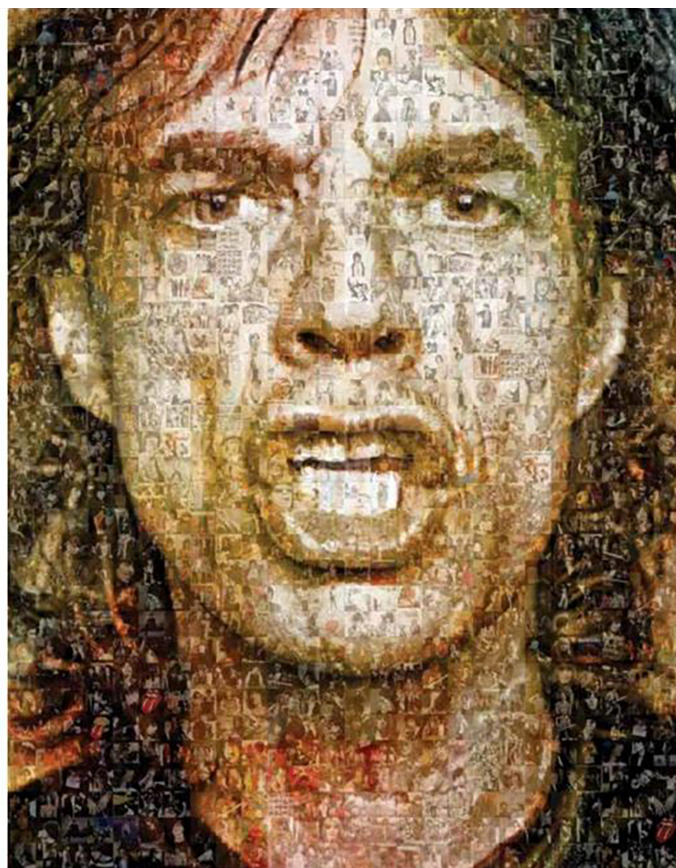


## ROBIN AUSTIN: Iconic Photo Mosaic Storyteller

It's all there: movies, music, fashion, sex, sports, politics, news events – the iconic stuff that shapes our lives.

Written by Cindy Clarke



"WOW!" THAT WAS THE FIRST WORD that came to mind when I saw Robin Austin's pop culture portraits of celebrity icons I had grown up with. Same for the second, third and umpteenth time that I uttered my awe in that one indefatigable, but wholly inclusive word that expressed my growing admiration for his work.

The first time I said it aloud, it reflected my immediate, admittedly visceral attraction to Robin's big picture vision – larger than life images of superstars that truly own the walls of the Connecticut home he shares with his wife, Mickey, a fellow thought leader and innovator. The second "wow" came out in a spontaneous rush as I took a closer look at his storied portraits. Each revealed itself in intimate photo mosaics, meticulously researched and perfectly posed, to speak volumes about the person profiled, the times we've lived in and the artist himself.

My wowed appreciation grew as we took our conversation and his compositions outside. Here the sunlight played off his metal canvases to spotlight decades of genius, unequalled anywhere and uniquely their own. Robin explained that his dye sublimation prints, brilliantly imposed on aluminum, give them an exceptional dimensional quality and a more vibrant color palette that changes with the light. The proof was in the looking. When I admired *Your Majesty*, Mick Jagger, inside and out, I relived the rock star's life through impressive flashes of photo moments captured in time.

Back inside, I counted the 72 covers uncovered in his one Playboy cover story *No More Centerfolds*, remembering how the brand mesmerized generations of men with visions of bare beauty. I was amused that his *Inappropriate Thoughts*, ranking high among his

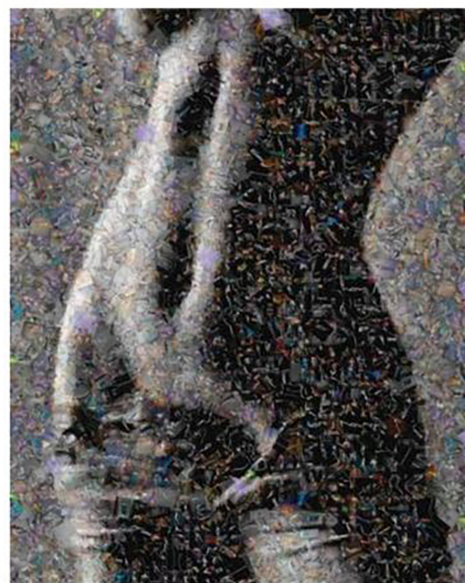
best sellers, now sits over the bathtub in one client's bathroom. I was equally impressed by the tasteful, seductive reveal of *Anticipation*, a suggestion of a woman in a sensuous stage of undress that was part sex and all saucy.

More "wows," effusive and instantaneous, kept on coming as I immersed in his eye-candy retelling of visual stories that chronicle key generations of pop culture: the glamour of Hollywood's *Nifty Fifties* as modeled by silver screen star Jane Russell, Twiggy of the *Swinging Sixties*, who epitomized the fashion fusion of change and charm from 1955 to 1966, Debbie Harry queen of the new wave of punk rock of the *Fantastic Seventies*, *The Way You Wear Your Hat* swoon sultan Frank Sinatra, the *Let it Be* sounds of the Beatles, the *Never Give Up* spirit of Nelson Mandela, his heartfelt Princess Diana, Marilyn the blonde bombshell and so many others immortalized by a discerning filmed montage of their lives.

Robin's art is a stunning reflection of the stories that have played out in his life and career as a creative branding genius. He relishes the telling, can't resist the tease and thrives on the surprise. Right brain driven, Robin believes in disrupting expectations to make a stand that stands for something and stands out. A headlining article in *Advertising Age* about the blue-chip consulting firm, Fusion5, he co-founded in 1994 after leaving executive roles at the Marketing Corporation of



Opposite Page: "His Majesty" Mick Jagger 54" x 40" - limited edition.  
This Page Above: Robin Austin in his studio, Weston Connecticut.  
Photo by Luciana Fampalona.  
This Page Below: "Inappropriate Thoughts" 60" x 40" - limited edition.



America, referred to the firm's "shock therapy approach" to marketing and their "pathological fear of being ordinary." The firm's clients, cool consumer brand giants like Coca Cola, Miller Lite and wanna-be-considered-cool automaker king, Ford Motor Company, were among the corporate royalty who looked to Fusion 5 to launch them into the stratosphere with results-driven branding campaigns that translated into improved performance and presence in new, youthfully exuberant markets. Confident, innovative and armed with in-the-know, on-the-street insights that would emotionally and effectively connect brands to buyers, Robin and company were known for telling it like it is, relying on trend-setting stories, not story boards, to play out in their always playful strategies.

And while some things have changed since the company was sold some 16 years ago, Robin still has his finger on the pulse of the next buzz-worthy idea. Only this time he has put a new spin on his own signature version of story boards, giving his star-studded ideas a voice and vision that get better with each retelling.

His first reinterpreted story board was inspired by his son's fascination with the award-winning cable TV series *Breaking Bad*. Robin created it with hundreds of photos of the show's stars and his own sofa-cheering family and friends for his son's 18th birthday, giving birth to a new art form that never fails to start or keep the conversation going.





"He is a force of nature, an aesthetic alchemist who converts cultural dots into the here and now," said New York art dealer Gene Seidman, who said Robin's appeal as an artist goes way beyond what we've seen before. "We live in a photocopy where images take the place of words and celebrities are the icons of our culture. Robin's work captures, reimagines and serves them up in such a way that he accelerates their essence and tells their stories, fully, through impactful images."

Printed in limited editions of 25 on acrylic and 24 on metal canvases measuring upwards of 60" by 40", his artwork has found homes in restaurants, galleries, bars, hotels, private residences, commercial headquarters and showrooms around the world, attracting fans and followers inextricably connected to his graphic multi-layered stories about lives that have shaped their lives.

"People who see his work want to own one," said Gene. "Art has the ability to activate and light up the frontal cortex, the pleasure center, of people's minds. No matter who or what he profiles, Robin's art always offers a new surprise and connection that make people smile every time they look at it."

Much like the artist himself, I mused, who is as charming and energetic, as undeniably gifted and as immediately likeable as his art is. Robin and I ended our interview with a sneak peek at his soon-to-be-unveiled portrait of sitting President Barack Obama sitting in front of a portrait of George Washington. While the profiles of America's presidents are clearly evident from afar, as you move in they dissolve into tiny photographs of the Obamas, hundreds of them, blending black and white into a colorful living commentary about the lasting impact influence makers have on contemporary culture.

I asked Robin who's next and he just smiled. Which I happily interpret to mean that there are many more exciting, invariably surprising stories almost ready for their close up. Like his art, no words are needed. I can't wait. □



Top: "Classic Beatles - Let it Be" 40" x 60" limited edition.  
Above: "The Greatest - Muhammad Ali" 52" x 40" limited edition.

Robin Austin's work hangs in galleries in New York City, Tampa Florida, St. Martin and two Gilles Clement Galleries in Westport and Greenwich Connecticut. He will be exhibiting his newest pieces at Art Basel in Miami Florida this December. For more information and to view his online gallery, visit [www.robinnaustinart.com](http://www.robinnaustinart.com)

## Life at the Top: The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Westchester II

Exclusive Views, Exceptional  
Service, Extraordinary Living

ASK RESIDENTS WHY they've chosen to call The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Westchester II their home and you're sure to get plenty of enthusiastic responses.

Some will undoubtedly rave about the majestic views — through floor-to-ceiling windows — of Long Island Sound and the Manhattan skyline. Some will point to the high-end finishes, such as the marble baths, spacious closets, custom cabinetry and sleek stainless steel Viking appliances. Still others will cite the glass-enclosed pool, the well-equipped fitness center and the full-service spa and salon, among other building-wide amenities. No doubt a few will mention the close proximity to fine dining, fabulous shopping and exciting entertainment options of downtown White Plains. And you're only 30 minutes to Manhattan from the nearby Metro North train station!

No wonder sales at Tower II have been exceptionally strong with over 90% of the 177 condominium residences sold out. Exclusive Selling Agent Nancy Kennedy of Houlihan Lawrence notes, "Sales of Tower II are understandably moving quickly because The Ritz Residences feature the three most important elements in assuring an exceptional lifestyle: unbeatable value, unparalleled views and convenient location. We have found that our current residents are delighted with their decision to purchase a condominium home at The Ritz Residences and are eager to share their excitement with friends and family." Here is what some residents have to say:



Photography by Jaime Martoreno



"We love living at The Ritz-Carlton Residences Westchester. It provides security and tranquility with awesome views."  
—Carole and Bert Mitchell

"After living in our spacious home for 40 years, we became empty-nesters and moved to the Ritz-Carlton Residences. The amenities offer a five-star lifestyle."  
—Monica and Edward Kaufman

"We are an active retired couple and enjoy traveling around the world. Living here is a dream come true — no hassles, no worries. We just enjoy life."  
—In-ai and Edward Kang

"We're thrilled with the living experience here. The amenities of the building and the attention to detail by the entire staff have lived up to our highest expectations."  
—Alyce and Sanford Schwartz

"The services and amenities enhance our busy life. Our grandchildren can't wait to visit us and play in the playground, swim in the pool and dine in the lobby lounge."  
—Monica Lavin and Rick Ross

"We love our apartment with its beautiful views, the terrific staff, the services and amenities and the convenient location. Living here has exceeded our expectations."  
—Dana and Randi Wiston

Ritz Residences Tower II is now unveiling its newest penthouse model—a luxurious 2,880 sq. ft. two-bedroom, 2.5 bath residence with den. Enter through a gracious foyer with large double coat closet and follow the hallway into the oversized 17 x 37 foot Great Room featuring floor-to-ceiling windows with spectacular views of Long Island Sound and Manhattan. The 18 x 23 foot eat-in kitchen is open to the Great Room, affording expansive entertaining space. Just off the Great Room is a cozy den, a perfect nesting spot, also with floor-to-ceiling windows.

The very private and personal master bedroom suite features two expansive walk-in closets and a 5-fixture rose aurora master bath. The second bedroom located near the entrance foyer has two walls of floor-to-ceiling windows facing residential Westchester with far reaching views to Connecticut. There is also an ensuite cappuccino marble bath with walk-in shower affording guests maximum privacy.

To schedule a tour of the new penthouse model or for more information about The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Westchester II, call 914-946-9200 or visit [www.rcresidenceswestchester.com](http://www.rcresidenceswestchester.com).