

Exploitation Poster Art The Tony Nourmand Collection

*The cream of cinematic poster schlock - from blaxploitation to sexploitation –
Crane Kalman Brighton - 18 October to 13 November*

Sex, drugs, delinquency, Black power, alternative culture and, of course, rock and roll: these are just a few of the themes which have attracted the attention of the cinema's bottom-feeders over the past eighty years. A few of the resulting films have become cult classics, but most were simply tacky – few would probably now want to sit through two hours of *High School Hellcats* (1958) or *Hot Rod Rumble* (1957). The posters produced to promote them, on the other hand, are wonderful period pieces that vividly evoke the social fears, temptations and taboos of bygone eras.

Up until the introduction of the Hayes Code in 1934 Hollywood had few inhibitions; the poster for *Girl Without a Room* (1933), for example, left audiences in little doubt about how the young woman would find accommodation. Later in the decade, it became necessary to adopt the old tabloid trick of pretending that titillating content had a redeeming social message – thus the producers of *Marijuana* were obliged to present it as a warning about the dangers of drug addiction.

In the 1950s, it was the Beats and juvenile delinquents who seemed to threaten middle-class values – and, of course, attracted middle-class kids to the drive-in screens. Then, in the 60s and 70s, came 'Blaxploitation' movies like *Shaft*, the first of Russ Meyer's mammary-obsessed epics, *Faster Pussycat*, *Kill, Kill*, and even an animated sexploitation story, *Fritz the Cat*.

The posters for these films, from Albert Vargas' venture into the genre (for *Ladies They Talk About*, 1933) to Alan Aldridge's photomontage for Warhol's *Chelsea Girls* (1966), are masterpieces of visual innuendo, offering, in most cases, far more than the movies actually delivered.

This unique collection, comprising over 300 artworks, owned by Tony Nourmand, co-founder of The Reel Poster Gallery in London, will be going on sale at Christie's South Kensington on 8 December 2005.

A book, Exploitation Poster Art, edited by Tony Nourmand and Graham Marsh, will be published by Aurum Press, priced to accompany the sale in original paperback priced £18.99.

A selection of works from the Tony Nourmand Collection, will be on display at Crane Kalman Brighton, 38 Kensington Gardens, Brighton from 18 October to 13 November. For any further information or imagery, please contact Richard Kalman on 01273 697096 or richard.kalman@cranekalmanbrighton.com.