Hispanic Heritage Month Programs at the National Portrait Gallery

As a part of an ongoing initiative to build its collection of previously under-represented minorities, the National Portrait Gallery has recently appointed a curator of Latino art and history, Taina Caragol, and continues to acquire works that tell America’s whole story.

The museum has more than 75 Latinos represented in its collections, including Joan Baez, Cesar Chavez, Miguel Covarrubias, Carolina Herrera and Pedro Martinez. Additionally, the museum has installed a newly acquired work of Dennis Chavez by Francisco Passalacqua. Chavez was the first native-born Hispanic elected to the U.S. Senate. The portrait is located in the museum’s “20th-Century Americans” exhibition.

As a part of Hispanic Heritage Month, the museum is highlighting its permanent collection exhibition “The Struggle for Justice,” which considers cultural and political figures who worked on behalf of civil rights for disenfranchised or marginalized groups, as well as the family designed drop-in program “Portrait Story Days.” Visitors may also stop at the visitor desks and pick up a family guide with a special Hispanic Heritage Month insert highlighting three individuals in the collection.

Programs

Portraits Story Days: Cesar Chavez
Sunday, Sept. 15, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.
First floor, education center, room E151
Young visitors and their families may drop in to listen to a story about civil rights activist Cesar Chavez and create a special piece of art. This program is sponsored in part by the Reinsch Family Education Endowment.

Portraits Story Days: Dolores Huerta
Saturday, Sept. 28, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Sunday, Sept. 29, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.
First floor, education center, room E151
Young visitors and their families may drop in to listen to a story about civil rights activist Dolores Huerta and create a special piece of art. This program is sponsored in part by the Reinsch Family Education Endowment.
Exhibitions

The Struggle for Justice

Ongoing permanent collection exhibition

“The Struggle for Justice” showcases major cultural and political figures—from key 19th-century historical figures to contemporary leaders—who struggled to achieve civil rights for disenfranchised or marginalized groups. The exhibition, featuring photographs, paintings, posters, buttons and sculptures, includes portraits of civil rights leaders Frederick Douglass, Thurgood Marshall and Martin Luther King Jr.; women’s-rights advocates Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Betty Friedan; Native American activist Leonard Crow Dog; cultural icons Jackie Robinson and singer Marian Anderson; United Farm Workers organizer Cesar Chavez; gay rights leader and playwright Larry Kramer; and Special Olympics founder Eunice Kennedy Shriver. The exhibition includes a video created exclusively for the exhibition, narrated by Soledad O’Brien.

Portraiture Now: Staging the Self
August 22, 2014 through April 12, 2015

The Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery in collaboration with the Smithsonian Latino Center will present the museum’s first exhibition dedicated exclusively to the work of Latino artists. This dual-language exhibition, organized by curator of Latino art and history Taína Caragol, will play a vital role in telling the whole American story. “Portraiture Now: Staging the Self” explores the association between the portrait and identity. Artists selected for the show work in a wide variety of media: photography, painting, mixed media and sculpture. However, all are connected through their use of dramatic tools like exaggeration, the creation of fictional characters, or the staging of narratives to question the idea that portraiture can convey the essence of the sitter. At the same time, they highlight the day-to-day frictions of cultural negotiation.

The 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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