National Portrait Gallery Announces the Appointment of David C. Ward as Senior Historian

Today, the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery director, Kim Sajet announced the appointment of David C. Ward as senior historian for the museum. Ward joined the Portrait Gallery in 1981 as a historian. During his tenure he has published significant works and served as a curator for multiple exhibitions, including the award-winning show, “Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture” (2010).

“This is a vibrant time for the National Portrait Gallery and David Ward excels at recognizing ongoing conversations about American identity and placing them in the context of history and the visual arts.” said Kim Sajet, director of the museum. “David is comfortable working with a wide variety of the museum’s constituents, from members of the public and teachers to scholars in the field.”


He serves as one of the curators who develop the museum’s commended “Portraiture Now” series and is currently co-curator for three exhibitions, “Face Value,” (April 18, 2014), “Portraiture Now: Staging the Self” (Aug. 22, 2014) and “The Sweat of Their Face: Portraits of American Workers” (Dates TBD). He is also curator for the One Life exhibition “Grant and Lee” opening July 4, 2014.

Ward is the co-editor of a book, Lines in Long Array, A Civil War Commemoration: Poems and Photographs, Past and Present (2013). For this publication, the Smithsonian commissioned poems from 12 contemporary poets. They produced deeply felt and well-wrought poems on subjects ranging from the history of the conflict to the experience of the common soldier.
Among Ward’s publications are *Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture* (Smithsonian Books, 2010) and *Charles Willson Peale, Art and Selfhood in the Early Republic* (Univ. of California Press, 2004). Ward is also a poet who has published in Anglo-American literary magazines; his work has been collected in *Internal Difference* (2011) and the forthcoming *Call Waiting* (Carcanet, England, Aug. 2014).

Ward’s interests lie in American social and cultural history as well as literature, most notably poetry. He received his bachelor’s degree from the University of Rochester and has graduate degrees from Warwick University (England) and Yale University.

**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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