

# ROLF HARRIS

A LIFE IN ART



NATIONAL EXHIBITION TOUR 2010



### A LIFE IN ART

This monumental exhibition has been created to celebrate Rolf Harris's unique contribution to the world of art over half a century, in this his 80th birthday year. It incorporates an exceptional array of collectable limited editions, lithographs, sculptures and a new retrospective art book, all of which demonstrate the versatility, technical skill and creative energy of **Britain's most enduringly popular and best-loved artist.**

Staged across the UK over 2010, 'A Life in Art' represents a wonderful opportunity for collectors old and new to **acquire a very special piece of art from this important landmark collection.**

**ROLF HARRIS**



### THE PEOPLE'S PAINTER

Rolf Harris occupies a unique position on the contemporary art scene, both with his work and with his upbeat and accessible attitude to the world of art. A hugely gifted communicator, he presents prime time TV shows and headlines at Glastonbury, proving that there is no audience beyond his reach. **His artwork encapsulates this inspirational ability, and whatever the subject or style, every piece is linked by that immediacy, accessibility, and personal impact.** From powerful scenes of the Australian outback to intimate figurative studies, Rolf's art reflects the range of experiences and locations he has encountered over his long life as an artist. But despite the diverse subject matter his style is unmistakable, and his observational skill and portrayal of **fine detail** is second to none.

#### SELF PORTRAIT - A LIFE IN ART

Canvas Edition of 195, Size 17" x 22"  
Framed £595  
Paper Edition of 195, Size 11" x 14"  
Framed £495

## MENDING THE NETS

This is on the island of Hydra in Greece. I conceived the idea of having everything radiating out from the thumb on the fisherman's right hand and to this end I used a rigger brush to paint lines of thick cerulean blue from that point to cover the whole canvas.

When that paint was dry I began the rest of the painting over the top of it and I'm thrilled with the result. I love the silhouette of the man's face and the cigarette stub hanging from his mouth.



### MENDING THE NETS

Canvas Edition of 195 Size 24" x 18" Framed £750  
Paper Edition of 195 Size 18" x 14" Framed £625





## THE SUN HAS SET ON VENICE

This was inspired by seeing a magazine photograph advertising some fragrance or other. I loved the image so much that I subtly changed the shape of the whole thing and advanced the time of day so that it was suddenly dusk with the various lights lit up. I put a figure right up at the front of the painting, obviously viewed from above, so that the viewer feels he or she is up in the air, suspended at about the level of the main lamp.



### THE SUN HAS SET ON VENICE

Canvas Edition of 195  
Size 30" x 20"  
Framed £875

Paper Edition of 195  
Size 24" x 16"  
Framed £750



## MIST ON THE THAMES

Many years ago we had a snow gum and a weeping laburnum growing side by side on the riverbank in our garden. The snow gum is a small evergreen eucalyptus with a stunted shape that usually grows in the snow country in Australia. The laburnum had glorious yellow blossoms every year. Sadly, both have now died because their roots became waterlogged but at the time, they looked wonderful together and I loved their contrasting shapes.



MIST ON THE THAMES

Canvas Edition of 195 Size 41" x 15" Framed £875  
Paper Edition of 195 Size 32" x 12" Framed £750

The sun was rising just out of the picture, on the top right. I like the effect of the brilliant reflections of the sun on the water and the way these work with the ducks and the misty fog.



## TRUST

I painted this piece from a photo I took in South Africa. The boy had some food to tempt the starling closer to him, but I knew if he moved too fast the bird would be off. I love the gorgeous colours of the starling – almost like shot silk.

### TRUST

Canvas Edition of 195  
Size 14" x 21"  
Framed £595

Paper Edition of 195  
Size 11" x 16"  
Framed £495

## BUSH SUNSET

This is in Harvey in Western Australia. The sun had set behind me, leaving everything in deep shade. But the sunlight was still hitting the bank of trees high up in the distance, lighting them up to such a brilliant orange that they looked for all the world like a far-off bushfire. I did all the foreground, sketched in the bright orange background and then began to put in the mass of branches at the top. Then I started to think about what my old teacher and mentor Hayward Veal told me. He'd suggested that instead of trying to paint trees and branches on top of the sky colour, you paint everything dark, then put in the sky and the spaces in between to reveal the trees and branches. I followed his advice and it worked.

"I think his Australian landscapes are particularly fine. You can feel the heat, sense the silent vastness of the land."

**MICHAEL PARKINSON CBE**

Sir Michael has written the foreword to 'A Life in Art', a beautiful new book about Rolf's life and work which is featured on page 10 of this brochure.

BUSH SUNSET  
Canvas Edition of 195  
Size 28" x 40"  
Framed £1,225



# ROLF HARRIS

A LIFE IN ART

## RETROSPECTIVE BOOK

"You know, I can't help thinking just how lucky I've been over the years, and I marvel at the amazing variety of careers I've been able to enjoy. I'm thrilled at continually having been able to find new things to do, new paths to follow, and now being able to paint almost every day. I hope you enjoy this book as much as I've enjoyed doing all the drawings and paintings over the years.

This exercise of collecting as many of these works as we can, putting them all together and writing about the constant joy of a life in art, has been really thrilling!"

ROLF HARRIS AM CBE



This spectacular retrospective of the life and work of Rolf Harris represents both a celebration of artistic excellence, and a tribute to the man who has done more to bring art into the mainstream than any other individual in this country. Its 260 full colour pages reinforce the huge impact that Rolf has had on the world of art, as an educator, an entertainer, and of course as a major artist in his own right.

A LIFE IN ART BOOK  
£55



The two Limited Edition Prints are available only as part of the exclusive Limited Edition Book

### A LIFE IN ART COLLECTOR'S GIFT SET

'A Life in Art' has also been produced as an exclusive limited edition collector's box set of 750 copies. This fabulous collector's item comprises 'A Life in Art' itself, a stunning full colour hardback book which provides a fascinating retrospective of the life and work of an extraordinary artist. This is encased in a beautiful presentation box and accompanied by two signed limited edition prints signed and numbered by Rolf Harris.



# ROLF HARRIS

LIMITED EDITION

A LIFE IN ART  
Limited Edition Book of 1,950  
inclusive of two Limited Edition Prints  
£295



"I SEEM TO HAVE BEEN BORN WITH THE ABILITY TO DRAW WHAT I SEE."

## INTUITION

In the Rodin programme for the 'Rolf on Art' series for BBC TV, I was asked to create a sculpture of a pair of hands as Rodin had done, first modelling the hands in clay and then casting them. To my amazement, I was told that Rodin used exactly the same single hand sculpture, but placed it in two different positions in the finished work. I got my dear daughter Bindi to pose for the work, and modelled it from her hand. This is the hugely satisfying end result, and if you look closely, it is definitely NOT a pair of hands. It is a repeat casting of the same hand, but placed in a slightly different position, at a different angle. It was most thrilling to know that it was possible to do something as complicated, and I'd like to thank the people at the casting foundry who nursed me through the whole process.



### INTUITION

Bronze Sculpture edition of 595  
Size 12" x 10"  
£995





## DRY COUNTRY

This is spectacular country in one of the driest parts of Australia where the rocks seem to have a blue surface staining to them – they look incredible. The country is so sparse and barren that it can't be farmed and the only trees that will grow are these – affectionately known as parachute trees. They have lots of tiny branches supporting a leafy canopy – hence the name.

DRY COUNTRY  
Canvas Edition of 195  
Size 44" x 27"  
Framed £1,295

## ELVIS ENTERTAINS

This was painted from a television show commemorating the fact that Elvis would have turned 75 in 2010 had he lived. I feel this picture really captures his huge appeal to the youngsters of the day and I love **the two girls at the right of the picture, watching his every move with rapt attention.** They are absolutely loving everything he does, loving the way he sounds and the way he performs

ELVIS ENTERTAINS  
Canvas Edition of 195  
Size 30" x 22"  
Framed £875

Paper Edition of 195  
Size 24" x 17"  
Framed £750





## FIRE ESCAPE

I imagined that the jungle was on fire behind the animal and it was escaping by swimming, and the fearful look in the eyes reflected that thought. All the orange painted reflections added to the colour of the water, cement the image in my mind.



FIRE ESCAPE  
Canvas Edition of 195  
Size 27" x 22"  
Framed £875

Paper Edition of 195  
Size 22" x 18"  
Framed £750

## SNOW ON MARSHY GROUND

Many years ago, when TVAM was operating, I arranged for them to hang a huge sheet of photographic background paper in their studio so that I could do a demonstration painting of a snowscene for the TV cameras. I'd done all sorts of preliminary sketches of snow scenes, trees and buildings covered in snow, and went ahead and  **painted a 9 foot by 12 foot scene.** It was thrilling to do, using all the different pots of paint and the 4 inch house-painting brushes. I took a photo of the end result and have kept it ever since. The original painting was scrapped. Well, what can you do with something that huge on fairly flimsy paper? Just recently I unearthed my old photo and was inspired to paint it again, but this time in oils, and at a more sensible size.



### SNOW ON MARSHY GROUND

Canvas Edition of 195  
Size 40" x 20"  
Framed £925

Paper Edition of 195  
Size 30" x 15"  
Framed £775

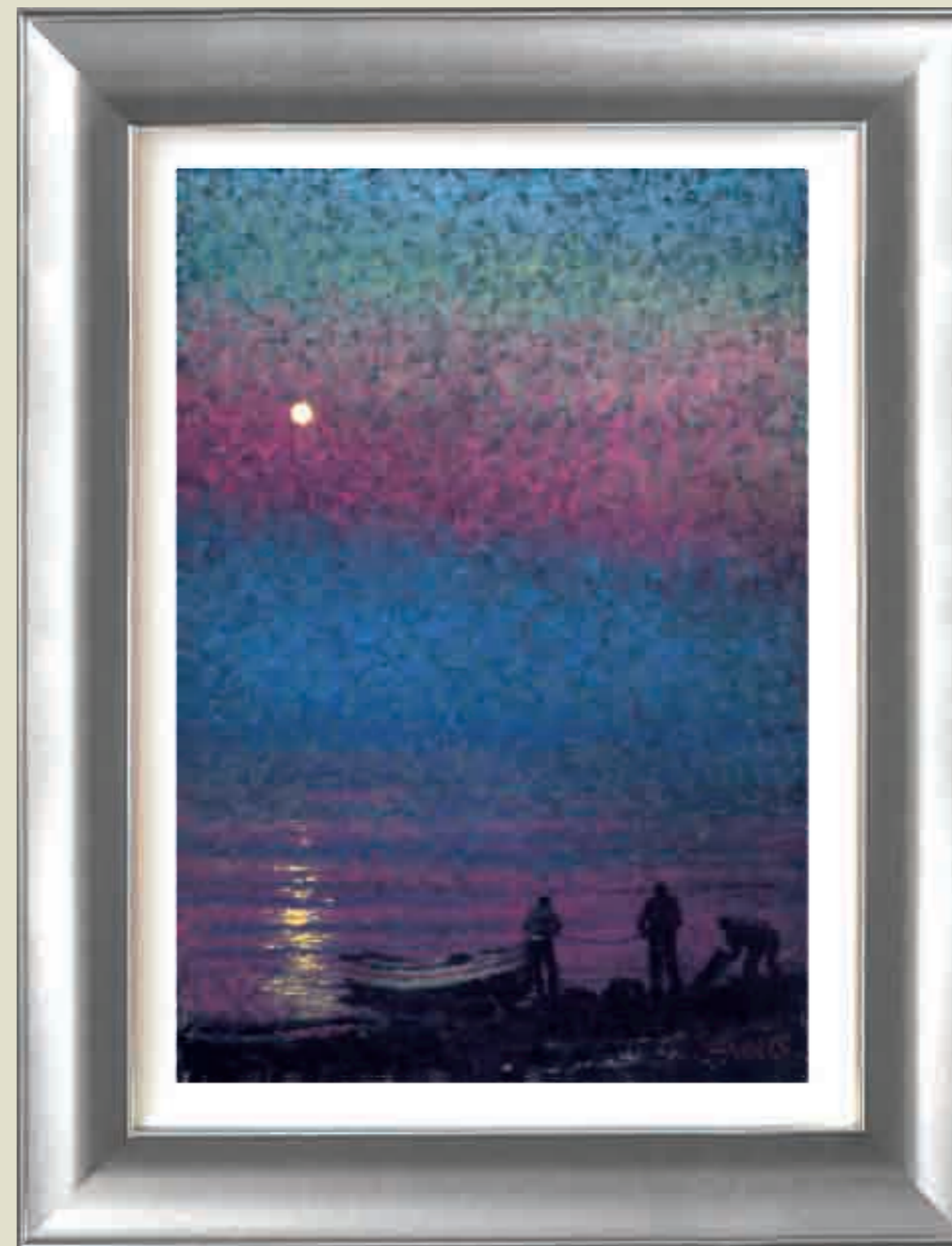
FISHERMEN BY MOONLIGHT

Canvas Edition of 195  
Size 17" x 24"  
Framed £695

Paper Edition of 195  
Size 15" x 21"  
Framed £595

FISHERMEN BY MOONLIGHT

A friend of mine, Mike Lewin, sent me a greetings card with this picture, one of his own photographs. I loved the image and, with his permission, did a painting from it.



## TRUCKS AT THE OLD BARN

Many years ago I went out sketching one day, and was lucky enough to come upon this scene, an old barn with a couple of derelict motor vehicles parked in the grass nearby. **The resultant pencil drawing has sat in a folder for all those years, until I was leafing through the pages recently, and thought that this sketch could make a great lithograph.**



TRUCKS AT THE OLD BARN  
Lithograph Edition of 195  
Size 14.5" x8.5"  
Framed £395

SKETCH CLUB,  
CONTEMPLATION

Lithograph Edition of 195  
Size 9" x 12"  
Framed £295

SKETCH CLUB,  
CONCENTRATION (right)

Lithograph Edition of 195  
Size 9" x 12"  
Framed £295



SKETCH CLUB

I did a couple of pastel sketches of two members of a sketch club I go to. They were so involved in doing their own thing, that they didn't even notice me. The second member of the sketch club that I drew seemed much more contemplative about what he was doing. I liked these drawings so much I have had lithographs done from the original pastels.



## A MUCH LOVED REMINDER OF AUSTRALIA

I had taken a photo of one of the eucalyptus trees I planted out in front of our old home in Sydenham, South East London. The 'gum leaves' as Australians call them, have a very special place in all Australians' hearts. They seem to symbolise everything about Australia to people who are far from home and maybe a tiny bit homesick, and to see this exquisitely proportioned branch with these beautifully symmetrical lozenge shaped pendant leaves, each with its own drop of dew, standing clean and artistic in front of the slightly foggy, square, formal English buildings in the background, created a great juxtaposition of two cultures in my mind. I couldn't wait to do a misty painting of the background building and then do another crisp painting of the leaves and branches as a separate crystal clear image to be dropped in front of that foggy backdrop.



## A MUCHED LOVED REMINDER OF AUSTRALIA

Lithograph Edition of 195  
Size 29" x 20"  
Framed £795



## ROAD TO PARADISE VALLEY

Canvas Edition of 195  
Size 49" x 19"  
Framed £1225

When I had finished it, I really loved it so much that I immediately coated a long canvas with orange paint so that I could have the pleasure again of painting a similar scene, but in a more right-angled oblong shape. As I eventually got around to working on it, the excitement of painting the scene on the piano was long months away, but as soon as I started, the thrill was there again. I hadn't realized that the piano was so much longer than my canvas, and so I couldn't duplicate the piano work of art. It was, of necessity, shorter, but I think, exactly as much fun to paint. I don't think it would have worked as well had I made all the paddocks green instead of that orangey-red.

## ROAD TO PARADISE VALLEY

I illustrated the side of a grand piano for DeMontfort Fine Art, with a long complex scene partly made up from my head, partly inspired by photos of country scenes from Northern New South Wales. These photographs showed a very green landscape, but I had in mind a parched, dry scene mainly composed of reds and oranges.

## MARINA - STORM CLOUDS

We were here with friends who had their boat moored in the harbour, when a hugely menacing cloud came over. There was an incredible contrast between the black sky and water and the brilliant late afternoon sunshine behind me. Trying to paint the reflections of the masts was a nightmare and took forever.

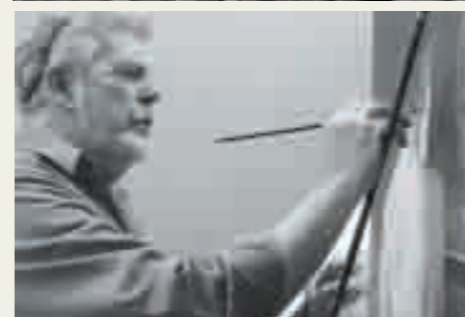


### MARINA - STORM CLOUDS

Canvas Edition of 195  
Size 25" x 18"  
Framed £750

Paper Edition of 195  
Size 20" x 14"  
Framed £650





## MODERN MASTER

Long acknowledged as a living legend, Rolf has been awarded the CBE and has won many accolades for his artwork. In 2000 he received an honorary membership from the Royal Society of British Artists, joining a distinguished list that includes Sir Winston Churchill and James McNeil Whistler. His status as the nation's most popular artist was highlighted when the BBC commissioned him to paint an 80th birthday portrait of Her Majesty the Queen. His famous BBC1 TV series 'Rolf on Art' gained the highest ever viewing figures for a programme on the visual arts, topping all previous programmes by over six million viewers on a weekly basis. In 1992 Rolf was named the world's most famous artist in a massive poll and in 2008 his enduring popularity was underlined by a survey called 'What the British really think about art today' published in the Daily Telegraph in which he featured ahead of Damian Hirst. He remains one of the most well known names and biggest draws on the contemporary art scene.

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