

Kazuo Ishiguro

Audio Guide transcript

Kazuo Ishiguro, author of highly-regarded novels *'The Remains of the Day'*, *'The Unconsoled'* and *'When We Were Orphans'* was painted for us by Peter Edwards, a former winner of the BP Award as his winning commission.

'It's very hard to see yourself in the picture or any image of yourself. But when I look at that now, you see that was done a few years ago and when I first posed for Peter I must have been 38 or 39. It was unveiled when I was 40. And that this whole process of having a portrait done paradoxically because you know a portrait is supposed to in some way preserve you, It suddenly made me very aware of my mortality and I mean I'm approaching 40; yes it's a great honor and very flattering. But they say they are going to do a portrait for the National Portrait Gallery. But of course I immediately think, oh but that's where all these dead people are hung up. Yes, of course, there's a big contemporary section but overwhelmingly it's a place where all these people from past centuries are hung up and so yes, I mean, if I look a little pensive there or perhaps there's some atmosphere I project that on the image now. I think as myself on the other side of 40, on the younger side of 40, suddenly realizing that yes, we're mortal and we have such things as portraits and portrait galleries to try and combat our unfortunate condition.'