

MATTHEW ROLSTON, PHOTOGRAPHER, DIRECTOR, & CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Matthew Rolston is an artist who works in photography and video; his practice centers on portraiture, most notably subjects drawn from celebrity culture. Rolston, who lives and works in Los Angeles, studied at Chouinard Art Institute (Los Angeles, California) and Otis College of Art & Design (Los Angeles, California). In 2006, he received an Honorary Doctorate from Art Center College of Design (Pasadena, California) where he had studied photography from 1976-1978. While still a student at Art Center, Rolston was discovered by Andy Warhol, who immediately commissioned portraits for *Interview* magazine. Thus began an extraordinary career; over the next 30 years, Matthew Rolston's photographs have been published in many magazines, including *Interview*, *Vogue*, *W*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Vanity Fair*, *The New York Times*, and over 100 covers of *Rolling Stone*.

Along with his friend Herb Ritts, Rolston was a member of an influential group of photographers (among them, Bruce Weber, Annie Liebovitz and Steven Meisel) to emerge from the 1980's magazine scene. Rolston's early photographs from this era are notable for their distinctive and glamorous lighting style, surrealistic tableaux, and detail-rich sets. His imagery has helped define contemporary aesthetics of American portrait photography and truly embodies modern glamour.

"Matthew has a unique beat on our culture," said Jann Wenner, Editor-in-Chief of *Rolling Stone*. "The very images we have ingrained in our minds when we think of music, movies, and celebrities are quite often Matthew's creations. After publishing more than 25 years of his photographs we're still excited by the imagery." To date Jann Wenner and *Rolling Stone* remain Rolston's longest continuous professional relationship.

Robert Sobieszek, the legendary former Curator of Photography for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), compared Rolston's work to the "four mega-greats of the '50s and '60s: Avedon, Hiro, Penn and Skrebneski... I think Rolston is one of the foremost editorial, glamour/fashion photographers working today," he said, "giving us immensely sophisticated, exciting, glamorous shots and portraits that surround us daily."

Matthew Rolston is also a filmmaker who works in video. Known for his distinctive lighting techniques, Rolston has helmed award-winning music videos for artists as diverse as Madonna, Janet Jackson, Beyoncé Knowles and even Marilyn Manson, as well as both print and television campaigns for a wide variety of internationally recognized brands including Campari, Bacardi, L'Oreal, Revlon, Estée Lauder, Clairol, Pantene, Elizabeth Arden, Gap, Polo Ralph Lauren and Burberry.

Rolston's short film *The Most Beautiful Woman in the World* (2011, color, 3:00 min) screened as part of *SF Shorts: The San Francisco International Festival of Short Films* (2013), among others. The Whitney Museum of American Art (as part of *Blues for Smoke*) screened *Whatta Man* (1994, color, 4:52 min) in *Through the Lens of the Blues Aesthetic: An Evening of Short Films Selected by Kevin Everson* (April, 2013). Other films include *Be Without You* (2005, color, 4:09 min) for which he won "Best Director" (MTV Video Music

Awards, 2006); and *Candyman* (2007, color, 3:18 min) for which he won (with Christina Aguilera) “Best Director” (MTV Video Music Awards, 2007).

Matthew Rolston has continued to form lasting relationships with celebrities and magazines, such as his long association with Oprah Winfrey. Rolston has had the unique distinction of photographing Oprah for more than 40 covers of *O, The Oprah Magazine*. Rolston has shot Oprah for her magazine more than any other photographer.

Responding to ever changing client needs, in 2012 Rolston established a new production unit he calls ‘R-ROLL’. Its mission is to provide his clients with behind-the-scenes documentaries of his photo, film and creative direction assignments. According to Rolston, “It’s clear to me that there’s an overwhelming demand for filmed content, as clients expand their reach beyond traditional media.”

R-ROLL was created to serve Rolston’s usual mix of editorial, advertising, entertainment and hospitality clients. “I decided to call it R-ROLL as a joke on ‘B-roll’ – industry parlance for behind-the-scenes footage. The ‘R’ is for Rolston.” Since its inception, R-ROLL has produced numerous projects for clients such as Time Inc., Amazon.com, ESPN and A&E/Lifetime Networks. Said Rolston, “We’re now entering an era where the ‘making of’ is just as important as the ‘of’. And clients seem to enjoy the integration of our media services. Print, film, design, documentary, you might say we’re a ‘one-stop-shop’.”

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). His 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.).

Three monographs have been published of Rolston’s work: *Big Pictures, A Book of Photographs* (1991), a collection of early photographs (introduction by Tim Burton) published by Bullfinch Press, New York; *beautyLIGHT, Pictures at a Magazine* (2008), a survey of twenty years of Rolston’s celebrity portrait photographs, published by teNeues, Germany; and most recently, *Talking Heads: The Vent Haven Portraits* (2012), published by Pointed Leaf Press, New York.

Once again expanding and redefining the scope of his vision, Rolston has added the title of Creative Director to his résumé, developing innovative projects in the area of experiential design, including hospitality, product design and new media ventures.

Rolston’s first hospitality brand creation, developed for Los Angeles-based hotel and restaurant owner Sam Nazarian’s company sbe Entertainment, opened in 2010. Called

The Redbury, Rolston was deeply involved in every aspect of the project, from the naming to the logo, from design concepts to marketing strategies. As Creative Director, he oversaw an extensive team that included architects, interior designers, graphic designers, music and scent experts – even the uniform company that supplied the look-and-feel of the staff wardrobe.

Rolston has also appeared as a guest expert on a spectrum of beauty-oriented broadcast programs, from Bravo's *Shear Genius* and *Make Me A Supermodel* to the CW's *America's Next Top Model*.

Matthew Rolston was surprised and deeply saddened by the unexpected death of entertainer Michael Jackson, whom he had known and worked with from the earliest days of his career. By a strange twist of fate, it appears that Matthew Rolston is officially the final photographer to shoot Michael Jackson in a formal sitting. Rolston's images of Michael Jackson from a September 24, 2007 shoot are literally "the last sitting" of the legendary performer's career.

In 1998, Mr. Rolston endowed the "Matthew Rolston Scholarship for Photography and Film," at Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, California. He remains actively involved in this program as a mentor and lecturer on the subjects of modern communication techniques, fashion aesthetics and luxury brand strategies.

Rolston's representatives for his commercial still photography work include Stockland Martel Inc., New York and Kathrin Hohberg, Munich. His music video work is represented by LARK Creative, Los Angeles. In the areas of environmental and product design as well as creative direction and brand creation, he is represented by Culture + Commerce, New York. Rolston's fine art photography is represented by the Fahey/Klein Gallery, Los Angeles, and Camera Work Galerie, Berlin. Rolston's touring fine art shows are represented by Curatorial Assistance Traveling Exhibitions, Los Angeles, and ECHO INTERNATIONAL, Paris.

Rolston's production offices are in Beverly Hills, California. He continues to divide his professional time between photography, filmmaking and creative direction, traveling frequently between Los Angeles and New York City. Rolston resides in Beverly Hills.