From the Acting Director

Over Presidents’ Day weekend, nearly 25,000 people visited the Donald W. Reynolds Center. I would like to think that what motivated so many to come to the museums at Gallery Place was the National Portrait Gallery’s permanent collection, which is currently enhanced by the loan of Charles Willson Peale’s splendid 1779 portrait of George Washington after the Battle of Princeton. This iconic portrait of the triumphant General Washington complements our equally iconic “Lansdowne” portrait of Washington as president, completed by Gilbert Stuart in 1796. Both of these imposing portraits, which represent the cornerstones of Washington’s career, were initially destined for European collections: Peale’s portrait was sent to Spain the year it was completed, and Stuart’s portrait was a gift to Lord Lansdowne, an English supporter of the American Revolution.

For others, it may have been NPG’s temporary exhibitions—which this year have been marked by their extraordinary range and diversity—from “Legacy: Spain and the United States in the Age of Independence, 1763–1848,” to “RECOGNIZE! Hip Hop and Contemporary Portraiture.” Where else could one find Carlos III and Grandmaster Flash only one floor apart? Our collection of nearly 20,000 portraits has yielded three shows. “Let Your Motto Be Resistance: African American Portraits” featured 100 photographs highlighting such distinguished individuals as crusader Sojourner Truth, jazz vocalist Sarah Vaughan, and civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. “Ballyhoo! Posters as Portraiture” underscores the role that this ephemeral medium has in popularizing likenesses to a mass market. “Edward Steichen: Portraits” presents celebrity photographs that complement those of the less-well-known Zaida Ben-Yusuf—the subject of the groundbreaking loan show “Zaida Ben-Yusuf: New York Portrait Photographer.” If you traveled to the National Portrait Gallery twice, once in the winter and again in late spring, you would have seen “The Presidency and the Cold War” and its replacement, “Herblock’s Presidents: ‘Puncturing Pomposity,’” which takes a less-than-reverential look at those who occupy our nation’s highest office. Two one-person shows have also been big draws: “KATE: A Centennial Celebration,” illuminates moments in the life of Katharine Hepburn, while Stephen Colbert’s portrait, displayed over the water fountains between the second-floor restrooms, was a wonderful but tongue-in-cheek tribute to both the mission of the National Portrait Gallery and power of celebrity portraiture.

Of course, some visitors may have come just to enjoy our beautifully restored 1836 building and the spectacular new Robert and Arlene Kogod Courtyard—or they may have just come to enjoy it all.

Against this background of public enthusiasm for all that we do, the Smithsonian Institution welcomes its twelfth Secretary, G. Wayne Clough. And here at the National Portrait Gallery, the staff welcomes Martin E. Sullivan, who becomes the fifth director of the museum on April 28. Dr. Sullivan is currently the CEO of the Historic St. Mary’s City Commission in Maryland. You will get to know him better in the next issue of Profile.
Cover: Fred Astaire (detail) by Edward Steichen, 1927, acquired in memory of Agnes and Eugene Meyer through the generosity of Katharine Graham and the New York Community Trust, The Island Fund © The Estate of Edward Steichen. This is one of many of Steichen’s portraits featured in the NPG exhibition, on view through September 1, 2008 (see p. 14).
Hip Hop Exhibition Energizes the Portrait Gallery

Frank H. Goodyear III
ASSOCIATE CURATOR OF PHOTOGRAPHS

On a recent day at the National Portrait Gallery, Acting Director Carolyn Carr greeted a family with several children as they entered the museum. Carr welcomed them, and then asked what they had come to see. Without hesitation, a young boy in the group exclaimed excitedly, “LL Cool J and the presidents.” For many years, the museum’s signature exhibition on the American presidency has been the focus for countless school groups. With the opening of the Portrait Gallery’s new exhibition, “RECOGNIZE! Hip Hop and Contemporary Portraiture,” people of all ages—yet especially the young—have flocked to see recently completed portraits of such hip hop stars as KRS-ONE, Grandmaster Flash, and James Todd Smith, known more famously as LL Cool J.

“RECOGNIZE!” which opened on February 8 and remains on view until October, is the most recent installation in the museum’s “Portraiture Now” series—temporary exhibitions meant to highlight the latest developments in the art of portraiture. With “RECOGNIZE!” the Portrait Gallery showcases six artists and a poet, each of whom has created work that grows out of or responds to the tradition of hip hop. The featured individuals include painter Kehinde Wiley, photographer David Scheinbaum, video artist Jefferson Pinder, poet Nikki Giovanni, sculptor Shinique Smith, and graffiti muralists Tim Conlon and David Hupp.

Nikki Giovanni’s poem, “It’s Not a Just Situation: Though We Just Can’t Keep Crying About It”—commissioned especially for the exhibition—speaks directly to a larger theme that unites this group of artists. “You are just/ determined/ to be the very best you and/ You just guess/ you better not let anyone take that away/ You are just/ a person/ with a big heart and wonderful talent/ That you just/ think should be shared,” she writes. Celebrating the need and desire to express one’s individuality—regardless of one’s instrument, training, or social background—Giovanni’s poem acknowledges hip hop’s legacy as a powerful form of portrayal. Whether one has found expression through DJ-ing, MC-ing, breakdancing, or art-making, hip hop has given voice and visibility to a new generation.

Based on the outpouring of responses to the exhibition from reviewers and audiences alike, “RECOGNIZE!” has drawn renewed attention to hip hop and the positive elements that are squarely at the core of this cultural phenomenon. During the exhibition, the Portrait Gallery is sponsoring a variety of public programs—films, artists’ talks, and family-oriented activities. Please see the exhibition’s website at http://www.npg.si.edu/exhibit/recognize/index.html for details about these events, as well as recorded interviews with each of the exhibition’s participants.

Jean Grae, Indio, California, by David Scheinbaum
2005. David Scheinbaum

AREK by Tim Conlon and Dave Hupp, 2007


No Thief to Blame (installation detail) by Shinique Smith, 2007–8. Shinique Smith

Early in the morning of July 24, 1966, a summertime party at a beach house on Fire Island, Long Island, began to break up. As the revelers started to drift home, the poet and art curator Frank O’Hara (1926–1966) walked out onto the beach and was hit by a speeding dune buggy. He died the next day.

O’Hara had had some minor successes as a poet during his lifetime, but he was best known in New York City’s cultural world as an instigator: bridging the worlds of art, poetry, and society; sparking ideas; initiating projects; and stoking creative energies through his charismatic personality. A friend and collaborator of artists of the New York School, O’Hara was dubbed “the poet among painters,” but he was generally seen as only a minor figure in a circle that extended from Jackson Pollock to Larry Rivers. Yet when O’Hara’s literary executors Kenneth Koch and John Ashbery cleaned out his apartment, they were astonished to find file after file overflowing with poems. Ashbery introduced The Collected Poems of Frank O’Hara in 1971 by saying that it would surprise everyone—“and would have surprised Frank even more”—to discover a volume of nearly five hundred pages. Ashbery accounted for this in O’Hara’s method: “Dashing the poems off at odd moments—in his office at the Museum of Modern Art, in the street at lunchtime or even in a room full of people—he would then put them away in drawers and cartons and half forget them.”

O’Hara was not an occasional poet or an amateur: he was deeply committed to his art, but he believed poetry was an instantaneous act, one that occurred between “two people, not two pages.”

What O’Hara’s poetry needed to spark him into life was the city: the cacophony of daily life in all its ordinary glory. O’Hara made it a point to write a poem every lunch hour, based on his purposefully aimless walks around New York, and he had published a book called Lunch Poems in 1964. Superficially, his poems were about nothing much in particular, and with characteristic modesty he called them his “I do this, I do that” poems. But O’Hara’s quirky eye for the telling detail turned these ephemeral jottings into art; his seductively deceptive lines would build to a moment of recognition or an emotional punch.

O’Hara’s greatest memorial is his Collected Poems, but he also quickly received an artistic homage from his friend and collaborator, artist Larry Rivers. From 1957 to 1960, Rivers and O’Hara had worked together on a project called Stones, a lithographic marriage of the visual and the verbal. For his memorial portrait of O’Hara, Rivers created this piece, called Frank O’Hara Reading, that used a characteristic technique of collage and multimedia, verbal and visual, in way that evoked his dead friend’s own poetic technique. Rivers took his central image of the poet from Fred McDarrah’s photograph of a 1959 reading; the black-and-white picture is colored and includes images of Leroi Jones, Allen Ginsberg, and Ray Bremser, who were also at the event. Rivers places the figures in the midst of a curving stream of words caught between two blue embankments made of construction paper. In the midst of life and art’s river, the print quotes the opening lines of “To a Poet,” a work that O’Hara wrote, with characteristic generosity, to praise an emerging writer named John Wieners. O’Hara limns the young poet’s ecstatic discovery of his art and then his perfection of it:

Two years later he has possessed
his beautiful style,
the meaning of which draws him further down into passion...

“Drawn down into passion”: It is almost as if O’Hara was writing about himself.

CURATOR’S CHOICE  Zaida Ben-Yusuf

Self-portrait, platinum print, 1898
National Museum of American History, Behring Center, Smithsonian Institution

Frank H. Goodyear III
Associate Curator of Photographs

One of the signature works in the new exhibition “Zaida Ben-Yusuf: New York Portrait Photographer” is an 1898 self-portrait. Although Ben-Yusuf (1869–1933) was principally a commercial photographer who attracted to her studio the leading cultural and political figures of the day, the subject she photographed most often was herself. During her career, she created no less than ten self-portraits, each different from the other in terms of dress, pose, and mood. Turning the camera on herself provided an opportunity to experiment with both the art of portraiture and her own feminine persona. These self-portraits gave the British-born photographer—a young single woman recently settled in New York City—a much-needed identity, one that would lessen her sense of displacement and attract attention to her art.

Rendered in a narrow vertical format, this image is striking for the costume Ben-Yusuf wears and the pose she adopts. Both mark her as a bohemian woman. Unlike more conventional dresses of the period, Ben-Yusuf’s long gown is strikingly form-fitting. Her dark coat and hat are equally modern in fashion, and the manner in which she arranges her long necklace and holds her fur muff at her side suggests a desire to push forward—if not to break free from—stylistic traditions. This likeness makes clear how conscious Ben-Yusuf was of her public appearance and how deliberate she was in casting herself among those women who looked to transgress traditional boundaries of femininity.

Ben-Yusuf was pleased with this self-portrait, and it became the image of her that she reproduced and exhibited most often during her career. It also suggests her commitment to a new school of portraiture. Inspired by artists such as James McNeill Whistler and John Singer Sargent, Ben-Yusuf created in this self-portrait a work that announces itself as faithful to modernist principles. Rather than deriving meaning from the room in which the subject poses or the objects therein, this self-portrait emphasizes her jaunty pose, costume, and demeanor.

In the first profile written about Ben-Yusuf—an article that reproduced this image—author Marion Barton noted her proclivity for artistically interpreting her subjects. “It is not that she merely takes portraits, but she evolves from her camera what can be described more as a work of art than a mere likeness.” This tendency to interpret the subject before her—and to avoid simply recording a likeness—would become a hallmark of her portraiture.

Created only a year after she opened her first photographic studio, this portrait shows Ben-Yusuf projecting an air of self-confidence that befits her growing reputation. Having recently been discovered by various magazine editors who commissioned photographs from her, she enjoyed wider public notice and a secondary income to supplement her studio profits. Yet perhaps no honor meant more to her than the recognition derived from being selected to participate in the premier photographic exhibitions of the moment. During the fall of 1898, she contributed work to three different exhibitions, two in New York and one in London.

Reviewers greeted her photographs with enthusiasm. In Alfred Stieglitz’s Camera Notes, critic William Murray singled out this self-portrait for praise. It was Ben-Yusuf, though, as much as the portrait itself that prompted Murray to comment that the subject “appears before us scintillating with all the qualities of mind and person represented by the much abused French word—chic.”

Twenty-eight years old when this portrait was created, Ben-Yusuf was indeed coming into her own as an independent woman and a fine art photographer. This self-portrait acts to announce her arrival in the New York art world and anticipates her engagement with the many subjects who would visit her studio in the years ahead.

New Arrivals—
Recent Acquisitions on View at NPG

John Bradstreet (1714–1774)
Oil on canvas by Thomas McIlworth (active 1757–1767), c. 1764
An ambitious British army officer, John Bradstreet was a conspicuous player in the contest between the English and French for control of the North American continent, participating in military events ranging from the capture of the French fortress at Louisbourg in 1745 to the campaign against Ottawa leader Pontiac in 1764. Bradstreet's likeness is one of the forty-six known portraits painted by Thomas McIlworth, a Scottish artist who arrived in America in 1757. He worked in New York for a decade before he moved on to Montreal and disappeared from sight.

John C. Calhoun (1782–1850)
Charcoal and chalk on brown paper by Rembrandt Peale (1778–1860), 1834, gift of Robert L. McNeil Jr.
South Carolina politician John C. Calhoun is known, along with Daniel Webster and Henry Clay, as one of the three great statesmen of American politics in the antebellum period. Rembrandt Peale cast him in a heroic guise in this imposing head, using the dark paper as a midtone and adding precise lines of black, soft smudged stumping, and lively white highlights. Drawn from life as a preliminary study for a portrait commissioned by Calhoun's niece, Peale, arguably the greatest portrait draftsman of his era in America, achieved an animating, lifelike quality less evident in the finished oil.

Frank B. Kellogg (1856–1937)
Oil on canvas by Philip de Lászlo (1869–1937), 1925, gift of Dr. Edward T. Wilson
Ambassador Frank B. Kellogg, about to leave London to take up his post as President Calvin Coolidge's secretary of state, asked Philip de Lászlo—depicter of the wealthy and powerful on both sides of the Atlantic—to paint his portrait. Kellogg posed in the academic gown he had worn in 1913 when he received an honorary degree from McGill University in Montreal. Kellogg's greatest fame came as the recipient of the 1929 Nobel Peace Prize, awarded for his work in negotiating the Kellogg-Briand Pact, which "renounced war as an instrument of national policy." The pact was promptly broken when armed conflict broke out in Manchuria in 1931.
Dolores del Rio (1904–1983)
Gelatin silver print by Benjamin Strauss (1871–1952), c. 1927, acquired through the generosity of the Honorable Anthony Beilenson in honor of his wife, Dolores

Actress Dolores del Rio rocketed to Hollywood stardom within a year of her arrival from Mexico in 1925 and established herself as a major box-office draw with her performance in the World War I drama *What Price Glory?* Although the American movie industry counted her among its first “Latin” stars, del Rio resisted Hollywood’s efforts to typecast her during her silent film career. With the introduction of talking pictures, however, del Rio’s accent made it easier to consign her to stereotypical roles. In 1942 she returned to Mexico to embark on an award-winning career in Spanish-language cinema.

John Ashbery (born 1927)
Gelatin silver print by Peter Hujar (1937–1987), 1975, acquired through the generosity of Elizabeth Ann Hylton

Peter Hujar photographed the poet John Ashbery in 1975, the year in which he swept all of the major literary awards with *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror*. In the title poem, Ashbery wrote, “What is beautiful seems so only in relation to a specific Life, experienced or not, channeled into some form/ Steeped in the nostalgia of a collective past.” This is Ashbery’s own artistic credo, as he has sought throughout his career to mediate experience through his ecstatic, long lines of verse. Ashbery, one of America’s most important poets, recently celebrated his eightieth birthday by publishing his twenty-sixth book of poems.

David Driskell (born 1931)
Oil on canvas by Clarice Smith (born 1933), 2006, gift of Clarice Smith

Artist and collector David Driskell has played a major role in the study and exhibition of African American art. He has served as curator of several major exhibitions, including “Hidden Heritage: Afro-American Art, 1800–1950” (1985) and “Harlem Renaissance: Art of Black America” (1987), and has also written or edited important books on the subject. After many years as a member of the faculty of the Department of Art at the University of Maryland, he was named a Distinguished University Professor. Clarice Smith was commissioned to paint this portrait to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the university’s David C. Driskell Center.
**Staff Profile**

Mark Planisek and His Memorial Portraits

**Brandon Brame Fortune**
Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture

A native of Cleveland, Ohio, Mark Planisek worked as a graphic artist and illustrator for more than fifteen years. Since 1999, his day job has been as a museum technician at the National Portrait Gallery. He spends much of his time on registrarial tasks, as well as art moving and packing at NPG’s collections storage facility in Maryland and installing objects for exhibitions at the Donald W. Reynolds Center.

Planisek has made portrait-based work in the past, often creating pieces by using a digital collage technique. Recently, he has exhibited photo collage boxes—evocative images of sunlight and shadow—in the old Randall Junior High School in Washington, where he maintained a studio until 2006.

Since 2001, Planisek has also been part of the local and national movements among American artists to develop portrait projects honoring the sacrifice of American servicemen and women killed in Afghanistan and Iraq. Portraits serve many functions, but one of the most ancient is as a memorial to the dead. During the winter of 2004–5, Planisek joined a number of local artists who were creating small paintings based on photographs of American service personnel killed since October 2001. The project, called “Faces of the Fallen,” was organized by Washington artist and Corcoran faculty member Annette Polan and her co-chair, Anne Murphy. The exhibition, held from March 23, 2005, to June 7, 2006, at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial (located at the gates to Arlington National Cemetery), featured more than 1,300 portraits by hundreds of artists. Planisek created thirteen paintings, all eight by six inches, in acrylic and mixed media on canvas. For all of this work, he and the other artists involved put aside any personal feelings about the war and concentrated on creating a meaningful memorial for the families. As Planisek has said, “I wanted to do this for the families. What began as a protest became a form of honor for these soldiers. Putting a face with a name has so much more impact than seeing a name by itself.”

For each painting, he attempted to sublimate his personal style in favor of a direct replication of the faces found in the photographs he was given. In one case, Polan e-mailed him to ask if he could redo one of the portraits, not because the mother of the slain soldier didn’t like the painting, but because she did not care for the photograph that the military had provided. With a different photograph in hand, Planisek made another painting. All of the artists who participated in “Faces of the Fallen” gave the portraits to the families.

In 2007, Planisek created two more paintings, which became part of a permanent memorial at the naval amphibious base in Coronado, California, to honor two Navy SEALs who died in Iraq in 2006: Marc A. Lee and Michael A. Monsoor. Pictured here is the original photograph, along with Planisek’s painted portrait, of Aviation Ordnanceman Second Class Lee, who was a close friend of Planisek’s nephew. No doubt Mark Planisek will be ready to take up future memorial projects, for his energy and compassion are obvious to all of his colleagues at NPG.

From left: Hallway Window Second Floor by Mark Planisek, 2007; Portrait of Marc A. Lee by Mark Planisek, 2007; family photograph of Aviation Ordnanceman Second Class Marc A. Lee; Mark Planisek and his portraits, closing day of the “Faces of the Fallen” exhibition, June 7, 2006.
Stephen Colbert Refreshes Visitors at the National Portrait Gallery

Bethany Morookian Bentley
Public Affairs Officer

If you had a chance to visit the National Portrait Gallery in the past few months, you might have noticed a particularly long line outside of the second-floor restrooms near the “America’s Presidents” exhibition. This flurry of activity was not because of the popularity of these restrooms; instead, the draw was NPG’s temporary installation of a portrait of Stephen Colbert, mock pundit for the Comedy Central television show The Colbert Report. The producers contacted the Portrait Gallery last fall, hoping to donate this picture to our collection.

For the third season of The Colbert Report, this portrait hung above the fireplace on the set that serves as a backdrop for Colbert’s interviews. Each season, Colbert hangs a new portrait of himself for the show and then finds a new home for the old one. Three episodes of The Colbert Report, which aired on January 10, 14, and 15, 2008, included segments in which Colbert tries to convince the Smithsonian that he should be considered a national treasure. He starts by attempting to donate his portrait to Brent Glass, director of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History. After Glass rejects the portrait, Colbert seeks to convince then–Portrait Gallery director Marc Pachter to accept it. In the final episode, Colbert engages in all sorts of antics to convince Pachter that he belongs in the Portrait Gallery, offering witty and sometimes outrageous responses to the recognizable faces in the “20th Century Americans” exhibition, and finally demonstrating his Hackey Sack skills in one of the galleries. “I’m in big trouble if you hit one of those pictures,” Pachter warns. Finally, while standing with Pachter in front of Gilbert Stuart’s “Lansdowne” portrait of George Washington, Colbert concludes in a voiceover that they had finally come to an agreement to hang his portrait just steps away from the “America’s Presidents” exhibition, he notes, “right where it belongs.” Then the camera pans to show that Colbert’s portrait is installed just above the drinking fountain and between entrances to the restrooms.

The public’s response to this piece was overwhelmingly positive, and thousands of people made special trips to have their picture taken in front of the portrait for their Facebook pages. Most weekends saw lines of visitors waiting their turn. In fact, the Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture experienced a 20 percent increase in visitors for the month of January, 33 percent in February, and a whopping 57 percent in March.

In addition, the museum received many e-mails, calls, and letters from people thrilled that the National Portrait Gallery has shown that it has a sense of humor. One man wrote to say he had been intimidated by the prospect of visiting the Portrait Gallery but that the appearance of Colbert’s portrait had convinced him to make a trip. He reported that after he and his thirteen-year-old daughter stopped at Colbert’s portrait, the pair spent five hours in the museum; his daughter loved making connections between the people in the museum and her history lessons. He ended with, “Ultimately, I had to tear her away from the museum. The portraits . . . were great, the building was beautiful, and the whole museum is just a jewel that we intend to return to so we can see more.”

The Colbert portrait was on view at the Portrait Gallery through, fittingly, April Fool’s Day.
Ellen G. Miles
CURATOR OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

The Smithsonian Institution, in partnership with Showtime Networks, launched its new television venture, Smithsonian Channel, in the fall of 2007 with around-the-clock programming. The channel presents programs about Smithsonian staff and collections to communicate the institution’s work to a national audience. Among these are four programs that feature Portrait Gallery staff and collections. Two that are already available include a program on the care of family photographs in “Saving Treasures,” which is hosted by Don Williams, senior conservator at the Smithsonian’s Museum Conservation Institute. Williams is co-author of Saving Stuff: How to Care for and Preserve Your Collectibles, Heirlooms, and Other Prize Possessions (2005). In the program, Ann Shumard, NPG’s curator of photographs, discusses the preservation of the museum’s large albumen silver print of Abraham Lincoln by Alexander Gardner, made in early 1865, just months before Lincoln was assassinated. It is the only print made from Gardner’s glass-plate negative, which cracked and was discarded after one printing. A dark line across the print records the position of the break in the glass. Shumard also discusses the Portrait Gallery’s photograph of General William T. Sherman and his staff, also made by Gardner in 1865, as an example of the rich tonality of an albumen print before any fading has taken place.

Also available is an episode in the “Smithsonian Spotlight” series featuring current exhibitions around the institution. This includes a tour of the Portrait Gallery’s exhibition spaces with former director Marc Pachter as guide. Pachter discusses the decision to include portraits of contemporary Americans in NPG’s permanent collection. (Formerly, the subject of a portrait had to have been dead ten years before being considered for the permanent collection.) Pachter also visits NPG’s exhibition of presidential images, noting that Gilbert Stuart’s full-length “Lansdowne” portrait of George Washington is the museum’s “single most important treasure.” Next, Pachter visits the portraits of recent presidents, from John F. Kennedy to Bill Clinton, discussing how these varied images provoke “conversations” about portraiture. He also briefly visits the Lunder Conservation Center—shared with the Smithsonian American Art Museum—with the center’s programs coordinator, Julie Heath, as his guide.

Smithsonian Channel lined up independent producer Linda Goldman for two programs that focus entirely on NPG collections, which will be aired later in 2008. “Picturing the President: George Washington” presents the history of the “Lansdowne,” from its creation in 1796 to its acquisition by NPG in 2001. Marc Pachter and Ellen Miles, curator of painting and sculpture, are joined by historian Richard Norton Smith and artist Edwin Ahlstrom in a discussion of Washington’s presidency and the imagery in the portrait.

The second show, “Framing History: Portraits of American Presidents,” also involves Pachter and Shumard, as well as Acting NPG Director Carolyn Carr and Curator of Prints and Drawings Wendy Wick Reaves. “Framing History” focuses on the role of images and image-making in a president’s career and reputation, as well as the viewer’s expectations of presidential images as he or she reflects on the role of the president. The program includes cameo appearances by portrait painter Nelson Shanks and cartoonist Pat Oliphant, whose depictions of recent presidents are included in NPG’s collection. Smith and Ahlstrom again provide additional commentary. Portraits of the presidents...
since John Kennedy receive especially close scrutiny as staff and visitors comment on individual artists and the meaning they have given to their presidential portraits. A comparison of the “Lansdowne” portrait of Washington with Nelson Shanks’s recent full-length portrait of Clinton reveals how a portrait depends on the relationship between the artist and the sitter. Other presidential portraits are touched on. President George H. W. Bush appears on camera to talk about his portrait, and Peter Hurd’s difficulties in trying to arrange sittings with President Lyndon Johnson are outlined.

Every proposed program concept or treatment will be reviewed by a Smithsonian Networks Review Committee chaired by Richard Kurin, the acting under secretary for history, art, and culture. One hundred hours of original programming has already been aired since the channel launched in the fall of 2007.

At this time, Smithsonian Channel is available in approximately twenty-two million households. Its carriers include DirecTV, Verizon FiOS, Charter Communications, and RCN, with more to be announced in the near future.

From top: A viewer considers Alexander Gardner’s photograph of Abraham Lincoln.
Pat Oliphant completes a caricature of President Bill Clinton.

**Coming Soon!**

**The Next Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition**

**Open to all visual arts media!**
Call for entries: June 2–July 31, 2008

Beginning in June, artists from all over America will be invited to enter the second Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition. The competition is named for Virginia Outwin Boochever (1920–2005), whose generous gift made the competition possible. The first competition attracted more than 4,000 entrants and focused on painted and sculpted portraits. The resulting exhibition of fifty-one portraits was a part of the National Portrait Gallery’s reopening in July 2006.

This year, the competition will be open to all visual arts media, from paintings to photographs to video to portraits derived from an individual’s DNA. Each artist may enter one portrait based on a direct encounter with a living individual or group. For instance, the subject may be a friend, a married couple, a stranger, or even a self-image of the artist. The resulting exhibition, chosen by a panel of experts, will open at the Portrait Gallery in October 2009. More information is available on the competition’s Web site, www.portraitcompetition.si.edu. Spread the word!
Opening This Spring

Zaida Ben-Yusuf: New York Portrait Photographer
April 11–September 1, 2008
The first woman to embark on building a “gallery of illustrious Americans,” photographer Zaida Ben-Yusuf (1869–1933) attracted many of the most prominent artistic, literary, theatrical, and political figures of her day to her Fifth Avenue studio. The National Portrait Gallery presents the first solo exhibition on Ben-Yusuf, celebrating her rediscovery as an important member of the pictorialist photography movement in turn-of-the-century New York.

Edward Steichen: Portraits
April 11–September 1, 2008
As chief photographer for *Vanity Fair* (1923–36), Edward Steichen created extraordinary portraits of many celebrated personalities of the era. With their sharpened focus, dramatic lighting, and bold compositions, Steichen’s sophisticated images captured the public’s imagination and set a new standard for photographic portraiture. Drawn exclusively from NPG’s collection, the exhibition includes such varied individuals as Walt Disney, Paul Robeson, Pearl Buck, and Franklin Roosevelt.

Herblock’s Presidents: “Puncturing Pomposity”
May 2–November 30, 2008
Herbert Block’s (1909–2001) political cartoons appeared in American newspapers for more than seven decades, under the pen name Herblock. Encompassing Block’s cartoons from Franklin Roosevelt through Bill Clinton, this exhibition affords the rare opportunity of viewing how one of America’s greatest political cartoonists depicted the twentieth-century American presidency. *This exhibition has been made possible by a generous grant from The Herb Block Foundation.*

Ballyhoo! Posters as Portraiture
May 9, 2008–February 8, 2009
See how posters—while advertising circuses, promoting films, hawking products, or selling war bonds—also function as portraiture. Dramatic, colorful and often enormous, posters project the public image of celebrity figures, enhancing, exploiting, or upgrading the information we subconsciously absorb. This exhibition features posters from the nineteenth century through the present and includes “Buffalo Bill” Cody, Joe Louis, Judy Garland, Bob Dylan, and Johnny Depp.

Charlie Chaplin by Edward Steichen, 1925, acquired in memory of Agnes and Eugene Meyer through the generosity of Katharine Graham and the New York Community Trust, The Island Fund

Currently on View

One Life—KATE: A Centennial Celebration
Through September 28, 2008
“KATE” celebrates the 100th anniversary of the birth of film, stage, and television icon Katharine Hepburn.

RECOGNIZE!
Hip Hop and Contemporary Portraiture
Through October 26, 2008
Spotlighting the influence of hip hop music on the surrounding culture, “RECOGNIZE!” features the works of visual artists David Scheinbaum, Kehinde Wiley, and Shinique Smith; poet Nikki Giovanni; videographer Jefferson Pinder; and graffiti muralists Tim Conlon and Dave Hupp.

New Arrivals
Through January 25, 2009
This installation highlights twenty-seven selections of recently acquired works.

Traveling Exhibitions

“So Let Your Motto Be Resistance: African American Portraits”
Louisiana State Museum, New Orleans
March 15–June 1, 2008
The photographs in this exhibition, selected from the National Portrait Gallery’s collection, illuminate the variety of ways in which African Americans resisted and redefined an America that needed but rarely accepted its black citizens. Organized by the National Museum of African American History and Culture, in collaboration with the National Portrait Gallery.

Loans from the Collection

New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, New York City
March 27–June 30, 2008
“New York Story: Jerome Robbins & His World,” an exhibition celebrating the famed dancer and his


Decatur House Museum, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C.
April 16, 2008–March 1, 2009
The museum celebrates the local African American experience, from the early nineteenth century through the 1960s, in “Half Had Not Been Told to Me: The African American History of Lafayette Square.” NPG’s portrait of Lillian Evanti by Lois Mailou Jones will illustrate the story of the singer’s performances at both the Belasco Theater and the White House.

Bucerius Kunst Forum, Hamburg, Germany
June 6–August 31, 2008
Oil portraits of Francis Millet by George Willoughby Maynard and Henry Clay and Helen Frick by Edmund C. Tarbell will travel to Germany for “High Society: American Portraits of the Gilded Age.”

Portland Museum of Art, Maine
June 12, 2008–February 1, 2009
Seven photographs from John Loengard’s Georgia O’Keeffe/Ghost Ranch series, the 1968 issue of Life magazine in which the photographs appeared, and a platinum-palladium print of O’Keeffe by Irving Penn will be included in the exhibition “Georgia O’Keeffe: Image and Identity.”

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City
June 26–September 21, 2008
“Buckminster Fuller: Starting with the Universe” will honor the well-known architect, engineer, environmental scientist, and author. Opening at the Whitney, the exhibition will travel to several venues. NPG is lending its 1963 portrait of Fuller by Boris Artzybasheff.
Portrait Puzzlers

1. Most famous for her 1939 Lincoln Memorial concert, this Philadelphia-born contralto performed the national anthem at the inauguration of President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1957.

2. In 1953, this man launched a new, more risqué “men’s magazine” that pushed the envelope of respectability and, in the process, changed the way people looked at “bunnies.”

3. This celebrated poet of the Harlem Renaissance published more than forty books during his career, beginning with The Weary Blues.

4. As director of the Manhattan Project, this man was able to bring together his great loves, physics and the high desert mesas of New Mexico.

“I was riveted by the entire experience. Most of the time my heart was in my throat. This museum enabled me to view and revisit much of America’s and people’s history, from presidents to hip hop and the Cold War to Kate. Thanks.” —Visitor comment

You can enable us to inspire future visitors to the National Portrait Gallery. Your generous contribution fills the gap between federal funding and the rising costs of operating 364 days a year. Contact Sherri Weil, director of development and external affairs, at weils@si.edu.

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