

Hologram portrait miniatures of Her Majesty the Queen by Rob Munday

A concise account of the making of all of Rob Munday's holographic portrait miniatures of Her Majesty the Queen.

In 2003 artist-holographer Rob Munday was commissioned to create a three-dimensional holographic portrait of Her Majesty the Queen. The portrait shoot was conducted as a joint and equal creative collaboration between himself and graphic designer-artist Chris Levine. The purpose of the commission was to commemorate the Island of Jersey's 800-year allegiance to the English throne.

A total of thirty-eight portrait image sequences were shot over two sittings in 2003 and 2004. Joint authorship of the portrait was legally recognised by a legally binding agreement drawn up and signed by all three parties in 2005. The agreement stipulates that the portrait must always be credited as by Chris Levine and Rob Munday, or Rob Munday and Chris Levine, with equal emphasis.

The world's first portrait miniature.

In February 2004, between the two sittings, Rob Munday created the first ever holographic portrait of any kind of Her Majesty the Queen and the world's first holographic portrait miniature at his studio in Richmond-Upon-Thames using one of the eighteen image sequences shot during the first sitting. A photoresist master hologram was made using a unique 3D digital hologram technique and Lightgate digital hologram mastering system that Rob had invented in 1997 and for which he received a coveted International Hologram Manufacturers Association 'Excellence in Holography' award for Best New Technique in the year 2000. This, in turn, was used to produce a nickel metal master hologram and copy. The portrait, the first ever hologram portrait miniature, was shown to the Queen by Rob Munday prior to the second sitting in 2004. It was shown for only the second time by Rob Munday at his solo show at The Little Back Gallery, London in 2017.



Left: Rob Munday discusses holograms with the Queen.

Middle: The first ever holographic portrait of Her Majesty the Queen and first ever holographic portrait miniature.

Right: Rob Munday showing his portrait to the Queen at the second sitting.

The second portrait miniature

In 2005 The Jersey Heritage Trust, the sole rights holders, asked Rob Munday to independently create a second holographic portrait miniature for presentation to entities such as The Royal Mail, The Bank of England and Benham etc.

To create the second portrait miniature Rob Munday utilised one of the twenty image sequences shot at the second sitting, namely the sequence chosen by both himself and Chris Levine to be the official version. He again utilised his unique 3D digital hologram technique and Lightgate digital hologram mastering system. This second portrait miniature was the first to utilise the 'achromatic' technique providing for a black and white digital hologram, again, uniquely developed by Rob Munday. The portrait was created in December 2005 and several nickel metal copies were made in February 2006.

The third portrait miniature

In 2011, Rob Munday was again approached by The Jersey Heritage Trust, The States of Jersey and The Jersey Post to independently create and produce a hologram portrait miniature to adorn their 2012 commemorative Diamond Jubilee

stamp. Rob was asked to attend a meeting in Jersey at which all parties were present to discuss the commission. Rob took one of the copies of the second portrait miniature mentioned above, that had been created several years earlier, and proposed to all parties that this specific version be used for the stamp. It transpired however that this version of the portrait was too small and so Rob was asked to create a new and larger version, again using his Lightgate mastering system. The stamp was the world's first to feature a holographic portrait of a Head of State and the first to feature a black and white 'achromatic' hologram, as confirmed by the primary authority on the subject, 'Holography and Philately' by Hans Bjelkhagen, 2014.



In 2012 The National Portrait Gallery accepted a copy of the third portrait miniature, in the form of a stamp, into its collection.

The first gold portrait miniature

In 2013, Rob Munday was invited to show his second portrait miniature at The Royal Miniature Society's prestigious annual exhibition in The Mall Galleries, London. Rob Munday chose to gold plate the hologram, thus creating the world's first 24c gold hologram portrait miniature. The portrait was described by both Elizabeth Meek MBE., the President of the Royal Miniature Society and the Rt. Hon. Michael Portillo, Chairman of the Federation of British Artists as 'extraordinary and spellbinding' and 'the future of portrait miniatures'. It featured in several publications including the Journal of the Royal Photographic Society.



Royal Miniature Society Exhibition, The Mall Galleries, 2013.



In creating and showing his portrait miniature of the Queen along with others, it has been recognised that Rob Munday has brought into being a brand-new portrait medium.

In 2017 this portrait, along with the first portrait miniature, as also described above, featured in Rob Munday's solo exhibition at The Little Black Gallery, London.

In 2005, Rob received the Royal Photographic Society's Saxby Medal, the most prestigious international award for creative and technical achievements in the field of three-dimensional imaging and holography, largely in recognition of his portrait of Her Majesty the Queen.

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