# Alexander Millar's Everyday Heroes return home

**Wednesday 6 June, 2018**

On 2nd April 2018, self-taught and critically acclaimed artist Alexander Millar opened his first ever State-side museum exhibition *Everyday Heroes* at New York City Fire Museum. The exhibition then went on to show in a gallery in New York City's fashionable SoHo district and Millar now returns to the UK with a contract to open an art gallery on Fifth Avenue, New York.

*Everyday Heroes* was painted especially for the New York City Fire Museum to honour the firefighters of the city in what Millar refers to as a celebration of the modern day working men and women that he is known for portraying in his artwork.

The collection featured living firefighters, such as Tracy Lewis (only the second-ever black female firefighter to be promoted to Lieutenant in the FDNY) as well as those who have passed away, such as Keithroy Maynard who was killed in service during saving civilians during the 9/11 attacks.

Taking inspiration from archive material from the New York City Fire Museum, and the Vulcan Society (a organization supporting Black Firefighters), including photographs of the 18th, 19th and 20th century firefighter, Millar created a collection of portraits and cityscapes that show respect, humour and warmth for the everyday heroes of the city, communicating a strong sense of the people behind the uniforms.

It seems New Yorkers agreed, with the exhibition seeing some two and a half thousand visitors in just three weeks, with fans even travelling from as far away as Texas (some 1,700 miles) as well as UK fans making the trip to see the first Millar exhibition outside of the United Kingdom.

Millar who was in New York meeting fans and collectors for much of the month, commented, "It was great to see some familiar faces across the pond, but the focus was to create a collection that connected with the New York community, firefighters and beyond. So, to see my work appreciated by a brand-new audience was humbling and fantastic."

According to Millar's New York City gallery director, Billy Couper, the most popular pieces with new fans and collectors were the 'Peaky Blinders' inspired work, "Alex's limited-edition collection Youth and Young Manhood was originally only released in the UK earlier in 2018, but the reaction to these pieces from New Yorkers was incredible. Peaky Blinders has become an international success, and these collection combines elements of these characters with industrial scenes reminiscent of New York which seem to have captured the imagination of the public!"

It wasn't just the art-loving public that Millar won over, celebrities also took a liking to Millar's work, including ex-firefighter and actor Hisham Tawfiq, known for his role in NBC's The Blacklist purchased a number of pieces from the exhibition.

During its New York run, Everyday Heroes saw sales of some $400,000 and what's more, secured Alexander Millar a Fifth Avenue art gallery set to open on 1st October 2018.

"I'm over the moon to have been offered a Fifth Avenue gallery," said Millar, "it certainly wasn't an expectation when we made the trip out there, but the owner of the space saw the exhibition and was adamant that he wanted a more permanent place for it in the city. I have to keep pinching myself, but we will open on 1st October 2018 and I will be splitting my time between Newcastle and New York, and of course, doing a lot more painting!"

Alexander Millar will also be holding a retrospective exhibition in Newcastle-upon-Tyne this summer, featuring artwork spanning 20 years of his career as a professional artist, including many now unavailable pieces from his own private collection, giving long-time collectors the opportunity to buy rare and sold-out limited-edition artworks.

Anyone interested is encouraged to visit www.alexandermillar.com to find out more.

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