

Media Release

Portraits of Care

Ground-breaking project brings photography to care homes in Bristol to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee



The Royal Photographic Society has today announced a ground-breaking photography exhibition, created in partnership with Bristol Care Homes, Arts Council England, and the Quartet Community Foundation.

During Spring 2022, the RPS worked with three Bristol care homes to help care staff create unique and personal portraits of the older people in their care. Through a series of workshops and tutorials led by photographer Colin Moody, the care teams were supported to make creative and meaningful images of residents, whilst reflecting on their memories of Queen Elizabeth II.

The resulting 47 portraits are being displayed at the Royal Photographic Society, Bristol from 11 June; and a digital exhibition preview will be displayed at [rps.org](https://www.rps.org) from 2 June. Following the exhibition, the portraits will be displayed at the care homes; before being presented to the participating individuals and their families.

Evan Dawson, RPS CEO said: "This project demonstrates the special power of the arts to bring people together. The care teams and older people have been brilliant and have clearly benefitted in so many ways from their experiences, learning new skills too. The resulting photographs are powerful, moving and of a very high quality. Please do come and see the exhibition at the RPS, as part of our mission to bring photography to everyone."

Colin Moody, Workshop Leader, said: "Portraits of Care aims to improve individual and communal wellbeing in the care setting whilst growing their photographic practice. This offers a transformative wellbeing that can grow beyond the project whilst also producing work that offers insight and encourages empathy.

It's essential to get under the surface when documenting social situations - to let the people involved create the work and the story. Working in this way and workshopping with the individuals who live and work in the care homes, was very important.

This project has uncovered some talented photographers and inventive ideas. We will continue our journey to bring photography to everyone and continue to allow those involved to share their stories and what they find beautiful, real, strong, and human."

Marcia Ellington, Social Engagement and Wellbeing Manager at Bristol Care Home Group said: "Every day, our residents' wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do. It was thrilling to have the opportunity to express the lives of residents through photography.

There has been a significant impact in the homes. There was a wonderful atmosphere and both residents and staff were so inspired to start taking pictures of their daily lives and to show off their new skills. This project has given the residents a sense of belonging and has provided them with comfort in their daily lives."

'Portraits of Care' has provided new creative skills, instilled confidence, and encouraged a more meaningful connection between care teams and residents. Furthermore, it aimed to help older

people share their personal histories, whilst expressing themselves in an artistic, safe, and enjoyable environment. 'Portraits of Care' emphasises the importance of the arts in building nurturing relationships and demonstrates the powerful impact that photography can have in improving personal wellbeing.

The project demonstrates a new evidence-based approach to creative photography and draws on the Royal Photographic Society's new transformative strategy, 'Photography for Everyone', specifically the 'Photography for Wellbeing' strand that aims to support older people, carers, young carers, and those living with autism, dementia, and disabilities.

The staff and residents involved in the project include residents Jules Challen and June Donovan, and care staff including Michelle Mills, Carly Moore, Marcia Ellington, Naomi Elder, Simon Taylerson, Mariam Mokhtar, Tracy Freke, Sarah Stocker and Julie Farrell.

Queen Elizabeth II was the Royal Photographic Society's Patron for 67 years, from 1952 to 2019.

'Portraits of Care' is funded by the Let's Create Jubilee Fund by Arts Council England in partnership with UK Community Foundations, a 5million investment to support voluntary and community organisations to deliver creative activity as part of Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations. The project is also supported by the Quartet Community Foundation and West of England Creative Business Grants.

View the digital exhibition from 2 June: rps.org/portraitsofcare

— ENDS —

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Download an image selection here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Nd4aJVyxCpcPU5cBLY7NVrIhLXtp8R8f?usp=sharing>

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ABOUT THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

The Royal Photographic Society (The RPS) is an educational charity with an international membership. Founded in 1853, when photography was in its infancy, the objective of the RPS is to make the art and science of photography more widely available and is committed to bringing photography to everyone. Today, the RPS is a world-leading photographic community, based in Bristol, UK, with a membership of over 10,000 photographers. The RPS aims to inspire people through its innovative exhibitions, its award-winning RPS Journal, and its highly respected awards and events. The RPS helps photographers create images through its educational programmes, qualifications, and its public initiatives; and it seeks to connect photographers through its UK and international regional hubs, and specialist groups. Membership is open to everyone.

#RoyalPhotographicSociety #PhotographyforEveryone

Instagram: @royalphotographicsociety

Twitter: @The_RPS

Facebook: @royalphotographicsociety

rps.org

ABOUT COLIN MOODY

Colin is an artist and photographer with a passion for the recognition of culture in Bristol and around the UK. He works on arts projects with various institutions. His books explore the social environment, spaces, and events in Bristol, UK.

ABOUT BRISTOL CARE HOMES

Bristol Care Homes are a group of four high-quality care homes in Bristol, UK. Bristol Care Homes founding vision is to provide excellence in all aspects of care, looking after their residents' physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs to ensure they have a happy and fulfilled life.



ABOUT QUARTET COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Quartet is the local community foundation for the region of the West of England, covering the old Avon boundary – Bath & North Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire. We help ordinary people do extraordinary things that make our local communities thrive and improve the lives of people who live here.



Image captions (left to right):

Joel, Quarry House, Bristol Care Homes

Empty Room, Field House, Bristol Care Homes

Nan, Quarry House, Bristol Care Homes

