National Portrait Gallery Announces 2016 Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition Call for Entries

The Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery opens a “call for entries” for the next installment of the “Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition.” The juried competition is open to artists 18 and over to submit portraits created after Jan. 1, 2013, in any visual art medium. Entries may be submitted online at http://www.portraitcompetition.si.edu from Aug. 1 through Nov. 30. The exhibition of finalists will be presented in 2016.

There have been three installations of the “Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition.” Together, they have attracted entries from every state in the United States. The winner of the first competition (2006), David Lenz, created a portrait of Eunice Kennedy Shriver for the museum’s collection. Dave Woody, who was awarded the top prize for the second competition (2009), was commissioned to create a portrait of Alice Waters. Bo Gehring, whose video portrait won the third installation (2013), has also been commissioned to create a work for the Portrait Gallery’s collection.

“With each successive OBPC we discover the next phase in American portraiture. I am excited to see how contemporary artists today are mastering their medium whilst also connecting with their subjects and interpreting their biographies,” said Kim Sajet, director of the National Portrait Gallery.

Entries will be first accepted online and will initially be judged using an online jury system. A semifinalist group of portraits will be selected to be judged in person; the exhibition and winners will be chosen from that group. The jurors for this competition are Jerry Saltz, critic at New York Magazine; Helen Molesworth, chief curator of MOCA, Los Angeles; Dawoud Bey, photographer and video artist, Chicago; and John Valadez, painter, muralist, photographer in Los Angeles. Judges from...
the National Portrait Gallery will be Kim Sajet, director; Brandon Brame Fortune, chief curator; and Dorothy Moss, associate curator of painting and sculpture.

The competition invites submissions of portraits in all media, including painting, drawing, sculpture, prints, photography, textiles, performance and digital media. All finalist works will be shown in a major exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery March 11, 2016, through Jan. 8, 2017. The grand prize-winner will receive a $25,000 cash award and will have the opportunity for a separate commission to portray a remarkable living American for the Portrait Gallery’s collection. In addition, entrants may be featured on “Face to Face” face2face.si.edu, the Portrait Gallery’s blog, as the competition unfolds.

More information about entering the competition is at portraitcompetition.si.edu.

**National Portrait Gallery**

The Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery tells the history of America through the individuals who have shaped its culture. Through the visual arts, performing arts and new media, the Portrait Gallery portrays poets and presidents, visionaries and villains, actors and activists whose lives tell the American story.


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