

WPA POSTERS

The U.S. Postal Service will celebrate posters of the Work Projects Administration (WPA), striking and utilitarian artworks created by the Poster Division of the WPA Federal Art Project, with a self-adhesive booklet pane of 20 stamps containing ten different designs. The stamps will be issued on 7 March 2017, at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park, New York. The stamps will be on sale nationwide the same day. Each stamp pays the First Class “Forever” rate, currently 49 cents.

The USPS will also produce ten different Digital Color Postmarks for First Day Covers.

Each stamp features a vibrant example of the posters conceived and printed in workshops across the nation under the WPA, a broad-reaching program that provided millions of jobs during the Great Depression. Formed in 1935 as the Works Progress Administration and renamed the Work Projects Administration in 1939, the WPA operated until 1943.



The poster images used are from the Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, WPA Poster Collection. The Library of Congress says that 2,000 different WPA posters are known to exist.

Antonio Alcalá served as the art director and designed the stamps with Maribel O. Gray. The stamps are produced using the Offset process by Ashton Potter, Ltd., at Williamsville, New York. The print run is 100 million stamps.

Half of the ten stamps show designs relating to the **Biology** topic. One poster created by Vera Bock shows a farmer and a factory worker with a stylized stalk of corn. Another promotes tourism in Puerto Rico with a colorful plant and palm trees and the Morro Fortress in the background.

A poster encouraging people to visit the zoo is decorated with a pair of herons, and two bighorn sheep are shown on another poster designed by J. Hirt publicizing the national parks. A poster promoting the benefits of hiking shows some stylized trees and shrubs.

Reproduction prints of these and other attractive WPA posters can be found offered by several on-line art sites.