



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

News

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Media Website: <http://newsdesk.si.edu>

Fact Sheet

The National Portrait Gallery Presents “Tokens of Affection and Regard: Photographic Jewelry and Its Makers”

Exhibition

“Tokens of Affection and Regard: Photographic Jewelry and Its Makers”

Oct. 24–June 21, 2009

Location

National Portrait Gallery

Eighth and F streets N.W.

Description

“Tokens of Affection and Regard: Photographic Jewelry and Its Makers” presents a special installation of more than 50 examples of antique photographic jewelry drawn largely from the collection of Larry J. West and the National Portrait Gallery’s permanent collection. This exhibition examines the popular 19th-century practice of collecting and wearing jewelry containing photographic portraits. Just as people today wear lockets, it was a popular custom in the 19th century to wear small keepsakes with photographs of loved ones, whether for private enjoyment or public display. While some of the photographic jewelry in the show was worn for a specific function, such as an expression of mourning, other pieces were prized largely for their decorative value. The show not only features examples of photographic jewelry—ranging from bracelets, rings and necklaces to watch winders and pins—but also presents intriguing daguerreotypes of people wearing this jewelry. Although most of the jewelry in the exhibition is not attributed to specific photographers, the show includes an 1853 advertisement for New York City–based daguerreotypist Martin M. Lawrence, whose gallery, among other services,

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marketed “a great variety of ... Locketts, Bracelets, Pins, Rings, &c.” The exhibition presents examples from a succession of photographic mediums, including daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, tintypes and paper prints. In addition to the photographic jewelry on display, the exhibition includes images of some of the celebrated pioneering photographers of the 19th century known to have made and sold photographic jewelry, including Mathew Brady, Jeremiah Gurney, Albert Sands Southworth and Josiah Johnson Hawes.

Ann Shumard, curator of photographs, is the curator of this exhibition.

The National Portrait Gallery

The National Portrait Gallery tells the stories 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 opened to the public in 1968. The museum’s collection of more than 20,000 works includes paintings, sculpture, photographs, drawings and new media. Located at Eighth and F streets N.W., in 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.

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Note to editors: Selected images for publicity may be downloaded from a password-protected FTP site. Call (202) 633-8295 for information to access the site.