

BILLY C  N N  LLY

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BORN ON A RAINY DAY





## BILLY CONNOLLY

It was on a rainy day in 2007 that Billy Connolly first put pen to paper. Taking refuge from the grey drizzle of Montreal, Canada, the veteran comedian entered an art shop with a twinkling curiosity and left with an armful of supplies and the urge to create. Back in his hotel room, his felt-tips and sketchbook formed a portal for his imagination, and over the next five years his drawings evolved into his debut fine art collection, *Born On A Rainy Day*.

Upon its original release in 2012, the body of work was lauded for its humorous surrealism. Fellow star Vic Reeves, who attended its unveiling at Halcyon Gallery in Mayfair, revealed: "If I look at a painting and it makes me smile or makes me sad, then it's achieved the effect it should have. I can smile at most of these." A second instalment in 2018 was featured by *BBC News*, *i News* and the *Scottish Sun*.

Marking the fourth release from the series, this 2019 collection comprises six never-before-seen graphics. Just like his idiosyncratic, no-holds-barred comedy, each of the artworks reflects a refreshing honesty from the former welder, who last year appeared on *The One Show* to chat about his art and his new book, *Made in Scotland: My Grand Adventures in a Wee Country*.

Black-and-white lines, Escher-esque surrealism and observational humour are underpinned by a sense of liberation. His process mirrors that of the Surrealist Automatism movement, whereby the artist allows their hand to move randomly across the paper or canvas without

a specific intent. While eagle-eyed viewers may try to spot references to his personal life – for instance his pet fish or the Statue of Liberty (Billy once owned a New York apartment) – the dreamlike quality of his art is closer to Salvador Dalí than an autobiography.

Others have likened Billy's sketches to the cave paintings of the Aurignacian period (40,000-25,000 BC), which were characterised by their linear, one-dimensional approach. Charmingly simplistic, his faceless figures possess an extraordinary self-awareness and humanity. Devoid of emotion or expression, their anonymity opens them up to individual interpretation, creating a unique bond with the viewer.

An admirer of artists like René Magritte and David Hockney, Billy has made an impact on the art world beyond his own creations. In 2017, the CBE recipient was immortalised in three 50ft murals in his hometown of Glasgow to celebrate his 75th birthday. His infamous 'banana boots' are currently on display at the People's Palace, while earlier this year his art was projected onto MacLellan's Castle to mark World Parkinson's Day.

For a man who has spent his life on stage, art, like that Montreal art shop on a rainy day, is a welcome refuge. Billy adds: "My art is pure and unjudged; I am creating it for myself. It is personal and private, whereas with a film, comedy show or music, you expect people to be critiquing, watching, assessing. Art is different, it liberates you."



### **Big Close Up**

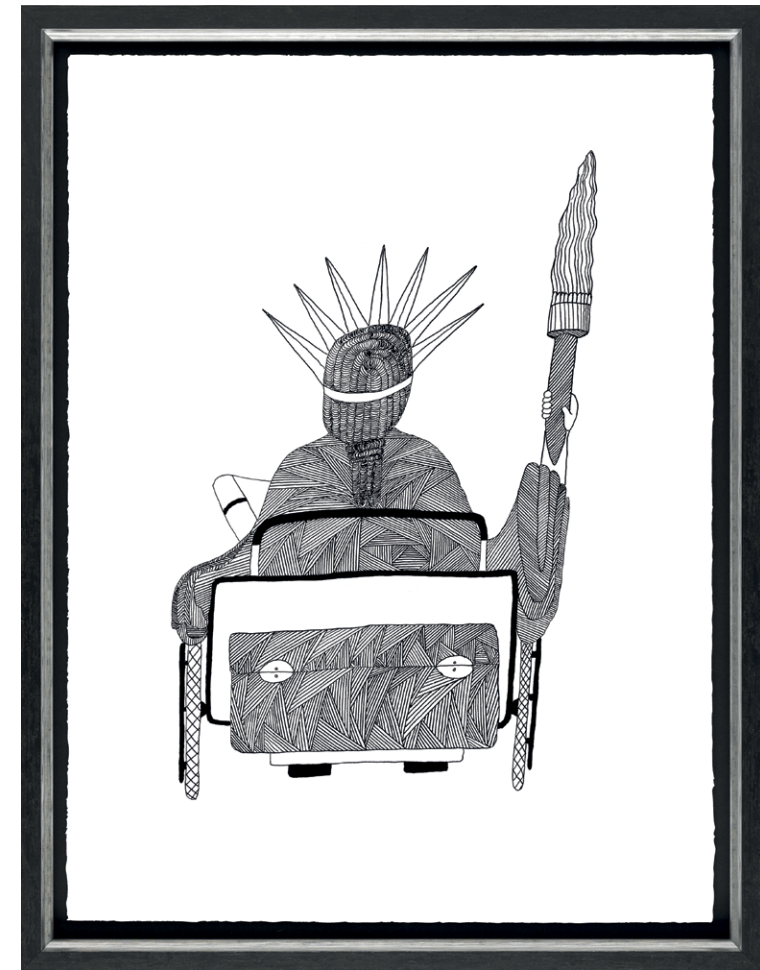
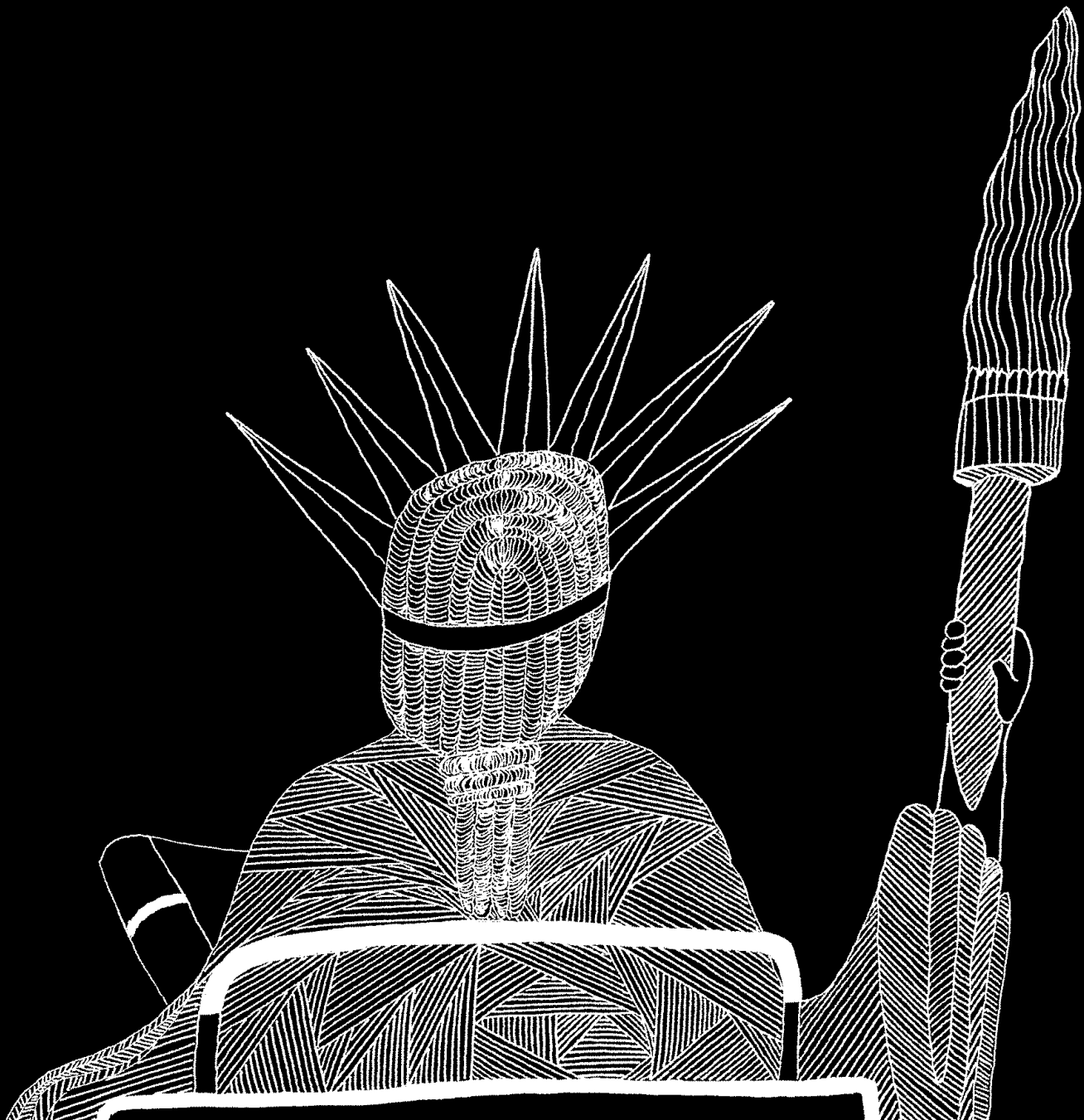
Double Hit Flatbed Giclee Print on 100% Cotton Aquarelle Arches - Torchon 300gsm  
Paper size 57 x 77cm  
Framed size 65 x 85cm  
Edition of 195  
Framed £895



## Count Me In

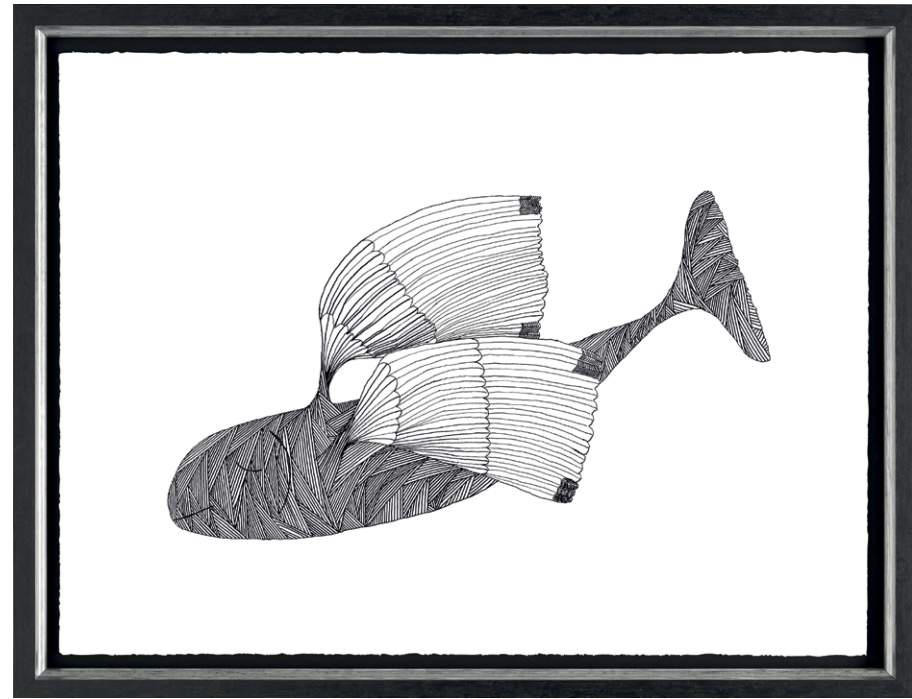
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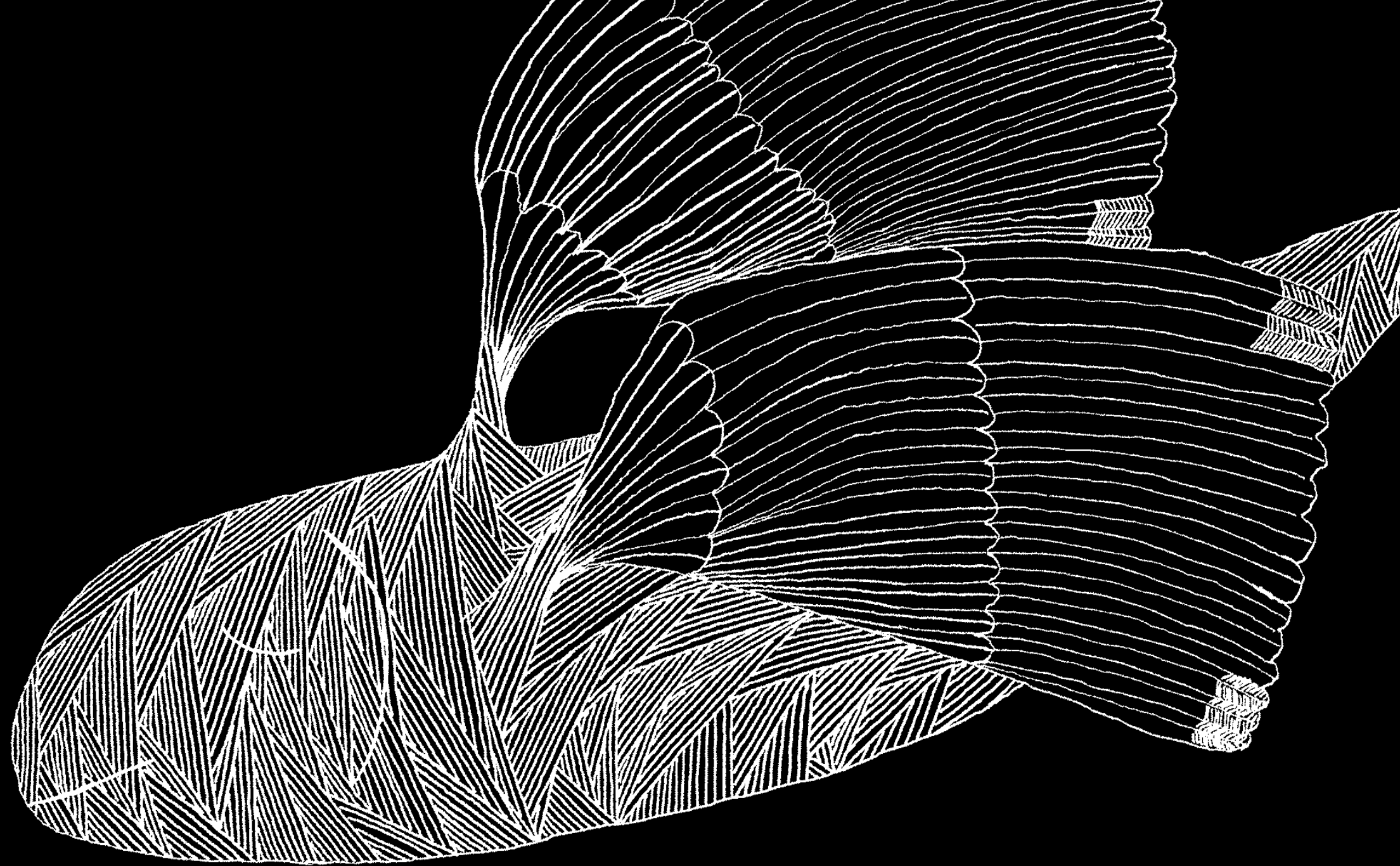
### **Disabled American II**

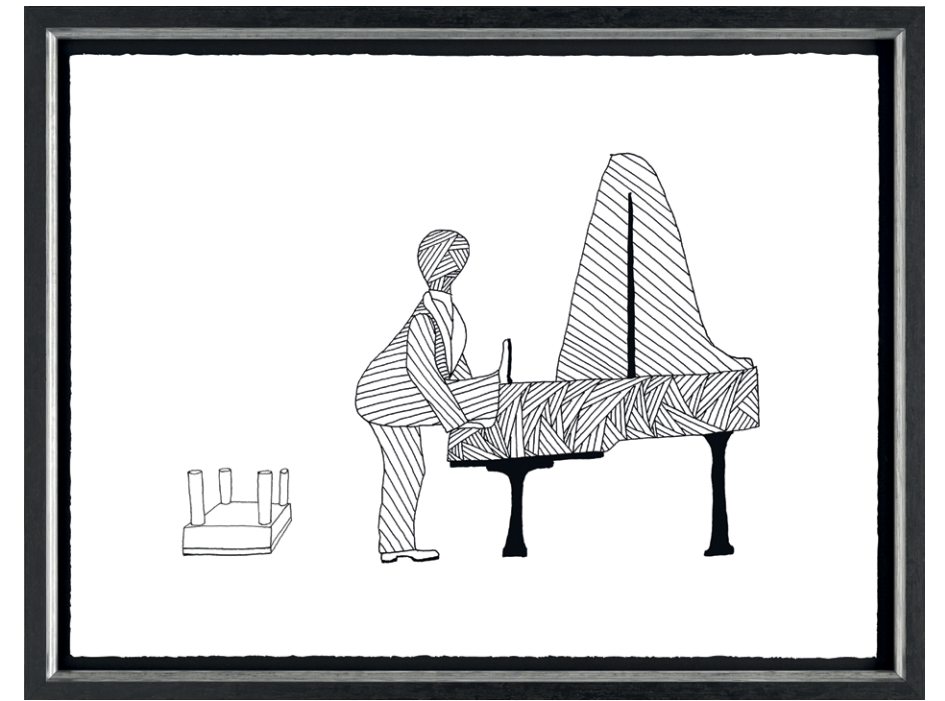
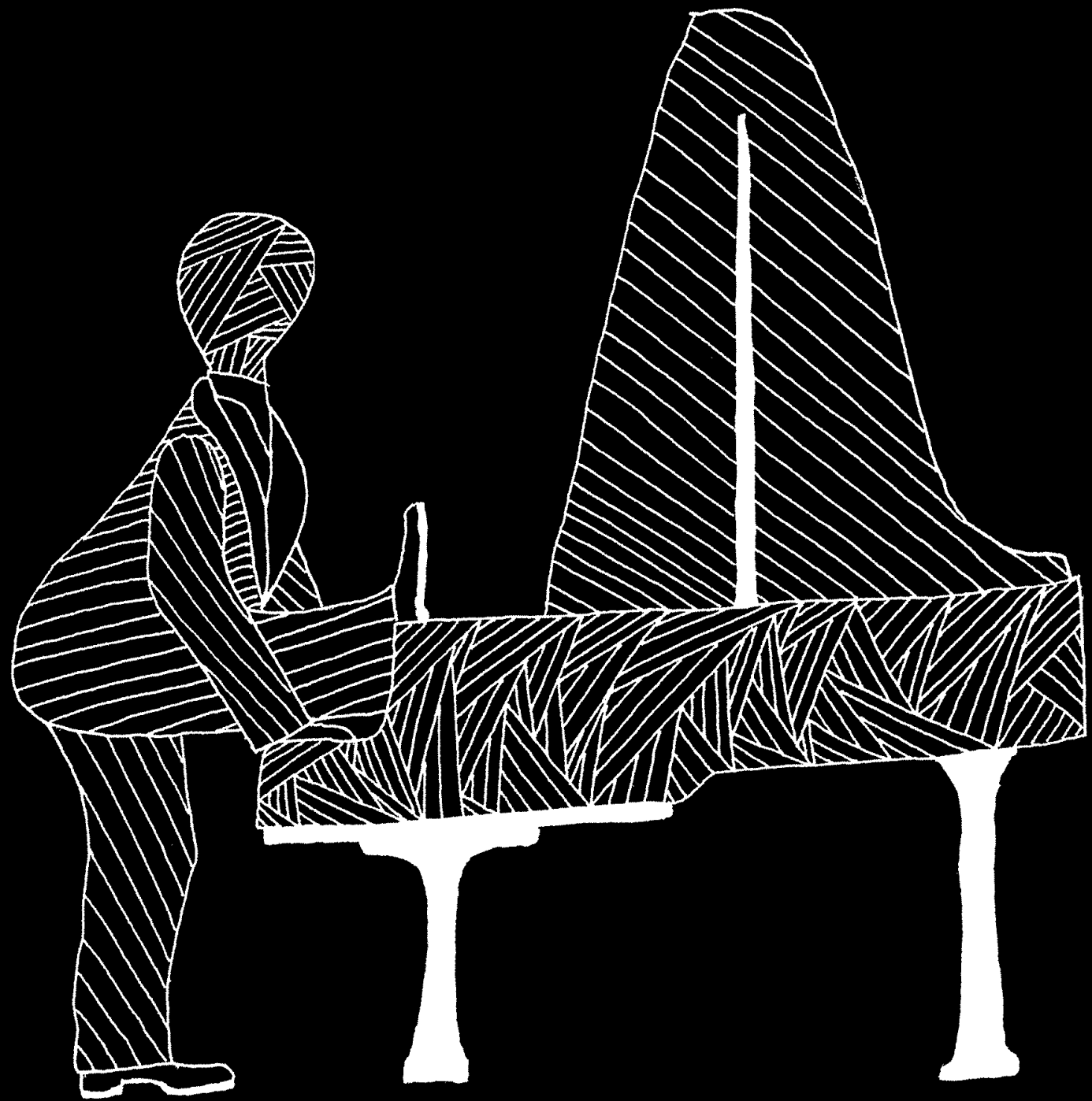
Double Hit Flatbed Giclee Print on 100% Cotton Aquarelle Arches - Torchon 300gsm  
Paper size 57 x 77cm  
Framed size 65 x 85cm  
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## Flying Fish

Double Hit Flatbed Giclee Print on 100% Cotton Aquarelle Arches - Torchon 300gsm  
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Framed size 85 x 65cm  
Edition of 195  
Framed £895

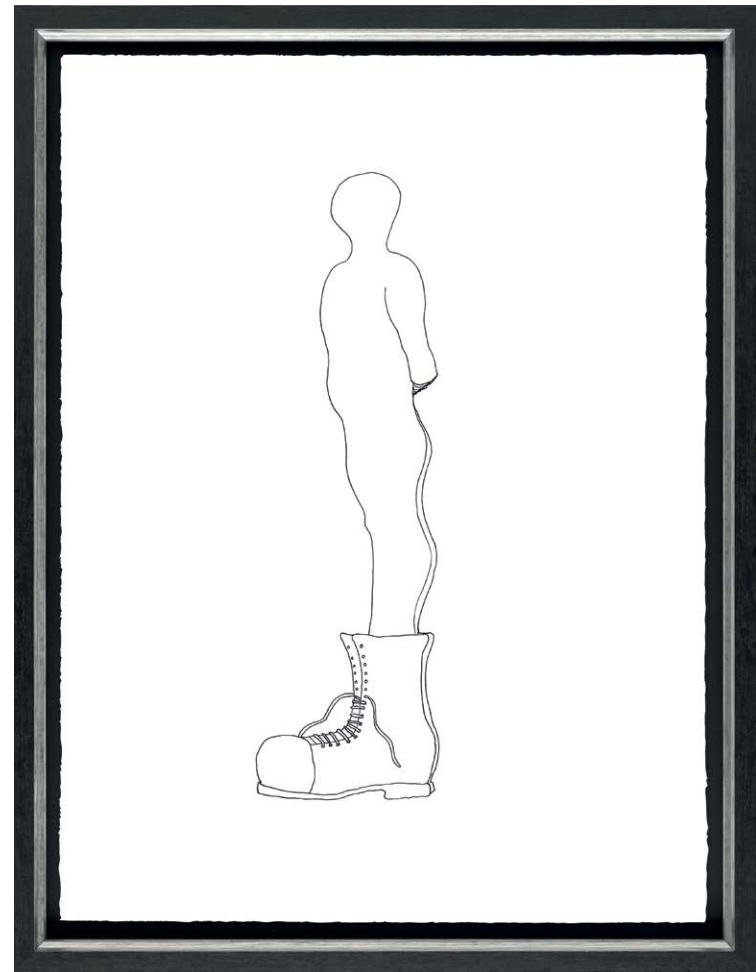




### **Saturday Night**

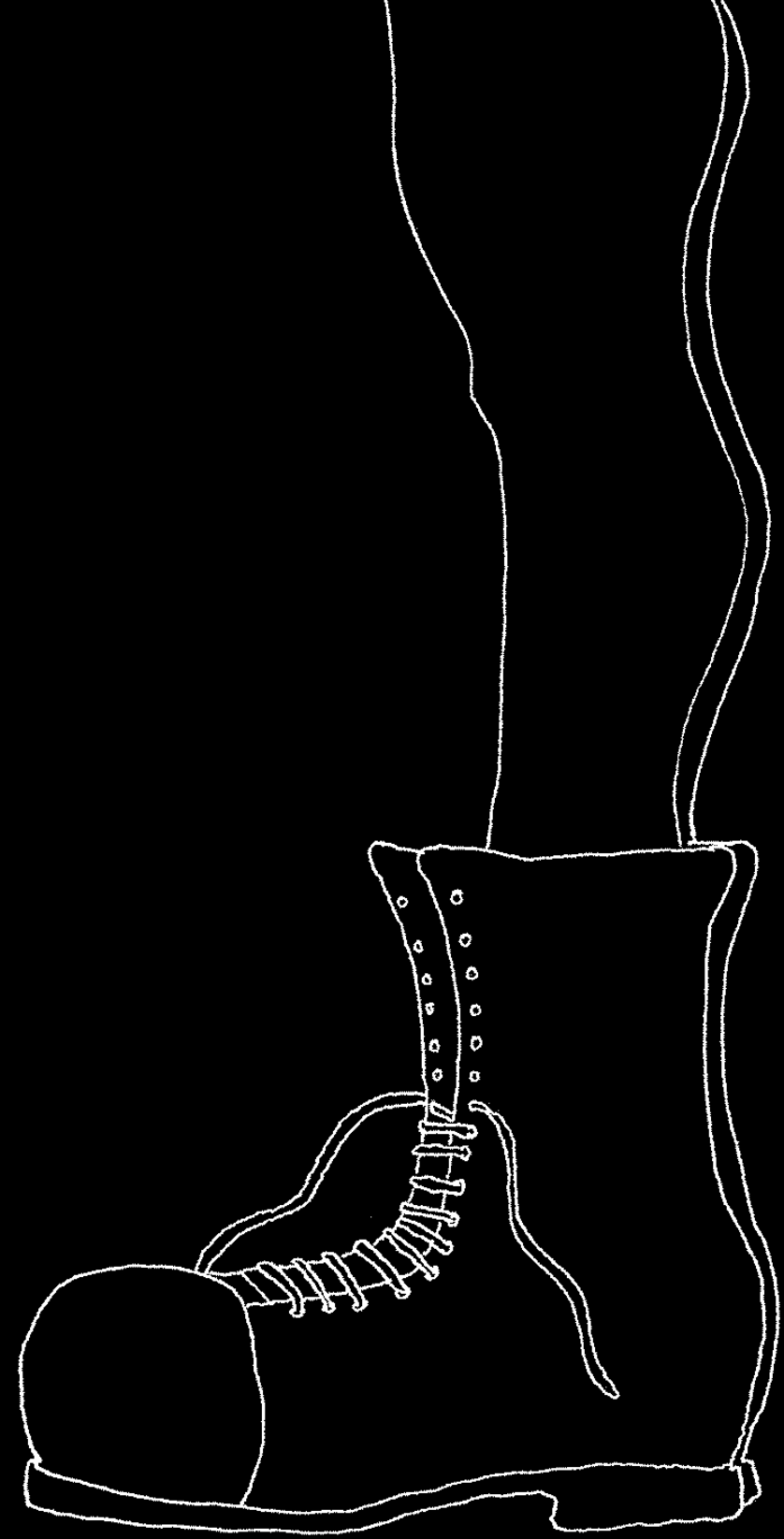
Double Hit Flatbed Giclee Print on 100% Cotton Aquarelle Arches - Torchon 300gsm  
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Framed size 85 x 65cm  
Edition of 195  
Framed £895





### **The Sentinel**

Double Hit Flatbed Giclee Print on 100% Cotton Aquarelle Arches - Torchon 300gsm  
Paper size 57 x 77cm  
Framed size 65 x 85cm  
Edition of 195  
Framed £895





**Born On A Rainy Day Portfolio**

Set of 6 limited edition prints  
Pictured above unframed in presentation portfolio  
Unframed £3500 | Framed £5,000

# Biography

Sir Billy Connolly  
[B.1942, Glasgow]

William "Billy" Connolly, CBE is a Scottish comedian, musician, presenter and actor. He is sometimes known, especially in his native Scotland, by the nickname The Big Yin (The Big One). His first trade, in the early 1960s, was as a welder in the Glasgow shipyards, but he gave it up towards the end of the decade to pursue a career as a folk singer in the Humblebums and subsequently as a soloist. In 2012, Billy Connolly's artistic expression took a new path, in the form of fine art.

"Art, for me, bears no relation to comedy or music. My art is pure and unjudged, I am creating it for myself."

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| 2001 | Awarded an honorary doctorate from University of Glasgow                                       | 2010 | Made a Freeman of Glasgow with the award of the Freedom of the City of Glasgow |
| 2002 | Presented with a Special Award by British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA)          | 2012 | Presented with the Outstanding Contribution Award by BAFTA Scotland            |
| 2003 | Made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the Queen's Birthday Honours list | 2016 | Presented with National Television Awards (NTA) Special Recognition Award      |
| 2006 | Awarded an honorary doctorate from Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama                   | 2017 | Received a knighthood in the Queen's Birthday Honours list                     |
| 2010 | Awarded an honorary doctorate from Nottingham Trent University                                 |      |  |





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fine art

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