

THOMAS DANE GALLERY

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VOGUE

STEVE MCQUEEN

Six Essential Works Of Steve McQueen

His illustrious and much-celebrated career as a director, producer, screen writer and visual artist has earned Steve McQueen accolades at the Academy Awards, BAFTAs and Golden Globes; the Turner Prize in 1999; a place on the TIME 100 Most Influential People In The World list in 2014; and the BFI Fellowship last year. The London-born artist is famed for his intensely expressive and groundbreaking accomplishments. As he is named a contributing editor of British Vogue, we detail six of his most notable works to date.



Bear (1993)

One of his earliest works - and often called his breakout film - this short, silent, black-and-white film was first presented at the Royal College of Art. Showing a wrestling match between two naked black men (one of them McQueen), who at times appear aggressive towards each other and in other moments romantic and tender, the film has raised discussions about homoeroticism, race and violence. "The whole idea of making it a silent piece is so that when people walk into the space they become very much aware of themselves, of their own breathing," the director previously said in an interview with Art Monthly. "I want to put people into a situation where they're sensitive to themselves watching the piece."



Deadpan (1999)

McQueen used the medium of silent film for much of his early work, including *Deadpan* - a compelling four-minute piece that was part of the exhibition that won him the Turner Prize in 1999. Inspired by a scene in Buster Keaton's 1928 slapstick film *Steamboat Bill Jr* - in which the façade of a house crashes down around the central character who survives thanks to a strategically placed window - McQueen replicated the stunt with himself in the frame, standing stoically throughout, and projected it from multiple angles

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Queen And Country (2007)

In one of his most moving and well-known pieces of artwork, McQueen paid tribute to fallen soldiers in Iraq - after he was unable to get any footage during a visit to Basra as the UK's official war artist - in a series of postage stamps featuring photograph of members of service staff who died in the conflict. In an interview with The Guardian, he called it "the hardest thing I ever did". The work has toured the country, including a display at the National Portrait Gallery, but McQueen has said that he considers it incomplete until the stamps are released to the public and recognised by the Royal Mail.



Hunger (2008)

Based on the 1981 Irish hunger strike, the BAFTA-winning feature film premiered at the Cannes Film Festival, where the writer and director was given the Caméra d'Or Award for first-time filmmaker. Harrowing and explicitly political, it stars Michael Fassbender - a frequent collaborator of McQueen - as Bobby Sands, the Irish republican who led the inmates of a Northern Irish prison in a hunger-strike protest.

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Shame (2011)

Fassbender then appeared in McQueen's 2011 drama Shame, this time alongside Carey Mulligan, about a potentially damaged sibling relationship and sex addiction, set against the backdrop of New York. A controversial watch powerful in its depiction of addiction, the writer and director said at the time that it was intended to provoke reflection and discussion. "It's a case for giving audiences something to fucking think about," he told Vanity Fair.



12 Years A Slave (2013)

Perhaps his best-known work so far, 12 Years A Slave was based on the 1853 memoirs of the same name by Solomon Northup, telling the story of an African American man (played by Chiwetel Ejiofor) kidnapped and sold into slavery, and forced to work on plantations in Louisiana for 12 years. It received critical acclaim and the Best Picture Oscar in 2014, becoming the first film with a black producer or director to win that award.

<http://www.vogue.co.uk/gallery/steve-mcqueen-director-best-known-works>

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