



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

**This portrait commission was supported
in full by the generosity of Alumni**

Our very special gratitude extends to the following,
hailing from many inspiring generations who have
studied at Trinity College Dublin

Nicholas Bielenberg

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Christina McGuckian

Rosheen McGuckian

Síle McGuckian

Fiona McKone

Bryan Meehan

Fionnuala Meehan

Paul Meehan

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Sarah O'Doherty

Richard O'Donohoe

Denise O'Kelly

Carlos Quinn

Gilliane Quinn de Schonen

Zoe Quinn

Members of the Senior Common Room

Jenny Shanagher

Tim Shanagher

Fiona Thomas

Helga Thomson

Rory Tobin

Jean Walker (née Tweedy)

Melissa Webb

Richard Whitley

Full image and details: Mark Shields, Portrait of Mary Robinson,
Chancellor 1998–2019, oil on canvas, unframed h 270 x w 180 cm,
framed h 310 x w 220 cm © the Artist and reproduced by kind permission
from The Board of Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin



Chancellor Mary Robinson (1998–2019)

Portrait inaugurated by Provost Patrick Prendergast
in the presence of the Chancellor and the Artist
with the donors and invited guests, May 28th, 2019

A welcome from Catherine Giltrap, Curator of the College Art Collections

Our extraordinary history has witnessed exceptional graduates and academics who have confidently reached far beyond Trinity College Dublin to make life-changing contributions to global society. We are all aware of the impact Dr Mary Robinson has had in Ireland and around the world. However, it is her twenty-one year contribution as University Chancellor that we wish to acknowledge by the long-established tradition of commissioning a portrait upon retirement from this prestigious position. In a career replete with firsts in terms of accolades, appointments and achievements, it is fitting that we echo this legacy by introducing the first portrait of a woman to our eighteenth-century Dining Hall with this superlative painting by Mark Shields. Indeed, it is the first portrait since 1868 to join the existing Dining Hall portraits of Chancellors, Provosts and University representatives. We hope that the commission of this portrait embodies the esteem in which Chancellor Robinson is held.

Dr Mary Robinson has been a significant contributor to this University since her time here as a student, then lecturer, in the Law School, when in 1969 she was awarded the Reid Professorship. In the same year, she was elected to *Seanad Éireann*, a position held consistently for twenty years. Since 1990, she has earned many national and global firsts, being inaugurated as the seventh President of Ireland, and the first woman to hold this office. She was subsequently appointed as the first ever United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. In 1998, Mary Robinson was invited to the Chancellorship of the University of Dublin, and, indeed, she was also the first woman to hold this position. The Chancellor acts as the Head of the University, presiding at meetings of the University Senate, including important ceremonial occasions such as commencement ceremonies, when degrees are awarded. The Chancellor also officiates at honorary degree ceremonies and is one of the two 'Visitors' who hear appeals against decisions of the College Board and interpret the College Statutes.



Mark Shields is a member of the Royal Ulster Academy whose practice encompasses a broad range of styles and subject matter in a determination to balance poetic resonance with tangible presence. Exhibiting extensively both nationally and internationally since he graduated from Ulster University, Belfast, he has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions, winning awards at the Royal Hibernian Academy, the BP Portrait Award, and the Discerning Eye Exhibition. His work is held in private collections worldwide, as well as in the collections of the National Gallery of Ireland, the Ulster Museum, the National Self-Portrait Collection of Ireland and the Palace of Westminster. Commissioned portraits include Mary and Nicholas Robinson for the National Gallery of Ireland; HRH The Prince of Wales for the Royal Gurkha Rifles; and Rev Dr Ian Paisley MP for the Houses of Parliament. This is the first time his work will enter the collections of Trinity College Dublin.

The portrait frame was designed, crafted and gilded by Kathryn Day Carri- gan and David Kirwan, with creative assistance from Catherine Giltrap and Mark Shields. Architectural references are made to the neo-classical Public Theatre at Trinity College Dublin, which is specifically connected with the role of Chancellor. These include dentils from the facade and a sunflower motif taken from the interior of the Public Theatre, the latter chosen to symbolise Dr Mary Robinson's significant contribution to the global cause of climate justice. These elements are combined with a seventeenth-century Spanish *cassetta* style, featuring lozenges along the frieze, to complement recurring forms within the painting and to create a unique, contemporary frame befitting this commission.