

Press

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Oren Sherman: Portrait of the Artist as a Brand

Local Designer Scores Poster Work for Boston Marathon, Old Navy

by **Judy Warner**

BOSTON—Oren Sherman has landed a contract to design a commemorative poster for this year's Boston Marathon and a 17-city series for Old Navy, the retailer owned by The Gap.

These assignments should help reestablish the Boston-based graphic designer, who spent the past four years fulfilling a life-long goal: illustrating a collection of Greek myths, including 40 original illustrations for a book being published by Random House this fall targeting teenagers.

Sherman's distinctive style and crisp colorations have made his modern style much copied. "I spawned a style that became an industry," he asserts. He intends to try and reclaim some of that turf by marketing a line of what he calls "affordable art"—prints packed in archival tissue in a flat cardboard carrying case for less than \$100.

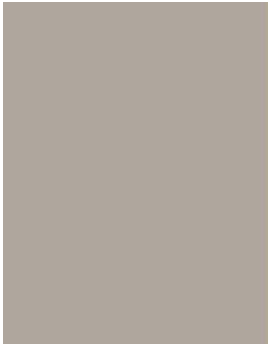
"Yes, it's the low end of the market. With a hundred bucks, you can get a great something. You can't get a nice piece of art, but it's a far cry from the rock poster in the dorm room. Good design has always been available at a certain price point...I want to lower that point."

"The poster look is really big again," Sherman noted. So far he has 78 individual posters in the series.

Selling his posters has taught him lessons that he now imparts on students at the Rhode Island School of Design, where he teaches.

"Know how it sells and to whom," he said. As such, Sherman's idea for this year's marathon will look to capture the experience of running in Boston, not a winner's moment."

"The graphic interpretation I have in mind is of a runner on



Hereford Street with magnolias in front of a row of brownstones with Trinity Church and the Hancock Tower in the background," said Sherman, who as a boy lived only a short walk from the race route.

Hancock, a marathon sponsor for more than a decade, had no say in the design. "I decide what the graphic appeal is...To me, Trinity Church and the Hancock Tower represent old and new Boston," he said.