

Intangible fantasy

By Anna Richardson

With the latest crop of graphics students bursting on to the design scene, it's a good time to consider some of the grand masters, too. The Royal College of Art is doing just that by staging the first major retrospective in Britain of the work of the late Roman Cieślewicz.

Part of the ongoing [Polska! Year](#) cultural programme, the exhibition will display more than 150 key works from the Polish graphic designer's diverse career. Working first in Warsaw and then in Paris, Cieślewicz was at the heart of artistic

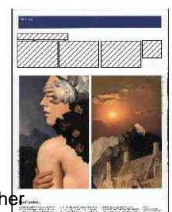
life in both cities. He brought Surrealist fantasy to the staid visual culture of communist Poland and a critical perspective on the consumer spectacle in the West. Through collage, he produced images by reworking familiar icons, such as Che Guevara or the Mona Lisa.

Curated by David Crowley, Andrzej Klimowski and Jeff Willis of the RCA and Anna Grabowska-Konwent of the National Museum in Poznań, the exhibition will comprise film and cinema posters of the 1950s and 1960s, including his design for Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, collages for

a number of 20th-century literary classics, iconic magazine covers, such as his USSR/USA Supermen image for *Opus*, and publicity for the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.

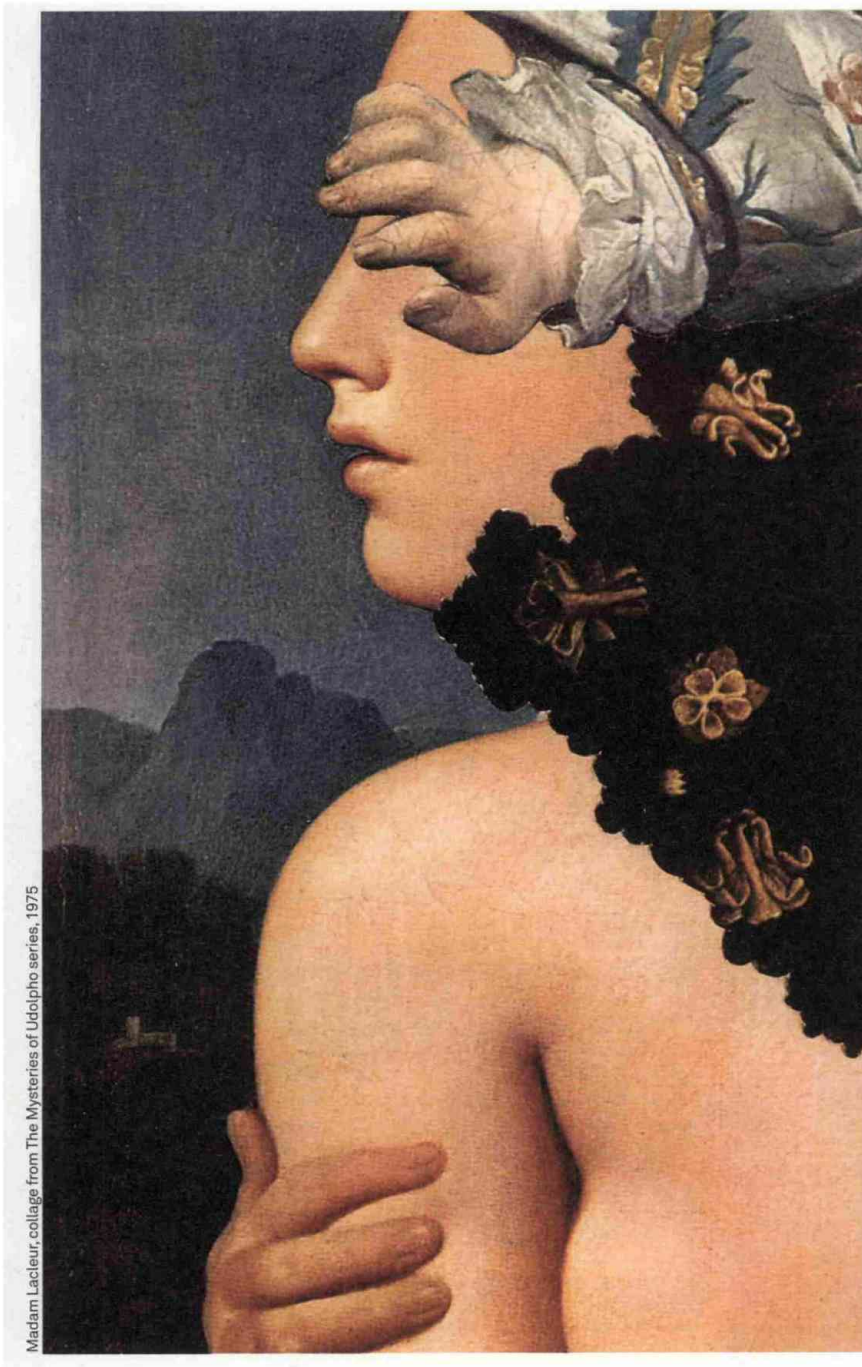
Cieślewicz has many fans in the design world. As Neville Brody says, 'Here you find a master of the dark arts of iconic image-making, a meeting place between the warped and disturbed inner mind of today's society and the powerful articulation of raw graphic language. His posters are without edges, constantly moving and undefinable, beautiful and ugly, never reassuring.'

Roman Cieślewicz is
on in the Gulbenkian
Galleries at the Royal
College of Art,
Kensington Gore,
London SW7 from
16 July to 7 August



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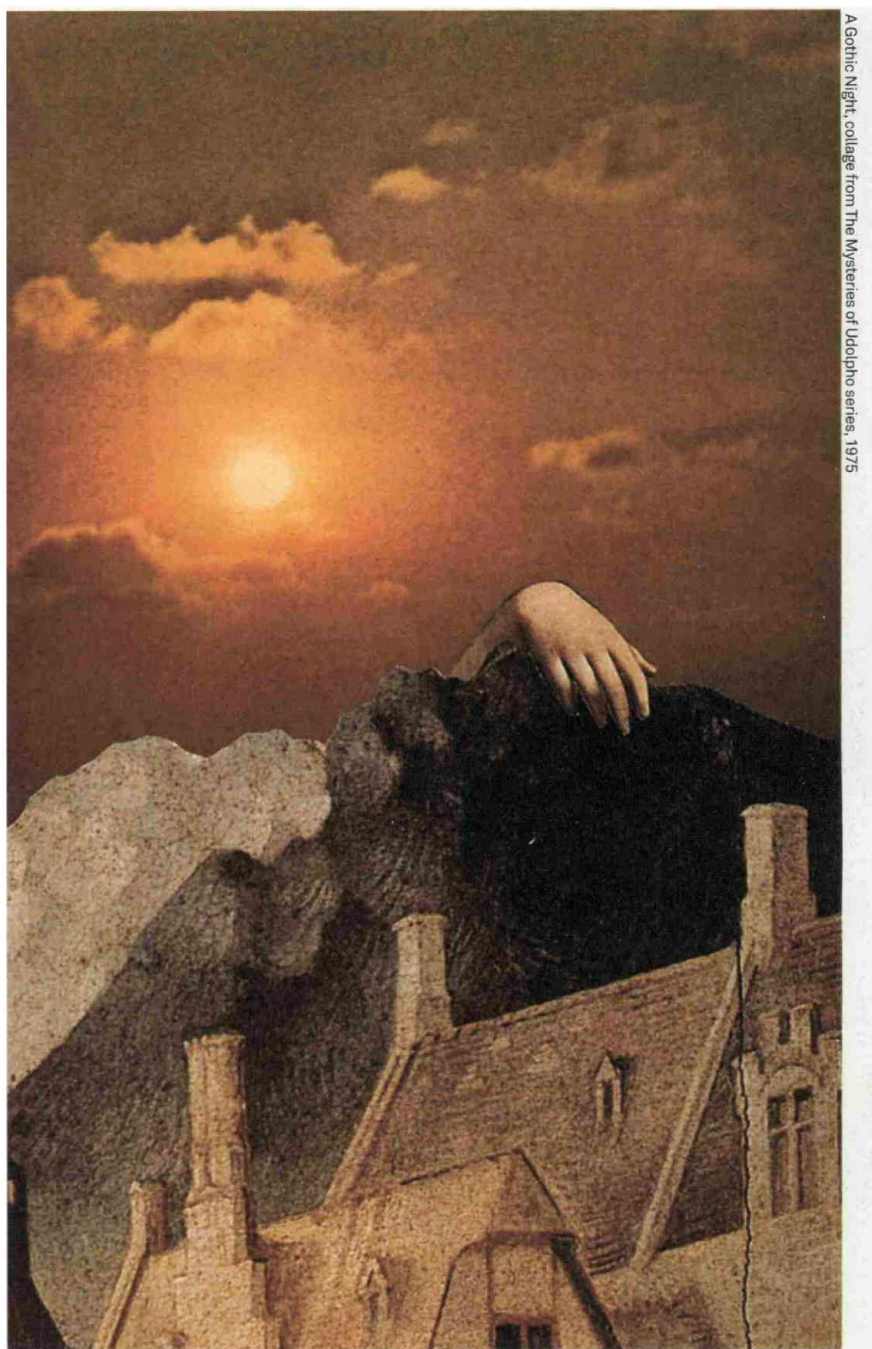
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Madam Lacleur, collage from The Mysteries of Udolpho series, 1975

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A Gothic Night, collage from The Mysteries of Udolpho series, 1975