BIOGRAPHY

MATTHEW ROLSTON (USA, b. 1955)

Matthew Russell Rolston is an American artist, photographer, and director known for his signature lighting techniques and detailed approach to art direction and design. He has been repeatedly identified throughout his career with the revival and modern expression of Hollywood glamour.

Born in Los Angeles, Rolston studied drawing and painting in his hometown at the Chouinard Art Institute and Otis College of Art & Design, as well as in the Bay Area at the San Francisco Art Institute. He also studied illustration, photography, imaging and film at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, where in 2006, he received an Honorary Doctorate.

While still a student at Art Center, Rolston was "discovered" by Andy Warhol, for Warhol's celebrity focused *Interview* magazine, where he began a successful career in photography.

Rolston's photographs have been exhibited at museums and institutions. Selected group shows include *Beauty CULTure* (with Lauren Greenfield, Herb Ritts, Andres Serrano, and Carrie Mae Weems, 2011), The Annenberg Space for Photography, Los Angeles, California*; The Warhol Look: Glamour, Style, Fashion* (curated by Mark Francis and Margery King), The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1997); and *Fashion and Surrealism*, FIT Gallery, New York, 1987 (traveled to the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK, 1988).

Rolston's photographs are in the permanent collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the National Portrait Gallery (Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture at The Smithsonian, Washington D.C.).

RECENT PROJECTS

Rolston has created four photographic fine art projects that have led to a series of publications and exhibitions.

Talking Heads: The Vent Haven Portraits, consisting of monumental portraits of ventriloquial figures housed in the Vent Haven Museum in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky, was Rolston's first self-assigned photographic series. The work debuted at Diane Rosenstein Gallery in Los Angeles, California, and has since traveled to venues in Miami and Berlin, among others. Rolston's third published monograph accompanied the exhibition.

Hollywood Royale: Out of the School of Los Angeles, which includes Rolston's fourth monograph, as well as a traveling exhibition, is a retrospective of his editorial portraits from 1977 to 1993. Edited by long-time Los Angeles–based gallerist and curator David Fahey, this series presents an array of portraits that capture the 1980s and its myriad talents. From Michael Jackson and Madonna to Prince, George Michael and Cyndi Lauper, the selection of images reflects the era.

Art People: The Pageant Portraits is a series of emotionally-intimate portraits of participants in "Pageant of the Masters", a *tableaux vivants* show that is part of an annual arts festival held in Laguna Beach, California. The project features dramatically-scaled color prints; one installation alone is over thirty feet wide. Ralph Pucci International exhibited this series in its Los Angeles gallery.

Vanitas: The Palermo Portraits is yet another dramatically-scaled portrait series, this depicting Christian mummies housed in the Capuchin Catacombs of Sicily. The project, which has not yet been published or exhibited, represents Rolston's continuing evolution as a photographer and is an attempt to elevate his portraiture to a conceptual level.

Rolston has stated his purpose with art-making is to "pose questions about the things that make us most human."

PUBLICATIONS

Four monographs have been published of Rolston's work:

Big Pictures: A Book of Photographs (1991) is a collection of early photographs published by Bulfinch Press, New York.

beautyLIGHT: Pictures at a Magazine (2008) is a survey drawn from twenty years of Rolston's celebrity portrait photographs published by teNeues, Germany.

Talking Heads: The Vent Haven Portraits (2012) is a concept project centering on portraits of ventriloquial figures, published by Pointed Leaf Press, New York.

Hollywood Royale: Out of the School of Los Angeles (2017) is a retrospective of Rolston's celebrity photography in the 1980s, published by teNeues, Germany.