

Elizabeth II

A Biography of the Image of a Monarch

THE CONCEPT:

In the sixty years since Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II ascended to the throne of the United Kingdom, the world has changed on an unimaginable scale, and in ways both technological and social that were entirely unforeseeable. The young Queen began her reign in 1952 during a time of grim austerity and with post-war rationing still in force; of a society still class-bound and entirely deferential to the royal family; a time when the British Empire was only part way through its final dissolution and before the emergence of the Commonwealth. Elizabeth came to the throne in a world in which TV was only just beginning to invade people's homes and, arguably, daylight had yet to be let in upon the (assumed) magic of royalty. The Queen's reign has witnessed unprecedented social change, the birth of the technology-based modern world and a socially mobile and cosmopolitan society with changing expectations and an outlook that has caused the role of the Monarch to endlessly adapt.

Employing over 170 seminal and carefully researched main images of the Queen, organized chronologically and fully captioned with an accompanying fascinating narrative written by historian Mark Garnett, the book is an ambitious attempt to deliver a defining documentary of the evolution of much-admired and respected Monarch. Mark Garnett has based his text on wide-ranging quotes from contemporary reports, newspapers, magazines and books of the period along with extensive interviews with those whose lives have come in to contact with Her Majesty; their stories provide unwitting testament to the way the Queen has kept the royal ship afloat in treacherous waters, and how she has been in possession of an unenviable and, at times, impossible job. It adds up to an extraordinary and magnificent social history of the Queen and her subjects, mapped in compelling visual detail.

At the same time the book is an attempt to provide a biography of the Queen's image. As a unifying symbol, the portrayal of the Queen has changed as society has changed and with the consequent and constant evolution of Monarch's role. From the initial reluctance of the new Queen to allow cameras in to the coronation, through the misguided collusion with television in the 1970s, a decision resulting in a level of intrusion that shone, perhaps, altogether too much daylight on the magic of royalty, to the modern-day preoccupation with the royal household as a celebrity commodity coupled with the destructive and polarised coverage of the tabloids.

With its chronological approach, the combination of images and the close examination of the week during which each image was captured (what people at the time took for granted; worldwide events reported through the news at the time and the changing attitudes to the place and role of the Monarch in British and Commonwealth society) the life of the Queen is given an enriched context.

A unique and significant study, plus a fascinating illustrated celebration of the Queen that will be published to coincide with Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee.

THE EXHIBITION:

A prime objective on the part of the creative team is to have staged an accompanying exhibition at a prestigious gallery – somewhere where it will attract maximum interest – during the Diamond Jubilee year.

The exhibition design and presentation will be lead by David Costa and associates at Wherefore Art.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER:

Robin Nunn has travelled with The Queen for thirty years. Granted exceptional access to the Royal Family, he has taken some of the most enduring official and informal images of Her Majesty. He is the author of three previous books, *Happy & Glorious – A Celebration of The Life of HM Queen* [Cassell Illustrated]; *William, His Life in Pictures* [Hayden Publishing] and *William & Kate: A Royal Romance* [to be published by Anova]

Mark Garnett teaches politics at Lancaster University. He is the author of *'From Anger to Apathy: The British Experience since 1975'* [Random House]; *'Keith Joseph: A Life'* [Acumen Press]; *'Splendid! Splendid! The Authorized Biography of Willie Whitelaw'* [Jonathan Cape]

Elizabeth II

A Biography of the Image of a Monarch
Proposed specification

Art Direction: David Costa, Wherefore Art

Publication date: Spring 2012

Category: Biography/Photography/Royalty

Rights: World

Title origin: Hayden Media Limited

Size: 272 x 218mm

Extent: 208pp

Wordcount: 60,000

Illustrations: 200 b&w and colour photographs

Binding: Cased and jacketed