

# Live portrait painting of Richard Demarco draws a crowd

Art fans flocked to the RSW Annual Exhibition in Edinburgh on Tuesday to watch on as award-winning painter, Aine Divine, made a portrait of artist and arts supremo, Richard Demarco, in front of a live audience.

Divine, who has been a finalist on Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year, described the opportunity to paint the 94-year-old as “a rare pleasure”.

The live portrait was part of the Events Programme for the 144th Open Annual Exhibition of the RSW (The Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Watercolour), which is in the RSA Upper Galleries on Princes Street until 5 February.

Divine said: “I knew Richard was the person I wanted to paint, he speaks so inspiringly about the arts. He has such a passion for it, and it has never left him, in fact he’s more passionate than ever.

“I love painting live, although it’s scary. I love the sense of having to select what’s important. Every time you show up it feels like a new adventure.

“I never know in advance what will happen in the painting, I just need to be observant in the moment with the person and respond to what I find.”

Divine, who is originally from County Cork in Ireland, has lived in the Edinburgh area for 18 years and is now based in Roslin, Midlothian.

She has featured on BBC 1's Star Portraits, and on Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year, on which she painted Neil Hannon of the band The Divine Comedy, evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins and actor Ian McKellen.

Her portrait of Labour politician Mo Mowlam, painted just before she died, has recently been purchased by the National Gallery of Ireland in Dublin.

Richard Demarco, CBE, was one of the founders of the Traverse Theatre in 1963, and ran the Richard Demarco Gallery in Edinburgh 1966-1992 bringing to Scotland important contemporary artists such as Paul Neagu, Marina Abramovic, Joseph Beuys and theatre maker Tadeusz Kantor.

His achievements have been recognised across Europe and he has been the recipient of major arts awards in Poland, Germany and Italy. [Read more here about his archive.](#)

RSW President Anthea Gage said: "Richard is an ideal subject for a portrait. I've known him since I was about 12, and went to all his galleries with my dad (the art critic) Edward Gage.

"He is a great advocate for art and artists, and it's special to be able to stage an event like this where both parties are RSW members."



Richard Demarco being painted live by Aine Divine PHOTO Colin Hattersley Photography



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