begun teaching art at San Francisco State College in 1950 only to be told by the campus administration that he needed to sign a Levering Act oath. This reactionary California legislation required state employees to deny membership in, or belief in, organizations promoting the overthrow of the U.S. government. The oath was a political litmus test; Frank refused to sign it and was fired. He was blacklisted from holding an academic position until 1969, two years after the California Supreme Court ruled the oath was unconstitutional.

Further evidence of this 20-year political poster desert (1945–1965) was the University of California Berkeley's 1964 Free Speech Movement, with activists using poetry, banners, theater, and song—but no posters. Posters are a specific medium—print multiples intended for public display (“posting”). Limited edition art prints—even ones on political themes—are not really posters, nor are the iconic civil rights movement's “I AM A MAN” hand-carried placards. Until the mid-1960s, the only posters one could buy were about travel, movies, or fine art reproductions. Many cultural forms were still emerging from morally and politically restrictive norms. As underground cartoonist and artist Spain Rodriguez reflected on the 1950s, “It was a bad time to be weird.”³

Yet in the mid-1960s political posters began a renaissance.⁴ In the United States, one transformative moment happened when the San Francisco Mime Troupe (pronounced “meem,” an homage to Greek and Roman exaggerated theater—they were not silent) was arrested in 1965 for deliberately performing “obscenity” in public.⁵ Their new publicist, Bill Graham, mounted an enormously successful defense benefit that would launch his career as a rock music impresario. Promotional art for those early concerts was wild, innovative, affordable, and hugely popular.⁶

At the same time, artists in countries such as Poland, Mexico, and Cuba were experimenting with this powerful medium, and much of it targeted to young people. By the late 1960s posters would never be the same.

THE CUBAN EXPERIENCE

After the 1959 revolution, propaganda imagery in Cuba underwent its own transformation. The dismantling of private-sector media, so dominant under capitalism, left a huge void for the new government to fill. But early efforts were generally simplistic and boring. Art historian David Kunzle observed that “commercial standards of realistic illustration of the Batista era were [simply] given a new political orientation.”⁷ However, like in the United States, popular culture led the way. On 26 July 1969, the first of many National Poster Shows was held and juried by prominent designers. Propaganda posters began to achieve legitimacy.

Cuba avoided mimicking the socialist realism typical of Soviet propaganda and established its own unique style. Their equivalent of Bill Graham as an agent of change was the Cuban Film and Cinematic Industries Institute, more commonly known as the Cuban Film Institute (ICAIC), which is generally acknowledged as the prime force in the postrevolutionary emergence of a uniquely Cuban style of

poster art. Saúl Yelin was a visionary publicist when he and Alfredo Guevara created ICAIC in March 1959. Yelin

In keeping with the spirit of the times, the contributions of individual artists were less important than the posters’ content.

was instrumental in turning the fresh, new institute into a significant international cultural presence. In keeping with the spirit of the times, the contributions of individual artists were less important than the posters’ content, and dozens of idealistic and talented artists applied their professional skills to this new enterprise. However, given that film showings were already well-attended, the posters were not as much advertising as they were an opportunity to present a Cuban slant on a film’s subject.

Other governmental agencies took note of ICAIC’s success. One of the efforts to coordinate post-World War II national liberation movements was the Organization for Solidarity for the People of Africa and Asia (OSPAA), and with the inclusion of Latin America (América Latina) at the 1966 Tricontinental Conference, “AL” was added to the acronym. OSPAAAL, a non-governmental organization based in Havana with an international board, began to publish the bimonthly *Tricontinental* magazine in English, Spanish, and French. Inside many of those magazines, mailed all over the world, were political posters. OSPAAAL realized that a poster is ideally suited for distribution, and instead of needing

to be carefully rolled up and mailed at considerable expense, posters could just be folded and inserted into bulk-mailed magazines. Turning an increasingly critiqued popular meme on its head, the Cubans created an anti-imperialist Playboy pinup. This experiment proved to be the most effective poster dissemination system yet conceived. Between 1966 and 1990, *Tricontinental's* circulation peaked in 1989 at 30,000 copies and reached 87 countries. OSPAAAL closed down in June 2019.

The largest producer of propaganda was *Editora Política* (EP), the official publishing department of the Cuban Communist Party. The agency operated under other names before 1985 and produced a wide range of domestic public information through books, brochures, billboards, and posters. Many other government agencies used the resources and distribution powers of EP for their own work, including the Federation of Cuban Women and the National Union of Students in Latin America and the Caribbean (OCLAE). Although less familiar to U.S. audiences than posters from OSPAAAL or ICAIC, among their internationally-respected staff artists were René Mederos Pazos (1933–1996), Alfredo Rostgaard (1943–2004), and Félix Beltrán (1938–2022). Many EP graphics ended up inspiring international variants.

STATE-SPONSORED GRAPHICS SHAKE HANDS WITH GRASSROOTS UNDERGROUND MEDIA

Three distinct groups make political graphics—independent, grassroots organizations and individuals with a lot of spirit but little money; established organizations with media departments (such as trade unions, political parties, and larger nonprofits); and governmental agencies. What is remarkable about the posters flowing back and forth during the “long 1960s” was the degree to which these producers formally and informally influenced each other as an act of solidarity. The posters coming out of the Chinese Cultural Revolution were cheap, plentiful, and powerful, and found their way onto the walls of U.S. radicals ranging from the Black Panther Party (BPP) to lesbian auto mechanics. However, most Chinese posters were reproductions of paintings, a difficult graphic style to reproduce or modify. Alternatively, Cuban posters were clean and bold graphics that could be easily lifted and repurposed. They spoke about domestic and international issues that mattered to North American movement activists of every persuasion. It may not be apparent now, but for many years the Cuban Revolution and its struggle to develop a socialist nation under the heel of the United States inspired people all over the world.

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Initial channels by which North Americans learned about Cuban posters were few and far between. One was by visiting the island, but the United States began restricting travel to Cuba in 1962 as one of its many efforts to isolate and undercut the revolution. A common trope in mainstream culture for several of those early years noted the uselessness of “Cuban travel posters.”⁸ Yet many Americans did (and still do) manage to travel to Cuba and frequently brought back posters.

Reproductions in print media were crucial to sharing the message. Most likely, the first was the December 1968 issue of *Ramparts* with a six-page article by Dugald Stermer based on the collection of Oakland, California activist Reese Erlich.⁹ Stermer was aware of cross-cultural influence, noting that the art for one of the posters shown was done by BPP Minister of Culture Emory Douglas. Cuban poster images also began appearing in underground newspapers and other alternative media.

Newspaper accounts of a U.S. airplane hijacked and flown to Cuba at the end of January 1969 flashed a photo of a young Cincinnati woman holding a copy of Alfredo Rostgaard’s “Hanoi Martes 13” [fig. 1].¹⁰ Articles decried the “propaganda stunt” by Cuban authorities, accusing them of preying on the young student passengers. One lawyer commented that “he felt the students posed in exchange for some posters on the walls of the Cuban air terminal ‘because of the poster craze.’”¹¹ Little did that lawyer know how far that “craze” would influence American youth.

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Figure 1



1969 was also the year that the *Venceremos* (“We Shall Overcome”) Brigade (VB) was formed. A New Left campaign created by activists from Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), its goal was to show solidarity with the Cuban Revolution by traveling to Cuba and working side by side with Cubans to rebuild their nation.¹² Since that time they have helped over 8,000 activists visit Cuba without permission from the U.S. government. The VB produced many posters about their activities, such as “Solidarity with the African peoples,” as well as general support for Cuba [fig. 2].

Figure 2



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The April 1970 issue of *Ramparts* carried activist journalist Karen Wald’s article about René Mederos Pazos.¹³ In 1969, Mederos was assigned to travel to Vietnam to paint scenes of the war, where he visited both North and South Vietnam for two months, traveling along the Ho Chi Minh Trail with the liberation forces, experiencing first-hand the brutal conditions of war and the courageous response of the Vietnamese people. The Cuban government was extremely supportive of this distant country fighting against U.S. control, and North American activists closely followed this international solidarity. The article included six large color reproductions. Wald described the significance of this exhibition:

The first showing of the full exhibit of 32 paintings had its ‘opening’ via national television—putting an end once and for all to the small-clique, private gallery openings that had been the custom in the past. That original art set was presented as a gift to the Vietnamese embassy

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in Havana. Sixteen of the paintings were chosen for reproduction and 300 copies of each were made. These have been shown in schools, workplaces, and public buildings in every town and province in Cuba.¹⁴

Mederos’s subsequent trip in 1972 added to the body of work. The Government of Cuba even reproduced seven of them as postage stamps.

How did a broad cross-section of North Americans first see Cuban posters? The earliest public dissemination with the highest profile was McGraw-Hill’s 1970 publication of *The Art of Revolution: Castro’s Cuba: 1959-1970* by Dugald Stermer (a former editor at *Ramparts*) with an introduction by Susan Sontag.¹⁵ Art historian Eva Cockcroft noted that the book “crystallized a growing interest within the New Left in Cuban poster art and allowed it to cross over into the mainstream.”¹⁶ *The Art of Revolution* was an oversized monster—17.5 by 14.5 inches—with 96 full-page poster reproductions grouped by publisher. Sontag’s introductory essay weighs in at over 14,000 words. She raised provocative issues about appropriation:

However much those who have made this book may like to think of it simply as presenting the poster art of Cuba, to a wider audience than ever before, the fact remains that the Cuban posters reproduced in this book have thereby been converted into something other than what they are—or were ever meant to be. They are now cultural objects, offered up for our delectation. They have become one more item in the cultural smorgasbord provided in affluent bourgeois society.¹⁷

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Stermer’s essay expands considerably upon his earlier *Ramparts* article, describing the poster-producing agencies and selected artists in more depth. He explains the difference between these posters, noting “the Cuban artist/propagandist is encouraged to deal imaginatively with slogans, workers, guns, plows, and heroes in a way that the Soviet socialist-realists never conceived of.”¹⁸ But the book was light on catalog information and research, with an index arranged in page sequence without artist, date, or medium, and solely based on Reese Erlich’s collection.

Surprisingly, the reception in Castro-hating, Cuban-exile-rich Florida was somewhat sympathetic. The *Miami News* review, however, sniffed at the medium, stating:

Hundreds of painters, artists, designers and graphic specialists are on the payroll of the Cuban government in various propaganda agencies, their supplies furnished, their studios paid for. Their job? Producing more posters, because in a sense the city walls throughout the provinces are art galleries, as are the telephone poles, and the billboards that once

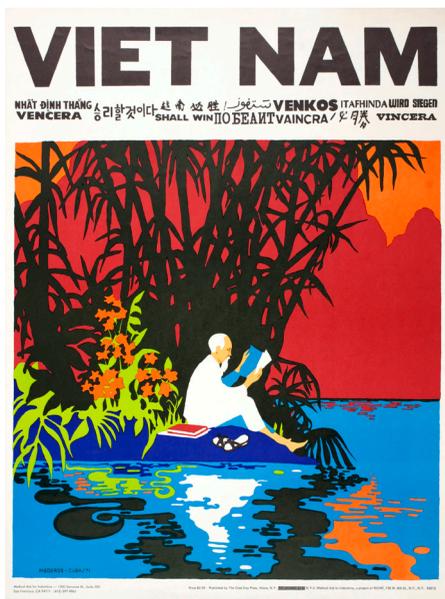
advertised commodities from private enterprise.¹⁹

Also surprisingly, the progressive Bay Area's *San Francisco Examiner's* art reviewer, Thomas Albright, slammed the book: "The big surprise is that *The Art of Revolution* is scarcely revolutionary at all."²⁰ Albright noted that the ICAIC posters were produced in limited screen-print editions with the artist's name, which "...sounds mighty bourgeoisie [*sic*]." He sniped at Sontag for her essay that "...manages almost always to neutralize one statement with another."²¹ And to Sontag's concluding caution that "this book is a good example of how all things in this society get turned into commodities ... Caveat emptor, Viva Fidel," Albright sarcastically added, "And viva Susan, all the way to the bank."²²

Public displays of Cuban posters in the United States began in 1975, when Juan Fuentes and Susan Adelman organized an exhibition at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. Fuentes was overwhelmed by the response: "We were told this show received the largest response since a Van Gogh exhibit, and those attending were all kinds of people, not just the regular museum crowd, but people from third world communities, Chicanos, Latinos, and Asians."²³ Later that same year, the show opened at *El Centro Cultural de la Gente* in San Jose, California and the Art Student Association Gallery at the University of New Mexico. In April 1976, New York's Center for Cuban Studies (CCS) mounted its first poster show at the Interchurch Center in Manhattan. The CCS continues to promote Cuban poster art—they have collected over 5,000 posters through traveling exhibitions and publications to date.

One of the earliest movement channels for recirculating Cuban posters was the independent Left print shop Glad Day Press. Glad Day was founded in Ithaca, New York, and operated there from 1967 to 1979 until it relocated to Oakland, California, to print for the Liberation Support Movement and became Sequoyah Graphics. Glad Day printed posters for many Cuban solidarity events, such as benefit concerts by the Committee for July 26. They also adapted and distributed a 1973 OSPAAAL poster by Rafael Morante, "Solidarity with Angola." But by far their most popular Cuban poster was Mederos' "Viet Nam shall win," (1971) [fig. 3] featuring a serene image of Ho Chi Minh, which was sold to raise funds for the solidarity organization Medical Aid to Indochina.

Figure 3



But beyond the visibility of the Cuban posters, a deeper level of artistic and political solidarity was maturing between the cultural activists.

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THE INTERCHANGE

It is hard to understate the profound influence of Cuban posters on a whole generation of North American graphic artists. In 2003, I mounted “One Struggle, Two Communities: Late 20th Century Political Posters of Havana, Cuba and the San Francisco Bay Area” at the Berkeley Art Center, displaying works by Enrique Chagoya, Emory Douglas, Juan Fuentes, Rupert Garcia, Nancy Hom, Malaquias Montoya, Jane Norling, and Jos Sances. The exhibition explored the extent to which artists and political activists in the San Francisco Bay Area played a significant role in establishing dynamic solidarity links that deepened and enhanced the creative impact of both communities. These artists—all of whom continue to produce social justice artwork to this day—described the deep influence of Cuba’s posters.

Jane Norling, the only North American to have designed an OSPAAAL poster (“Day of world solidarity with the struggle of the people of Puerto Rico,” 1973), remembers:

They appeared on every wall in the San Francisco houses in 1970 where activists met in the struggles for civil rights, women’s rights,

and against the war in Vietnam. The Cuban posters—vivid, clever, and compact—brought back by Venceremos Brigadistas from a tiny country in transition that taught us profoundly about liberation efforts around the world.²⁴

Emory Douglas first remembered seeing Cuban posters sometime in 1967 or 1968 while working on the Black Panther newspaper after the party received publications from Havana. Douglas recalls being inspired by this revolutionary artwork from Cuba, Vietnam, and other countries. As a reciprocal gesture, the BPP regularly sent newspapers and posters to Cuba. There was also direct contact—by the early 1970s, when BPP Minister of Education George Murray traveled to Havana, a group of members from several local offices served as a conduit for agitational artwork. Douglas noticed very early on that some of the posters coming from Cuba were appropriating his artwork, and, true to the spirit of the times, he was “glad to see it picked up.”²⁵

Juan Fuentes traveled to Cuba as a member of the Venceremos Brigade in 1973. He later wrote:

We helped build homes just outside of Havana. We also traveled all over the island visiting schools, factories, and farms. There were bold and colorful billboards and posters proclaiming national identity that addressed cultural, social, and political themes. It was here that I began to see the powerful impact these images provided to society.²⁶

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Fuentes was an active conduit in the United States–Cuba art recirculation. In addition to his 1975 exhibition, in 2000 he organized a cultural exchange between San Francisco’s Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts and Cuban artists. These examples show some of the ways the spirit and style of the art flowed back and forth between the two communities.

Rostgaard’s film poster with President Lyndon B. Johnson’s face on bombs was recycled in 1972 for a San Francisco demonstration against the Vietnam War, this time using Richard Nixon’s mug [fig. 1]. Daisy Garcia’s 1968 poster about African Americans was picked up and redesigned by “Taking Care of Business.”²⁷ The image was further recycled by the Venceremos Brigade in 1970, shifting the message to support African liberation.

The face and raised fist of Angela Davis—Communist Party USA member and BPP supporter—was multinational as well.²⁸ Félix Beltrán powerfully posterized her in various prints; a 1971 profile [fig. 4] is so iconic that it is the catalog cover and entrance image for the comprehensive “Angela Davis—Seize the Time” traveling exhibition currently mounted by the Zimmerli Art Museum

(Rutgers).²⁹ The image was almost immediately recycled by a support group in New York, and Angela’s revolutionary impact was so strong that she became the face for a Cuban May Day celebration [fig. 5].

Figure 4



Figure 5



Luis Balaguer’s brilliant Cuban poster of Richard Nixon’s head filled with dead Vietnamese [fig. 6 inspired Emory Douglas’ newspaper cover of a Black G.I [fig. 7].³⁰ Douglas recycled the graphic for a film in 2020 and put Nixon’s face back on the bombs. Sharing is a two-way street—Douglas’ work had been

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lifted by the Cubans in 1968 [fig. 8]. Appropriation within the movement was encouraged. A Cuban poster in solidarity with Laos [fig. 9] was redrawn in the United States and retitled “Their struggle is our struggle.” These posters expressed visual support for the idea that everyone’s destinies were shaped by similar forces, and the future lay in revolutionary solidarity.

Figure 6



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Figure 7

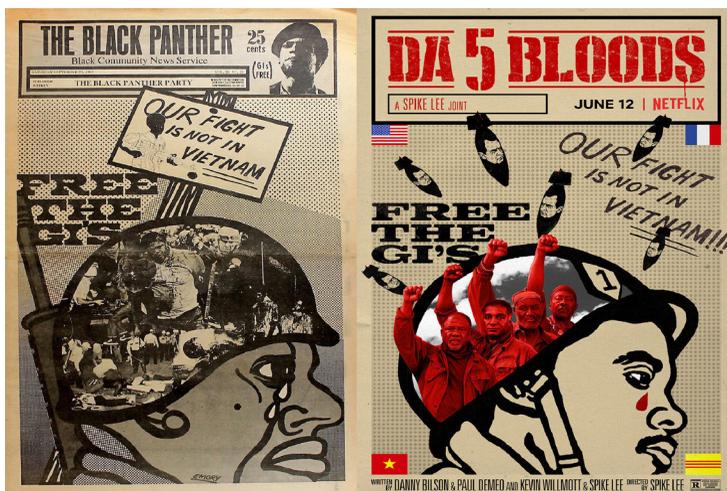


Figure 8

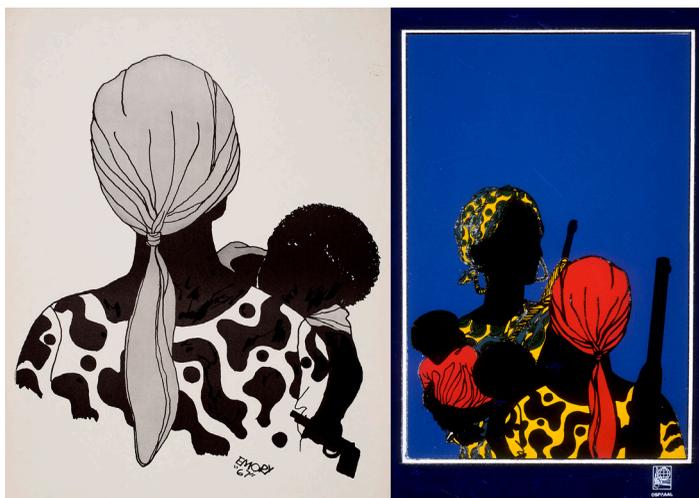
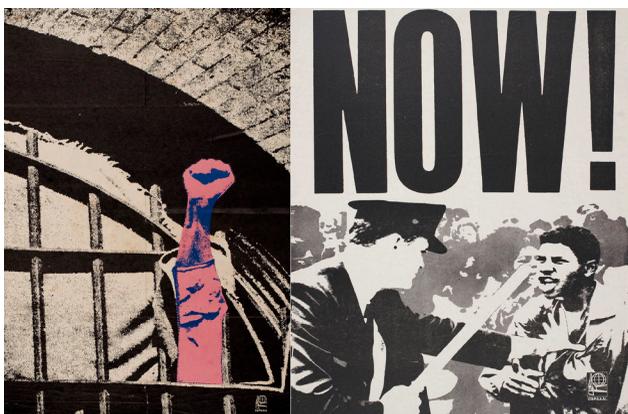


Figure 9



Several OSPAAAL poster images [fig. 10] were drawn from U.S. events without acknowledgment. The generic raised fist from a prison window is from a 1970 photo of the Queens (N.Y.) House of Detention by Mark Feinstein/Liberation News Service.³¹ That exact image was soon recycled in another poster by the BPP. “NOW!” (1967) uses a 27 April 1964 Nashville police racial incident news photo; it has been recycled in the United States many times, including by the BPP in 1968 as “FREE HUEY NOW!” and in 2002 by the Prison Activist

Figure 10



THE INTERCHANGE CONTINUES

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Although Cuba no longer produces the robust body of graphic work it did during the 1970s and 1980s, the images and issues from that “golden age” continue to inspire new artists and work. Scholars, filmmakers, and activist organizations often request these images.

One of the major centers for new and recycled movement graphics is the Interference Archive in Brooklyn, which has produced several exhibitions and publications exploring Cuban graphics.³² Interference founder Josh MacPhee has published some exceptional scholarship on international design movements, with a special shoutout to the *SIGNAL* journal he edits with Alec Icky Dunn.³³

It is not just the overt Cuban political art that has established a graphic design impact in the United States—it is all their posters. Nashville artist and printmaker Sam Smith reflected in 2019: “[*Revolucion! Cuban Poster Art*] really got me started on poster design, especially this one for “Stolen Kisses”—it is one of my all-time favorites. I was so blown away by Cuban film posters—they were so powerful, graphically.”³⁴

One recent example of the global interchange of political art was the 2017 exhibition at Work Room Four gallery in Hanoi, “A Present Retrospective: The historical work of René Mederos and the contemporary responses of artists.”³⁵ In collaboration with Mederos’ grandson Marcelo Brociner working in Viet Nam, my colleague Carol Wells (Executive Director of the Center for the Study of Political Graphics in Los Angeles) and I helped organize an exhibition. In 1996 CSPG mounted “Decade of Protest: Political Posters from the United States,

Viet Nam, and Cuba, 1965-1975” and “A Present Retrospective” which included five contemporary Vietnamese artists who created new artwork in response to Mederos’ prints.³⁶ A review in *Viet Nam Bridge* noted, “This exhibition brings the focus away from conflict to a space of collaboration and solidarity. We as nations are now eternally bound and it is imperative that we all work together for a peaceful coexistence.”³⁷ This international collaborative art project not only validated how solidarity played out in real-world politics, but it showed how solidarity inspires further work over generations and across cultures.

ANALOG WORKS IN A DIGITAL WORLD

Posters that simply sit in drawers are not fulfilling their destiny. These items were made to be posted in public, shared, and commented on. Graphic artists as well as archivists have evolved with the new tools available—digital media complements, not replaces, physical documents.

Even in this digital age artists still make social justice silkscreen prints. People who attend rallies and demonstrations highly value these hand-crafted objects. They often take prints home and display them on their walls as proud reminders of the human web of political engagement. And a popular mechanized form of stencil printing is Risograph, used by grassroots and community groups for agitational flyers and small posters.

But digital tools take everything further. We were once limited to books, magazines, and exhibitions to see powerful movement art, but we can now share almost everything online. Research on art used to be extremely cumbersome. When visiting OSPAAAL in 1989, I was shocked to discover that this important body of work had not been systematically documented, and by the mid-1990s I assembled the first digital *raisonné* of these posters.³⁸ The full life of a cultural artifact should not be a stagnant linear one, but a cycle. Posters are made, collected, archived, and eventually re-used for artistic inspiration and education.³⁹ Digital tools are an essential part of this art history renaissance.

One member of the new generation of activist archivists is Lisbet Tellefsen, who has pursued significant collections, including Che Guevara posters and Black lesbian culture. Her current project amassed Angela Davis images (with many from Cuba) and built a comprehensive special collection, exhibition, and book on Angela’s impact. Digitizing unprocessed materials *before* they go to archives and special collections has opened new doors for sharing content and speeding up archival processing.⁴⁰ As more awkward formats and marginalized historical documents (like underground newspapers and movement flyers) become

digitized and searchable, researchers can more easily connect the dots. This, in turn, helps artists find more relevant works. Just like in the 1960s, political poster images fly across borders and inspire solidarity. 

IMAGES (ALL IMAGES BY THE AUTHOR EXCEPT FOR #7)

1. *Left*: “Hanoi Martes 13” [Hanoi, Tuesday 13th] by Alfredo Rostgaard, for ICAIC, 1968; right: “April 22 Kezar Stadium,” artist unknown, 1972

2. *Left*: “Day of solidarity with the Afro-American people August 18” by Daysi García, for OSPAAAL, 1968; center: “United Front” for Taking Care of Business, circa 1969; right: “Solidarity with the African peoples” for the Venceremos Brigade, circa 1970.

3. “Viet Nam shall win” original art by Rene Mederos, republished by Glad Day Press, NY, 1971

4. *Left*: “Libertad para Angela Davis [Freedom for Angela Davis]” by Félix Beltrán (1938-2022), 1971, for the Cuban Committee for Freedom for Angela Davis, published by Editora Política; right: “Libertad para Angela Davis” version published by the New York Committee to Free Angela Davis, circa 1971.

5. “Los pueblos unidos jamás seran vencidos! Viva el primero de Mayo” [The people united will never be defeated! Long live May Day], artist unknown, for Commission of Revolutionary Orientation (later called Editora Política)-Matanzas, circa 1972.

6. “Day of support for Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos” by Jose Lamas, 1969, for National Union of Students in Latin American and the Caribbean (this poster has previously been credited to Luis Balaguer; research by Cuban poster scholar Pepe Menéndez confirms this new attribution, supported by this graphic on the cover of OCLAE magazine no. 56, August 1971)

7. *Left*: cover for September 1969 issue *The Black Panther*, by Emory Douglas; right: poster for “Da Five Bloods” film, by Emory Douglas, 2020. (© 2022 Emory Douglas / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York)

8. *Left*: untitled, by Emory Douglas, 1967 (© 2022 Emory Douglas / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York); right: untitled, by Lazaro Abreu, for OSPAAAL, 1968.

9. *Left*: “Day of solidarity with Laos Oct. 12” by Jesús Forjans, for OSPAAAL, 1968; right: “Laos: Their struggle is our struggle” artist unknown, circa 1970.

10. *Left*: untitled, by Lazaro Abreu, for OSPAAAL, 1974; right: “NOW” by Jesús Forjans, for OSPAAAL, 1967 [Photo also used on cover of *Tricontinental Bulletin*, issue 4, July 1966.

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NOTES

1. *Characteristics of American Youth*, United States Census report P23-30 (February 6, 1970).

2. Eva Cockcroft, “Abstract Expressionism, Weapon of The Cold War,” *Artforum*, <https://www.artforum.com/print/197406/abstract-expressionism-weapon-of-the-cold-war-38017>.

3. Spain Rodriguez, interview with author, September 28, 2010.

4. Poster art in general, and political posters specifically, seem to blossom in waves over time. In addition to the U.S. poster renaissance from the mid-1930s to the mid-1940s, another splash moment occurred during the 1890s. Margolin Victor, *American Poster Renaissance* (New York: Castle Books, 1975).

5. “Banned show goes on—Park mime star arrested,” *San Francisco Examiner*, August 8, 1965.

6. Innovation in art must be tempered with understanding the role of influences. The iconic typographic style of the “psychedelic poster” is directly linked to a seminal exhibition “Jugendstil and Expressionism” of the poster art of Germany and Austria from 1893 to 1934. The exhibition at the University of California (UC), Berkeley Art Gallery and the Pasadena Art Museum was organized by Herschel B. Chipp, who five years later would be a faculty champion of UC Berkeley activist poster art. University of California Berkeley Herschel Browning Chipp and Pasadena Art Museum, *Jugendstil & Expressionism in German Posters* (Berkeley: University of California, 1965).

7. David Kunzle, “Public Graphics in Cuba,” *Latin American Perspectives* 7, Supplement, Volume II,

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no. 4 (1975): 90.

8. I have run across many examples of this “joke” in newspapers, from September 1961 to June 1964. One is surprisingly “quoted” as being made by Black comedian and civil rights activist Dick Gregory: “Can you imagine anything more outdated than a Cuban travel poster?” in *Philadelphia Daily News*, February 13, 1962. Given the massive U.S. government disinformation campaign against Cuba, it is possible that these were planted.

9. Dugald Stermer, “The Agit Pop Art of Cuba,” *Ramparts* 7 no. 9 (December 14–27, 1968): 32–37.

10. “Local Co-ed, Executive on Hijacked Jets,” *Post and Times Star* (Cincinnati), January 30, 1969.

11. “Hijacked Students Pose for Castro Credo” UPI, *Courier-Post* (Camden, New Jersey), January 30, 1969.

12. Kavitha Iyengar, “The Venceremos Brigade: North Americans In Cuba Since 1969,” *International Journal of Cuban Studies* 7.2, 2015.

13. Karen Wald, “Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom (Ho Chi Minh): A Cuban Artist Views North Vietnam” *Ramparts*, April 1970.

14. Wald, “Nothing is more precious,” 22.

15. Dugald Stermer and Susan Sontag, *The Art of Revolution* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970).

16. Eva Cockcroft, “The United States and Socially Concerned Latin American Art,” *The Latin American Spirit: Art and Artists in the United States, 1920-1970*, The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1988, 212.

17. Sontag, “Posters: Advertisement, Art, Political Artifact, Commodity,” in Stermer and Sontag, *The Art of Revolution*, xxii-xxiii.

18. Stermer, “Bread and the Rose,” in *The Art of Revolution*, https://www.docspopuli.org/pdfs/BREAD_AND_THE_ROSE_1970.pdf.

19. Kerry Johnson King, “Graphic signs of Cuba’s art revolution,” *Miami News*, March 3, 1971, 6A.

20. Thomas Albright, “Crazy Quilt Off-Shoots from a Revolution,” *San Francisco Examiner*, March 21, 1971, 33.

21. Albright, “Crazy Quilt Off-Shoots,” 34.

22. Albright, “Crazy Quilt Off-Shoots,” 34.

23. Leroy Perkins, “Cuban Poster Show Gives Glimpse of Life in Island,” *Albuquerque Journal*, July 24, 1975.

24. Jane Norling artist statement, “One Struggle, Two Communities: Late 20th Century Political Posters of Havana, Cuba and the San Francisco Bay Area,” exhibit at Berkeley Art Center September 28–December 13, 2003, <https://www.docspopuli.org/articles/Cuba/BACshow.html>.

25. Emory Douglas artist statement, “One Struggle, Two Communities: Late 20th Century Political Posters of Havana, Cuba and the San Francisco Bay Area,” exhibit at Berkeley Art Center September 28–December 13, 2003, <https://www.docspopuli.org/articles/Cuba/BACshow.html>.

26. Juan Fuentes artist statement, “One Struggle, Two Communities: Late 20th Century Political Posters of Havana, Cuba and the San Francisco Bay Area,” exhibit at Berkeley Art Center September 28–December 13, 2003, <https://www.docspopuli.org/articles/Cuba/BACshow.html>.

27. Little is known about TCB, which was most likely a U.S. Black nationalist group; their name was possibly inspired by the title of a December 1968 televised performance by Diana Ross and the Supremes, and/or by the same term as quoted in 1968 by the prosecution of Black Panther Huey Newton from in address at San Francisco State College.

28. Sarah J. Seidman, “Angela Davis in Cuba as Symbol and Subject,” *Radical History Review*, January 2020.

29. Gerry Beegan and Donna Gustafson, *Angela Davis—Seize the Time*, (Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, New Jersey, 2020).

30. Emory Douglas: “I do recall seeing the poster. It did influence some of the collaged graphic designs I did.” Email exchange with author, June 21, 2020.

31. Fenton David (ed), *Shots; Photographs from the Underground Press* (New York: Douglas Book Corp., 1971), 43.

32. Lani Hanna et al., *Armed by Design: Posters and Publications of Cuba’s Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa Asia and Latin America (OSPAAAL) = El Diseño a Las Armas: Los Carteles Y Publicaciones*

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Cubanos De La Organización En Solidaridad Con Los Pueblos De África Asia Y América Latina (OSPAAAL), Interference Archive, Brooklyn, 2015.

33. Josh MacPhee. "Constructing Third World Struggle: The Design of the OSPAAAL and Tricontinental," *The Funambulist*, no. 22 (2019).

34. "Studio Visits: Sam Smith," podcast May 9, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elOE-hIPXts>.

35. Steven Heller, "Cuba-Viet Nam Exhibition: Art Solidarity Across Oceans," Print, January 22, 2018.

36. Carol A. Wells et al., *Decade of Protest: Political Posters from the United States Viet Nam Cuba 1965–1975*, Track 16, Gallery and Center for the Study of Political Graphics, (Santa Monica, California, Smart Art Press, 1996).

37. "Exhibition of propaganda artworks in Hanoi," *VietNamBridge/Vietnam Art News*, May 12, 2017.

38. Philip Krayna, "The Cuban Poster Crisis," *Communication Arts*, September–October 1994, 40–49. OSPAAAL Online Catalog, <https://www.docspopuli.org/CubaWebCat/gallery-01.html>.

39. "Life Cycle of a Cultural Artifact," <https://www.docspopuli.org/articles/LifeCycleCulturalArtifact.html>.

40. Lincoln Cushing, "Cataloging as political practice," *The Stansbury Forum*, April 4, 2015, <https://stansburyforum.com/2015/04/04/cataloging-as-political-practice>.