

THE PORTRAIT

Interview Transcript, 2013

My first wife and her music teacher were very close...

When Ms McCallum died the doctor who looked after her, who played *Scrabble* with her each week, she left everything to her. And the doctor rang us up and said that Ms McCallum had said that we should have anything that we wanted from her house.

She was very old and the house had gone into disrepair and there wasn't much that the average person would go in and find something that they liked.

We went in and had a look around and I said '*I love those frames*'. I don't know what's in them because we couldn't see anything but the frames were old and rather fine. So we thought we'd have them.

I took them home and I thought I'd have to clean them because there were decades of grime on them. And I sat down, really to clean the wood and see whether the wood came up as I thought it might, and it did. You can see how beautiful it is.

I got soap and water and decided to clean the surface. I cleaned [the male portrait] first and out of it came what I

thought was a good portrait. I was absolutely stunned when I got to this one and out of it came something I think is very beautiful.

The interesting thing is that these are Ms McCallum's ancestors.

She'd not a typical woman. She's very beautiful. She is stunning in the things she's saying to you. By the way the way she's dressed. By the staff she holds. By the cross she holds. Obviously, I think, someone who had a very strong religious feeling ... but it wasn't the religious feeling, it was the feeling that was the most important thing that came out of this portrait. It was the feeling that she gives me every time.

We sit here and look at her sometimes, just my wife and I, and we enjoy just looking at the beauty of it.

The background – we're interested in textiles – and the background is obviously a textile background and that came out and the colours come out of something that was black.

We loved it ... and we still love it.



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