



Smithsonian
*Donald W. Reynolds Center for
American Art and Portraiture*
National Portrait Gallery

News

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#PortraitCompetition

Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition Finalists Announced

The Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery has selected the finalists for the exhibition resulting from the Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition. The juried exhibition's 43 pieces include sculptures, mixed-media pieces, photographs, paintings and drawings. The works will be exhibited at the museum from March 12, 2016, through Jan. 8, 2017.

Seven artworks were shortlisted for this fourth occasion of the Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition. The first prize winner receives \$25,000, as well as a commission to create a portrait of a living individual for the museum's permanent collection. Other cash prizes will be awarded for selected works. Winners will be announced at the press preview slated for March 10. A list of artists whose works were selected for the exhibition follows at the end of this release.

The selected finalists mark a turning point in advancing American contemporary portraiture. The jurors considered this exhibition a synopsis of historical and cultural events that have unfolded in the past three rounds, particularly in terms of race, sexual identity, gender and concerns about protecting childhood in an age of technology and gun violence.

"I was very impressed with the social-impact choices made this year," said Kim Sajet, director of the National Portrait Gallery. "This year's competition finalists are truly remarkable and reflect the rigor with which they were chosen by the judges. Each judge came with a definite and strong point of view about what he or she considered a portrait to be and how today's artists are part of the national dialogue around issues of race, identity, family and community. I defy anyone coming to the exhibition not to be fundamentally moved by this year's interpretation of the human condition."

The competition received more than 2,500 entries in a variety of visual-arts media. Submissions included digital animation and video, large-scale drawings, prints, photographs and

textiles, as well as painted and sculpted portraits. It was open to artists working in the United States who had created portraits after Jan. 1, 2014, in any visual art form.

External jurors for the competition are Dawoud Bey, professor of art and a Distinguished College Artist at Columbia College in Chicago; Helen Molesworth, chief curator at MOCA LA; Jerry Saltz, senior art critic, *New York* magazine; and John Valadez, a LA based realist painter and muralist. National Portrait Gallery staff on the jury are Brandon Brame Fortune, chief curator, and Dorothy Moss, associate curator of painting and sculpture and competition director.

Held every three years, the Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition was made possible by benefactor Virginia Outwin Boochever (1920–2005), a former Portrait Gallery docent who volunteered at the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery for 19 years. Boochever also shared the museum’s increasing interest in the important role that contemporary portraiture could play in the life of the gallery, as well as in heralding the museum’s engagement with figurative art and portraiture in today’s world.

The exhibition reveals that in this media age—where the “selfie” is part of the visual landscape—the art of portraiture is not only universal, it is thriving and evolving. The dazzling variety of media and diverse approaches to the exploration of “self” and “other” challenge the preconceived notions of portraiture and expand the limits of the imagination.

In addition, one exhibiting artist will win the People’s Choice Award, which will be announced Sept. 20, 2016. In this part of the competition, visitors to the exhibition, both online and in the gallery, will be able to cast a vote for their favorite of the finalists.

The competition has accelerated the careers of participants. 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 and Bo Gehring, whose video portrait won the third installation (2013), was commissioned to create a video portrait of Esperanza Spalding.

After the exhibition closes in Washington, D.C., for the first time it will travel to three host museums across the country from February 2017 through June 2018.

National Portrait Gallery

The Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery tells the multifaceted story 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.

The National Portrait Gallery is part of the Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture at Eighth and F streets N.W., Washington, D.C. Smithsonian Information: (202) 633-1000. Website: npg.si.edu. Connect with the museum at [@NPG](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#) and [Tumblr](#).

Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition Finalists and Short-listed Artists

John Ahearn, New York City	Cynthia Henebry, Richmond, Va. *
Dean Allison, Penland, N.C.	Sedrick Huckaby, Fort Worth, Texas *
Wendy Arbeit, Emeryville, Calif.	Dave Jordano, Chicago
Rick Ashley, Marblehead, Mass.	Riva Lehrer, Chicago
Evan Baden, Albany, Ore.	Jarod Lew, Beverly Hills, Mich.
Claire Beckett, Jamaica Plain, Mass.	Daniel McInnis, Perrysburg, Ohio *
Claudia Biçen, San Francisco	Michael Meadors, Clayton, N.C.
Kelly Carmody, Waltham, Mass.	Dean Mitchell, Tampa, Fla.
Marti Corn, Houston	Thu Nguyen, Honokaa, Hawaii
Paul D'Amato, Riverside, Ill.	Tim Okamura, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Ray DiCapua, Storrs, Conn.	Christine Osinski, Ridgefield, Conn.
Tim Doud, Washington, D.C.	Paul Oxborough, Excelsior, Minn.
Maureen Drennan, Brooklyn, N.Y.	Louie Palu, Washington, D.C.
Jess T. Dugan, St. Louis *	Joel Phillips, Oakland, Calif. *
Gaspar Enriquez, San Elizario, Texas	Adrian "Viajero" Roman, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Lucy Fradkin, Staten Island, N.Y.	Amy Sherald, Baltimore *
Jona Frank, Santa Monica, Calif.	Carolyn Sherer, Birmingham, Ala.
Rigoberto A. Gonzalez, Harlingen, Texas	Donita Simpson, Royal Oak, Mich.
Allison Janae Hamilton, New York City	Mike Smith, Johnson City, Tenn.
Jessica Todd Harper, Merion Station, Pa. *	Naoko Wowsugi, Washington, D.C.
Anne Harris, Riverside, Ill.	Brenda Zlamany, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Clarity Haynes, Brooklyn, N.Y.	

*Denotes artists who were selected for the short list.

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