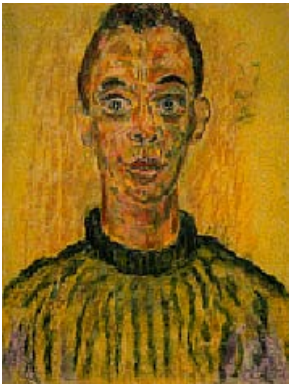


The adopted grandson of vaudeville magnate E. F. Albee, Edward Albee was an indifferent student who dropped out of college. After trying his hand at writing poetry and novels, he turned to theater at Thornton Wilder's suggestion, and in three weeks composed a one-act play, *The Zoo Story*. Its New York premiere in 1960 established Albee as one of America's most promising young playwrights. Other one-acts, including *The American Dream*, followed, taking as their theme the struggle between real and artificial social values. His full-length play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* earned him the Drama Critics Circle Award of 1962. Two later works, *A Delicate Balance* and *Seascape*, both won Pulitzer Prizes, and *The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?* won a Tony Award for Best Play in 2002. Albee sat for this likeness during a winter stay in Florida.

Menden Hall (1960-2004) Oil on canvas, 1997  
NPG.98.8 Exhibition script #CT12 Stretcher:  
81.2 x 101.6cm (31 15/16 x 40") Frame: 83.8 x  
104.1 x 4.4cm (33 x 41 x 1 3/4")

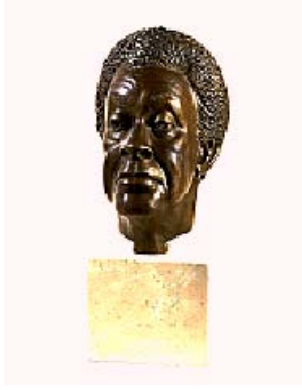


James Baldwin 1924-1987

Beauford Delaney drew this pastel of James Baldwin at the height of the writer's powers. Baldwin's novel *Another Country* was a best-seller, and he had recently published *The Fire Next Time*. Delaney had once served as a surrogate "father in art" to the teenaged Baldwin, who was inspired by his ideas. Although Delaney loved his protégé, this portrait, made with roughly applied, dissonant colors, seems harsh and confrontational. Glowing with the Van Gogh-inspired yellow that Delaney favored after his move to Paris in the 1950s, it hints at the painter's increasing mental instability. One of many Baldwin portraits he made over thirty years, it is both a likeness based on memory and a study of light. Delaney had taught him, Baldwin acknowledged, to see light in every surface—light that "held the power to illuminate, even to redeem and reconcile and heal."

Beauford Delaney (1901-1979) Pastel on paper, 1963  
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.98.25 Exhibition script #EC39 Image/Sheet:  
64.8 x 49.8 cm. (25 1/2 x 19 5/8")



"Blackness is what I know best. I want to talk about it, with definitive illustration," said writer Gwendolyn Brooks. From her sensitive autobiographical novel *Maud Martha* to her popular rhythmic poem "We Real Cool," Brooks devoted her life to portraying urban African American life with poignancy, artistry, and pride. During the course of her career, Brooks received two Guggenheim Fellowships and became the first Black writer to receive the Pulitzer Prize and earn election to the National Institute of Arts and Letters. Brooks wrote of this sculpture: "Sara, thank you for extending my life; for sending my life into bronze and beyond."

Sara S. Miller (born 1924) Bronze, 1994 NPG.94.303  
Exhibition script #341-36 With Base: 45.7 x 18.7 x 22.9cm  
(18 x 7 3/8 x 9") Without Base: 31.8 x 18.7 x 22.9cm (12  
1/2 x 7 3/8 x 9") Mount: 17.5 x 17.5cm (6 7/8 x 6 7/8")



Van Wyck Brooks 1886-1963

In 1936, when John Stuart Curry drew this portrait, historian Van Wyck Brooks had just received a Pulitzer Prize for *The Flowering of New England*, one of several studies of the American tradition. In his many books, Brooks worried about the divergence between imported "highbrow" and vulgar "lowbrow" elements of contemporary life and advocated an indigenous national culture based on a "usable past." Curry, a Kansas-born artist renowned as a regionalist painter, distills the writer's pensive character with a furrowed brow and thoughtful expression. Both Brooks and Curry lived in the intellectual community of Westport, Connecticut. Although he had studied in Paris and lived for many years in the eastern United States, Curry, perhaps influenced by Brooks, focused on midwestern themes. "My sole interest and conception of subject matter," he claimed, "deals with American life, its spirit and its actualities."

John Stuart Curry (1897-1946) Conté crayon on  
paper, 1936 National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian  
Institution

NPG.99.7 Exhibition script #EC28 Image:  
41.9 X 26.7 cm (16 1/2 X 10 1/2") Sheet:  
47 X 30.8 cm. (18 1/2 X 12 1/8")



The enfant terrible of postwar American letters, Truman Capote escaped his hardscrabble and scarring adolescence to vault to literary prominence with his semiautobiographical *Other Voices, Other Rooms* (1946). A coming-of-age novel that dealt explicitly with the protagonist's homosexuality, the book gained notoriety for the jacket photograph of a boyishly sexual Capote lying on a sofa. Arnold Newman's picture mimics that pose by showing the aging Capote surrounded by the trappings of wealth and fame. Perhaps best known for *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1958), Capote belied his reputation as a writer of light fiction by producing *In Cold Blood* (1966), a tautly written account of the murder of an ordinary Kansas family. Calling the book a "nonfiction novel," Capote, along with Norman Mailer, created a new form of American journalism. Thereafter, though, Capote became enmeshed in New York's high society and published only sporadically.

Arnold Newman (born 1918) Gelatin  
silver print, 1977 NPG.91.89.29  
Exhibition script #342-14 Image: 20.7 x  
33.5cm (8 1/8 x 13 3/16") Sheet: 27.7 x  
35.4cm (10 7/8 x 13 15/16") Mat: 55.9 x  
71.1cm (22 x 28")



Truman Capote 1924-1984

When New Orleans-born author Truman Capote published his notorious debut novel *Other Voices, Other Rooms* in 1948, the dust jacket photograph of him reclining on a couch helped establish his image as a frivolous, latter-day Oscar Wilde. Don Bachardy's arresting portrait challenges the stereotype, conveying more vulnerable aspects of the author's personality. Bachardy never makes preliminary sketches for his large portrait drawings, preferring the pressure of having "to get it right the first time." His usual practice is to draw one eye and scale the rest of picture around it. Bachardy has found that such "eye contact" results in "a real exchange of energy" between two personalities at a particular moment. At the time Capote posed for Bachardy in 1964, he was finishing *In Cold Blood*, a "nonfiction novel" about the brutal murders of a Kansas family.

Don Bachardy (born 1934) Graphite on paper, 1964  
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.97.60 Exhibition script #EC40  
Image: 67 x 48.3 cm. (26 3/8 x 19")  
Sheet: 76.5 x 55.9 cm. (30 1/4 x 22")

Image restricted  
Contact NPG  
Development Office  
(202) 357-0125 for  
assistance

This portrait adopted by Anthony  
and Dolores Beilenson.

Using the pen name Mark Twain, Samuel Clemens had become one of this country's favorite satiric writers by the early 1870s, routinely making light of everyday human foibles. But it was the publication of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884) that assured him a lasting place in American letters. Inspired in part by his own boyhood, these two tales set along the Mississippi River did more than capture the rhythms of youth in antebellum America. In both novels, Clemens examined with sardonic wit various tensions that underlay contemporary society, including, most importantly, the question of race. In later years, his success in this country and abroad was tempered by financial and personal setbacks and by a contempt for American and British imperialism.

John White Alexander (1856-1915) Oil on canvas, c. 1912  
NPG.81.116 Exhibition script #AO285 Stretcher: 192.4 x  
92.1 x 3.8cm (75 3/4 x 36 1/4 x 1 1/2") Frame: 210.2 x  
109.2 x 7.6cm (82 3/4 x 43 x 3")



E. E. Cummings 1894-1962 Born  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Poet E. E. Cummings, who famously avoided uppercase letters in his writings, declared that "poetry and every other art was and is and forever will be strictly and distinctly a question of individuality." Believing that poetry was visual as well as verbal, Cummings defied rules of punctuation, capitalization, and arrangement of words on the page in his poems of the 1920s and 1930s, offering a new literary experience for Americans. For some, he demonstrated the rich possibilities for self-expression; others he left feeling uncomfortable and annoyed. In either case, his radicalism made an indelible mark on twentieth-century letters and, in the words of one critic, extended "the capabilities of poetry" well beyond its traditional limits. As this self-portrait indicates, Cummings was also a competent painter. After serving in World War I, he studied painting in Paris and exhibited his work in New York.

Self-portrait Oil on canvas, 1958 NPG.73.26  
Exhibition script #321-29-1 Stretcher: 50.8 x 38.1 x  
2.5cm (20 x 15 x 1") Frame: 67.9 x 55.2 x 6.4cm (26  
3/4 x 21 3/4 x 2 1/2")



When the young journalist Theodore Dreiser published his first novel, *Sister Carrie*, in 1900, even his publisher was shocked, and the book was virtually banned. Nevertheless, this tale of compromised virtue within a harsh urban environment would ultimately be regarded as a watershed move toward greater frankness in American fiction. Dreiser continued to probe the unvarnished realities of urban life in such works from the 1910s as *Jennie Gerhardt*, *The Titan*, and *The Genius*. But it was not until the appearance of *An American Tragedy* in 1925 that Dreiser finally received serious attention as one of the most significant realists in American literary history. Nonetheless Dreiser, a lifelong advocate of freedom of expression, battled censorship his whole career. Henry Varnum Poor made this portrait at the time the contentious author had begun to get involved in the politics of radical protest.

Henry Varnum Poor (1888-1970) Oil on canvas, 1933  
NPG.73.39 Exhibition script #321-04 50.5cm x 40.6cm  
(19 7/8" x 16"), Accurate Frame: 64.8 x 54.9 x 3.8cm  
(25 1/2 x 21 5/8 x 1 1/2")



Paul Laurence Dunbar 1872-1906  
Born Dayton, Ohio

Regarded by Frederick Douglass as "one of the sweetest songsters his race has produced," Paul Laurence Dunbar became the first African American author to be able to support himself solely through his writings. Although he wrote three novels and many short stories, it was his poetry, written in both standard English and African American dialect, that first caught the attention of a national audience and allowed him to leave his job as an elevator operator. While many readers gravitated towards those dialect poems that presented a sunny vision of African American life, Dunbar also probed with great eloquence the harsh world of racial segregation and discrimination. His example inspired not only the next generation of African American writers, but also William McKnight Farrow, who like Dunbar grew up in Dayton before moving to Chicago to pursue a career as an artist.

William McKnight Farrow (1885-1967)  
Oil on canvas, 1934 NPG.93.86  
Exhibition script #AO287

Author: F. Goodyear Stretcher: 70.5 x 59.7 x 3.8cm (27 3/4 x 23 1/2 x 1 1/2") Frame: 91.4 x 80 x 5.1cm (36 x 31 1/2 x 2")



Dropping out of Tuskegee Institute when he ran out of money, Ralph Ellison moved to New York City, where he wrote politically driven fiction and essays heavily influenced by both Marxism and the literary naturalism of the 1930s. But he broke through as an original fiction writer with his masterful novel, *Invisible Man* (1952). It begins: "I am an invisible man. . . . I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me." And no one ever does: the anonymous African American narrator, despite a life of heroic resistance, never makes white society "see" him. In making this bitterly powerful point, *Invisible Man* exists as a fully realized work of art, drawing on sources from the *Odyssey* to the Harlem jazz and club scene. Transcending its subject matter, *Invisible Man* is a humanistic expression of the will to self-determination.

David Attie (1920-1983) Gelatin silver print,  
c. 1964 NPG.93.352 Exhibition script #342-  
15 Image: 20.8 x 31.3 cm (8 3/16 x 12 5/16")  
Sheet: 27.8 x 35.7 cm (10 15/16 x 14 1/16")  
Mat: 40.6 x 55.9 cm (16 x 22")



Ralph Waldo Emerson 1803-1882  
Born Boston, Massachusetts

In 1832, Harvard-educated minister Ralph Waldo Emerson resigned his post at Boston's Second Congregational Church in a crisis of faith. Having cast off doctrine, Emerson went on in his voluminous writings to create a uniquely American school of philosophy, which harkened back to Thomas Paine's revolutionary politics of "Common Sense" and anticipated William James's pragmatism. In Emerson's system, man approached God (embodied in nature) on his own, taking responsibility for his own salvation. Emerson preached self-reliance as Americans' core attribute; this empowered the individual in a way that led to dreams of perfectionism and supported the culture of American business.

Daniel Chester French (1850-1931)  
Bronze, 1901 NPG.74.13 Exhibition  
script #AO122

57.5 cm (22 5/8" )

Image restricted  
Contact NPG  
Development Office  
(202) 357-0125 for  
assistance

William Faulkner was at work in the late 1920s on his third novel, *Sartoris*, when it struck him that his "own little postage stamp of native soil" in Mississippi contained so much material to write about that he could "never . . . exhaust it." With that in mind, he began inventing the fictional universe of Yoknapatawpha County, which would be the vehicle in nearly all his works for examining the South's slaveholding past and its dark, tragic grip on the present. Over the next decade or so, he produced some of the finest pieces in American fiction, including *The Sound and the Fury*, *Light in August*, and *Absalom, Absalom!* In 1949 he won the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Henri Cartier-Bresson (1908-2004)  
Gelatin silver print, 1947 NPG.89.196  
Exhibition script #322-20 Image: 35.8 x  
24cm (14 1/8 x 9 7/16") Sheet: 40.3 x  
30.3cm (15 7/8 x 11 15/16") Mat: 71.1 x  
55.9cm (28 x 22")



John F. Finerty 1885-1967

The heroic humanism of Mexican muralist Diego Rivera's powerfully drawn figures affected not only the American mural movement but figural art in general. In this portrait of American lawyer John F. Finerty, the bold outline, profile pose, and low vantage point combine to create a mural-like monumentality. Finerty espoused causes congenial to Rivera's social activism. His clients included labor leader Tom Mooney, anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, and convicted spies Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, whose last writ of habeas corpus he prepared and argued the night of their execution. Rivera met Finerty in Mexico in 1937, where the lawyer, as part of a commission investigating trials of political dissidents in the Soviet Union, interviewed the exiled Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky. The drawing was probably made at Rivera's home, where Trotsky was living at the time.

Diego Rivera (1886-1957) Charcoal on paper, 1937  
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.2003.29 Exhibition script  
#EC29-2 <Hall> Sheet: 39 x 28.2cm  
(15 3/8 x 11 1/8") Mat: 71.1 x 55.9cm  
(28 x 22")



F. Scott Fitzgerald 1896-1940  
Born St. Paul, Minnesota

It was F. Scott Fitzgerald who named the self-indulgent 1920s the Jazz Age, and his best-selling novel *This Side of Paradise* became one of the decade's first literary landmarks. But his most enduring achievement was *The Great Gatsby* (1925), which, in meticulously crafted prose, wove a modern morality tale set against a backdrop of luxury. Fitzgerald and his talented wife Zelda experienced—in New York, Paris, and Hollywood—some of the glamorous life he evoked. But struggling with financial disappointments, alcoholism, and Zelda's mental illness, Fitzgerald also probed the destructive underside of the era's bright illusions. When he met artist David Silvette in 1935, Fitzgerald was suffering from an emotional breakdown. He agreed to pose, however, and considered this a "swell" portrait. His career as chronicler of the dreams and disappointments of contemporary life was cut short by his death five years later.

David Silvette (1909-1992) Oil on canvas, 1935  
NPG.72.107 Exhibition script #321-34 61cm x  
50.8cm (24" x 20"), Accurate Frame: 77.5 x 67.6 x  
7cm (30 1/2 x 26 5/8 x 2 3/4")

Image restricted  
Contact NPG  
Development Office  
(202) 357-0125 for  
assistance

Robert J. Flaherty 1884-1951  
Born Iron Mountain, Michigan

Often called the father of documentary film, Robert J. Flaherty began filming native life while exploring the Hudson Bay region in the late teens. In 1920 a fur-trading company funded his filmmaking, and the result was Flaherty's classic documentary, *Nanook of the North* (1922), which depicted an Eskimo (Nanook) hunting, fishing, and trapping. Flaherty's subsequent documentaries included *Moana* (1926), a depiction of Samoan life, and *Tabu* (1931), which took place in the South Seas and won an Oscar for Best Cinematography. As much a showman as a filmmaker, Flaherty helped popularize the idea of motion pictures as a chronicle of everyday life.

Jo Davidson (1883-1952) Bronze, 1973 cast after 1949 original  
NPG.73.21 Exhibition script #BR015 With Base: 47 x 31.4 x  
29.5cm (18 1/2 x 12 3/8 x 11 5/8") Without Base: 39.7 x 31.4 x  
29.5cm (15 5/8 x 12 3/8 x 11 2/8") Base: 7.6 x 22.8 x 22.8cm (3 x  
9 x 9")



Jessie Benton Frémont spent her life in the public eye—as the daughter of powerful Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton, as the wife of noted explorer John C. Frémont, and as a popular author in her own right. Married to Frémont at the age of seventeen, Jessie secured for him her father's backing for a series of government-sponsored expeditions to open up the far western regions of the country to migration and settlement. When Frémont returned from the first of these expeditions in 1842, Jessie collaborated with him in writing the vivid report of his findings that first brought him national recognition. Many years later, when financial difficulties brought the couple close to bankruptcy, Jessie employed her literary skills to support her husband and family by writing lively reminiscences, stories, and travel sketches for a number of popular periodicals.

Mathew Brady Studio (active 1844-94) Modern albumen silver print  
from c. 1863 wet-collodion negative NPG.81.M95.D1 Exhibition  
script #AO273 Image: 8.9 x 6cm (3 1/2 x 2 3/8") Sheet: 13.5 x  
12.3cm (5 5/16 x 4 13/16") Mat: 35.6 x 27.9cm (14 x 11")



Henry George 1839-1897 Born  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

"The great American Republic must be a republic in fact as well as form," wrote economist Henry George. As American industry after the Civil War spawned undreamed-of wealth for some and a new and excruciating poverty for others, George became a leading voice in efforts to reform the nation's free-enterprise system. His stinging yet highly popular critique of American capitalism, *Poverty and Progress* (1879), described with great eloquence the inequities in modern society. According to George, poverty's root cause lay in ever-rising land values. Levying a heavy "single tax" on those values would, he asserted, undermine monopolies, distribute wealth more evenly, and eliminate poverty. Although George failed in his attempt to win elected office, his writings found widespread support, especially within the burgeoning labor movement.

George de Forest Brush (1855-1941) Oil on wood  
panel, c. 1888 NPG.67.53 Exhibition script  
#AO294 Panel: 22.5 x 20 x 0.3cm (8 7/8 x 7 7/8 x  
1/8") Frame: 33.3 x 30.5 x 5.7cm (13 1/8 x 12 x 2  
1/4")



During an age when social conventions limited the opportunities for women, author Charlotte Perkins Gilman was influential in exposing the problems that lay behind the sentimental facade of domesticity. She achieved an international reputation with the publication of *Women and Economics* (1898), a book that highlighted the importance of economics in shaping relationships between men and women. Her critique of patriarchal power was in part rooted in her own traumatic experiences as a child and a young wife. Most famously, her chilling short story "The Yellow Wallpaper" dramatized the repressive treatment she received during a period of depression following the birth of her first child. More typically, Gilman's writings focused on specific reforms for everyday living, from child-rearing to women's dress. This portrait sketch shows her as a young woman before her rise to prominence.

Ellen Day Hale (1855-1940) Oil on wood panel,  
before 1880 NPG.83.162 Exhibition script  
#AO293 Panel: 40.6 x 30.2 x 0.6cm (16 x 11 7/8 x  
1/4") Frame: 51.4 x 40.6 x 5.4cm (20 1/4 x 16 x 2  
1/8")



Allen Ginsberg 1926-1997

Poetry is not an expression of the party line. It's that time of night, lying in bed, thinking what you really think, making the private world public, that's what the poet does.

Like Whitman, Allen Ginsberg was a poet of the self and its relationship to society, as this quotation indicates. Although Ginsberg adopted Whitman's long free-verse line, he mixed it with both hallucinogenic substances and his own version of Eastern mysticism. But Ginsberg lacked Whitman's discipline and his ability to transcend immediate political issues to achieve a wider view of the individual and society. The poem displayed here begins with an homage to the master as Ginsberg proclaims himself a direct descendant of Walt Whitman.

Robert Wesley Wilson (born 1937), after Larry Keenan Jr.  
Offset lithographic poster, 1967 National Portrait Gallery,  
Smithsonian Institution

NPG.2004.18 Exhibition script #WW24  
Sheet: 78.6 x 41.3cm (30 15/16 x 16 1/4")



As founder and longtime editor of the New York Tribune one of the great liberal newspapers of the nineteenth century Horace Greeley was a powerful advocate for reform. In editorials and lectures, he railed against slavery and championed a host of progressive movements, from women's rights to organized labor. A supporter of free homesteading as an antidote to the evils of industrialization, Greeley popularized the saying "Go west, young man" when he quoted it in the pages of the Tribune. Sent as a token to someone Greeley had met during a lecture tour, this daguerreotype is remarkable for the informality of its pose.

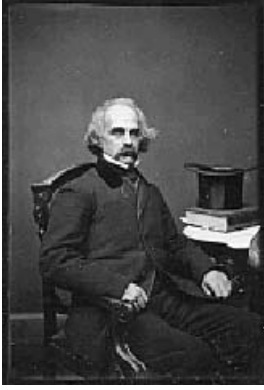
Unidentified photographer Quarter-plate  
daguerreotype, c. 1850 NPG.77.9 Exhibition script  
#AO114 Image: 10.7 x 8.2cm (4 3/16 x 3 1/4") Case  
Open: 12.1 x 19.4 x 1.4cm (4 3/4 x 7 5/8 x 9/16")



Bret Harte 1836-1902  
Born Albany, New York

Through his short stories and essays, Bret Harte presented many Americans with their first taste of the society that the California gold rush had produced. In stories such as "The Luck of Roaring Camp" and "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," Harte brought to life a colorful assortment of gamblers, miners, and other adventurers who, like him, had settled in California. Returning east in 1871, he found himself lionized as the West's signature writer. But Harte never felt any real kinship with the crude world he portrayed, and his later western stories paled in comparison to the crisply narrated tales that made him a celebrity. By 1878 Harte was sailing for Europe, where even his lesser works continued to find an appreciative audience. There he remained for the rest of his life, grinding out hackneyed variations of his original themes and settings.

John Pettie (1839-1893) Oil on canvas, 1884 Frame conserved with funds  
from the Smithsonian Women's Committee NPG.69.52 Exhibition script  
#AO290 Stretcher: 111.8 x 74 x 2.5cm (44 x 29 1/8 x 1") Frame: 123.2 x 85.1  
x 7.6cm (48 1/2 x 33 1/2 x 3")



Descended from the early Puritan settlers, Nathaniel Hawthorne drew upon his knowledge of both family and local history to create the plots and settings for such highly regarded works as *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851).

Hawthorne's evocation of old New England added an important dimension to his fiction, but it was his exploration of the psychological and moral aspects of the human condition that distinguished his work, giving it a universal quality that raised it far above the realm of regional literature. Despite the widespread popularity of his novels and short stories, Hawthorne suffered financially from the lack of international copyright protection when unauthorized editions of his books were published abroad. And he never earned more than \$1,500 from his sales at home, largely because the market was flooded with cut-rate editions of works by celebrated British authors.

Mathew Brady Studio (active 1844-94) Modern albumen silver  
print from 1862 wet-collodion negative NPG.81.M113.D1  
Exhibition script #AO274 Image: 8.9 x 6.3cm (3 1/2 x 2 1/2")  
Sheet: 13 x 11.8cm (5 1/8 x 4 5/8") Mat: 35.6 x 27.9cm (14 x 11")

Image restricted  
Contact NPG  
Development Office  
(202) 357-0125 for  
assistance

Ernest Hemingway 1899-1961  
Born Oak Park, Illinois

In 1954, when Ernest Hemingway received the Nobel Prize for Literature, the committee cited his "mastery of the art of modern narration." In fact, in his short stories and such novels as *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), Hemingway had in large measure invented a new literary style as he chronicled the disillusionment of a post-World War I "lost generation." His terse, powerful prose became a major influence on American literature. Hemingway's own experiences-reporting foreign wars, living the bohemian life in Paris, and adventuring in Africa, Spain, or Cuba-fueled his imagination and helped create his larger-than-life persona. Man Ray's 1928 photograph of a bandaged Hemingway, made after an accident with an overhead window, occasioned the quip from poet Ezra Pound: "How the hellsufferin tomcats did you git drunk enough to fall upwards through the blithering skylight!"

Man Ray (1890-1976) Gelatin silver  
print, 1928 NPG.77.130 Exhibition  
script #321-30 Sheet: 22.5 x 17.5cm  
(8 7/8 x 6 7/8") Mat: 55.9 x 40.6cm  
(22 x 16")



Throughout his lengthy career as a teacher and lecturer at Harvard, Oliver Wendell Holmes demonstrated an enlightened approach to medical science that placed him in the forefront of his profession. But if medicine was his vocation, literature was most certainly Holmes's avocation. In the eyes of his contemporaries, Holmes's achievements as a man of letters overshadowed his accomplishments as a man of science. With his radiant humor, pointed wit, and sparkling conversational skills, he dominated the intellectual life of Boston and Cambridge for nearly a quarter of a century, and reached a wider audience through his poetry, essays, and lectures. Holmes also maintained a lively interest in photography, publishing a series of articles on the subject and inventing the handheld version of the stereoscope—the device used to view the popular dual-image stereographs.

Mathew Brady Studio (active 1844-94) Modern albumen silver print  
from c. 1862 wet-collodion negative NPG.81.M119.D1 Exhibition  
script #AO277 Image: 8.9 x 6.1cm (3 1/2 x 2 3/8") Sheet: 14.6 x  
11.7cm (5 3/4 x 4 5/8") Mat: 35.6 x 27.9cm (14 x 11")

Image restricted  
Contact NPG  
Development Office  
(202) 357-0125 for  
assistance

Zora Neale Hurston 1891-1960  
Born Eatonville, Florida

While attending Howard University, Zora Neale Hurston met African American philosopher and cultural critic Alain Locke, who persuaded her to write for publication. Later, at Barnard College, noted anthropologist Franz Boas encouraged Hurston's interest in the folklore of her people. The literary works that followed would be profoundly Afrocentric, capturing not only folklore, but the call-and-response dynamic of the black church and the poignancy of the blues. When she was unable to support herself with her writing, Hurston returned to her home state of Florida in 1950 to work as a domestic. A debilitating stroke and the effects of prolonged poverty claimed her life in 1960, and she was buried in an unmarked grave in the Fort Pierce African American cemetery. In 1973, writer Alice Walker placed a granite tombstone in the cemetery, which reads, "A Genius of the South, Novelist, Folklorist, Anthropologist."

Carl Van Vechten (1880-1964)  
Photogravure, 1935 (printed 1983)  
NPG.83.188.24 Exhibition script  
#341-03 Image: 22.5 x 14.9cm (8 7/8 x  
5 7/8") Sheet: 55.7 x 35.6cm (21 15/16  
x 14") Mat: 61 x 40.6cm (24 x 16")



The artists Christian Schussele and Felix Darley created this apocryphal gathering of leading writers at Sunnyside, Washington Irving's Hudson River home, to honor the literary culture created by America's founding generation of writers. By making Irving the center of the image, the artists both glorify his career and at the same time celebrate the national culture. But in doing so, they made the writers too much alike. As a New York critic wrote, "If [Irving] could have caught a glimpse of such a gathering . . . [he] would have dashed out of doors." Nonetheless, the group portrait is an important summing up of an era in which American literature found its voice and created a vigorous national culture that a new generation-Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, Stephen Crane-would later enhance.

Christian Schussele (1824-1879), after a design by Felix Darley  
Oil on canvas, 1864 NPG.82.147 Exhibition script #AO135 Sight:  
134.6 x 199.4 x 3.8cm (53 x 78 1/2 x 1 1/2") Frame: 158.8 x 224.8  
x 14cm (62 1/2 x 88 1/2 x 5 1/2")



Washington Irving 1783-1859  
Born New York City

Trained as a lawyer, Washington Irving found the law tedious and drifted into writing, publishing the first of his comic tales, *A History of New York*, in 1809. He went on to become a popular and critical success in both America and England with such tales as "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." Irving modeled his writing on a romanticized view of history as embodied in the novels of Sir Walter Scott. His originality came from basing that style in distinctly American material, especially his wry delineation of well-known American "types."

Robert Ball Hughes (1806-1868) Plaster, c. 1836  
NPG.84.168 Exhibition script #AO136 Object: 66.7 x 36.8  
x 27.3cm (26 1/4 x 14 1/2 x 10 3/4")



Cecilia Beaux's portrait of Henry James was commissioned by their mutual friend Helena Gilder. It depicts James during his final trip to the United States, when he was recovering from a nervous breakdown and the death of his brother, William. At first, Beaux found James "almost impossible to do. So delicate and spiritual in solid exterior." Beaux reconciled the disparity of delicate mind and corpulent body by placing James's head high on the page and downplaying his torso. The drawing reflects Beaux's advice to her students: "place the eyes at the moment they are most interesting, do not lose the first impression, look for the large planes of shadow on the head, and, since light falls like rain, look for the places on the head that would get wet." James, much pleased, complimented the drawing's "astonishing. . . economy of means."

Cecilia Beaux (1855-1942) Charcoal on paper, 1911  
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.87.248 Exhibition script #EC08 Image:  
42.7 x 33.6 cm (16 13/16 x 13 1/4") Sheet:  
50.6 x 38.3 cm (19 15/16 x 15 1/16")

Image restricted  
Contact NPG  
Development Office  
(202) 357-0125 for  
assistance

Jack Kerouac 1922-1969  
Born Lowell, Massachusetts

"The only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved . . . the ones who . . . burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles." Like his character Sal Paradise in *On the Road*, Jack Kerouac was restless to discover himself in postwar America. His stream-of-consciousness writing style flowed like jazz, encompassing but not always embracing the Beat generation of the 1950s. Hitchhiking with friend Neil Cassady gave birth to *On the Road* (1957), which became an instant success. The manuscript, like the roads he traveled, embodied Kerouac's marathon urge to create, having been typed on a continuous roll of taped-together paper measuring 120 feet in length. Troubled by fame, critics, and his inability to break free of beatnik stereotypes, Kerouac sought solace in alcohol, which led to his early death.

Fred W. McDarrah (born 1926) Gelatin silver  
print, 1959 NPG.2002.97 Script #342-12  
Image/Sheet: 18 x 15.4cm (7 1/16 x 6 1/16")



In a series of novels including *Main Street* and *Babbitt*, Sinclair Lewis popularized a skeptical new view of American values in the 1920s. His message was often severe: American society stifled idealism and, in its push for conformity and material goods, crushed those who departed from convention. Assailing small-town narrow-mindedness, Lewis addressed such topics as religious hypocrisy, racism, and changing gender roles. When Nickolas Muray photographed him, Lewis, annoyed by past oversights, had recently declined the Pulitzer Prize. In 1930, however, Lewis became the first American to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature, which he saw as a tribute to recent authors' efforts to "express the sweep and strength and beauty-in-ugliness of the American empire as it is today." Muray concealed Lewis's heavily pocked complexion with soft focus and artful retouching, using the sharper, graceful hand in the foreground to suggest his eloquence.

Nickolas Muray (1892-1965) Gelatin silver print, 1926 NPG.78.8 Exhibition script #321-33 Image/Sheet: 24.1 x 19.1cm (9 1/2 x 7 1/2") Mat: 55.9 x 40.6cm (22 x 16")



Walter Lippmann 1889-1974  
Born New York City

By the early 1930s, newspaper columnist Walter Lippmann was well established as one of the country's most widely respected political commentators, and in 1933, as Franklin Roosevelt's New Dealers began to grapple with the worst depression in American history, what Lippmann had to say about their often controversial actions was followed with considerable interest. Early in the recent presidential campaign, he had dismissed Roosevelt as an "amiable boy scout" with little "grasp of public affairs." But in the wake of the New Deal's swift implementation of depression-healing measures, Lippmann was soon praising its innovative spirit. Among the most influential columns of his career was one written in defense of Roosevelt's decision to take the country's monetary system off the gold standard. Ultimately, however, Lippmann cooled to Roosevelt's activism, fearing that it was claiming too much control over private initiative.

Stanley Meltzoff (born 1917) Oil on gessoed panel, c. 1954 NPG.95.51 Exhibition script #322-10 Panel: 60 x 75.2 x 0.6cm (23 5/8 x 29 5/8 x 1/4") Frame: 73.7 x 88.9 x 6.4cm (29 x 35 x 2 1/2")



William Zorach's portrait of Edna St. Vincent Millay appeared in *Century* magazine in June 1923, accompanying a laudatory article on her poetry, which had just earned her the Pulitzer Prize. Zorach met Millay around 1917, when both were working with the Provincetown Players in Greenwich Village. He depicts Millay's lovely features and intelligent gaze, while the provocative opening of her jacket hints at her independent spirit and charismatic personality. Others described her as a tiny, pale young woman with bright-red bobbed hair and sea-green eyes who dominated her surroundings. One of the most widely read poets of her generation, Millay was famous for such verses as "First Fig": My candle burns at both ends; It will not last the night But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends-It gives a lovely light!

William Zorach (1887-1966) Ink, charcoal, and colored pencil on paper, c. 1923 National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.97.151 Exhibition script #EC13  
Image: 57.2 x 38.1 cm. (22 1/2 x 15")  
Sheet: 61.6 x 47.2 cm. (24 1/4 x 18 1/2")



Arthur Miller 1915-2005  
Born New York City

As playwright Arthur Miller stands here in this photograph in the doorway of a New York theater in late 1946, the only staged play that he could list in his credentials had been a total flop. But *All My Sons*, his new drama about a man who sacrifices principle in pursuit of wartime profits, was in rehearsal, and at its Broadway opening a few months later, Miller found himself proclaimed a "genuine new talent." The tributes to Miller became warmer yet with the premier of his *Death of a Salesman* in 1949. One critic proclaimed it "a great play of our day"; another said that its production provided one of those rare moments when "all is right and nothing is wrong." With that, Miller took his place as one of the foremost American playwrights of his time.

Arnold Newman (born 1918) Gelatin silver print, 1946 NPG.91.89.8 Exhibition script #322-21 Image: 32.1 x 23.1cm (12 5/8 x 9 1/8") Sheet: 35.2 x 27.8cm (13 7/8 x 10 15/16") Mat: 71.1 x 55.9cm (28 x 22")



Modernist poet Marianne Moore won both the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize in 1952, the same year that Soss Melik drew this portrait. Moore's friends and fellow poets, including T. S. Eliot, Wallace Stevens, and Allen Ginsberg, admired the precision and intellectual rigor of her work. William Carlos Williams once commented on her technique of seeing vastness in everyday things, "so that in looking at some apparently small object, one feels the swirl of great events." Moore was known for her trademark cloak and tricorne hat, but Melik suggests her independence through a proud tilt to her head and her old-fashioned crown of braided hair. Despite her reserved expression here, Moore was known to be playful and quirky. A passionate baseball fan, she once remarked that she would give much to have invented the intricate stitch pattern of baseballs.

Soss Melik (1914-2003) Charcoal and pastel on paper, 1952 National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.74.31 Exhibition script  
#EC36-1 Other: 48.2 x 40.6cm  
(19 x 16") Mat: 71.1 x 55.9cm  
(28 x 22")



Marianne Moore 1887-1972  
Born Kirkwood, Missouri

Author of more than a dozen volumes of verse, Marianne Moore received virtually every major literary award—including the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award—that the United States had to offer. Moore was acclaimed by her contemporaries, including T. S. Eliot, who cited the "original sensibility and alert intelligence" of her poetry. Using unconventional metrical schemes and focusing on such no-nonsense virtues as courage, loyalty, and patience, her innovative and exquisitely crafted verse secured her a leading position among modernist writers.

This portrait by Marguerite Zorach--Marianne Moore and Her Mother--redolent with the bright fauvist colors and faceted cubist planes that the artist picked up from four years in Paris, records Moore at an important moment in her rise to fame. It suggests the influence of Moore's mother, who lived her daughter and edited her poetry, as well as the red-haired dynamism of Moore herself.

Marguerite Zorach (1887-1968) Oil on canvas, 1925  
NPG.87.217 Exhibition script #321-32 Stretcher: 102.2 x  
77.5 x 3.8cm (40 1/4 x 30 1/2 x 1 1/2") Frame: 125.4 x 101  
x 7.6cm (49 3/8 x 39 3/4 x 3")



World War II marked radio's coming of age as a major purveyor of news to Americans, and no figure is more closely identified with that development than CBS commentator Edward R. Murrow. Based in London, Murrow began reporting the war well before the United States entered it, and many claimed that his newscasts on the German air blitz over England were a significant factor in reconciling Americans to the need for joining the struggle to subdue Hitler. Among Murrow's broadcasting assets was a rich baritone voice that vested him with an oracle-like authority. Equally important were an ability to condense his stories without distorting them and a knack for spotting the deExhibition scriptive details that gave his commentary its vivid particularity. Murrow continued to distinguish himself in newscasting through the 1950s, and his enormous influence on other radio and television journalists is still evident today.

Arnold Newman (born 1918) Gelatin silver print, 1951 NPG.91.89.3 Script #322-32  
Image: 31.6 x 25.5cm (12 7/16 x 10 1/16")  
Sheet: 35.4 x 27.8cm (13 15/16 x 10 15/16")  
Mat: 71.1 x 55.9cm (28 x 22")



Ezra Pound 1885-1972  
Born Hailey, Idaho

If Ezra Pound was America's most original and influential modern poet, he was also its most controversial. Living primarily in Europe, the prodigiously energetic Pound promoted innovation as a critic and editor, serving as friend and adviser to such writers as T. S. Eliot, William Carlos Williams, James Joyce, and Ernest Hemingway, as well as to photographer Alvin Langdon Coburn. By the 1920s, Pound's experimental verse and critical essays helped revolutionize western poetry. His most ambitious work was the *Cantos*, an epic series of lyrical poems that he began to publish in the 1920s and on which he labored all his life. Pound's virulent anti-Semitism, support of fascism, and mental instability ultimately clouded his reputation. But Coburn, who photographed Pound in London for his 1913 book *Men of Mark*, portrayed the passionate intellectual who inspired and influenced so many.

Alvin Langdon Coburn (1882-1966)  
Collotype print, 1913 NPG.78.14  
Exhibition script #321-18 Image: 19.5 x  
15.8cm (7 11/16 x 6 1/4") Sheet: 22.7 x  
17cm (8 15/16 x 6 11/16") Mat: 45.7 x  
35.6cm (18 x 14")



Harold Rosenberg was one of the most important American art critics of the mid-twentieth century. His 1952 article for ARTnews, "The American Action Painters," instantly became the manifesto for abstract expressionist artists in New York, for he championed their intense, personally expressive work. Artists Willem de Kooning and his wife, Elaine, were central to the movement. Elaine transposed the abstract expressionist aesthetic to portraiture, explaining in 1959 that it "always fascinated me because I love the particular gesture of a particular expression or stance. Working on the figure, I wanted paint to sweep through as feelings sweep through." Her portrait of her close friend captures through jagged and fluid brushwork his awkward, bulky frame and quirky gestures.

Elaine de Kooning (1918-1989) Oil on canvas,  
1956 NPG.94.14 Exhibition script #342-02  
Object: 203.2 x 149.9 x 2.5cm (80 x 59 x 1")  
Frame: 205.7 x 152.4 x 3.8cm (81 x 60 x 1 1/2")



John Steinbeck 1902-1968  
Born Salinas, California

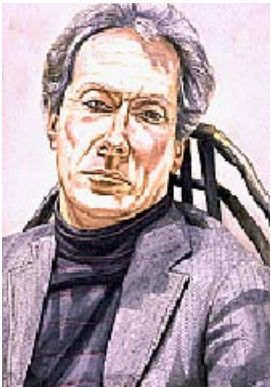
In politics, mention of the Great Depression evokes Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal; in painting, it summons up images of federally funded WPA murals depicting the nation's workforce. And in American letters, the work most synonymous with those hard times is *The Grapes of Wrath*, John Steinbeck's best-selling novel portraying the spirit-breaking poverty that overtook so much of the country's rural economy in the wake of prolonged drought and falling crop prices. When the book appeared in 1939, Steinbeck had already tasted popular success with his two novels *Tortilla Flat* and *Of Mice and Men*. *Grapes of Wrath*, however, earned him an acclaim that few American writers have enjoyed. No recent novel, one critic said at its publication, was "better calculated to awaken the humanity of others." In 1962, Steinbeck's literary accomplishments earned him the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Sonya Noskowiak (1900-1975) Gelatin silver  
print, 1935 NPG.81.14 Exhibition script  
#322-16 Image/Sheet: 21.7 x 18.4cm (8 9/16 x  
7 1/4") Mat: 55.9 x 40.6cm (22 x 16")



Excluded from public professions, cultivated women sought other avenues for their talents. From discussing the issues of the day in informal salon gatherings, it was a short step for women to become writers, especially since the antebellum period saw a burgeoning number of magazines catering to women. So Harriet Beecher Stowe started a career that made her one of the most popular novelists of the nineteenth century. Stowe's place in American history was sealed with her novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1851-52), which sold 300,000 copies in its first year. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was a reform novel; Stowe was motivated to write it by the Fugitive Slave Law and the effect that slavery had in destroying the African American family. No more effective charge could be made in a nation that, both North and South, revered the family as the foundation of society.

Alanson Fisher (1807-1884) Oil on canvas, 1853  
NPG.68.1 Exhibition script #AO160 Stretcher: 86.4 x  
68.6 x 2.5cm (34 x 27 x 1") Frame: 105.4 x 88.3 x 8.6cm  
(41 1/2 x 34 3/4 x 3 3/8")



Mark Strand born 1934

This watercolor was made as a gift in 1983, when Philip Pearlstein and Mark Strand were collaborating on a book about contemporary figurative painters. Strand, a poet laureate of the United States and recipient of a MacArthur Foundation "genius" grant, originally planned to be an artist. He recognized Pearlstein as one of a group of realist painters who, in the wake of abstraction, suggested through their work "that our relationship to the physical world, a relationship that is perpetually in danger of being destroyed by inattention, can be salvaged." A leading American figurative painter over the last forty years, Pearlstein focuses on the formal elements of making art: pattern, composition, color, light, and highly finished detail. The large scale, close cropping, and emotional detachment of this watercolor illustrates what one critic called Pearlstein's "anesthetizing psychic withdrawal" from his subjects.

Philip Pearlstein (born 1924) Watercolor on paper, 1983 National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; gift of Mark and Julia Strand

NPG.91.38 Exhibition script #EC50 Image/Sheet:  
74.6cm x 52.7 cm (29 3/8" x 20 3/4")



Pavel Tchelitchew's demure portrait of Alice B. Toklas records a fleeting friendship. Companion of author Gertrude Stein, and the more reserved of the pair, Toklas played a critical role in evaluating individuals who aspired to be part of their famous Paris salon. Initially accepting the young Russian émigré, Toklas ultimately rejected him, concluding "If you go into Pavlik too deeply, you'll find a weakness." In Tchelitchew's portrait, Toklas's head is a flattened oval, without ears or mouth. His deep shades of blue derive from his travels in the south of France and Algiers, and the layering of color planes suggests the influence of Paul Cézanne. Tchelitchew, who eventually moved to the United States, never forgave Toklas, commenting years later that he hoped to prove to her "that painters not only paint but can think sometimes."

Pavel Tchelitchew (1898-1957) Gouache on paper, c.  
1926-28 National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian  
Institution

NPG.80.13 Exhibition  
script #EC18  
50.1 cm x 32.5cm (19 3/4" x 12 13/16"), Accurate



Edith Wharton 1862-1937  
Born New York City

Before embarking on her celebrated writing career, Edith Newbold Jones Wharton led a privileged life as a member of New York society. Edward Harrison May, a British-born artist working in Paris, painted her portrait during an extensive family sojourn in Europe. Wharton, who would become famous for her critical depictions of the New York upper class, as in the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Age of Innocence*, was strongly influenced by these European trips of her youth. As an adult she chose to spend much of her life abroad, forming friendships with other American expatriates, such as Henry James. Despite Wharton's cheerful demeanor in this portrait, she would later chronicle the frustrations of her childhood. Yet it was during this time that she came to enjoy "making up," occupying the fictional worlds she would write about as an adult.

Edward Harrison May (1824-1887) Oil on canvas,  
1870 NPG.82.136 Exhibition script #AO310 Stretcher:  
73 x 60.3 x 3.8cm (28 3/4 x 23 3/4 x 1 1/2") Frame: 89.5  
x 71.1 x 7.6cm (35 1/4 x 28 x 3")

This portrait adopted by Daniel Okrent chairman of  
the NPG Commission (2004-2008).



Phillis Wheatley was the first African American to publish a book and the first American woman to earn a living from her writing, no small feat considering that she came to the colonies as a slave. Although most slaves had no opportunity for an education, within two years of Wheatley's purchase in 1761, she had learned to read and began to write poetry. Her elegy for celebrated minister George Whitefield caught audiences' attention. It also prompted the publication of *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* (1773), which drew the praise of Washington, Franklin, and Voltaire and helped Wheatley to gain her freedom.

Unidentified artist, after Scipio Moorhead Engraving,  
1773 NPG.77.2 Exhibition script # AO023 Image:  
12.8 x 10.1cm (5 1/16 x 4") Sheet: 17.6 x 12.8cm (6  
15/16 x 5 1/16") Book (open to 90%): 18.4 x 19.7cm  
(7 1/4 x 7 3/4")



Whitman shortly before his death

Thomas Eakins's photographs and portrait of the aged poet were not well liked by Whitman's admirers. Yet the poet praised them, especially the photographic series of 1888, saying, "they are honest." Complementing these pictorial studies of Whitman's decline were a series of farewell poems that Whitman wrote as he prepared to take leave of this world.

"After the Supper and Talk" (1887) begins

after the day is done, As a friend from friends his final  
withdrawal prolonging, Good-bye and Good-bye with  
emotional lips repeating

and ends: O so loth to depart! Garrulous  
to the very last.

Thomas Eakins (1844-1916) Platinum print, 1891  
(printed 1979) National Portrait Gallery,  
Smithsonian Institution

NPG.79.64 Exhibition script #WW19  
Image: 9.5 x 12.2cm (3 3/4 x 4 13/16")  
Mat: 45.7 x 35.6cm (18 x 14")



In this rough-hewn likeness, Whitman projected himself as a new kind of writer in a calculated act of romantic self-assertion. Whitman later wrote of it: "I look so damned flamboyant, as if I was hurling bolts at somebody-full of mad oaths-saying defiantly, to hell with you!" He published *Leaves of Grass* himself as a declaration of artistic independence on July 4, 1855. (Actually, Whitman was mythologizing himself with this claim; the book appeared on July 5.)

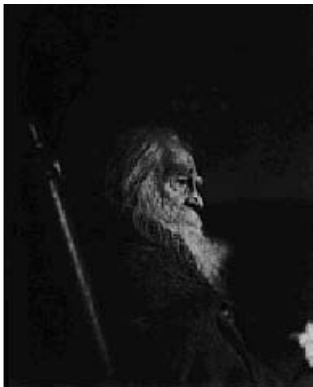
The poetry fulfilled the image, as Whitman went on to set his own rules:

From this hour I ordain myself loos'd of limits and  
imaginary lines, Going where I list, my own master total  
and absolute, Listening to others, considering well what  
they say, Pausing, searching, receiving, contemplating,  
Gently, but with undeniable will, divesting myself of the

holds that would hold me.

Samuel Hollyer (1826-1919), after Gabriel Harrison  
Stipple engraving, c. 1854-55 National Portrait  
Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.82.25 Exhibition script #WW04  
Sheet: 29 x 21.3cm (11 7/16 x 8 3/8")  
Mat: 45.7 x 35.6cm (18 x 14")



Whitman shortly before his death

Whitman famously wrote, "The real war will never get in the books." At best, the immediacy of combat would disappear as people tried to make sense of the conflict as a historical event. At worst, the Civil War would be prettified and distorted by a Victorian culture that, like the amputee in "The Wound Dresser," could not face its scars directly. But the war remained a violently contested issue of national politics. And it never left the memories and dreams of those who had seen it close up.

Long have they pass'd, faces and trenches and fields,  
Where through the carnage I moved with a callous  
composure, or away from the fallen, Onward I sped at  
the time-but now of their forms at night, I dream, I  
dream, I dream. From "Old War-Dreams" (1865-66)

Thomas Eakins (1844-1916) Platinum print, 1891  
(printed 1979) National Portrait Gallery,  
Smithsonian Institution

NPG.79.66 Exhibition script  
#WW21 Other: 12 x 9.8cm (4 3/4  
x 3 7/8") Mat: 45.7 x 35.6cm (18 x  
14")

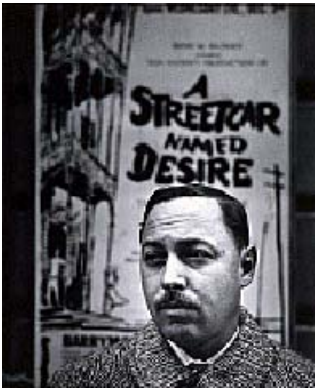


Whitman worked on a single book, *Leaves of Grass*, for his entire life, adding, changing, dropping, editing the poems therein, issuing six editions during his lifetime. If the text was not his alter-ego, it was his ego itself. Whitman expresses this doubleness of man and text in the concluding stanzas to the 1891 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, the last published under his supervision. Titled, in jaunty Americanese, "So Long!" the poem begins:

Camerado, this is no book,  
Who touches this touches a man,  
(Is it night? are we here together alone?)  
It is I you hold and who holds you,  
I spring from the pages into your arms-decease calls me  
forth.

Thomas Eakins (1844-1916) Platinum print, 1891  
(printed 1979) National Portrait Gallery,  
Smithsonian Institution

NPG.79.65 Exhibition script #WW20  
Image: 10.3 x 12.2cm (4 1/16 x 4 13/16")  
Mat: 45.7 x 35.6cm (18 x 14")



Tennessee Williams 1911-1983  
Born Columbus, Mississippi

As Arthur Miller reveled in the accolades for *All My Sons*, fellow playwright Tennessee Williams was also experiencing the heady joys of Broadway triumph following the recent premiere of his play *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Regarded as a classic of American theater practically from the moment it opened, *Streetcar* earned Williams a Pulitzer Prize. In the picture essay on the play that occasioned this photograph, *Life* magazine hailed him as the "dreamy young man" who was now "the most important new playwright in U.S. theater." Not all of Williams's later plays lived up to the implied promise of that billing. But many did-among them *Night of the Iguana*, *Sweet Bird of Youth*, and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, which won him his second Pulitzer Prize.

W. Eugene Smith (1918-1978) Gelatin  
silver print, 1948 NPG.93.364 Exhibition  
script #322-22 Image: 31.5 x 26.7cm (12  
3/8 x 10 1/2") Sheet: 35.3 x 27.8cm (13 7/8  
x 10 15/16") Mat: 71.1 x 55.9cm (28 x 22")



Journalist Alexander Woollcott urged his friend Soss Melik to make portraits commemorating American writers, and he helped to arrange a sitting with Thomas Wolfe, the renowned author of *Look Homeward, Angel*. Melik later wrote that "since [Wolfe] seemed to rest his massive shoulders and arms by holding on to his suspenders . . . it was a logical and characteristic gesture." At the time the portrait was made, the young writer was agitated over his professional separation from longtime friend and editor Maxwell Perkins, who had helped wrestle his voluminous manuscript into publishable form. Melik captured the intensity and emotional energy of this giant of a man, who later that year would suffer a fatal illness. Although Melik's deft charcoal sketching does not suggest modern style, the candor of the sitter's informal pose and defiant attitude seems quite contemporary.

Soss Melik (1914-2003) Charcoal on paper, 1938  
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

NPG.74.34 Script #EC31-1  
Other: 63.5 x 48.2cm (25 x 19")  
Frame: 78.7 x 63.5cm (31 x 25")

.....