New Subjects Join the National Portrait Gallery Collection

What do Amazon-founder Jeff Bezos, Oscar-winner George Clooney, basketball star LeBron James, best-selling author Joyce Carol Oates, hip-hop entrepreneur Jay-Z and X-Games founder Tony Hawk have in common? The Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery has just selected them for inclusion in its collection.

Curators and historians at the National Portrait Gallery recommend to the museum’s commission (a board of 17 people who serve in an advisory role for the museum) a selection of objects portraying those who have made significant contributions to American life and culture. The works are chosen for their biographical and aesthetic impact and are created in a wide variety of mediums—paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings, photographs and video art.

“The National Portrait Gallery’s collection represents the story and identity of America through the art of portraiture,” said Martin Sullivan, director of the museum. “I am thrilled that these new subjects are now a part of our collection and can contribute to our telling of the American story.”

Nineteen of the newly acquired images were created through a process pioneered by artist-videographer Lincoln Schatz. Displayed on flat-screen monitors, these “generative portraits” add a 21st-century touch to portraiture. Three of the subjects include Bezos, Clooney and James. The videos will be on view beginning Aug. 20 in the exhibition “Americans Now.”

The museum also acquired objects that represent sitters who are already in the collection. Collecting images of people in different media is important to the historical record, can add insight to a person’s biography and allows the museum to rotate objects on and off view to preserve fragile works. All of these new acquisitions will join more than 20,000 others in the Portrait Gallery’s collection; they represent the thousands of people who have made a significant impact on the history and culture of America. While most of the newly acquired portraits will be displayed in exhibitions at a future date, some will be on view in the upcoming exhibition “Americans Now” opening Aug. 20.
The Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery tells the history of America through the individuals who have shaped American culture. Through the visual arts, performing arts and new media, the Portrait Gallery portrays poets and presidents, visionaries and villains, actors and activists who tell the American story.

The Portrait Gallery was established by an Act of Congress in 1962 and opened to the public in 1968. It 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; (202) 633-5285 (TTY). Website: npg.si.edu.

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**National Portrait Gallery New Subjects and Objects**

George Carlin by Arthur Grace, gelatin silver print, 1990 (printed 2010)
Jay-Z (Shawn Carter) by Dan Winters, digital pigment print, 2003 (printed 2010)
Christo and Jeanne-Claude by Wolfgang Volz, digital pigment print, 2005 (printed 2009)
George Clooney by Lincoln Schatz, video, 2008
John Ford by Roman Freulich, gelatin silver print, c. 1944
Tom Hanks by Dan Winters, digital pigment print, 1999 (printed 2010)
Tony Hawk by Martin Schoeller, gelatin silver print, 1999 (printed later)
LeBron James by Lincoln Schatz, video, 2008
Lyle Lovett by Martin Schoeller, gelatin silver print, 2004 (printed later)
John Mackey by Dan Winters, digital pigment print, 2009 (printed 2010)
Stanley Marcus, self-portrait, chromogenic print, 1966 (printed 2008)
Joyce Carol Oates by Dan Winters, digital pigment print, 2007 (printed 2010)
Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne by Frederick Gutekunst, albumen silver print, c. 1888
Pauline Morton Sabin by Samuel J. Woolf, charcoal and chalk, 1932
Walter Clark Teagle by Samuel J. Woolf, charcoal and gouache, 1930
Dorothy Thompson by Emeri Revesz-Biro, gelatin silver print, c. 1940
Edward Villella by Sacha Newley, oil on linen, 2005
Andrew Young by Rossin, oil on canvas, 2009

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**National Portrait Gallery New Objects**

(These objects represent subjects already in the museum’s collection.)

Neil Armstrong by Robert McCall, oil on canvas, 2009
Alexander Graham Bell by E. J. Holmes, albumen silver print, 1892
Frank Crowninshield by Clara Tice, graphite drawing, c. 1920
Earl “Fat’ha” Hines by Al Hirschfeld, ink and watercolor drawing, c. 1979
Louis I. Kahn by Alexandra Tyng, oil on canvas, 2009
King Kamehameha II with Queen Kamamalu by J.W. Gear, lithograph, 1824
John Marshall by Cephas Thompson, oil on canvas, 1809–10

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