

Classic Posters Interview with Heads of State by Michael Erlewine

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Michael Erlewine: When and how did you get interested in art?

Heads of State: We have always been artistic young lads. We met in college and upon graduation found ourselves in jobs that really didn't push our creativity as much as we had hoped that they would. So we found poster art really as an outlet for artistic sides.

Michael Erlewine: What kind of art influenced you?

Heads of State: We are heavily influenced by graphic design. People like Saul Bass, Luba Lukova, Alexey Brodovitch, Milton Glaser, Stefan Sagmeister. These people really influenced our style as poster artists, even though their disciplines are far different from poster making. Beyond that, I think we are influenced by everything around us, albums from our youth, type treatments of early and mid 20th century paper backs, old signage, you name it.

Michael Erlewine: What concert-posters artists influenced you?

Heads of State: We are really in an odd spot. Some of our major influences are our contemporaries today. We are young, only 24, so we grew up flipping through Juxtapoz looking at the work of Frank Kozik and Derek Hess. We were in high school looking at the flyers that Art Chantry put out. In college, we saw and were heavily influenced by the work of Jeff Kleinsmith. So its strange being a little younger. We initially weren't really influenced by the posters from the 1960s and 1970s. Certainly now we have a great appreciation for them, but growing up, it was something that

related to our parents generation, and when your 14 or, 15 its law to hate that stuff.

Michael Erlewine: What was your first concert-music poster?

Heads of State: Our first poster was for Dillinger Escape Plan with Dalek at the First Unitarian Church in Philadelphia.

Michael Erlewine: What are the main venues you have done posters for?

The First Unitarian Church, The Trocadero, North Star Bar.

Michael Erlewine: What are the main bands you have done posters for?

Heads of State: Dillinger Escape Plan, Idlewild, Pinback, Ted Leo, J Mascis, Engine Down, And You Will Know Us By the Trail of Dead.

Michael Erlewine: What media do you use?

Heads of State: Most of our posters are hand screen printed 2-4 colors. Our sizes vary 18x24, 17x23, or 13x19, but really the design dictates the size, so if an odd size works better, we will go with that.

Michael Erlewine: What other poster artists have you collaborated with?

Heads of State: Unfortunately, as of now we have not collaborated with anyone, though we are working to do a split poster with Serigraphie Populaire.

Michael Erlewine: Who are your favorite current poster artists?

Heads of State: Jeff Kleinsmith, Patent Pending, Bird Machine, Nocturnal Showprint, Serigraphie Populaire, Aesthetic Apparatus - Dan Ibarra, Michael Byzewski, Programmable

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Press, Kangaroo Press, Isle of Print,
Dan Grzeca.

Michael Erlewine: What are your favorite
bands?:

Heads of State: Modest Mouse, Willie
Nelson, Wilco, Nirvana, Wu Tang Clan,
Fugazi, Pinback, Skip Spence, Gram
Parsons, Tribe Called Quest.

Michael Erlewine: Any poster shows of
your work:

Heads of State: Baltimore Maryland.
July 1 - August 27, 2002, Space 1026,
Philadelphia, PA - July 28th & 29th,
2003

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