

Zenith Radio Tubes Poster at BVWS, London

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The lady dances on a radio antenna:



She holds aloft a three-tube radio with her right arm. A triode vacuum tube provides the window through which we see her. She sings, Grand Opera no doubt.

This 'Zenith' poster seems to date from the 1920s — the Roaring Twenties, or soon after. The hairstyle is consistent. Her left arm bears a flag. The flag she dances with is not American, or British, but it could be French (blue, white, red; usually left to right), but for the heraldic device on the center white stripe – maybe Spanish. Zenith used just such a shield as its logo.



This poster is on display at the British Vintage Wireless Society, Croydon (London), UK: <https://www.bvws.org.uk>.

Further research suggests that it is of Italian origin; a least several Internet sellers of this image say so. Robert Lozier (AWA) agrees.

Philip Monego notes:

“I find myself wondering if this is the same Zenith. The radio doesn't look like any 20's Zenith (aka Chicago Radio Lab) model and the flag is I believe Spanish. The Zenith etched on the base is similar but different.”

Joe Knight notes:

“Definitely a European style radio with tubes out the top. And her hair style, yes more Continental too. Me thinks there was even a repro metal poster made of this image some many years ago.”

This poster, by some reproduction sellers, is attributed to Italy in the 1920s. A famous early 20th Century French poster artist Jean d'Ylen made a similar 'ZENITH' poster for the Swiss Zenith watch company, with the same style lettering at the bottom. There have indeed been metal reproductions made of the vacuum tube poster.

A likely story is that this image is *not* any authentic “Zenith” radio company (from any country) promotional poster. It is more likely to be a synthesis of Jean d’Ylen’s poster style with a voluptuous image resonating with the high-tech of the day (or retro-tech). It seems to have sold well and still to be selling well. I wonder why ...

(11 IV '21, V3, de K6VK) ##