



Imagined Lives: Portraits of Unknown People

*John Banville, Tracy Chevalier, Julian Fellowes, Alexander McCall Smith, Terry Pratchett, Sarah Singleton,
Joanna Trollope, Minette Walters*

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- Published on the occasion of a new display at the National Portrait Gallery, London from 3 December - August 2012
- Features two new pieces by award winning author Alexander McCall Smith and Tarnya Cooper, 16th Century Curator and Deputy Director of the National Portrait Gallery, London
- A major collaboration between the National Portrait Gallery, postgraduate students at the University of

Bristol and the National Trust, and includes new research into the identities of the sitters

In *Rosy*, Tracy Chevalier writes of a handsome young man with a flushed complexion as the object of homosexual desire. Minette Walters writes a poignant letter from a despairing wife. Julian Fellowes has created a biography of a resourceful woman whose husband was executed during Henry VIII's reign.

Sarah Singleton relates the adventures of a spice merchant and amateur musician struggling to make his way in the world, despite his illegitimate status.

Joanna Trollope tells a touching tale about the offer of a marriage proposal in the form of a letter from the sitter's intended bride.

By contrast, the fantasy writer Terry Pratchett has written an amusing tale about an explorer who presented Elizabeth I with a skunk. And John Banville has seen, in the features of a man on his deathbed, the face of an admired officer serving with Cromwell's New Model Army.

These short, fictional narratives build brilliantly on what can be seen in each portrait, thereby providing a new and entertaining way of looking at these intriguing images.

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