



six string nation

THE STORY OF CANADA
as you've never held it before

The Portrait Feature



Since the very first day that the Six String Nation guitar made its debut on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, July 1st, 2006, we've been taking portraits of people holding the guitar at all festival events and many of our educational, conference and corporate events. The portraits are free to recipients and distributed electronically following the event. To date, we've taken about 150,000 portraits of around 15,000 different subjects at events in every province and territory of Canada as well as at a festival in Italy.

This is arguably the most ambitious photo-portrait project in Canadian history. Bringing the portrait feature to your event is a great way for you and your organization to be part of that project. We also find that there is a great demand from individuals following a presentation to get close and touch the guitar. We have no problem with this – with or without the portrait feature – provided certain security conditions are met, but we find that making time for the portraits gives everyone a chance for a respectful, orderly and very personal encounter with this piece of Canadian history.

It's also a great way to create a memento of your event. Each photo subject receives multiple photos – in electronic form – of various poses, each one bannered with the name and date of the event as per your specifications. In addition, the event host will receive the full set of portraits for their archives and to use in various organizational communications.

Also, if you wish to recognize an event or portrait-feature co-sponsor or include specific messages, there's room for that in the footer of each image. Some organizers have utilized this sponsorship space to partially or even fully cover the cost of our participation in the event. (See Appendix A).

Apart from the additional cost of the portrait photographer and our set up, there are a number of facilities requirements that need to be met in terms of available space, power and equipment. The portrait feature can be operated in indoor and outdoor configurations (see Appendix B). You'll also need to build in sufficient time for the photo sessions since we spend an average of 3-4 minutes with each subject. We can shoot individuals and groups of up to about 8. Remember, of course, that we can't do the portraits while the presentation is on. We also need 2-3 dedicated volunteers to help us operate the feature. We'll train them about 20 minutes before starting and we need them to stay with us for the duration to avoid re-training delays.

Doug Nicholson is the exclusive official portrait photographer for the Six String Nation project and we do not permit third party photographers to replicate our set up. But we have no issue at all with people taking candid photos with their own smartphones or cameras – again provided we have dedicated volunteer support and that security conditions allow this to be done safely.



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Appendix A

The Portrait Feature

Sponsor Recognition

The portrait feature is a requirement for all festival bookings but simply an option for most other engagements – including schools, conferences, corporate and community events. This is because there is always a demand from audiences to get close to *Voyageur* and want to take pictures, ask questions and perhaps even play the guitar a little. This can be unwieldy and even dangerous to accommodate – especially in a setting where there is a lot of flow-through and some people encountering *Voyageur* may not have had the context of the full story – which means we will get frequent repetition of basic questions that are answered in the presentation and some people may not take the appropriate level of care with the instrument. The portrait feature brings some structure and intimacy to these interactions at the same time as providing a genuine attraction to the event and added value to the experience for everyone involved.

It also adds considerable expense – not only in terms of our engagement fee but possibly additional travel and accommodation for our official photographer, some consumable equipment needed for our background (and possible equipment rentals depending on the event location) and even possible rentals of additional equipment to ensure that the event facility meets our requirements. But it also provides a greater level of engagement for your audience and creates a lasting memento of the encounter linked forever to your event. And it provides a vehicle for sponsor recognition that recipients are encouraged to share on social media, extending the impact long past the end of the event itself. Many events have either fully or partially covered these costs and more by offering sponsors space on the photos that are distributed post-event.

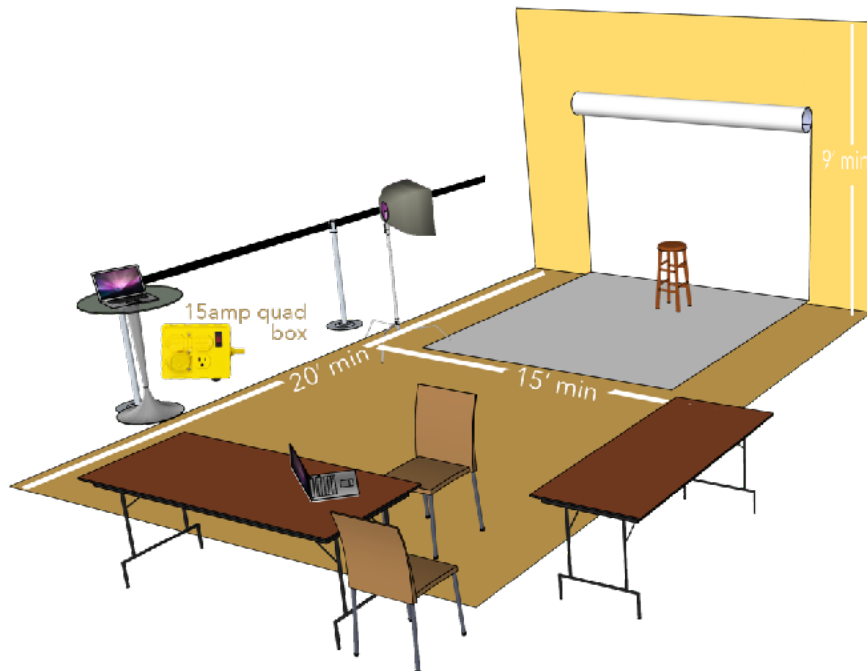
There are some basic constraints on the design of our branded template “frames” that you can see at the left here. We will work with you in advance of the event to brand the event itself and the host organization at the top of each photo and provide space to either recognize sponsors or provide other messaging in the footer of each. These examples show just a small range of some of the ways we have applied event branding and sponsor recognition designed in collaboration with our hosts. Hosts also receive a full set of the portraits for their archives and communications.

For more examples, you can either visit our full portrait gallery at [flickr.com/photos/sixstringnation/albums/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/sixstringnation/albums/) or, for a smaller curated gallery of sponsor recognition samples, scan this QR code with your smartphone:





The Portrait Feature



While this configuration can be modified somewhat, this diagram will give you the basic idea. To start, the area must be a minimum of 15' X 20' and be wheelchair accessible.

If the entire area has a hard floor surface, that is ideal. If that is not possible, we need at the very least an 8' X 8' section of hard, smooth, level surface at one end of the area on which to roll out the backdrop where portrait subjects will sit or stand (such as parquet interlocking dance floors common at many facilities). Very tight industrial carpet-tile is OK but anything softer is not.

A 9' height from the surface of this area to the ceiling gives us maximum flexibility in the range of images we can capture. A cramped area will reflect poorly on your event when the photos are distributed following the event.

We require one 15A circuit with which to run our camera lighting and computer system. Please provide one long extension cord with dual or cube tap terminus (sometimes called a quad box). Ideally, we should have some control over ambient light, either from artificial lighting or windows. If we are positioned away from wall or in-floor power outlets, you may need to provide cable covers.

We require two or three 6' craft tables, one hightop table (sometimes called a "cruiser") if you have it, two armless chairs and a performer's stool if available (though not required).

Set up and testing of the station and training of the volunteers takes about 60-90 minutes in total provided the space is well prepared.

We require a minimum of two dedicated volunteers (three is even better). One job is primarily data entry, the other two are standing/walking within the space. The tasks are not difficult and we promise to treat volunteers nicely!



The Portrait Feature

Tent roof must be leak-proof, side panels up for wind, sun, weather protection



While this configuration can be modified somewhat, this diagram will give you the basic idea. To start, the area must be a minimum of 15' X 20' and be wheelchair accessible.

If the entire tent area can be floored, that is ideal. If that is not possible, we need at the very least an 8' X 8' section of hard, smooth, level surface at one end of the area on which to roll out the backdrop on which portrait subjects will sit or stand, such as risers parquet interlocking dance floor sections.

An 8' height from the surface of this area to the ceiling gives us maximum flexibility in the range of images we can capture. There should be no interior tent poles and any guy wires should be at least 8' above the surface.

We require one 15A circuit with which to run our camera lighting and computer system. Please provide one long extension cord with dual or cube tap terminus (sometimes called a quad box).

We require opaque tent sides for control of light, wind and weather. In extreme conditions we may need to suspend operations for safety reasons.

We require two or three 6' craft tables, one hightop table (sometimes called a "cruiser") if you have it, two armless chairs and a performer's stool if available (though not required).

Set up and testing of the station and training of the volunteers takes about 60-90 minutes in total provided the space is well prepared.

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