

Portraits of Richard Harris by Ralf McMahon, main picture, and by Dave Cassidy, Rosanne Hayes, David Dalton and Gearoid Arthur Hayes, which have been shortlisted for the portrait competition

# Portraits of Harris, actor and proud Limerickman

## ■ Sixteen artists shortlisted for portrait award, as film festival kicks off next week

ANNE SHERIDAN

THE MANY on-screen and private personas of Richard Harris have been beautifully captured on paper and on canvas by artists for the first portrait competition in his honour.

Sixteen diverse portraits of the legendary Limerick actor and Hollywood star have been shortlisted for the first portrait competition under the upcoming third annual international film festival, which takes place next week.

The judges now have the unenviable task of selecting the winning image, which will be used in promotional material for the coming year.

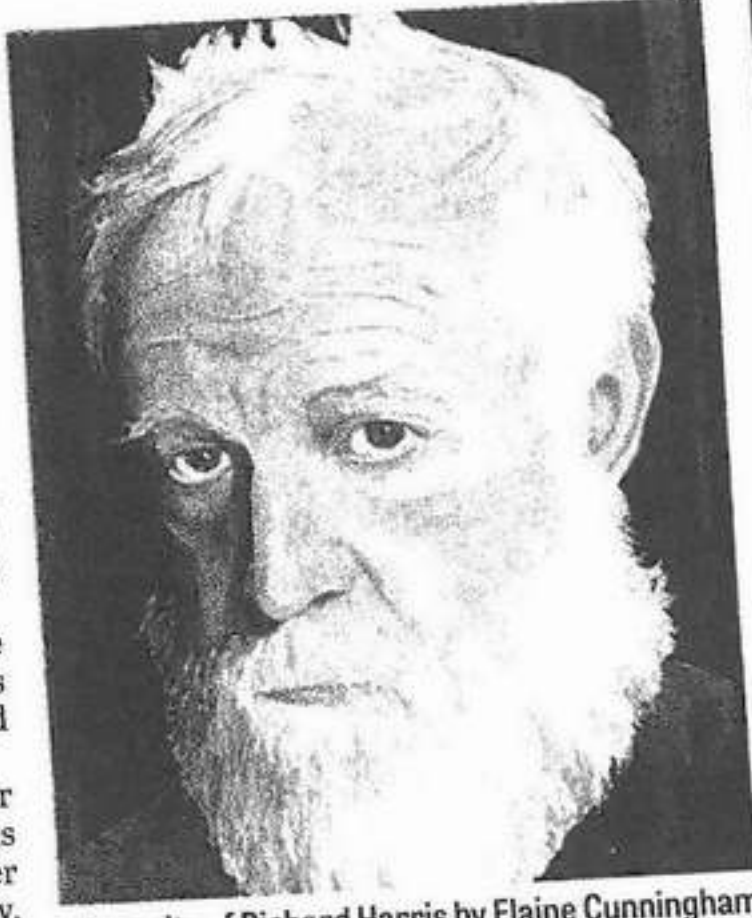
Hundreds of entries from artists across the world, including of course his native city, as well as Poland and Scotland, were received for the inaugural competition.

With entries now closed, it is up to actor Jared Harris, Richard's son, artist Thomas Delohery, from Clare, Irish fashion designer Natalie B. Coleman and Billy O'Reilly, Richard's life long friend, and the directors of the festival to select the image most befitting a man of his stature in life and on the silver screen.

Mr Delohery said the winner will be informed before the gala night on Friday next, October 23.

"Frankly the judging committee were blown away by the standard. There has been a lot of debate and long distance phone calls between the judges," he said.

He said one of the most unusual entries



Portraits of Richard Harris by Elaine Cunningham, on the left, and by Clara Scullion, both of which have made the final 16 for the first portrait competition under the Harris film festival

they received was by Lee Stain, a tattoo artist from Melbourne with an Irish/Italian background.

Others drew inspiration from his performance as the Bull McCabe in John B. Keane's *The Field*; others captured him in a Munster rugby jersey, smoking, with a pint of Guinness in hand, or standing proudly overlooking the River Shannon.

Artists were asked to submit an original portrait, in black and white or colour, "to represent Richard's powerful presence, both in person and on screen".

The winning artist will also receive an award next week.

A statue has already been erected in his honour, somewhat controversially due to its pint-sized status, a cocktail also mixed

in his name, and now the pub he regularly frequented in Limerick will also see a plaque bearing his name erected outside its door.

Jared Harris, son of the late actor and one of the stars of *Mad Men* series, will unveil a commemorative plaque in honour of his father, who died 13 years ago this month, on Thursday next, October 22 at 5pm at Charlie St George's pub on Parnell Street.

The plaque will be the fourth to be erected for the Limerick Literary Trail, which has been established by The Limerick Writers' Centre.

"Richard Harris was an actor but he was also a published poet and writer and it is this aspect of his career that the plaque will commemorate," explained Dominic Taylor, of The Limerick Writers' Centre, who has coordinated this event.

It follows another plaque, dedicated to Limerick's only Pulitzer Prize winner, Frank McCourt, which was recently unveiled outside South's pub.

"Richard Harris always said he played a double game," said Mr Taylor, "one in public and one in private. His writing is very much the private Harris but one we feel is appropriate to celebrate with a plaque on the Limerick Literary Trail.

Jared will also read from published and unpublished pieces of work written by his father on the night.

Full details of all the events taking place under the Richard Harris Film Festival can be found on the web at richardharrisfilmfestival.com/

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