National Portrait Gallery Announces
2006 Paul Peck Presidential Award Winners

—Fifth Annual Awards Honor Presidential Service and Portrayal—

Leon E. Panetta, former White House chief of staff, and Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., professor and author, have been named as the recipients of the 2006 Paul Peck Presidential awards to be presented by the National Portrait Gallery. Panetta won for his service to the presidency and Schlesinger for his portrayal of the presidency. Each honoree will be awarded $25,000 as well as specially designed National Portrait Gallery medal that honors individual excellence in presidential service and portrayal.

The Paul Peck Presidential Awards were founded in 2002 and are the only national awards to celebrate achievement in support of the presidency. Each year an individual is recognized for service to the presidency and another for portrayal of the presidency. The awards are one of several presidential initiatives undertaken by the Portrait Gallery, which holds the nations only complete presidential portrait collection outside of the White House. The awards are named after Paul Peck, the National Portrait Gallery’s major individual donor.

“These winners are honored for their great contributions to our country: Mr. Panetta for his service to the presidency and Mr. Schlesinger for his portrayal of the individuals who have held this office, said Marc Pachter, director of the National Portrait Gallery. “It is an especially significant occasion as this is the fifth year that the Portrait Gallery has awarded this prize and the first year that we will be able to do so in our gloriously restored home.”

Award for Portrayal

The award for portrayal of a president is given to an individual who has depicted the presidency in either a visual or literary form. This winner could be a portrait artist in any medium, a journalist, a presidential biographer or a scholar. Past winners include scholar and...
presidential advisor Richard E. Neustadt, photographer Diana Walker, C-SPAN founder Brian Lamb and journalist Hugh Sidey.

Professor Schlesinger is the author of numerous books about the American presidency. His Pulitzer Prize-winning book, “The Age of Jackson” (1945), was a major reinterpretation of Jackson’s presidency. Schlesinger’s other books about the presidency include “The Age of Roosevelt,” (three volumes, 1957, 1958 and 1960), “The Politics of Upheaval” (1960) and “A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House” (1965). Schlesinger’s allegiance to the presidency went beyond writing; in 1952 and 1956 he was a member of Gov. Adlai Stevenson’s campaign staff, and in 1961 he was appointed special assistant to President Kennedy and worked closely with him throughout his administration. He has been the recipient of many awards, including two Pulitzer Prizes and two National Book Awards, and holds honorary degrees from several institutions, including the University of Oxford and Harvard University.

**Award for Service**

The award for service to a president honors individuals in the executive branch of government and members of Congress who have served a president or in some way made a contribution to the office of the presidency. Officials from the current administration are not eligible. Past winners include National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering, presidential advisor George McKee Elsey and Ambassador and former White House Chief of Staff Howard H. Baker Jr.

Panetta has spent a long career serving the president and the American people. In 1976 he was elected to represent California’s 16th (now 17th) district and was re-elected for nine terms. From 1989 to 1993, Panetta was chairman of the House Committee on the Budget. Panetta left Congress in 1993 to become director of the management and budget for the incoming Clinton administration. On July 17, 1994, Panetta was appointed chief of staff to President Clinton, and served until 1997. Panetta currently co-directs, with his wife Sylvia, the Leon & Sylvia Panetta Institute for Public Policy.

Schlesinger and Panetta will be recognized in a private ceremony taking place at the National Portrait Gallery in October.

**The Nominating Process**

The nominating committee consists of 10 organizations that are devoted to the study of the American political system and are not associated institutionally or ideologically with any political party. Nominating institutions for this year’s award are the American Historical
Association, the American Political Science Association, the American Society of Portrait Artists, the Center for the Study of the Presidency, the Close-Up Foundation, the Junior Statesman Foundation, the National Coalition for History, the Organization of American Historians, the Portrait Society of America and the White House Historical Association.

A selection committee selects the winners each year. Former Presidents Jimmy Carter and George H. W. Bush are honorary co-chairmen of the committee, and members of the 2006 committee include David Gergen (chair), Betty Monkman, Cokie Roberts, Robert Remini, Robert Samuelson, Roger Wilkins and Thomas Pickering.

**Background**

The Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery tells the stories of America through the individuals who have shaped American culture. Through the visual arts, performing arts and new media, the Gallery portrays poets and presidents, visionaries and villains, actors and activists who speak American history.

The National Portrait Gallery was established by an Act of Congress in 1962 and opened to the public in 1968. The museum’s collection of nearly 20,000 works ranges from paintings and sculpture to photographs and drawings. 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). Web sites: www.npg.si.edu or www.reynoldscenter.org.

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