



9

SCI-FI FILMS  
THAT YOU  
SHOULD SEE  
BUT  
PROBABLY  
HAVEN'T!



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**'To Columbus & Back Again'  
Four Color Comics'  
ROBERT ROGOVIN  
COLLECTION**



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# To Columbus and Back Again

By Robert Rogovin

I know most of the past contributors to this publication have used this space to share their collections with the hobby but I also would like to use this opportunity for something else as well. In addition to writing about my collection I would like to discuss where I think the hobby is right now and where I think it's going in the future.

## First my collection

I've been collecting movie posters for almost 20 years. My background has been in comics and original comic art and I own and operate Four Color Comics, ([www.fourcolorcomics.com](http://www.fourcolorcomics.com)) a company that sells these collectibles as well as pulps and movie posters.

Since I am a baby boomer, I remember going to drive-in movies and watching the latest 1950's sci-fi and horror films. When I started to collect, I picked those particular categories because I loved those movies and the memories they brought with them. Whenever I enter a new hobby I always do my homework first, since I had friends who were into posters as well as comics I used them as a source of information and guidance. They gave me a good overall view of the poster market and directed me in what material I should look to purchase and where to obtain it. Because of my extensive experience in comics, I have always been condition conscious and always prefer to buy items that are untouched (little or no restoration) and in high grade whenever possible. That philosophy continued when I began collecting movie posters.

I started with one and three sheets but soon went on to the other formats such as half sheets, inserts and lobby cards. I felt, for example, that if a Creature from the Black Lagoon one sheet had good graphics and was a good investment so would the other related material from this film. I believed that in the future, even if I decided to sell some items from this movie I would still have a good representation of paper left on that title for my collection. On this title, I now own the three sheet, one sheet, insert, both half sheets and the lobby card set. I also had the window card but sold it after I purchased the style B half sheet. The same is true for Invasion of the Saucer Men. I have the three sheet, one sheet, half sheet, insert and lobby card set. I try to get a good representation of the major titles but on the less important ones I have been content to own the lobby cards and/or maybe one other piece of paper. The perfect example of this is The Fly. I own the British Quad on this title and that's it. I had the lobby card set and one sheet but sold them after acquiring the quad.

On many titles I have owned a number of the same items over and over

again. I've had four or five Forbidden Planet one sheets and the same is true for many other posters. At this time, I have two unrestored War of the Worlds style B half sheets, one of which is for sale. Sometimes after selling something I end up buying it back, or trading for it years later. This happened with my Frankenstein 1947 one sheet. I sold it to Jim Gresham, who later sold it to Walter Ruben, who later traded it back to me. It was a win-win situation for everyone involved and the poster is now back in its rightful home where this time it will stay until they carry me out on a stretcher and bury me.

Since I'm a comic enthusiast I also buy comic character posters and own two six sheets in that category, a 1948 Superman and a 1949 New Adventures Batman and Robin. These posters are overpowering and hang side by side in my office. They dominate the room and anyone entering my office for the first time never fails to comment on them. I advise anyone interested in buying a six sheet to be sure they love that poster because there's no getting away from it once you hang it.

Even though I wasn't born until the late 40's, I still love the horror posters from that era and started collecting them soon after I started buying Sci-fi. From that decade I have some great one sheets, such as a Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man, The Invisible Man Returns, House of Frankenstein, House of Dracula, The Mummy's Curse and as previously mentioned, a Frankenstein 47. For half sheets I have a Ghost of Frankenstein, The Wolf Man and a 1942 King Kong. One great thing about the Universal horror movies from the 30's is that they were released time and again, so if you can't afford the posters from the original release, you can collect the posters from the subsequent releases. The Realart material on these movies is very attractive and has great potential to increase in value because they are far more affordable than the originals. The Universal Abbott and Costello meet Frankenstein half sheet is not as nice as the Realart R 56 and so I sold my Universal as soon as I had the opportunity to acquire the Realart. This material is so desirable; I want to send a request out there to anyone who has some they want to sell to call me. Of course the same is true for 50's sci-fi and 30's, 40's and 50's horror.





I personally love the 50's Sci-fi half sheets. You can have a collection of them and just stop there because the images for these posters are very often the most desirable of all the varied sizes produced for those films. Their size, 22" X 28" can fit anywhere in the house and can be grouped together for a great display. Unlike inserts, there are often two styles of half sheets to choose from. I now have over fifty half sheets and some are among my favorite posters. So just for fun I thought I would share with you what I feel are the top ten sci-fi half sheets. I wonder if you will agree or disagree with my choices.

### Rob's Top 10 1/2 Sheets



War of the Worlds style B. The ultimate 1950's sci-fi poster. The first poster everyone wants to buy and the last one they want to sell. It's a great movie, with great graphics and as scarce as a 1950's sci-fi poster can get. If you want only one 50's sci-fi poster in your collection, this is the one to get. God bless the Martians and their space ships for giving us this image.



Creature from the Black Lagoon style B. There is not a bad piece of paper of this movie so no matter what you buy, you can't go wrong. The gill man rules.



Invasion of the Body Snatchers style B. Called the Spotlight by dedicated fans because at first glance it appears that the people are dancing. In reality, or Hollywood reality anyway, they're running for their lives.



Day the Earth Stood Still. There is only one style 1/2 sheet for this title but it's all you need. Another one of those titles that have nothing but great paper. I had to buy the lobby card set, insert and half sheet just to get me through the night.



Man from Planet X style B This movie really sucks but the graphics don't. Buy the poster, forget the movie.



Revenge of the Creature style B. This poster may be as hard to obtain as the War of the Worlds. It's worth having even if you're not a creature fan.

It Came from Outer Space style B. Another difficult poster to acquire. All the paper on this movie is worth owning, what can I say, the eyes have it.



Forbidden Planet style A. I prefer the A to the B but I wouldn't lose any sleep over the difference. The movie was way ahead of its time and the paper is as good as it gets.



Invasion of the Saucer-Men. This poster gets my vote for depicting the most attractive aliens ever known to invade earth. Only one 1/2 sheet to choose from but it's so good, I never felt cheated.



Wasp Woman. Again just one style was produced, but it proved to be the best paper on the movie.





## The market

The market for horror and science fiction is down about 30% and has been hurt by several factors. The first is the economy. People buy posters to hang up in their homes, and if they are losing their home because they are out of work, who needs to buy a poster.

The second is the large number of fakes that have surfaced in the market. Kerry Haggard “the Bernie Madoff of the poster hobby” did a great job of ripping us all off, may he rot in jail. His actions have caused some collectors to leave the hobby and curtailed others from entering into it. Other fakes have also caused real damage.

There are a large number of “minty white fakes” created from high resolution scans that are sold to the unknowing public, and although the creators state they are reproductions, I suspect many consumers have been fooled when buying them from unscrupulous dealers who never disclosed that these are reproductions.

Another problem, some comic collectors I know have expressed interest in buying posters but were turned off

because the exit strategy from the hobby was limited. To them it seemed that they would have to sell to a dealer or give their material to an auction house. Either way, they would be taking a 30% to 40% hit and it is not like that in comics. There are a number of dealers and auction houses in the comic industry that work

on a smaller margin and there are other avenues as well to sell your collectibles without losing 30% to 40%.

That all may be changing now because of some new companies that have just entered the market. CGC ([cgc-comics.com](http://cgc-comics.com)) and MP Grading ([mpgrading.com](http://mpgrading.com)) now provide authentication

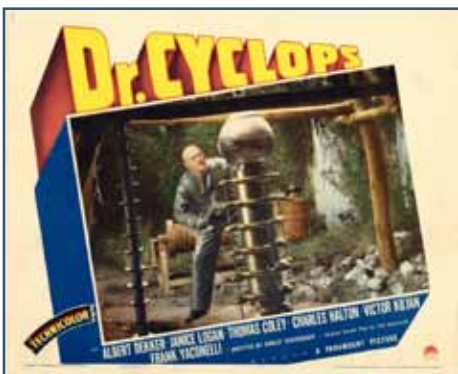
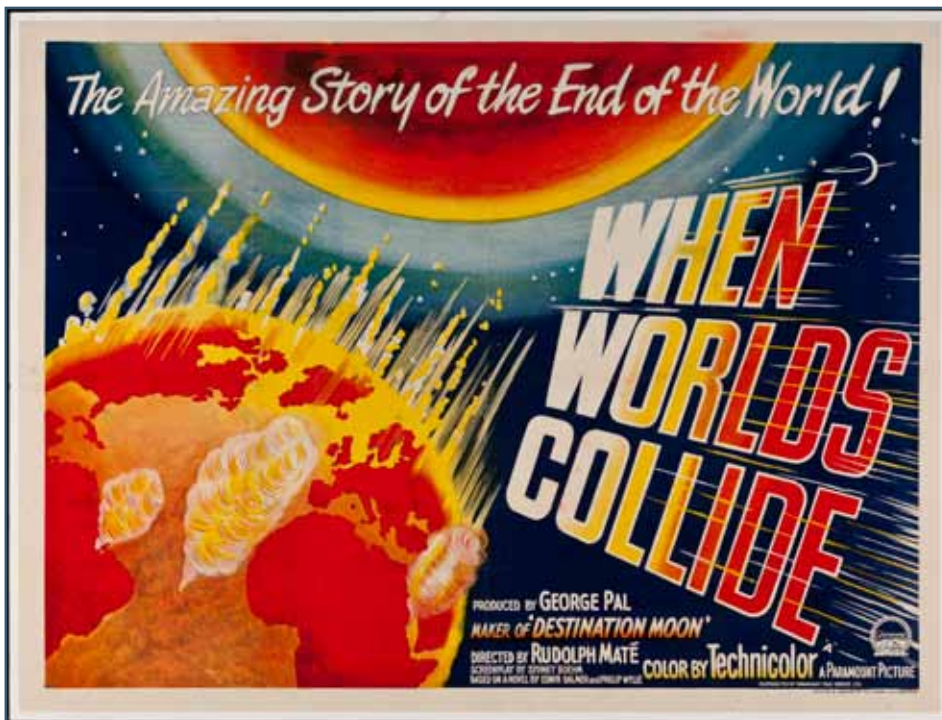
### Honorable Mention

I would have to put *Tarantula*, *This Island Earth*, *The Creature Walks Among Us* and *Target Earth* all style B's in this category. Just because I've picked the style B's don't dismiss the A's. There are some great ones that belong in any sci-fi collection.

Lobby card sets for me tell the story of the movie in eight cards or less. Whenever possible I like to obtain the whole set (I have about one hundred and sixty sets at this time), but sometimes this is not practical as with 30's and 40's horror. Can I really afford to spend a hundred thousand dollars on a Dracula lobby card set? Not really, so I have to make do with what I have and for me that means limiting my purchases to one, if any, chosen items from these early films







and third party grading. Third party grading levels the playing field for sellers because the end users no longer have to rely on the seller's opinion of what grade a poster really is. An independent company assesses the poster and establishes its authenticity and grade. This means you can buy a poster from anyone and be confident in what you're purchasing.

Third party grading has also greatly helped other hobbies such as comics, coins, cards and even toys to achieve remarkable success in increasing the value of these authentic collectibles. This has helped the comic market gain the kind of support where an Action #1 and a Detective #27 (the first appearance of Superman and Batman respectively) were able to obtain more than one million dollars at auction.

CGC will grade only lobby cards at this time. They encase the cards in plastic and when sealed create a







tamper proof system thereby ensuring the cards remain untouched and in the same condition as when graded. Their numerical grading system is similar to that of comics and works well and is easily understood. Each card is graded by three graders with an image of the card kept on file along with their grading notes.

MP Grading, owned by Todd Spoor, a well-known and respected poster collector who has authored *The World's Rarest Movie Posters* (Schiffer 2010), has taken a different approach. It would be impractical to encase a one, three or six sheet in plastic. So they perform forensic fiber testing to determine whether a poster is an original or reproduction. They then grade it using their patented computerized numerical grading system and take a color-accurate image of the poster that is then posted on their website where it can, if you so choose, be offered for sale to the public. They take no commission from the buyer or seller and the image of your poster can be used on your own website, screen saver or photo album. The really great thing about this system is that each poster or lobby card is marked with a number that is stamped with invisible

DNA ink (also patented) so that it can be identified using a special UV light. I can't overstate the importance of this invisible stamp.

As many of you may know, I had fourteen folded one sheets stolen from me. Each one had been graded by MP Grading and was marked and accompanied by their grading certificate. My insurance company was impressed with their system and paid my claim with complete confidence because of this documentation. They were later issued duplicate certificates and because they have high quality images of these posters, there will be no question as to their ownership if they are ever recovered.

MoviePosterExchange, founded by Peter Contarino and Sean Linkenback, has just opened for business. Peter managed the Paper Chase, a well-known dealership run out of Athens, Georgia and Sean owned and operated Platinum Posters out of Atlanta, Georgia.

Movieposterexchange.com is becoming sort of a clearinghouse for poster collectors. They have collectors from all over the world listing items for sale both at fixed prices and at auction, charging no listing fee and a 10% commission only on items that sell. The best part is they act as a middleman, approving listings, checking items for authenticity and making sure that transactions go smoothly for both the buyer and seller. They have been working on the design and layout of the site for a year now and it really shows. It is very easy to navigate and listing items for sale is a breeze. The site also allows you to bargain and negotiate on pieces listed for sale as well as keep a want list on file and get instant email messages when something is listed that matches your requests. It is really great because there are always new things being listed. You have collectors listing material for sale at reasonable prices because they don't have to worry about losing 30-40% when the item sells.

I have obtained my collection by buying and selling through auction houses, ebay, dealers and friends. I have gone to poster conventions from New York to California with stopovers in Columbus, Ohio. I am always on the lookout for quality material (top of my list right now are half sheets from the *Mummy's Hand*, *Tomb*, *Ghost or Curse*) and hope to continue collecting for many years to come. We have a wonderful hobby that has been through a lot these last three years but I feel confident that the future will bring better times ahead.

