

<http://www.itn.co.uk/home/43599/Queens+face+beamed+onto+Buckingham+Palace>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-17786965>

London, UK based The Projection Studio, headed by visual artist Ross Ashton, designed and created the record-breaking video artwork featuring 32 animated mosaic portraits of HM The Queen that is being projected onto Buckingham Palace this week.

The 'Face Britain' project was instigated by The Prince's Foundation for Children & the Arts and brought to life by PhotoBox. It has enabled over 200,000 children to make their faces famous on the front of one of London's most iconic landmarks.

It is also the first time that video projections have ever been used on the front of the Palace.

Ashton has previously projected onto the building three times – famously for the first time during the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations in 2002 – for which he used PIGI projectors. This time, leading UK video rental specialists Creative Technology (CT) have supplied the 24 Barco and Panasonic 18K and 20K video projectors.

The video montage of the 32 portraits is attempting to break the Guinness World Records Title for the Largest Collaborative Artwork, that is the most artists working on the same art installation. The previous record stands at 28,267 artists.

Ashton says, "I am hugely proud and absolutely delighted to be involved in this collaboration, and naturally it's a great honour to work directly for the Prince's Charities. There have been plenty of creative and technical challenges and it's very satisfying to get the opportunity of pushing the boundaries and breaking new ground".

Children aged 4 – 16 were invited to produce their own self-portraits by Face Britain encompassing all levels of skill and in any medium, including drawing, photography, textiles, painting and graphics. These were uploaded to PhotoBox .

Ashton came up with the idea of animated mosaics. He worked with Moscow-based Boris Glazer to create a bespoke version of his Mazaika software to encode all the photos and then compose the 32 images of The Queen from the 200,000 or so self-portraits that were submitted.

Ashton specifically wanted to see the individual photos making up each portrait montage flying together as they formed onto the fascia of the building.

When compositing the 32 portraits into the 32 minute long video file which runs as a loop, Ashton treated each individual portrait of the Queen as a separate colour way, containing 6,400 children's portraits. This enabled him to get the desired movement effect.

The template portrait of The Queen was supplied by the Sun newspaper's legendary royal photographer, Arthur Edwards. The Queen herself had to approve all stages of the creative process!

Ashton worked closely with CT's Scott Burgess to design the projection system and CT supplied all the hardware including weatherised hides and crew for the installation. The projectors are ensconced as unobtrusively as possible behind the pillars of the Palace's front wall.

The video is run via a Watchout control system programmed by Dave Boeck.

The overall image covering the Palace is 110 metres wide and 25 metres tall. Filling the spaces around the actual Queen's head portraits are a series of animated backgrounds and other picture frames.

In addition to the Buckingham Palace projections, the 32 portraits are being simultaneously shown for 24 hours on BBC Big Screens in 18 public locations nationwide.

Face Britain celebrates the UK's children and young people in the run up to HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the London Olympic and Paralympic Games.