

THE ART of FEAR

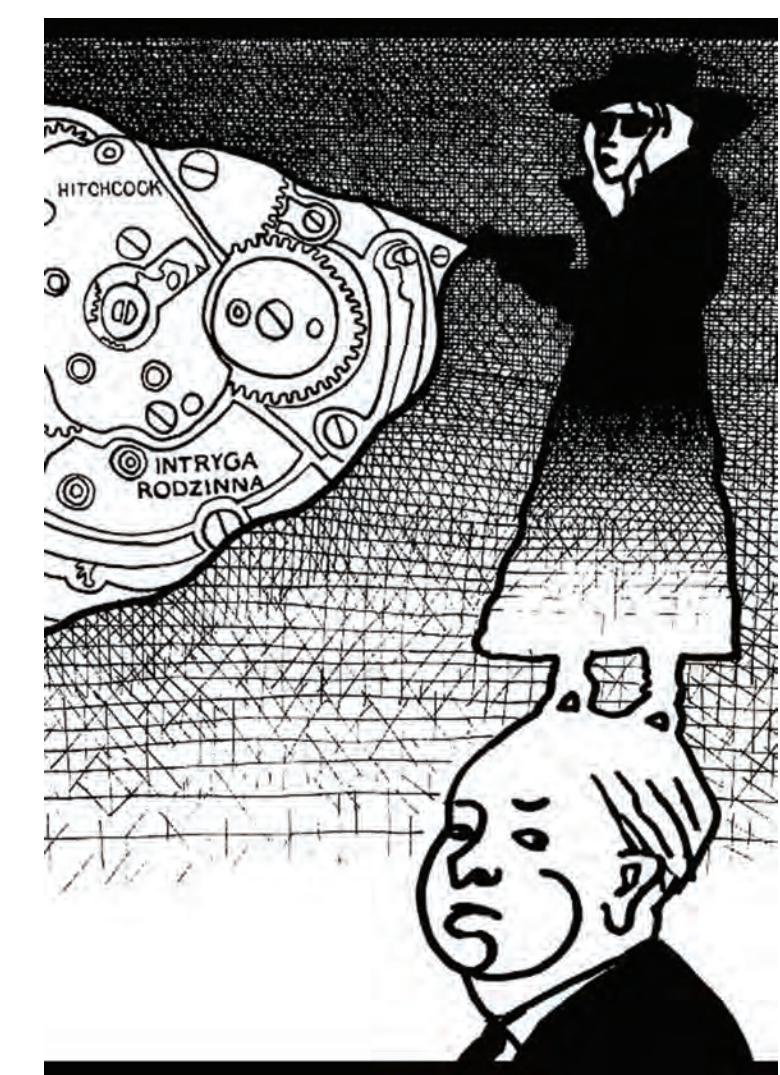
An exploration of Polish Posters and American Horror and Thriller films

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Horror Films



Thriller Films



A Brief History of Polish Posters

During the Cold War, a time when American “publicity materials” were banned from Poland - which was controlled by the oppressive Communist rule - Polish posters were often the only colorful thing on the street, and subsequently became a staple of Polish life and culture. The Stalinist rule was lifted in the mid fifties, leaving ample room for artistic expression. Artists were able to work outside of the commercial constraints of a capitalist economy, leading to a poster school that was vibrantly diverse in terms of design.

Westphal's Collections

Currently housed in Westphal's URBN center, the Frank Fox and Kenneth F. Lewalski Polish poster collections totals at over 2,600 posters, representing one of the largest collections of Soviet era posters in an institution in the United States. The immense creativity displayed by the Polish School of Poster Design has had a lasting and significant impact on Graphic Design in the modern era, and the allusions and metaphors in many of the posters created for film, theatre, opera, the circus, and music are known to have made implicit statements on life under a totalitarian regime.

A Glimpse Into the Virtual Exhibit

For the STAR Summer 2020 project, a virtual gallery containing Polish posters for American horror and thriller films was created to explore the relationship between imagery and the effect it has on the viewer. This exhibit focused on the imagery and visual symbols utilized in horror and thriller films as well as how deliberate artistic choices impact the appearance of the poster. The themes of this exhibit include—but are not limited to—the various ways typography is used in the posters, the use of black and white imagery as well as contrastingly bold and colorful imagery, and the application of visual motifs common to the horror and thriller genre, such as skulls and inhumane creatures.