For the most part, we devote each issue of Profile to a particular theme. But every now and then we give our lively quarterly magazine over to the many topics that describe our activities and collections without imposing thematic unity. And although this is just that sort of issue, I find that when I look at the collection of articles and reviews, something like a theme emerges. Not surprisingly, in a museum devoted to the story of Americans, that underlying theme is freedom. In fact, one way to describe American life is as an ongoing conversation, sometimes debate, about freedom.

A central element of that debate, of course, has been the situation of African Americans. We have chosen to remember that great national concern in this issue by offering our account of the landmark Brown v. the Board of Education decision by the United States Supreme Court, in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of that decision on May 17. There is a bit of irony in this issue’s serendipity in that we also include a review of a recent publication on Jefferson Davis. Davis felt deeply that his struggle for states’ rights was in the end a struggle for freedom, but lived with the contradiction that one of the key rights that the Confederacy was struggling to secure was the right to maintain slavery. He was not alone in that dilemma, because the Constitution itself had allowed for the different treatment of African Americans. The struggle to guarantee freedom for all Americans has become in our time a core commitment of the America we believe in.

Another manifestation of American freedom occurs in this issue—that of the artist to create. We discover that here in the persons of dancers Natalia Makarova and Mikhail Baryshnikov, captured by the photographer Max Waldman in photographs taken only months after their respective defections (four years apart) from the Soviet Union. The article about those epoch-making decisions to “leap to the West” recalls Makarova’s statement, “I firmly believe that to develop as an artist it is essential to have a measure of freedom to choose what seems right.” The Portrait Gallery has the opportunity to celebrate these great performers who joined our national life through its recent acquisition of these vintage Waldman photographs.

There’s another kind of American freedom, of course, the freedom to have fun. I won’t belabor that point, but you’ll enjoy the account of the career of a number of celebrity caricaturists, whose form of fun, it might be said, was the kind you poke at others. There’s also here a cheerful retelling of the time that Beatlemania struck America. That’s fun I personally remember. And even though the Beatles weren’t (and aren’t) American citizens, they still have a place in the American National Portrait Gallery because of their impact on society, like the “Swedish Nightingale” Jenny Lind more than a century before.

And read here, too, of the discoveries of one of our staff members at our sister Portrait Gallery in London, and the discoveries provided by our first Edgar P. Richardson Symposium on Portraiture. The National Portrait Gallery, I hope you’ll agree, is as dynamic and open as the country we represent.

From the DIRECTOR

[Signature]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>PROFILE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Miguel Covarrubias and Celebrity Caricature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>We Love You, Yeah, Yeah, Yeah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beatlemania Hits America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Doing the Beatles for Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Leaping to the West Max Waldman Photographs Dancers Natalia Makarova and Mikhail Baryshnikov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Brown v. Board of Education A Decision that Changed America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>NPG—London A Reflection of the People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Two Prominent Paintings Much in Demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Book Review Jefferson Davis, Confederate President by Herman Hattauay and Richard E. Beringer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Edgar P. Richardson Symposium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>NPG on the Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>NPG Schedules and Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Portrait Puzzlers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correction: In the winter 2003 issue, Max Waldman’s name was misspelled on page 3. Also, the image of Roger Maris on page 14 was reversed during the printing process.

In the next issue
- A special focus on scientists in the NPG collection
By 1923, when Mexican-born caricaturist Miguel Covarrubias arrived in New York City, the nature of fame had switched from a nineteenth-century model of accomplishment to a twentieth-century preoccupation with attracting an audience. Covarrubias's stylized portrayals of emerging Manhattan celebrities—from poets and politicians to baseball stars and dancing girls—struck a chord. Along with such contemporaries as Ralph Barton, Al Frueh, Will Cotton, and Al Hirschfeld, the young Mexican artist defined a fashionable new form of satiric portraiture for the interwar generation, inspired by modern design and the mass-media-generated celebrity industry. The National Portrait Gallery owns one of the premier collections of caricature from this era, comprising original watercolors, collages, and ink drawings, mostly acquired in preparation for the 1998 exhibition "Celebrity Caricature in America." Sophisticated and witty, these distillations of personality capture the spirit of the age.

Covarrubias, drawing upon influences as diverse as European modernism, native Mexican folk traditions, and Precolumbian art, had honed an incisive style that amazed the critics. Images of such figures as Irving Berlin, Mae West, or Will Rogers—to cite examples from our own collection—seemed unerringly precise and monumental to the commentators of his day. "They are bald and crude and devoid of nonsense," one wrote of his drawings, "like a mountain or a baby." Fellow caricaturist Ralph Barton singled out Covarrubias's Calvin Coolidge in his review. The President, he pointed out, might dream of being a satyr among a bevy of nymphs, "but the Calvin

Radio Talent by Miguel Covarrubias, 1938

Coolidge that is any of our business is the Calvin Coolidge that Covarrubias has drawn." The caricaturist no longer needed to be penetrating, Barton concluded; it was his job "to put down the figure a man cuts before his fellows in his attempt to conceal the writhings of his soul."

Playfully spoofing the public image instead of probing beneath it, these portraits signal a celebratory irreverence more than the searing criticism of traditional caricature and editorial cartooning. Often the artist satirizes the celebrity system itself more than the individuals portrayed. Covarrubias's Radio Talent, published in the pages of Fortune magazine, depicts disembodied broadcast personalities, from FDR to Donald Duck, wafting out over the evening airwaves. Despite the liveliness of the recognizable faces, the piece conveys a slightly nightmarish quality, suggesting the unsettling effects of mass communications. The article accompanying this image addressed the spiraling costs of celebrity voices, the indiscretions of the sponsors, and the industry's controlling role as the "greatest maker and taker of Names on earth."

Ralph Barton's caricature of his friend the photographer Nickolas Muray from our collection sounds a similar, unnerving note. The dilated eyes and dark camera lens confront the viewer with an uncomfortable intensity. And as our gaze drops to the oversized hand squeezing the shutter bulb, we are struck by the disquieting sensation that the photographer has surreptitiously captured our own image. The underlying sense of menace relates more to the unrelenting demands of celebrity than the subject's character, however; Barton often felt hounded by his own success and renown.

Despite this edge, the aesthetic sophistication

Luther (Bill) "Bojangles" Robinson by Al Hirschfeld, 1939

© Al Hirschfeld
of celebrity caricature captivated viewers and victims alike. Designed with eye-catching clarity and style, it stood out on the pages and covers of the periodical press in contrast to stale, big head/small body cartoon conventions or grainy newsprint photos. The clean lines and dominant black, white, and pink contrasts of Barton’s Muray, for instance, lent a stylish, Art Deco elegance to the picture, while quiet modulations of more neutral tones added to the subtle interplay of geometric shapes. Al Frueh (pronounced “free”) abbreviated his images of theatrical stars with a noteworthy economy of means that reduced a figure like George M. Cohan to a swing of the leg and a tilt of the hat. The Gallery owns dozens of Frueh’s drawings, once exhibited at Alfred Stieglitz’s avant-garde 291 Gallery because of their innovative originality.

Vanity Fair magazine preferred a caricature portrait to a photograph, its editors claimed, when it sought a “vivid interpretation.” Pastelist Will Cotton used color with special brilliance and humor in his caricatures for the magazine in the 1930s. He set the contorted figure of his Theodore Dreiser against a bright green background and then used a pale tint of lavender to weigh down the flesh tones of the face, implying the author’s perpetual gloom and five-o’clock shadow. The Gallery’s fourteen Cotton portraits celebrate both the intensity and the subtlety of the pastel technique, which the magazine’s new printing plant could reproduce with remarkable accuracy for the first time. Color alone, in these dazzling full-page images, suggested to Vanity Fair’s audience that zestful, theatrical personality that defined celebrity success.

Al Hirschfeld, the only artist of that generation to continue the tradition of celebrity caricature throughout the second half of the twentieth century, captured the body language of his subjects, conveying a joyful sense of movement. His 1939 ink drawing of tap dancer “Bojangles” Robinson reminds us how complex his black-and-white drawings could be, with all their loops, squiggles, cross-hatches, threads, and arcs of ink. An enthusiastic drummer himself, Hirschfeld added, by way of gracefully arching white seatbacks, a strong percussive rhythm under Bojangles’s feet. The Gallery’s many Hirschfeld drawings, including works in color for magazine covers, all display an intriguing tension between exuberance and control.

Caricature of this era spoke to a generation wrestling with a new celebrity culture and rapidly expanding mass media. Spoofing everyone of note, it eased the class, gender, and ethnic mixing that characterized urban society. Aspects of modern art, baffling to many in other pictures, became acceptable as clever distortions of familiar faces. At the National Portrait Gallery, we also see celebrity caricature as a vibrant form of portraiture, richly evocative of its era and filled with telling information about the individuals portrayed.

In the fall of 1963, reports were making their way across the Atlantic about a mopheaded foursome of British rock singers named the Beatles, whose music and cheeky sense of humor were driving the United Kingdom’s youth into wailing fits of adoration. At concerts, this idolizing expressed itself in a shrieking that often drowned out the Beatles’s own performance. “To see a Beatle is joy,” noted one observer, “to touch one, paradise on earth.”

Beatlemania’s days as a strictly British disease, however, suddenly became numbered when CBS television’s Sunday-night variety-show host, Ed Sullivan, encountered the huge mob that had turned out at London’s airport to welcome the Beatles home from a tour of Sweden. Sullivan knew next to nothing about the group. But when he saw how all the brouhaha impeded even the Queen Mother’s arrival from Ireland, he knew the Beatles were an act worth having on his show. So it was that forty years ago this past winter, Sullivan introduced Beatlemania to the United States.

Booked to perform on Sullivan’s show on February 9, 1964, the Beatles arrived two days ahead of time at Kennedy Airport, where they were greeted by three thousand raging teenagers. The quartet headed in separate limousines for Manhattan’s Plaza Hotel, where special security forces had been stationed to protect them from the hordes of screaming, mostly female, fans milling on the sidewalks outside.

All the preshow attention doubtless heightened Sullivan’s hopes that the Beatles would be good for his ratings, and he was not disappointed. As the hour for his show neared, viewers tuned in by the hundreds of thousands. By the time the Beatles came on, some 73,900,000 pairs of eyes were focused on them, a number that earned Sullivan a viewer rating of 44.6, the highest any television show had achieved up to that time.

As the Beatles consolidated their transatlantic conquest with two more appearances on Sullivan and a succession of sold-out live concerts, some music experts remained singularly unimpressed. Among the naysayers was Sullivan’s own musical director, who saw them as strictly a passing fad. “I give them a year,” he said. But the Beatles stuck around a tad longer than that, and eventually claimed an impact on pop music that has rarely been matched. Even today, the release of a Beatles recording is still a newsmaking event in the music world. For a group of wisecracking, flash-in-the-pan mop-heads, that really is not too bad.
Doing the Beatles for *Time*

In 1967, in recognition of the Beatles’s mounting reputation as one of the most important creative forces in pop music, *Time* magazine made them the subject of a cover story. To do their likeness, it turned to British caricaturist Gerald Scarfe, whose gift for savaging public faces with a few strokes of the pen was becoming legendary. Following are excerpts from a recent interview where Mr. Scarfe recalled his encounters with the “Fab Four,” which resulted in one of *Time’s* most memorable and engaging covers (featured on our Profile cover).

**Frederick Voss:** When *Time* asked you to do a cover of the Beatles in 1967, how did you feel about it?

**Gerald Scarfe:** I was more thrilled, I think, about doing a *Time* cover than I was about the Beatles. I wasn’t particularly an ardent fan of theirs. You couldn’t miss them back in the sixties; they were everywhere. But I didn’t particularly respond to their work. I now see that it was an historical moment in music, but it didn’t appeal to me much then.

**Voss:** In plotting out this portrait, did you have much opportunity to study the Beatles firsthand?

**Scarfe:** The Beatles were pretty exclusive by that point, but *Time* gained me access to them. And I went out to Twickenham Studios, just outside London, where they were shooting a film. They were all very kind to me. Then I went to some of their houses to do more sketches. I remember that when I went to Ringo’s, I was surprised to see that he had bought this enormous mansion, and he didn’t quite know what to do with it. One room had psyche-delic lights spinning all over the ceiling. Another room he turned into an English pub. Anyway he asked me to do a caricature of him for his living room, which I did straight on the wall. When I visited Paul’s house in St. John’s Wood he tried to explain the philosophy of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who they had been studying with in India. It had something to do with our all being the head of a rose and the stalk being something else. At any rate I’ve forgotten it all now. In my sessions with John, I remember him saying to me something like, “Ah, Gerald, you’re a cynic like me. We’re two cynics.”

**Voss:** *Time*, as I understand it, was just expecting a more usual two-dimensional drawing of the Beatles from you. What happened?

**Scarfe:** When I was back in the studio with all my sketches, I suddenly decided to make something three-dimensional. I wanted to make something memorable, and I fashioned these papier-mâché models which stood about four feet high. Then I went to an Asian store in London’s West End to find clothes for them that fit in with their current fascination with Indian music and the Maharishi.

**Voss:** So much of your work has a really merciless edge to it. Did you intend that kind of an impact with the Beatles?

**Scarfe:** Not really. I hadn’t any ax to grind. I save my savage work for tyrants and world leaders who I think are leading us astray. Of course the Beatles did affect many people, but I think it was a benign effect. Besides, I quite liked them personally as men, and my caricatures were meant as fond representations of them.

Scarfe’s drawings for the Beatles done for their *Time* cover. Top to bottom: John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Ringo Starr. All images are in the collection of the artist and are ©Gerald Scarfe.
Leaping to the West

Max Waldman Photographs Dancers
Natalia Makarova and Mikhail Baryshnikov

Frank H. Goodyear III
Assistant Curator of Photographs

Last year, the National Portrait Gallery acquired sixteen vintage photographs by Max Waldman (1919–1981), through a gift from Carol Greunke, archivist at the Max Waldman Archives. During the 1960s and 1970s, Waldman was widely known for his work interpreting celebrated figures from the world of contemporary theater and dance. His photographs were “not mere records of theatrical performances,” one critic observed in 1972. “Instead they seem to be celebrations of theatricality itself by someone who clearly loves it and expects that we will love it too.” Included among these new acquisitions are striking photographs of ballet stars Natalia Makarova and Mikhail Baryshnikov, taken only months after their respective defections from the Soviet Union. These photographs chronicle their arrival in the West and remind us that the Cold War was as much a cultural contest as it was a political and military confrontation.
On the evening of September 4, 1970, Natalia Makarova was scheduled to dance the role of Princess Florine in Pytor Tchaikovsky’s *The Sleeping Beauty* at London’s Royal Festival Hall. She and her fellow dancers from Leningrad’s Kirov Ballet troupe were in the final two days of their highly acclaimed visit to Britain. That evening, Makarova failed to appear. When her whereabouts were finally reported, the world learned that she was seeking political asylum in the West.

Two months shy of her thirtieth birthday, Makarova was regarded as the outstanding ballerina of the day. Earlier that year, she had been awarded the prestigious Anna Pavlova Prize for individual achievement in dance. Although she claimed that her defection had little to do with politics, her statements following this decision repeatedly focused on the suffocating conservatism affecting dance and artistic expression in the Soviet Union. Like fellow dancer Rudolph Nureyev, whose defection in 1961 attracted similar attention, Makarova longed for the opportunity to experiment. As she stated at the time, “I firmly believe that to develop as an artist it is essential to have a measure of freedom to choose what seems right. It is sad that that was not possible in my previous position.”

By November 1970, Makarova was in New York, having signed a one-year contract to dance with the American Ballet Theatre. The excitement cre-
Leaping to the West

Makarova's defection and the tremendous publicity it generated were a source of considerable concern to Soviet authorities. In the months and years that followed, cultural ministers and KGB operatives were far more attentive to the activities and movements of the USSR's most prized performers. It is perhaps more than a historic footnote that twenty-two-year-old dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov was on stage with Makarova during her last performance with the Kirov Ballet in London. Indeed, Makarova's defection and the success she achieved in the West greatly influenced Baryshnikov's own decision to flee the Soviet Union four years later.

Baryshnikov was performing with Moscow's Bolshoi Ballet in Toronto when he slipped away on the evening of June 29, 1974. His motivation for doing so was virtually identical to Makarova's. Baryshnikov explained: “I finally decided that if I let the opportunity of expanding my art in the West slip by, it would haunt me always. What I have done is called a crime in Russia. . . . But my life is my art and I realized it would be a greater crime to destroy that.”

Once Baryshnikov's request for political asylum was granted, Makarova proved instrumental in assisting him with his transition to the West. Most important, she helped to arrange his guest appointment with the American Ballet Theatre. In a gesture whose symbolism was lost on no one, Makarova asked her current partner, Ivan Nagy, to step aside for an evening, so that she could perform with Baryshnikov during his American debut on July 27. Dancing the lead roles in Théophile Gautier’s Giselle at New York’s Lincoln Center, the two gave a riveting performance. At the conclusion of what the New York Times described as “an emotional occasion,” Makarova presented Baryshnikov with a bouquet of flowers.

Not long afterward, the pair agreed to pose before Waldman's camera. The photographs reproduced here show Makarova and Baryshnikov dancing excerpts from that memorable performance. Again, Waldman's photographs accentuate the style and beauty of his subjects. Just as important, they bear witness to a poignant moment in the history of ballet and provide insight into the cultural dimension of the Cold War.
The Dying Swan, 1970

Giselle, 1974

Giselle, 1975

All images are the gift of Carol Greunke, archivist at the Max Waldman Archive and are ©Max Waldman Archive
Brown v. Board of Education
A Decision that Changed America

Frederick S. Voss
Senior Historian

May 17 of this year marks the fiftieth anniversary of one of the most momentous decisions ever issued by the United States Supreme Court. At 12:52 p.m. on that day in 1954, in words carefully chosen to assure that any nonlawyer in the land would understand his meaning, the recently appointed Chief Justice Earl Warren began the Court’s unanimous findings in Brown v. the Board of Education of the City of Topeka.

At issue in this case (which was actually a collation of five similar cases) was the right of local jurisdictions to segregate their public school systems by race. In 1896, the Court had held in Plessy v. Ferguson that racial separation in public accommodations was legal so long as those facilities were equal. Since then, “separate but equal” had been the legitimizing premise in many jurisdictions, especially in the South, for a strict segregation of white and black students in education. That premise, however—which had for nearly six decades been routinely invoked to justify often woefully inadequate schools for blacks—was shorn of its validity when Warren declared on behalf of his fellow justices: “in the field of public education the doctrine of ‘separate but equal’ has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.” So saying, the Chief Justice had called for integration of all public schools, a change destined to radically transform the institutional arrangements that had long shaped America’s racial relationships.

After Warren finished, a lawyer in the chamber turned to two colleagues and said, “We hit the jackpot.” The speaker of those jubilant words was Thurgood Marshall, head of the NAACP’s legal arm and the individual who, more than anyone, had tailored the arguments that had led the Court to its historic 9–0 decision. In the National Portrait Gallery’s likeness of him by Betsy Graves Reyneau, Marshall looks dapper, poised, and in control. But it was not always that way. During the months of grueling preparation that preceded the final courtroom arguments in Brown, he...
was once heard grousing, “Isn’t it nice—no one cares which twenty-three hours a day I work?” That sarcastic allusion to the length of days was not wide of the mark. “It was nothing,” a colleague noted, “for him to say at one a.m., ‘How about a fifteen-minute break?’” and Marshall’s constant lack of sleep, along with an awareness of the sheer importance of his cause, took a severe toll on his customary good humor. More troubling yet, on his first day of final arguments before the Court in December 1953, despite the months of ceaseless preparation, his performance seemed clumsy and unconvincing as he pleaded the case for integration. By the next day, however, Marshall had recomposed himself. In his refutation of the opposition, one bystander said, “he came on like a locomotive,” and another observer later told him that his rebuttal had been “the most forceful argument” he had “ever heard in any appellate court.”

But although Marshall took great satisfaction in the central role he had played in Brown’s outcome, he knew that the decision did not in itself mark the end of the school integration struggle. At a party celebrating the decision, he warned colleagues, “I don’t want any of you to fool yourselves, it’s just begun.” Indeed, despite a clear Supreme Court mandate, it was soon apparent that in the South, at least, the road to school integration would be neither quick nor easy. Characterized by some as a plot fomented by Communists, the effort to implement Brown was denounced throughout the South, and the region’s politicians wasted no time in playing to the segregationist instincts and racism of their constituents. While 101 members of Congress, spearheaded by South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond, signed on to the “Southern Manifesto” urging the use of “all lawful means” to prevent integration, Georgia’s governor, Herman Talmadge, declared “There will never be mixed schools while I am governor.” Calling Brown a “monstrous crime,” Mississippi Senator James Eastland declared it the duty of all white southerners to fight integration “every step of the way.”

And fight they did. Over the next several years, a good many southern governors owed their elections largely to promises that they would block integration, and their administrations were marked by prolonged and often violent confrontations over efforts to enforce Brown. In Arkansas, Governor Orville Faubus’s opposition to the integration of Little Rock’s Central High School inspired mob disorders on a scale so threatening that the National Guard finally had to be called in. One of the lawyers defending segregation in Brown, J. Lindsay Almond, had said at a hearing on the decision’s implementation that “enforced integration” would never occur in the lifetime of anyone present. Following his inauguration as governor of Virginia in 1958, he did his best to assure that his prediction came true by closing nine schools that had been put under court order to integrate. Then there was Mississippi’s governor, Ross Barnett, who orchestrated the opposition to the admission of a young black G.I. named James Meredith at the University of Mississippi in 1962. With the backing of federal authorities, Meredith was finally permitted to enroll, but not before the campus had been torn by rioting that left more than 350 injured and two dead.

Despite the obstacles, however, school integration did take place—sometimes more slowly than its adherents hoped but often much more rapidly than its opponents expected. Moreover, the reasoning behind the Brown decision became a wedge for court actions that led to the elimination of racial segregation in yet other areas of American life, such as public transit and some restaurant facilities. But perhaps even more important, the decision also became a powerful leavening agent in the civil rights movement in general. In the story of the African American struggle for racial equality in the last half of the twentieth century, it would be difficult indeed to find a single, more galvanizing event than Brown v. Board of Education.
NPG—London: A Reflection of the People

Tia Powell Harris
Outreach Program Manager

About a year ago, our director, Marc Pachter, and Sandy Nairne, director at the National Portrait Gallery, London, conceived a staff exchange program premised on the conviction that two museums with the same mission could learn much from each other. The program began last fall, and I was the individual who had the pleasure of inaugurating it with a four-week immersion into the life of NPG-London.

London’s culturally diverse population rivals ours here in the United States. At NPG-London, the art strives to reflect this diversity. Portraits of people of color are displayed prominently, especially in the more contemporary first-floor galleries. A brochure entitled “Diversity” highlights images of blacks and Asians in the collections. Artwork by new and diverse artists is being commissioned, giving added breadth to the existing collections.

NPG-London understands that diversity issues involve more than race. For example, to support what they call the “universal access principle,” NPG-London reaches out to visitors with visual disabilities by providing live “descriptive talks.” During these tours, the docent describes the portrait (usually from left to right, top to bottom) for the visually impaired visitor. These tours often allow the visitor to manipulate reproductions of objects related to or found in the portrait. Highly animated and participatory discourse between visitors and docents tends to characterize these tours. But the greatest testament to their success is how visitors outside the group are enticed into conversation. As I observed this and other diversity programs, perhaps the most important message that I came away with was how excitingly open-ended the potential is for broadening the range of our audience at our own National Portrait Gallery.

I left London with new friends, new ideas, and new inspiration. These valuable staff exchanges open the door to understanding and to future collaborations that will benefit Portrait Gallery visitors on both sides of the pond.

Two Prominent Paintings Much in Demand

Alice Neel’s self-portrait will travel with “Me! 20th-Century Self-Portraits,” an exhibition that examines the role the genre has played through the ages in conceptualizing an artist’s status and self-definition. The painting will be on view at the Musée du Luxembourg in Paris from March 31 through August 22, 2004, and at the Palazzo Strozzi in Florence from September 16, 2004, through January 9, 2005.

Meanwhile, Edgar Degas’s pivotal portrait of Mary Cassatt is featured on the cover of the exhibition catalogue Japan and Paris: Impressionism, Post-impressionism and the Modern Era. The exhibition examines the role of early-twentieth-century Japanese collectors in introducing Western-style modernism to Japan. NPG’s portrait of Cassatt was once owned by Matsukata Kojirō, one of the most influential of those enthusiasts, and will play a prominent role in the exhibition, which is on view at the Honolulu Academy of Arts from April 8 through June 6, 2004.
Book Review:
Jefferson Davis, Confederate President by Herman Hattaway and Richard E. Beringer (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002)

Michael Fox
LANSDOWNE PROJECT MANAGER
Jefferson Davis was a man of many talents and accomplishments. Elected to the United States House of Representatives in his home state of Mississippi, he resigned his seat to lead a regiment at the Battle of Buena Vista in the war with Mexico, returned home a war hero, and stepped easily into the U.S. Senate. As secretary of war under Franklin Pierce, Davis helped reform the armed forces, and following his reelection to the Senate he led the states'-rights Democrats in the country’s escalating dispute over slavery. All of this happened before he took on the most challenging task of his life: leading the South in the forging of a new nation through rebellion against the United States of America.

In Jefferson Davis, Confederate President, Herman Hattaway and Richard E. Beringer reexamine Davis’s presidency of the Confederate States of America and provide a compelling glimpse into the day-to-day workings of the short-lived southern nation. This book is probably not for the casual browser of Civil War history, however. The authors conduct a minute examination of Davis’s multiple roles in the Confederacy’s birth and ultimate demise. For those with an understanding of the conflict, however, this volume is a rare opportunity to view the inner circle of the CSA at work. Readers will find an excellent portrait of Davis as the conflicted ringmaster of a nation constantly in danger of flying apart as arguments over the interpretations of the rights of individuals and the states roiled through southern capitals and the legislature in Richmond. Although recognized as the iron soul of the Confederacy, Davis was widely (and loudly) denounced by southern lawmakers, senior soldiers, newspaper editors, and the population in general when the tide of the rebellion turned for the worse. The major difficulties of his presidency—most notably the unwillingness of governors to enforce conscription and a chronic shortage of funds—are all effectively presented here. Along with his Herculean determination, the authors put in high relief Davis’s unfortunate propensity for placing his faith in men unqualified for the tasks he assigned them.

The question of slavery, of course, lies at the heart of both Davis’s and Dixie’s story. As the thundering orator of the Senate, Jefferson Davis had, as much as any other southern politician, defended the legitimacy of slavery. But he recognized that the South’s “peculiar institution” could in fact be a liability in the Confederacy’s efforts to gain international recognition. He therefore downplayed slavery’s role in the breakup of the Union, holding that the split was owing to the Republicans’ victory in the 1860 presidential election, which threatened to trammel the southern states’ rights. In doing so, he conveniently overlooked the fact that the right the South most wanted to preserve was the right to own slaves. It’s easy to imagine him cringing as his Vice President, Alexander Stephens, told crowds that the cornerstone of the Confederacy “rests upon the great truth, that the Negro is not the equal of the white man; that slavery—subordination to the superior race—is his natural and normal condition.”

Overall, Jefferson Davis, Confederate President succeeds in bringing this unusual American to life for contemporary readers. It is particularly recommended for buffs of the Civil War.
The Edgar P. Richardson Symposium on Portraiture

Wendy Wick Reaves  
Curator of Prints and Drawings

On November 19, 2003, the National Portrait Gallery launched an exciting new initiative, the Edgar P. Richardson Symposium on Portraiture. Former NPG Commissioner Robert L. McNeil Jr., whose recent generous gift endowed the symposium, named it for his fellow commissioner, the pioneer American art historian. The annual conference will be dedicated to the examination of various dimensions of the portrait genre. Building on the recent acquisition of the Bowman-Kahn collection of twentieth-century American self-portraiture, we chose as the theme for this year’s meeting “Self-Portraiture: The Autobiographical Impulse in American Art.”

After my brief overview of our own strong holdings in this area, five distinguished speakers challenged the audience to think broadly about the entire notion of self-representation. Figural artist Philip Pearlstein gave a first-person analysis of portrait-making, enriched by allusions to such artists as Leonardo, Velázquez, and Duchamp. David Ward, deputy editor of the Charles Willson Peale Family Papers, continued with a discussion of Peale’s lifelong self-fashioning, particularly in the self-portraits he painted during his long career. Professor Sarah Burns, from Indiana University, examined Thomas Eakins’s insertion of his own figure into his paintings and his fascination with the nude body. Stanford University art historian Wanda Corn charted Grant Wood’s comic and dramatic modes of self-imaging, which at times reflected his wounded pride at critical reversals. Finally, Brian Wallis, from the International Center for Photography, discussed Cindy Sherman and other contemporary photographers and artists who use new approaches to exploring and projecting their own identity.

The first Richardson Symposium offered us a stimulating opportunity to share our interests with artists, scholars, students, and portrait enthusiasts. Judging by the gratifying response we received, it whetted everyone’s appetite for more. We look forward to the portrait symposia of the future.

NPG on the Road

Showcasing the famous “Lansdowne” full-length portrait of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart, “George Washington: A National Treasure” appears at the Oklahoma City Museum of Art through April 11. The exhibition will open at its final tour venue—the Arkansas Arts Center in Little Rock—on April 23, remaining on view there through August 22, 2004. The National Portrait Gallery was able to purchase this major icon of the nation’s first President through the generosity of the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation, which also provided funding for its tour to museums across the country.

See other exhibition-related web pages at www.npg.si.edu.
Portrait of a Nation encompasses a series of innovative exhibitions organized by the National Portrait Gallery while its building is under renovation. For further information, contact the Department of Exhibitions and Collections Management at (202) 275-1777; fax: (202) 275-1897, or e-mail: NPGExhibitions@si.edu.

Women of Our Time: Twentieth-Century Photographs
Long Beach Museum of Art, California
Now through April 4, 2004
North Carolina Museum of History, Raleigh
May 28–August 1, 2004
Final venue: George Bush Presidential Library & Museum, College Station, Texas

American Women: A Selection from the National Portrait Gallery
George Bush Presidential Library & Museum, College Station, Texas
Now through April 4, 2004
Additional venues include: Naples Museum of Art, Florida; Columbia Museum of Art, South Carolina

Perhaps it’s a bit selfish, but all of us at NPG are experiencing a bit of angst at the retirement of senior historian and Time collection curator Frederick S. Voss. As a frequent contributor to Profile—and also recently unveiled as the “Portrait Puzzler”—Fred has eagerly taken on the challenge of writing about the wonderful variety in the collection. From Presidents and peacemakers, reformers and reporters to artists and athletes, divas and dancers—all have been the recipients of his sharp insights and ready pen.

A member of the National Portrait Gallery staff since 1971, Fred is as much of a tradition as the Gallery itself. Even though Fred’s retirement means he won’t be here every day, the impact of his legacy continues—in his research and exhibitions, and his books, labels, and audio tours. We will especially miss his ability to connect visitors with the essence of the personalities in our collection, using portraits as a springboard for biography. But most of all, we’ll just miss you, Fred.

Farewell Fred!
Join and support the National Portrait Gallery at the following membership levels!

**Director’s Circle**
$1,000 or more

**Benefactor:** $500–$999  **Friend:** $100–$499

Or consider making a planned gift!

For more information, call (202) 275-1771, e-mail Gutierrezm@npg.si.edu, or visit www.npg.si.edu

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**Portrait Puzzlers**

1. He was the first Vice President to succeed to the presidency owing to the death of his predecessor.

2. She was the first woman to serve in a presidential cabinet.

3. He sparked a revolution in food production and reaped a fortune.

4. Considered America’s first important playwright, he made his own family the focus of one of his greatest plays.

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**Answers:**

1. John Tyler, tenth President of the United States (1790–1862). Oil on canvas by George P. A. Healy; transfer from Smithsonian American Art Museum, gift of Friends of the National Portrait Gallery, 1859.


All images are details.