

Ever since the inception of the motor car, automotive posters have existed to advertise, inform and educate. There are generally three types of automotive posters: posters produced for a race event, ones produced by the manufacturer and commemorative posters—those produced by manufacturers of, for example, fuel, oil or tires celebrating the fact that a car won a race using their product.

Many advertising posters are destroyed during use, being mounted on walls and merely discarded or ripped away when the next new one becomes available. Few survive in their original state.

Because poster art has to combine an image and a message, it is often more ingenious than pure art, and automotive posters have often displayed some revolutionary images—from the wonderful '30s art deco posters of Falucci to the bold graphics of Atelier Strenger on his Porsche-factory posters from the '50s through 1970s.

Value of posters obviously vary greatly and are largely determined by the rarity, condition, artist, image and event advertised. Always try to buy posters in the best condition you can find, and without significant restoration. Avoid sun-damaged examples. Take care not to buy reproductions passed off as originals; some can be difficult to spot. For this reason, always buy from a reputable dealer or gallery.

But why not just buy a reproduction? For starters, many reproductions are unofficial, that is produced without permission from the copyright holder. Secondly, they are often not the correct size, so the image will not have the impact it was designed to have. Thirdly, they will lack the feel and depth of

color of an original, and lastly, they will never have any value. If you just can't afford an original and must buy a reproduction, make sure it is official and produced with permission or under license.

Unless you are an expert, you should not try to buy posters as an investment; as with fine art, buy what you like. However, motoring posters are very popular at the moment and prices are rising quicker than with many other subject matters. Prewar poster prices are especially strong. Postwar events such as Le Mans and Monaco are always sought after, as are the Porsche-factory posters. Watch out for some of the less well known events, too; the graphics for these are often very appealing.

So, if you're working on a budget, what do you buy? How much do you want to spend?

**Under £200 (\$400):** You will get a nice late-'60s, early-'70s Le Mans poster or '70s Monaco poster; a late-'60s

British Grand Prix or similar. There are also some nice posters from less well known races such as the Reims 12 hours that can be purchased for this kind of budget; small Mercedes-Benz victory posters from the '50s, too.

**Under £500 (\$1,000):** Many of the late '60s Porsche factory posters can be yours for under £500. Early-'70s examples start at under £300 (\$600). A nice Nürburgring 1,000 km from the mid-'50s would be around £350 (\$700). Early to mid-'60s Monacos are from £300 and up.

**Under £1,500 (\$3,000):** Most of the mid-'50s and early-'60s Le Mans posters fall into this range. They really start from just over £500. Earlier Porsche posters start here, too. With \$3,000 to spend you have quite a wide choice of fabulous posters in great condition.

**Under £5,000 (\$10,000):** You may be surprised to learn that, if you want that prewar Monaco poster you've always dreamed of, this still isn't enough! You're probably going to need closer to \$20,000. However, you're still going to have a large choice of most postwar and many prewar posters to choose from.

One last thing—if you're going to display your posters (which hopefully you will), then don't let them hang unprotected in sunlight; they will fade. Have them framed using conservation glass, offering UV protection.

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