

HR



Portrait of an Artist with a Passion for Intuitive Expression

"We live in a world that has lost its way. A world where the rational dominates the emotional, the intellectual holds sway over the spiritual, the complex confuses the simple, and where technology is more esteemed than biology. Our salvation - our chance to live truly rich and fulfilled lives - lies in the need to reconnect with nature, to open our eyes to the things that we take for granted. Every day, I am in awe of the artistry of nature. It stirs my soul. It drives me to interpret and express the raw, visceral and powerful feelings it evokes in me."

Harvey Rothchild

Harvey Rothschild is a gut feel guy with a passion for the natural and a creative fire burning in his belly. He's been that way ever since he can remember. Some artists discover their calling later in life. With Harvey, creativity came looking for him at a very early age. Colour, texture, shape, form: Harvey's fascination with these constructs have sculpted his sensibilities all his life – first, in the demi-monde of fashion, and more recently, in the realm of painting.

Sketches of Schooling

Born in Johannesburg, South Africa at the mid-point of the last century, Harvey proved to be a very average scholar - and an extraordinary artistic talent. He was drawn to take art lessons at the local recreation centre at age 6. The next year, an impressionistic early work entitled "The Whispering Tea-pot" won a Gold Medal at the annual Rand Easter Show and a career in the creative arts was born.

Following his matriculation and nine months of military service spent soaking up the awe-inspiring landscapes of the Namib desert, Harvey headed for England in 1969 to embark on studies in Art and Design and to be part of the creative explosion in art, fashion and music that blasted London in the Swinging Sixties.

With a Foundation Course completed at the Blackpool School of Art behind him, he was admitted to the prestigious St Martins School of Art and Design in London where he spent three years specialising in fashion and textiles.

Fashionista extraordinaire

Following his stint at St Martins, Harvey returned to South Africa where he immediately made a huge impression on the emerging local fashion scene. In 1982 he won the South African Designer of the Year Award as well as the Coty International Menswear Design Award.

Doors began opening abroad. Harvey was offered a freelance assignment to design for Ralph Lauren in the USA. In 1984 he returned to the UK and established his own design studio and the HR label. Together with an English friend they purchased an old farmhouse and animal outbuildings in St Ives, Cornwall and set about restoring them. Their efforts were rewarded in 1987 when they won the Prince of Wales Award for Innovation and Architecture.

The years spent in England were hectic and heady. Apart from building up the HR brand which penetrated markets far afield as Europe, Japan and the USA, Harvey also completed lucrative design contracts with global brands such as Burberrys, Christian Dior and Iceberg. In 1995 he won the BBC Clothes Show Award for menswear.

It was at this time, as an escape from the relentless, high pressured fashion world, Harvey began applying his sketching skills to the picturesque countryside surrounding his home in Cornwall. The area, which is renowned for its magical light quality, soon had him reaching for his watercolors. The bug, which had bitten all those years ago, was back with a vengeance.

Adios Armani. Hello Caravaggio.

After some serious soul searching, Harvey realized that he had achieved all that he wanted to in fashion. Painting on the other hand had rejuvenated his spirit. It was time to go back to school. Harvey hung up his fabric swatches and enrolled at the Byam Shaw School of Art in London where he spent a year honing his drawing and painting skills. A second year was spent at the New York Studio School where he further developed his figure drawing skills and began exploring contemporary landscape painting.

Back home - to a blank canvas

Not only was Art calling, so was Africa. Harvey returned to South Africa and a full-time career in painting in January 2002. The wide-open spaces, the earthiness of the people, the warmth of the colours, the sensuality and the textures that are unique to the southern tip of Africa continue to inspire his work and unique style. Harvey spent a few years in Franschoek and then moved to Rheenendal near Knysna, where he built a home studio at his home where he ran his Art Barn painting school which he ran for several years. During his years in the Western Cape, Harvey's work was to be found in several reputable galleries in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Knysna and Hermanus.

The Itch of Wanderlust

In 2010 Harvey and family headed North, first to the English countryside followed by a channel-crossing to the picturesque region of Aquitaine in the southern climes of France where he renovated a French farmhouse, turning the old animal enclosure into an airy studio where he painted impressionist and expressionist work of the area where he lived.

The Recent Years

In 2016, Harvey's nomadic spirit took him moved to County Kerry, Ireland. Yet again he searched found a neglected old farmhouse with a view over the Waterville loch. He renovated the house and added on a bespoke studio where he took brushes to canvas. Recently he has moved into more abstract work inspired by the colours of the Irish countryside.

Where Harvey will move to next is anybody's guess...

Achievements, Learning & Wanderlust

- 1956 Rand Easter Show: Gold Medal** (age 6)
- 1969 Blackpool School of Art** (Foundation Course)
- 1970-1972 St Martins School of Art and Design** (London)
- 1982 South African Designer of the Year Award**
- 1982 Coty International Menswear Design Award**
- 1987 Prince of Wales Award: Innovation and Architecture** (Cornwall, UK)
- 1995 BBC Clothes Show Award for Menswear**
- 2000 Byam Shaw School of Art in London**
- 2001 New York Studio School**
- 2002-2009 Returns to SA as full-time artist** (Franschoek, Rheenendal)
- 2010-2015 European Trek** (UK and France)
- 2016- Currently in Ireland** (County Kerry)

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