

# Face to Face

AUTUMN 2006

National  
Portrait  
Gallery

1856·2006

David Hockney  
Portraits

Pet Shop Boys in the  
Bookshop Gallery

John Gay  
Portraits in Print

Dryden Goodwin  
in conversation  
with Sandy Nairne



## From the Director



RIGHT  
**Royal Mail Commemorative Postage Stamps celebrating the Gallery's 150th Anniversary:**

**Virginia Woolf**

by George Charles Beresford, 1902

**Sir Winston Churchill**

by Walter Richard Sickert, 1927  
© Estate of Walter R. Sickert 2006. All rights reserved, DACS/National Portrait Gallery, London

COVER

**Celia in a Black Dress with White Flowers** (detail)

by David Hockney, 1972  
Collection of Victor Constantiner  
© David Hockney

The 150th Anniversary celebrations have continued over the summer with the Royal Mail's issue of a special set of commemorative postage stamps. Selecting just ten subjects from the riches of the Collection was a difficult task, but I am pleased that the span should range from our very first portrait, the Chandos painting of William Shakespeare, to the recently commissioned painted portrait of Dame Cicely Saunders by former *BP Portrait Award* winner Catherine Goodman. The latter offers an especially poignant study of a great health-care pioneer, painted in the months before she died.

Two new commissions will be unveiled in the early autumn. One is the delightful portrait of the arts benefactor Dame Vivien Duffield by another *BP Portrait Award* winner, Charlotte Harris. The second is the complex study of the exceptional Olympic oarsman Sir Steven Redgrave, the only person to have won a gold medal in an aerobic sport in five successive Olympic Games. Dryden Goodwin has created twenty-five small, meticulously rendered drawings of Redgrave at close quarters, all of them then combined into an animated film displayed on a plasma screen next to the drawings, giving extraordinary life to the portrait image. The portrait is made possible by JPMorgan through the Fund for New Commissions.

The climax of the year's exhibition programme is the presentation of *David Hockney Portraits*, co-organised with the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and sponsored in London by Burberry, also celebrating its 150th anniversary. Visitors in Boston and Los Angeles have already voiced their appreciation of this fine exhibition, curated by Sarah Howgate, the Gallery's Contemporary Curator. Paintings, drawings and photographic collages give insight into the artist's friends, family and lovers, often returning to the same subjects across many years and locations. Several key working places have emerged for David Hockney, most particularly East Yorkshire, London and Los Angeles. Some of the outstanding double portraits of the early 1970s are included, as well as many affectionate studies of his mother and father. Portrait projects include the 'visitors to the studio' and the Gallery Warders from the National Gallery. The exhibition demonstrates Hockney's magnificent achievements across fifty years, with the artist giving a nod here and there to his particular mentors, Picasso and Ingres. It is an artistic and intellectual *tour de force* not to be missed, accompanied by a beautiful catalogue and a set of fascinating talks and activities.

From 16 September a display of recent commissions and acquisitions, *Exploring the Contemporary*, can be seen on the First Floor Landing. Other portraits temporarily removed from the ground floor to accommodate *David Hockney Portraits* (12 October 2006–21 January 2007) can be seen on the Portrait Explorer touch-screens in the IT Gallery or on the Gallery website at [www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk)

150 Years  
Collecting for the Future

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

THE TIMES

*Sandy Nairne*

Sandy Nairne  
DIRECTOR

**THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY** is a place to which I go for many things, and one of them is to find peace during a time of reflection. Recently I faced some difficult decisions with tricky moral implications, and, feeling adrift, I headed for the Gallery.

The escalator is my 'Tardis', and as I set foot in the Tudor rooms I am back in the 1500s. The Glories, so well loved and known the world over, never fail to lift my mood, but this time I saw a portrait I hadn't noticed before.

The compelling picture that drew me is of John Donne, poet and polemicist. His handsome face emerges from the shadows of a dark background, his gypsy dark eyes that look away from the painter are arresting; a dramatic hat is just discernible from which his long hair falls on to the collar of an unlaced shirt. The image suggests a man distracted. The Latin inscription beseeches 'Our Lady' to illuminate our darkness, though it is only partly legible.

The portrait is of Donne in his mid-twenties, about to embark on two military expeditions with the Earl of Essex. Born a Catholic, he later converted to Protestantism. His brilliance easily matched that of the poet Francis Bacon. Donne spent his life much admired by women, he married for love, and wrote poetry, polemics and sermons with equal genius. His ten-year struggle to embrace the Anglican faith has been described as 'Hamlet-like indecision'. For all the joyousness, fury and passion in his work he confessed



to having 'a sickly inclination' to suicide and argued that it was morally acceptable in certain situations.

Seeing his beautiful face so preoccupied, I imagined him to be wrestling with the same kind of problems as my own. His companionship gave me comfort and I left the Gallery, as I always do, succoured in some way.

**Leonie Frieda**

## MY FAVOURITE PORTRAIT

LEONIE FRIEDA



Leonie Frieda was born in Sweden and lives in London with her two children. She is the author of the recent biography of Catherine de Medici and is currently working on her next book *Renaissance Women*, a dynastic epic charting the struggles and camaraderie between the most significant women of that period.

LEFT AND ABOVE

**John Donne**

by an unknown English artist, c.1595

**Leonie Frieda**

by Bolla Deneby  
© Bolla Deneby

**NEIL TENNANT AND CHRIS LOWE** as the Pet Shop Boys are the most successful duo in British pop history. Since the 1980s their records such as *West End Girls*, *It's a Sin* and *Always on My Mind* have topped the charts and sold millions. Their arrangement of *Go West* is now one of the most popular chanted football anthems, and played throughout the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

This new display celebrates the twentieth anniversary of their first Number One hit and ties in with the publication of a major new book, *Pet Shop Boys Catalogue* (published by Thames & Hudson, for details and offer see back cover). With 1,955 illustrations and text and essays by Philip Hoare and Chris Heath, the *Catalogue* describes the various phases of the duo's constantly changing image through re-invention and through their collaboration



with many of the most interesting artists, designers and photographers of the last twenty years, including Sam Taylor-Wood, Bruce Weber, Derek Jarman, Martin Parr and Wolfgang Tillmans. The book celebrates all aspects of their visual output and influence.

The display particularly focuses on the work of the photographer Eric Watson, who helped define the duo's early image both as a portraitist and as a director of some of their videos. Watson, like Neil Tennant, was born in Newcastle, and moved to London at the end of the 1970s to make his name. He studied at Hornsey College of Art from 1977 to 1980 (Adam Ant and a member of Madness were fellow students), and, after assisting Gered Mankowitz and Red Saunders, joined the pop magazine *Smash Hits* in 1981. He remained there until 1986 as one of its main photographers, in its golden age, when Tennant acted as deputy editor before becoming a pop star. Watson's iconic work is shown with images from other leading pop photographers such as Pennie Smith and Andy Earl.

The release of their ninth studio album this summer, *Fundamental*, has already produced another top ten single, while the exhibition coincides with a British and American tour. For those unable to attend these dates this display will reveal part of their intrinsic and fascinating effect on British music and culture.

**Terence Pepper**

CURATOR OF PHOTOGRAPHS

## PET SHOP BOYS PORTRAITS

from 30 October 2006

Bookshop Gallery



ABOVE

Cover for collaboration with Dusty Springfield, *What have I done to deserve this?*

by Eric Watson and Val Wilmer, 1987

© Eric Watson and Val Wilmer

LEFT

Cover for *I don't know what you want but I can't give it any more*

by Eric Watson, 1999

© Eric Watson

## DAVID HOCKNEY PORTRAITS

12 October 2006–  
21 January 2007

Wolfson and  
Ground Floor Galleries

Sponsored by Burberry

Exhibition organised by the  
National Portrait Gallery, London,  
and the Museum of Fine Arts,  
Boston, in collaboration with the  
Los Angeles County Museum  
of Art

RIGHT  
**Mr and Mrs Clark  
and Percy**, 1970–1  
Tate  
Presented by the Friends  
of the Tate Gallery, 1971  
© David Hockney  
Photo: © Tate, London 2006



*What an artist is trying to do for people is bring them closer to something, because of course art is about sharing: you wouldn't be an artist unless you wanted to share an experience, a thought*

David Hockney

**THE FIRST MAJOR RETROSPECTIVE** devoted to the portraits of one of Britain's most celebrated artists opens in the autumn. The exhibition has already been warmly received on the east and west coasts of America at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Now it is returning home for the grand finale in the city where the artist first made his name over forty years ago.

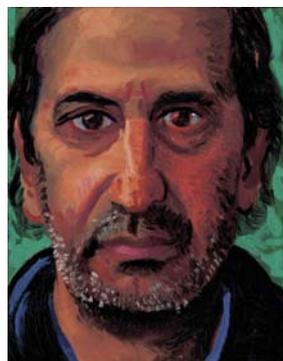
David Hockney's portraits reflect his passion for life, love and art. He has been engaged with portraiture as long as he has been an artist. The first painting he ever exhibited and sold was *Portrait of my Father* in 1955. Self-portraits and portraits of family, lovers, friends and well-known subjects represent an intimate visual diary of his life and artistic preoccupations.

The National Portrait Gallery shares a long history with Hockney. In 1971 his now iconic and timeless double portrait *Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy*, recently voted one of the nation's favourite paintings, was exhibited here for the first time. And in 2003 the Gallery's commissioned portrait of Glyndebourne opera impresario Sir George Christie and his wife Mary became the centrepiece of a display of five watercolour double portraits. It was with this display that the seeds of *David Hockney Portraits* were sown.

The exhibition selection developed over time in close collaboration with the artist. There has rarely been a time when he has not produced portraits, making the selection extremely challenging. There are over 150 works in the exhibition, spanning fifty years: paintings, drawings, prints, photocollages and sketchbooks.

We are thrilled to have secured some wonderful loans from public and private collections. Opening the exhibition will be an early self-portrait which has only recently come to light. The iconic, almost life-size double portraits from the late Sixties and early Seventies will be reunited on our gallery walls: *American Collectors (Mr and Mrs Weisman)*, *Henry Geldzahler and Christopher Scott*, *My Parents* and *Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy*.

We are delighted that Hockney has produced new work especially for the exhibition. As is his practice, in making the selection he staged a preliminary hang of the exhibition in his Santa Monica Boulevard studio. In looking again at a series of small heads painted quickly and directly from life in oils in 1988, Hockney produced a whole new series of full-length standing figures, portraits for the twenty-first century. He revisited the double portrait, too, exploring relationships familiar to him over many years first in watercolour and most recently in oils. And, perhaps inspired by the Rembrandt drawing 'A Child Being Taught to Walk' of



ABOVE  
**Jonathan Silver, February 27,  
1997**, 1997  
Courtesy of the artist  
© David Hockney

RIGHT  
**My Parents**, 1977  
Tate. Purchased 1981  
© David Hockney  
Photo: © Tate, London 2006





c.1660–2 in the British Museum, ‘the single greatest drawing ever made’, according to Hockney, he has turned to the portrayal of children, a rare subject for him until now.

The exhibition is arranged broadly chronologically, but within that structure certain subjects and themes recur. The room devoted to the artist’s self-portraits charts his journey from the confidence of youth, projecting his image as an artist, to the brutally frank recent self-scrutiny. Among the family portraits, the depictions of his mother are some of the most sensitive and tender representations of old age. Counter to his celebrity image, Hockney has a circle of intimate friends whom he has consistently chosen as models for his work: Celia Birtwell, Gregory Evans and the late Henry Geldzahler are among the familiar subjects he has returned to over a period of thirty years. In looking at these it is possible to see his continuing stylistic development throughout the often circular nature of his choice of subject and medium. He has also on occasion been inspired to record people he doesn’t know but who strike a chord with him. Man Ray, W.H. Auden and Divine are among those subjects. Punctuating the exhibition



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

**Peter Getting Out of Nick’s Pool**, 1966

Walker Art Gallery, National Museums Liverpool  
© David Hockney

**Self-portrait with Charlie**, 2005

Courtesy of the artist  
© David Hockney

**Peter Reclining** (detail)

1972  
Private collection, Cologne  
© David Hockney

too are several works in a series in which Hockney has recorded everyone passing through the studio door to flex his muscles with a new creative development.

A fully illustrated catalogue with over 300 illustrations accompanies the exhibition (for details see inside back cover). Marco Livingstone is the most-published writer on Hockney and here charts the artist’s stylistic development. Mark Glazebrook, who created Hockney’s first retrospective at the Whitechapel in 1970, places his work in a wider art-historical context and argues that it belongs in the canon of the great conversation-piece artists. Novelist Edmund White identifies the important connection between portraits and literature in Hockney’s work, with a particular focus on the gay perspective. Barbara Stern Shapiro investigates the artist’s portraits on paper, in particular his prints, the medium through which most people encounter Hockney’s work, and a subject that goes far beyond the confines of this single exhibition. And I look at Hockney’s pattern of moving from the vast expanse and space of landscape back to the close scrutiny of the portrait and self-portrait. As with Van Gogh, Hockney’s landscapes can also be interpreted as a form of self-portrait, and the way that place has affected his portraits has informed the selection of the works in the exhibition.

**Sarah Howgate**

CONTEMPORARY CURATOR

## JOHN GAY PORTRAITS IN PRINT

Until 3 December 2006  
Room 31 showcase



ABOVE AND RIGHT  
Enid Blyton with her daughter  
Imogen Pollock, 1949

Agatha Christie (detail), 1949  
Both by John Gay

IF YOU HAD PICKED UP a copy of the popular pocket-sized *Strand* magazine in February 1949 you would have come across an essay by Malcolm Muggeridge entitled 'The Best-Selling Authors'. His remarks about the 'comparatively recent origin' of the term 'best-seller' are accompanied by a 'picture-gallery of the big-money writers' of the day by John Gay. The photograph of Enid Blyton ('probably the most productive best-seller today') shows the author with her daughter Imogen and pet Labrador. She has her typewriter poised on her lap. *Swallows and Amazons* author Arthur Ransome is shown tying a salmon fly and Agatha Christie is peering out from behind the pages of *The Times* ('She types her books, fast and fluently'). By her death in 1976 Christie had written over seventy classic detective novels.

Many of John Gay's sitters are long-standing achievers of this calibre from the worlds of literature, art, publishing, acting, radio and the law. John Gay (1909–1999) illustrated essays in *The Strand* magazine from 1947 until 1949. In 2003 his widow bequeathed to the Gallery some 250 vintage prints and corresponding negatives relating to these essays.

Gay was born Hans Gohler in Karlsrühe, Germany. He moved to England with his friend Walter Stern and Stern's family following Hitler's rise to power. Comfortable with English customs, he changed his name to John Gay after the eighteenth-century dramatist of the *Beggar's Opera*. His affection for the English countryside and topography is apparent in his photographs. He became a chronicler of the countryside for the magazine *Country Fair* throughout the 1950s. In June 1955 editor Macdonald Hastings



named him 'Man of the Month', stating, 'If ever, on your journeys through the countryside, you come upon a wild-haired individual mounted on the rung of a step-ladder, itself mounted in turn on the roof of a station wagon, you can bet your last roll of film that you have seen John Gay.'

The Gallery's display, which includes original magazine spreads and twenty photographs, highlights John Gay's portrait photography for *The Strand* and *Country Fair*.

**Clare Freestone**

ASSISTANT CURATOR OF PHOTOGRAPHS

## PULLING FACES CARICATURE IN EIGHTEENTH- CENTURY ENGLAND

Until 3 December 2006  
Room 16

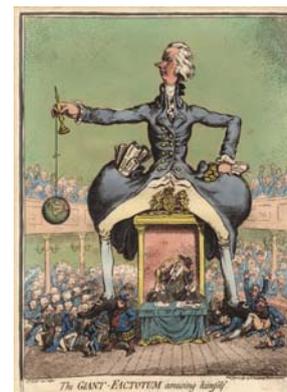
RIGHT, FROM LEFT  
**A Family Piece**  
by William Dickinson  
after William Henry Bunbury,  
1781

**The Giant Factotum**  
**Amusing Himself (William Pitt)**  
by James Gillray, 1797

**THIS DISPLAY EXPLORES** the development of caricature, which started as a genteel pastime and became a powerful and rancorous political weapon. It includes rarely seen works from the Gallery's Collection. When the art of caricature was introduced to England in the 1730s it was enthusiastically adopted by young aristocrats, including George Townshend, who adorned 'the shutters, walls and napkins of every tavern in Pall Mall with caricatures'. The display begins with a page of an album of his lively sketches. The role of the amateur was crucial in the development of caricature. One of the most successful amateur caricaturists was Henry Bunbury, whose charming 'Family Piece' – a new acquisition – is a highlight of the display.



No exploration of eighteenth-century caricature could be complete without the work of James Gillray, who transformed caricature into a professional activity by targeting public figures including the Prime Minister, William Pitt. Gillray's influence is evident in the work of the Regency caricaturists who took particular pleasure in ridiculing the royal family. The display includes examples of the astonishingly licentious caricatures of Princess Caroline of Brunswick, the Prince Regent's wayward wife. As a postscript, the contemporary political caricaturist Steve Bell, who is particularly influenced by Gillray, has contributed to the display. He demonstrates how the briefest of sketches of Tony Blair developed into an instantly recognisable caricature.



**Rosie Bradley**  
ASSISTANT CURATOR

**SN** Can I ask about your reaction when the Gallery proposed Sir Steven Redgrave as a sitter?

**DG** My initial thought was just excitement: at making something in a very different way from the way I have worked before. A lot of my past work has involved aspects of portraiture, but all the subjects have been personally known to me, or else complete strangers. So the opportunity to make something about someone who's achieved an enormous, Herculean feat felt challenging. And I was fascinated to meet him.

**SN** Did you think of particular processes to follow in exploring what a commissioned portrait of Steve Redgrave could be?

**DG** I knew at the outset that it would involve some time-based element, because he has such a singular relationship to time. This idea of the tremendous repetition and commitment of training, the pushing against time to be the fastest, or in the team that is fastest, and then the most extraordinary aspect, that it is sustained over so many years – meant that I needed to make something engaged with time. The process of making it, and then the experience of someone looking at the work, would all need to involve an element of time.

**SN** Did Redgrave mean something to you because of rowing?

**DG** Part of what is particular to rowing is the idea of endurance, and also the idea of focus and the idea of sacrifice. Running is the closest thing I can draw on in terms of what the experience is like. When I was growing up I had a passion for long-distance running. At school I used to run a lot and I suppose that involved the idea of sustaining something over a long period, hitting the pain barriers and having to pull something out of the bag at the end of the race, to achieve the best position possible. I suppose I was thinking about sporting heroes and the concept of endurance. What he went through is on an epic level over such a long time.

**SN** Has the concept of heroism been of interest to you?

**DG** Well, I think it has. In the past, because a lot of my work has featured strangers, it has been about speculating who these people were that I passed in the street or who showed up briefly on a piece of film that I caught, or a drawing I made on the spot – speculating about their own personal narratives. Approaching a portrait of a public figure, you inevitably have preconceived ideas. This sense of the scale of him is quite epic in itself. I'm tall, but he has an incredible frame and chest and arms. He's not in full training now, he is past that stage, but still there is a sense of that scale. The lines etched into his face from the hours of rowing, and thinking about all the oxygen that is pushed into his body – that is quite extraordinary. But what shifted my perception was going to his home to find a definitive photograph for the twenty-five drawings, and realising that he was a very relaxed and totally unpretentious family man.

**SN** You have evolved this rather particular combination of drawing and film. Why has the relationship between the two emerged as an important way of working?

**DG** My time-based works are often shown in cinemas or in a gallery space where the images are set against a sound-track with music and wild sounds that I create. The time-based pieces are much more about creating a first-hand experience for someone engaging with them; whereas the drawings are often evidence of a certain process I put myself through. Recently, there has been an increasing cross-pollination of the two-dimensional work and the time-based work I'm making. With this particular commission, I have set up a tension between the still and the moving image, emphasising my time investment in making the portrait, the endeavour of holding a likeness or a single idea. Attempting to draw out something essential to Sir Steve Redgrave, my method is the key to the meaning of the work. Maybe the multiple drawings are like the repetition of the training and the video loop of the drawings shown in quick succession mirror the cohesion of the races.

**SN** When you are making each of the drawings are you very conscious of trying to make each one different in some way?

**DG** No, I take one down from the wall and set that against the photograph and then I really attempt to render that same photograph. When I'm drawing that one it's a tunnel vision because I think, well, this is it, this is the confrontation of this drawing and this photograph and it sets a time zone within which I'm thinking about Steve Redgrave. You get lost in the activity and focus on this man.

**SN** You make it sound like a process of meditation?

**DG** In a way, yes.... It's all very intense, and then there's this point where you think, yes, this is it, this is what he looks like, this is the definitive image, but then you put it up on the wall and realise that there is quite a slippage between the two, and then between all twenty-five of the drawings.

**SN** You mentioned the etched face, and how you focused in on the head and face within a frame and didn't show the rest of his body.

**DG** I wanted to get to this essential element. The framing is within a wide-screen format, so there is a slight sense of something grand. It was important that the singular figure related to the landscape of the page, even though there isn't any landscape behind him. He's within a void space which becomes a physical as well as a psychological space. But I feature his shoulders, which seemed to be essential, and also the tops of his arms.

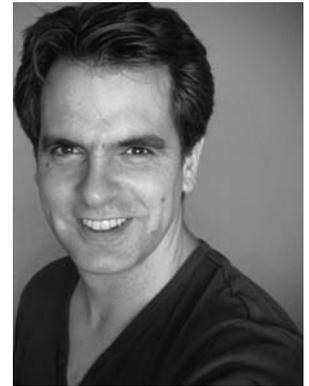
**SN** How long did each one take?

**DG** Each drawing probably takes, solidly, about thirteen hours. They are really worked up.

**SN** The light that I sense around Redgrave appears to be coming up off the water.

**DG** The predominating light is from above, but there is also this reflected light coming from underneath, you are right. In making the drawings, there are these magic moments when the drawing just flips from being graphite on paper to being a form, so although you don't see the back of his body, you sense it, and the tracing and plotting out of the body just seem to drop away: so you start to feel the mass of this man – Steve Redgrave.

## SANDY NAIRNE INTERVIEWS ARTIST DRYDEN GOODWIN



*Sustained Endeavour – 25 drawings of the same photograph of Sir Steve Redgrave will be on display in the Gallery from the 6 September 2006*

ABOVE  
Dryden Goodwin

## THE JOHN DONNE APPEAL



The National Portrait Gallery would like to thank all those who have made the acquisition of this remarkable portrait possible.

We are very grateful to:

Gallery visitors

Online donations

Donors to the Appeal

The Art Fund for their generous support

National Heritage Memorial Fund for their significant grant

The Executors of the Estate of the late Lord Lothian for agreeing, through Sotheby's, to reduce the price of the portrait

ABOVE

John Donne

by an unknown English artist, c.1595

Anonymous • Dr Aileen K Adams CBE • Sir Eric Anderson • Lady Shirley Anglesey • Dr David Arrowsmith • The Art Fund • Colin and Marion Bailey • Margaret Baillie • Dr B Bain • Catherine Baines • Nicholas and Diana Baring • Helena Barraclough • Roy Barton • Hugh Beale • Lord and Lady Beaumont • Sara Berry • Margaret Berwyn Jones • Elizabeth Birkett • Lawrence and Mary Blackmore • Christopher Bostock • Ruth Boswell • Sir Alan Bowness • Mr and Mrs Brady • Jennifer Brehony • Lord Brooke of Sutton Mandeville • Caroline Brown • Charlotte Bulmer • John Donne Burton • The Lady Butterfield • Michael Carney • Mrs Carolan • Professor Carpenter • Sir William Cashmore • Professor Owen Chadwick • Celia O Clear • Marion Cohen • Geoffrey Collens • Eleanor Corran • David Cosens • Coutts & Co • Eileen Cox • Mr O Damgaard-Nielsen • Stuart Dandridge • Peter David and Gillian Humphreys • Frankie de Freitas • Francis de Mars • Elizabeth Dixon • Sir Harry A Djanogly CBE • David Donne • Jeremy Donne QC • Ann Douglas • The Drapers' Company • Eleanor Edwards • John Ellis • June Ellison • Mr and Mrs Elton • Maurizio Farina • Mary Spearing Fleay (née Simpson) • Friends of Shrewsbury's Borough Museums • Mrs T Gaisman • Aileen Gillett • Anne Glyn-Jones • Dr Lawrence Goldman • L A Goodenough • Keith Goodway • Martin Gordon • Pamela Gordon • Alison Gowman • Angela Graham-Leigh • Barbara

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## FRANCIS BACON PORTRAIT OF GILBERT DE BOTTON SPEAKING

Until 10 December 2006

Balcony Gallery



FROM LEFT

**Portrait of Gilbert de Botton  
Speaking**

by Francis Bacon, 1986  
Private Collection

**Francis Bacon**

by Bruce Bernard, 1984  
© Estate of Bruce Bernard

**FRANCIS BACON** is widely regarded as one of the most remarkable artists of the twentieth century. Self-taught, he began painting in the early 1930s but failed to make a reputation. As a result he virtually ceased painting and destroyed much of his early work. He resurfaced, however, in 1945 when his triptych, *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion* (now in the Tate collection), was shown at the Lefevre Gallery in London. Visitors to the exhibition were appalled to see images of extreme horror: ghastly, distorted, half-human figures trapped within a confined space. The critic John Russell observed: 'The mind shut with a snap at the sight of them.'

In a career that spanned almost fifty years, Bacon went on to produce an enormously influential body of work in which the human figure was subjected to a relentless onslaught of expressive, violent distortion. According to Bacon, violence to the image was the only way of conveying 'the brutality of fact' – an extreme, anguished view of human existence. A central aspect of that vision was Bacon's portraits: frequently images of himself, but also people he knew. Despite working from photographs, Bacon's portraits made few concessions to literal resemblance. During the process of painting the sitter's appearance would be progressively improvised on the canvas, producing images that are frequently startling or subtly disturbing.

From July, the National Portrait Gallery is featuring a major loan from an important private collection, one of Bacon's most intriguing late works: *Portrait of Gilbert de Botton Speaking* (1986). Born in Egypt in 1935, Gilbert de Botton worked for much of his career with the Rothschild family banking business. Described by Lord Rothschild as 'a genius', he went on to head

the American branch of the Rothschild business in New York. Armed with a first-class reputation as an investment manager, he founded and became the Chairman of Global Asset Management. De Botton was a major collector of contemporary art, a Trustee of the Tate Gallery, and – unusually – the only person ever to be painted by both Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud. He died in 2000.

Bacon's portrait of de Botton is disarming. The artist used a photograph taken while the sitter was giving a speech at the Conference of the Weizmann Institute in Madrid in 1980. For once, violence to the image is relatively restrained and appears not to have been the painter's instinct. Instead, the financier is seen apparently addressing himself in a mirror, standing in a darkened space. The title tells us that de Botton is speaking, but what is said is not disclosed. The figure is seen from behind standing partly outside the picture, so that direct contact with his features is denied. We see only his reflection. Like the presence of the sitter, the meaning of this enigmatic image remains elusive – a tantalising glimpse, forever on the edge of speculation.

The painting is presented in the context of a selection of the Gallery's substantial holdings of photographic portraits of Bacon himself. These photographs trace the fascinating evolution of the painter's features: from the early 1950s to the moment of his association with de Botton, and then beyond, to shortly before Bacon's death in 1992. As such the display provides an intriguing double portrait of the artist and his distinguished and enigmatic sitter, each holding a mirror to the other.

**Paul Moorhouse**

20TH CENTURY CURATOR

## FEELING GOOD ABOUT GIVING

Lady Ripley, a Patron of the National Portrait Gallery, reflects on how supporting the Gallery through patronage has proved an extremely enjoyable, positive and valuable experience

The National Portrait Gallery Patrons is a group of individual donors who are greatly valued and appreciated by the Gallery.

Patrons receive a number of benefits through their subscription and contribute towards the cost of additional specially arranged events.

If you are interested in becoming a Patron or would like more information about patronage please contact Charlotte Savery on 020 7312 2444, or email [csavery@npg.org](mailto:csavery@npg.org) for more details.

A RECENT OCCASION which began with drinks and canapés in the Contemporary Galleries followed by a tour of the *BP Portrait Award 2006*, showcasing the very best of contemporary portrait painting, is just one of the memorable evenings I have enjoyed since becoming a Patron five years ago. Guided by Sandy Nairne, the Director, we gained an insight into the judging process and learnt about the stories behind the portraits. The fifty-six paintings selected were, as always, thought-provoking and absorbing, and it was a pleasure to meet some of the artists and sitters.

This is typical of the exclusive events arranged for the Patrons' group. As well as evening preview tours, I am invited to private breakfasts where I can relax with guests in the Portrait Restaurant and tour the latest exhibitions before the Gallery opens to the public.

Particularly enjoyed are behind-the-scenes glimpses of the framing and conservation work and the extensive archives. Here I can see at first hand how the funds raised by the Patrons' group are used and how worthwhile and needed my support is.

Alongside these evenings are special visits and tours. Unforgettable was the visit to 10 Downing Street to see the portraits on display, including those from the Gallery, as well as to hear the history of No.10 and anecdotes about various prime ministers. Another highlight was lunch with Sir Roy Strong and a tour of his glorious garden at The Laskett in Herefordshire, not normally open to the public. I am keenly anticipating the forthcoming visit to the Palace of Westminster.

The Patrons' group is a wonderfully lively and sociable circle. Friends can join me for a champagne reception in the stimulating environment of the Contemporary Galleries followed by an entertaining lecture about the Collection or a temporary exhibition. Previous speakers have included the renowned historian Dr David Starkey, who brought to life the world of Elizabeth I, the actor and writer Michael Palin, who discoursed wittily on his travel writing to complement the *Women Travellers* exhibition, and the Oscar-winning screenwriter and actor Julian Fellowes, who set the scene for the *Below Stairs* exhibition.

There is much more to come this winter. I am looking forward to the next Literary Lunch, a new series in which a historian, historical novelist or biographer talks about his/her work with a small group of Patrons and their guests, followed by lunch in the Portrait Restaurant. The historian Antonia Fraser gave an insightful talk at the last lunch and Alan Bennett is the speaker later this year.

The restaurant, on the top floor of the Gallery, with magnificent views over the skyline of London – St Martin-in-the-Fields, Nelson's Column and Westminster beyond – is a really special London place to eat, and Patrons enjoy a discount.

Vital to my pleasure at these monthly events is the fact that my contribution as a Patron directly supports the Gallery. It helps conserve the existing work, develop the programme of exhibitions and initiate a wide range of educational activities. Funds from the



Patrons have supported a variety of exhibitions over the years, most recently *Icons and Idols: Commissioning Contemporary Portraits*, charting the last twenty-five years of the commissioning programme, which is at the very heart of what the Gallery is about – those who have made and are making history.

For me one of the real joys of being a Patron is the chance to forge a special relationship with the Gallery and those who work there, whose enthusiasm is infectious and who make every effort to ensure that I have a happy, entertaining and fulfilling time. The parties after the special events, where I can bring a guest and chat to Sandy whilst having the opportunity to meet other Patrons, artists, photographers, sitters and staff, are invariably relaxed occasions, when the wine and conversation flow. Being a Patron of the National Portrait Gallery has been a hugely enjoyable and fulfilling experience, and I warmly recommend it.

**Lady Ripley**

RIGHT FROM TOP

Patrons' preview of the *BP Portrait Award 2005*

Alan Bennett

by Tom Wood, 1993

Recently exhibited in *Icons and Idols: Commissioning Contemporary Portraits*, our 2006 spring exhibition supported by the Patrons

**DAME VIVIEN DUFFIELD** has devoted her career to philanthropy, largely through the Clore Duffield Foundation. Her cultural support began with Eureka!, the children's museum in Halifax, and continued with the creation of education centres in museums around the country, including the V&A. She sponsored the Turner Gallery at the Tate, and is Patron and inventor of the *Artworks* celebrations, a nationwide children's art event, which includes Children's Art Day and the Children's Turner Prize. Responsible for raising the £100 million needed to ensure that the Royal Opera House rebuild was properly funded, she also led the campaign to raise £20 million for the South Bank Centre and set up the Clore Leadership programme with the former Culture Secretary, Chris Smith.

The artist, Charlotte Harris won the first prize in the *BP Portrait Award* in 2003 with a painting of her grandmother (see right). At the time she was still a student at Leeds Metropolitan University and her subjects were primarily close friends and family.

Since winning the *BP Portrait Award*, Charlotte Harris has undertaken a number of commissions, but nevertheless she felt apprehensive about painting a distinguished figure for the Gallery. The informal character of her prize-winning work contrasts with this more formal portrait of Dame Vivien.

The process of creating the commission began in late spring 2005. It took seven sittings over the course of four months to gather all the material needed. In the process of working on the composition Harris produced a series of drawings and painted sketches. The setting is Dame Vivien's modest sized Chelsea study. Although her gaze is preoccupied, the pose is relaxed, her right hand following the form of the chair. It was the artist's decision to include Duffield's favourite scarf because 'I like painting patterns. It creates a focal point in the composition but I do get caught up with details; in that painting there's quite a lot to take in.... The foreground and the background are quite complex.'

The artist's intention was to celebrate her subject's achievements and devotion to her work against an informal backdrop, recording the space where she generates ideas. The books behind Dame Vivien reflect her passions and aspects of her working life, among them opera, ballet and art. Commenting on her experience, Harris said: 'There is an element of theatre about Vivien; she is dynamic even when she sits.... She's always thinking, she never switches off.'

**Sarah Howgate**  
CONTEMPORARY CURATOR

## PORTRAIT COMMISSION

### DAME VIVIEN DUFFIELD

The Dame Vivien Duffield commissioned portrait will be on display in the Gallery from the 5 September 2006

BELOW  
Charlotte Harris' winning portrait of her grandmother for the 2003 *BP Portrait Award* by Charlotte Harris, 2003  
© Charlotte Harris

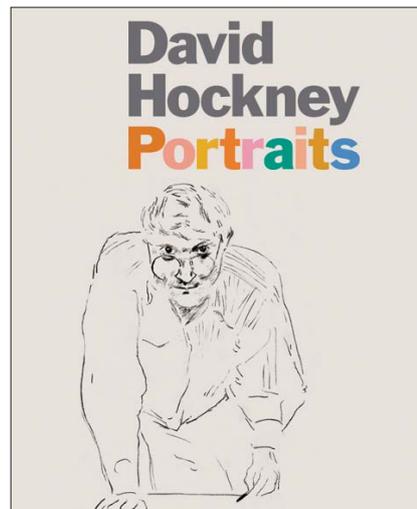


**LAST YEAR** *Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy* (1970–1; Tate) was voted one of the nation's ten greatest works of art in a national poll conducted by the BBC. David Hockney was the only living artist to be included in the selection, and the poll confirmed his status as one of Britain's most significant artists working today. The reasons why this portrait, and many others by Hockney, continue to capture our imagination are explored in the Gallery's new publication *David Hockney Portraits*. Featuring over 300 illustrations, five essays, a twelve-page chronology and seventy-five amusing and anecdotal biographies of the sitters, this glorious new catalogue not only documents the exhibition but also provides a detailed analysis of Hockney's preoccupation with portraiture over a fifty-year period.

For those who want a sneak preview of the exhibition, the catalogue is now available exclusively to Gallery visitors in our bookshop or online at [www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk), along with a stunning calendar featuring a selection of the artist's most popular works.

Publications such as *David Hockney Portraits* can take up to three years to research, commission, edit, design and produce. Part of the publishing process includes attending the Frankfurt Book Fair every October, to secure overseas sales and distribution for our books. This year, the Gallery will be sharing a stand with the National Maritime Museum and we will be profiling the best of books for 2007–2009, including *Faces of Fashion*, *Daily Encounters: Portraits from Fleet Street*, *Pop Art Portraits* and *Wyndham Lewis*.

For more information on National Portrait Gallery publications please see the website, or contact [publications@npg.org.uk](mailto:publications@npg.org.uk) or 020 7321 6612.



## THE BEST OF BOOKS

LEFT FROM TOP  
*David Hockney Portraits* costs £35 hardback, £25 paperback (the paperback is a Gallery exclusive), and will be available through the general book trade from September

*David Hockney Portraits Calendar 2007* costs £9.99

## Autumn Offer for Gallery supporters

### 20% DISCOUNT OFF Pet Shop Boys Catalogue

This offer is only open to  
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#### Face to Face Issue 18

Communications and  
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Celebrating the twentieth anniversary of their first album and coinciding with their exhibition in the Bookshop Gallery (from 30 October 2006) and a major world tour, *Pet Shop Boys Catalogue* is a lavish visual retrospective of the pop duo's entire career. It reproduces all their record sleeves; stills and behind-the-scenes shots from every video, film, concert and theatre show; stage sets; cutting-edge fashion and costume designs; publications; and ephemera. Incisive texts accompany almost 2,000 illustrations and provide illuminating insights into the genesis and creation of each project. A feast of art, music and design, this book will be an essential purchase for Pet Shop Boys' devoted legion of fans and anyone interested in contemporary popular culture.



#### **Pet Shop Boys Catalogue**

by Philip Hoare and Chris Heath

Published by Thames & Hudson

October 2006

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at the National Portrait Gallery Bookshop

Please note: the 20% discount includes supporters' standard 10% discount

TOP: Can You Forgive Her, 1993, Chris Nash

LEFT: Performance Tour, 1991, Pet Shop Boys in the 'Thompson Twins' outfits. Photo Derek Ridgers

ABOVE: Cover for *Pet Shop Boys Catalogue*