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Picture-perfect vintage posters

By [Gena Ng](#)

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Before radio and television advertising, posters were popularly used as mini billboards to promote holiday travel destinations, upcoming films, and the latest must-have in fashion and home decor. The colourful, bold illustrations were omnipresent — adorning buildings, train stations and other public spaces.

These posters are now making a comeback. Now known as vintage posters, they've found their way into art galleries, dining places, and on the walls of collectors' homes.

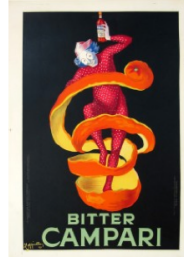
Although collecting posters is more predominant in Europe and the US, there's been, in recent years, rising interest and demand for these artistic graphics in Asia, including Singapore.

For the first time in Singapore, Hong Kong-based [Picture This](#) gallery is presenting "The Art of the Poster", the first original vintage poster selling exhibition from November 24 – December 1 at the ION Art Gallery on Orchard Road. The vintage posters anthology showcases a diverse range from aviation to pop culture.

On display are over a hundred works of art by great artists that include French artist and graphic designer A M Cassandre (famed for his Normandie series), French painter and lithographer Jules Cheret (who became a master of Belle Époque poster art), and Italian poster art designer Leonetto Cappiello. The exhibit spotlights rare vintage travel posters from the 1930s to the 1950s highlighting Asian destinations.



A vintage travel poster promoting Singapore. (Image: Picture This Limited)



'Bitter Campari' by Italian poster art designer Leonetto Cappiello. (Image: Picture This Limited)



'Les Ambassadeurs: Aristide Bruant' by French artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. (Image: Picture This Limited)

The exhibition also features two rare pieces by French artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, whose artworks are highly coveted by collectors worldwide. One of his most famous posters on display, 'Les Ambassadeurs: Aristide Bruant', with a price tag of \$5125,000, is the most expensive among the lot.

Being the only established vintage poster dealer in East Asia, Picture This is popular among regional and international collectors and enthusiasts. It has a string of loyal customers from Singapore, who "regularly buy posters" from Picture This gallery.

According to the gallery owner Christopher Bailey, "Singapore... is ready for us to bring the collection to town".

This is the first time that Picture This is bringing its collection abroad and it does not intend to stop.

"I am sure we'll return to Singapore again in the future. Success here will encourage us to explore other new markets in the region including Jakarta, Seoul, and Shanghai," said Mr Bailey.

Those interested in posters from the Roaring Twenties should look out for Mr Bailey's favourite — A M Cassandre's classic Grand Sport, which "epitomises all the great aspects of 1920s Art Deco design".



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