

It Came From Hollywood

Attack of the Killer B's – it's a scream

A woman screams in fear beside the front entrance to a store called Attack of the Killer B's. That 12-foot-high painted-on stencil serves as the first image you see, the central branding identity for the horror-movie memorabilia shop in the Hollywood & Highland mall in Hollywood, Calif.

"Shots of screaming women can be found in virtually all B-grade horror movies, so we adopted it as the unifying theme for the store's space," explains designer Bob Bangham, whose RipBang Architecture (Los Angeles), was commissioned to design the 3000-square-foot space by Fred Der-Hacopian and Ron Moazzez, co-owners of the nearby Hollywood Toys and Costumes store.

"Hollywood & Highland's developer wants its stores to be one of a kind in nature," explains Bangham, the firm's president. "So we took the B-movie merchandise sold by Hollywood Toys and Costumes, packaged it under the Attack of the Killer B's brand and made it the sole focus of the new store."

Bangham notes that B movies of the 1950s "were notoriously

low-budget affairs, and we wanted all the elements of the store – including its exterior, graphics, signage and fixturing – to reflect that."

In keeping with that theme, the outside walls are sheathed in stainless steel, installed to look like cheap tin foil. Over the top of the store's front and side entrances are backlit neon Attack of the Killer B's signs, rendered in a splashy type font reminiscent of B-movie posters of the 50s.

"We wanted the walls to have a cobbled-together look that would provide eerie, eye-catching reflections from the neon lighting," says Bangham.

The store, located in a corner space, has three large display windows anchoring its side wall. Each window is elaborately decorated with merchandise from one of three horror-film sub-genres identified by Bangham and his creative team: mad scientists/monsters (e.g., "The Swamp Thing"); UFOs/science fiction ("It Came from Outer Space"); and teenage rebellion ("Beach Blanket Bingo"). The sci-fi window, for example, displays space toys from a "Martian yard sale."

"The windows are a throwback to the elaborate dioramas you used to see in downtown department stores," Bangham notes. "We designed them to grab the attention of passersby."

Sheathed in stainless steel installed to resemble cheap tin foil, the exterior of the Attack of the Killer B's movie memorabilia store in Hollywood & Highland features a "screaming woman" stencil and three display windows housing sci-fi scenes.



Inside, the store is divided into three main areas, each selling merchandise and memorabilia from the B-movie categories. Much of the space's fixturing consists of gondolas and studio trunks that look like they came from a low-budget movie set.

At the center of the store, a giant metallic bee head – made mainly out of soup strainers and colanders – hovers ominously over the cashwrap. This area also houses a premier product showcase, holding B-movie masks, props and artwork priced from \$300 to \$500. Off to the sides are honeycomb-shaped metal fixtures holding less-expensive merchandise. To the rear is a display screen showing a continuous loop of horror-movie trailers.

"This ain't The Disney Store," says Bangham. "We've created a space that's sinfully fun and a bit tasteless – just like the B movies we glorify."

Attack of the Killer B's is the first commissioned project for RipBang, which Bangham founded after serving as a senior associate at the Rockwell Group (New York). Der-Hacopian, co-owner of Attack of the Killer B's, gives Bangham's efforts two thumbs up. "The entire process was an amazing journey in design," he says.

—By Matthew Hall, Managing Editor



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Client Team: Attack of the Killer B's, Hollywood, Calif. — Fred Der-Hacopian, Ron Moazzez, co-owners

Design Team: RipBang Architecture, Los Angeles — Bob Bangham, president/design director, Rowena Macaraeg, senior designer

General Contractor: Ramiand Construction, Los Angeles

Outside Design Consultants: Sauce Design, Venice, Calif. (graphic design); LightShow, Pasadena, Calif. (lighting); Charles White III, Venice, Calif. (artistic consultant); Linda Berman, Los Angeles (merchandising)

Suppliers: Home Theater Design, Los Angeles (audio/video); RAP, Cudahy, Calif. (fixtures); Ramland Construction, Los Angeles (furniture, built-in cabinets); Cannabar, Burbank, Calif. (graphics, props/decoratives); Universal Neon & Cathode Lighting (signage)