“Star” Gazing at the National Portrait Gallery

Exhibition Highlights 53 Masterful Portraits of Influential Figures

In a world consumed by personal and celebrity image making, the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery considers how personalities are constructed with “Eye Pop: The Celebrity Gaze.” The exhibition features 53 portraits and will be open at the Portrait Gallery May 22 through July 10, 2016.

Many of these works of art are masterful photographs, such as Todd Glaser’s panoramic image of surfer Kelly Slater or Annie Leibovitz’s classic depiction of Renée Fleming on stage. Paintings, prints and time-based media works are also represented. Painter Will Cotton represents Katy Perry as an airbrushed confection, while Colin Davidson offers an introspective portrait of Brad Pitt. Video artist Bo Gehring provides a personal view of Esperanza Spalding listening to music that inspires her own work. And Luke Dubois pulls from the Internet and his own software to give a generative, ever-changing double portrait of Google’s Sergey Brin and Larry Page.

“Celebrity evolved with modernity and with the use of visual media to replicate a likeness and create a reputation,” said Kim Sajet, director of the museum. “These origins now exist uneasily in a postmodern society in which fame is fleeting, public attention is fickle and the eye is always on the next big thing.”

The curators for this exhibition are Associate Director of Education and Visitor Experience Rebecca Kasemeyer, Chief Curator Brandon Fortune, Senior Historian David C. Ward, Curator Emerita of Prints and Drawings Wendy Wick Reaves, Senior Curator of Photographs Ann Shumard, Curator for Latino Art and History Tána Caragol, Associate Curator of Painting and Sculpture Dorothy Moss and Assistant Curator of Prints and Drawings Asma Naeem.
The Portraits in “Eye Pop”

Marc Anthony by ADÁL, 1994
John Baldessari by Alphonse van Woerkom, 2009
Kobe Bryant by Rick Chapman, 2007
Sandra Cisneros by Al Rendon, 1998
Daniel Dae Kim by CYJO, 2007
Silver Deb by Deborah Kass, 2012
Yellow Deb by Deborah Kass, 2012
Blue Deb by Deborah Kass, 2012
Red Deb by Deborah Kass, 2012
Peter Dinklage by Jesse Frohman, 2003
Eminem by Elizabeth Peyton, 2003
Louise Erdrich by Alec Soth, 2012
Renée Fleming by Annie Leibovitz, 2008
Michael J. Fox by Steve Pyke, 2008
Barney Frank by Jon R. Friedman, 2012
Diane von Fürstenberg by Anh Duong, 2001
Jeff Gordon by Rick Chapman, 2002
Tony Hawk by Rick Chapman, 2002
Bernard Hopkins by Holger Keifel, 2003
LeBron James by Rick Chapman, 2006
Jhumpa Lahiri by David Levine, 2003
Chang-rae Lee by CYJO, 2006
Spike Lee by Jesse Frohman, 1999
John Leguizamo by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, 2011
Maya Lin by Karin Sander, 2014
Eva Longoria by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, 2010

Marc Jacobs by Elizabeth Peyton, 2003
Floyd Mayweather Jr. by Holger Keifel, 2005
Audra McDonald by Jesse Frohman, 1999
Michelle Obama by Mickalene Thomas, 2008
Cesar Pelli by Philip Grausman, 2014
Katy Perry by Will Cotton, 2010
Michael Phelps by Rick Chapman, 2007
Brad Pitt by Colin Davidson, 2013
Albert Pujols by Rick Chapman, 2006
Condoleezza Rice by Mickalene Thomas, 2007–8
Maxine Singer by Jon R. Friedman, 2001–12
Kelly Slater by Todd Glaser, 2011
Dana Tai Soon Burgess by CYJO, 2007
Sonia Sotomayor by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, 2010
Esperanza Spalding by Bo Gehring, 2014
Britney Spears by Luke Dubois, 2010
Barbra Streisand by Deborah Kass, 2013
Anne Tyler by David Levine, 2004
Harold Varmus by Jon R. Friedman, 2010
Dwyane Wade by Rick Chapman, 2006
Alice Waters by Dave Woody, 2010
Shaun White by Rick Chapman, 2006
Robert Wilson by Chuck Close, 2012
Serena Williams by Rick Chapman, 2007
Venus Williams by Rick Chapman, 2006
Oprah Winfrey by Mickalene Thomas, 2007–8

National Portrait Gallery

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

The National Portrait Gallery is part of 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. Website: npg.si.edu. Follow the museum on social media at @NPG, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Tumblr.

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