



Smithsonian
*Donald W. Reynolds Center for
American Art and Portraiture*
National Portrait Gallery

News

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David Lenz Selected as a Short List Finalist in the National Portrait Gallery's Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition

The National Portrait Gallery is proud to announce that of the 51 finalists on view in the "Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition," David Lenz was selected as one of seven on the short list. Each of the artists on the short list will win a cash award and one will win the first prize, which includes a cash award of \$25,000 as well as a commission from the National Portrait Gallery. The exhibition is one of the National Portrait Gallery's opening shows when it re-opens to the public on July 1.

"I've been painting pictures of people my entire professional career. I've always been able to find the inspiration for my work in people, all kinds of people, but especially those from disadvantaged circumstances," said David Lenz.

At a young age, Lenz developed an appreciation for the visual arts. His grandfather was a painter and Lenz followed in his footsteps by becoming a professional artist whose works have gained national recognition.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of Lenz's portraits is the manner in which he evokes a sense of spirit and emotion from the individuals depicted in unusual, even beautiful, environments. Throughout his career, Lenz has primarily focused on works portraying rural life in Wisconsin as well inner city children in Milwaukee. In his more recent works, Lenz features people living with disabilities; the inspiration for this comes from his 9 year-old son, Sam, who has Down syndrome.

Lenz's competition entry, titled "Sam and the Perfect World" is a portrait that he has longed to paint since his son was born. Lenz comments that the Portrait Competition's call for entries was the final push he needed to begin his dream painting. "This portrait is about Sam and

his place in the world. This issue has been a huge part of our day-to-day family life and I felt it needed to be incorporated into this painting.”

Lenz holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and has been painting professionally since 1989. He lives in Shorewood, Wisconsin with his wife Rosemarie and son Sam. Lenz has received numerous accolades for his work, many of which have been showcased in exhibitions. He has partnered with a variety of nonprofit organizations including the Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, the YMCA, and the Boys and Girls Club.

The Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery was established by an Act of Congress in 1962 and opened to the public in 1968. It is the only museum of its kind in the United States to combine the aspects of American history, biography and art.

The National Portrait Gallery is housed in the Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture at Eighth and F streets N.W., Washington, D.C. Smithsonian Information: (202) 633-1000; (202) 357-1729 (TTY). www.npg.si.edu or www.reynoldscenter.org.

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