I am occasionally asked whether it is a problem for me to be director of the National Portrait Gallery at a time when our glorious building is under renovation and therefore not open to the public. My reply is rooted in my deep belief that “the building is closed, but the museum is open.” This we have demonstrated in so many ways: Profile itself is one vigorous example, as are the acquisition of the epic “Lansdowne” portrait and the Bowman-Kahn Collection of prints and drawings; the establishment of the Paul Peck Presidential Awards; and the development of our extensive touring program, including the groundbreaking “Gilbert Stuart” and “Retratos” exhibitions. And we are also immensely proud of the ongoing educational programs we continue to provide.

But one of the most exciting reasons to take pride in this period of renovation is the investment of our staff’s creativity in rethinking the installation of our permanent collection. Many good ideas have come of our discussions, and I will describe a number of them in future issues. But the one I want to highlight now is Assistant Curator of Photographs Frank Goodyear’s idea that we continuously devote one gallery to the portrayal of a single life. I jumped at the suggestion, not only because there are so many remarkable lives and collections of images that space does not normally allow us to explore in depth, but also because at the heart of our reinstallation is the goal of sharing with our visitors the many ways in which lives are portrayed and interpreted. The missing piece, now added, was showing that a curator’s “take” on a life is yet another key element of representation.

I then asked staff members to propose a life they wanted to portray in some depth, and out of the many good suggestions, the one that I picked to launch the series was Historian David Ward’s idea of presenting Walt Whitman. You’ll meet Ward on Whitman in this issue as an anticipation of the exhibition, in which we’ll introduce the curator’s own background into the experience of the show. Whitman got the nod for a number of reasons. Above all, of course, was his role as the energetic and innovative poet of democracy, as critical (along with his advocate/appreciator, Ralph Waldo Emerson) in shaping our cultural contribution to the world as Washington and Jefferson were in shaping our political contribution. It was happy coincidence, too, that Whitman had actually worked in our building and tended wounded Union soldiers here.

It is a strength of the National Portrait Gallery that we celebrate the poets no less than the politicians. Whitman leads the way, but in this issue you’ll meet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, now overshadowed by Whitman, and Allen Ginsberg, who reinvigorated Whitman’s legacy. You’ll also meet Phillis Wheatley, an African American voice from the eighteenth century, and Bob Dylan, whom some would call one of the most important poetic voices of the twentieth century.

And finally, to entice you into our future, you’ll also learn of our planning for our first-ever Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition, with which we will highlight our reopening in 2006. The museum is open, but won’t it be wonderful when the building is open as well! ●
Poets and Portraits

Ellen G. Miles
Curator of Painting and Sculpture

The Gallery has a very strong collection of portraits of American poets, ranging in date from an engraving of Phillis Wheatley, published in 1773, to Alan Dugan, portrayed in 2000 by Ray Elman. Geographically, the poets represent many regions, from New England, in the work of Robert Frost, to California, portrayed in poetry by Cincinnatus Hiner (“Joachim”) Miller. Nineteenth-century poets such as William Cullen Bryant and James Russell Lowell are found in good company with the poets of the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, who include Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, and Jean Toomer. Poets celebrating heroism in war include Thomas Buchanan Read, who wrote “Sheridan’s Ride” in 1864 to express support for the Union cause after General Philip Sheridan’s leadership at the Battle of Cedar Creek. Read later celebrated the event in a series of paintings of the general on horseback. Some poets, including e. e. cummings, Randall Jarrell, and Alan Dugan, wrote instead about the horrors of war.

The Gallery’s portraits include depictions in many media within the general categories of sculpture, paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs. In many cases, the Gallery has more than one portrait of a writer: Joel Barlow is portrayed in a drawing by John Vanderlyn, a sculpture by Jean-Antoine Houdon, and an engraving after Robert Fulton, the latter published as the frontispiece of the 1807 edition of his epic poem, The Columbiad.

Marianne Self-portrait by e. e. cummings, 1958
Phillis Wheatley by an unidentified artist, 1773
Alan Dugan by Raymond Elman, 2000, gift of Lee Elman
Joel Barlow by Jean-Antoine Houdon, 1803
Self-portrait by e. e. cummings, 1958
Lawrence Ferlinghetti by Crawford W. Barton, 1974, gift of Edward Brooks DeCelle
Moore is seen in a sculpture by Gaston Lachaise, in a painting with her mother by Marguerite Zorach, and in two photographs, including Esther Bubley’s memorable image of her with elephants at the zoo. Frank O’Hara is seen in a profile painted by Alice Neel, at a desk in a lithograph by Larry Rivers, and with Rivers in his studio in a photograph by Hans Namuth. Carl Sandburg is represented by a sculpture by Jo Davidson and in photographs by Edward Steichen and Arnold Newman. Another photograph, by Alexander Alland Sr., depicts him with Davidson as his portrait is being made. The group portrait by Christian Schussele, Washington Irving and His Literary Friends at Sunnyside, includes five American poets among the fifteen writers seen at an imaginary gathering at Irving’s home.

Some writers’ appearances are very familiar: Henry David Thoreau, Edgar Allan Poe, and Gertrude Stein are immediately recognizable. Others, including the self-portrait of cummings, are perhaps a surprise. Some writers sit at desks, including John Greenleaf Whittier and Anne Sexton; Lawrence Ferlinghetti is seated in the shade, casually dressed. Some seem pensive, posed in close-up shots: William Carlos Williams by Man Ray, Robert Frost by Doris Ulmann, and Sylvia Plath by Rollie McKenna, are images that capture the introspective poet, while Wallace Stevens and Countee Cullen, in suits and ties, seem hardly like poets at all. The sheer number and range of these images echo the differences of the poets themselves—as full of variety as the verses they write.
1855: A Poetic Crossroads

David C. Ward
Historian and Deputy Editor, Peale Family Papers

In 1855 the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882) published *The Song of Hiawatha*, whose drumbeat rhythms have been much anthologized:

> On the shores of Gitche Gumee,
> Of the shining Big-Sea-Water,
> Stood Nokomis, the old woman
> Pointing with her finger westward,
> O'er the water pointing westward.

That same year, the novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote to Longfellow, “No other poet has anything like your vogue” in both England and America. Not only was Longfellow wildly popular; he was widely praised by his fellow writers. William Cullen Bryant wrote of his “exquisite music,” and the *Spectator* in London praised *Hiawatha’s* “sweet and limpid purity.”

Longfellow wanted to be a writer from his early years. While he worked as a professor of modern languages at his alma mater, Bowdoin College, and then Harvard, he spent as much time as he could on his own poetry and prose; he finally resigned from Harvard in 1854. Thereafter he published a string of major poetic books such as *Hiawatha, The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858), and *The Hanging of the Crane* (1874). Steeped in the lore and fable of his native New England, Longfellow crafted his verse from American subjects, creating a literary history of America in such poems as “Paul Revere’s Ride” or “The Village Blacksmith.” His distinction, far from being merely literary nationalism, arose from his having the technical facility to render homely American subjects in a style that could compete with his English contemporaries. Longfellow, who claimed to find his stories in “the bird’s-nest of the forest,” specialized in the ballad, a form “that like voices from afar off/Call to us to pause and listen.” And his genteel audience of Anglo-American Victorians did pause and listen to hear Longfellow’s “exquisite simplicity of expression.”

Yet Longfellow suffered the fate known by many of those who are the most popular writers of their day: a voice of its time frequently lacks staying power. Thus Longfellow, whose sensibility was that of a mild romantic and whose life in Cambridge was placidly comfortable, has now been eclipsed by his “darker” contemporaries such as Hawthorne or Herman Melville. Now, the rhythms of Longfellow’s ballads are quaint artifacts of a New England as bygone as the village blacksmith. Ironically, as Longfellow’s fame was still cresting in 1855, his poetic future was sealed with the self-publishing of a little book called *Leaves of Grass* by an unknown Brooklyn newspaper editor, Walt Whitman (1819–1892). The first printing sold few copies and the subsequent seven editions did little better. The book’s form and content was bitterly condemned by guardians of Victorian literature and morals. As opposed to Longfellow’s idealized blacksmith (“His brow is wet with honest sweat,/He earns whate’ver he can”), Whitman observed workers as they really were:

> The butcher-boy puts off his killing-clothes,
> or sharpens his knife at the stall in the market,
> I loiter enjoying his repartee and his shuffle and break-down.
The rawness of Whitman’s eye shocked and horrified Americans used to genteel, gently moralizing verses; Longfellow himself said that his rival’s verse wanted education and “delicacy of feeling.”

Like Longfellow, Whitman took his subjects from America, but instead of memorializing the past, he celebrated the present and the future. Above all, he was the poet of the individual, of the rampant ego expressing itself in the unbounded promise of American life. The opening of Leaves of Grass, “I celebrate myself, and sing myself,” kicks down all the doors in an exultation of the American experience. So great was Whitman’s exuberance that he invented a new poetic form—free verse—to break the boundaries of English poetry’s traditional and formalized rhythmic structure; in his long lines, Whitman’s words overspilled to match his emotions. “I know I have the best of time and space, and was never measured and never will be measured.//I tramp a perpetual journey, (come listen all!).”

An unruly poet of an unruly subject—Americans themselves—Whitman found few willing to listen to his message, but important writers took note. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote Whitman, “I greet you at the beginning of a great career, which yet must have had a long foreground somewhere for such a start.” For Whitman, as for Emerson, it was not just that the poet celebrated America but that he did so with a vocabulary drawn from the streets and with a new method that claimed a literary declaration of independence. Whitman created a poetry that captured the expansiveness and contradictions of American nature and society. In his romantic modernism, Whitman was the progenitor of a line of American artists—from Hart Crane to the Beats—who adapted his lessons to their own artistic and cultural circumstances. Whitman’s unfurling of his long line of free verse created a means of self-expression that has influenced artists, writers, and musicians to the present day. Whitman, unlike Longfellow, is a continuing force in American culture, one who has had to be reckoned with by all who came after him.

Longfellow and Whitman are linked together by the curious coincidence of 1855, when the past and the future of American poetry passed, but never met.

Portraiture is the rising star of contemporary art. During the last few decades of the twentieth century, artists such as Lucien Freud, R. B. Kitaj, Alice Neel, Chuck Close, Philip Pearlstein, and Alex Katz—who all made innovative and compelling portraits—were few in number. But recently figurative art is on the rise, and many of today’s emerging artists are using portraiture to explore complex issues of identity, race, and gender. Others are finding success through a renewed attention to classical training in representational art. Artists who regularly create portraits on commission are also experiencing a higher level of interest in their work.

The National Portrait Gallery, in recognition of this trend and as part of its increasing engagement with contemporary portraiture, will hold its first-ever Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition, and the resulting fifty to sixty painted and sculpted finalist portraits will comprise the lead exhibition for the Gallery’s July 2006 reopening. The first prize of $25,000 will include a commission to create a portrait of a prominent living American for the Gallery’s permanent collection. Other cash prizes will be awarded for selected works.

The winner’s commission will inaugurate another new direction for the Gallery—to acquire through commission innovative likenesses of remarkable living Americans by today’s artists. In the past, NPG has acquired such portraits after they were created, often from the artist, sitter, or patron. Examples include Alex Katz’s likeness of John Updike or Marisol’s whimsical portrait of Hugh Hefner, both created for the editors of *Time* magazine; Chuck Close’s 1982 portrait of Philip Glass; and Frederick Brown’s over-life-size painting of Lionel Hampton. Miami-based artist Carlos Betancourt created a portrait of his friend Liz Balmaseda, a Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist, which is replete with personal imagery and yet preserves the sitter’s likeness clearly. Everett Raymond Kinstler’s painting of journalist and novelist Tom Wolfe captures with crisp precision Wolfe’s dramatic public persona. These portraits represent a variety of approaches to the genre but reflect special preexisting friendships between artist and subject, or other collaborations borne of particular circumstances. In the future, the Gallery wishes to enter into and help shape similar situations in order to acquire more innovative portrayals of contemporary Americans. The portrait competition will explore the range of work being done today and identify artists who represent the best of that work—artists who may agree to create arresting portraits for our collection.

The competition (named for Virginia Outwin Boochever by Jim Gipe, 2001, gift of Virginia Boochever

Best Face Forward!
Announcing the Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition 2006

Brandon Brame Fortune
ASSOCIATE CURATOR OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

Virginia Outwin Boochever
Boochever, a former docent and long-time supporter of NPG whose generous gift has endowed this program) will be open to all artists eighteen or older residing in the United States who depict the human figure through painting or sculpture. Although these two mediums are associated with traditional portraiture, they are also employed today by artists who are testing the boundaries of the genre. Future competitions (to be held triennially) will be expanded to include other media such as photography, prints and drawings, film, and new media.

The call for entries will open on June 1, 2005, and close in early September. The competition website (at www.npg.si.edu) will be available after March 1, 2005, and will include all entry information. The entry fee will be $25, and artists may enter only one portrait. Artists are encouraged to submit their images and information online, but they will also be able to submit images on a CD. A limited number of paper entry forms and slides will be accepted, for which the Gallery will charge a slightly higher entry fee to offset scanning and data-entry costs. The portrait must be the result of the artist’s direct contact with a living person and must have been completed after January 1, 2004. The subject may be anyone known to the artist; self-portraits are accepted.

During the “call for entries” period, a select number of artists who enter the competition will be chosen randomly for interviews about their career, work, and goals. The results will be posted, on an ongoing basis, on the competition website. In this way, the competition itself will highlight the “face” of portraiture throughout the United States, from artists who are represented by New York galleries, to artists working within a regional arts community, to those who are just completing their education.

The Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition 2006 will be judged in two stages. First, a panel of experts will use an online jurying system to select approximately 120 semifinalist works. The Gallery will then arrange to ship these paintings and sculptures to Washington, D.C., where the panel will meet again in early March of 2006 to select the fifty to sixty finalists. These works will be installed in NPG’s newly renovated second-floor special exhibition galleries.

After the exhibition opens, the public will also be invited to vote for its own favorites among the judge’s finalists, and the People’s Choice Award will be announced approximately one month after the Gallery’s reopening. So spread the word to your favorite artists and encourage them to take this chance to showcase their work in the National Portrait Gallery!

For further information, see our website, www.npg.si.edu or e-mail portraitcompetition@npg.si.edu.
In 1968, poet Allen Ginsberg (1926–1997) became a celebrity for his actions during the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. There to protest American involvement in the Vietnam War, Ginsberg responded to police attacks against him and fellow members of the National Mobilization Committee by sitting down amid the chaos in Grant Park and chanting “om” in a quixotic attempt to calm the crowds being beaten and tear-gassed. His efforts did little to stem the violence. Television and newspaper cameras caught this idiosyncratic act, however, and in the aftermath, the forty-two-year-old poet emerged as a hero among a segment of a younger generation increasingly disillusioned with America.

While Ginsberg and other Beat authors became associated with the political and social rebellion of the sixties, the roots of the so-called Beat Generation can be found in the previous decade. The two photographs featured here—one of Ginsberg, the other of his friend William Burroughs (1914–1997)—come from this earlier period. Each was taken by the other in the fall of 1953, during a four-month period when the two writers shared an apartment on the Lower East Side.

In the fifties the Beats were less interested in changing society and more focused on a personal search for meaning and happiness in a world whose values they chose not to share. Although they comprised a relatively small group of disenchanted writers, they wrote as if they spoke for an entire generation then coming of age. Raised in the era of the Depression and witness to a global war whose end initiated the atomic age, the Beat Generation was characterized by a “desperate craving for affirmative beliefs,” wrote author John Clellon Holmes in the New York Times in 1952. In describing the term “beat,” Holmes suggested that “more than mere weariness, it implies the feeling of having been used, of being raw. It involves a sort of nakedness of mind, and, ultimately, of soul; a feeling of being reduced to the bedrock of consciousness. In short, it means being undramatically pushed up against the wall of oneself.”

This “desperate craving” led many to experiment with mind-altering drugs and to assume a lifestyle wholly different than societal norms. Although Ginsberg and Burroughs received Ivy League educations, each rejected a traditional career, choosing instead to pursue, in Ginsberg’s words, “an exalted state of mind.” As the grandson of the inventor of the adding machine, Burroughs had the resources to support his drug habit and his interest in the world of low-life criminals. Ginsberg, a scholarship student at Columbia, worked a variety of unambitious part-time jobs to support himself. The two first met in 1943 and saw much of each other before Burroughs moved to Texas and then Mexico to grow.
marijuana with his common-law wife, Joan Vollmer.

During the years in which they were apart, both worked at becoming writers. With the support of poet William Carlos Williams, Ginsberg experimented with writing poetry, but struggled to find his own voice. From his home in Mexico City, Burroughs wrote a largely autobiographical account of his life as a drug addict that Ginsberg helped to get published as *Junkie* in 1953. Any satisfaction that Burroughs derived from his publication, however, was greatly undercut by the fact that he had shot Vollmer to death during a drunken, William Tell–like episode two years earlier. This crime was ultimately ruled an accident by Mexican authorities, but it left Burroughs further unnerved.

With this specter hanging over him, Burroughs returned to New York and reunited with Ginsberg and others. Happy to be together again, each drew much from the other. As Ginsberg later recalled, “I saw a soft center where he felt isolated, alone in the world and he needed . . . a feeling of affection, and since I did love him and did have that respect and affection, he responded.” Burroughs, who was twelve years older, had long been an inspiration to Ginsberg, and together they spent hours talking about their lives and their aspirations as writers.

It was during this period that these two photographs were taken. Created with a Kodak camera Ginsberg had bought at a Bowery pawn shop, each portrait is self-consciously autobiographical. The photograph of Ginsberg, taken on their apartment roof, reveals the young poet in full light before a panoramic view of Manhattan, the city he had called home for the last decade. In contrast, shadows obscure Burroughs’s face. In the darkness, a copy of *Junkie* is barely visible in the background at left.

Since Ginsberg and Burroughs had not seen each other for six years, the two portraits acted to formalize a renewed relationship. Yet they also anticipated a separation, for in December of that year each would leave New York headed in his own direction, Ginsberg to San Francisco via the Yucatan and Burroughs to Tangier. Taken together, these photographs provide a window into the lives of two interconnected people, each at a crossroads and each about to embark on the literary works that would establish him as a leading voice of the Beat Generation.

During the next several years, Ginsberg and Burroughs would create some of their most powerful work. Ginsberg’s poem “Howl” (1955), a scathing critique of American society written in a Whitmanesque free verse, and Burroughs’s equally brutal novel *Naked Lunch* (1959), made both authors famous. More significantly, these and other works infused a new generation with the confidence to question the status quo in America. For the Beat Generation, what began as a search for self-fulfillment would ultimately contribute to the rebellious spirit of the sixties. ●

---

*From Naked Lunch:*

*I can feel the heat closing in, feel them out there making their moves, setting up their devil doll stool pigeons, crooning over my spoon and dropper I throw away at Washington Square Station, vault a turnstile and two flights down the iron stairs, catch an uptown A train . . .*
Dr. Ellen G. Miles, curator and chair of the Department of Painting and Sculpture at the National Portrait Gallery, delivered the Smithsonian 2004 Secretary’s Distinguished Research Lecture on February 7, 2005. Entitled “Sneaking Up on Gilbert Stuart’s Portraits of George Washington,” her slide-lecture described the variety of curatorial opportunities she has had at the Smithsonian that gave her the experience needed to research and reinterpret Stuart’s portraits of the first President. Familiarity with the “Atheneum” image of Washington, which appears in reverse on the one-dollar bill, has taken the portrait out of its historical context. To understand both that context and Stuart’s oeuvre of portraiture, she studied many examples of his work, took informal lessons in conservation, learned to look at X-rays, researched portraits by Stuart’s contemporaries, and wrote articles and catalogues on American and European portraiture. In addition, her contacts with fellow staff members, docents, interns, fellows, and the public helped to raise questions about eighteenth-century portraits in general.

Being selected to give this lecture is a signal honor for Miles and for the National Portrait Gallery. The annual lecture series was established five years ago to honor Smithsonian researchers and highlight the breadth and quality of their research. The lecture features an individual who has made exceptional contributions to a field of knowledge and whose career exemplifies sustained excellence. Ellen Miles fits these criteria perfectly. A graduate of Bryn Mawr College and Yale University, Miles joined the NPG staff in 1971. Since then, she has created important, meticulously researched exhibitions, books, and articles devoted to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American and British portraiture. When she began her career, the study of portraiture was essentially a matter of categorizing images on stylistic grounds. Miles led the scholarly and museum communities to investigate the subtle social functions of portraiture and the care with which portraits were planned and made. Her concern with portraits as material evidence and her constant testing of her knowledge has resulted in a series of scholarly productions that have changed the shape of the art-history field. Miles also served on the Institution’s Research Policy Committee and helped to found both the Smithsonian’s Congress of Scholars, of which she was the first chair, and the Material Culture Forum.

Miles’s publications include *American Colonial Portraits, 1700–1776*, the catalogue for the groundbreaking 1987 NPG exhibition, co-authored with Richard Saunders, and a catalogue of the drawings and engravings produced by the talented French émigré artist Charles Balthazar Julien Févret de Saint-Mémin (1770–1852), published in 1994. Her *American Paintings of the Eighteenth Century*, a volume in the systematic collection catalogues of the National Gallery of Art, was published in 1995. In 1999 she organized an exhibition of the life portraits of George and Martha Washington created during Washington’s presidency, which returned her to Gilbert Stuart’s work on Washington. She continued that research when Stuart’s full-length painting of Washington, known as the “Lansdowne” portrait, was purchased for the National Portrait Gallery in 2001. Stuart takes center stage in her current project, a major survey exhibition of the artist’s work co-organized with Carrie Rebora Barratt of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The exhibition opened at the Metropolitan in October 2004 and is now on view at the National Gallery of Art, NPG’s Washington, D.C., venue for this exhibition during its building renovation project.

George Washington by Gilbert Stuart, 1796, owned jointly with the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (detail)
Book Review
Chronicles: Volume I by Bob Dylan

Carol Wyrick
Education Program Director

Bob Dylan’s autobiographical first volume is bound to engage its readers, from those who knew Dylan as the quintessential folk singer (see cover) or rock poet (far right) of the 1960s to others who are interested in his more contemporary work. Chronicles reveals, through episodes self-selected and artfully woven by the author, multiple facets of Dylan as he transitions from one musical genre to another, reinventing himself along the way. The title purposely misleads, as Dylan wants us to view his life as anything but a chronicle. Anyone who expects a discourse about some of his signal albums of the 1960s—including “The Times They Are A-Changin’” and “Bringing It All Back Home”—or a tell-all about his personal life, will not find them here. Neither the influential role of his protest songs—such as “Blowin’ in the Wind”—or the perception by the folk music world that he sold out for an amplified sound, are acknowledged; rather, they are disavowed. Dylan claims, for example, that he was merely singing topical songs about real events: “I didn’t think I was protesting anything any more than I thought that Woody Guthrie songs were protesting anything. What I was hearing pretty regularly, though, were rebellion songs and those really moved me.” Dylan does not differentiate between “protest” and “rebellion.” Nor does he view himself as a part of or inspiration for the various protest movements of the 1960s.

Despite the omissions, Chronicles delights in other ways. Much of it is written in the lyrical style of his songs. A master storyteller, Dylan reveals a host of defining influences and pivotal moments that are certain to give those who have followed his career a better sense of the man. The book recounts numerous episodes, from his early years in Greenwich Village in the 1960s through a period of seclusion with his wife and children following a serious motorcycle accident, from his tour with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers and the Grateful Dead in the mid-1980s to a creative rebirth that occurred in a New York jazz club.

As with his songs, Chronicles eschews a simple chronology, moving back and forth across time. It opens with a young Dylan’s observations of New York City, shortly after arriving there from the Midwest to become part of the growing Greenwich Village folk-art scene and to search out the ailing Woody Guthrie (who was in a New Jersey hospital at the time). He and Lou Levy, head of Leeds Music, had just visited the studio where Bill Haley and His Comets recorded “Rock Around the Clock” and were now sitting together at Jack Dempsey’s restaurant at 58th and Broadway. “Outside the wind was blowing, straggling cloud wisps, snow whirling in the red-lanterned streets, city types scuffling around, bundled up—salesmen in rabbit fur earmuffs hawking gimmicks, chestnut vendors, steam rising out of manholes. None of it seemed important. I had just signed a contract with Leeds Music giving it the right to publish my songs.” Pages later, a seemingly chance encounter with singer Dave Van Ronk results in an invitation for Dylan to play a few songs at the Gaslight, the best of the Village folk-music clubs. Dylan concludes: “I’d come from a long ways off and had started from a long ways down. But now destiny was about to manifest itself. I felt like it was looking right at me and nobody else.” Chronicles moves full circle to end where it began, with Dylan asking Lou Levy if he could buy back his contract. “‘Sure son,’ he said. . . . ‘There’s something unique about your songs, but I can’t put my finger on it.’”

Chronicles was nominated for this year’s National Book Critics Circle Prize in the category of biography/autobiography.
NPG Schedules & Information

NPG in Town

Washington, D.C.
“Gilbert Stuart,” co-organized by the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is presented in Washington in association with the National Gallery of Art. The National Gallery is hosting the exhibition while the Portrait Gallery’s renovations are taking place. Seen previously at the Metropolitan in the fall, the exhibition gives vivid insight into the premier portrait artist of the new republic and the remarkable individuals who were his subjects. Two rooms devoted to Stuart’s celebrated portraits of George Washington, which include NPG’s “Lansdowne” portrait and the paired life studies of George and Martha Washington, are the centerpiece of the show.

This exhibition is proudly sponsored by Target as part of its commitment to arts and education. This exhibition and the acquisition of Gilbert Stuart’s “Lansdowne” portrait have been made possible by the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation as a gift to the nation.

NPG Director
Marc Pachter and
Metropolitan Museum of Art Director Philippe de Montebello at the New York press preview for the “Gilbert Stuart” exhibition, as captured by NPG commissioner Jill Krementz, October 18, 2004

Sneak Peek

Planned installations for the reopening in 2006!
Each year a gallery within the museum, aptly named “One Life,” will be devoted to an NPG curator’s exploration of the life of an individual. The inaugural exhibition in this series is titled “Walt Whitman, a kosmos.” David Ward, Gallery historian and himself a poet, selected Whitman because he “influenced a century of America’s foremost writers.” The exhibition reflects Whitman’s own themes of the American common man and will include images and personal memorabilia of Whitman, coupled with the poet’s words, to create a multifaceted portrait of a remarkable American.

This stipple engraving by Samuel Hollyer was used as the frontispiece to the first edition of Leaves of Grass, self-published by Whitman as a declaration of artistic independence on July 4, 1855.

This exhibition is proudly sponsored by Target as part of its commitment to arts and education. This exhibition and the acquisition of Gilbert Stuart’s “Lansdowne” portrait have been made possible by the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation as a gift to the nation.

NPG in Demand

Throughout the National Portrait Gallery’s renovation period, the collection has been in high demand from institutions around the world. Our extensive loan program has allowed us to maintain a strong connection to the museum community. As our 2006 reopening approaches, however, loans will be reduced. The following objects from the collection are now on public view:

- Selins Grove, Pennsylvania: Robert Tait McKenzie’s bronze bas-relief of Pennsylvania artist Violet Oakley will be on view at the Lore Degenstein Gallery at Susquehanna University from April 9 through June 5. The retrospective exhibition of Oakley’s work includes several recently uncovered pieces, unknown until curatorial investigation located them for the show.

- New Bedford, Massachusetts: The New Bedford Whaling Museum will include NPG’s portrait of Frederick Douglass by an unidentified artist in an exhibition celebrating the lives of Douglass and Herman Melville. The exhibition, which illuminates their attitudes towards the issues of race, freedom, and violence, will be on view from May through September.
After six years of showcasing NPG's collections through five traveling exhibitions within the Portrait of a Nation initiative, the tours conclude in July with the final showing of “American Women” at the Columbia Museum of Art in South Carolina. These exhibitions have been viewed by more than 650,000 visitors in more than twenty venues across the United States, in Japan, and in England. We are grateful to all who participated in the tour and hope you will be able to join us in Washington, D.C., when we celebrate the reinstallment of our collection and the reopening of the Patent Office Building in 2006. 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.

American Women: A Selection from the National Portrait Gallery
Final venue: Columbia Museum of Art, South Carolina
April 29–July 10, 2005

Co-Organized Traveling Exhibitions

Gilbert Stuart
Co-organized by the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the National Portrait Gallery (see p. 14)

National Portrait Gallery at the National Gallery of Art
Washington, D.C.
March 27–July 31, 2005

Retratos: 2,000 Years of Latin American Portraits
Co-organized by the San Antonio Museum of Art, the National Portrait Gallery, and El Museo del Barrio
This project and all related national and local programs and publications are made possible by Ford Motor Company Fund.

San Diego Museum of Art, California
April 16–June 12, 2005

Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach, Florida
July 23–October 2, 2005

International Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
October 21, 2005–January 8, 2006

San Antonio Museum of Art, Texas
February 4–April 30, 2006

See other exhibition-related websites at www.npg.si.edu

Useful Contacts

The Gallery’s main telephone number is (202) 275-1738.

Catalog of American Portraits
PHONE: (202) 275-1840
WEB: www.npg.si.edu and click on Search
E-MAIL: NPGWeb@si.edu

Office of Conservation
Conservation consultations are available for the public on Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. by appointment only.
PHONE: Cindy Lou Molnar
(301) 238-1038 (for paintings and sculpture)
E-MAIL: molnarl@npg.si.edu
PHONE: Rosemary Fallon
(301) 238-1033 (for art on paper)
E-MAIL: fallonr@npg.si.edu

Office of Development
PHONE: (202) 275-1767
E-MAIL: weils@npg.si.edu

Office of External Affairs
PHONE: (202) 275-1764
E-MAIL: friendlyp@npg.si.edu

Office of Education
For information about school and community programs, teacher resources, internships, and upcoming events:
PHONE: (202) 275-1811
WEB: www.npg.si.edu and click on Education or Events & Programs
E-MAIL: NPGEducation@si.edu

Library
PHONE: (202) 275-1912
WEB: www.siris.si.edu (for the library’s catalog)
E-MAIL: lynaghp@si.edu

Office of Photographic Services
PHONE: (202) 275-1791
WEB: www.npg.si.edu and click on Rights & Reproductions
E-MAIL: NPGRightsOffice@si.edu

Office of Publications
Visit the NPG website to order NPG publications.
PHONE: (202) 275-1870
WEB: www.npg.si.edu and click on Publications
E-MAIL: NPGPublications@si.edu
Can you help? Answer the Profile Puzzlers!

1. Does Profile best represent the National Portrait Gallery’s commitment to keeping the museum open while the building is closed? Does it also demonstrate the creativity, scholarship, and passion of the Gallery’s curators, who are committed to sharing the many ways lives are portrayed and interpreted?

2. Did you know that this issue of Profile has been paid for through the generous contributions of our Commissioners and friends? And that since 2000, Profile has been sent free of charge to more than 10,000 recipients, four times a year?

3. Would you like to see Profile continue during the renovation of the Patent Office Building, until July 2006? Could you consider a contribution toward the design, printing, and distribution costs of Profile for the next four issues?

4. As a reader of Profile, would you like to help us stay open while closed? How? Please go to the envelope in the center of this issue.

Answers: 1. Yes. Yes. 2. No. No. 3. Yes. Yes. 4. Yes! With a contribution of $30 or more for a year of Profile.

Please take this moment to demonstrate your support for the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery, the only national museum chartered by Congress that tells the story of men and women—past and present—who have made significant contributions to American history and culture, and recognizes the artists who have celebrated these individuals.