

***HENNESSY PRESENTS THE FOUNDER'S EDITION BOTTLE,
CREATED WITH PRIDE BY IRISH ARTISTS
MASER AND CONOR HARRINGTON***

Celebrating the Legacy of Richard Hennessy, from Cork to Cognac



Cognac, France, September 23, 2024 - Hennessy has selected Irish artists Maser and Conor Harrington to create its historic Founders Edition bottle, celebrating the 300th anniversary of the birth of its Irish founder, Richard Hennessy. The stunning design of the new **Hennessy Very Special (VS) Founder's Edition** embodies the enduring influence of the Corkonian who emigrated to Cognac and created the globally iconic Hennessy brand. It is the perfect blend of then and now.

The House he founded still carries his name, crafting the very best cognac in the world, steeped in Irish legacy. Now over 300 years later and back where it all began, Conor Harrington and Maser have been selected by the internationally renowned Maison to commemorate the birth of the founder of Hennessy, his Irish origins and its global acclaim.

Selected last year, the artists travelled to Cognac, immersing themselves in the culture and heritage of Hennessy, learning of its grape to glass process and meeting those who passionately craft Hennessy VS using the exact recipe which was created three centuries ago. Both artists' work resonates perfectly with the Hennessy VS brand' character: vibrant, artistic and street!

Maser is renowned for his colourful street art, who captivates audiences with his geometric abstractions. His artistic platforms span street murals to interactive installations, and showcase a signature style that merges urban energy with engaging forms. Cork-born Conor Harrington merges classical art with street aesthetics, exploring masculinity and power in modern society through historical motifs and vibrant urban influences. The work they have co-created is an exceptional homage to their fellow Irishman and bridges the heritage of the Hennessy Maison with the celebration of street culture that Hennessy VS resides in. A symbol of Irish pride and achievement, the original artwork will hold pride of place upon the walls of Killavullen, the Cork home of Richard Hennessy after the official launch of the limited edition bottle in October 22nd in Dublin.

Talking about his inspiration for the Founder's Edition bottle, Maser said: *"There are so many parallels to this real time project and the historic story of Richard Hennessy. We travelled to Cognac, the same trip as Richard and when staying in the Château, got to live in his time for that brief moment. The opportunity to experience those surroundings did not pass me by. We met the master blender and he explained to us the textures, smells, colours, and gradients to be aware of in order to make the perfect blend. In that moment I saw the elements he spoke about are the same as those we use it in our paintings. Paint is our ingredient, we mix it and introduce new blended colours and textures to give our work that rich gradients, depth, uniqueness. You can see this in the deep orange tones we have in the painting. When he spoke about the different grapes in my mind those flavours were like pops of colour! The contrast between Conors work and mine is a great example of the perfect blend, painting together to create a unique piece in my option is similar to the work of the Hennessy cellar masters."*

The resulting stunningly vibrant and colourful artwork and bottle design combines the striking and uniquely different and distinctive styles of the two talented artists in an eye-catching homage to the Hennessy founder. The fusion of Maser's bold colours and pattern overlays combine perfectly to complement Conor's portraiture.

Conor commented: *"I portrayed Richard striding forward confidently into his new terrain while at the same time glancing around and over his shoulder, always with an eye on his roots and where he has come from. I used Ireland as the main inspiration for the colour palette in his portrait, with the green of his coat and the yellow and gold in the background reminiscent of the Irish tricolour, a palette we are known for the world over. My painterly language is both solid and grounded but at the same time the blurs, swipes and erasure marks evoke a strong sense of time and memory, highlighting the strength of history and heritage that is so unique to the Hennessy brand."*

The longstanding, deeply rooted connection between Hennessy and Ireland began in the house where Richard Hennessy was born, in Killavullen, Co. Cork, a home that is still owned by Hennessy today. As with so many trailblazing Irish people who have travelled abroad, the thread that calls to home remains ever strong. As a key market, Hennessy celebrates and pays homage to its Irish roots which are a true source of pride and inspiration to immerse itself in the worlds of contemporary culture, art and craftsmanship. That love and link from Hennessy to Ireland is reciprocated by an Irish consumer that has steadily supported and engaged with the brand for generations. A mutual respect and appreciation for the ages.

Born in Killavullen, Cork in 1724, Richard Hennessy left his native Ireland to join Louis XV's army in France, where in 1765 he founded a wine dealership along the banks of the Charente in Cognac. His business prowess ensured that Hennessy would traverse the world and be enjoyed globally for centuries. Supporting avant-garde art has been a Hennessy tradition since 1765. Today, the brand continues that legacy with collaborations in contemporary street culture including with the premier basketball league, the NBA, innovative fashion designer, Kim Jones, hip-hop legend, Nas and many more. Closer to home Hennessy's collaborations with Ireland's creatives includes partnerships in important spaces such as the Hennessy Hip Hop House at Body & Soul Festival, the Hennessy Sound Lounge, the Hennessy Shared Connection campaign and its partnership with street fashion brand Emporium.

Hennessy offers this Founder's Limited Edition Bottle with the same bold and fragrant Hennessy V.S liquid. Matured in new oak barrels, it offers toasted and fruit notes, with a rich, clearly defined palate and a welcoming exuberance.

Notes to editors:

For further information, please contact: asall-ext@moethennessy.com

About Hennessy

Founded on Richard Hennessy's pioneering spirit and with a legacy of over 250 years, the brand spans over 160 countries, but remains rooted in the Charente region in France. Beyond its iconic cognacs, Hennessy embraces cultural collaborations, evidenced through its many partnerships with visionary artists from around the world. Over the years, Hennessy has worked with cultural icons in design, art, fashion and music to celebrate a diverse range of creativity to reflect the multi-faceted nature of the brand and to bring to life the Hennessy cognac's versatility.

For further information, serves and collaboration details, please visit [Hennessy.com](https://www.hennessy.com) or follow @Hennessy on Instagram.

About Maser

Dublin-born artist Maser, who first made his mark in the graffiti scene in 1995, has risen to prominence in the international art world. His career, rooted in a deep connection to urban environments and their communities, showcases his journey from the streets of Dublin to global acclaim. Maser's educational background in fine art and visual communications, highlighted by an award from the International Society of Typographic Designers, set the stage for a vibrant, socially engaged artistic practice.

Maser's early artistic ventures included impactful collaborations, such as the "They Are Us" project with Damien Dempsey in 2010, aimed at revitalising Dublin's streets while supporting the Dublin Simon Community Homeless Charity. His directorial debut in Dempsey's "Bustin Outta Here" music video showcased his versatile creative talents. His acclaimed video installations, such as "Home Made" for the Sebastian Guinness Gallery, and a larger sculpture installation tribute to Daniel O'Connell at Dublin Contemporary 2011, demonstrated his capacity for large-scale visual storytelling. Throughout his career, Maser has collaborated with esteemed artists like JR on the UNFRAMED project and with Conor Harrington on various influential artworks. His global presence is affirmed by his artwork displayed across various cities and participation in notable art fairs such as INK Miami, Art on Paper NYC, and EXPO Chicago with Tandem Press.

Maser's commissions are notable for their scope and cultural impact. He has created immersive installations across major European cities including Berlin, Paris, Zurich, Milan, Hamburg, Munich, and Amsterdam.

His significant contributions also include creating a music video for U2, and engaging with prestigious art institutions like the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA), the National Gallery in Ireland, the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, Expo Milan, the RHA Gallery, the Seamus Heaney Museum in Dublin, a solo exhibition at the Rhodes Contemporary Art in London and work in Palais de Tokyo in Paris. In addition to this, Maser had a solo exhibition at Lazarides Gallery in London, a gallery that represented street artist Banksy. These achievements and his collaboration with the President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins on a series of limited edition prints "Of Utopias" are testaments to his artistic acclaim.

His efforts in political advocacy through art were highlighted in the Repeal campaign, where his work became a symbol of societal change in Ireland.

Masers accolades include multiple awards from the Arts Council of Ireland, such as the 'Agility Award', recognising his innovative contributions to the arts, continuing to push the boundaries of his craft through pioneering augmented reality experiences and his

leadership role at Atelier Now, a creative hub he established in Dublin that fosters contemporary art exhibitions and residency opportunities.

Through his vibrant installations and collaborations, Maser continues to engage communities, transforming urban landscapes into canvases that reflect his commitment to innovation and the collective spirit of the cities he touches.

About Conor Harrington

Conor Harrington was born in Cork, Ireland, in 1980. After completing a BA in Fine Art at Limerick School of Art and Design in 2002, he relocated to London, where he has lived and worked since. Harrington began painting graffiti as a teenager in Cork and has since gone on to paint large scale murals around the world in locations such as London, Paris, New York, Miami, Sao Paulo and Mexico City. Working on the streets for over 25yrs has informed Harrington's studio practice in terms of both content and technique, with narratives and approaches nurtured from the urban environment. Harrington's large scale oil paintings take reference from classical art, are rooted in graffiti and manifest as contemporary painting. He examines themes such as masculinity, colonialism and draws parallels between the politics of today and the language of painting. Heroes are built up, torn down and obliterated and the cycle of history and power continues on repeat. Interacting with a series of interchangeable symbols of power from flags to bunting and medals Harrington's protagonists hold up a mirror to the male ego down through the ages. Flitting between his many inspirations and references Harrington's work is unquestionably dreamlike and finds a striking balance between the ethereal senses and hard realism. Harrington has exhibited extensively internationally including notable shows "Eat and Delete" Lazarides Gallery New York, 2014 and "Watch Your Palace Fall" Heni/ PACE gallery London 2016. Hi work can be found in the collections of Anita Zabludowicz, Damien Hirst's Murderme Collection as well as notable celebrities like Alicia Keyes and Sir Elton John.