



FEREF ARCHIVE

COLLECTION

MASTERS OF MOVIE DESIGN

In the heart of London's West End, while the '60s were in full swing, one of the world's most exciting and innovative creative agencies came into being. Named after its five founders – movie-poster illustrators Fred, Eddie, Ray, Ed and Frank – Feref was, as they still say today, “born to entertain.”

Over the past five decades, Feref has dreamed up some of film history's most iconic one-sheets, from Bond to Star Wars, from Get Carter to Basic Instinct, from Enter the Dragon to The Karate Kid Part II. Making its name during an era when posters were the driving force of any movie advertising campaigns (trailers, after all, could only be seen in cinemas), Feref mastered the art of instantaneous impact.

Their posters were primarily hand-painted, working from transparencies, plot synopses and production photography. They were usually complex compositions focused on action, drama, movement and eye-catching, colourful characters: Indiana Jones, Freddy Krueger, Crocodile Dundee... As Feref Chairman Robin Behling says, “The poster would have created the audience. It's got everything in there.”

Over the years, as the company expanded and evolved, it built up an astonishing treasure trove of artworks, containing thousands of its attention-hooking creations and enshrining the very best of the pre-digital era of film-poster design. On 22 April, Prop Store is opening up that treasure trove to you, with a very special Cinema Poster Live Auction.

In the following pages you'll be able to appreciate the amazing work of artists like Eddie Paul (the first “e” in Feref), Brian Bysouth and Arnaldo Putzu, whose Get Carter images remain as striking 50 years on as the day they were inked. There's such diversity here, too. Alongside the big names we all know and love, you'll find such fascinating curios as 1977 Mexican Jaws rip-off Tintorera: Killer Shark, obscure Polish fantasy adventure The Knight, and the luridly sexploitative Bad Girls Dormitory. There's even a concept for an unmade '80s Roger Moore/Farah Fawcett caper titled Strictly Business.

The blockbusting icons are present and correct, of course, though often in ways you've never seen before. Represented in proof prints, transparencies and negatives – revealing the tangible, hands-on process of Feref's early days – this collection includes many alternative concepts for poster campaigns. Most notable is the selection of Star Wars original trilogy artworks, which include a number of unused concepts for The Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi, giving a sense of how complex and challenging a campaign it must have been.

These pieces must at the time have been seemed necessary for the moment, not something for the ages. Indeed, Feref's archive was all but a rumour in the company for many years, until it was rediscovered seven years ago in a storage container in Norfolk. A selection was presented at an exhibition at the Film Distributors' Association in Summer 2018, by which point it was clear that this wasn't just advertising. It was art. These pieces were by no means throwaway. They were, and they remain, beautiful relics from a past era of posters, produced by some extraordinarily creative talents.

“Feref: Unseen” Kickstarter Campaign

In early 2021, Feref launched a successful Kickstarter campaign to compile an art book celebrating Feref's 52-year old movie poster archive, featuring many unseen alternative versions of classic posters.

Since 1968, Feref has helped to advertise some of the biggest and best-loved movies in the history of cinema and this book is a visual record of their most memorable work. It gives an in-depth insight into their archive, featuring pieces from over 3,500 films, acting as a love letter to the hard work and dedication of the artists that created stunning movie posters across 6 decades.

The paintings, illustrations and alternative layouts will be as close as you can get to standing over their shoulder and watching as they paint the posters the world fell in love with.

This isn't just another collection of movie posters; this is a one-of-a-kind insight into the world of film advertising, featuring words and works of some of the greatest movie poster artists of all time. This beautiful book is for poster fans, for film fans and for anyone who appreciates art in all its forms.

FEREF: UNSEEN - over 200 pieces of movie art / 200 pages / 32x25cm

Several highlight lots are accompanied by a First Edition of the book, which includes details for many of the items offered in the auction.



The Feref Archive Collection - Glossary

Proof Prints

Each individual print presented here is unique to a specific Lot and represents an image produced from either a colour transparency or a negative for that title. Printed in 2021, these prints have been struck to prove the content and quality of the original transparencies they accompany, which are difficult to view in their native form. It is a unique proof print carrying the hand written signature of Feref Director Robin Behling, numbered 1 of 1 and printed on 350gsm premium, smooth uncoated stock paper which is embossed with the Feref company logo.

Large Print - 18" x 24" (46 x 61 cm)
Small Print - 10" x 13" (25.5 x 33 cm).

Transparency

A full-colour photographic image of subject matter used in the printing process to produce a picture, normally to paper and often used in conjunction with a light box where it is back-lit to preview the image before printing.

10" x 8" (25.5 x 20.5 cm)

Negative

An image, usually on transparent plastic film, in which the lightest areas of the photographed subject appear darkest and the darkest areas appear lightest. These are sometimes used in conjunction with a transparency but from a photographic viewpoint offer a larger variety of finished product options than just a transparency.

6.5" x 4.5" (16.5 x 11.5 cm)

35mm Slide

A piece of film, held by rectangular frames of cardboard or plastic to create a square image. Usually consisting of production shots and images, they were traditionally projected onto a screen to allow in-depth reference, but were also viewed with small mobile hand viewers for the film makers to see and examine a certain scene whilst filming.

2" x 2" (5 x 5 cm)

Photograph / Still

A series of black-and-white or colour photographs used during filming to keep a day-to-day physical record of events which would include production, continuity and candid shots.

10" x 8" (25.5 x 20.5 cm)

Poster Concept

A number of different designs and images created by the advertising agency to give the studio and distribution company options as to which final design and marketing campaign (often referred to as 'The Payoff') of poster to choose which best suited the movie. The perfect example of this in our Auction are the Lots for "Top Gun", "Get Carter" and "Empire Strikes Back" or "Return of the Jedi". The original artwork for these designs would often be displayed on transparencies and negatives for easier viewing.

To view more images of the lots, please view the online auction catalogue at propstoreauction.com