

PROFILE

Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery News

Summer 2000



Marc Pachter Begins Tenure as Fourth Portrait Gallery Director

Marc Pachter, former chief historian and assistant director of the Gallery, has assumed his new position as director, succeeding Alan Fern, who retired on July 1.

After he joined the Gallery staff in 1974, Pachter organized a number of exhibitions, including “Abroad in America: Visitors to the New Nation, 1776–1914” (1976) and “Champions of American Sport” (1981). He was also responsible for the Gallery’s history, publications, education, and library programs.

In 1990 he moved to the office of the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution as deputy assistant secretary for external affairs, where he oversaw *Smithsonian* magazine, the Smithsonian Press, and membership and development programs, among other responsibilities. He was appointed counselor to the Secretary in 1994, and assumed responsibility for electronic media issues at the Institution and chaired the Smithsonian’s 150th anniversary celebration in 1996. In 1999 he received the Secretary’s Gold Medal for Exceptional Service.

An author and editor with a particular interest in cultural history and biography, Pachter is regarded as the Smithsonian’s “master interviewer.” For more than fifteen years he has conducted the Gallery’s series of interviews before a public audience, called “Living Self-portraits,” which grew out of two conferences that Pachter conceived and organized in the 1970s, titled “The Art of Biography” and “Presidential Biography.” Papers from the first conference were published in *Telling Lives: The Biographer’s Art* (1979). *



From the *New* DIRECTOR

It is my very good fortune to arrive as fourth director of the National Portrait Gallery at a time when this handsome new publication will allow me to keep in regular contact with our many friends. During the next

years, while the museum is closed as the Patent Office Building is restored to even greater grandeur, we will be a “museum without walls,” presenting exhibitions that will travel around the country and the world, organizing programs in partnership with other cultural institutions, expanding our Web site, and producing publications such as this one. It will be a period of ever-changing news, and one of the most exciting in the Gallery’s history.

If the Gallery’s story is one of continuity and change, the same might be said of its new director’s relationship to this wonderful place. When I arrived at the Smithsonian twenty-six years ago, it was as the Gallery’s chief historian under then-director Marvin Sadik. Over eight years I learned the art of presenting candidates from all fields of endeavor for inclusion in our collections to our commissioners, who ultimately decide which portraits we acquire. As luck would have it, I spent an equal number of years under the director whose great tenure we have just celebrated, Alan Fern. Under Alan I pursued my passion for the art of biography and enjoyed the remarkable opportunity to interview such great Americans as Agnes de Mille, Katharine Graham, and Gordon Parks before a live audience for the museum’s series of “Living Self-portraits.”

I have spent the last ten years working on special projects for two Secretaries of the Smithsonian—years that have given me a sense of the entire Smithsonian, and what it means to the American people. I return to the Gallery with a passion to make it a centerpiece of the Institution’s growing connection to all Americans, wherever they live. As I see it, the Gallery’s mission is to make certain that the remarkable Americans of generations past continue to share company with present and future generations. Through the rich tradition of the exhibition, through performance, lecture, and interview, through the use of the latest technologies, we will enliven their memories and enrich our own lives. It’s a sacred obligation and a lot of fun. I’m glad to be back.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marc Pachter". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and expressive.

PROFILE

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Photo: Chris Lands



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National Portrait Gallery

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NPG Is on the Move as Portraits Go on View Across America and Abroad

By the time the Gallery reopens, hundreds of thousands of museum-goers across America and in Europe and Japan will have seen portraits from the collection in the form of traveling exhibitions or as loans ranging in duration from a few months to three years. Of the nearly one thousand works leaving Washington, D.C., many have not been seen outside the museum since they were acquired because they have been on view as part of the Gallery's core display.

Some 250 of the museum's most important artworks will tour in four exhibitions organized specifically for this period of renovation; each is accompanied by a book. There are still opportunities for museums to participate in these tours.

In addition, several exhibitions organized by



Photo: Chris Lands

Abraham Lincoln's portrait being removed from the Hall of Presidents

museum curators which opened in Washington in 1998 and 1999 are still traveling, and thematic groups of portraits of baseball giants, notable women, figures portrayed for the cover of *Time* magazine, and significant Virginians, for example, are already on view elsewhere or are scheduled to be packed and shipped soon.

The Gallery is also lending works to dozens of additional sites, including the George C. Marshall Museum in Lexington, Virginia; the Haus der Geschichte, a museum of contemporary art in Bonn, Germany; the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City; the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, California; and the McBride Museum in Roswell, New Mexico.

“Portraits of the Presidents from the National Portrait Gallery”

The sixty-one paintings, sculptures, photographs, medals, and other likenesses in “Portraits of the Presidents” (most of which have been on view in the Hall of Presidents) are a testament to the public's enduring fascination with the office of the presidency and the men who have held it.

In general, these portraits were produced with an eye toward posterity, and many are mainstream works made by artists who were among the best and most sophisticated of their time, such as nineteenth-century virtuoso George P. A. Healy, whose portraits of John Tyler, Franklin Pierce, James Buchanan, and Abraham Lincoln are included. A few artists were unusual choices, such as Abstract Expressionist Elaine de Kooning, whose vivid portrait of John F. Kennedy was featured in the spring 2000 issue of *Profile*. The exhibition opens at the George Bush Presidential Library and



Richard Milhous Nixon by Norman Rockwell



“Patriae Pater” George Washington by Rembrandt Peale

Museum in College Station, Texas, on October 6. It will travel to six other venues.

Among the exhibition's highlights are:

- A portrait of Richard Nixon by Norman Rockwell (1968), the most intimate work on exhibit. Small in relation to the others, the painting's relaxed informality and engaging warmth are so compelling that it holds its own.
- Castings of Lincoln's hands and face, made before and during the Civil War, showing the toll the conflict took on his features, and one of the last photographs of Lincoln, the famous “cracked plate” image by Alexander Gardner.
- A version of Rembrandt Peale's monumental portrait of George Washington, titled “Patriae Pater,” which is the culmination of a more than twenty-year search for what Peale intended as the national likeness of the first President.

“A Brush with History: Paintings from the National Portrait Gallery”

Traveling to seven venues, “A Brush with History” opens at the North Carolina Museum of History on January 27, 2001, and will be on view there through April 8. The exhibition’s seventy-five paintings spanning nearly three centuries include works by the nation’s major portrait artists.

The paintings explore the range of American portraiture and the often complex relationships between the artist, the sitter, and the intended audience. They vary in time and subject from Charles Willson Peale’s 1769 portrait of America’s first woman newspaper publisher, Anne Green, and Henry Inman’s circa 1830 painting of Sequoyah holding a tablet with his alphabet of the Cherokee language; to Betsy Graves Reyneau’s 1942 portrait of scientist George Washington Carver, made for the Harmon Foundation’s acclaimed exhibition, which toured the nation to combat racism; and Alex Katz’s portrait of writer John Updike, made in 1982.

The works also vary dramatically in imagery and technique, from John Singleton Copley’s brilliant self-portrait of the 1780s, done under the influence of European history painting, to Pop artist Andy Warhol’s vibrantly colored rendition of Michael Jackson, made for the cover of *Time* magazine in 1984.



*Self-portrait by
Mary Cassatt*



*Self-portrait by
John Singleton Copley*



*Josephine Baker by
Stanislaus Julian Walery*

“Women of Our Time: Photographs from the National Portrait Gallery”

This wide-ranging survey features seventy-five leading American women of the twentieth century, as seen by many of the finest portrait photographers of our time: Georgia O’Keeffe by Irving Penn, Eleanor Roosevelt by Lotte Jacobi, Audrey Hepburn by Philippe Halsman, Sylvia Plath by Rollie McKenna, Barbara Jordan by Richard Avedon, Janis Joplin by Linda McCartney, and others. Studio portraits, glamorous publicity shots, press photographs, fashion photographs, advertising images, amateur snapshots, and pho-

tographs made as works of art are all represented. Together, they serve as an informal history of portrait photography in the last century.

The subjects are shown at important junctures in their lives and careers: Josephine Baker performing the Charleston after her phenomenally successful Paris debut in 1925; Althea Gibson engulfed by young admirers on a city street in 1955, soon after she became the first African American to compete in a national tennis championship; Joan Baez at the March on Washington in 1963, where she sang the civil rights movement’s anthem “We Shall Overcome”; and Katharine Graham as publisher of the *Washington Post* in 1976.

“Modern American Portrait Drawings: Selections from the National Portrait Gallery”

These fifty drawings—the earliest being a luminous self-portrait by Mary Cassatt from the 1880s—explore the use of graphic media to produce ambitious works of art.

Some of these works on paper represent artistic turning points, such as Marius de Zayas’s groundbreaking abstraction in charcoal of Agnes Ernst Meyer (circa 1912), which is featured on page 9.

The drawings represent well-known figures in American life and a wide range of graphic effects,

such as Beauford Delaney’s electrifying pastel of James Baldwin, Roy Lichtenstein’s Pop interpretation of Robert Kennedy, Ben Shahn’s vision of a tortured J. Robert Oppenheimer, and Elaine de Kooning’s sketchy glimpse of saxophonist Ornette Coleman in performance.

Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, Alice B. Toklas, Stokely Carmichael, and others come alive in these vivid portrayals. In many cases, artist and subject are perfectly paired; Reginald Marsh captured his Yale roommate Thornton Wilder in charcoal, and Jamie Wyeth and Andy Warhol depicted each other in a play on their stylistic differences. ✨

See the exhibition touring schedule on page 15

Gift of Rare Indian Peace Medals and Lithographs

Ellen G. Miles

CURATOR OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

From George Washington's administration through the nineteenth century, peace medals were an important part of the federal government's relationships with Native Americans. They were often presented to tribal leaders to secure treaties and cement political loyalties. The medals, with a portrait of the current President on one side, were usually made in silver in limited quantities and are now rare.

In 1999 Betty and Lloyd Schermer gave the Gallery nineteen Indian peace medals and a rare, complete set of *The History of the Indian Tribes of North America* by Thomas L. McKenney and James Hall, one of the nineteenth century's most important works on the American Indian and the most elaborate color-plate book produced in America during the age of lithography. The Schermers' generous gift also includes framed examples of additional lithographs, and a letter written in 1823 concerning the medals made during James Monroe's administration.

Eighteen of the nineteen medals were made for the United States government between 1793 and 1881, and depict Presidents from George Washington to Chester Arthur. The nineteenth, a medal of George III, was given by the British government to its Canadian allies during the War of 1812. The medals became treasured symbols of power for their owners, who often wore them around their necks on ribbons.

The earliest medal in the collection, made in silver in an oval shape, shows George Washington greeting a Native American on one side, and the coat of arms of the United States on the other. The Native American, wearing a peace medal, puffs on a long pipe in a gesture of peace and points to a hatchet on the ground, a symbol of war that has ended. In the background is a scene of a farmer plowing a field.

The pipe and hatchet continued to be used as peace symbols on these medals until 1850, and were usually shown in a crossed position above two clasped hands. In the example made in 1801, during Thomas Jefferson's first administration, the sleeve cuff represents the arm of an army officer, and the silver wristband embossed with an image of the American eagle represents the arm of a Native American. Silver bands such as this were another type of ceremonial gift from the government. A profile portrait of Thomas Jefferson is on the front of the medal.

The Jefferson medals, and many subsequent examples made during later presidencies, were struck at the United States Mint in three sizes. From 1850, beginning with the medals made during Millard Fillmore's administration, the images on the reverse combine



Mark your calendars to see the medals on the Mall

Indian Peace Medals from the Schermer Collection, National Portrait Gallery

The Smithsonian Castle, Schermer Hall January 26 – June 3, 2001

the theme of peace with one of progress and assimilation.

McKenney and Hall's three-volume publication, printed in Philadelphia in 1837–1844, includes biographies of Native American leaders and 120 hand-colored lithographic portraits that reproduce paintings made by Charles Bird King and other artists. Most of the paintings were made during the tribal leaders' visits to Washington, D.C., under commission by McKenney, who, as superintendent for Indian trade, was also responsible for procuring the medals. Some of the images show Native Americans wearing the peace medals that were given to them on their visits. The original portraits, displayed at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, were destroyed in a fire at the Smithsonian in 1865. *



Above: George Washington peace medal, obverse (detail)

Opposite: Thomas Jefferson peace medal, obverse (above), and reverse (below)

Portraits on the Road

Now on View

New York City

International Center of Photography, Uptown Gallery

“A Durable Memento: Portraits by Augustus Washington, African American Daguerreotypist.” This exhibition of thirty-two daguerreotypes by one of the nation’s first black photographers, organized by the Gallery in 1999, will be on view through September 24.

St. Petersburg, Florida

The Florida International Museum

“Presidents and First Ladies on *Time*.” On view are thirty-five pieces of original art made for covers of *Time* magazine, including several Man of the Year portraits, portraying Presidents from Harry S. Truman to Bill Clinton, as well as five first ladies. The exhibition, which is based on a show held at the Gallery in 1995–1996, will be on view through October 22.

Arlington, Texas

Legends of the Game Baseball Museum

Twelve works, including a watercolor of Vida Blue, a casein painting of Mickey Mantle and Roger Maris, and a polychromed bronze of Casey Stengel, will remain on view until January 2003.

Coming This Summer and Fall

Long Island, New York

Heckscher Museum

“Hans Namuth: Portraits.” The first full exploration of Namuth’s life and work begins with iconic photographs of Jackson Pollock in the act of painting made in 1950. Seventy-five of Namuth’s photographs from the Gallery’s collection, which were exhibited in Washington, D.C., in 1999, are on view from August 19 through October 29.

Dallas, Texas

The Women’s Museum: An Institute for the Future

Some fifty paintings and sculptures of such figures as Jenny Lind, Leontyne Price, Amelia Earhart, and Susan B. Anthony will comprise one of this museum’s inaugural installations beginning on September 29.

Richmond, Virginia

The Virginia Historical Society

Thirty-three paintings, sculptures, prints, drawings, and photographs of important Virginians, including Arthur Ashe, Henry “Light-Horse Harry” Lee, Ella Fitzgerald, Robert E. Lee, and Martha Washington, will be on view from December 2000 until January 2003.

HISTORIAN'S CHOICE Ethel Merman

*Oil and acrylic on canvas by Rosemarie Sloat (born 1925), 1971
gift of Ethel Merman*

Amy Henderson

HISTORIAN

It was one of the most riveting moments of my life—the day I strolled into my office and found myself face-to-face with Ethel Merman. The Queen of the American Musical Stage was not there to visit me, needless to say, but to pay homage to the larger-than-life portrait that hung on my wall. The portrait was enormous, more than seven feet high, and depicted La Merman outfitted in fringe and toting a gun for one of her best-known roles, as Annie Oakley in *Annie Get Your Gun*. Dressed this day in a subdued suit and with her hair swirled into a light brown cloud, Merman stood enraptured by the painting. There were tears in her eyes when she turned to me as I tiptoed into the room, trying not to interrupt—well, actually, I was trying not to jump up and down and scream “Wow!! You’re Ethel Merman!!!” Her voice was soft as she said, “I love this picture.” But it was definitely The Voice.

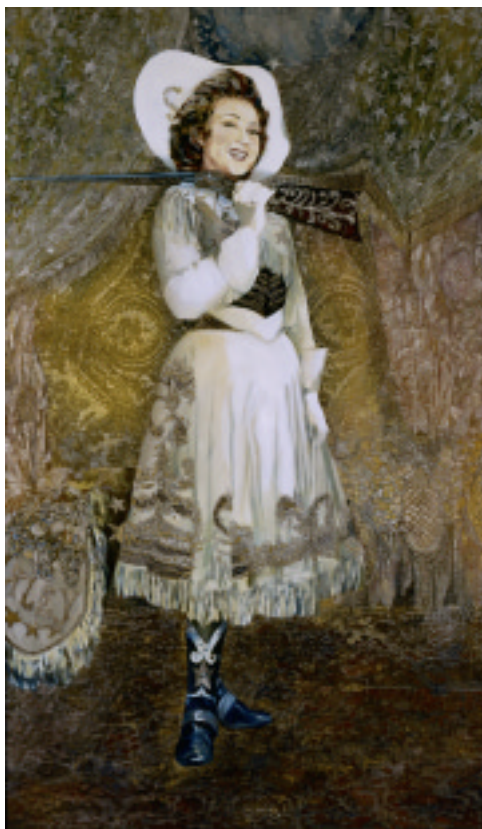
It was the same voice that had catapulted her to overnight stardom in the Gershwins’ 1930 Broadway musical, *Girl Crazy*. When she sang “I Got Rhythm” on opening night, she stopped the show: “I held a high C note for sixteen bars while the orchestra played the melodic line—a big, tooty thing—against the note. By the time I’d held that note for four bars the audience was applauding. . . .” They kept applauding, and she did several encores. “When I finished that song,” she recalled, “a star had been born. Me.”

Her vibrant personality and clarion voice reverberated through Broadway’s greatest years, and America’s leading composers adored her. Cole Porter once said, “I’d rather write songs for Ethel Merman than anyone else in the world,” and songwriters from the Gershwins to Stephen Sondheim and Jule Styne agreed. Merman thought it was

because she was always true to the lyrics—“I sing honest. Loud, but honest.”

Irving Berlin’s *Annie Get Your Gun* was a defining role for her, providing the anthem that became her signature song, “There’s No Business Like Show Business.” Opening at the Imperial Theatre on May 16, 1946, *Annie Get Your Gun* ran for 1,147 perfor-

mances. Twenty years after *Annie’s* premiere, Merman starred in a highly successful revival at Lincoln Center. She became so closely identified with the role that when her portrait was painted for a 1971 Gallery exhibition, “Portraits of the American Stage,” she chose to be depicted as Annie Oakley. Artist Rosemarie Sloat was selected to paint her, and she began by sketching Merman in her dressing room at the St. James Theatre after a matinee performance of *Hello, Dolly!* Sloat reported that she was extremely cooperative—“She’s a warm, wonderful woman and she talks constantly.” For the portrait, Sloat used her palette knife to layer stars, spangles, and fringe with hills and valleys of paint. And to create the filigreed curtains and embroi-



dery effect for the Annie costume, she squeezed swirls and gobs of acrylic directly from tube onto canvas. The three-dimensional metallic texture showcases the brassy Merman stage personality—so much so that Merman suggested the portrait be used as the cover illustration for the *Annie Get Your Gun* cast recording.

Indeed, she was so fond of this portrait that when she heard that a search was on for a donor, she bought it herself and presented it to the National Portrait Gallery. It is the only life portrait of Ethel Merman ever done. ✨

Further reading: *Merman: An Autobiography* (New York, 1978), co-authored by George Eells, is great fun and full of anecdotes. Laurence Bergreen’s biography of Irving Berlin, *As Thousands Cheer* (New York, 1990), sets a solid context for Merman’s significance in American musical theater.

CURATOR'S CHOICE Agnes Ernst Meyer

*Charcoal by Marius de Zayas (1880–1961), circa 1912–1913
gift of Dr. Anne Meyer*

Wendy Wick Reaves

CURATOR OF PRINTS AND DRAWINGS

Pioneer works of American modernism are uncommon in a collection like ours, so we were delighted with our recent acquisition of Marius de Zayas's abstract portrait of Agnes Ernst Meyer (1887–1970), a reporter and social activist, and co-owner of the *Washington Post*. The charcoal, one of the most advanced images produced in America at the time, is the generous gift of her granddaughter, Anne Meyer.

Both artist and subject of this remarkable drawing were leading figures of Alfred Stieglitz's inner circle when his "291" galleries represented the height of the American avant-garde. Agnes Ernst was the *New York Sun*'s first female reporter when she was sent to interview Stieglitz in 1908. She became an activist for the modernist cause, and, after her marriage to financier Eugene Meyer, a patron of 291. Her friend Marius de Zayas played a major role in the promotion of avant-garde art in America through his art, his writings, his exhibitions of modern artists, and his own galleries.

The Mexican-born de Zayas, a caricaturist for the New York press, also drew unusual charcoal portraits of attenuated figures emerging from shadowy backgrounds, which were exhibited at 291 in 1909. A subsequent trip to Paris broadened his ambitions still further. There he encountered cubism and befriended Pablo Picasso. The two Spanish-speaking artists were kindred spirits; they once had a square-wheeled bicycle constructed just so they could park it outside a bistro and sketch the reactions of astonished passersby.

Picasso introduced de Zayas to African art, cubist theory, and fresh ways of translating imagery into form. De Zayas began writing about modern art and planning exhibitions for 291, introducing Picasso, cubism, and African art to American audiences. Attracted to modern and primitive stylization, he started his own search for symbolic

expression, the "pictorial equivalent" of an individual's immaterial essence. Developing a complex theory of what he called "abstract caricature," he produced a series of drawings that reduced personality to abstract shapes and mathematical symbols.

The Meyer charcoal was one of nine such abstracts shown at 291 in April 1913. As de Zayas

explained in an accompanying essay, his technique consisted of representing the spirit of man by algebraic formulas, his "material self" by geometrical equivalents, and his "initial force" by "trajectories within the rectangle that . . . represents life." In the Meyer drawing, ovoid shapes at the top allude to her broad brow, eyes, and prominent chin. The curved shape beneath and long arcs to the right represent her breast and full-length figure in profile. De Zayas balances these forms with classical symmetry around a central axis to connote Meyer's renowned beauty, and hints at her

intelligence with an abstruse algebraic formula of squared and cubed numbers. Sweeping diagonals leading upward to the right indicate Meyer's dynamic progression through life.

As the controversial Armory Show of 1913 proved, abstraction in art was still a radical concept in America, and de Zayas applied it for the first time to portraiture. Most New York critics were predictably skeptical; one called his drawing "the disordered dreams of some Cubist mathematician." But modernists in both France and America were influenced by his innovative approach. His charcoal of Meyer, a radical new idea for portraiture, documents both of their crucial roles in the early avant-garde. ✨

Further reading: See Craig R. Bailey's article, "The Art of Marius de Zayas" in *Arts Magazine* 53 (September 1978): 136–44; Willard Bohn, "The Abstract Vision of Marius de Zayas," *Art Bulletin* 62 (September 1980): 434–52; Douglas Hyland, *Marius de Zayas: Conjuror of Souls* (Lawrence, Kans., 1981); and Wendy Wick Reaves, *Celebrity Caricature in America* (New Haven, Conn., 1998).



Familiar Faces—Different Places

New Resources for School and Community Audiences in Print and on the Web

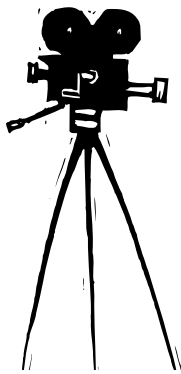
Carol Wyrick

EDUCATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Now that the Gallery is closed, the Office of Education is busier than ever designing an expanded menu of resources in a variety of formats for use by school and community audiences across the country. In addition to descriptions of local school and adult program offerings and internship opportunities, the Web site also includes new resources developed around the permanent collection, recent Gallery exhibitions, and traveling exhibitions.

New!

A video “A Brush with History: Paintings from the National Portrait Gallery” is slated for completion by early winter 2000. The Web site will soon feature preview clips from this engaging program, developed especially for the traveling exhibition. Copies of the completed video—including interviews with artists and sitters, studio and archival footage, photographs, and memorabilia—will be available on loan through the Office of Education.



For information about how to obtain print versions of these collection-based resources, call the Office of Education at (202) 357-2920.

Permanent Collection Resources

Hall of Presidents: A Virtual Tour

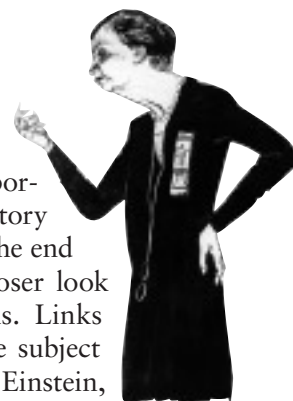
www.npg.si.edu/exh/hall/index-hall2.htm

Sweeping 360-degree panoramic views of the Hall of Presidents shot just before the Gallery closed for renovation are available on this virtual tour. Viewers can look at architectural details of the Hall and at portraits by clicking from one alcove to the next. Detailed views of each portrait, as well as presidential biographies, are included.

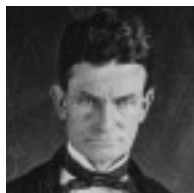
Portraits of Character

www.npg.si.edu/inf/edu/index-teach.htm

Originally produced in partnership with the *Washington Times* and soon to be offered for national syndication, these monthly features include a portrait from the permanent collection and a related story about the sitter. A new feature will be added at the end of each month. Readers are asked to take a closer look at portraits through carefully crafted questions. Links to Web sites with related information about the subject are also provided. Currently featured are Albert Einstein, George Washington Carver, Henry Clay Frick, Rosa Parks, Frances Perkins, and Walt Whitman.



Frances Perkins
by William Sharp



John Brown by
Augustus Washington
(detail)

Special Exhibition Resources

www.npg.si.edu/inf/edu/index-teach.htm

A variety of teaching resources based on selected exhibitions mounted by the Gallery in 1999 are available in print and on the Web. The exhibitions are “Picturing Hemingway: A Writer in His Time,” “Tête à Tête: Portraits by Henri Cartier-Bresson,” and “A Durable Memento: Portraits by Augustus Washington, African American Daguerreotypist.”

Coming Soon!

Portraits of the Presidents from the National Portrait Gallery

Available in fall 2000

Print and Web resources based on “Portraits of the Presidents” introduce the Presidents and the role of the presidency. Input from local and national educators helped department staff tailor these materials to ensure that they meet the needs of students in grades three through twelve. Resources include presidential biographies and thematic lesson plans accompanied by interactive classroom activities.

A Brush with History: Paintings from the National Portrait Gallery

Available in winter 2000

Print and Web resources help teachers prepare students in grades five through twelve for their study of this exhibition at venue sites or on the Web through five thematic units: “From Revolution to Constitution,” “Those Inventive Americans,” “Abolition and the Civil War,” “American Literary Voices,” and “The American Artist.” Each unit also includes a call for related lesson plans or ideas from teachers, which will be reviewed for possible inclusion on the site. *

HARD HAT NEWS

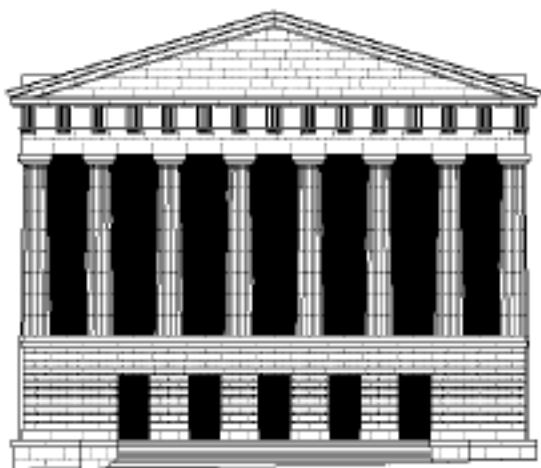
Portico Restoration

Kristin Gray, HARTMAN-COX ARCHITECTS
Four of the grandest architectural features of the Old Patent Office Building are the Greek Revival Doric order porticos that punctuate the center of each facade. The south portico was the original entrance to the building and has been the entrance to the Portrait Gallery since the museum opened to the public in 1968. Built in 1836, it is the only portico on the building to feature two rows of eight freestanding Doric columns. The north, west, and east porticos are similar in style but smaller, with one row of freestanding Doric columns.

Analysis of the porticos revealed problems, including inadequate drainage and damaged or missing paving. The porticos were also covered with bird droppings. With the completion of the first phase of renovation, each of the porticos is now illuminated nightly by a new lighting system, and an ASPCA-approved bird deterrent system has been installed at the columns and pilasters to ensure that the birds do not return.

An interesting feature of the project was the reuse of original sandstone pavers from the south portico. This is the only portico that has retained the building's original pavers, many of which were damaged or missing. There were not enough salvageable original pavers to cover the south portico floor, so new pavers were installed there, matching the material, color, and pattern of the original design. Salvaged pavers from the south portico were relocated to the north, where fewer pavers were required.

Future phases will address other areas of the porticos, such as replacing windows, repairing portico doors, and cleaning and repairing the marble, granite, and sandstone facade. ✨



South portico



Crews used plywood and wood studs to build a protective structure around the portico pilasters and columns before the portico restoration work began. The contractor started at the south portico, where the only remaining original paving still existed. Salvageable paving was reused on the north portico.



View of the protected columns on the south portico, looking down from the Great Hall windows. The historic paving is visible on the portico deck.



A view of the fluid-applied membrane that seals the new concrete decks of the porticos. This waterproofing layer was applied to the north, south, and west portico decks, and covered by crushed stone and new or salvaged pavers.

THEN & NOW

Mantle, Maris, and the 1961 Home Run Bonanza

Sidney Hart

EDITOR, PEALE FAMILY PAPERS

In the last decade, baseball fans and officials alike have had two major questions on their minds: Why are so many home runs being hit, and has it damaged the integrity of the game? These questions were also asked during the glorious 1961 season in which New York Yankee teammates Mickey Mantle and Roger Maris (“M&M”) hit 61 and 54 home runs, respectively (Maris broke Babe Ruth’s record of 60), and the Yankees, as a team, hit a record 240.

Further reading: See Ralph Houk and Robert W. Creamer’s *Season of Glory* (New York, 1988); Richard Justice’s “Home Run Hitters Are Having a Blast,” *Washington Post*, April 30, 2000; and George Will’s “Home Run Glut,” *Washington Post*, May 7, 2000.



Mickey Mantle and Roger Maris by Russell Hoban. Gift of Time magazine.

As we pass the halfway point of the 2000 season, there is again a sense of unease about America’s game. A lengthy article by Richard Justice in the *Washington Post* quotes baseball’s “top executives” as “concerned” about the pace of home runs in the 1990s, which increased from one team hitting the home-run benchmark of 200 in 1991, to ten (one-third of all major-league teams) reaching 200 in 1999. More than half of the major-league teams are expected to meet or exceed 200 this season. Further evidence lies in the decades of the 1970s and 1980s, when George Foster was the only player to hit more than 50 home runs (52) as compared to the 1990s, when ten players hit 50 or more.

Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig is perplexed and has appointed a commission to study the problem. In the meantime, “experts” are rounding up the usual suspects, and it seems that size really could matter: players are bigger, ballparks are smaller, the height of the pitching mound is lower, and the strike zone has shrunk! In addition, the baseball is harder, and the quality of pitching has been diluted as the number of teams has increased.

Back in 1961, fans and experts were also at odds to explain the phenomenon. Ted Williams, probably annoyed that he had retired the previous year and was missing out in the home run derby, blamed it on expansion and a dilution of pitching talent. A Baltimore pitcher claimed that the ball was wrapped tighter, and thus was livelier. The longtime manufacturer of baseballs responded that the “coeffi-

cient of restitution” (how far a ball rebounds) was unchanged. Mantle questioned the livelier-ball thesis by pointing out to reporters that he had hit longer home runs in the 1950s. Maris’s more acerbic response was that it was the players, not the ball, who were more lively.

Whatever one’s view of the matter, in 1961 fans were treated to an awesome display of power by M&M. Yankee manager Ralph Houk and author Robert W. Creamer recall a Yankee-White Sox twi-night doubleheader in late July, which epitomized the titanic battle between the teammates. In the first game Maris hit a home run in the fourth inning to tie Mantle at 37. Mantle came up next and hit his 38th. Maris hit another in the eighth inning and two more in the second game to move ahead of Mantle, 40 to 38. Between Memorial Day and Labor Day, M&M hit homers in the same game thirteen times. And so it proceeded until nearly the end of the season, when injuries forced Mantle out of the race.

Notwithstanding all of the explanations for the outbursts of home runs in 1961 or the 1990s, perhaps American League president Joe Cronin had it right when he concluded that a season is a season. Home runs or dominant pitching may come in cycles. As for the fans, they have been coming to ballparks in record numbers to see the powerhouses of the 1990s. They would no doubt disagree with commentator George Will, who, in writing about the home run glut, takes issue with Mae West’s famous line, “Too much of a good thing is wonderful,” when it comes to baseball. ✨



The Appeal of Peale

An interview with Sidney Hart, editor of the Charles Willson Peale Family Papers, conducted by Dru Dowdy, managing editor at the National Portrait Gallery.

The Peale Family Papers, a historical editing project of the National Portrait Gallery, has compiled an archive of more than six thousand copies of Peale family documents. The project is publishing, in conjunction with Yale University Press, a seven-volume letterpress edition of the most interesting and historically significant of these documents with copious annotations to help readers place them in historical context. *The Autobiography of Charles Willson Peale*, volume five of the series, was published this spring. Previous volumes contain Charles Willson Peale's letters and diaries.



Photo: Chris Lands

Sidney Hart, editor, Peale Family Papers

Dru Dowdy: Who is Charles Willson Peale and why is he important?

Sidney Hart: Peale (1741–1827) is best remembered as a portraitist who left us with more than one thousand images of men and women of colonial America and the early republic. He also pursued an amazing variety of other interests.

He began his career as a saddlemaker, a highly skilled artisan who also was able to repair clocks and do fine silver work. He was initially self-taught as a painter, convinced that he could probably paint portraits as well as, if not better than, most of the artists in the American colonies. In 1767 a small number of wealthy Marylanders sent him to London to study painting with the American expatriate Benjamin West, and when he returned to America in 1769, he rapidly developed into one of the most prominent portrait painters of the middle colonies.

During the American Revolution, Peale fought with the Philadelphia militia and became a leader in that city's radical republican politics. In his *Autobiography* he recounts the triumph of George Washington's victories at Trenton and Princeton, in which he fought, and also the turmoil his involvement in war and Revolutionary politics caused for himself and his family.

Dowdy: He also possessed one of the most inventive minds of his day.

Hart: Yes. His interests in technology led to patents for the first American bridge design, improved fireplaces, and a vapor bath. Later in life he was also an agrarian reformer and farmer, and a pioneer manufacturer of porcelain false teeth. His most significant achievement, though, was his Philadelphia Museum, America's first serious museum of natural history. He was a member of the nation's most prestigious learned body, the American Philosophical Society, where he befriended such men as David Rittenhouse, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin.

For readers interested in early American science, the *Autobiography* contains a full account of his 1801 expedition to upstate New York to exhume and mount the skeleton of an American mastodon, which was an epochal event in the new science of paleontology and a huge popular success that made his museum well known in the United States and Europe.

Dowdy: What made Peale decide to write his autobiography?

Hart: He was not modest about his role in American history. He wrote his autobiography to ensure his fame—he rightly viewed himself as an important participant in many of the young nation's significant cultural and political events. But he also intended his manuscript to be a memoir for his descendants; he included a great deal of material on his three wives and the eleven sons and daughters who



Charles Willson Peale, self-portrait, circa 1791

lived into adulthood. These sections on his private life make the *Autobiography* a matchless account of an American family in the early republic.

Peale composed the *Autobiography*—almost one thousand manuscript pages—when he was in his mid-eighties. He had written a short version of his life in late 1790 and 1791, when he was fifty years old. Peale's first wife had died recently, leaving him with a household full of children. He was eager to remarry and so began courting a young woman named Molly Tilghman. Peale was a man of great energy and abrupt action in all activities he pursued, and he courted all his wives in the same manner. After only a few meetings he implored Molly to commit herself immediately to marriage and a waiting family in Philadelphia. She was, of course, frightened and intimidated. And her family did not consider him to be of sufficient wealth and status to marry Molly. There were also rumors that Peale had a wife in London, so the Tilghmans ordered Molly to end the courtship. Peale, who was always an optimist, thought that they could be made to change their minds if they knew of his considerable accomplishments. But the

family was unmoved, and he was devastated and returned to Philadelphia. When Peale wrote the *Autobiography* thirty-five years later, he described the events of the Tilghman courtship far differently from what I have just outlined, which I have drawn from his letters and diaries. It was fascinating in editing Peale's work to compare the two versions, which readers of the *Autobiography* can follow in the annotations my colleague David C. Ward and I wrote.

Dowdy: What is the significance of Peale's *Autobiography*?

Hart: There are, as I see it, only two major autobiographies in the late colonial and early national period of American history: Benjamin Franklin's, which is very well known, and Peale's, which has never been previously published and is not well known at all, except by a handful of scholars in American art history. Peale's *Autobiography* spans a pivotal era in our history, from fifteen years before the American Revolution through the 1820s. The reader can follow America's amazing transformation from an undeveloped colonial outpost of Great Britain to an independent republic in the midst of a transportation revolution, and to the beginnings of the industrial revolution.

Dowdy: What or who will the last two volumes of the Peale Papers focus on?

Hart: Volumes six and seven of the series will focus on Charles Willson Peale's numerous children, most of whom were named after European artists and scientists, and the Peale museums. Included will be selections from the papers and writings of

Rembrandt Peale, one of America's most important nineteenth-century artists; Rubens Peale, proprietor of art and science museums in Baltimore and New York; Titian Ramsay Peale, naturalist of the famous Wilkes Expedition, which explored the South Seas; and also Sophonisba Peale, whose large collection of letters is filled with information on the nineteenth-century American family, a subject of intense interest among American social historians. We also hope to include a photographic essay of the paintings of James Peale's daughters, Anna Claypoole and Sarah Miriam Peale, who are among the first professional women artists in nineteenth-century America.

Dowdy: How can readers of *Profile* find out more about this volume?

Hart: For more information about Peale's *Autobiography*, including ordering information, look at the Peale Family Papers section under "Information" at the Gallery's Web site, www.npg.si.edu. *

The volume can also be purchased in local bookstores, or directly from:

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Portrait Puzzlers

Most of us have been able to conjure up mental images of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln practically since we were toddlers. Using these clues, can you connect names to these faces? Answers below.

1.



This artist's best-known work is *Arrangement in Grey and Black*, but its popular title has a more familial ring. When a noted critic likened one of his paintings to "flinging a pot of paint into the public's face," the artist sued for damages and won. The settlement amounted to one British farthing.

2.



She was the White House hostess for two Presidents and was much loved for putting her guests at ease. She may be best known, however, for saving another President from going up in flames.

3.



This illustrator-cartoonist was dubbed the Union army's most effective recruiting sergeant of the Civil War. He also originated the two most used symbols in American political cartooning.

4.



During the Battle of the Bulge in World War II, his German opponents sent this general a demand for surrender. He boiled his answer down to a one-syllable American colloquialism that has been a much-quoted part of American military lore ever since.

1. James McNeill Whistler: *Arrangement in Grey and Black* is popularly known as *Whistler's Mother*. Oil on canvas by Walter Greaves, 1870. 2. Dolley Madison: The wife of President James Madison ensured that the White House portrait of George Washington would not be burned when the British invaded Washington during the War of 1812. Oil on canvas by William S. Elwell, 1848. 3. Thomas Nast: The political cartoonist devised the Republican elephant and the Democratic donkey. Oil on canvas by John White Alexander, 1887. 4. General Anthony McAuliffe: His answer to the Germans read "Nuts!" Oil on canvas by Jes Schlatker.

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