

News Release

STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01 THURSDAY 7 MAY

THE DUCHESS OF CAMBRIDGE AND NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY LAUNCH *HOLD STILL*

Landmark Community Project to Create a Photographic Portrait of the Nation



Alexis and David Brett with nine of their sons and baby daughter © Peter Jolly

The Duchess of Cambridge and the National Portrait Gallery have today (Thursday 7th May) launched *Hold Still*, an ambitious community photography project to capture the spirit, the mood, the hopes, the fears and the feelings of the nation as we continue to deal with the Coronavirus outbreak.

Whilst many people's lives are on hold to help protect our helpers and heroes, there are some that are working harder than ever, and others that are enduring the upheaval of hardship and loss. Spearheaded by The Duchess, Patron of the National Portrait Gallery, *Hold Still* will create a unique photographic portrait of the people of our nation as we hold still for the good of others, and celebrate those who have continued so we can stay safe.

The Duchess and the National Portrait Gallery are inviting people from across the UK to submit a photographic portrait which they have taken during these extraordinary times. Participants are also encouraged to provide a short written submission to outline the experiences and emotions of those depicted in their photograph. The project will focus on three core themes:

- Helpers and Heroes
- Your New Normal
- Acts of Kindness



Jack Dodsley, 70, dances with a carer in PPE © Tom Maddick / SWNS; Nurse Aimée Goold after a 13-hour shift treating coronavirus patients © Aimée Goold

Completely free and open to all ages and abilities, *Hold Still* will serve to allow the nation to capture a snapshot of the UK at this time, creating a collective portrait of lockdown which will reflect resilience and bravery, humour and sadness, creativity and kindness, and human tragedy and hope. It will also act as a reminder of the significance of human connection in times of adversity, and that although we were physically apart, as a community and nation, we all faced and rose to the challenge together.

On the launch of *Hold Still*, The Duchess said:

“We’ve all been struck by some of the incredible images we’ve seen which have given us an insight into the experiences and stories of people across the country. Some desperately sad images showing the human tragedy of this pandemic and other uplifting pictures showing people coming together to support those more vulnerable.”

Hold Still aims to capture a portrait of the nation, the spirit of the nation, what everyone is going through at this time. Photographs reflecting resilience, bravery, kindness – all those things that people are experiencing.”

Her Royal Highness has taken part in an interview, which will be broadcast today on ITV’s *This Morning*, to speak about the project and her motivations for utilising photography to capture a portrait of a nation.



Captain Tom Moore **Twitter** @captaintommoore; 5-year-old Eadee © **West Midlands Ambulance Service**

Submissions for *Hold Still* can be made from 0001hrs today (Thursday 7th May) via: www.npg.org.uk. The closing date will be the 18th June, 2020. One hundred shortlisted portraits will then feature in a gallery without walls – a one of a kind digital exhibition open to all. A selection of images will also be shown across the UK later in the year. The images can be captured on phones or cameras and each image will be assessed on the emotion and experience it conveys rather than its photographic quality or technical expertise.

For 164 years, the National Portrait Gallery has existed to tell the stories of the people of Great Britain through the medium of portraits. In these unprecedented times, it is now more important than ever that we find ways to document and share our individual and collective stories of an experience which has impacted everybody's lives in a multitude of ways.

The Duchess has a longstanding interest in photography and its power to capture emotions and stories. In January 2020, Her Royal Highness took photographs of two Holocaust survivors with their grandchildren as part of the commemorations for the 75th anniversary of the end of the Holocaust.

Her Royal Highness has been Patron of the National Portrait Gallery since 2012.

Speaking about *Hold Still*, Nicholas Cullinan, Director of the National Portrait Gallery London, said:

“Even if we are alone, we can all create something together. We are honoured to partner with The Duchess of Cambridge on the Hold Still project, which will provide an inclusive perspective on, and an important historical record of, these unprecedented times, expressed through the faces of the nation. The National Portrait Gallery reflects the history of Britain through the personal stories of the people who have helped to shape it. We are now inviting each and every person, across every city, town, village and home in the UK, to share their portraits with us in this unique collective endeavour.”

International law firm Taylor Wessing are supporting the *Hold Still* project in partnership with the National Portrait Gallery. They are long-term supporters of the Gallery and have sponsored the *Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize* for the past 12 years.

Shane Gleghorn, Managing Partner for Taylor Wessing UK said:

"We're thrilled to be able to support Hold Still. It's a privilege to be part of such an accessible project that we feel sure it will capture everyone's hearts and imaginations, bringing us all closer together in these extraordinary circumstances."

www.npg.org.uk/holdstill

#HoldStill2020

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Notes to Editors

National Portrait Gallery, London

Founded in 1856, the aim of the National Portrait Gallery, London is 'to promote through the medium of portraits the appreciation and understanding of the men and women who have made and are making British history and culture, and ... to promote the appreciation and understanding of portraiture in all media'. The Gallery holds the most extensive collection of portraits in the world.

With over 1000 portraits on display across three floors, from Elizabeth I to David Beckham, the Gallery has something for everyone. Artists featured range from Holbein to Hockney, and the Collection includes work across all media, from painting and sculpture to photography and video. As well as the permanent displays, the Gallery has a diverse and ever-changing programme of exhibitions and events that promote an understanding and appreciation of portraiture in all forms.

The Gallery is currently temporarily closed due to the Coronavirus pandemic.
www.npg.org.uk

About Taylor Wessing

Taylor Wessing is a global law firm that serves the world's most innovative people and businesses. Deeply embedded within our sectors, we work closely together with our clients to crack complex problems, enabling ideas and aspirations to thrive. Creative thinking is at the heart of our culture and we see art as an important instrument of change. Together with our people and community partners, we seek to challenge expectation and create extraordinary results.

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