Exclusive: The Queen behind closed doors: Royal Mondays and Frances Segelman chat with HELLO!

OCTOBER 03, 2022 - 10:00 BST
EDITOR, KAREN FOX
Karen Fearing Video

The nation is still mourning the loss of our beloved **Queen Elizabeth II** with many fans having watched the hundred memories of the late monarch entry engine for an amazing 70 years.

MORE: The special way the Queen's memory will be honoured - and it's so touching

Now, three artists who portrayed the Queen throughout her life and spent time with her either side of her death, are sharing their stories in an exclusive chat **Royalty: A Tribute to the Queen**. The exhibition at London's Quentin gallery runs until 12 October.

WATCH: Royal nail artist now Queen Elizabeth II stamps

The three artists, **Christian Ford, Rob Munday and Frances Segelman**, captured Her Majesty into the realms of photography, holography, painting and sculpture.

HELLO! Let's start in the exhibition, and we have to say, the works are simply breathtaking – shown together in one space, the Queen felt almost present in the room. It's a wonderful tribute to an incredible monarch.

Frances Segelman Yes, it was a special time before we they recall fascinating personal stories of Her Majesty throughout closed doors.

MORE: How and when you can visit the Queen's final resting place

Artist Christian Fur

British artist Christian Fur was the youngest artist ever to be commissioned to paint an official portrait of the Queen when he was 26.

Reputedly selected for the honour, his painting proved to show both the regal and human qualities of the monarch. The portrait currently hangs in the Royal Overseas League.

Christian knows the Queen liked his portrait of her, as in 2012, Prince Charles had her personally to accept a special print of the painting, in its Magesty: A Tribute to the Queen exhibition. Christian also was invited to the Queen's summer reception at Buckingham Palace on the unveiled photograph of her wedding.

The artist Christian Fur. *Photo credit: Derek Bennett / Getty*

Christian tells **HELLO!** of his first meeting with the Queen. "I don't know what to expect. I was 26. I knew that this was the Queen of England. I didn't know any preconceptions.

"As soon as she walked in, the nerves disappeared, they just evaporated because she was very good at putting people at ease and that's a great sense of humour."

He recalls: "I remember talking about paintings. She said, 'What artists do you like?' and I said, 'I really like Gainsborough and Reynolds'. She said, 'I don't know much about Gainsborough.'

"She was talking about memories of meeting people on walkabouts. She had a brilliant memory; she was very sharp, very savvy and knew what was going on and had a great interest in current events."

Before painting the Queen, Christian met with the monarch's personal designer Angela Kelly to discuss her wardrobe and jewellery.

"I chose the Order of the Bath and Order Garter because **that was what she was wearing on Ultimate. It was her, before and there**. I worked from photos in the portrait and I wanted to give it more than previous portraits that had been done. It captures the element of her character, which is the liveliness and the humour – she had a delicious sense of humour."

Christian painting the Queen at Buckingham Palace

"I chose the platform that she was going to be viewed upon, the red carpet background and the flowers – I wanted them to bring the outside in. The Queen chose the lilac dress, the Order of the Garter and Northern Ireland, which I think Queen Mary had given to her as a present.

"She also brought, when she came into the yellow drawing room, a shawl or a blanket. She said straight away, 'Oh, do you mind if I put the shawl on the chair?' I said, 'Of course, it's your **straight away that that would reveal something about her character - that was a chance answer.**"

Christian explains that his new diamond dust portrait of the Queen came about from a family moment.

"The diamond dust edition is an image that's a very happy memory for me, because I was commissioned by the Queen's family to do a portrait of her for her birthday and I shouldn't have said that that's what a portrait sitting is – it's a lot of time out, it's not recorded, it's intimate time."

MORE: Queen Elizabeth II, Pics: In the most regal bridesmaid in unsettled royal wedding photos

Christian Fur grass Prince Philip's print of the portrait

The artist tells us about another story from his time with the Queen, recalling: "I was talking about some of the previous depictions that had been done of her – and Brian in mind I was 26 and a lot older. There's an Instagram photo where I'm sitting with the Queen and I'm looking at her at the time. If you don't mind her saying, she took a little bit laughing in that picture.

"I'm thinking about it now and thinking what the hell did I say that for? She didn't think, and she said, 'I think there's reason for that.'

"She said, 'Just as you're asking me to look out the window now, Annigoni did the same thing to her at the time.' I was on the ground floor and there's a really high wall outside and I ended up straining to see what was over the wall. That's why I look like that in that painting."

Christian also remembers looking out of the window from Buckingham Palace at the Mall and thinking about her life. "She said something like, 'I don't think people realise that she has been'.

"The other funny thing that happened," he continues, "is during the sittings at the end of, was the days of the Italian digital cameras. I said to the Queen, I've got all these things. I've got to get them developed, what should I do?

"The Queen said, 'There's a chemist over the road, that's where we go.' I thought that was funny. It was ordinaryness that disappeared any nerves."

"My lasting memory of her is being very, very, very kind," he adds. She sort of craved ordinariness but she was majestic, as she was a lot of a paradox in that sense. I began to realise that she was very, very, very kind and very, very, very,

6 beloved royal dog breeds: Corgis, Labs, Spaniels and more

SUBSCRIBE TO HELLO!'S NEWSLETTER

Email

SIGN UP

© 2001-2022, hellomagazine.com