

Mail Online News

Prince Charles will appear at conference as a hologram

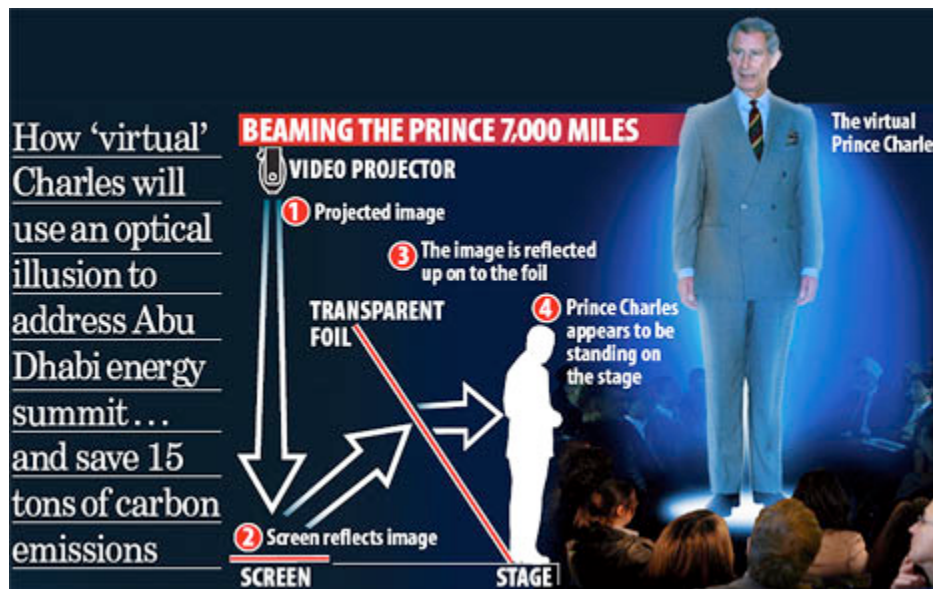
Last updated at 22:54 15 December 2007

His detractors may argue that his green principles do not stand up to close examination.

But now Prince Charles is set to confound his critics by addressing an energy conference - as a hologram.

Determined to keep his environmental damage to a minimum, Charles will save the 15 tons of carbon that would have been generated by flying himself and his staff 7,000 miles to the World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi.

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Instead, a three-dimensional image of the Prince will be seen giving a five-minute talk.

Charles recorded the message at Highgrove last month. It will be transformed into a hologram-style image using technology based on a Victorian music-hall technique called "ghosting".

A video projector will beam an image of the Prince on to the floor.

It is then reflected up on to a paper-thin sheet of foil to create an optical illusion that makes him appear as a 3-D image on stage.

Former US Vice-President Al Gore used similar technology to appear as a hologram at Wembley Stadium at the beginning of the Live Earth concerts earlier this year.

Charles was heavily criticised in January when he and the Duchess of Cornwall flew to Philadelphia with 12 staff to pick up an award from Mr Gore honouring him as an environmentalist.

That trip created 20 tons of carbon dioxide.

The idea of the virtual Prince came from the Abu Dhabi conference organisers, who asked British events firm Revolution to produce special events for the three-day summit which starts on January 21.

Revolution managing director

Matt Sims said: "He will appear as a three-dimensional holographic image. All credit to His Royal Highness who was very keen to do it.

"It's all about zero carbon emissions."

Ironically, the biggest hurdle to setting up the holographic speech was Royal protocol, Mr Sims said, as Prince Andrew - dubbed "Air Miles Andy" for his jet-set lifestyle - will also be there.

"Protocol forbids two Royals from being on the same stage, and so the whole thing was coming into question," Mr Sims said.

"I was at a very eye-opening meeting at which they were asking 'Do we allow two Royals on the same stage at the same time?'

"Because Prince Charles isn't actually going to be there, it was decided that this did not breach protocol.

But they said they might have to rewrite protocol to take holograms into account in the future."

The Prince wore a light-coloured suit to film the speech - if he had worn dark clothes, only his head would be visible.

He will be seen standing, making gestures and moving around the stage.

The video is not a true hologram as you cannot see different parts of the image by moving around.

The technology is only a little more expensive than shooting a standard high-definition video, Mr Sims added.

A Clarence House spokeswoman said: "His Royal Highness was happy to do it.

He often does video messages but this is his first hologram."

Comments (13)

Good for him. Some of our jet-setting politicians could take note, like the MP who is flying to Pakistan to help one British citizen who should be being helped by the local embassy.

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- Cyril Wiggle, Portsmouth, 16/12/2007 11:39

Great technology what an advantage it can be shut off immediately and spare the audience his "green" diatribe. What does he know about the lives of ordinary people and their struggles?

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- Mrs Marian Oakley, Abbeyfeale,Limerick, 16/12/2007 10:58

Well, you have to hand it to him. Nutter he may be, but he's putting all those who attended Bali, to shame.

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- Kim, Hampshire UK, 16/12/2007 10:39

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