



Smithsonian
National Portrait Gallery

**PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST
DEMI RAVEN**

“Painting, and the arts in general, have long been a love of mine,” says Demi Raven, the tenth in a series of contemporary artists to be featured on the National Portrait Gallery’s “Portrait of an Artist” Web site. “Portrait of an Artist” is an innovative feature of the first-ever Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition 2006, which allows viewers into the lives of the artists behind their competition entries.

Growing up in Colorado Springs, where he took classes at Bemis Art School, Raven credits his mother for his fascination with the arts. Raven has been painting professionally for more than 10 years now, and received his BFA from the University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, in 1997.

Raven’s most recent body of work is “Monsters,” which he completed earlier this summer. He entered one portrait from the series in the competition. An oil painting on panel, “Monsters” measures roughly two feet in height and width, and is a self-portrait of Raven with his fist in an unusual place – his mouth. “This body of work is an exercise in breaking down the composure of the models painted, of offering a slight challenge to formal portraiture, and an attempt to make unattractive portraits of ‘not-unattractive’ people that look beautiful,” says Raven.

Raven says he thinks that people are the most interesting subjects for a painter. Almost all of his work comments upon people, their interactions, and the complexity of human thought and emotion. “Culture, politics, sociology – all aspects of human life are intriguing to me. I enjoy making paintings that can be found to be beautiful while being simultaneously challenging.”

Raven’s wife, Rebecca Raven, is also a figurative painter, and they both work out of their home. Every Wednesday evening Raven hosts an “Art Night,” for a number of artists and friends to create and discuss art. “I do artwork that I enjoy and think is provocative, and hope others enjoy it as well.” Raven says.

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Media: For more information or to schedule an interview with Demi Raven, please contact Vicki Moeser at (202) 357-2627 Ext. 111 or Cheryl Davis at (202) 974-5033 or davisc@ruderfinn.com. For more information on the Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition 2006, please visit www.portraitcompetition.si.edu.