

# The Crown: Season Five [C1]

L'arrivo della quinta stagione di The Crown ha portato con sé un ampio dibattito sul ruolo della monarchia nel Regno Unito. Sia monarchici che repubblicani stanno reagendo apertamente alle modalità con cui la famiglia reale viene ritratta nei nuovi capitoli di questa serie.



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Season five of The Crown is now streaming on Netflix and, [as expected](#), it has [taken the internet by storm](#). Reviews are divisive: heavy criticism on the one hand and [outstanding praise](#) on the other. Historical [happenstance](#) has [preempted](#) the arrival of this fifth fictional [instalment](#); with King Charles III recently ascended to the throne after the death of his mother Queen Elizabeth II, the debate over the purpose of the British monarchy is [gaining traction](#) once again. This season of The Crown covers the years 1991 to 1997. It begins with the [release](#) of a [poll](#) which revealed that more than half of Britons wanted the Queen to abdicate and Charles to ascend to the throne, and it ends with the [landslide](#) victory of Prime Minister Tony Blair. As the [showrunner](#) Peter Morgan explained in a promotional Netflix interview, public opinion on the monarchy has changed significantly since the 1990s: \*\*Peter Morgan (English accent): \*\*Season five [plays against](#) a

period of real criticism and uncertainty and unconfidence. It's quite shocking how overtly critical people were of the monarchy at that time.

## PLAYING A ROYAL

One of the most significant traits of the show is the casting of its protagonists; the actors portraying prominent characters change as the historical timeline progresses. Claire Foy played Queen Elizabeth II from age twenty-one to thirty-seven, and Olivia Colman from thirty-eight to fifty-three. It is now Imelda Staunton who embodies the monarch in her most troubled middle age. The veteran actor sums up succinctly the difficulties her character faces. \*\*Imelda Staunton (English accent): \*\*It does start with people questioning: "Do we need the monarchy? Do we need the Queen?" And she has to ride that particular storm.

## RELUCTANT PRINCESS

Through the season's ten episodes, viewers enjoy a filmic development of the big events that shaped recent royal and British history, but also the subtle, quiet dramas that occurred. This is exemplified by the series of circumstances that, in the words of the Queen herself, defined her "annus horribilis". She refers to 1992, a year that ended with the divorce of Charles and Diana. In fact, the psychological evolution of Princess Diana is arguably the main focus of the entire season. Depicted as a woman driven to extremes by a cold, rigidly-conservative family, Diana's pleas for compassion as well as her relationship with the media much remind us of the recent accounts of Meghan Markle, who has shared her own troubling experiences with the British royals.

## END OF ILLUSION

Episode 8 includes a very convincing [re-enactment](#) of the famous 1995 BBC interview, where Diana stated that “there were three of us in this marriage”; a scene which very much [mirrors](#) the recent interview Diana’s son Harry and his wife Meghan gave to Oprah Winfrey. Australian actor Elizabeth Debicki replaces Emma Corrin as a [thirty-something](#) Diana, who has very much [awoken](#) from the royal [fairy tale](#) she thought she was [marrying into](#): \*\*Elizabeth Debicki (Australian accent): \*\*As a result of the marriage [breaking down](#) and how she becomes more and more [removed](#) from the rest of the royal family, that of course sort of encourages her to grow other pieces of her life in an attempt to sort of [recoup](#) control of the ones that feel like they’re [spiralling](#).

## TRADITION AND DUTY

Prince Charles is depicted as an [opinionated](#) man who cannot wait to take the throne, but who is deeply unpopular among the British public. This is in [striking](#) contrast to a Queen viewed as both stable and beloved amongst her subjects. Dominic West plays a — perhaps too-handsome, some have [argued](#) — Prince Charles, [taking over](#) from Josh O’Connor. West discusses his role. \*\*Dominic West (English accent): \*\*The great tensions that you see in this season that Peter’s written about is between this 1950s [outlook](#) on the monarchy and on public life and on marriage, and the modern day and how they [clash](#), and how Diana really represents the modern day and Charles is sort of [caught](#) between the two.

## THE OTHER WOMAN

Charles is also [caught](#) between two women: his wife and Camilla Parker-Bowles, who begins to attract the attention of the press in a way she much dislikes, as the actor Olivia Williams, who plays the role this season, points out: \*\*Olivia Williams (English accent): \*\*Camilla goes from being a sort of an —inverted commas — close friend of Charles to being the subject of media scrutiny.

## THERE IS NO BAD PUBLICITY

Intense scrutiny is itself what has accompanied the series and elevated it to a global hit. Publicity — even bad publicity — has proven to be the key to success in terms of viewer numbers. However, from former Prime Minister Sir John Major, portrayed on the show, to Dame Judi Dench — who has played two queens, Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth I — , to Jonathan Dimbleby, friend and biographer of Charles, a number of public figures close to the royal family have felt [compelled to speak out](#) against this season of The Crown, calling it “[nonsensical](#)” and even “[tasteless](#)”. Their proximity to the royals, however, is also at play. Choosing this occasion [to speak up](#), while they remained silent on other occasions — when serious accusations were made against Prince Andrew, for example, or when Meghan Markle [called out](#) racism within the royal institution — suggests [bias](#) at best and hypocrisy at worst. Ultimately, however, it remains [up to](#) viewers to see how they feel about season five of The Crown and its treatment of the British monarchy.

## RE-CASTING THE ROYALS AS TIME GOES BY

\*\*Princess Diana. \*\*We get to see two very different Dianas: while Emma Corrin plays an innocent, hopeful princess, Elizabeth Debicki [embodies](#) a disillusioned, exhausted woman who is nevertheless ready to break free from the role that has been keeping her captive. **King Charles III.** Both Josh

O'Connor and Dominic West have two main tasks to achieve: to make it clear that he is an unusually opinionated royal, and to convey that he married Diana out of duty, while his heart was always set on Camilla. **Elizabeth II.** Claire Foy, Olivia Colman and Imelda Staunton portray Elizabeth II as consistent in her restraint. They all successfully humanise a character which, if in the wrong hands, could have been perceived as cold and detached.

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# Glossary

- **release** = uscita
- **portraying** = fare il ruolo, interpretare
- **Depicted** = rappresentare
- **recoup** = recuperare
- **up to** = dipendere da
- **taken the internet by storm** = invadere, inondare
- **preempted** = anticipare
- **striking** = sconcertante
- **taking over** = hacerse cargo
- **caught** = atrapado
- **convey** = trasmettere
- **instalment** = stagione
- **awoken** = svegliarsi
- **clash** = scontrarsi
- **faces** = affrontare
- **to speak up** = dare l'opinione
- **much remind us** = ci ricorda molto
- **breaking down** = crollare
- **spiralling** = perdere il controllo
- **arguably** = potrebbe dirsi, per così dire
- **sums up** = sintetizzare, riassumere
- **quiet** = silenziosi
- **thirty-something** = trentenne, sulla trentina d'anni
- **gaining traction** = diventare rilevante
- **embodies** = incarnare
- **called out** = portare l'attenzione su qualcosa
- **re-enactment** = ricostruzione
- **bias** = pregiudizio, parzialità
- **showrunner** = responsabile del programma
- **overtly** = apertamente
- **mirrors** = essere un riflesso
- **fairy tale** = favola
- **detached** = distante

- **pleas** = suppliche
- **accounts** = racconti, storie
- **outstanding** = eccezionale
- **landslide** = schiacciante, lett. 'a valanga'
- **argued** = affermare, difendere l'opinione
- **to speak out** = dare l'opinione
- **tasteless** = di cattivo gusto
- **poll** = sondaggio
- **troubled** = turbato
- **nonsensical** = ridicolo, assurdo
- **out of duty** = per dovere
- **happenstance** = casualità, coincidenza
- **outlook** = prospettiva
- **marrying into** = sposarsi
- **praise** = lode
- **removed** = allontanata
- **opinionated** = ostinato
- **compelled** = obbligati, costretti
- **succinctly** = succintamente
- **restraint** = moderazione
- **as expected** = come era da aspettarsi
- **plays against** = svilupparsi nel contesto, confrontarsi
- **shaped** = dare forma, determinare