

Poster for a Ceylonese Exhibit at a “Human Zoo” (1883)

Abstract

Promotional poster for an 1883 Hamburg *Völkerschau*, an “ethnographic exhibition” (of non-white people) or a “human zoo.” This poster was used to advertise one Carl Hagenbeck’s *Völkerschauen*, which had been immensely popular throughout Germany since their 1875 debut.

The text at bottom reads, in part: “Carl Hagenbeck’s newest Singhalese-troupe, men and women (from the Isle of Ceylon), including devil’s dancers, Udaky-dancers, stick-dancers, pot-dancers, and the Singhalese [female] ‘Verama,’ 25 years old and 90 centimeters tall. The Singhalese [Ceylonese] display themselves in their native costumes and offer their natives songs, customs, and fantastic dances.”

Source



Source: Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg; reprinted in David Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire: Race and Visual Culture in Imperial Germany*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011, plate 5.

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