



THE **ART** GALLERY  
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

# Analyzing Music Posters

Created by: Katie Coogan and Kate Kula

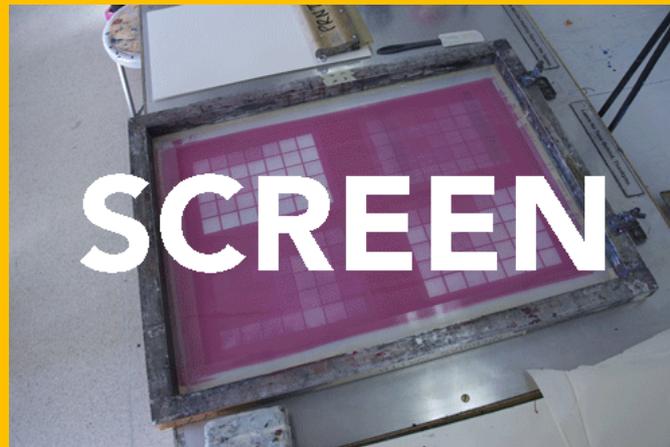
# QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- 1. What do designers consider when creating a poster for a musician or band?**
- 2. How do designers ensure their work fits with the genre of music they are creating for?**
- 3. Does the music played by the band influence the design of the poster?**
- 4. How does a designer decide what colors, imagery, text, type, and other design elements to use?**

# ALL ABOUT SCREEN PRINTING

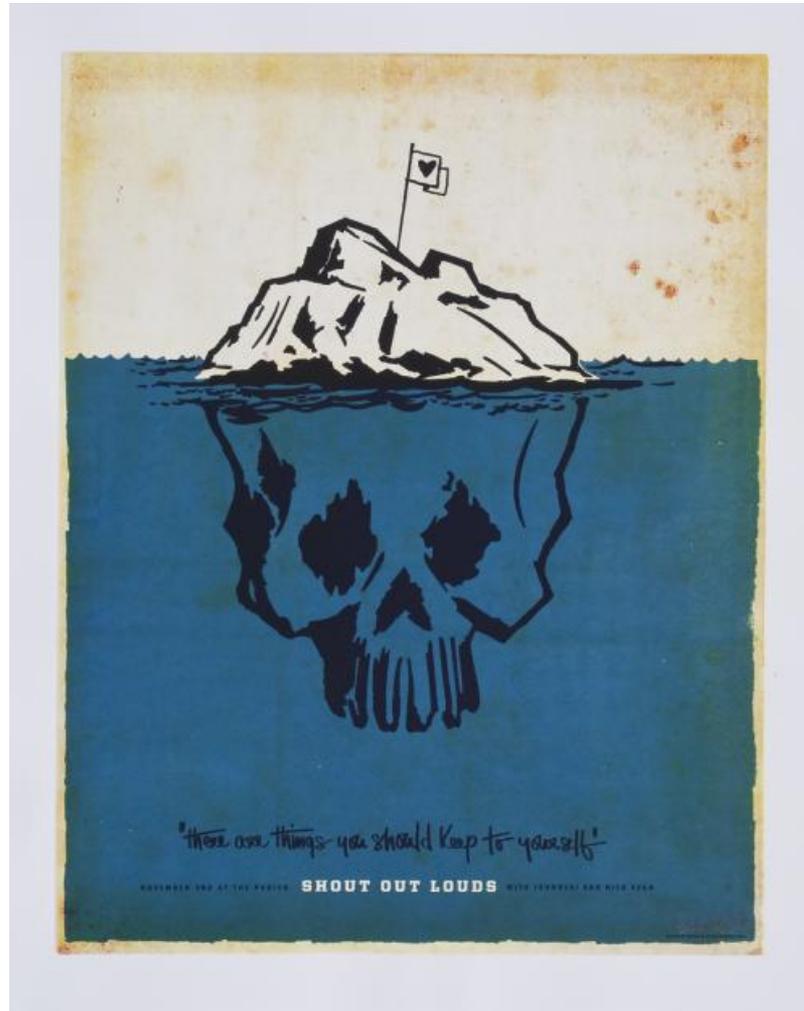
**Most of the posters you are about to view were created using the screen printing process. So what is screen printing?**

**Screen printing is a kind of stenciling. A stencil is supported by a fine mesh screen. Ink is “squeegeed” through this screen, creating an image on paper. View an in depth video of the process [here](#).**



**Screen prints may also be called silkscreens or serigraph prints.**

# POSTER FOR THE SHOUT OUT LOUDS



Decoder Ring, *Shout Out Louds*, 2007, screen print

## Artist Quick Facts:

Decoder Ring is a screen print design shop located in Austin, Texas. All artworks are credited to the shop and not individual artists.

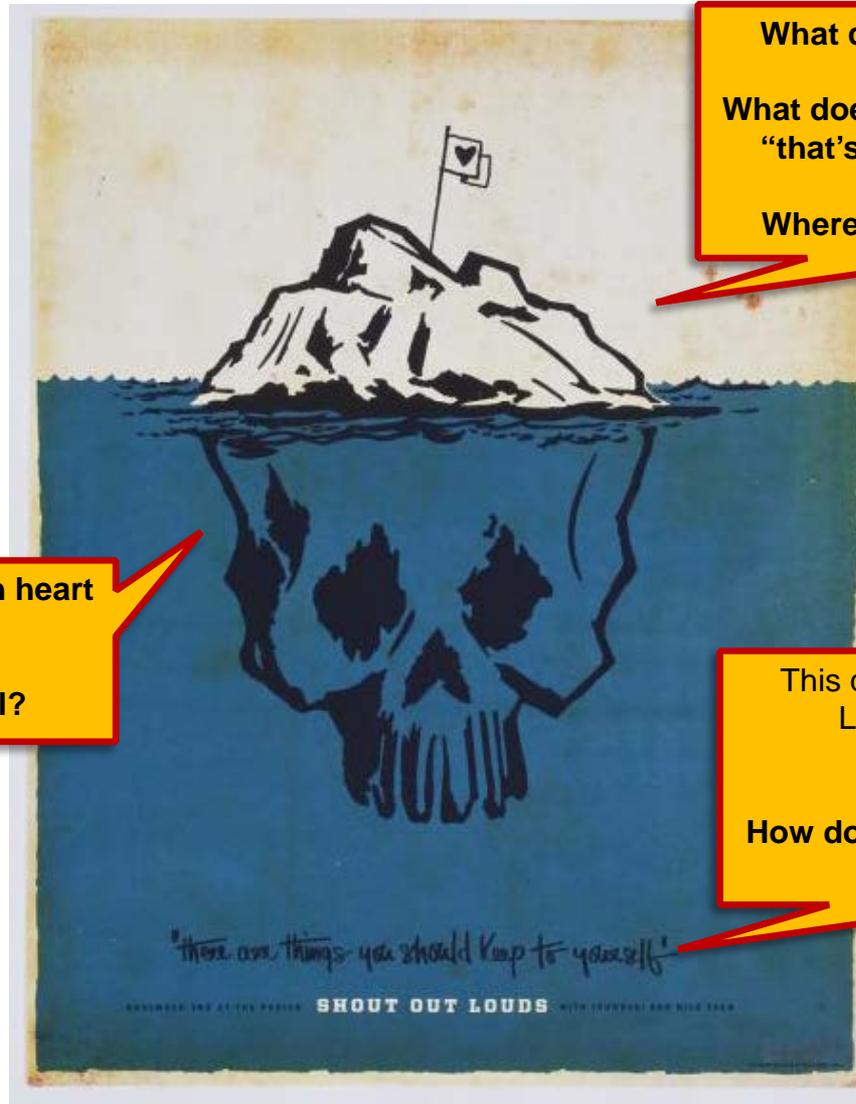
[Learn more about the design group here.](#)

## About the Band:

The Shout Out Louds are a Swedish Indie Pop Band.

[Check out their website here.](#)

# ANALYZING THE POSTER



What could the iceberg represent?

What does it mean when someone says "that's just the tip of the iceberg?"

Where did that saying come from?

What could the flag with heart represent?

How about the skull?

This quote comes from the Shout Out Louds song "Meat is Murder."

[Listen to the song here.](#)

How does the quote tie into the iceberg image?

# POSTER FOR MATISYAHU



Hero Design Studio, *Matisyahu*, 2008, screen print

## Artist Quick Facts:

Hero Design Studio is comprised of a husband and wife team, Beth Manos and Mark Brickey, located in Long Beach, CA.

[You may learn more about the studio here.](#)

## About the Musician:

Matisyahu is a reggae/rap artist known by his Hebrew name. His birth name is Mathew Paul Miller. The musician, until recently, lived following the Hasidic Jewish lifestyle. To learn more about Hasidic Judaism click [here](#).

The song he is most known for in the US is [King Without A Crown](#) – released in 2005. Click [here](#) to visit Matisyahu's website.

# ANALYZING THE POSTER

At first glance, what do you see?

What sports team is this logo a play on?  
How does this hat fit into hip hop culture? Do you think is a symbol of some sort?

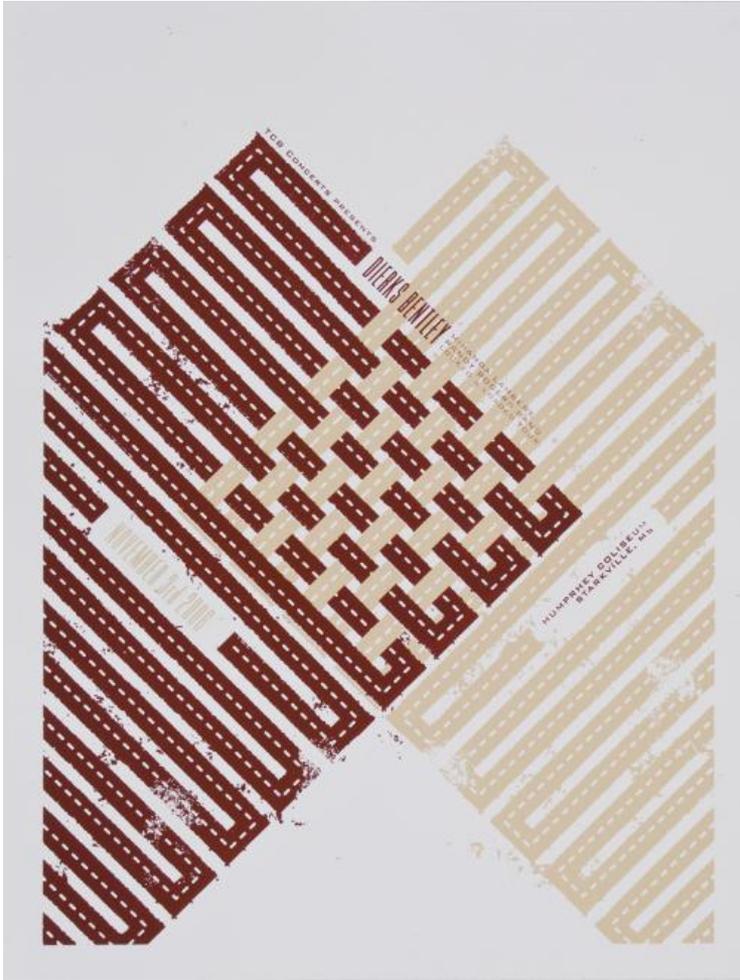
What does this symbol represent?

What does this sticker represent? Is it another symbol?

What artistic choices relate to Matisyahu's musical genre? How about to the artist?



# LESSON TITLE



Sasha Barr, *Dierks Bentley*, 2006, screen print

## Artist Quick Facts:

Sasha Barr is a designer and illustrator based out of Seattle, WA.

To check out his complete portfolio, click [here](#).

## About the Musician:

Dierks Bentley is a country music singer from Phoenix, AZ. He has been nominated for and won several music awards. He is best known for his first hit [What Was I Thinking](#) and [Free and Easy](#).

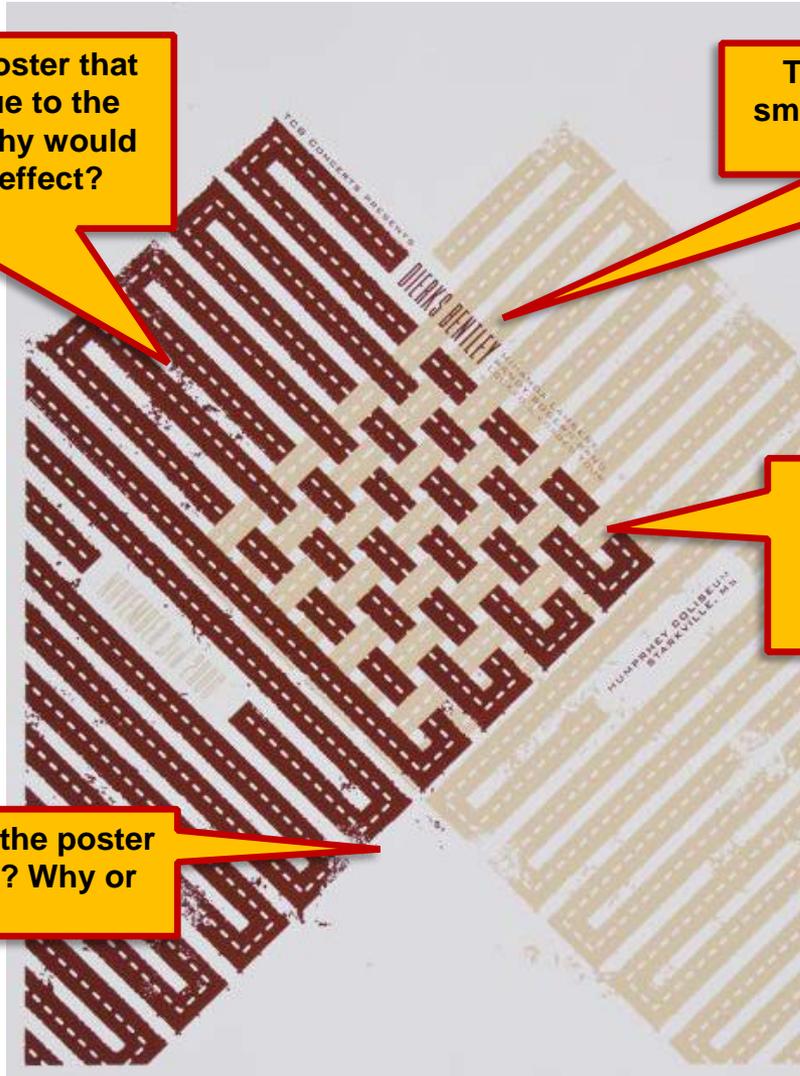
# ANALYZING THE POSTER

There are areas in the poster that look like “mistakes” due to the printmaking process. Why would the artist choose this effect?

The font size on this poster is small. Why do you think the artist chose to do this?

Why would the artist choose this color scheme? Do you think it is suited to the musician/genre of music?

Does the overall style of the poster suit the genre/musician? Why or why not?



# LESSON TITLE



Decoder Ring, *The Decemberists*, 2007, screen print

## Artist Quick Facts:

Decoder Ring is a screen print design shop located in Austin, Texas. All artworks are credited to the shop and not individual artists.

[Learn more about the design group here.](#)

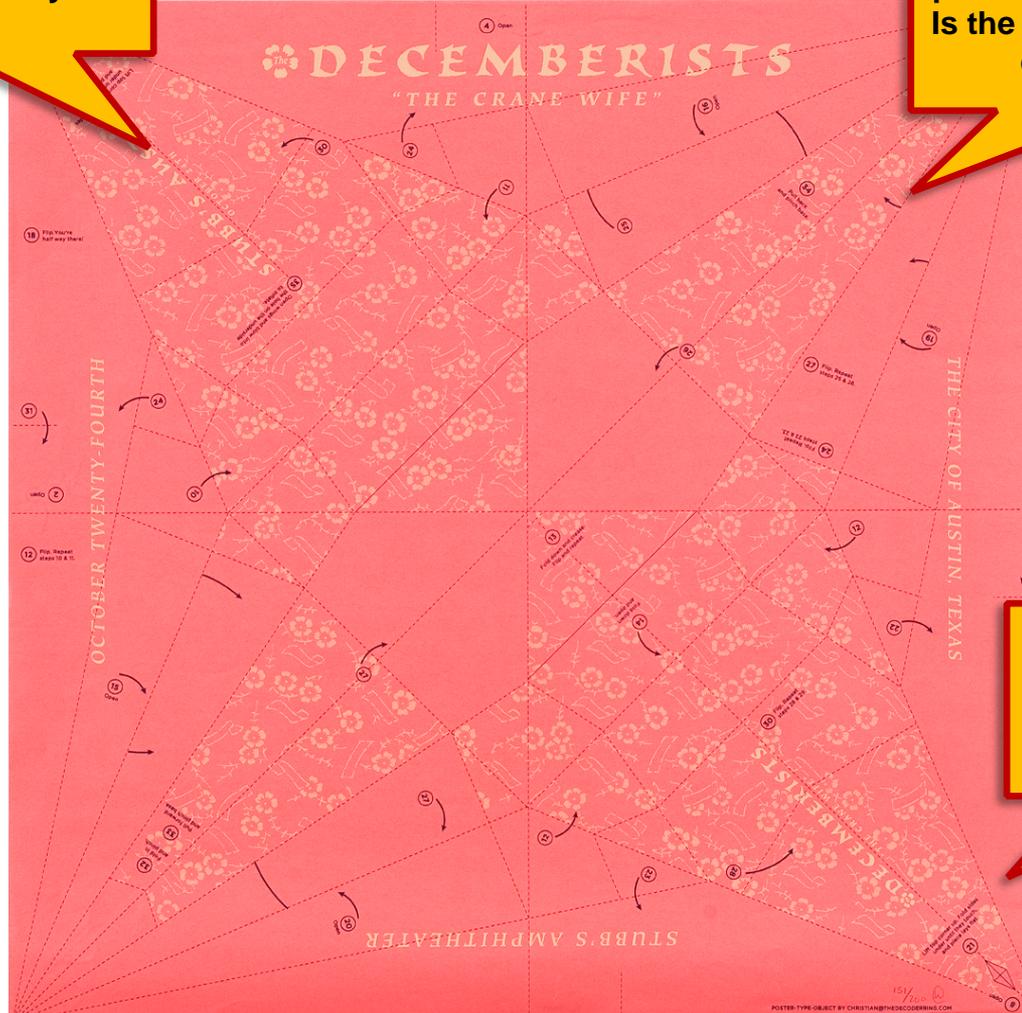
## About the Musician:

The Decemberists are an indie folk-rock band from Portland, Oregon. Their lyrics often contain references to historical events and folklore. This poster was created for their album, [The Crane Wife](#).

# ANALYZING THE POSTER

Look closely at this poster.  
What does it remind you  
of?

What kind of shapes and  
patterning does the artist use?  
Is the artist thinking of another  
country or culture?

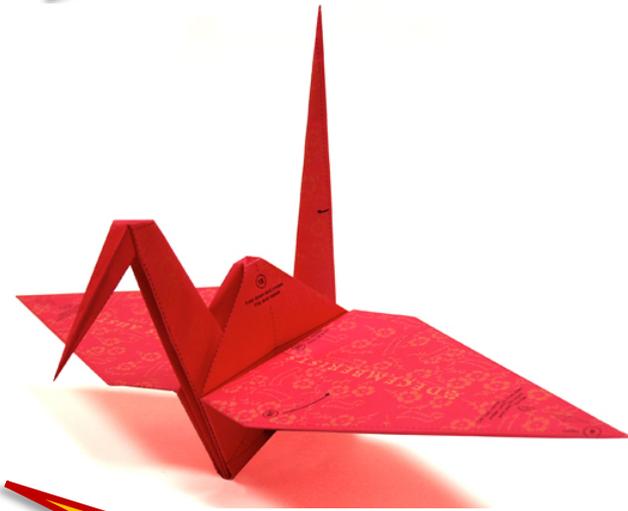


Do you think this poster  
might be meant to be  
seen in a different way  
than you see it now?

# ANALYZING THE POSTER

All the posters we have examined were made to advertise concerts by the musicians or bands they feature. Copies of this poster were folded into giant origami cranes, and the cranes were placed in record shops, cafés, and bookstores to promote a concert by The Decemberists.

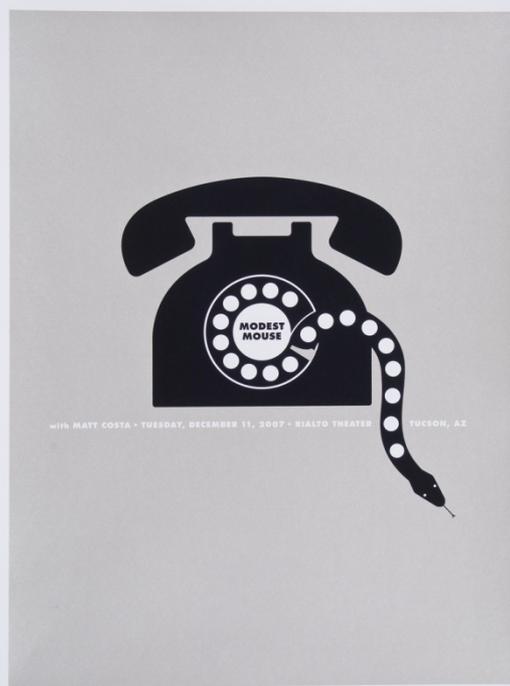
Knowing that The Decemberists like to use folklore in their lyrics, do you think the form of this poster might have a special significance?



The Decemberists named their album *The Crane Wife* after the Japanese folktale of a mysterious bride who turns into a crane. The artists created a poster that visualized that theme. This poster features a floral pattern inspired by traditional Japanese printed flower motifs. It also shows step-by-step instructions on how to fold the flat poster into an origami crane.

Which would convince YOU to attend The Decemberists concert – the flat, unfolded poster, or the 3-dimensional origami crane?

# LESSON TITLE



## Artist Quick Facts:

Jason Munn is a graphic artist who works in Oakland, California.

[Learn more about Jason here.](#)

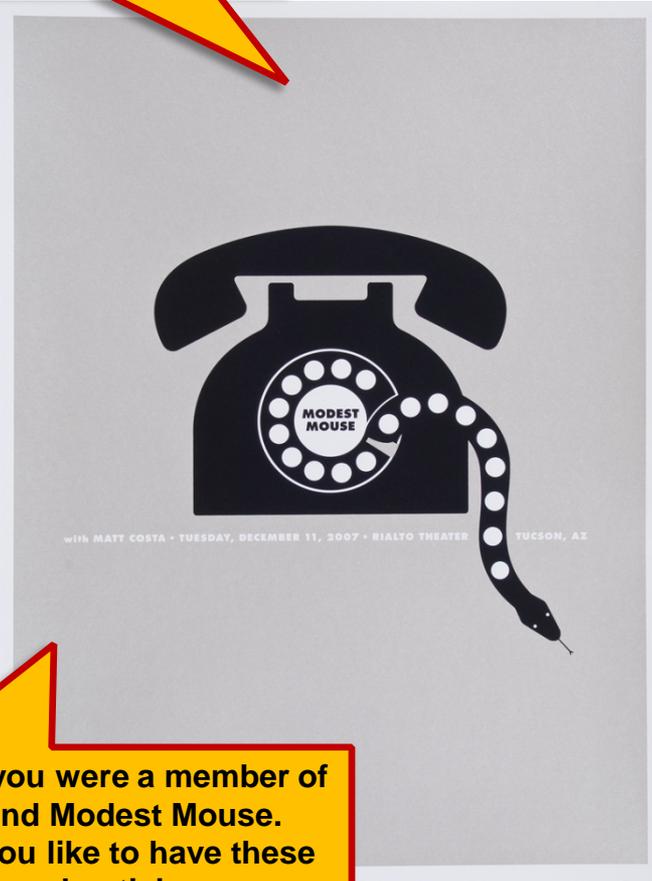
## About the Musician:

Modest Mouse is an indie rock band from Issaquah, Washington. These posters advertise the United States tour for their 2007 album, [We Were Dead Before the Ship Even Sank.](#)

Jason Munn, *Modest Mouse*, 2007, screen print

# ANALYZING THE POSTER

Think of three words to describe the posters you see here.



Pretend you were a member of the band Modest Mouse. Would you like to have these posters advertising your concert?

What is unusual or uncommon about each of these images?



How does Jason use the poster's space differently than the other artists we have seen?

## **Your Assignment:**

You have been commissioned by your favorite band to create a music poster. Use the brainstorming worksheet to begin gathering your thoughts.