

National
Portrait
Gallery

20th

TRAIL

Discover the people who
shaped the 20th century

With insights from

Clare Balding

Lily Cole

Sanjeev Bhaskar

Dermot O'Leary

Chris Packham

Sir Trevor McDonald

Kathleen Turner

In association with

BBC

TWO

The 20th century was a time of extraordinary change. One hundred years of progress which shaped not only the society of the day, but generations to come. Behind this progress were incredible individuals who chose to defy convention, and in doing so changed the world forever.

ICONS is an eight-part series on BBC TWO exploring the achievements and legacies of some of the greatest figures of the 20th century. Seven well-known advocates will each front an hour-long documentary arguing the case for four people from a different field of human endeavour: Leaders, Explorers, Scientists, Entertainers, Sports Stars, Artists & Writers and Activists.

At the end of each documentary the public will be asked to vote for their favourite. The icon who wins the public vote in each of the seven categories will be put through to a live final, which will see all of the celebrity advocates return to fight their icon's case – the public will then vote again for the person they believe was the greatest figure of the 20th century.

The series and voting starts on the 8 January on BBC TWO and the live grand final is on 5 February.

The National Portrait Gallery has partnered with the BBC to create this special trail. In the Gallery you will find portraits of a key sitter from each theme. This booklet also contains information about all the men and women featured in the BBC ICONS series, co-produced with The Open University.



Floor 2, Room 16

**Tanni Grey-Thompson, 1969—**

In winning sixteen medals across five Games, Tanni put the Paralympic Games on the map in the UK and helped London win the bid for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. As a cross-bench peer in the House of Lords, she has continually campaigned for equality, accessibility and sport for all.

This photograph was commissioned for the Gallery's *Road to 2012* project, which showcased the men and women preparing for the 2012 Games.

“

Having spent much of my career in sport, I need no convincing of its power to inspire, unite and entertain. Sport may be humankind's great trivial invention, designed to bring joy as well as promote exercise but it has a power far beyond the field of play. Indeed, the role of a few sporting superstars has had a huge impact on the history of the 20th century.

These icons may have secured our attention with breath-taking sporting performances, which live long in the memory but they also became symbols of something greater. Each of these legends transcended their sport, and leave a legacy greater than their career statistics. They each represent triumph, not just over their competitors, but over marginalisation, prejudice and bigotry.

Again and again, the 20th century saw sporting figures lead the way, and where they trod a path to inclusion and acceptance – society often followed.

Clare Balding

Floor 1, Room 30

**Virginia Woolf, 1882—1941**

Feminist icon and one of the most important modernist writers of the century.

This portrait of her knitting is by her sister, the Bloomsbury Group artist Vanessa Bell, and was painted when she was working on her first novel *Melymbrosia* which was published in 1915 as *The Voyage Out*.

“

The 20th century marks a huge shift in art history, where traditional art forms were continuously interrogated and up-rooted in a quest for meaning. Artists reflected the evolving emotional, psychological, and political landscape of a tumultuous century, in new and profound ways.

The century's greatest artists and writers were unafraid to tackle big concepts, from mental health to war, from terror to fame – the things which society found the hardest to process, often proved the most fertile ground.

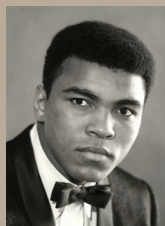
Each of these icons were revolutionary practitioners of their art form, they were game-changers who disrupted the status quo, and gave birth to entirely new schools of work. Their achievements left their mark on the world and the time, and their legacies live on today, offering us a portrait of the past.

Lily Cole

Other icons from the Sports Stars episode:

**Pelé, 1940—**

Born into an impoverished background in Brazil, Pelé became the world's most celebrated player and turned football into a global phenomenon.

**Muhammad Ali, 1942—2016**

Former world heavyweight champion who was banned for three years in his prime for refusing to fight in the Vietnam War. Eloquent, charismatic and unforgettable.

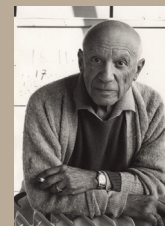
**Billie Jean King, 1943—**

Won thirty-nine tennis Grand Slam titles over a career spanning two decades. A champion for the women's movement, she drew attention to the inequality in prize money afforded to women in comparison to men.

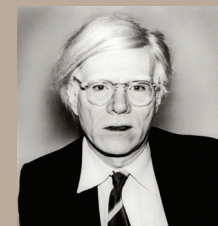
Other icons from the Artist and Writers episode:

**Alfred Hitchcock, 1899—1980**

Pioneering film director, known as the 'Master of Suspense'. His films vary widely from romantic drama and comedy thriller to the horror classic *Psycho*.

**Pablo Picasso, 1881—1973**

Co-founder of cubism – Picasso is regarded as one of the most influential artists in history.

**Andy Warhol, 1928—1987**

Leading figure in the pop art movement, whose work often reflected an evolving celebrity culture.

Floor 1, Room 31 (Case Display)

**Emmeline Pankhurst 1858—1928**

Leader of the suffragette movement, Pankhurst is credited as one of the people responsible for securing women the vote.

This photograph was taken at a suffrage rally in Trafalgar Square in 1908. Following Pankhurst's speech, in which she urged the audience to 'rush' the House of Commons, she was arrested and sentenced to three months in Holloway prison.

“

The 20th century was the century of activism – a time when, across huge swathes of the world, power moved from the hands of the few, to the many. This was a hundred years that saw the spark of democracy emerge and then spread like wildfire and these great men and women fanned the flames.

Each of these icons stands out for different reasons, each championed a different cause but I think what's fascinating is how much they had in common. They were all preoccupied by societal iniquity and improving the lives of millions, giving voice to those that had gone largely unheard. Each of them, in their own way, fought for freedom and came up with new ways of bringing their cause to wider attention. They fought tirelessly for what they believed in, but perhaps more importantly, acted like guiding lights for their supporters. Their names have become synonymous with not just their causes but social activism in general.

These people didn't just change the world – they inspired others to do the same.

Sanjeev Bhaskar

Floor 1, Room 31

**Ernest Shackleton, 1874—1922**

Polar explorer, who succeeded in reaching the South Magnetic Pole in *Nimrod* (1907—9). In 1914 he commanded the Trans-Antarctic Expedition in *Endurance*. When the ship was crushed by ice, using sledges and boats he guided its company 200 miles to safety. He and five companions then sailed a further 800 miles in a small boat to find rescue.

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What's fascinating about the story of exploration in the 20th century is how it evolves; we start off with people flag planting in the name of empire, and over the decades – as technology becomes more advanced – the scale of their discoveries gets bigger and bigger, as humankind tries to conquer unknown lands, the oceans – even the skies.

Each of these icons showed immense bravery and courage – but they also held a deep seated passion for their subject. Far from merely being a race to be first to the biggest prizes, I think some of the most valuable lessons we've learned from their explorations are about appreciating the world that's all around us, and how vital it is to preserve it.

It's a journey from conquest to understanding, something epitomised by each of these icons, and that, for me, is what makes them so compelling.

Dermot O'Leary

Other icons from the Activists episode:

**Mahatma Gandhi, 1869—1948**

Pioneered non-violent tactics and led India towards independence from British Rule.

—On display in Room 31

**Helen Keller, 1880—1968**

First deafblind person to gain a Bachelor of Arts degree, became a campaigner for disabled causes and workers' rights.

**Martin Luther King Jr., 1929—1968**

Civil Rights leader, who led the Montgomery bus boycott and helped to enshrine legal protection for all races in US law.

Other icons from the Explorers episode:

**Neil Armstrong, 1930—2012**

Former test pilot and aeronautical engineer, made Commander of the Apollo 11 Mission and was the first man to walk on the moon.

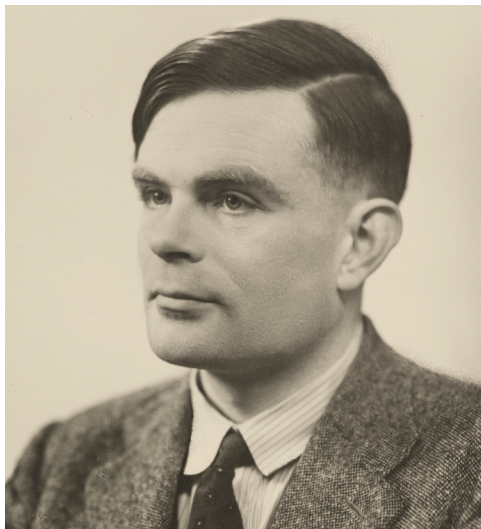
**Gertrude Bell, 1868—1926**

Explored and mapped areas across the Middle East and helped establish the modern state of Iraq, before founding the country's National Museum.

**Jane Goodall, 1934—**

Primatologist. The first person to successfully study chimpanzees in the wild, and first to observe a number of behaviours in chimps – including some previously believed to be unique to humans.

Floor 1, Room 31

**Alan Turing 1912—1954**

Mathematical genius and Second World War codebreaker whose theories ushered in the computer age.

This photograph was taken at the time of Turing's election to a Fellowship of the Royal Society in 1951. In 1952 Turing was prosecuted for having a sexual relationship with a man. His personal life came under scrutiny and in 1954 he was found dead, the inquest ruled suicide. In 2013 he was granted a posthumous royal pardon formally cancelling his conviction.

“

The story of science in the 20th century is a subject so enormous it's almost hard to comprehend. This is a century that begins without computers, antibiotics or aeroplanes and ends with countless innovations, from brain surgery to mobile phones and the internet – the list of human achievements makes the mind literally boggle. Behind each extraordinary discovery and invention were dedicated scientists, who were brave enough to throw off established thinking.

These four icons each joined fields of study that already existed, but made discoveries or breakthroughs that sent shockwaves through the world of science and beyond. What their lives tell us, is that scientists neither live, nor work, in vacuums. These aren't dusty, theoretical figures; these are firebrands, trailblazers, pioneers.

These are people willing to make huge sacrifices, and suffer enormous personal costs for their work. They gave more than just their imaginations, they gave their souls, sometimes even their lives, to the advancement of science.

Chris Packham

Floor 1, Room 32

**Nelson Mandela 1918—2013**

Anti-Apartheid figurehead who served twenty-seven years in prison before becoming president of South Africa.

This bust was modelled from life over the course of two weeks. It is one of a number of portraits of Mandela made by Ian Walters, including two public sculptures in London on the South Bank and in Parliament Square. As an artist, Walters had unprecedented access to Mandela.

“

Leaders, the people who every day take decisions that affect millions of people, are often far from straightforward, and almost never universally revered. Yet, it is they who stand out as the people who hold the fate of nations in their hands, and who dictate the course of history. During the 20th century, leaders had much to contend with – wars, economic crises and humanitarian plights landed at the feet of these icons, and each answered the call in different ways.

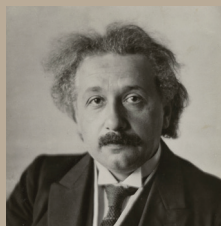
I think what's interesting about 20th century leaders in particular, is how the evolution in communication technology affected not only what we saw and heard of the people in charge, but what we wanted from them. Our rulers went from men of empire, determined to maintain an established world order – to people with newly found freedoms, equally determined to establish a new way of doing things – one which represented not only the leaders, but the people they led.

Sir Trevor McDonald

Other icons from the Scientists episodes:

**Marie Curie 1867—1934**

Radiotherapy pioneer who discovered Radium and Polonium, before saving thousands of lives in the First World War with her fleet of mobile X-ray units.

**Albert Einstein 1879—1955**

Physicist who rewrote the rules of the universe and campaigner for peace and intellectual freedom.

**Tu Youyou 1930—**

Chinese scientist who discovered a cure for malaria in a 1,700 year-old traditional herbal recipe, transforming it into a drug which has saved millions of lives.

Other icons from the Leaders episode:

**Winston Churchill 1874—1965**

Two-time British Prime Minister who led the nation to victory in the Second World War.
— On display in Room 31

**Franklin D Roosevelt 1882—1945**

American president who led the USA through the Great Depression and won a record-breaking four elections.

**Margaret Thatcher 1925—2013**

The longest serving British Prime Minister of the 20th century and the first woman to hold the office.
— On display in Room 32

Floor 1, Room 32



David Bowie, 1947 — 2016

Singer, songwriter, performer and actor who is often cited as one of the most influential artists of the 20th century.

The painter Stephen Finer's working practice involves long hours in the studio, in which paint slowly accumulates on the canvas and is worked and re-worked to create an image which finally corresponds to the artist's experience of the other person.

“

Entertainers are the true thread through our history. Entertainers make people come together; breathe at the same time; laugh, cry – together. Entertainers may not be leaders, but we still lead the way. Entertainment in the 20th century saw the world go from vaudeville clowns to Space Oddities, and everything in between, but most importantly, entertainers are people we care about; singers, actors, comedians – these are people that we hold in our hearts. We line up to see them at the movie theatre or spend our hard-earned cash on their songs, not out of a cold appreciation for their technical skills, but because we love them and believe they speak for us.

For me it's that fact that makes entertainers icons in the truest sense – they are made by us, they belong to us – and they in turn make us laugh, make us cry, and inspire us, offering us ways to re-imagine our world.

Kathleen Turner

Other icons from the Entertainers episode:



Marilyn Monroe, 1926 — 1962

Actress, model and singer, Monroe became symbolic of the century's shifting attitudes towards sex.



Charlie Chaplin, 1889 — 1977

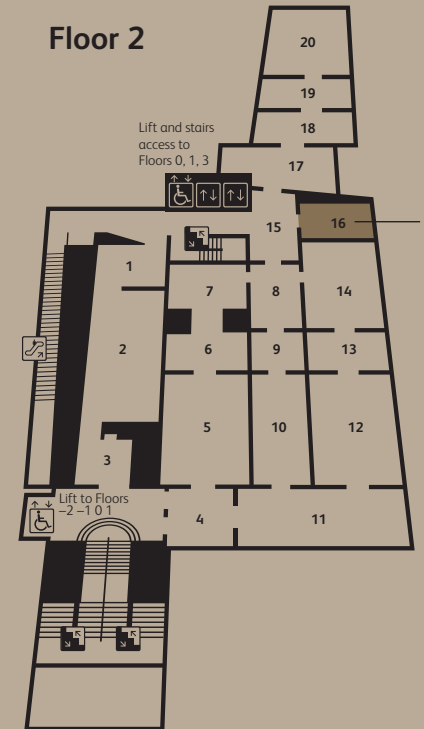
The world's first international film star, Chaplin's career spanned more than seventy-five years.



Billie Holiday, 1915 — 1959

American Jazz singer with a ground-breaking vocal style, whose work influenced countless artists that followed.

Floor 2



1. Sport Stars

Tanni Grey-Thompson – Floor 2, Room 16

2. Artists and Writers

Virginia Woolf – Floor 1, Room 30

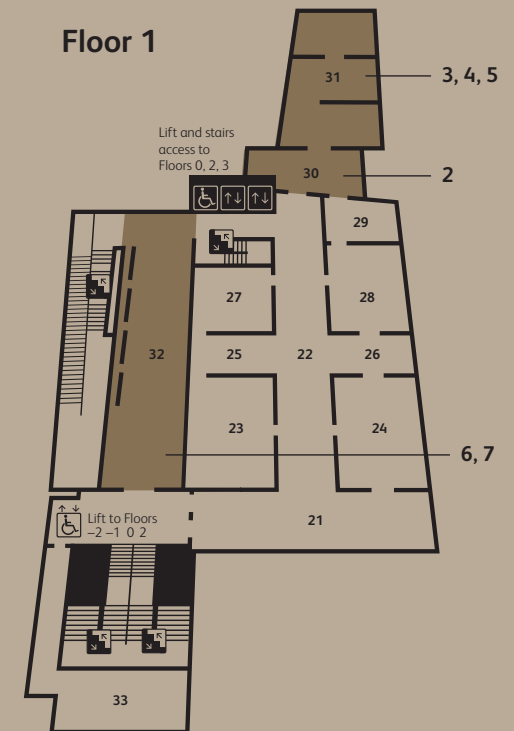
3. Activists

Emmeline Pankhurst – Floor 1, Room 31

4. Explorers

Ernest Shackleton – Floor 1, Room 31

Floor 1



5. Scientists

Alan Turing – Floor 1, Room 31

6. Leaders

Nelson Mandela – Floor 1, Room 32

7. Entertainers

David Bowie – Floor 1, Room 32

National Portrait Gallery

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EAT AND DRINK

The Portrait Café on Floor -3 offers a delicious range of light meals, artisan coffee and cake. Pop in for a warm welcome and a relaxed atmosphere.

One of the capital's finest dining rooms, the Portrait Restaurant on Floor 3 has unparalleled views of the London skyline and is the perfect spot for brunch, afternoon tea or dinner. Book your table by calling 020 7312 2490 or visit npg.org.uk/restaurant

SHOP

Visit the Gift Shop (Floor -1) and Exhibition Shop (Floor 0) to discover a fantastic range of postcards, posters and exclusive gifts and souvenirs inspired by the Gallery's portraits and exhibitions and browse our bookshop (Floor 0, mezzanine) for a unique selection of books and prints.

EVENTS

For information on our extensive programme of free and ticketed events, including talks, tours, workshops and activities for families and young people, pick up the What's On guide or visit npg.org.uk/whatson

FRIDAY LATES

Every Friday until 21.00 enjoy drinks at the bar, music and drop-in drawing and explore ideas about art, culture and society with our talks and screenings.

EXPLORE FURTHER

Discover the Collection with our interactive Audio Visual Guide (£3) or download the free Smartify app to find out more about the works on display (iOS and Android). Free Wifi is available throughout the Gallery.


EXHIBITIONS

- *Gainsborough's Family Album* until 3 February
 - *Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize 2018* until 27 January
 - *Elizabethan Treasures: Miniatures by Hilliard & Oliver* opens 21 February
 - *Only Human: Martin Parr* opens 7 March
- Book tickets at the Information Desk or visit npg.org.uk

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