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**The Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery Presents  
"Faces of the Frontier: Photographic Portraits from the American West, 1845-1924"  
Sept. 25 through Jan. 24, 2010**

The National Portrait Gallery's exhibition "Faces of the Frontier: Photographic Portraits from the American West, 1845-1924," explores how the American West was dramatically reconstituted during the 80 years between the Mexican War and the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act in 1924. More than 100 photographic portraits tell the story of those who contributed to the transformation of this region.

"The stories of the American West, both mythical and factual, are the stories that continue to fascinate our nation," said Martin Sullivan, director of the National Portrait Gallery. "This exhibition explores the history of the West through the people who contributed to the transformation of the region's identity."

"Faces of the Frontier" follows four general themes during this period: land, exploration, discord and possibilities. It chronicles events such as the completion of the transcontinental railroad, ongoing conflicts between Native Americans and non-natives, the emergence of the national parks movement, the admittance of 19 new states west of the Mississippi, and the philosophy of manifest destiny that drove explorers to connect the East and the West by conquering these "wild lands."

Among those included in the exhibition are artist Albert Bierstadt, frontiersman Kit Carson, frontiersman and entertainer "Buffalo Bill" Cody, explorer and politician John C. Frémont, American Indian leader Geronimo, lawman and gambler "Wild" Bill Hickok, Texas founder Samuel Houston, outlaw Jesse James, author Jack London, conservationist John Muir, entertainer Annie Oakley and Mormon leader Brigham Young.

The exhibition displays vintage photographs of those who explored, fought over, developed and represented this vast territory. The objects, primarily from the Portrait Gallery’s collection, show how the popularization of photography influenced the way Easterners came to understand the West. More than any literary or artistic medium, photography made visible these new lands and the different people who inhabited them. Although at times it reinforced preconceived notions of the West, photography also gave rise to new ideas about this region—and in the process America itself. Images by photographers of the period include Charles Milton Bell, Mathew Brady, Alexander Gardner, Edward Sheriff Curtis and Eadweard Muybridge.

The exhibition includes a fully illustrated catalog of the same title by Frank H. Goodyear III with an essay by Stanford University historian Richard White. The 192-page book, published by the University of Oklahoma Press, will be available in the museum store for \$45.

“Faces of the Frontier” will travel to the San Diego Historical Society March 12 through June 6, 2010, and to the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Okla., Oct. 9, 2010, through Jan. 2, 2011.

### **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.

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. It is open every day, except Dec. 25, from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Smithsonian Information: (202) 633-1000; (202) 633-5285 (TTY). Web site: [npg.si.edu](http://npg.si.edu).

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