



Above: "Subway Train Gang Fight", Mort Kunstler, 1965, 12"x18", gouache on board

Left: "The Devil's Pigeons". Rudolph Zirn, 1939, 21"x30", oil on canvas

"Hard Boiled Art"

Red Wing Framing & Fine Art Printing and Grapefruit Moon Gallery present an exhibition of rare, original pulp magazine cover art.

Red Wing Framing & Fine Art Printing and Grapefruit Moon Gallery proudly present "Hard Boiled Art", an exhibition of eight original pulp magazine cover paintings from legendary artists including George Rozen, John Coughlin and Mort Kunstler. These original artworks, many of which have never been seen by the public before, were key to the salacious and controversial appeal of magazines like The Shadow, Detective Story Magazine and Men's Adventure Magazine.

"Hard Boiled Art" will run at Red Wing Framing & Fine Art Printing from November 6th, 2009 until December 5th, 2009. All eight pulp magazine cover paintings are original and available for purchase.

News release – HARD BOILED ART - October 16, 2009

Pulp magazine cover art occupies a unique place in art history. Only recently has the expressive and technical skills of the pulp magazine cover artists come to receive proper recognition. Pulp covers – created as original stand-alone paintings that were filed away or thrown away after they were photographed by publishing houses – specialized in willful provocation and testing the boundaries of public decency. Often underestimated because of their shock value and sensational content, pulp covers had one overriding function: to sell magazines. Cover topics included violence, scantily clad heroines, private dicks and other imagery associated with the tough gangsters movies of Film Noir. The colors are lurid, the poses evocative and the images unforgettable.

Pulp magazines are synonymous with the brittle, high pulp content paper they were printed on and that association is part of their appeal. Printed cheaply and quickly, pulps are time capsules from the underbelly of American society, telling crude yet sophisticated tales of murder, spies, mystery, western adventure, war, science fiction, fantasy and sexual scandal, tales personified in the art emblazoned upon covers.

With the content among various pulps so similar, the competition for the best cover artists was intense. The more sensational and eye-catching the cover, the better the sales. The cover art was so critical that the best artists, those featured in “Hard Boiled Art”, would be commissioned to paint a cover long before the magazine articles were written.

Pulp artists toiled in near anonymity. Many of these original paintings are unsigned, because the artists who created them feared the effect their association with the cultish world of pulp magazines might have on their career. Yet, as “Hard Boiled Art” makes clear, artists like Mort Kunstler (who went on to a career as the leading Civil War realist artist) did their most heartfelt and unrestrained work for the pulps.

Red Wing Framing & Fine Art Printing (www.RedWingFraming.com) is located in the historic park corridor in downtown Red Wing and specializes in original fine art, custom framing and fine-art printing.

Grapefruit Moon Gallery (www.GrapefruitMoonGallery.com), a Minneapolis-based art gallery, specializes in original pin-up, glamour, advertising, and cover art from the grand age of American illustration. Grapefruit Moon Gallery has earned a world-wide reputation for their expertise in original illustration and American commercial art.

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