



George Washington 1732–1799

("Lansdowne" Portrait)

First president, 1789–1797

As a military and political figure, George Washington was a unifying force during the country's formative years. He fought in the French and Indian War and later served as commander-in-chief of the

Continental Army in the Revolutionary War. After being unanimously elected as the first president of the United States, in 1789, he installed the Supreme Court and the cabinet, quelled the Whiskey Rebellion, and defeated the Western Lakes Confederacy in the Northwest Indian War (and facilitated the subsequent peace negotiations with the alliance). Washington enjoyed immense popularity at the end of his second term, but he declined to run again, insisting that the United States needed to take proper precautions to avoid hereditary leadership or dictatorship.

While mapping out the composition for this painting, American artist Gilbert Stuart, who had previously worked in England and Ireland, drew from European traditions of state portraiture to evoke

Washington's leadership. The artist made a number of direct references to the newly formed United

States, and the pose he chose for the president is believed to allude to Washington's annual address in front of Congress in December 1795. Stuart completed several replicas of the image, which spread rapidly through popular engravings.

Gilbert Stuart (1755–1828) Oil on canvas, 1796

Acquired as a gift to the nation through the generosity of the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation

NPG.2001.13



## The Four Justices

Counterclockwise from bottom left: Sandra Day O'Connor born 1930; Ruth Bader Ginsburg born 1933; Elena Kagan born 1960; and Sonia Sotomayor born 1954

In 1880, Belva Lockwood became the first woman to argue before the Supreme Court. Distinguished jurist Florence Allen was considered for the Supreme Court in the 1940s, but opposition, including from the sitting justices, precluded her nomination. It was not until 1981 that Sandra Day O'Connor became the first woman to serve as a Supreme Court justice. Over ten years later, in 1993, Ruth Bader Ginsburg was nominated by President Clinton. Today, Ginsburg serves alongside Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan, who were nominated to the Supreme Court in 2009 and 2010, respectively.

The Cummings commissioned this portrait to recognize the accomplishments of all four justices. Justice O'Connor's office arranged their busy schedules so that they could pose at the same time for Nelson Shanks and his camera. The artist drew on the traditions of Dutch group portraiture, and the setting is based on interiors and a courtyard within the Supreme Court Building in Washington, D.C.

Nelson Shanks (1937–2015) Oil on canvas, 2012

Gift of Ian M. and Annette P. Cumming



Henrietta Lacks (HeLa): The Mother of Modern Medicine

Henrietta Lacks (1920–1951), who was from Roanoke, Virginia, died of cervical cancer at age thirty-one. Upon her death, doctors discovered that cells from her body lived long lives and reproduced indefinitely in petri dishes. These “immortal” HeLa cells have since contributed to over 10,000 medical patents relating to polio, AIDS, Parkinson’s disease, and other conditions.

Considering the history of medical testing on African Americans without their consent, the fate of Lacks’s cells raises questions about ethics, privacy, and race. By addressing these issues forthrightly in *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (2010), author Rebecca Skloot prompted Oprah Winfrey and HBO to make a film on the subject.

Award-winning artist, author, and illustrator Kadir Nelson uses visual elements to convey Lacks’s legacy. The wallpaper features the “Flower of Life,” a symbol of immortality. The pattern of her dress recalls cellular structures, and the garment’s missing buttons signal the absence of those cells that were taken from her body, without permission.

Kadir Nelson (born 1974)

Oil on linen, 2017

Collection of the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery and the National Museum of African American History and Culture; gift from Kadir Nelson and the JKBN Group, LLC

NPG.2018.9



*Ætatis suæ 21. A. 1616.*

Matoaks als Rebecka daughter to the mighty Prince Powhatan Emperour of Attanoughkomouck als Virginia converted and baptized in the Christian saith, and wife to the wor<sup>th</sup> M<sup>r</sup> Tho: Rolff.

Pocahontas c. 1595-1617

Born near present-day Richmond, Virginia

Matoaka, also known as Pocahontas, grew up in coastal Virginia among a confederacy of Algonquian-speaking Powhatan people overseen by her father. After John Smith and other representatives of the Virginia Company of London established a settlement at Jamestown, she promoted their peaceful relations with her people. Yet in 1613, an English sea captain kidnapped and ransomed her for corn, guns, and prisoners. While in captivity, Pocahontas was converted to Christianity, took the name Rebecca, and married the tobacco farmer John Rolfe. Their son, Thomas, was born in 1615.

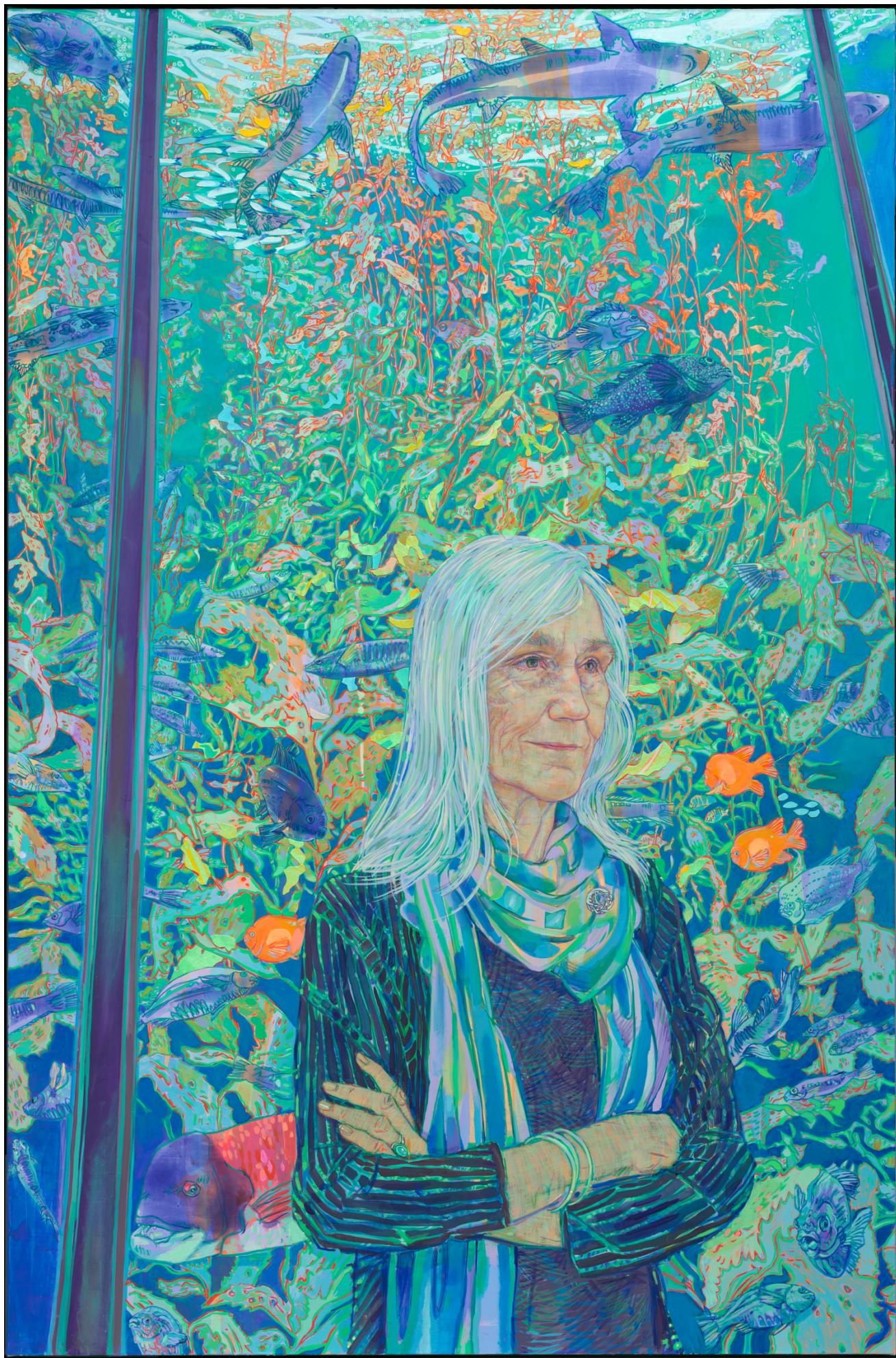
Eager to publicize Pocahontas's apparent assimilation as a means of attracting investors, the Virginia Company transported her to England, where she arrived in June 1616. This painting, based on an engraving from that time, depicts Pocahontas as an affluent Englishwoman. Inscriptions proclaim her elite lineage, Christian religion, and marital status (confusing her son's name with her husband's). Pocahontas took ill and died nine months after arriving in England. Over the next four hundred years, her brief life inspired tributes and legends, including a fictitious romance with John Smith.

Unidentified artist

Oil on canvas, after 1616

Transfer from the National Gallery of Art; gift of the A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, 1942  
NPG.65.61





Julie E. Packard

Born 1953 in Los Altos, California

Julie Packard has dedicated her career to preserving ocean life. In the late 1970s, after earning a master's degree in biology from the University of California, Santa Cruz, she chose to focus on environmental action. She helped transform a dilapidated fishing cannery into the world renowned Monterey Bay Aquarium in Northern California, in 1984. Today, the aquarium draws millions of visitors each year, and Packard continues to work as the organization's executive director. She also chairs the board of the innovative Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, which, in her words, aims to give "voice to the ocean, [to] have people realize our lives truly depend on the future of the sea." In 1998, Packard received the Audubon Medal for Conservation, and she currently serves on several commissions concentrating on national ocean policy.

Hope Gangloff, known for her colorful, stylized portraits, spent a week making sketches and photographs of Packard against the backdrop of the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

Hope Gangloff (born 1974) Acrylic on canvas, 2019

Gift of the Monterey Bay Aquarium Board of Trustees

NPG.2019.3



Untitled

Toni Morrison 1931–2019

Born Lorain, Ohio

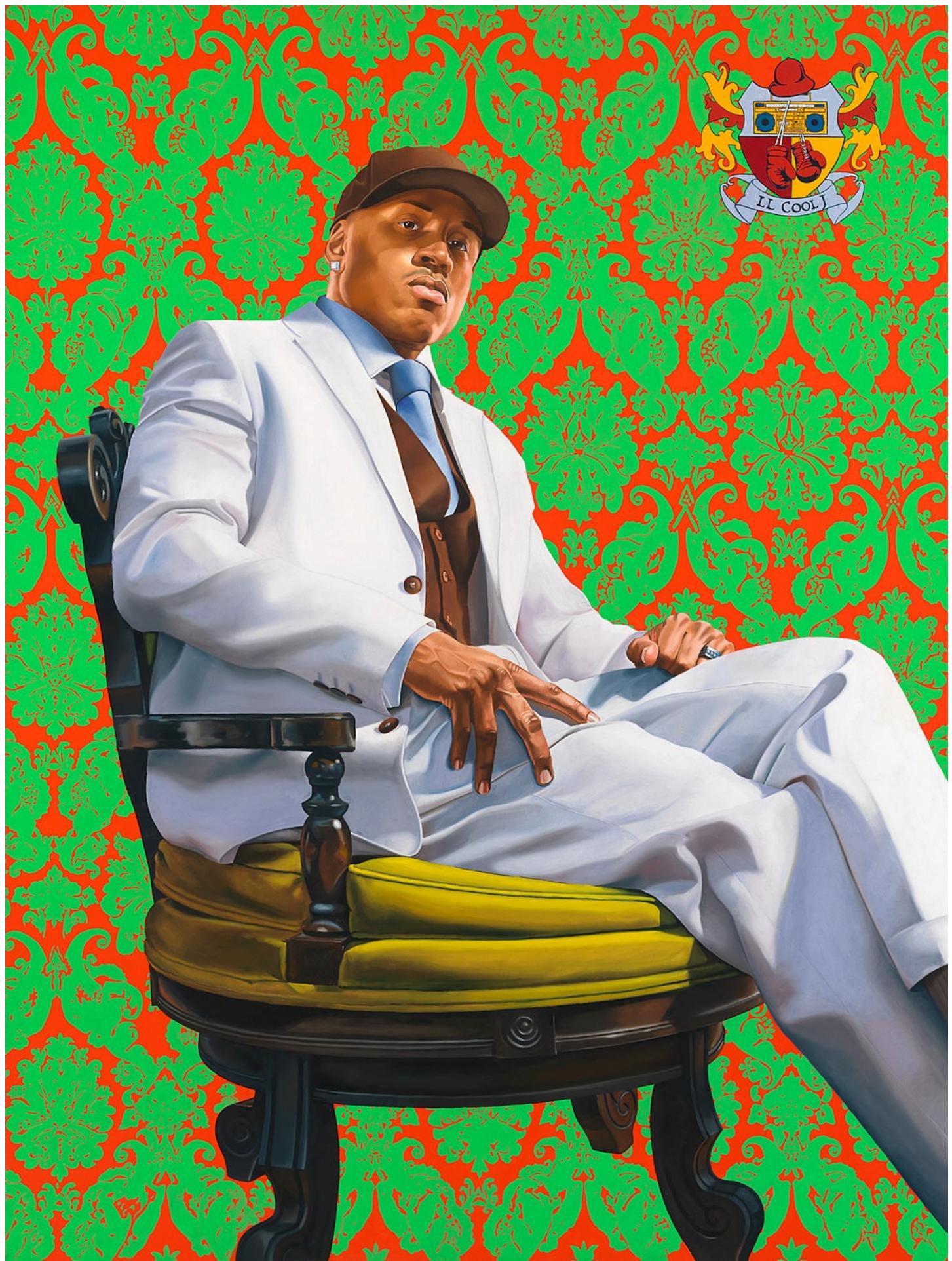
Toni Morrison's first novel, *The Bluest Eye* (1970), tells the story of Pecola Breedlove, a young African American girl who longs for acceptance. With the publication of each new work, Morrison's fan base and critical acclaim grew. She received the National Book Critics Circle Award for *Song of Solomon* (1977), the Pulitzer Prize for *Beloved* (1987), the Nobel Prize for Literature (1993), and the Presidential Medal of Freedom (2012). Morrison is primarily remembered as a fiction writer, but she also published works of nonfiction, such as *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1992), a provocative reassessment of the American literary canon.

During her years as a professor at Princeton University, Morrison delivered many memorable lectures. Speaking to students in 2005, she told them: "From my point of view, your life is already artful—waiting, just waiting, for you to make it art."

Robert McCurdy (born 1952) Oil on canvas, 2006

Gift of Ian M. and Annette P. Cumming

NPG.2020.125



LL Cool J born 1968

Born Queens, New York

New York Two-time Grammy Award winner and multi-platinum hip hop legend LL Cool J strikes a pose reminiscent of John D. Rockefeller in John Singer Sargent's 1917 painting. LL Cool J had just read a biography of Rockefeller when he sat for Kehinde Wiley, who was commissioned to paint this portrait for the 2005 VH1 Hip Hop Honors. The heraldic crest contains boxing gloves that reference LL Cool J's single "Mama Said Knock You Out" (1990) and the boxers in his family; his signature Kangol hat; and a boom box that "symbolizes all things that hip hop was and is." Born James Todd Smith III, LL Cool J (short for "Ladies Love Cool James") changed his name at sixteen when he released his first single and helped transform rap from an underground genre into a mainstream cultural force in the 1980s. In 2017, he became the first rapper to receive the Kennedy Center Honor.

Kehinde Wiley (born 1977)

Oil on canvas, 2005

Lent by LL Cool J L

NPG.42.2006



Betsy Graves

Mary McLeod Bethune 1875–1955

Born Mayesville, South Carolina

The fifteenth of seventeen children born to formerly enslaved parents, Mary McLeod Bethune believed deeply in education as the main route out of poverty for herself and other African Americans. In 1904, she founded the Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute—a school for Black girls in Daytona, Florida. By 1929, that institution had blossomed into Bethune-Cookman College.

Bethune went on to make a significant impact in the mid-1930s with her service as a director for the National Youth Administration, a New Deal agency established to aid unemployed African American youth during the Depression. She leveraged her position to speak out powerfully against racial discrimination throughout the federal government. When President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued an executive order in 1941 requiring equal consideration for African Americans seeking jobs in the government and in the nation's defense industries, there was little doubt that Bethune's lobbying had played a major role in bringing it about.

Betsy Graves Reyneau (1888–1964)

Oil on canvas, 1943

Gift of the Harmon Foundation

NPG.67.78



Frida Kahlo 1907–1954

Born Mexico City, Mexico

Since the late 1970s Frida Kahlo has emerged as one of the foremost twentieth-century practitioners of the art of portraiture. Mexican artist Diego Rivera was an early supporter of her work, and the couple married in 1929. While Rivera worked on large-scale history murals, Kahlo's work was both intimate in scale and subject matter. These qualities stemmed partly from her lifelong health challenges after a streetcar accident that occurred when she was eighteen. Through her self-portraits she expressed her physical and emotional pain, as well as her fluid identity as a politically engaged, modern, cosmopolitan woman and heir to Mexico's indigenous traditions. For her championing of personal experience and identity as valid art subjects, Kahlo is a cultural icon for feminists, gays, and U.S. Latinos, among others.

Magda Pach, wife of writer and artist Walter Pach, was one of the American establishment figures who fervently supported Mexican art in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s.

Magda Pach (1884–1950)

Oil on canvas, 1933

NPG.2015.136



Rosa Parks 1913–2005

Born Tuskegee, Alabama

As a boycott of Montgomery, Alabama's racially segregated buses entered its third month, Rosa Parks was arrested for the second time. One of 115 black Montgomerians—including Martin Luther King Jr.—to be indicted by the county grand jury on charges of violating a 1921 Alabama law prohibiting boycotts, Parks was taken into custody and jailed on February 22, 1956. Although the Montgomery Improvement Association quickly posted Parks's bail, this wire service photo of the dignified seamstress being fingerprinted by Deputy Sheriff D. H. Lackey appeared the next day on the front page of the *New York Times* and ran in countless newspapers across the nation.

Unidentified photographer for the Associated Press

Gelatin silver print, 1956

NPG.2013.76



## Shimomura Crossing the Delaware

As an artist, Roger Shimomura (born 1939) has focused particular attention on the experiences of Asian Americans and the challenges of being “different” in America. He knows well the pain and embarrassment associated with xenophobia: as a small child during World War II, he and his family were relocated from their home in Seattle to a Japanese American internment camp in Idaho.

This painting takes as its source Emanuel Leutze’s 1851 painting *Washington Crossing the Delaware*, which is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Shimomura presents himself in the guise of America’s Founding Father; he replaces George Washington’s colonial troops with samurai warriors; and he remakes the body of water they cross to resemble San Francisco Harbor with Angel Island (the processing center for Asian immigrants) in the background. The work echoes the compositional format of a Katsushika Hokusai wood-block print.

Self-portrait

Acrylic on canvas, 2010

Gift of Raymond L. Ocampo Jr., Sandra Oleksy Ocampo, and Robert P. Ocampo

NPG.2012.71



Michelle LaVaughn Robinson Obama born 1964

Born Chicago, Illinois

Michelle Obama remembers growing up on the South Side of Chicago and thinking, “being smart is cooler than anything in the world.” After earning degrees from Princeton University and Harvard Law School, she joined Sidley Austin LLP, where she met Barack Obama in 1989. Guided by the desire to improve her community, she left the firm in the mid-1990s to begin a career in public service. She directed community and external affairs for the University of Chicago Medical Center prior to moving to Washington in 2009.

During her husband’s two presidential campaigns, Mrs. Obama delivered poignant speeches that centered on her family’s commitment to serving others and highlighted the importance of her role as a parent. As first lady, she focused on women’s rights, LGBTQ+ rights, children’s health, and military families.

Mrs. Obama selected Amy Sherald, winner of the 2016 Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition, to create her official portrait for the museum. The artist considers the former first lady to be someone “women can relate to—no matter what shape, size, race, or color. . . . We see our best selves in her.” Here, she portrays Mrs. Obama as both confident and approachable, in a dress by Michelle Smith’s label Milly.

Amy Sherald (born 1973)

Oil on linen, 2018

Gift of Kate Capshaw and Steven Spielberg; Judith Kern and Kent Whealy; Tommie L. Pegues and Donald A. Capoccia; Clarence, DeLoise, and Brenda Gaines; Jonathan and Nancy Lee Kemper; The Stoneridge Fund of Amy and Marc Meadows; Robert E. Meyerhoff and Rheda Becker; Catherine and Michael Podell; Mark and Cindy Aron; Lyndon J. Barrois and Janine Sherman Barrois; The Honorable John and Louise Bryson; Paul and Rose Carter; Bob and Jane Clark; Lisa R. Davis; Shirley Ross Davis and Family; Alan and Lois Fern; Conrad and Constance Hipkins; Sharon and John Hoffman; Audrey M. Irmas; John Legend and Chrissy Teigen; Eileen Harris Norton; Helen Hilton Raiser; Philip and Elizabeth Ryan; Roselyne Chroman Swig; Josef Vascovitz and Lisa Goodman; Eileen Baird; Dennis and Joyce Black Family Charitable Foundation; Shelley Brazier; Aryn Drake-Lee; Andy and Teri Goodman; Randi Charno Levine and Jeffrey E. Levine; Fred M. Levin and Nancy Livingston, The Shenson Foundation; Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago; Arthur Lewis and Hau Nguyen; Sara and John Schram; Alyssa Taubman and Robert Rothman

NPG.2018.15



Barack Obama born 1961

Forty-fourth president, 2009–2017

Barack Obama made history in 2009 by becoming the first African American president. The former Illinois state senator's election signaled a feeling of hope for the future even as the U.S. was undergoing its worst financial crisis since the Great Depression.

While working to improve the economy, Obama enacted the Affordable Care Act, extending health benefits to millions of previously uninsured Americans. Overseas, he oversaw the drawdown of American troops in the Middle East—a force reduction that was controversially replaced with an expansion of drone and aviation strikes. Though his mission to kill al-Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden was successful, his pledge to close the Guantanamo prison went unrealized.

Artist Kehinde Wiley is known for his vibrant, large-scale paintings of African Americans posing as famous figures from the history of Western art. This portrait does not include an underlying art historical reference, but some of the flowers in the background carry special meaning for Obama. The chrysanthemums, for example, reference the official flower of Chicago. The jasmine evokes Hawaii, where he spent the majority of his childhood, and the African blue lilies stand in for his late Kenyan father.

Kehinde Wiley (born 1977)

Oil on canvas, 2018

Gift of Kate Capshaw and Steven Spielberg; Judith Kern and Kent Whealy; Tommie L. Pegues and Donald A. Capoccia; Clarence, DeLoise, and Brenda Gaines; The Stoneridge Fund of Amy and Marc Meadows; Robert E. Meyerhoff and Rheda Becker; Catherine and Michael Podell; Mark and Cindy Aron; Lyndon J. Barrois and Janine Sherman Barrois; The Honorable John and Louise Bryson; Paul and Rose Carter; Bob and Jane Clark; Lisa R. Davis; Shirley Ross Davis and Family; Alan and Lois Fern; Conrad and Constance Hipkins; Sharon and John Hoffman; Daniel and Kimberly Johnson; John Legend and Chrissy Teigen; Eileen Harris Norton; Helen Hilton Raiser; Philip and Elizabeth Ryan; Roselyne Chroman Swig; Josef Vascovitz and Lisa Goodman; Michele J. Hooper and Lemuel Seabrook III; The Skylark Foundation; Cleveland and Harriette Chambliss; Anna Chavez and Eugene Eidenberg; Carla Diggs & Stephen M. Smith; Danny First; Peggy Woodford Forbes and Harry Bremond; Stephen Friedman Gallery; Sean and Mary Kelly, Sean Kelly Gallery; Jamie Lunder; Joff Masukawa and Noëlle Kennedy Masukawa; Derek McGinty and Cheryl Cooper; Robert and Jan Newman; The Raymond L. Ocampo Jr. and Sandra O. Ocampo Family Trust; Julie and Bennett Roberts; Paul Sack; Gertrude Dixon Sherman; Michael and Mary Silver; V. Joy Simmons, MD; Andrea Lavin Solow and Alan P. Solow; John Sykes; Galerie Templon; Henry L. Thaggert III

NPG.2018.16



Russell Means 1939–2012

Born Porcupine, South Dakota

Born on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, Russell Means was Oglala Lakota Sioux. In 1968, he joined the American Indian Movement (AIM), a militant activist organization. When AIM occupied Wounded Knee, site of the infamous nineteenth-Century massacre of the Sioux, in 1973, Means was the organization's spokesperson. The siege grew into a seventy-one day confrontation between armed AIM members and the federal authorities. Means left the group in 1988.

Artist Bob Coronato wanted to honor Means, who agreed to sit for him as long as the portrait conveyed that "Indians are not the idea of old Hollywood westerns or to be thought of as 'in the past' but a people very much of today, and with a rich history." The artist and Means decided to include the upside-down flag, a sign used by the Navy as a symbol of distress and that AIM often displayed during protests.

Bob Coronato (born 1970)

Oil on canvas, 2012

NPG.2017.81



Faith Ringgold born 1930

Faith Ringgold based her 1998 artist's book, *Seven Passages to a Flight*, and this accompanying quilt on autobiographical memories drawn from her own Harlem childhood. Searching for a way to express the experiences of African American women, she started working in textiles in the 1970s. Her innovative story quilts draw inspiration from Tibetan "tankas," African piece work, and black American quilting traditions.

Long an activist for racial and gender equality, Ringgold used flight here as a metaphor for overcoming the challenges that she had encountered. The bridge, which she could see from her tar-covered Harlem rooftop, symbolizes opportunity. "Anyone can fly," she writes in her children's book, *Tar Beach*. "All you have to do is have somewhere to go that you can't get to any other way." The

imagery of flying, Ringgold has explained, "is about achieving a seemingly impossible goal with no more guarantee of success than an avowed commitment to do it."

Hand-painted etching and pochoir borders on linen with quilted cotton border and nylon backing, 1998



Sandra Cisneros 1998

AK Rendón 2014

Sandra Cisneros

Born 1954 in Chicago, Illinois

While writing *The House on Mango Street* (1984), Sandra Cisneros drew upon her experience as the daughter of a working-class Mexican American family in Chicago. The book earned her the American Book Award and was later translated into more than twenty languages. Cisneros has been named a MacArthur Fellow (1995), and in 2002, the New York Times and other national newspapers selected her novel *Caramelo* as a notable book of the year. In 2016, she was awarded the National Medal of the Arts by President Barack Obama.

This portrait is by Al Rendon, who is renowned for his photographs of Latinx leaders in his hometown of San Antonio, Texas. He portrays Cisneros with her dog on the porch of her former house, smiling at the viewer and wearing a traditional Mexican folk dress. The author currently lives in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, taking advantage of her dual U.S. and Mexican citizenship.

Al Rendon (born 1957)

Inkjet print, 1998 (printed 2014)

Acquisition made possible through the Smithsonian Latino Initiatives Pool, administered by the Smithsonian Latino Center

NPG.2015.36



Michael Phelps born 1985

Born Baltimore, Maryland

At the 2004 Olympics, nineteen-year-old swimming phenomenon Michael Phelps dominated the competition, breaking six Olympic records and one world record to become the only American to win eight medals in a single Olympiad. Phelps's performance in Athens and his subsequent victories have led many to call him the greatest all-around competitor in the sport's history. Declaring, "I'd like to break a record every single time I go out in the water," Phelps continues to add to his medal count. Hailed as "superhuman" by his competitors, Phelps set his sights on the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, where he won eight gold medals—setting world records with the seventh and an Olympic record with the eighth.

Photographer Ryan McGinley captured Phelps with an underwater camera for a piece in the *New York Times Magazine* about the 2004 U.S. Olympic swim team.

Ryan McGinley (born 1977)

Chromogenic print, 2004

NPG.2005.12



## Cupcake Katy

Pop star Katy Perry (born Katheryn Hudson, 1984, in Santa Barbara, California) collaborated with painter Will Cotton to design a set inspired by the board game Candy Land for her video “California Gurls.” Cotton’s work, which draws on art-historical sources to explore consumer culture, caught Perry’s eye. The artist felt an affinity for Perry as well, describing her as just the kind of subject he wanted to paint: “She’s over-the-top, she’s very sugary, saccharine.” Here, Cotton presents her in a dress by designer Cynthia Rowley. Perry’s cheeky pose, wry expression, and flawless appearance playfully hint at the paradoxes she bridges. Crafty and self-aware, she acknowledges that “everything I do is always with a wink.”

The provocative teenage icon, chart-topping singer, and savvy businesswoman began her career singing gospel music as the daughter of Pentecostal pastors. With *Teenage Dream* (2010), she was the first to tie Michael Jackson’s record of producing five number-one hits from a single album.

Will Cotton (born 1965)

Oil on linen, 2010

Gift of the James F. Dicke Family

C/NPG.2015.135



Marian Wright Edelman born 1939

Bennettsville, South Carolina

Founder and president emerita of the Children's Defense Fund (CDF), Marian Wright Edelman has dedicated much of her life to advocating for the rights and well-being of at-risk children. She was the first Black woman to be admitted to the Mississippi Bar and tackled racial injustice and child welfare issues while working for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's Legal Defense and Educational Fund (1964–68). After moving to Washington, D.C., in 1968, Edelman established the Washington Research Project—a public interest advocacy initiative that gave birth to the CDF in 1973. Regarded as the nation's foremost child advocacy organization, the CDF strives to ensure a safe, fair, and healthy start for every child. In 2000, then-President Clinton awarded Edelman the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Renowned Colombian-born photographer Ruven Afanador made this portrait of Edelman for Essence magazine. With images of abolitionists Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth, Edelman's pendants signal her commitment to social justice.

Ruven Afanador (born 1959)

Inkjet print, 2013 (printed 2022)



## José Andrés and the Olla de Barro that Feeds the World

born 1969 Mieres, Spain

José Andrés arrived in Washington, D.C., in the early 1990s and began his U.S. career popularizing tapas through his restaurant Jaleo. One of the country's foremost restaurateurs, Andrés describes himself as "a chef who believes in feeding the many, not just the few." When a 7.0 magnitude earthquake devastated Haiti in 2010, he flew there to help. In Haiti, under the guidance of women refugees, Andrés and other volunteers cooked black beans into a creamy comfort food. This effort marked the beginning of World Central Kitchen (WCK), a non-profit organization that provides food relief to people impacted by natural disasters and other crises. After hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico, after El Fuego's volcano erupted in Guatemala, and after Russia invaded Ukraine, WCK fed thousands. Amidst scenes of destruction, Kadir Nelson portrays Andrés holding an olla de barro. The clay vessel, which in Spain alludes to a woman's womb, brims with soup—and hope.

Kadir Nelson (born 1974)

Oil on linen, 2022

Acquired through the generosity of Teresa Carlson and André Pienaar, Kate Capshaw and Steven Spielberg's The Hearthland Foundation, Cheryl and Ron Howard, Patty Stonesifer and Michael Kinsley, and the Wilder Family