

Jonathan Yeo's King Charles III: Vivid Red King [B1]

In occasione del suo primo ritratto ufficiale da re, Carlo III ha scelto un controverso artista londinese. Il risultato non ha lasciato nessuno indifferente.

A new official portrait of King Charles III [unveiled](#) in May has caused a lot of controversy. While some have called it mysterious and powerful, others have described it as disturbing, satanic or just [poorly](#) painted. The portrait is the work of Jonathan Yeo, who seems unperturbed by the [mixed response](#) to it. He [released a statement](#) that said his objective in surrounding the monarch with vivid red was “to make reference to the traditions of royal portraiture but in a way that reflects a 21st-century monarchy and, [above all else](#), to communicate the subject’s deep humanity.” He later told the BBC, “All my life I’d known who [King Charles] was and what he looked like, so it was really just a case of deciding what to show and trying to [slightly](#) channel who he seems to be now.”

RICH AND FAMOUS

Born in London in 1970, Yeo is considered one of the world’s most influential portrait painters. He became famous [in the early 2000s](#) for his paintings of [high-profile people](#): in 2007, he notoriously created an unauthorised portrait of US president George W. Bush using pornographic images cut out of magazines. Yeo has also created authorised portraits of many iconic figures, including British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Hollywood stars Nicole Kidman, Idris Elba, and Paris Hilton, British naturalist Sir David Attenborough and royals Prince Philip and Queen Camilla.

PORTRAIT OF A KING

When Yeo began working on the portrait of Charles III in 2021, Queen Elizabeth II was still alive and Charles was still the Prince of Wales. Over the next few years — during which the Queen died and Charles became king — Yeo and Charles met four times for [sittings](#). The portrait gradually evolved, as Yeo worked on it at his London studio, before being revealed at Buckingham Palace in May. In the portrait, the King is wearing the uniform of the Welsh Guards, has a sword in his hand, and a butterfly — a symbol, says Yeo, of both his metamorphosis from prince to king and his interest in the environment — [hovering](#) above his shoulder. Yeo told the BBC that the King “was initially [mildly](#) surprised by the strong

colour”, but seemed to approve of the portrait, and joked, “If this was seen as [treasonous](#), I could literally pay for it with my head...”

Glossary

- **mildly** = moderatamente
- **unveiled** = svelare
- **mixed response** = reazioni contrastanti
- **released a statement** = rilasciare una dichiarazione
- **slightly** = leggermente
- **sittings** = sessioni
- **hovering** = volteggiare
- **treasonous** = sovversivo
- **poorly** = male
- **above all else** = soprattutto
- **in the early 2000s** = nei primi anni del 2000
- **high-profile people** = persone di alto rilievo