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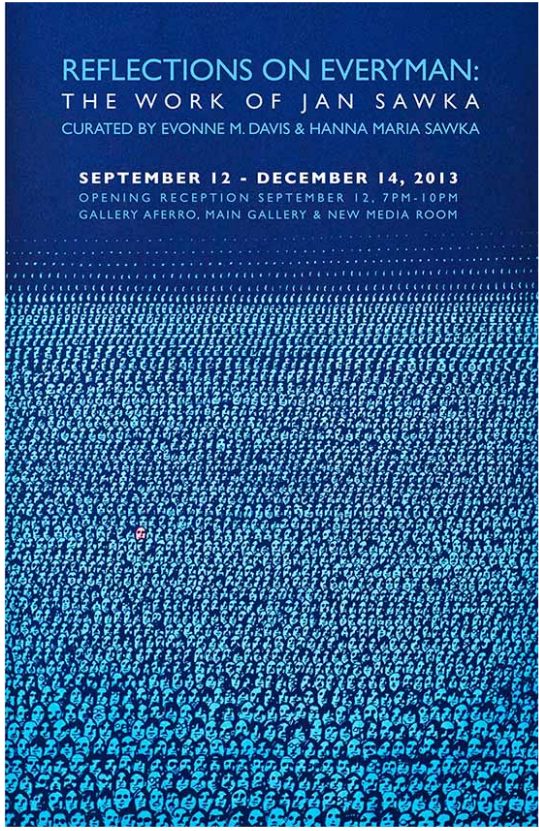
Weekend Heller: Jan Sawka, Richard Nixon, Food Stuff

By: Steven Heller | August 23, 2013



Jan Sawka, Out of Exile

The Polish emigre illustrator and painter Jan Sawka (1946-2012) will be remembered in the exhibition "Reflections on Everyman: The Work of Jan Sawka," opening September 12 through December 14, 2013. Curated by Evonne M. Davis and Hanna Maria Sawka at the Gallery Aferro's Main Gallery and New Media Room in Newark, New Jersey.



Sawka's body of work includes paintings, book arts, sculptures, engravings, editorial illustrations, architectural installations, monuments, new media and a 10-story stage set designed for the Grateful Dead. Currently, a memorial exhibition of his work is on view at The National Museum in Krakow, Poland. Born in 1946 in Zabrze. In his 20's Sawka was the youngest member of the Polish Poster School. "Sawka's portrayal in his art of the impact of totalitarianism on the individual led to his expulsion from Poland in 1976," notes the gallery's press release. He was, however, given a residency at the newly opened Pompidou Center in Paris. In 1977, he arrived in New York with his wife and baby, four suitcases and a portfolio of artworks.



Within a year, he became a prolific editorial illustrator for The New York Times. While producing paintings at his home studio, he designed posters and sets for the Jean Cocteau Repertory Theater, Harold Clurman Theater, and Samuel Beckett Theater, where he collaborated closely with Beckett. In 1981, when Martial Law was imposed in Poland, the AFL-CIO sold Sawka's Solidarity Poster in the millions to provide immediate support to the besieged Solidarity movement.

This exhibition will focus on Jan Sawka's concern with the human condition in today's world, with examples of his paintings, prints and sculptures.

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Richard Nixon meant many things to many people. On the plus side, he founded the National Endowment for the Arts. On the minus side, he really was a crock. But whatever you may think, he's BAAAAAACK and now trending on Twitter.

