

# King Charles III's first official portrait sparks mixed reactions

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**Online Desk:** The unveiling of King Charles III's inaugural portrait as monarch has ignited a flurry of reactions across online platforms, signaling a blend of admiration and critique for the symbolic representation of the reigning sovereign of Britain.

This significant milestone in King Charles III's reign unfolded at Buckingham Palace, where the monarch and Queen Camilla presided over the official unveiling of his portrait. Crafted over a meticulous three-year span by renowned UK-based artist Jonathan Yeo, the majestic painting stands as a towering testament to the royal persona.

Adorned with a vivid red backdrop, the portrait portrays King Charles donning the uniform of the Welsh Guards, a poignant nod to his esteemed role as Regimental Colonel since 1975. Notably, the genesis of this artistic endeavor traces back to 2020, when Charles held the title of Prince of Wales, an appellation subsequently inherited by his eldest son, Prince William, following the demise of Queen Elizabeth II in 2022.

The butterfly located above Charles' shoulder in the painting is representative of his transformation as king, according to Yeo.

"When I started this project, His Majesty The King was still His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, and much like the butterfly I've painted hovering over his shoulder, this portrait has evolved as the subject's role in our public life has transformed," Yeo said in a statement. "I do my best to capture the life experiences etched into any individual sitter's face."

"In this case, my aim was also 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. I'm unimaginably grateful for the opportunity to capture such an extraordinary and unique person, especially at the historic moment of becoming King," the artist continued.

Throughout the meticulous process, spanning four sittings between 2021 and 2023, Yeo meticulously chiseled the essence of King Charles' persona within the confines of his London studio. The culmination of this artistic endeavor heralds a month-long exhibition commencing May 16 at the Philip Mould Gallery in London, before finding its permanent abode at Draper's Hall, an esteemed edifice historically linked to King Henry VIII.

The portrait's departure from conventional royal depictions, emphasised by its bold crimson hue, has elicited a spectrum of reactions online, underscoring the subjective interpretation of artistic expression. While some laud the departure from tradition as refreshing and avant-garde, others perceive an unsettling intensity in the vibrant red palette.



Amidst the discordant chorus of opinions, a consensus emerges on the aptness of a more nature-centric portrayal for King Charles, given his renowned advocacy for environmental conservation.

The unexpectedly modern painting and its bold red tone quickly drew mixed reactions online, including in the comments section of the palace's Instagram post about the portrait.

"I think this is beautiful and such a break from the traditional portraits," wrote one commenter. "I'm sorry but his portrait looks like he's in hell," wrote another commenter.

Others in the comments section saw a little of both sides, with one person writing, "I would have loved this if it was any other color than red. He really captured the essence of him in the face, but the harshness of the red doesn't match the softness of his expression."

King Charles gives Prince William a military title with close ties to Prince Harry

And still others commented that they would have expected a more nature-based portrait for Charles, who is known as a champion for the environment.

"Given his love of nature and preservation, I am surprised there was not a natural landscape portrayed behind him," wrote one commenter.