

WARNING OF A FAKE 'SHROUD' PHOTOGRAPH

Currently being circulated from the Ramala Centre, Glastonbury are photographs of the Shroud face with 'Risen Christ photo' superimposed, associated with a purported miracle on the part of the Indian 'holy man' Sathya Sai Baba. According to a leaflet accompanying these photographs (which are being sold for up to £9.50 each), a woman called Barbara McAlley visited Sai Baba in Puttaparti, India, in 1985 in the company of a New Zealand friend. The friend had brought with her for Sai Baba's blessing 'a black and white photograph of a computer printout of the image of Christ taken from the Turin Shroud,' and reportedly

'... as Sai Baba focused his attention on her friend's photograph of Christ, Barbara watched spellbound as with a lift and a wave of his hand Sai Baba drew from that photograph of the Turin Shroud the black and white image of Christ until there was nothing left but a blank sheet of gloss paper. Then in the same manner, he created on that blank sheet (just as if it were in a developing tray in a darkroom) the colour image of the Risen Christ as you see it today. This image has eyes so full of love and compassion that they comfort and touch you on a deep inner level when you come into its range of vision. Then, with a blessing for the two women from New Zealand, Sai Baba went on his way...'

The leaflet is signed by someone called Carol Bruce, but unfortunately for the truth of her story (and/or 'Barbara McAlley' and Sai Baba's veracity), it is possible to demonstrate that there is absolutely nothing miraculous in the photograph being sold by the Ramala Centre. Its face of the 'Risen Christ' derives from a clearly identifiable painting created in 1935 by the Armenian artist Ariel Agemian. This painting was created from the Shroud face, and is in such exact register to it, that a few years ago the Holy Shroud Guild of America published the Shroud face and Agemian's superimposed on each other by a technique known as a Super Xograph. Via ridges or serrations to the surface the viewer is enabled to see first one face, and then the other, merely by tilting, and when held at about 45 degrees the two images appear to blend into each other. Since it is precisely this blended image which is seen in the Ramala Centre's Sai Baba 'miracle' photo, there seems little doubt that this was fraudulently photographed from one of the Holy Shroud Guild's Super Xograph's held at this angle. Accordingly Carol Bruce's story can be nothing more than hocus-pocus, and whatever the authenticity of the Shroud this photo at least is one purported 'miracle' which may be said to have been well and truly exposed....