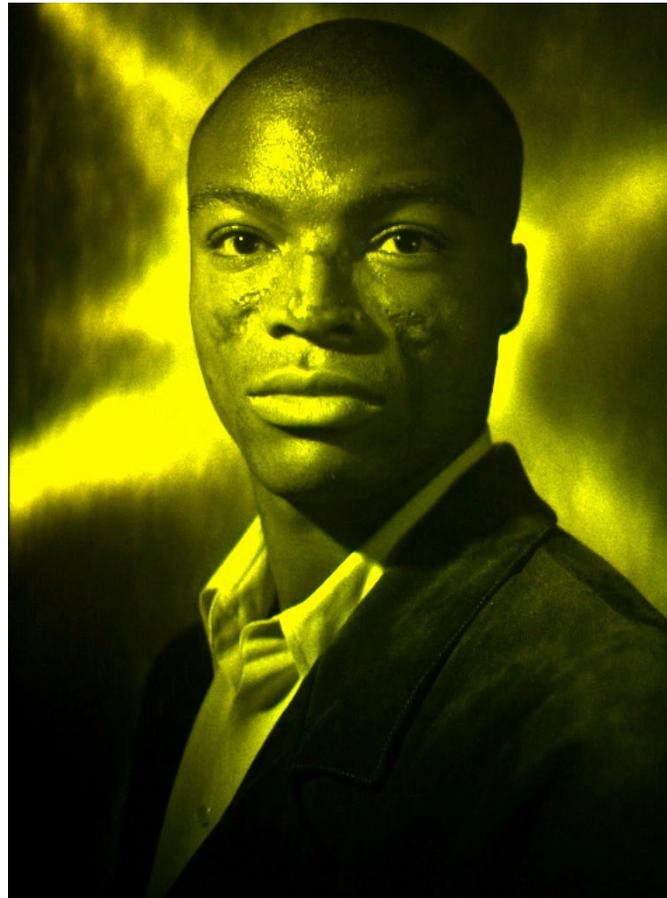


A 3D holographic portrait of Seal by Rob Munday, 1994

Seal (born Seal Henry Olusegun Olumide Adeola Samuel in 1963) is a British singer-songwriter whose distinctive, soulful voice and genre-blending style brought him international acclaim in the early 1990s. Raised in London, he worked a series of jobs before emerging onto the music scene, first gaining attention with the hit *Killer* and then achieving global success with *Crazy* and the Grammy-winning *Kiss from a Rose*. Over the course of his career, he has released multiple platinum-selling albums, won numerous awards, and established himself as one of the UK's most recognisable and enduring musical artists.



Seal 1994

In 1994, a call came through from IC Holographic to ask whether I would be interested in creating a holographic portrait of Seal. IC had a contact at Warner Bros. and explained that it would be an opportunity for me to create another celebrity portrait as my own artwork, albeit at my own cost and in exchange for several copies of the final work. Having already produced holographic portraits of Britain's pioneering inventor and consumer-electronics visionary Sir Clive Sinclair, as well as television presenter and mathematics expert Carol Vorderman MBE, I was keen to add a third notable figure to my portfolio, and so I jumped at the chance.

The plan was to create Seal's portrait at my private creative holography studio, which I had designed and built only three years earlier in a premises behind No. 8 Wheatash Road, Addlestone, Surrey, KT15 2ER. The premises had previously been occupied by the engineering firm SCHEMECHS Ltd., owned and run by Mr and Mrs Lovelock. Within the UK holography community, SCHEMECHS was legendary as it produced the world's finest spatial filters and mirror mounts for holography, components so well engineered that, even today, they have never been surpassed.

After Mr Lovelock's passing, his wife Jean generously allowed me to take over the workshop. The space comprised an entrance gallery, an office, a darkroom, and three holography studios, one of which was my private pulsed-laser portrait studio. The portrait studio, which I operated as the UK's only holographic portrait

artist, was the only facility of its kind in the UK at that time.

The chief tool of my art was a second-hand JK Lasers 10-joule ruby pulsed laser, which I had purchased in 1991 directly from its designer, the pioneer holographer, laser physicist, and engineer Dr John Webster. The acquisition included the essential optical components and an 80 cm-diameter collimating mirror, at a total cost of £35,000. I funded the purchase entirely from my own savings, six years' worth accumulated during my time working within the Holography Unit of the Royal College of Art.

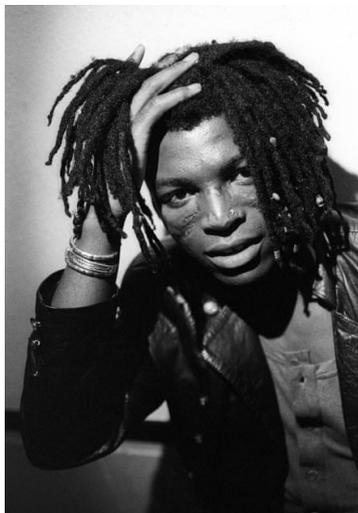
The shoot was managed by Chris Levine, the part owner and in-house designer of IC Holographic, the company that had arranged the shoot for me.

A few days before the shoot, I designed and built the holographic camera, set up the studio, arranged the lighting, and considered how I would shoot the portrait, composition, style, etc. I had made the creative decision to back light Seals head, on the assumption that he still had long dread locks, using a piece of broken glass to scatter the light in a more interesting way than had been used for holographic portraits to that date. I also planned to create what I believed at the time would be the world's first two-colour pulsed portrait hologram artwork

On the day of the shoot, Chris Levine arrived at my studio first, eager to meet Seal. Seal followed a little later. My studio sat in the middle of a sleepy residential street in Addlestone, Surrey, quite literally the last place one would expect to see one of the UK's most famous singer-songwriters pulling up in a black Porsche 911 Carrera.

He stepped out of the car wearing a long black suede suit and sunglasses, looking every inch the international music star he was. I imagine more than a few curtains twitched as neighbours wondered why a global celebrity had appeared at number 8 and was strolling into the back garden. Seal himself may have been slightly bemused by the provincial setting of the UK's only holographic portrait studio.

My first shock was to see Seals shaven head, as one of my creative visions for the portrait had been to highlight his famous dreadlocks from behind.



Seal in the Netherlands in 1991, shortly after the release of his first album. Photograph: Rob Verhorst/Redferns

After we'd exchanged introductions, I walked Seal through to my studio at the very back of my workshop and explained the process to him. I fired a couple of test bursts from the laser so he could see exactly what would happen. I told him that the actual exposures would be taken in complete darkness, and that I would give a clear countdown before each shot so that he knew precisely when the pulse was coming. This was partly for reassurance, but also an important safety measure.

The shoot then began in earnest. I posed Seal, chose my moment, counted down, and triggered the exposure. Over the course of the session, I produced five H1 master holograms, including two intended to become the

world's first two-colour pulsed-laser portrait.

In between exposures, I went into the darkroom to process each master hologram. This allowed me to assess their quality, both creatively and technically, and to show Seal the results before taking the next shot. It was a sunny day, and while I worked, Chris chatted enthusiastically with him, keen to strike up a friendship. During one break, Seal settled into an old deckchair in the garden; during another, his manager rang to discuss his second album, *Seal* (1994). After a short pause for coffee and a McVitie's Hobnob or two, the shoot resumed.

Satisfied with the results, we said our goodbyes to Seal, and I began the second half of the creative process. The following day, I selected the strongest portrait from the session and began creating the final holographic portrait artwork. As with the H1 master recording, I alone made all creative decisions.

Both creative and technical skills are required to produce the final exhibition artworks, known as white-light, image-plane reflection holograms, and many creative decisions are made at this stage: the choice of size, colour, composition, spatial positioning, and overall dimensionality, among others. It took several days, working in my blacked-out holography studio, to create the final piece and copies thereof, all again at my own expense.

It was only after creating the final work that I noticed a unique and rather surprising feature of the portrait. Holographic portraits cannot be retouched or have unwanted details removed, unlike photographic images. Upon close inspection, I spotted a single Hobnob biscuit crumb lingering at the corner of Seal's mouth!

Even though I had intended to create the world's first two-colour pulsed-laser portrait, and had indeed recorded two H1 master holograms for that purpose, the final two-colour artwork was never realised, largely due to time and cost constraints. The image below, which I created and published on my website only recently, is a visual impression of what such a hologram might have looked like. Perhaps one day I will complete the work.



A visual for a proposed two-colour lenticular portrait work, by Rob Munday.

As part of my agreement with IC Holographic, who had arranged and organised my project to create a

holographic portrait of Seal, I supplied them with several copies of the final portrait artwork.

Please note, that this was not a commission from IC Holographic, nor was it an artistic collaboration with Chris Levine, nor a work of Chris Levine alone, however, soon after delivering the holograms, I learned that the portrait had been publicly shown by Chris Levine as his own and credited in at least one newspaper as a 'Portrait of Seal by Chris Levine'. My solicitor, Richard Thompson of Thompson and Lilly in Mayfair, advised me to take legal action over the false attribution, but I simply couldn't afford to pursue it.

Over the subsequent years, Chris Levine befriended Seal and continued to present my portrait as his own in various exhibitions, including his *1997 Hypervisual 1* and *1998 Hypervisual 1.2* exhibitions, failing to credit me as the author of the work.

He later presented himself as the sole author of the portrait at the Jersey Heritage Trust, a misrepresentation that ultimately led to his being commissioned to create a holographic portrait of the late Queen Elizabeth II, a commission that he gained under false pretences.

I own and retain all the H1 master holograms of my portrait of Seal, however, I am currently considering donating them to a leading museum collection.

From 7 July – 1 August 2000, the Royal Photographic Society Holography Group Summer Exhibition, curated by the respected art hologram collector Jonathan Ross, was held at the Royal Photographic Society's prestigious Octagon Gallery, located at its headquarters in Bath, UK. One of the featured artworks, item 5., was my portrait of Seal. The work is credited in the catalogue as by Rob Munday / Chris Levine, with a description of me under. Chris Levine's name appears, not in recognition of his creative input, but as the initiator and manager of the project. Chris Levine is also credited for item 13b, a commercial 'dot matrix' hologram sticker, made by Applied Holographics for a 1995 CD single called "In the Meantime" by Spacehog, and is described as a commercial hologram designer.

<p>1 Bob Gibson FRPS</p> <p>(upper) Auto-Pilot (lower) United Kingdom</p> <p>Bob describes himself as an engineer who dabbles in art. He took up holography as a result of his wife's interest and went on to produce pseudocolour holograms of semi-abstract subjects. Most of Bob's work is inspired by real or imagined images but is presented with a degree of ambiguity that invites thoughtful consideration.</p>	<p>6 Margaret Benyon</p> <p>Sophie</p> <p>Margaret Benyon pioneered art holography in the late 1960s. Her work is included in a number of private and public collections world-wide, including the Australian National Gallery, the MIT Museum Boston, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the V&A Museum. She has received a number of awards, and has exhibited 80 times.</p>
<p>2 Molly Gibson ARPS</p> <p>(upper) Columbine (lower) Holy Family</p> <p>Molly became interested in holography after seeing an exhibition in London; a weekend course further whetted her appetite. She and her husband Bob set up a holographic studio in their cellar. Specializing in abstract pseudocolour reflection holograms, she gained her ARPS in holography in 1992.</p>	<p>7 Martin Richardson</p> <p>Mathematical Chef</p> <p>After obtaining a BA(Hons) in Fine Art, Martin went on to gain an MA and a PhD at the Royal College of Art. He has exhibited in UK, Germany, USA, Israel and Japan and his work is held in collections world-wide. He has received many awards, published numerous articles, and gives lectures. He produces commissioned holograms from The Holographic Image Studios which he founded in 1993.</p>
<p>3 Jo Fairfax</p> <p>Serotonin</p> <p>Jo left art college in 1979 and since then has exhibited nationally, and received several awards and residences. He has taught part time and given lectures on his work throughout this period in Britain and America. He works primarily as a sculptor but for the last five years his studio work has centred around the emotive qualities of light - hence his involvement with holography. His collaborations have included various architectural projects and sculptural input with the dance company Salamanda Tandem.</p>	<p>8 Jeffrey Robb</p> <p>Will Not Marry</p> <p>Jeffrey came to holography via photography. He studied under Prof. Nick Phillips at Loughborough University before moving to the Royal College of Art Holography Unit. Here he was granted an extra scholarship year to specialise in moving holograms. Since leaving the Royal College he has worked at Spatial Imaging, a world leader in holographic origination and is now their Creative Director.</p>
<p>4 Jim McIntyre</p> <p>Kraken</p> <p>Jim started holography in 1984 while studying for a Fine Art degree. He was initially interested in 3D film but after seeing an exhibition of Holography at the Science Museum he decided that was a better way to go. After doing some courses at Richmond Holography Studios and working with other practitioners in the UK on an assortment of projects, artworks, collaborations and commercial projects he took an MA in Holography at the Royal College of Art in 1990.</p>	<p>9 David Pizzanelli</p> <p>Warrior</p> <p>David Pizzanelli holds a PhD in Holography from the Royal College of Art and has had a career in holography since 1980. His artworks have been exhibited in the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Tate Gallery, the Museum of the Moving Image, the Diamaru Museum (Tokyo), the Musco Trans-Unto (Florence), the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television and several other smaller galleries.</p>
<p>5 Rob Munday / Chris Levine</p> <p>Seal</p> <p>Rob Munday taught himself holography while studying for a degree, and went on to become Chief Technician at the Royal College of Art. He is recognised as one of the finest practitioners of pulse laser holography, noted for his portraits and animal studies.</p>	<p>10 Patrick Boyd</p> <p>Cows in Motion</p> <p>Patrick has been making holograms for some 15 years now. He graduated from the Royal College of Art, London with an MA in 1988. Since then he has won many awards and scholarships including a Fulbright Fellowship to work in the United States and a Monbuscho Scholarship to study in Japan. He likes to avoid all traditional holographic images in his creations preferring to record documentary style situations.</p>

11 Pearl John

Self-Portrait

Pearl graduated from the Royal College of Art with an MA in Holography in 1992. She went on to work as a community arts worker and an artist in residence in schools. She currently teaches holography and photography in London, but is soon to take up a post at Columbia Careers Center in Missouri, USA.

12 Mike Medora

New York, New York

Mike has been making holograms for 15 years. In 1988 he was Artist in Residence at the New York Museum of Holography where he made a series of holograms in collaboration with Gerhard Schlansky. These holograms have been exhibited widely throughout the world. His main interest now is large format full colour transmission holograms using 35mm tracking footage.

13a Inaki Beguiristain

Four Holograms

Inaki studied physics at Imperial College but started experimenting in holography while still at school. After leaving college he joined Spatial Imaging where he produced photoresist master holograms for embossing. He has a small studio at his home in Surrey where he is producing fine multicolour reflection holograms.

13b Chris Levine BA (Hons)

Spacehog "In the Meantime"

Chris studied Graphic Design at Chelsea and St. Martins Schools of Art. His current work is in the area of digital Holographic imaging and in designs for Holographic CDs. Commissions and projects include work for RSCG Conran, The Science Museum and EMI. Chris is Art Director at iC Holographic.

14 Jon Mitton

Tits

Jon is a visual and performing artist and musician. He gained a distinction for his MA in holography at the Royal College of Art in 1992 and was the recipient of the Walter Clark Award in both 1991 and 1992. His exhibitions include the 4th International Exhibition of Holography Chicago, Holographia 2000, Maison Internationale de L'Holographie & the Pompidou Foyer, Paris.

15 Andrew Pepper

Tilted Corner

Andrew studied Fine Art at Nottingham Trent and Reading Universities, where he became interested in holography. He studied in New York and has exhibited his work in group and solo shows worldwide, written extensively on the subject and taught, most recently at the Academy of Media Arts, Cologne. He returned to Nottingham last year to organise a major symposium for Art in Holography.



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Catalogue

Contact with the exhibitors may be made through
Bob Gibson, Tel: 01703 252171