

BRIAN JAMES BIOGRAPHY

I was born, and grew up in Birmingham. The two great passions in my life at that time were art and design, and cars. I decided to follow art as a profession and studied graphic design at Birmingham College of Art in the late sixties. Whilst there I designed the now familiar and iconic Union Jack flag painted on a Bowler hat, which won a national graphic design competition. A few years ago the original hat was sold by Christie's in London to the New York Museum of Design.

After graduating, I went into advertising as an art director for about 7 years, during that period I became interested in illustration, and decided to leave the ad agency and start as a freelance illustrator. I joined Meiklejohn Illustration in London, and I was soon busy working on some of the biggest national and international advertising campaigns, such as work for Barclays Bank, British Airways, Boots, Cadburys, Jaguar, London Transport and Volkswagen, to name just a few. I am still commissioned from time to time to illustrate magazine advertising campaigns and posters.

In recent years I have turned my attention more towards fine art, with work published in Europe and the US by companies such as Bruce McGaw Graphics and The Art Publishing Group. A large number of these images have been in the art deco style. This style had grabbed my imagination from an early age, after seeing and admiring art deco buildings, from 1930s cinemas, shops and department stores, to the white painted buildings you often find at the coast in the UK. I always thought these had a certain style and feel of a bygone era, long before I knew what art deco was.

From that start, my interest has grown into all things of the 1920s-30s period, and of course automobiles, hence a return to one of my first loves. I work in two distinct styles, the art deco flat colour image, influenced by the posters and graphics of the 20s-30s period, and a more traditional painterly style, of acrylic on canvas. In either style I like to capture the way the light shines and reflects on the surface of the vehicle, giving a very solid metallic feel. I also think it is important to try and sit the car in a setting appropriate to its era, and style.

Clients include: BMW in Germany, Salon Prive, HRH The Crown Prince of Bahrain, as well as numerous private collectors and car owners.

I have been commissioned to illustrate the BMW sponsored Concorso d' Eleganza at Villa d'Este, for 2009 and 2010. Held in Italy on the picturesque shores of Lake Como, this is the premier classic car event in Europe. Also in 2010, I have illustrated one of the most exclusive classic and supercar events in this country, Salon Prive, held at the Hurlingham Club in London. I have also exhibited my work at Goodwood, both at the Festival of Speed and the Revival Meeting, Silverstone Classic, plus the International Historic Motorsport Show, and in motor sport art galleries.

I am available for commissions from private and corporate clients, and I can be contacted on brian@brianjames.biz or telephone +44 (0)116 212 1957

More examples of my work can be seen on www.brianjames.biz