

KINO LORBER

presents

DREW: THE MAN BEHIND THE POSTER

2012 / 1.85:1 / 96 min. / Color

A Kino Lorber Release
333 West 39 St., Suite 503
New York, NY 10018
(212) 629-6880

Publicity Contacts:
Rodrigo Brandão – rodrigo@kinolorber.com
Matt Barry – mbarry@kinolorber.com

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SYNOPSIS

DREW: THE MAN BEHIND THE POSTER is a feature-length documentary exploring the life and work of Drew Struzan, the artist who created the posters for some of the most iconic movies of the past 30 years, including "Indiana Jones", "Back to the Future" and "Star Wars", among many others. Director Erik P. Sharkey tells the story of this distinctive artist, beginning with his early works in commercial and album cover art for Alice Cooper and Black Sabbath, to his acclaimed career and recent retirement as one of the most recognizable and influential movie poster artists of all time. The film features exclusive interviews with noted filmmakers, artists and critics including George Lucas, Harrison Ford, Michael J. Fox, Frank Darabont, Guillermo del Toro, Steven Spielberg, and many others.

CREDITS

Director
Erik P. Sharkey

Producer
Charles Ricciardi

Directors of Photography
Thomas Mumme and Greg Boas

Editor
Jeff Yorkes

Supervising Editor
Greg Boas

Featuring
George Lucas
Steven Spielberg
Harrison Ford
Michael J. Fox
Frank Darabont
Guillermo del Toro
Thomas Jane
Drew Struzan

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DREW STRUZAN – SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Drew Struzan, one of the most prolific and revered film poster designers of the 20th century was born in 1947 in Oregon. At the age of 18, he decided to leave home and pursue his life-long passion for drawing at the Art Center College of Design, migrating to West Los Angeles from Oregon City. As a young child lacking resources, Drew would sketch on toilet paper before rolling it back up, but entering an academic art setting opened a world of possibilities to him. He remained, however, relatively unfamiliar with the art world, and thus returned his counselor's inquiry about his choice of major with a question of his own, "What are my choices?"

Hailing from a poor background and with no money coming in to pay for his education, Struzan chose the path of an illustrator, viewing it as a much shorter path to a slice of bread than a career as a fine artist. On such a strict budget that he was only able to eat two days a week, the prospect of more immediate returns for his work was too tempting to forego. Drew was often kicked out of class because he was unable to pay tuition, but he would sneak in the back door to make sure that he did not miss any valuable education. He would sell homework pieces to other students for petty cash, but remained in dire financial straights even after his marriage and the birth of his first child.

After six years at Art Center, Drew's post academic career started with a trip to a hiring agency, which landed him a job at the design company Pacific Eye & Ear. Working under founder Ernie Cefalu, Struzan designed album artwork for a number of esteemed musical artists, including The Beach Boys, Roy Orbison, Black Sabbath, and more. During this time, Struzan illustrated Alice Cooper's *Welcome to my Nightmare*, which was voted one of the Top 100 cover albums of all time by *The Rolling Stone*. Though he was in demand because of his acclaimed work, Struzan was still earning little for each illustration.

Drew's Alice Cooper cover caught the eye of Tony Seiniger, who approached Drew about designing the poster for *The Blackbird* and introduced him to the movie poster-designing scene. Drew's big break came a few years later through collaboration with artist Charles White III on a *Star Wars* poster contracted by George Lucas. Following the *Star Wars* poster, Struzan was commissioned for a slough of posters for blockbuster films including *Bladerunner*, *Back to the Future*, *The Muppet Movie*, *Risky Business*, *Indiana Jones*, and *The Goonies*. The 90s saw the decline of illustrated movie posters as digital technologies became a cheaper and faster medium for design; however, Drew still worked on some posters, such as those for *Hook*, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, and *Hellboy*. As the industry sought more and more digitally created posters, Drew moved into other areas, designing artwork for Milton Bradley board games, postage stamps, and Franklin Mint collectible plates.

Drew has since moved into retirement, though he continues to illustrate for pleasure. Transitioning away from his life's work of commissioned pieces, he has begun to create autotelic works. While missed in the film industry, Drew's stunning "l'art pour l'art" works are received with much the same enthusiasm and wonder as his iconic movie posters.

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CREW BIOGRAPHIES

Erik P. Sharkey, *Director*

Born and raised in New York City, Erik Sharkey got hooked on movies at an early age and got into film the way many independent filmmakers do--with his own Super 8 movies. After winning the National Talent Search competition and receiving a full scholarship to Pratt Institute, he went on to work in film and video production in the NYC area before directing his first feature film, a campy comedy *Sexina: Popstar P.I.* (2007), featuring Adam West. The film was screened at The Fort Lauderdale International Film Festival, Big Apple Film Festival, and San Francisco Independent Film Festival and was recently picked up for foreign distribution by Lionsgate films.

Charles Ricciardi, *Producer, Writer and owner of Torino Pictures*

Charles gained hands on experience working at the NJ Motion Picture & Television Commission, 20th Century Fox Films Publicity & Promotions, Kingworld Productions and Michael Moore's critically acclaimed NBC show "TV Nation" all while studying film at New York University. His first feature film, "Barriers" which starred Annie Golden and Quentin Crisp, was an award winning urban drama that confronted the issues of class and race.

Charles then formed Torino Pictures to produce subsequent commercial, documentary and feature film projects, including "Delayed," which he wrote, produced and directed on less than a shoestring budget. Soon after Charles teamed up with director Erik P. Sharkey and editor Greg Boas to produce Sharkey's off-beat comedy script titled "Sexina: Popstar, P.I." starring Adam West (Batman) and featuring an original song by Davy Jones (The Monkees). The movie poster also featured a beautiful painted image created by legendary poster artist, Drew Struzan ("Star Wars," "Indiana Jones" & "Back To The Future"). So moved were they by the art and the artist, the three filmmakers united again to produce the feature documentary film titled "Drew: The Man Behind The Poster."

At NYU Charles received his Bachelor's Degree from the Tisch School of the Arts, studying Film & Television and his Master's Degree, from the Gallatin School, studying Business and Writing.