

PROFILE

Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery News

Fall 2006





From the DIRECTOR

I write this as the National Portrait Gallery, within the Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture, completes the first quarter of its reopening, indeed, its rebirth. The response has been everything and more than we had hoped. Over a quarter million people have experienced a building

renewed, as well as two museums vibrant with expanded spaces, new installations, and renewed dedication to exploring the cultural possibilities of democracy.

I think the best word to describe the response of both press and public has been exhilaration. In part, the building, each floor rising in grandeur, is responsible. But as I have wandered our galleries, listening and watching, I've heard more and more the expressions of delight in the handsome and spacious ways the portraits have been hung, in the rich splash of historic and modern blues and reds and yellows on the walls, and in the sensitive lighting, which allows for the first time the appreciation of jewel-like daguerreotypes, the dazzling white of Walt Whitman's painted beard, and the glorious red of Denyce Graves's concert dress. To the intellectual pleasures of history, highlighted by selected quotations adorning the galleries, this Portrait Gallery adds the sensuousness of light and color.

But before we returned to this building, the National Portrait Gallery had already begun its rebirth. This we did through exhibitions that crossed boundaries both intellectual (the reexamination of Gilbert Stuart, the exploration of Latin American portraiture) and geographical (presentations of our collections throughout the nation and the world, and the epic tour of the "Lansdowne" portrait of George Washington). This we also did by introducing new programs such as the Paul Peck Awards for Service to the Presidency and Portrayal of the Presidency, celebrating their fifth anniversary in the fall of 2006, and by laying the groundwork for the Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition, the country's first national portrait competition.

But for many, it is this publication, *Profile*—conceived in 2000 to keep the museum in the public eye during our closure—that began to reveal the Portrait Gallery's new thinking. Even after our reopening, however, it became unthinkable to discontinue *Profile*. But there are changes to announce. The editor, Carol Wyrick, has retired and handed the direction over to Dru Dowdy, whom you will meet in this issue. We salute Carol for her remarkable oversight and insight, as well as those, like Sid Hart and other members of the editorial committee, who will continue to lend their talents to this great expression of the spirit of our museum.

If we are reborn, it is only because we also cling to our origins, to our conviction that it is the past that gives meaning to present and future. So we celebrate our twenty-first-century museum by commissioning a daguerreotype of our building suggestive of that first one taken by John Plumbe in 1846. And we look to nineteenth-century tradition by commissioning a poem in honor of our rededication. Reading about these are some of the pleasures that await you in this issue. Truly we have gone back to the future. ✨

Marc Pachter

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Photograph by Amy Baskette



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A New Daguerreotype: Our Landmark Building



Jerry Spagnoli's opening-day daguerreotype of the Reynolds Center. Because daguerreotypes present mirror images of their subjects, this entire scene (including the building's signage) appears in reverse.

Ann Shumard

CURATOR OF PHOTOGRAPHS

The earliest known photographic image of the historic Patent Office Building—now home to the Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture—is a remarkable daguerreotype made by John Plumbe in 1846, just a few years after photography's introduction in 1839. Inspired by Plumbe's compelling daguerrean "portrait" of its landmark building, the National Portrait Gallery celebrated its grand reopening on July 1, 2006, by inviting internationally known New York daguerreotypist Jerry Spagnoli to document the occasion by means of this now-antique photographic process.

As soon as Spagnoli accepted the challenge of daguerreotyping the building's south facade on opening day, the search was on to secure everything he would need for a successful daguerrean "shoot." The first order of business was to find a location for Spagnoli's camera that would repli-

cate Plumbe's vantage point as nearly as possible. The surrounding neighborhood has changed considerably since 1846, but fortunately the building from which Plumbe made his exposure still stands. Designed as the General Post Office by Patent Office Building architect Robert Mills, this historic structure now houses the Hotel Monaco. Its colonnaded second-floor terrace was the perfect camera location, and although this space is normally inaccessible to the public, the hotel's staff graciously agreed to provide special access for Spagnoli and his Portrait Gallery support team.

With a vantage point secured, the next requirement was to locate a well-ventilated, non-air-conditioned workspace in the neighborhood where Spagnoli could prepare the daguerreotype plates and later develop them. Longtime Washington arts supporters Molly Ruppert and her son Paul volunteered a room in their Warehouse Gallery on Seventh Street that proved ideal, and it was quickly transformed into a temporary daguerrean dark-



John Plumbe made his 1846 image of the building using a correcting apparatus, which results in a true rather than a laterally reversed image. Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.



Jerry Spagnoli uses a stopwatch to time his exposure.



The building's image appears inverted on the ground glass of Spagnoli's camera.

room when Spagnoli arrived in Washington.

After making several sample daguerreotypes to gauge exposure times and plate sensitivity, Spagnoli was ready to document the opening-day ceremony. Daguerreotype plates must be prepared only a short time before exposure, so early that morning Spagnoli buffed each silver-clad copper plate to achieve a brilliant, blemish-free surface before sensitizing it with fumes of iodine and bromine. The light-sensitive plates were then placed in lightproof plate holders and carried to the Hotel Monaco's terrace, where Spagnoli's camera was positioned.

As an eager crowd began forming before the red-carpeted steps of the Reynolds Center to await the start of the festivities, Spagnoli focused his camera and positioned the plate holders within easy reach. When the ceremony began at 11:15, Spagnoli went to work, swiftly inserting one daguerreotype plate at a time into the camera and exposing each plate for no more than four seconds. As the ceremony

ended and the crowd surged through the museum's now-open doors, Spagnoli returned the final plate to its holder. With the help of a small team of NPG staff members, he gathered his equipment for the short trip to the improvised darkroom. There, he developed each plate in turn by fuming it with mercury vapor and "fixing" it in a bath of sodium thio-sulfate to prevent further reaction to light. After reporting that the daguerreotypes were successful, Spagnoli loaded his gear into his rental car for the return trip to New York where, later that day, he finished work on the plates in his Manhattan studio.

Three of Jerry Spagnoli's daguerreotypes, including the one illustrated here (page 4), have now entered the collection of the National Portrait Gallery, where they will serve as durable mementos of a grand occasion in the life of the Gallery and in the life of this nation. 🌟

Portrait of an Opening



E. Warren Perry Jr.

NPG Director Marc Pachter speaks to the audience at the July 1, 2006, opening, with Smithsonian Secretary Lawrence M. Small and Smithsonian American Art Director Elizabeth Broun.



E. Warren Perry Jr.

Visitors enter the Reynolds Center on F Street.



E. Warren Perry Jr.

The American Originals Fife and Drum Corps perform on the steps of the building.



E. Warren Perry Jr.

“Martha” and “George” Washington are on hand to greet visitors.



Ken Rahaim, SI Photos

“Marilyn Monroe,” “Charlie Chaplin,” and “Andy Warhol” join in the festivities in the Great Hall.



E. Warren Perry Jr.

The G Street entrance features tents and prize giveaways.



Ken Rahaim, SI Photos

Blues duo Warner Williams and Jay Summerour perform on the portico.



E. Warren Perry Jr.

The Harmony Heritage Singers offer crowd-pleasing barbershop melodies.

A “Perfect” Ending to the First Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition

Andrea Baer

PROGRAM ASSISTANT

Affirming the National Portrait Gallery’s conviction that portraiture is indeed a vital part of contemporary art, the first Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition attracted an incredible 4,076 painted and sculpted entries from every state in the Union. The resulting exhibition, featuring fifty-one objects, has proven hugely popular, even appearing in a syndicated national comic strip (page 15).

Amazingly, portraits of every kind—from the fanciful to the realistic and from oil on canvas to Lite-Brite pegs in front of fluorescent lights—were submitted in this first competition. But of all these entries, one fantastic sun shone light on one artist’s son and captivated the judges at every stage. On that day in March when the jury members first saw the actual works of art, they selected the exhibition one portrait at a time, exchanging nods and words of approval or disapproval until each member was satisfied with the show’s content. By midday, the task was done. After adjourning for lunch, the jury returned to vote on the prize winners. Each juror placed a slip of paper with his or her name on it in front of each object that he or she felt was deserving of a prize. The jurors walked from piece to piece, some going immediately to their choices and others revisiting each individual work. One portrait had a large stack of votes in front of it, and when they were counted, all but one

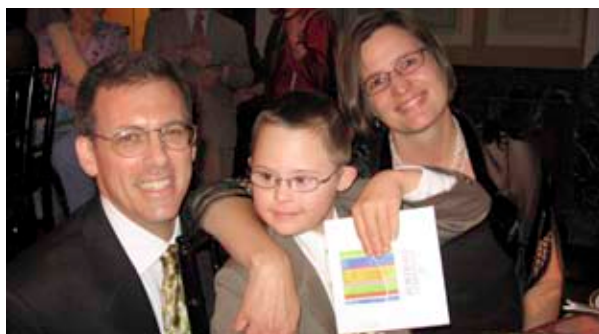


Grand prize-winner Sam and the Perfect World by David Lenz

© David Lenz

juror had voted for *Sam and the Perfect World* by David Lenz, making it the clear winner.

Sam and the Perfect World presents the image of eight-year-old Sam Lenz, the artist’s son, standing in front of the rolling green of a pastoral Wisconsin landscape, draped in light from a shimmering sun. The remarkable elements of this painting—the fish-eyed view of the farmland and the rare meteorological event of the haloed sun—evoke the world of a boy with Down’s Syndrome, who experiences life from a different angle. His penetrating gaze captures the viewer’s attention, at once inviting questions and answering others,



Andrea Baer

David Lenz with wife Rosemary and son Sam at the Portrait Competition awards dinner on June 23.



Fotobriceno

Yuqi Wang receives second-place honors

GRAND PRIZE
David Lenz
Sam and the Perfect World

SECOND PLACE
Yuqi Wang
From Red Hook

THIRD PLACE
Nuno de Campos
Magnet #3

COMMENDED
Brett Bigbee
Joe and James

Jenny Dubnau
M. with Wet Face

Justin Hayward
Young Marriage

Alan Caomin Xie
Still Image 24–Andrea



© James Seward

In mid-September, James Seward won the Outwin Bochever Portrait Competition People's Choice Award for his oil painting *My Father in the Living Room of Our Tenth House*. The work received more than 1,200 votes; David Lenz's *Sam and the Perfect World* was second; and Will Wilson's *Convexed* was third. Voters' reflections on their attraction to the winning portrait will be posted at www.portraitcompetition.si.edu.

coaxing us into a world that teems with curiosity and anticipation.

Lenz's meticulous technique in applying oil to canvas fools the eye; countless visitors to the museum have wondered how a photograph won the painting and sculpture competition. The scene is so real, and Sam appears so ready to talk to us, that we have to remind ourselves that this is a painting. Yet the phenomenon in the sky and strange warp of the rolling hills present an inescapable contradiction to this semblance of reality.

The combination of such a compelling story, and the sheer skill apparent in Lenz's painting, impressed

the judges and continues to impress viewers. *Sam and the Perfect World* also sets the bar for future competitions, no matter which media will be featured. This inaugural competition will always be the most unadulterated snapshot of current portraiture because there was no model, no previous winner, to emulate. Work entered in future competitions, however, will doubtless be considered under the light from that very strange sun.

The result of this remarkable competition is the beguiling exhibition that continues in the National Portrait Gallery's second-floor special exhibition space through February 19, 2007. ✨

I've always been able to find the inspiration for my work in people, all kinds of people, but especially those from disadvantaged circumstances. —PAINTER DAVID LENZ



Fotobriceno

The winning artists with NPG staff: (left to right) Justin Hayward, Andrea Baer (OBPC program assistant), Yuqi Wang, Alan Caomin Xie, Brandon Fortune (OBPC program coordinator), David Lenz, Nuno de Campos, Brett Bigbee, Jenny Dubnau, and Marc Pachter (NPG director)

A Celebration Broadcast in Verse

David C. Ward

HISTORIAN AND DEPUTY EDITOR,
PEALE FAMILY PAPERS

Tradition holds that poems are often commissioned for special occasions—and especially new beginnings—as happened in 1961 when Robert Frost composed and read a poem written in honor of President John F. Kennedy’s inauguration. Robert Pinsky, two-time poet laureate of the United States (1997–99), will celebrate the National Portrait Gallery’s new beginnings with a poem commissioned for the Gallery’s reopening year. The poem will appear as a limited-edition broadside published by the fine-art printer and artist Robin Price of Middletown, Connecticut, and is scheduled to appear in the early winter of 2006.

The broadside is the brainchild of Dan Logan, vice president of the Reva and David Logan Foundation, which is underwriting the project. After reading the *Profile* issue spotlighting poetry (spring 2005), Logan, himself a poet, contacted NPG about supporting its involvement in portraying the marriage of word and image. The foundation wanted to enable the Gallery to create something out of the ordinary, a project that would have a lasting impact. Inspired by his and his family’s deep interest in printing, art, and books, Logan suggested the idea of commissioning and publishing a poetry broadside to mark the reopening of the Portrait Gallery after six years.

Robert Pinsky was asked if he would be willing to write a poem for the Portrait Gallery. He was a nat-

ural choice for the task, given his role as a poet of distinction who also proselytized for poetry’s place among the public during his two terms as laureate; one of his signal achievements was co-editing *America’s Favorite Poems* (1999), an anthology generated from readers in all walks of American life. Pinsky’s sense of the importance of democratic culture is matched by the high standards of his formal poetic technique; in addition to five volumes of verse and several critical studies, he has published a notable translation of Dante’s *Inferno*. Pinsky readily agreed to write the commemorative poem for the Gallery.

The poetry broadside is a public celebration whose historical roots extend back to the troubadours of the Middle Ages. The modern broadside consists of a medium-sized sheet of paper on which the poem is printed and is usually accompanied by illustrations and other decorative elements. Publishing Pinsky’s poem as a broadside not only transforms the written word into a work of art, it also broadens the range in which the poet’s voice can be heard.

Robin Price was selected to print this broadside because of her imaginative approach in presenting the written word; she writes that her task is to “penetrate deep into a poem, and reveal it through the selection and arrangement of type, layout, paper, color(s), imagery and the techniques of hand production.” As she sees it, her work is a silent dialogue with Pinsky’s poem.

For further details about NPG’s poetry broadside project, visit www.npg.si.edu. ✱

Any face, as we see it or depict it, is the visible product of tremendous invisible roots, personal and cultural and genetic. Like our works and actions, our faces are partly our own and partly inherited; they express ancient energies, mostly unknown. This building, with its partly visible, partly invisible past—as a patent office, as a military hospital and morgue, as the hall for Lincoln’s second inaugural ball—embodies those same forces, cloaked but manifest. That interaction of the visible and invisible, we can hope, may have some parallel in the vocal nature of a poem and the printer’s visible art. That is the challenge for Robin Price and me.

—Robert Pinsky



Book Review

Franklin Delano Roosevelt: Champion of Freedom

by Conrad Black (New York: Public Affairs, 2003), 1,280 pp.

Sidney Hart

SENIOR HISTORIAN AND EDITOR,
PEALE FAMILY PAPERS

Conrad Black's *Franklin Delano Roosevelt: Champion of Freedom* is not your father's (or mother's) biography of FDR. Previous works by liberal historians depict Roosevelt as the idealist; those by historians further to the left are critical of FDR's transformation from the social liberal of the New Deal to a president who sacrificed domestic reform to fight a war; and biographies written from a right-wing perspective are critical of the "socialism" of the New Deal and suggest FDR's purposeful manipulation of America into World War II.

Conrad Black, a British media mogul, author, and member of the House of Lords, provides us with a new perspective. His regard for Roosevelt the man is almost limitless, but aside from Roosevelt's courage in fighting polio—a quality that we can all admire—Black's admiration stems from many of the qualities that both liberals and conservatives disliked about FDR: his political adroitness and legendary ability to manipulate situations and individuals. Also, unlike liberal historians, Black reveres FDR's New Deal, not because it was a departure from capitalism, but because it saved capitalism. Black's argument is on solid ground because FDR himself viewed the New Deal the same way. He often complained that most American businessmen were too "stupid" to see that he was trying to "reflate" the economy; and that his rescue of unemployed American workers kept them from the more extreme alternatives to the New Deal such as those offered by figures like Huey Long, Father Charles Coughlin, and Charles Lindbergh.

In foreign policy, Black spares no praise for FDR's prescience in recognizing the dangers posed by the fascist regimes of Germany and Japan, and the futility of the European appeasers. He is an admirer of Roosevelt's political skill and exquisite timing in maneuvering American public opinion away from entrenched pacifism and isolationism to support for war-preparedness and, eventually, war.

Too astute an observer to omit FDR's tactical mistakes, Black faults Roosevelt for placing all business leaders in the ignorant, and even unpatriotic, camp (a view that Black acknowledges was reciprocated by many American capitalists). According to Black, members of this group wanted an economic recovery and a strong America as much as FDR, and the president missed an opportunity to

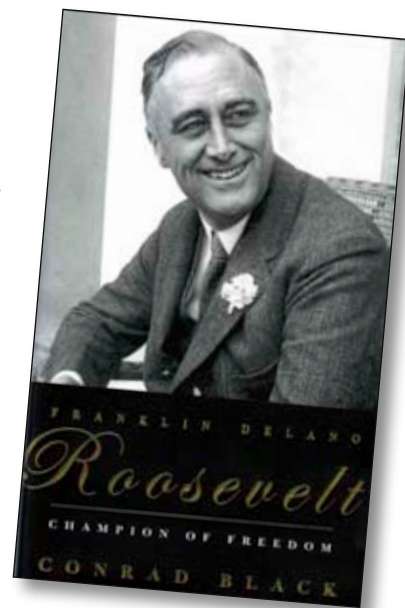
bring many of them over to his side.

Black also does not turn a blind eye, as others have, to Roosevelt's personal shortcomings, but in an intriguing way he views them as corollaries to FDR's strengths.

These character traits—perhaps akin to those of many of America's strong presidents—led to accusations that Roosevelt was high-handed, egotistical, and even despotic. Black acknowledges that FDR lied to and manipulated friends as well as enemies, behavior that hurt many good people but was also effective in defeating enemies and building useful coalitions. Roosevelt's mastery of Washington politics provided him with lethal tools for destroying real or imagined enemies. Black rightly condemns FDR's use of the Internal Revenue Service as his personal weapon to undermine men such as Andrew Mellon and Moses Annenberg.

FDR's almost preternatural ability to enlist men whom he disliked to work for him had a dark side in his proclivity to dominate and demean those men. Black relates the extraordinary episode of FDR's appointment of Joseph Kennedy as ambassador to the Court of St. James's. Although he considered Kennedy useful, FDR despised the man, and deliberately humiliated him. With Roosevelt's son, James, looking on, he had Kennedy drop his trousers so he could see if he was bow-legged, presumably so as not to embarrass the United States when Kennedy appeared at court in the traditional knee-breeches and silk stockings; Kennedy—always eager to please FDR—complied with alacrity. Pretending to judge Kennedy's legs insufficient, Roosevelt told Kennedy that he could not appoint him ambassador. Only after Kennedy pleaded with the president and promised to ask the British for a sartorial dispensation did FDR conclude his cruel joke.

It would be misleading to end on a sour note; Black clearly likes his subject, imperfections and all, and his accounts of FDR's political and strategic brilliance dominate this biography. Black's book will delight many and likely anger more than a few readers. At 1,280 pages, it is a lengthy but very good account of one of America's great presidents. ✨



HISTORIAN'S CHOICE Gloria Swanson

Platinum print by Karl Struss, 1919

Amy Henderson

HISTORIAN

To audiences today, Gloria Swanson (1897–1983) is remembered largely for her portrayal of aging silent film star Norma Desmond in *Sunset Boulevard* (1950): filmed in noirish black-and-white, she utters such classic movie lines as “we had faces then,” and, later, “I’m ready for my close-up, Mr. De Mille.” What is less often recalled is Swanson’s reign during the height of silent films, when she ruled the box office and introduced glamour to the silver screen.

Swanson was born in Chicago, and in 1913 found work there as an extra at Essanay Films. She met fellow actor Wallace Beery at the studio, married him, and went to Hollywood in 1915, quickly finding work at Mack Sennett’s Triangle-Keystone Studio. Unhappy in slapstick, Swanson was soon rescued by director Cecil B. De Mille. It was De Mille who recognized Swanson’s affinity for the camera, and De Mille who shaped her stardom with such films as *Male and Female* (1919).

By the end of the teens, silent films had nearly reached maturity. Only a half-step away from the heyday of the studio system that would dominate the industry from the mid-1920s on, the silent era had already witnessed the rise of the star system. Topping the most-popular lists in fan magazines like *Photoplay* were Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, and Charlie Chaplin, who in 1919 flexed their star power by forming their own studio, United Artists, with director D. W. Griffith.

In this emerging Hollywood scenario, Gloria Swanson blazed to fame by brandishing a far different image of female stardom than that presented by either Pickford—“America’s Sweetheart”—or the waiflike Lillian Gish, who was Griffith’s leading lady in such epics as *Birth of a Nation* and *Way Down East*. Rather than framed by long golden

curls and clinging innocence, Swanson radiated sensuality. As constructed by De Mille and captured by his cameraman/cinematographer Karl Struss, Swanson was lavishly and provocatively depicted in ostrich feathers, leopard skins, jewels, and the “hautest” of the day’s coutures. She oozed glamour, elegance, and extravagance in a way that was new to the screen.

By the mid-1920s Swanson was the highest-paid actress in Hollywood, earning \$250,000 per week; she reportedly made and spent more than \$8 million in the 1920s alone. Audiences were drawn to her movies as much for her wardrobe as for her effusive acting. In an age when people were just beginning to pay close attention to how movie stars dressed, she was an unabashed trendsetter. Swanson told one magazine, “During the day, I am a queen, garbed in all the wonders of the costumer’s art.” Would she consider forgoing such glamour to wear “simple little

dresses” offstage? Of course not, and “the natural consequence is,” she blushed to say, that “I have become extravagant.”

When movies became “talking pictures,” Swanson made a successful transition from silents and was nominated for a Best Actress Academy Award in both 1929 (for *Sadie Thompson*) and 1930 (for *The Trespasser*). Yet her next films failed to generate excitement, and she left Hollywood. Her 1950 comeback in *Sunset Boulevard* earned her another Best Actress nomination, and essentially capped her career.

Like the persona she created onscreen, Gloria Swanson draped her life in glamour. As she declared in her earliest days in Hollywood, “I have decided that when I am a star, I will be every inch and every moment the star.” It was never a question. ✨

Further Reading: See Gloria Swanson, *Swanson on Swanson* (New York: Random House, 1980), and Jeanine Basinger, *Silent Stars* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000).



© Karl Struss

EDITOR'S CHOICE Thomas Tudor Tucker

Chalk on prepared paper by Charles Balthazar Julien Févret de Saint-Mémin, 1805, gift of Cynthia Beverly Tucker Kimbrough Barlowe

Dru Dowdy

HEAD OF PUBLICATIONS

South Carolina physician and politician Thomas Tudor Tucker (1745–1828) has finally found the perfect home in the National Portrait Gallery. The third of six children, Tucker traveled from his birthplace on Bermuda to Scotland to study medicine at the University of Edinburgh in 1765. After finishing his dissertation in 1770—on the effects of cold on the human body, an apt topic for a Bermudian living in Scotland—he settled in Charleston, South Carolina. He was soon joined there by his brother Nathaniel, and in the colonies by another brother, St. George, who was studying law at the College of William and Mary.

In Charleston, Tucker almost immediately sank into debt; he was a stranger in South Carolina, he noted, and “most People have some Kind of . . . attachment to a particular Physician which only Time or accident can be expected to break.” Tucker soon found politics in the tumultuous Revolutionary era more agreeable—or at least more rewarding—than medicine.

The early 1770s brought the specter of war. But, Tucker noted, the present times opened “a wide Field for Adventurers, & many have already made their Fortunes.” He and his brothers owned shares in several vessels that took indigo and other products to Bermuda in exchange for arms and ammunition. Serving near Charleston during the first part of the war, Tucker was eventually appointed physician of South Carolina’s Continental hospital, and in 1781 he was named director of the Continental hospital in Williamsburg. The Virginia hospital was ill-supplied; Tucker’s job was made even more difficult by the daily increase in the number of wounded from both the American troops and the French army.

At war’s end, Tucker decided to involve himself in the political realm, serving first in the South Carolina General Assembly. In 1786 he accepted appointment as a delegate to the Continental Congress. The period from 1787 to 1788 was a crucial

one for the new American government, and Tucker found the decision-making task to be overwhelming, as it “must decide the Happiness of Millions of Generations.” A foe of the new Constitution (he found it “replete with Danger”), he was nonetheless elected to the United States House of Representatives, serving in the first and second congresses (1789–93).



After his second term in Congress ended, Tucker was disappointed in his hopes of receiving a political appointment. In 1801, however, he finally asked his friend John Page to help him secure a spot in Thomas Jefferson’s new administration. James Madison noted of Tucker’s qualifications, “I have always regarded him as a man of the greatest moral & political probity, . . . of a very ingenious mind . . . and consequently well fitted for public service.” By November 1801, Jefferson had offered Tucker the post of treasurer of the United States, a position Tucker held until his death in

1828. He never again formally practiced medicine.

Tucker’s portrait was drawn by the French artist Charles Balthazar Julien Févret de Saint-Mémin, who emigrated to New York in 1793. The artist traveled to several east coast cities, making large chalk profile portraits with the aid of a drawing machine called a physiognotrace, which helped him trace the outline of the figure. Saint-Mémin would also make small engravings of his drawings, which a sitter might order the way we order wallet-size photographs today. Saint-Mémin portrayed Tucker in 1805 in Washington, D.C. This drawing, a gift to the National Portrait Gallery from a descendant, suffered water damage at some point and is currently undergoing conservation. ✨

Further Reading: Dru Dowdy, “A School for Stoicism”: Thomas Tudor Tucker and the Republican Age,” *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 96 (April 1995): 102–18, and Ellen G. Miles, *Saint-Mémin and the Neoclassical Profile Portrait in America* (Washington, D.C.: National Portrait Gallery, 1994).

NPG at Home

We are finally home again in our gloriously renovated building, and even though we've been open for just a few months, temporary exhibitions are already changing. Make sure you take time to see those shows closing in the next few months and look for the new exhibitions opening this fall and winter as well.

Currently on View

Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition 2006 Second floor
The result of our first national portrait competition, this exhibition presents the work of fifty-one artists who express multiple visions of the art of portraiture. Through February 19, 2007.

One Life: "Walt Whitman, a kosmos" First floor
NPG historian David Ward looks at the life and work of Walt Whitman and his enduring impact on contemporary society and culture. Through March 11, 2007.

Portraiture Now First floor
The art of portraiture is seen through the eyes of five contemporary artists: William Beckman, Dawoud Bey, Nina Levy, Jason Salavon, and Andres Serrano. Through April 29, 2007.

The Presidency and the Cold War Second floor
Beginning with Yalta and ending with the collapse of the Berlin Wall, this exhibition explores how U.S. presidents dealt with the global struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. Through July 8, 2007.

Opening Exhibitions

Josephine Baker: Image and Icon Second floor
Through vintage photographs, posters, drawings, prints, and ephemera, this exhibition will explore the entertainer's important and innovative contributions to the Jazz Age. The exhibition, organized by the Sheldon Art Galleries in St. Louis, Missouri, will trace the development of Baker's image, first as the exotic "other" in Paris, then as glamorous cabaret star. November 24, 2006–March 18, 2007.

Coming Attractions

Great Britons: Treasures from the National Portrait Gallery, London, April 27–September 3, 2007

Being There: Harry Benson's Fifty Years of Photojournalism, April 27–September 9, 2007

Portraits by Alexander Talbot Rice, April 27–September 3, 2007

Memory Portraits, May 25, 2007–January 6, 2008



All © 2005 Nina Levy

Spectator (self-portrait) by Nina Levy, 2005. Courtesy Metaphor Contemporary Art, Brooklyn, New York, and Feigen Contemporary, New York City

William Beckman, Dawoud Bey, Jason Salavon, Andres Serrano by Nina Levy, 2005. All courtesy Metaphor Contemporary Art, Brooklyn, New York, and Feigen Contemporary, New York City

NPG in Demand

We receive many requests to share our collections with institutions around the world. Our pieces will soon be on view in the following locations:

Berlin, Germany:

Deutsches Historisches Museum will include several portraits of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in “Kunst und Propaganda,” which will be on view January 26–April 29, 2007.

Kyoto, Japan:

“Hemingway’s Beloved City—Paris in the 1920s with Picasso, Chagall, and Other Artists—A Moveable Feast” will open at Kyoto’s Museum Eki on February 8, 2007, and then travel to museums in Hiroshima, Takashima, Nihombashi, and Kanazawa through August 19. NPG’s works will include a drawing of Hemingway by Hugo Gellert and portraits of such members of his circle as Gertrude Stein and Sherwood Anderson.



Gertrude Stein by Man Ray, 1927

© 2000 Man Ray Trust / Artists Rights Society, NY / ADAGR, Paris

Conference on “Walt Whitman, a kosmos”

To celebrate the “One Life” exhibition, “Walt Whitman, a kosmos,” the National Portrait Gallery will sponsor a conference on Whitman to be held in the Nan Tucker McEvoy Auditorium at the Donald W. Reynolds Center on January 26, 2007, from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

The speakers and their topics will be Sean Wilentz, professor of history at Princeton University, on Whitman and democracy; Alexander Nemerov, professor of art history at Yale University, on

Whitman’s war poems; Michael Schmidt, professor of poetry at the University of Glasgow, on Whitman and the British; Jorie Graham, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory at Harvard University, who will accompany a reading of Whitman’s poems with commentary. The event will be moderated by David C. Ward, historian at the NPG and curator of “Walt Whitman, a kosmos.”

See www.npg.si.edu for further details.

Look for our new online feature, **Audio Profiles**, found under the “Exhibitions” tab on our website. There you will find short discussions of temporary exhibitions and permanent collection works of art from the perspective of the historians, curators, and artists. We hope these provide a virtual glimpse of the Gallery for those unable to visit in person.

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

On September 22, 2006, Zippy the Pinhead featured Nina Levy’s *Large Head* in the Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition.

ZIPPY THE PINHEAD BILL GRIFFITH



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Portrait Puzzlers

1.



In 1787 this Revolutionary War captain led an army of farmers in a revolt against Massachusetts taxation—and gave his name to the cause.

2.



This twentieth-century Japanese American artist once said, “The essence of sculpture is for me the perception of space, the continuum of our existence.”

3.



© Estate of Ernest De Meyer

Along with her husband, Vernon, this trendsetter cut a rug at the Café de Paris in France and ran a dancing school in New York.

4.



Shown here in his most famous role as Othello, this African American actor was forced by racism to move overseas in the 1820s to practice his art.

Answers: 1. Daniel Shays (1747–1825) by an unidentified artist, relief cut, 1787 2. Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988) by Winold Reiss, pastel on paper, c. 1929, gift of Joseph and Rosalyn Newman 3. Irene Castle (1893–1969) by Baron Adolph de Meyer, photograph, 1919 4. Ira Aldridge (1805–1867) by Henry Perronet Briggs, oil on canvas, c. 1830. All images are details.

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