

# WOMEN WALLS AT RIA: THE DOCUMENTARY

## VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Women have made huge progress in Ireland over the last century, but just how equal is the society we've created today? Have women been recognised enough in our history and in our public spaces? With an increase in spotlight on gender issues and gender equality, the Royal Irish Academy on Dublin's Dawson Street has chosen to commemorate and celebrate amazing Irish women at the home of academic excellence for some of our greatest minds both male and female, but a walk

Around Academy house tells a different story. The Royal Irish Academy was formed in 1785 at the learner's society promoting the sciences and the humanities. It's a remarkable selection of some of Ireland's best academics committing their lives to finding answers to questions that affect us, for its important research can either have an impact within a couple of years or more likely 20 years or sometimes 40 years often it's something brilliant in fact for like people working in cancer legal and thinness offices past members of the Academy include Nobel Prize winners like WB Yeats and Erwin Schrodinger one of the most famous presidents was William Rowan Hamilton people asked a centre in NASA which he discovered in 1843 took a class life in space today gender equality is a core principle of the RIA so they're concerned that only one and four people in Ireland working in the science technology engineering and math sectors are women this concern is shared by global professional services company Accenture we had a meeting in Academy High School for dancing and we were discussing the systemics challenge that is gender equality in need for role Models and I look up at these beautiful paintings and I literally just heart of thinking feeling and I just voiced I lied there are no women on the world of course I'd known that forever you know

I've worked in the Academy for over 20 years I'd forgotten and it annoyed me you know I was annoyed and irritated myself and because I have been conscious of the fact that it's not acceptable but it does give a bad impression of the Academy and it just gave a bad impression of Irish intellectual life arch tells us so much about what we value as a society about who is welcome about who fits in Irish communicates our expectations of our gender so in a very public forum if we're leaving women out of them actually were perpetuating women being less visible and indeed their work being less known that's carried on to future generations and in many ways less valued it's not only in the Academy that we don't see female faces you go to any public building public university you will not see the portraits of women looking down at you it's a cross-sectional issue and we want to start the conversation women on walls is a campaign by Accenture and partnership with the Royal Irish Academy to make women leaders more visible through a series of commissioned portraits for the first time in its 230 year history paintings of female academic leaders will go on the walls of the Royal Irish Academy women on walls is a wonderful collaboration between the Academy and Accenture to commissioned five portraits for individual portraits of the first four women who were elected to the Academy in 1949 and one group portrait of eight European Research Council grant holders with a long commissioning process we advised applicants we got a huge number of submissions but it was very quickly apparent that there were two artists that the committee liked very close who won the energy prize was chosen to do the portrait of the four female academics in 1949 and Glade Smith was chosen to empty 84 moon scientists working under scientists today V recluse is a Hennessey

Prize winning artist won in Germany she learned her craft in Ireland and her work is multidisciplinary taking in animation sculpture and painted portraiture my life doing portraits a lot and I'm into science so I guess I could relate to the women straightaway that way it's when I saw the ads they all had good face of interesting faces for portraits which is important the whole political aspect that it's women it's important as well as but for most women artists so they need to be interesting for me it should be completely normal that these women are getting a portrait done it shouldn't even be special so I know that it is but it's kind of sad that it is the for pioneering historical members of the Royal Irish Academy whose portraits Vera will paint our botanist Phyllis Clinch art historian Francoise don't we physicist Sheila Tinney and early Irish scholar Eleanor Nacht together the four became the first female members of the Royal Irish Academy in 1949 our four women are part of a privileged minority in 1949 women could not sit on juries they could not continue to work in the public service and a lot of the private sector after they were married they could not work in certain industries it was the detriment of male employees they could not inherit their own homes as married women so there's a serious cloak of quite deep oppression hanging over Irish women at this point are these women to reach the heights they did within the fields that they occupied was extraordinary and how difficult it was for them to become as preminent in their fields as they did it's not okay that the story of the women of yesterday have neither been told nor did those women get to do recognition for their incredible and scientific and educational discoveries so we wanted to correct the counter the other artists chosen is bladesmiths a leading figurative artist in Ireland you've won many awards and public commissions and has been selected in numerous submissions melted the annual in Dublin and the BP Portrait Award at the National Portrait Gallery in London blaze will create one group portrait of eight of today's leading female scientists who've each received hard-won grant from the European Research Council helping them bring great scientific ideas to life I am delighted to explain because it is a marker of a quantum shift of shift in surveying society would have been unthinkable in 1916 and absolutely unbelievable 100 years before

that so to have eight women clearly masters of their professions now in a painting that is the traditional way to mark a great moment you know it's a huge privilege for me to be asked to induction blazes subjects come from disparate scientific backgrounds Emmett Ealing studies back for insights into human aging Sarah McCormack is looking at ways to improve the efficiency of solar energy systems for the Irish climate Deborah Labor is devising new ways to collect area remote sensing data ether Mac Lysis is using an evolutionary approach to understanding our genomes in the context of human disease Maria McNamara is a palaeontologist working on the evolution of animal colours and feathers in dinosaurs Lydia Lynch is looking at how the immune system affects people with obesity and diabetes Katrina Lally is working to gain critical insights into the role of mechanics in cardiovascular diseases Aoife Galan is an expert in hyperspectral imaging exploring the role of water plays in biological interact these eight women are leaders in their fields undertaking important research to improve daily lives through science we want to create role models and profile role models if the work of these female scientists is extraordinary and wide-ranging and we want to acclaim that I'm proud that it's being done while I am the chief executive it's great that it's done people are accusing me feminizing the Academy and I don't mind being accused of that at all before the artists start painting they must get to know their subjects but for very clues it's not that simple there is detective work to be done the biggest challenge with the project is that none of the subjects or sitters are alive anymore so I'm spending a lot of time trying to find photographs and luckily there's more and more turning off usually I'd need the sitter before and get to know them a little bit just to get a get a sense of what kind of person they are and what's a typical expression and all of that so none of that is possible with this project I suppose in the way I thought it would be easier if if they are not around anymore they can't complain but I feel really obliged to get them right we just you know it's bad enough they didn't get this done while they were alive so I really don't want to do them another huge injustice by getting their faces completely wrong so I yeah I didn't think I would feel about it this way but I actually do with my

proposal I said I wanted to bring elements from their field of expertise into the background to turn them sort of into a pattern so I had to look into what they actually did the blood François Henry was an art historian I think she went around all of Ireland on the bicycle looking at the ruins and the stone crosses luckily enough someone specializes in art there's a lot of visual material so I was just flicking through the books there that she published and in one of the books there were these drawings where she's sort of constructing district geometrical designs so I thought it'd be nice to use something that she actually made herself I only had this picture of her so I was just zooming into the pixels trying to figure out a face there and it's almost impossible so the first drawing I did over I think looks nothing like her but luckily enough someone emails me images which was great born in Paris from 1902 Françoise Valerie was a Celtic art specialist and archaeologist in 1926 a chance visit to Ireland was to cement her passion for early Irish Christian art in 1965 she established Ireland's first department of art history at University College Dublin her seminal work The Book of Kells and its decoration was published in 1974 horses Olli was the grand mistress of Irish art in this country lecturing in UCD was also writing on the subject in a number of great books such as Irish art which appeared in three volumes in English in 1965 to 1970 and her final great contribution it was on the 7th of The Book of Kells which had never really been treated in the same way at the very same basic steps I think she was a romantic her soul was really delighted with the products of stonework that we had here the early Christian stonework the crosses decorated stones of which there was nothing comfortable she was the first of our kind to be elected Academy I think that must have been not only a great honour but also a feather in our cap and I would like to think that it helped her to get on in UCD but it still took a further 16 years before she was really placed in charge of Department and usually after she was elected remember we hadn't I don't think she was honoured enough in her day but I very much worthwhile remembering because the value of her works too stems she was one who really put island on the artistic map of Europe and I think it's great that the Academy is now honouring a holiday but it's very difficult to bring out the

character of someone whom you've never actually met but that I think is the genius of an artist and I can only hope the very truth has succeeded in bringing out the character of this very remarkable ad. They started thinking about it a lot more the way that probably there is a lot more inequality than I'm aware of I might be in a bit of denial because I always think to know and this day and age it should be completely normal that women get the same pay the same chances and can they portrait on the wall was probably isn't the case I went on an airplane with my five year old daughter and she was looking at me and she's saying oh but the pilot is a girl and I was absolutely shocked that she was that she would shout there was a girl because you know I thought I would erase her that that be normal that it was a woman flying the plane and it just it just showed that if even the five-year-old things that's unusual but bad like artist Blaise Smith is also tasked with painting the images of extraordinary women he'll paint a group portrait of eight contemporary female scientist unlike Sarah he's able to meet his subject which brings its own challenges approach that I originally proposed was really just to consult with the people who are the sitters I met the scientists and Royal Irish Academy and in May and we discussed how they'd like to be seen I looking ask the vanity fair' 100 women in green dress and that people didn't like this thing that's what I faced about a general we must be nine absolute yeah no I don't usually going here video now I read it actually Waverly some plans are on to the kind of up oh you're just a fellow over here but people's pity it's so unrealistic kind and paint my own what you know interests on just content facing straight edge it's not a lady draped over a chair in a decoration yes presenting yourself very much like proton like your very built so yeah great your scientists are trying to understand how life works in higher the national worlds actually functions and works easier from tiny fail all the way up to the sun bring them in then we're trying to understand processes like you write until you want to hold a song and then I opened the door for the rest of you the world's decision that everybody holds an object or hold something that represents their field of study but the problem to solve is really just how to depict these people or from disparate backgrounds really and you know are different people put them all

together in one image and make them all look both at home in a and separate and individual within that and I felt from the beginning that if any of the more sitting down that would create not exactly a hierarchy but differences you know between one person the next so I was very keen on saying well how about if you're all standing and you know through discussion really we came up with this idea of them all standing in a row like superheroes and one of them said yeah it would look like we're going to make a difference you know and there is that kind of echoing as well Lydia Lynch is looking at how anti-tumour immune cells can protect against obesity and diabetes don't college in the first place looks a bit of a challenge I had a baby when I was 16 but I had a really nice group of friends and neighbours and everybody that that helped me and so that's how it was possible I just found more immunology I just loved the whole idea that we have this immune system in our bodies that we can use to protect us from cancer and viruses so then I did a PhD in immunology and then a postdoc in Harvard I remember hoods being great he's so supportive of my career he's an electrician and he feels that you know in the bigger picture that to be an immunologist contributes more to the world so he feels that my job is important of the hisses as well but he was happy to give up his job in Dublin to move over to Boston and to look after the kids and he did a gas oven full time for a year while we got set up there to me it was a big sense that there's not as many women at the higher level in science or women in sciences man it just make sense because women are just as good a time and I just dozen bishops often and I don't see how being a woman will stand in your way but there obviously is obstacles and there are serious reasons that there's not as many women in science glaze have used photographs to sketch out an outline of the eight scientists but he will paint each of their faces from life yeah you're set here so I'm hoping that my sound so the window so it'll be the same lighting Leon is up that's the way I look in the pictures that I like I see every portrait than I do as a collaboration between mainland sitter it's not really just my painting I am trying to present them in the way they want to be presented to the world while at the same time presenting them in such a way that their nearest and dearest also recognize them oh my god my

eyes estranged I wished my eerie indifference presence in November in -14 division to get film fossils I work but I can only work because my husband takes the genitals the only way actually work first time I've ever heard about this idea I was sitting in my office and phone rang and I picked up - no - spoiler Academy and I'd like to ask you would you be interested in having your portrait painted tonight excuse me but so your portrait it might you have to tell me that again I think there must be something wrong with the line which is

Much more clear is that if you were in paint and I think you look at me funny Beauty trying to work with your subject yet still I get a sense you could push out a fruit best portrait no that's a genie I came out in to complain for 10 years because like anybody you know you're quite tough time you know I'm not pretty selfish or what you know and how do I go on painting the job it would've been better for some plant might as well be imitated or another are to the right but ago we did not form so it makes it very hard to proceed weapons are pretty quickly into an intellectual not you know main about where what it is for this way for almost differently on the side which we set those compression and I think they don't have a pressure I'm already see the students yes I mean a lot of ways I think women have great latitude in society and more oh yeah I know even if we look within Irish universities it's typically men that are full professors men that are the senior lecturers and the bottom ranks are usually populated by females that is very interesting because in my first year research groups and our students are predominately female but what seems to happen is that the females do the undergraduate degrees in science and then this is it's this weeding out that seems to happen so by the time it gets the top it's typically men and not women and I still see this and you know I somebody look around is realizing I'm hanging out with all the boys and at Ealing is looking at that and human aging so back don't age they seem to have slowed down aging and right now we're trying to understand what they're doing to achieve this extraordinary feat and that potentially we could then use that to soda and hold aging in human I went to an all-girls school but I never realized or a single says potentially I couldn't do I never ever thought that you know girls weren't as good as boys I went into

molecular phylogenetics so sequencing genes to understand the evolutionary history of organisms that's what I did for my PhD there was never any gender difference or I didn't receive it anyway and I did well in that environment and then I went you to Dean I started my career as a lecturer and again things were going fine until I got pregnant and then when I got pregnant I realized oh it's much more difficult for me than for my male colleagues we have great rebels from eternity protection laws in place in Ireland but what will remain the reality is that the China which is christened to build a career is up in the times which women will have to take time out to have children that can be difficulty in terms of career progression but you know obviously we have to change workplaces to ensure that this doesn't disadvantage women's as all the different ways of doing that so our two weeks paid paternity leave was just a very recent innovation while it's still very minimal compared to women's entitlement to maternity coverage it does for the first time acknowledged that men are parents to under steer role as parents should be recognized and acknowledged in the workplace Sheila Tinney was the first Irish woman to receive a PhD in last particle sciences a contemporary of Einstein she was widely recognized as one of the best physicists in the country she developed the first math courses on quantum mechanics at UCD and taught the subject to generations of students there one of the things that struck me when we were gathering photographs for this project was how on the reverse you had professor this and doctor that and you would miss tinny even though she was a doctor as well that was how she was you still miss power but she was at a stage miss s power not doctor as power is a long time before she was actually made an associate professor in UCD and certainly we remember people saying that actually happened years earlier that said mommy never complained or saw herself as some kind of a victim there is one professor emeritus who's a lovely story about how she was being passed over and how mummy said yes that's all very unfair and but what you need to do now is keep that big smile on your face and sit down and write another book and then they won't be able to pass you over any longer I think she just took it in her stride that would be her phrase that maybe if she hadn't been a woman she would

have had more recognition and earlier in order to try to reflect Sheila Tinney's life in one painting artists V recluse has arranged to meet the scientists children so it won't cover a sense of her character first-hand great to see such an age range just trying to figure out what ancient or try someone it would be in any ash butter that it's as if she didn't change that much it's kind of easier to find sort of a middle ground the hair was always big and yet is that I could I could see that from the photos she looks she looks very approachable and not arrogant or anything which do you know she could have been with the success that she had I also like this all about hatches between two very famous and noted physicist Paul Dirac and it I think is Arthur Eddington fundable I don't know she looks a bit shy or something that I don't think that's reflective of her personality I think she has outside IRA proposed to creatures won't agree on that I thought she was quite confident because you know in most of the folders she has a very steady gait machine and she doesn't have that awkward camera face some people they put on an awkward smile because they but I think she may have been very confident and comfortable in the mathematical in designs they're doing that kind of setting in yourself is a part of the whole process how do you think she'd feel about getting her portrait done now for this purpose to be comfortable with it no see how badly she had their little expressions that that's used to you that's kind of disappeared now I think she would have been tickled pink by having her portraits painted the thing I get wrong most distance between the eyes so it's best if I start with the eyes and then I make everything work around it. Son and daughter, you and Deirdre, just getting their perspective I never got to meet her, so I suppose it's the closest I'd get to getting to know her. It's not so much about the information that's exchanged more about maybe even getting a sense of de alike because I think meeting the children just sort of gives me a sense of our family and this was that stuff that will be reflective of the mother then in a way with women underrepresented in our history and our public spaces the Royal Irish Academy a home of academic excellence has chosen to celebrate amazing Irish women and correct and historical imbalance within its walls two of Ireland's leading artists have been commissioned to paint twelve

female academic leaders from today and yesterday we want our daughters to believe they can be anything they want to be not because we tell them they can be but because this is reflected and from society back at them for the first time in two hundred and thirty years the walls of the RIA are set to tell a different story artist Blaise Smith has been commissioned to create one group portrait of eight of today's leading female scientists if subjects come from a wide range of disciplines if a Gowan works in the field of hyperspectral imaging the Royal Irish Academy around me I feel like we're doing this painting of women new bucks EE or C Awards and like it to be part of us and I was like yes absolutely that sounds amazing um like it was definitely one of the coolest offers I've ever got to do something so and it was free and it was realistic exactly I thought it was a sounded like a really fun project and I mean ethical I was surprised to be asked because I'm starting off in my career as a scientist and kind of really dazed it hope that it's a well I just had a baby girl I suppose and for her when she grows up I hope that the it will be normal to see paintings of women alongside paintings of men women are laws faithful representation of gender in academia and like anything for you days I mean some paintings that you've done what's the proportionality or a famous Kennedy is it's three two one three two one you know type of people in commissioning portraits are often men in their 60s you know which is great but the woman's portrait of John have been commissioned say by their husbands and things like that hmm and dressing there's a lot of ground we made up you know yeah you're the nice thing as well that we're all really individual as you can see from the painting and there is no kind of stereotype scientist or professor or whatever you know so showing the next generation that we're, you know, it's normal more people here. The artists fee has been commissioned to paint the first four female members of the Royal Irish Academy have a search into the lives and work of each of these extraordinary women is helping to influence her paintings and the choices she's making Eleanor a countess so she was doing a lot of work on early Irish literature I started off doing drawings and this is the original drawing that I did it's mainly based on this old of a photograph offer but there she has a quite a

tense look in her face it's not quite a smile so I wanted to change that a bit and these were also different stages there she's obviously she almost looks like a teenager and there's I don't know fifty to say was once if once you have a few images speaking so to start recognizing what's a typical expression she did a lot of work on the Irish dictionary and I ended up using these words lips to sort of again create a fatter and behind her so that was the colour draft for her painting early Irish scholar Eleanor not meticulous research was crucial to the creation of the first Irish language dictionary her portraits will be displayed to the public and her son seeing her face again will have a special significance my parents died young my mother firstly sadly and then my father some years later of my aunt Nellie as because I was W her name she certainly put aside on the academic side to be very kind to me she clearly loved me as if I was a son and so I'd I also loved her. I think it was unusual for someone to have reached such heights in academia as she did as a woman, but there is no doubt whatsoever about how very clever she was. It's great that she should be acknowledged putting a painting up remain it mean and all that to me to just see her exhibited in that way she would never be seeking anything like that never she'd be just happy to get on with whatever happily Donna should be done in the same way as she had this huge care for myself I continue how to throne patriarchal structures if you look back us as our universities here at that time there were hardly any women in positions of authority in either the sciences or the humanities so that reflects again the broader patriarchy in the society the lack did not deem women in some cases as being fit for advancement however it was still a more liberal environment than a lot of what was going on in the rest of the country at the time and if you were prepared to put up with all sorts of stuff which women still do in lots of places you could advance and become eminent in your own future I'm in Trinity and I'm teaching which means fast I'm there with you know first-year students who just finished school right up to students who were doing their PhD and sometimes they do actually say to me that it's nice to see a woman who's doing the career as a nurse because there are very few of us there's something in that it's very hard to imagine yourself in a job if you can't see anybody even a

little bit like you in it if it was an interesting study done a few years ago so I caught the Jennifer and John study because what they did was they made a mocked up CV that was identical so the same experience the same grades the same study whatever and they put a name on the top of it and one of them was Jennifer and the other one was John and they sent these CDs out to people and asked them would you appoint this person to a job and that would what salary would you give them this was represented as a mentorship exercise and John was more hireable and would get higher pay than Jennifer even though they had the identical cv men and women both did this so both men and women had this unconscious bias and so I think one thing you need to do is be aware that this exists and I think the best people in this regard are the ones who were not so certain that they could never possibly have a bias the ones who go you know we all realize that we might have a bias and every now and again ask yourself am I being fair are the things I'm looking for am I kind of being distracted by maybe irrelevant detail so that's one thing just being aware of the fact that it's possible to have a bias that you're not conscious of in 1949 the bias against women in Ireland was plain to see which makes the achievements of various subjects so much more remarkable I mean they must have been quite determined to start with if they got where they got despite being women at the time Phyllis Clynch was a biologist or botanist she always looks really friendly and warm and you know really nice smile in all the photographs which is rare they usually don't like doing portraits of people smiling but in their case I don't think it would have been a reflection of her if I had gone over the serious face because I think she was just my finest aura. Botanist Phyllis clenches extraordinary research paved the way for disease resistant crops including the potato she was a much-loved figure in her department and was a famously kind and nurturing teacher my brother Andy she was anti field but she was also anti field to everybody in UCD even people that weren't in the science faculty knew her as anti-fans worried about people's she worried about students that were finding it hard to get to the exams she had she did everything she could to help them she devoted her life to her. Her work and she made incredible breakthroughs which led to her getting a PhD while still in her

20s. The work that she did benefice potential producers all over the world I think she would be quietly pleased with the women on walls project and she would certainly see the reason and she would have been supportive while rather embarrassed at having her picture on the wall let's put it that way. It's not about weak in this right now I'm painting EFA's dressing here I'm just enhancing the contrast from the earlier coast by adding dark ting oil painting I'll talk about earlier there to make it even blusher and Richard this is a highly contrived to manage image in Germany's business layer by layer so marketing mistakes has just mapping at the next step carefully so it's much more like a craft you know than something with flair all engines I'm just taking each small step each time I'm moving forward a bit so nothing so I'm sort of like the studio Catching Fire you know basically no I might be able to get this out of the priorities besides themselves a big hand some great welcomed contribution to the pave concerns I'd like to be portrayed you know so as much they are painting as it is my painting because I'm just executing it in the sense but they you know discussed at length how they want to be perceived and seeing you know far into the future. Whether a cancer cell a DNA genome or a 3d model latest painting illustrates the wide scope of research that's undertaken in Ireland in the painting I'm holding a heart and the reason for that is that my work is focused on the cardiovascular system and optimizing the design of heart valves that can be implanted in a minimally invasive way in 50 years I hope that will be less of a focus on what women in the picture are wearing which is often the focus and sometimes around women in the public eye and I think that's a shame if that's the focus I'd hope that the focus would be and wash the people in the painting what we've all achieved what we don't want to do is push young girls into the area of engineering and Sciences because we want to up numbers there the important thing is that women will feel they have just as much chance of succeeding in these areas that they feel the opportunities are open to them in the same way as they are to men and therefore that they think about it just as easily and readily as men do or young boys do. Vera and blaze are almost finished their paintings and this project has really had a big impact on each of them I'm quite

happy with them the closer is getting to the deadline now the more nervous I get about it though but generally I have a good gut feeling whether something is working or not and this time I actually like them and I'm fairly critical most of the time it is good the day that they get acknowledgement and they get it publicly and just thinking of my two daughters you know it's good for them to know that people get recognized for their achievements and women get recognized for their achievements and that they can their can-do physics or dinners or nose wash and they will get the recognition for it would have been nice to live them from life or at least meet them before and I was because they all dead now and they had their curry as many years ago but going back in time and sort of doing them justice now whether they do now what should have been done back then whereas for contemporary scientists now they shouldn't be no excuse why they shouldn't be up on the walls you know it shouldn't take a special project to do that they should just get it anyway I wouldn't I wanted to swap with play like I only applied for doing these for women I think it just meets to me for me to sort of one-on-one so no I don't envy plays looking forward to see is painting though just finish that go as much as I can - or as much as it needed so roll under the launch see everybody else might finish one think of social story ins that's who I'm worried about you know will they get the information that they need from this image and would give them a sense of our life and times so it'll be really interesting in 50 years in extremely interesting hundred years were at a major cultural change from say 1911 to 1916 women did not even have the volatile top stage so it's taken us a hundred years to get this far it's not far enough but it is the middle of a huge revolution in society so that's what we're recording here really no I fundamental in this painting will end up in the National Gallery in about 300 years because of what itself so that's a great privilege you know. Brought together by the painting these eight women are destined to share a future beyond their own lifetime it's a great honour to be in the painting with all these wonderful scientists not only because of their science but also the fact that they're all mothers as well so for me as a just starting out as a mother it's very inspirational to see that you can achieve so much in your

career and have a family at the same time and I think that's another aspect of this project it shows that science and having a family are not incompatible you can do both with the paintings now finished. Vera has chosen a simple wooden frame with a gilt finish once that is built to last it is an eyesore to think that maybe my grandchildren will walk in there thinking already did that or I felt like that you know this is a nice idea I think that's going to look well at the two splines on the side oh yeah Charlotte thinks go anyways and for yeah I'm going to take it into my framer the whole thing will weigh about sixty kilos by the time we're finished so it would be very sturdy that's part of my plan as well in a sense touch it all increases the longevity of the painting you know this sheer physical strain completes materials and so on. I think in the future people will look back at this period of history and see that there was a determination to resist sexism discrimination and gender bias this will be seen as a period where women younger women in particular who are being encouraged to aim high and you know not to feel that they had to put any kind of limitations on what they hope to do that they could fulfil whatever ambitions they wanted to do but this might also be seen as a period where some people believed it was a post-feminist theory that the bathroom that were fought in the 1960s in the 1970s were largely one that they didn't need to be fought again but you know there are others who will completely challenge that it can still be seen that it's there are so much that can be contested and there is so much that can be fought over I'm really heartened by the super initiatives we're seeing like women on roles which I think is great and there's definitely a real dynamic now a much more averse and visible sense of gender awareness it's young women saying well actually feminism is supposed to bring about major change we're still not seeing it they were going to get active again I do think we're at a period in time where a lot of people really do want to drive the change if you look at just one organization like the Royal Irish Academy you go from having no women on the walls now there will be 12 powerful women represented on the walls of the Academy and I think that's a great statement about women and men working together to really real inner quality that exists both in the past and in the present and hopefully creating a different



future for the first time and it's 230 year history portraits of female academic leaders now hang in the Royal Irish Academy the women on walls project have come to life it looks amazing whenever I thought it was just sketch of me and a few of the others and just to see it all come together pretty impressive tonight we mark this centenary year by celebrating 12 outstanding women in these five stunning portraits the past year of course anything about the state of gender equality in Ireland and globally it is that the struggle for equality is far from over I'm very functional an elliptically painting because it's about all about extinction has been there for so long and wonderful to see a very sorry could a very celebrated institution here reclaiming their old history of women and I think a lot of other institutions I could do the same women are all it's a simple idea and like really great ideas I think it's a simple idea which is putting to select something that's a relation the way forward is through inclusion proper inclusion I think it makes us look like real people and I think that's what that's what Irish people need to see you know we're female sciences we look like real people we're here in Ireland doing really good science it's really important that it is both the age contemporary scientists feel powerful to see their children here today responding to painting as well as really special but also before original members who were elected to the academia 70 years ago very powerful to see that redress of the imbalance that was there how did you find working for photographs if you look at a photograph and the face of the size of the hole. Yes, a summative portrait from that we know a person through their life you live close to them you don't notice them evolving and I'm looking there I see I see the mum of various different ages there you know which is which is fascinating but I like it very much it's actually quite an emotional day seeing everybody here seeing all the women here seeing the families of the first course in immensely calmly looking at the artists relate to them for the family so actually it feels much more personal project now you see those women and the pictures it's very moving really seeing the women on the role of Royal Irish problem for the first time I really hope that children in Ireland and all around the world will have an opportunity to see the beautiful hangers and look at them and say this could be you.

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