

Portrait of the Queen to be unveiled at Holyrood this week

✘ The first portrait of Her Majesty The Queen to be displayed at the Scottish Parliament will be unveiled by Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal on Wednesday 16 March.

Winning photographer Shaun Murawski, 24, will attend the unveiling of his portrait in the Main Hall of the Parliament.

The [Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body](#) agreed to commission the portrait last January after receiving a recommendation by the Parliament's Art Advisory Group. Shaun was then picked as the winner out of a shortlist of talented young photographers by a panel of judges that included award-winning photographer Harry Benson CBE and members of the Parliament's Art Advisory Group (AAG).

Renowned Scottish photographer Harry Benson CBE mentored Shaun throughout the project as well as guiding him during the actual photo shoot at Holyrood Palace and said: "I think it's wonderful that the Scottish Parliament had the idea of having a competition to choose a young photographer living in Scotland to photograph Her Majesty The Queen.

"What a unique opportunity and privilege and Shaun rose to the occasion. I am honoured to be associated with the endeavour."

✘ When asked about the portrait, Mr Murawski said: "I still feel hugely grateful to be given such an opportunity at my age. Both working with and being mentored by Harry Benson was a unique experience and an honour.

"I would like to thank everyone – friends, family and complete strangers who have given kind words, wishes and support, thank

you.

“I’d also like to thank everyone at the Scottish Parliament and The Palace, without their help the final image wouldn’t have been possible, or so enjoyable in achieving.

“For me the portrait captures what a moment in Her Majesty’s company feels like. She is an extraordinary human being in all her benevolence and warmth.”

Presiding Officer [Alex Fergusson MSP](#) said: “I am very much looking forward to welcoming Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal to the Scottish Parliament to unveil this impressive portrait.”

“The official portrait unveiling comes after months of difficult decision making from the judging panel and hard work from Shaun. Shaun is an exciting talent in Scottish photography, and his portrait of Her Majesty The Queen will be a fantastic addition to the Parliament’s art collection.

“The portrait will hang in the Main Public Hall, where visitors to the Parliament will be able to come in and view it for years to come.”

[Robin Harper MSP](#), Chair of the Art Advisory Group said: “The Art Group is very happy to be present at the official unveiling tomorrow. It has been an exciting and interesting journey, and I really hope the opportunity to view this portrait will encourage more people to visit the Parliament.

“We met a number of extremely talented young photographers who I am sure will have a distinguished career ahead of them. I would like to thank everyone involved, those from within the Parliament, but especially those from outside of the Parliament who have put both time and energy into this project.”

Background

As part of the events and activities delivered to commemorate the Scottish Parliament's 10th anniversary in 2009, the Parliament decided to commission an official portrait of Her Majesty The Queen.

The commission panel was chaired by [Robin Harper MSP](#) and also comprised Harry Benson CBE, Scottish Parliament Art Advisory Group members [Ted Brocklebank MSP](#), [Patricia Ferguson MSP](#), [Ian McKee MSP](#), [Jeremy Purvis MSP](#) , and poet and playwright [Liz Lochhead](#) – Scotland's Makar. The SPCB was represented on the panel by its member [Tricia Marwick MSP](#). Andrew Cowan, Parliament Photographer and Fiona McDougall, Art Curator/Exhibitions Manager were also on the panel.

Mr Benson has taken portraits of previous presiding officers Sir David Steel and George Reid, which are now part of the Parliament's Art Collection.

Glasgow-born Mr Benson, who now lives in America, gained international acclaim for his photos documenting various political events and his portraits of well-known personalities including Martin Luther King, Winston Churchill, Barack Obama and The Beatles. He was awarded the CBE in the New Years Honours List 2009 for his services to photography.

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