



Smithsonian
Donald W. Reynolds Center for
American Art and Portraiture

National Portrait Gallery
Smithsonian American Art Museum

News

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March 8, 2010

Media Web site: <http://newsdesk.si.edu>

Jules Feiffer, David Hackett Fischer and James M. McPherson to Headline 2010 “American Pictures”

This spring, the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, in partnership with Washington College in Chestertown, Md., present the third annual “American Pictures,” which pairs great works of art with pre-eminent figures of contemporary American culture. The 2010 series speakers are Jules Feiffer, noted playwright, cartoonist and satirist for *The New York Times*; David Hackett Fischer, the Earl Warren Professor of History at Brandeis University and author of several acclaimed books on early America; and former George Henry Davis ’86 Professor of History at Princeton University and noted Civil War historian James M. McPherson. All have won Pulitzer Prizes for work in their fields.

Each “American Pictures” lecture features a writer, critic, historian or artist who chooses a single image and investigates its meanings. In the process, the speaker also explores how works of art inspire creativity in many different fields and reveal American identity or a shared history. The series director is historian and essayist Adam Goodheart, who is the director of the C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience at Washington College.

The series begins Saturday, April 10, with a discussion of Alexander Gardner’s “Confederate Dead by a Fence on the Hagerstown Road, Antietam” (1862), in which McPherson will explore the experiences of ordinary soldiers in the Civil War. Feiffer will investigate Bob Landry’s “Fred Astaire in ‘Puttin’ on the Ritz” (1945), drawing on Landry’s forthcoming autobiography to discuss his work as an artist in many different media, Saturday, April 17. The 2010 series concludes Saturday, May 1, with Fischer’s focus on Emanuel Leutze’s “Washington Crossing the Delaware” (1851), a painting that helped inspire his Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Washington’s Crossing*.

Additional information about the series and the speakers is available online at americanart.si.edu and npg.si.edu or in a printed brochure that is available at the museums' information desks.

“American Pictures” is made possible through a pioneering partnership among Washington College, the National Portrait Gallery and the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Additional support comes from the Starr Foundation, the Hodson Trust, the Hedgelawn Foundation and other donors.

Ticket Information

All lectures, which are free and open to the public, take place at 4:30 p.m. in the museums' Nan Tucker McEvoy Auditorium. Free tickets are available beginning at 3:30 p.m. at the G Street lobby information desk on a first-come, first-served basis. Doors open for each lecture at 4 p.m.

The museums share a main entrance at Eight and F streets N.W. and are open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., except Dec. 25. Admission is free. Metrorail station: Gallery Place/Chinatown. Smithsonian Information: (202) 633-1000; (202) 633-5285 (TTY). Web sites: americanart.si.edu and npg.si.edu.

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