Jan Sawka, 65; Polish Artist Defied Labels

By PUAL MELLO

Jan Sawka, a Polish artist, acquired public acclaim in the '60s for his graphic work, which ranged from posters and book illustrations to stage designs and public murals. His work was characterized by a critical, satirical approach to social issues, often depicting the absurdities of the communist era.

Sawka was born in Warsaw in 1928 and attended the University of Warsaw, where he studied art. He later emigrated to the United States in 1954, seeking political asylum.

In the U.S., Sawka continued his work, designing posters and book illustrations for the New York Times and other publications. He was known for his eye-catching, often controversial images that critiqued the political and social landscape of his time.

Sawka's work was exhibited in numerous solo and group shows in the U.S. and abroad, and he received numerous awards for his contributions to the arts.

He died in 2007, leaving behind a legacy of provocative, thought-provoking art that continues to inspire and challenge viewers today.