

RAIN MAN

Influenced by the black and white cinematic images of a bygone age, Jeff Rowland's 'A Brief Encounter' is a powerful and evocative collection which focuses on couples meeting and parting amid a backdrop of atmospheric rain in an urban landscape.

→ **Fairytale Of New York**

Giclée edition of 150
Image 18¾" x 30"
Framed £525

↓ **A Brief Encounter**

Giclée edition of 150
Image 16" x 20"
Framed £375



Jeff Rowland, the Newcastle based artist is a Geordie who loves nothing more than rain. It features in all his work and has become almost like a third character in his paintings. "Living in the North East we get our fair share of rain," says Rowland, "and I feel a need to get out there and sketch when it does pour. I love the way the rain bounces off the ground and creates reflections in street and car lights. It's an essential part of my paintings."

The stylised 'film noir' look is key to Rowland's 'A Brief Encounter' collection. The title is not in any way intended to be derivative, but more of an 'homage' to a classic era. "I have always loved old films – directors like David Lean and Sergio Leone have been big influences on my work, and as a painter I have tried to paint with a director's eye," he says, who likens his canvasses to stills in a camera frame. "The old classic films may be dated in lots of ways but the stunning cinematography has really stood the test of time."

The universal theme in all seven paintings in this collection is that of couples

coming together or separating, amid a large and always wet, sometimes snowy, landscape. Rowland is keen that viewers should create their own interpretation as the narrative unfolds on the canvas: "I like to let the viewer make their own mind up about what is happening with the characters in the composition, which is why I add street signs pointing in two different directions suggesting that these two people may be coming together, or they could be parting." He says that as much as the viewer may like to think he could be portraying a couple hopelessly in love, he could also be portraying a couple entangled in an illicit love affair or parting for the last time. "I love that idea of the viewer imagining their own scenario," says Rowland. "I feel as if I have achieved a connection between the canvas and the viewer."

This new collection took Rowland on a globetrotting journey in terms of location, and he relished the opportunity to hang out in downtown Greenwich Village or observe people at the most iconic and famous landmarks in Paris. New York is depicted as a romantic place. In 'Under A Brooklyn Moon' the intimacy felt between

the couple in the shadow of the bridge is palpable, while in 'Fairytale Of New York' the eponymous yellow taxi shines out like a beacon through the blue drizzly haze of a city sidewalk.

With characteristic panache Rowland eloquently portrays the empty and atmospheric streets of a deserted Paris night, as a couple embrace and part in 'Unforgettable' under the huge arches of the Eiffel tower. Rowland saves his most cinematically inspired painting for 'A Brief Encounter' in which the couple embrace amidst the smoke of a steam train – an image that resonates of a bygone age when, as Rowland says: "Men were men and women were women - and romance was everything!"

Rowland freely admits that he struggled for years to become an established artist. "I worked in the shipyards on the Tyne and always drew the characters down there – it was like second nature to me." He now finds it faintly amusing that he gets asked to paint in the ritzy environment of Harrods, where customers flock to watch him create one of his cinematically inspired paintings. "I love it actually and it's very rewarding to produce something in public, and see how interested people are in how I create that stylised look on a blank canvas."

Rowland is far from precious about his skills and is happy to use DIY brushes to create his signature feature of falling rain. "I have developed a technique of stippling the paint with a decorator's brush and because the brush is old, the hairs split when put on canvas which gives a wonderful unconstrained pattern as the brush allows the strokes to become rain."

It's a collection of which Rowland is understandably proud and naturally protective. He says: "Each painting for me is like a still from a film – powerful and romantic – and, whether illegitimate or illicit, love conquers all and has the same meaning the world over."

→ **Unforgettable**
Canvas edition of 150
Image 27½" x 22"
Framed £499

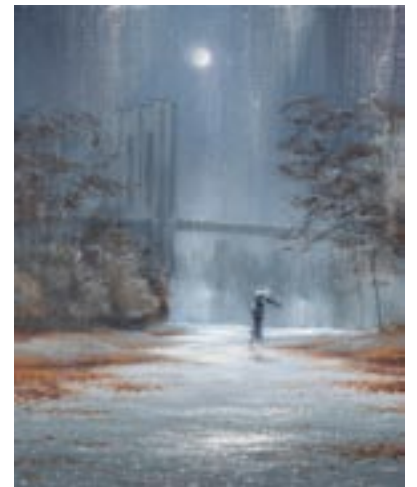


THE UNIVERSAL THEME IN THIS COLLECTION IS OF COUPLES COMING TOGETHER OR SEPARATING, AMID A LARGE AND ALWAYS WET, SOMETIMES SNOWY, LANDSCAPE

→ **Au Revoir**
Giclée edition of 150
Image 20" x 16"
Framed £375



→ **Under A Brooklyn Moon**
Giclée edition of 150
Image 20" x 16"
Framed £375



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www.washingtongreen.co.uk