



419 Main Street
Red Wing, MN 55066
1-651-385-0500
www.RedWingFraming.com
rwfg@RedWingFraming.com

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Contact Valerie Becker, Red Wing Framing Gallery

“The Dream Girl; Classic American Illustration”

Red Wing Framing Gallery exhibits original illustration art from Dan Murphy’s Grapefruit Moon Gallery collection

***An exhibit of classic original American pin-up and glamour art
-Sample images on page 2-***

Red Wing, Minnesota—Dan Murphy is in a constant pursuit of creativity. A founding member of the successful alternative rock bands Soul Asylum and Golden Smog, Murphy is known as a passionate musician. His time touring the U.S. afforded him the chance to explore his other passion, American illustration art. Over the past 25 years, Murphy has become a leading collector of original American illustration art. Murphy opened Grapefruit Moon Gallery in 2002, offering his collection for sale to the public.

From September 13th through October 22, 2007 Red Wing Framing Gallery will exhibit and offer for sale 30 artworks from the Grapefruit Moon Gallery collection. Entitled “*The Dream Girl; Classic American Illustration*” the exhibit will display a variety of stunning and rare pieces of 20th century original illustration art.

The Dream Girl exhibit offers a singular chance to see the artistry behind the sexy, enduring, and historic genre of pin-up and glamour art in America. The one-of-a-kind paintings and pastels on display at Red Wing Framing Gallery showcase the sophisticated and visionary commercial artists working from the 1920s through the 1950s. Through magazines, calendars, and advertising, these images of flappers, WWII Victory girls, Hollywood bombshells, and the girl next door became iconic. Each era had its own vision of the Dream Girl, directing and reflecting the cultures social mores and desires.

The artists behind the palettes, such as Alberto Vargas, Rolf Armstrong, Henry Clive, and Gil Elvgren, became celebrities in their own rights, given lavish salaries and granted unusual creative freedom. They were renowned for their talent, and for the bevy of beautiful models and actresses who crossed their path. Their phenomenal creations, however, were often seen as expendable; the stunning and easily available prints made from their paintings overshadowed the original artworks. Most original pin-up and glamour art is gone forever. The works have been lost, burned, and even purposefully destroyed by calendar and magazine companies who feared the paintings being stolen and copied. The paintings that have survived have become hotly collectible and this art is beginning to get its due through museum and gallery retrospectives.

Minnesota is the heart of glamour and pin-up art. The St. Paul-based Brown & Bigelow and Louis F. Dow calendar companies were industry giants for decades. Brown & Bigelow in particular fostered the talent of many of the greatest American illustrators. *The Dream Girl* exhibit, Grapefruit Moon Gallery’s first exhibition of pin-up and glamour art, offers a unique look at this heritage.

American illustration reached its first peak in the early 20th century. The technological advances in printing during the American Industrial Revolution allowed for the creation of new forms of affordable and beautiful multi-color offset printing. Companies like Brown & Bigelow began to mass-produce glorious color lithographs, sometimes blurring the line between fine art and commercial illustration. Suddenly, every home and office could now display its own masterpieces featuring historical and contemporary temptresses and the demand for new and novel depictions of these beauties was great.

The cultish world of pin-up grew, with artists becoming ever more enigmatic, erotic, and amusing. The pin-up girl has become ingrained in our cultural imagination, and *The Dream Girl* pays testament to the power of this art. The thirty original paintings from the Grapefruit Moon Gallery collection included in this exhibit show the images that gave America its standards of beauty and the feminine ideal. Glamour and pin up art defined a vision of women, captivating and unobtainable, as a modernizing society changed them and they, in turn, changed it.

Red Wing Framing Gallery (www.RedWingFraming.com) is located in the historic Boxrud Building on Main Street in downtown Red Wing and specializes in original fine art, custom framing and fine-art printing.

Grapefruit Moon Gallery (www.GrapefruitMoonGallery.com) is a Minneapolis-based art gallery, specializing in original pin-up, glamour, advertising, and cover art from the grand age of American illustration. Since its launch in 2002, Grapefruit Moon Gallery has gained renown for offering the finest in original illustration art to a loyal worldwide customer base.

Sample images:



(l) “*The Dream Girl*”, by Rolf Armstrong, 1920’s, pastel on board, 15”x20”

(c) “*Feature Attraction*”, by Earl Moran, 1940’s, pastel on board, 20”x26”

(r) “*Handle with Care*”, by Edward D’Ancona, 1950’s, oil on stretched canvas, 25”x37”

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