



ROYAL PORTRAITS:
A CENTURY OF PHOTOGRAPHY

PLAIN ENGLISH TRANSCRIPT

THE KING'S GALLERY, BUCKINGHAM PALACE

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Welcome to *Royal Portraits: A Century of Photography*. It is the first exhibition in the Gallery since its name was changed from The Queen's Gallery to The King's Gallery.

Since the beginnings of photography, members of the British Royal Family have regularly had photographs taken of official events, to go into newspapers and magazines or simply to give to friends and family. Demand for these photographs increased as 20th century improvements in printing made reproducing images easier and cheaper. The pictures in the exhibition show how photography became more and more popular. They explore photographic techniques and technologies as they changed. They provide the opportunity to learn about the people who practiced and improved photography. All the photographs on display are genuine prints made soon after the photograph was taken, either by the photographer themselves or under their direct supervision.

Please note – for legal reasons we are not able to put the pictures being discussed into these notes (because of copyright rules). To see the pictures, look for the headphone symbol on the picture labels in the exhibition – the number for that picture is the same as the one in the headphone symbol in these notes.



EMIL OTTO HOPPÉ (1878 – 1972)

Engagement photograph of Prince Albert, Duke of York and Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, January 1923

Gelatin silver print | 24.2 x 19 cm (image)

RCIN 2940850

This portrait was taken in 1923 when Prince Albert, Duke of York and Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon got engaged. They later became King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. The photograph has the same soft-focus often found in late-19th and early-20th century drawings or paintings. This is a style known as *pictorialism*. The photographer Emil Hoppé has made the circular frame around the couple by printing the image from a negative with sections blocked out, or 'masked'.

The first part of this exhibition explores photographs dating from the 1920s to 1970s, showing how the Royal photographic portrait changed. They started out being mainly black and white, or 'monochrome', but as the examples in the final room show, colour and digital photography

eventually burst onto the scene. More recently a range of special effects has opened up ways of altering images and, sometimes, creating illusions.

As you go through these rooms, please remember that the photographs on display are unique, valuable works. Some date back a hundred years. They have been put into the care of the Royal Collection Trust to look after for the enjoyment of visitors now and in the future.



EMIL OTTO HOPPÉ (1878 – 1972)

Queen Mary (1867 – 1953), 1922

Gelatin silver print | 24.5 x 18.2 cm (image)

RCIN 2808298

The year before he took the engagement photograph displayed in the previous room, Emil Hoppé took this portrait of Queen Mary, wife of King George V and great-grandmother of the present King, Charles III.

The photograph was taken at Buckingham Palace in front of a glass cabinet containing decorative objects that she liked to collect. She was particularly proud of her collection of jade.

This became a very well-known image of Queen Mary who is often remembered today for the dolls' house given to her by the nation. Queen Mary's Dolls' House, which is one hundred years old this year, can be seen by visitors to Windsor Castle. Inside its elegant rooms there are tiny versions of books and pictures by the most famous authors and artists in 1920s Britain. They include a photograph of Queen Mary similar to the one taken by Hoppé at the same sitting. It is displayed in a case nearby.

Choosing Hoppé shows how important he was as one of the leading photographers at the time.

Celebrities of the time were eager to have Hoppé take their portrait and they all came to his studio in London's South Kensington. They included writers Rudyard Kipling, Henry James, Thomas Hardy and George Bernard Shaw, and ballet dancers Vaslav Nijinsky and Anna Pavlova. Hoppé created images that made the viewer feel close to the sitter by maintaining eye contact with his subjects. He did not disappear under a black cloth behind his camera, but sat close to them, operating the shutter with a handheld cable release.



MARCUS ADAMS (1875 – 1959)

Card with Adam's portrait of the Duke and Duchess of York and Princess Elizabeth and Margaret, signed 1934

Gelatin silver on card | 10.4 x 11.7 cm (image)

RCIN 2108311

MARCUS ADAMS (1875 – 1959)

The Duke and Duchess of York, Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret Rose of York, 7 November 1934

Gelatin dry plate negative | 16.4 x 11.9 cm (whole object)

RCIN 2140454

Marcus Adams took the charming portrait on this card. Whenever possible he banned adults from his studio, making them watch what he was doing through a glass partition. When no-one was fussing over them, children were less self-conscious and Adams was able to take a relaxed, natural portrait. But sometimes, as in this case, he did let the adults in. Here the Duke and Duchess of York, later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, are pictured with their daughters, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret Rose.

The glass plate negative displayed alongside shows parts of the image removed by Adams in the photograph. It includes the backdrop, the lights just above the head and (on the right-hand side) the bench on which his subjects were sitting. The photographer made changes to the negative by hand, scratching away the surface of the negative to create the final image with its soft focus, and the oval around the family.

Just two years after this photograph was taken, life for 'Us four' – as the Duke of York described their little family – changed completely and for ever. When King Edward VIII stepped down as king in 1936, he passed the throne to his brother, who became King George VI. This picture is a reminder of a simpler life before that happened, when he could appear in front of a camera by choice rather than out of duty.

Adams was a firm favourite with the Royal Family throughout his life. Princess Elizabeth, when she was Queen Elizabeth II, sent her two eldest children to him at 'The Children's Studio' in London's Dover Street. His ongoing relationship with the Royal Family gave Adams great

happiness. He commented, 'I have had more joy from that family than from any. They are full of fun.'¹



CECIL BEATON (1904-80)

Queen Elizabeth, later Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother (1900 – 2002), July 1939

Gelatin silver print | 24.3 x 19.3 cm (image)

RCIN 2315116

One late afternoon during the summer of 1939, Cecil Beaton took this photograph of Queen Elizabeth, who later became Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother. It was taken in the gardens of Buckingham Palace, not far from this gallery.

It could be said that Beaton changed completely how photography was done in the 1920s and 1930s. For example, he believed in the use of natural light. It is obviously the best light for photographs, but it is very difficult to control. Beaton was particularly interested in back light, as in this photograph, where the sun is coming through the trees, behind the sitter.

Beaton's style was very theatrical, and his photographs were directed like a theatre performance with the sitters as characters in the drama he created. And he was fascinated by the Royal Family, who were at the peak of high society.

Like most royal sittings, Beaton had only been given a short time, just twenty minutes, to take the photograph. But Queen Elizabeth was obviously enjoying herself and the shoot ended up lasting over five hours.

Beaton wanted the picture to have echoes of traditions from past centuries. He got the Queen to perform as if she were on stage. The modern term for what Beaton achieved is rebranding by putting the mystery back into a picture of the Royal Family.

It wasn't long before the world being pictured by Beaton felt like it had slipped away, out of reach. Just two months later, Hitler invaded Poland, starting World War II.

¹ Heighway, L (2010) *Marcus Adams: Royal Photographer*. London: Royal Collection Enterprises.



CECIL BEATON (1904-80)

Princess Elizabeth, later Queen Elizabeth II (1926 – 2022), October 1942

Gelatin silver print mounted on card | 21.5 x 16.4 cm (image)

RCIN 2315189

During the dark days of World War II, Beaton's camera showed a more ordinary side of the Royal Family as it shared in the country's sorrows and struggles. In this portrait Princess Elizabeth, who later became Queen Elizabeth II, is just sixteen. She is wearing simple, everyday clothes, but with a diamond brooch pinned to the lapel of her jacket. It is in the form of the regimental badge of the Grenadier Guards – she had recently been appointed their Colonel-in-Chief. Beaton took this picture in Buckingham Palace after photographing the Royal Family with Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of the US President, who was in England to visit US troops.

The Princess's plain outfit fits in with the experience of a country in the middle of clothes rationing, but the photograph's backdrop recalls Beaton's earlier, more glamorous portraits. It is a scene taken from *The Little Park*, an oil painting by 18th-century French artist Jean-Honoré Fragonard. Beaton created several backdrops like this one. He would photograph a painting, remove any figures, print a bigger version, and then add some hand-painted improvements. The same backdrops appear and reappear in his photographs. This was not just about saving money. By placing his sitters repeatedly in classical scenes (sometimes improved by fresh flowers from his own garden) Beaton created a feeling of continuity between *his* photographs and the grand, formal royal portraits from past centuries painted by Thomas Gainsborough and Franz Xaver Winterhalter. This was a clever way of suggesting that *he*, a photographer, was their artistic heir.



CECIL BEATON (1904-80)

Coronation Portrait of Queen Elizabeth II, 2 June 1953

Gelatin silver print | 73 x 51 cm (image)

RCIN 2999885

Tuesday 2 June 1953 was a cool summer's day. Cecil Beaton rushed from Westminster Abbey, where he had attended the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, to Buckingham Palace. His duties as the official photographer of this momentous occasion were about to begin. He

was offered the possibility of photographing the Queen and other members of the Royal Family in the Abbey, but he preferred to use the Palace.

The previous day Beaton had set up two backdrops in the Green Drawing Room. The one in this photograph – of the Henry VII Lady Chapel at Westminster Abbey – was only to be used for pictures of the newly-crowned Queen. The other one, showing Westminster Abbey from the River Thames, was for other members of the Royal Family. It is the background to the photograph of Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and her pages hanging nearby.

Later, Beaton described how he took the photograph of the young Queen that would be seen by people across the country and around the world. Both photographer and sitter felt under pressure. The lighting was poor, but he had no time to do anything about it – he had to use every minute allowed for the photographs. In his diary he wrote,

*I had only the foggiest notion of what I was doing – if taking black and white or colour. If giving the right exposure. The Queen looked very small under robes and crown ... You must be tired Ma-am – yes [she replied] – but this is the thing we have to do.*²

By the early hours of the following morning the films had been developed. Beaton chose the best prints to send to the Palace. By noon, less than 24 hours after the Coronation service had ended, several had been approved for publication.

In January 1980 Cecil Beaton appeared on the BBC Radio programme *Desert Island Discs*, choosing his favourite music and talking about events that influenced his life. In this excerpt Roy Plomley, the programme's host, is asking the questions:

This is a transcript from *Desert Island Discs* 26 January 1980, provided by BBC Radio:

PLOMLEY: *“Another wonderful royal occasion for you was the invitation to take the post-Coronation of the Queen and Royal Family when they returned to the Palace after the service.”*

BEATON: *“Yes, that was a great occasion. I think it was the most thrilling thing that happened although only a certain amount of time was given to me, that time was very valuable.”*

PLOMLEY: *“One of the reasons why you were given so little time was that the Queen had already worn that heavy crown for about three hours.”*

² p. 122 Strong, Roy, *Cecil Beaton: The Royal Portraits*, London

BEATON: [laughs] “Yes. *Exactly. She’d done a hard job of it.*”

PLOMLEY: “*A sordid commercial question. What happens to the copyright of royal pictures? Are you entitled to sell them wherever you wish, or do you have to work with the Palace Press Office?*”

BEATON: “*Oh I have to work with the Palace Press Office if it’s anything vital but ordinarily they’re sold just for just a normal amount of money.*”

These were some of the last words Beaton spoke in public. He had had a stroke four years earlier and not long after the programme was recorded Beaton died. With the permission of his family the programme was broadcast a fortnight later.



CECIL BEATON (1904-80)

Queen Elizabeth II (1926 – 2022), 16 October 1968

Gelatin silver print | 29.7 x 25.4 cm (image)

RCIN 2509009

This photograph of Queen Elizabeth II, taken in Buckingham Palace in 1968, was released the following year to mark her 43rd birthday.

Leaning against the arm of the sofa, she turns her head to look over her shoulder. She may be the Queen, but she seems to be posing for this photograph more like a fashion model. This was a deliberate effort by Beaton to seek a bold, new approach to royal portraits.

An exhibition of his work was going to open soon after the photograph was taken at London’s National Portrait Gallery. It was the first time that a lifetime’s work by a living photographer was put on show at a British museum. Some of the photographs displayed dated back to 1928 and Beaton was keen not to appear old-fashioned especially after the huge social and cultural changes of the 1960s. Recent photographs of the Queen would bring his work up to date. He approached Martin Charteris, the Queen’s Assistant Private Secretary, and was granted a sitting.

For the initial photographs of the shoot the Queen wore a plain admiral’s cloak and stood in front of a simple backdrop. One of these dramatic images is in the last room of the exhibition. For this picture, Beaton moved to the White Drawing Room where bright afternoon sunshine streamed through the windows. He wrote in his diary:

*Everywhere were sparkling possibilities. The Queen reappeared in a vivid turquoise-blue dress, the Garter mantle and Queen Mary's pearl and diamond looped tiara. She looked splendid and I felt elated at the possibilities.*³

This 1968 sitting was Queen Elizabeth II's last with Beaton before his death in 1980. For nearly fifty years his photographs had defined – and then redefined – the image of the British Royal Family.



BARON (STERLING HENRY NAHUM) (1906-56)
HM King George VI and Queen Elizabeth with Baron, Silver
Wedding Anniversary, April 1948
Gelatin silver print | 30 x 24.3 cm (image)
RCIN 2935277

There is never a single official royal photographer. Cecil Beaton may be the best-known today, but he was just one of several working during the 1940s and 1950s. On this wall, and the wall behind, are examples of work by some of his contemporaries.

This picture of King George VI seated on the arm of the sofa and a beaming Queen Elizabeth looking straight at the camera, was taken during the sitting to mark their silver wedding anniversary. It was taken by Sterling Henry Nahum, known as Baron, the third person in the scene who had photographed the wedding of Princess Elizabeth to Philip Mountbatten the previous year. Baron was such a firm favourite with Prince Philip that he would have been among those applying to be the photographer for the 1953 Coronation, the position eventually awarded to Beaton.

In such a talented pool of royal photographers there was a mixture of feelings. It was inevitable that there was competition between them. But there was also friendship and admiration. In this picture Baron is holding open a recently published book of portraits, *Faces of Destiny* by Canadian photographer Yousuf Karsh. It looks like he is discussing it with the King. This is a way of acknowledging Karsh's influence on his own work and also his popularity with members of the Royal Family whom he photographed over several decades. Some of his pictures of

³ Strong p. 179

Prince Philip and Queen Elizabeth II, when they were Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, are on the wall behind.



DOROTHY WILDING (1893 – 1976)

Queen Elizabeth II (1926 – 2022), 26 February 1952

Gelatin silver print | 29.6 x 22.3 cm (image)

RCIN 2416689

This photograph was taken just twenty days into Queen Elizabeth II's reign when an image of the new queen was needed for coins, banknotes and stamps. Dorothy Wilding's simple, modern photographic style was ideal for reproduction in miniature for this purpose. She was also no stranger at Buckingham Palace, having photographed the Royal Family for over twenty years, including at the coronation of George VI and Queen Elizabeth in May 1937. In 1943, in recognition of services to members of the royal family, Wilding received a Royal Warrant. She was the first female photographer to be honoured in this way.

Like many of Wilding's portraits, this one is influenced by the picture postcards of glamorous stars of stage and screen she had collected as a young girl. By choosing a pale backdrop, she focused attention on the youth, beauty, and elegance of the new monarch who wore a black taffeta dress by Norman Hartnell and a platinum and diamond necklace given to her as a wedding present.

Wilding had left her early dreams of being an actor behind in order to train as a photographer. She learned to highlight sitters' features by carefully positioning bright studio lights. She also had the retouching skills needed to smooth out any lines and blemishes they showed up.

Wilding opened her first London studio when she was just 21 years old. Later as her reputation grew she moved to Bond Street and also opened a studio in New York. Almost all of her thirty-seven assistants were women.

Unfortunately, the Queen's pose, dress and jewellery in this photograph and in others from the sitting, were thought unsuitable for use on coins and stamps. Wilding was recalled to Buckingham Palace just a few weeks later.

Lessons had been learned from the previous sitting and changes were made to find an image more suitable for stamps. This time Queen Elizabeth was sitting in half-profile wearing a light-

coloured dress and a sash with the Star of the Order of the Garter. Her diamond coronet was the same one she would wear six months later for her first State Opening of Parliament, and again the following year on the journey to Westminster Abbey for the Coronation.

This time Wilding's photograph was approved by the Post Office who reproduced it on postage stamps in circulation between 1953 and 1971 known as 'Wilding Definitives' or 'The Wildings'.

A similar photograph from the same sitting became the official portrait sent to British embassies. For decades to come it was Dorothy Wilding's image of the new queen that sprang to mind when people thought of Queen Elizabeth.



**ANTONY ARMSTRONG-JONES, 1ST EARL OF SNOWDON
(1930 – 2017)**

Group of royal mothers with their babies, 1965

Gelatin silver print | 18.8 x 18.9 cm (image)

RCIN 2119600

**ANTONY ARMSTRONG-JONES, 1ST EARL OF SNOWDON
(1930 – 2017)**

Princess Margaret, 1967

Gelatin silver print | 30.2 x 22.18 x 18.9 cm (image)

RCIN 2335975

PATRICK LICHFIELD (1939 – 2005)

The Royal Family at Windsor, 26 December 1971

Gelatin silver print | 21 x 30.4 cm (image)

RCIN 2999866

These are proud royal mothers with their new babies. From left to right they are Princess Alexandra, holding her first child, James Ogilvy; Queen Elizabeth II holding Prince Edward; Princess Margaret, holding her daughter, Lady Sarah, now Lady Sarah Chatto; and the Duchess of Kent, holding Lady Helen Windsor, now Lady Helen Taylor.

Princess Margaret sent a copy of this photograph to her sister Queen Elizabeth suggesting it be given to Sir John Peel, the doctor who had supervised the births of all four royal babies, as a thank you present. The mothers were able to relax and smile because they knew the

photographer so well. He was Tony Armstrong-Jones, Earl of Snowdon, husband of Princess Margaret, brother-in-law to Queen Elizabeth – and father of one of the babies.

By being part of family occasions, Snowdon – and the Queen’s cousin Patrick Lichfield – were able to capture less-guarded moments and larger groups. Lichfield’s photograph taken on Boxing Day 1971 at Windsor Castle where the Royal Family was spending Christmas is displayed nearby. This was when Christmas was celebrated at Windsor rather than at Sandringham. Members of the family are posing very informally, definitely more like a family group rather than the royal family.

In Snowdon’s portrait of his wife Princess Margaret, on this wall, the usual rules between royal photographer and sitter have been replaced by intimacy – and a touch of daring.



NORMAN PARKINSON (1913-90)

Princess Anne’s 21st birthday, 1971

Gelatin silver print | 30.3 x 25.5 cm

RCIN 2824909

Norman Parkinson found photographic studios sterile and stuffy. He preferred to create scenes in the real world with sitter, clothes and surroundings all playing a part. It made him the perfect choice to take this 21st birthday portrait of Princess Anne in 1971. Parkinson had photographed the princess before. She was an expert horsewoman, and he photographed her riding in Windsor Great Park. For this picture he chose another outdoor location. Princess Anne, wearing a floral print maxi dress with billowy sleeves and standing in front of a pointed Gothic archway, is transformed into a romantic heroine.

Much of Parkinson’s work was for magazines like *Vogue* and *Harper’s Bazaar*. He was keen not to be seen as a fashion photographer, but he knew exactly how to set up and take photographs that would sell clothes—and sell magazines.

The pages of magazines from that time were all black and white, with only the advertisement pictures, for example for perfumes, in colour. Colour was seen as suitable for the cover, but not for the inside. It was only for publicity, for advertisement, for commercial use.

Princess Anne became the first senior member of the Royal Family to feature on the cover of *Vogue*. The two editions, from later in 1971 and from 1973, are in the glass case nearby. Not

only did Parkinson's colour photographs contrast with the usual royal portraits, mostly black and white, but they also focused attention on the young princess, establishing her glamorous image.



DOROTHY WILDING (1893 – 1976)

Retouched negative of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, 1943

Negative

RCIN 2119605

This negative of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, taken by Dorothy Wilding shows an expected – and accepted – stage of the photographic process: ‘retouching’. To create a single portrait of the Duke, Wilding has cut off one side of the negative and then reattached it further up. This creates space to ‘fill in’ the part of the Duke’s shoulder originally obscured by the Duchess.

Wilding thought that the harsh lighting used during the sitting revealed ‘unfair exaggerations’, that would not be seen in person. So she smoothed away the Duke’s laughter lines and furrowed brow.

The areas of the face where there are crease lines have been made softer by making those areas slightly darker, using a pencil, graphite, or dark crayon. Making areas in the negative darker means they will be lighter in the final print. The opposite is also true; making areas lighter in the negative makes them darker in the final print.

Delicate and skilful retouching like this took hours of practice to get right – and hours of very careful work to complete. Today’s photo-editing software makes the process faster and more straightforward.

But perhaps there is something to be said about actually doing the retouching by hand. It brings a touch of fine art to the process.

Additional Information: Conservation

The valuable works in this exhibition need to be kept in a special environment to prevent them from deteriorating.

Great care has to be taken when the images are put on display so that they can last for as long as possible. Printing photographs is a chemical process and they are very easily affected by little changes that can completely change their chemistry and damage the image or even cause it to be lost.

All the framed pictures are covered by acrylic glazing which protects them from ultra-violet light. The amount of light they are exposed to is monitored very carefully - how much light these photographs are exposed to during the exhibition is carefully worked out. Light levels are kept at a level which will not damage the images, which is why the lighting may seem quite dim. But brighter lighting would cause damage to the photographs over the entire run of the exhibition.

It might also feel rather cool and dry in the exhibition space. There are very specific restrictions for temperature and humidity for photographs to avoid chemical changes in the photographs and loss of the image.



JOHN SWANNELL (b.1946)

David Bailey (1938 – 2016), 1970

Archival pigment print | 24.7 x 34 cm

RCIN 2119565

The portraits in this section of the exhibition are of the people usually behind the camera – the photographers. John Swannell took this photograph of his boss David Bailey to go with a magazine article.

This is John Swannell's account of taking the photograph:

And he said, what do you want to do? And I said I want to make you look a bit like Byron. I just wanted to make him look romantic because, you know, he had this Beatle haircut. So we got him to part the hair in the middle and I did the bowtie. I'd learned how to light, because I'd been with him for a couple of years, and he had confidence in me because we worked together. He knows that I was basically copying him, you know it could have been him taking the picture. So I did that picture and sent it in, and they couldn't believe it was Bailey, of course, ... it went down really well.

Several of the photographers in this exhibition worked with each other, learning and passing on skills. A close professional relationship often became a lifelong friendship – as it did with John Swannell and David Bailey.

John Swannell again:

He really looked after me. And when I left him, he was unbelievable. I left after three or four years, I said, I've got to go now. He said, no you haven't. And I said, well, I've got to start on my own. And he was really good about it, and when I left he gave me a whole box of Pentax cameras, and a box of Nikon cameras as well. Also, he paid me for another year, to make sure I was okay. So he was incredibly good to me: he was like my brother.



MADAME YEVONDE (1893 – 1975)

Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, 1935

Vivex colour print | 36.4 x 26 cm

RCIN 2119606

'Be original or die,' said Madame Yevonde, a bold, outspoken pioneer of colour photography who made this portrait of Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester. A bridal picture is naturally dominated by white, but she has highlighted the red of Princess Alice's lips and the bright blue ribbon tied around a bunch of roses at her feet.

Madame Yevonde started to be interested in colour photography in the late 1920s. From the early 1930s she started using what was known as the Vivex process. The Vivex three-colour camera took an image on three separate plates at the same time through different colour filters. Images from the three negatives were then printed one on top of each other. This meant that Yevonde was able to change the balance of the colours to get the effect she was looking for in the final print. 'If we are going to have colour photographs,' she said in a heartfelt speech to the Royal Photographic Society in December 1932, 'for heaven's sake let's have a riot of colour.'

Despite her enthusiasm for and her skill with colour photography, not everyone welcomed it: some people thought it was tasteless and inferior. They felt that the colour was distracting. Black and white photography meant the viewer could see and enjoy different aspects of a photograph, but a colour photograph might distract the eye.

The Vivex process turned out to be short-lived, lasting just ten years. But, during that time, Yevonde made a very strong case for colour photography. She was a suffragette and also argued that women were particularly suited to be photographers.

She wrote,

*I have tried to show that personality, tact, patience and intuition are all very valuable to the portrait photographer, and that women possess them to a far greater degree than men.*⁴



PATRICK PETER GRUGEON (1918-80)

Queen Elizabeth II, 2 April 1975

Chromogenic print | 31 x 26 cm (image)

RCIN 2148924

ANDY WARHOL (1928-87)

Reigning Queens (Royal Edition): Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom, 1985

Screen print, diamond dust | 100 x 80 cm (image)

RCIN 507013

JAMIE REID (1947 – 2023)

Queen Elizabeth II ('God Save the Queen' for The Sex Pistols), 1977

Vinyl record and paper sleeve | 18.2 x 18.2 cm

RCIN 2119608

This is one of the most recognisable images of Queen Elizabeth II. Her pose, evening gown and tiara make it feel like a timeless portrait. The photograph was taken in Windsor Castle in 1975, but it was only released to the public in 1977 for her Silver Jubilee.

Two images based on Grugeon's portrait are hanging nearby. The sequence of images of Queen Elizabeth II by Andy Warhol, alongside Jamie Reid's artwork for the Sex Pistols - pop and punk - shows the power of the original image. It has authority – so much that it becomes the ancestor of second and third generations of art.

⁴ Gibson, Robert; Roberts, Pam, *Madame Yevonde: Colour, Fantasy & Myth*, 1990 (accompanying the exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery from 20 July – 1 October 1990), p.95

Warhol once said, *'I want to be as famous as the Queen of England'*. He created his brightly coloured screenprint as part of his *Reigning Queens* series. For The Sex Pistols' album cover displayed next to it, Jamie Reid reverses Grurgeon's portrait, suggesting punk rock's ambition to overturn society. Queen Elizabeth is blindfolded and gagged, her eyes and mouth covered with words and letters cut from newspapers, looking like an old-fashioned ransom note. Reid's anarchic design gives the words 'God Save the Queen' a different, more menacing meaning.

Additional Information: Early Auctions

When the Cecil Beaton exhibition opened at the National Portrait Gallery in 1968 it was the first time a British museum had dedicated a show to a living photographer. It also put the spotlight on what the camera could achieve. More and more people were becoming interested in photography. The Photographers' Gallery had recently opened in what used to be a Lyons Tea House in Covent Garden and was arguing the case for photography to be seen as a modern art form.

Up to now photographs had been seen as interesting and rather unusual. They were collected like documents containing information rather than as works of art. They were bought and sold by book collectors. But it was only in the early 1970s that people began to think of historic photographs as a subject in their own right.

The first auction of historic photographs was at Sotheby's. It was not at all clear who might come to the auction, but when it happened the level of bidding between buyers showed that this was something lots of people were interested in. Sellers learned quickly that photographs could make money, especially old photographs. Many treasures from attics and libraries and dusty corners were quickly found and offered for sale. More and more collectors were drawn to take part, and within a very few years, sales of photographs became key events in the photographic calendar.

Many of the works bought at these early auctions now form the basis of the photography collections of major art institutions here and in the United States.



RANKIN (b.1966)

Queen Elizabeth II (1926 – 2022), 6 December 2001

Inkjet print from a digital file | 61 x 51 cm (image)

RCIN 2999944

As part of the celebrations for the Golden Jubilee in 2002 ten photographers from across the Commonwealth were invited to photograph Queen Elizabeth II. These two portraits were made by British photographer Rankin. In the background of one is the Ballroom in Buckingham Palace where the shoot took place. In the other the photographer added the Union Flag back in his studio.

Rankin says that he found the experience ‘daunting but exhilarating’. He described what happened and how he felt:

I think that that pressure to take a picture that stands out ... sits on your shoulder when you're taking a photograph like that because you know it's an official picture. It's gonna be around forever. ... If your image isn't a little bit more original or unique then you're not really doing your job.

I was in the ballroom waiting for [Queen Elizabeth] to come in. Everybody was ... nervous, especially me. ... I could see The Queen walking towards me with this footman and they were laughing, ... in that moment I realised I'm going to be able to get the Queen to laugh or smile at my camera.

In total I was given five minutes. I did 10 rolls of film which is about 100 frames and luckily a piece of my equipment fell out of the camera and [the Queen] laughed. ... When I saw her laugh, I went: 'That's what I want. I want that.' ... she stopped smiling, and I started to say "Ma'am, please smile, please, Ma'am." And then she did a very large smile. I knew at that moment that I'd got a great picture.

One of the things I loved about the whole process of photographing her and getting feedback was that she loved the stitching on the flag, and I thought that was such a funny and clever way of saying that she liked the picture.

I still like the picture today. I feel like it's, it's one forever, which is, is really a special thing to have.



ANNIE LEIBOVITZ (b. 1949)

Queen Elizabeth II (1926 – 2022) wearing the Admiral's Cloak, 28

March 2007

C-type digital print | 40.6 x 56 cm (image)

RCIN 2512288

This portrait of Queen Elizabeth II is not quite what it first appears to be. The photographer Annie Leibovitz was given a few, precious minutes for a sitting *inside* Buckingham Palace. She then used digital technology to achieve the *outdoors* effect in the final image.

The first photograph was taken inside in front of a plain backdrop. The photograph of the garden was taken at a different time. The two images were then combined digitally. Digital photography gives photographers ways of being more creative, which many see as a positive thing.

In Leibovitz's image, Queen Elizabeth is wearing the same admiral's cloak she wore during her final sitting with Cecil Beaton in 1968. You can see that photograph displayed nearby.

Julian Calder's portrait of the Queen is hanging near it. For this Queen Elizabeth was outside. She is wearing the full robes of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle and is braving the weather – and the midges – on the Balmoral Estate in Scotland.

Annie Leibovitz returned in March 2016 to take family photographs at Windsor Castle to mark Queen Elizabeth's 90th birthday. This time she hoped to be outdoors to make the most of the natural light. She was in luck – partly. The Queen was not put off by cloudy skies and chilly temperatures, and was happy to be photographed outside, standing on the steps with her dogs. But she thought it was too cold for her grandchildren and great-grandchildren so the rest of the sitting took place inside, in the warmth of the Green Drawing Room – some of the final images are on the wall behind.



HUGO BURNAND (b.1949)
Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall, 2018

HUGO BURNAND (b.1949)
Coronation Portrait of King Charles III with the Prince of Wales and Prince George of Wales, 6 May 2023
Throne Room

Hugo Burnand took this photograph of King Charles III and Queen Camilla, when they were still Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall, on a hot day in their garden at Clarence House.

The photographer commented: *'This picture, it's about them. And if you look very carefully you might just be able to see that her hands ... pointing towards Prince Charles ... are creating a love heart.'*

Like many of the photographers whose work is in this exhibition, Hugo Burnand has been photographing members of the Royal Family over many years and has developed a relationship with them. *'I already understand, and they already understand quite a lot of what we will achieve together. I set myself quite a challenge, doing over ten different portraits, each one lit differently in a different location.'*

That relationship took away some over the pressure when he was preparing for King Charles and Queen Camilla's Coronation Day on 6 May 2023.

On Coronation Day, roads in central London were closed to vehicles. Hugo cycled to Buckingham Palace where he had already spent three days setting up equipment for the shoot.

Hugo Burnand recalled how it went:

I had a team of six people, including myself, and everyone had a very, very specific role to play. I was still doing dress rehearsals right up until the moment I saw the Gold Coach coming back under the archway. And I just turned to my team and I just said, 'Right, showtime'.

After King Charles and Queen Camilla had waved from the balcony to cheering crowds in The Mall they returned to the Throne Room where Hugo and his assistants were waiting.

He continues:

I wanted to fill the Throne Room with spring lighting, new era, new dawn, spring, and we pumped a lot of light in, because that Throne Room sucks up light: those damask walls and those high ceilings.

The Coronation photographs were the last official duty they had that day. There was a challenge there in that I had to photograph them when they had done probably the most gruelling day that they can remember. But at the same time there was an elation and an excitement that it had been a great success.

However, the day was far from over for Hugo and his team who cycled to the studio.

Unfortunately, the weather had turned and we got soaked. ... We got some dry clothes on and sat down and ... went straight back to work. You select the best images, and then you start doing colour balance and cropping. And I think we worked for 24 hours, with a little bit of sleep in between. So we got them out for the press for when the press needed them.

When studying works in the Royal Photograph Collection, Hugo noticed there had never been a photograph at a coronation of three generations in the line of succession. The picture he took of King Charles III with the Prince of Wales and Prince George of Wales is the first picture of this kind. It is hanging nearby.

Hugo added: *'and I'm very happy with the results, and that could partly be the expressions on all three of them, that they were so together and united.'*

This is the last stop on the tour.

We hope you have enjoyed the exhibition. You can find out more about cameras and analogue photography in a display in the Millar Learning Room, which is at the top of the stairs to the left of the exhibition entrance. When you have finished, please return this guide at the desk.

This script has been compiled from a tour produced by ATS with information from the experts from the Royal Collection Trust: Alessandro Nasini, Exhibition Curator and Senior Curator of Photographs, and Ashleigh Brown, Paper and Photographic Conservator and Photographers Hugo Burnand, Philippe Garner, Rankin and John Swannell.

To find out more about the works of art in the Royal Collection please visit our website at www.rct.uk. You can find out about future exhibitions there and keep in touch by signing up to our e-Newsletter or by following us on Facebook, X and Instagram. Please remember that you can return to The King's Gallery, free of charge, for a year, by converting your ticket into a 1-Year Pass. Just sign the back and ask a member of staff to stamp it before you leave.