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Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 1 Queen Street, Edinburgh



Louis Armstrong by Anton Bruehl, 1935

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VANITY FAIR PORTRAITS: PHOTOGRAPHS 1913 – 2008

14 June - 21 September 2008

SCOTTISH NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, 1 Queen Street, Edinburgh

Admission £6/£4

A collaboration between Vanity Fair and National Portrait Gallery, London

Sponsored by



Some of the greatest portrait photographs of the twentieth century were taken for, or published in, *Vanity Fair*. This remarkable selection of 150 classic images features works from the magazine's first period (1913-1936), displayed for the first time with works from the contemporary *Vanity Fair* (1983-present).

From the magazine's first incarnation, celebrated subjects such as Albert Einstein, Charlie Chaplin and Jean Harlow are shown in portraits by legendary photographers including Edward Steichen, Cecil Beaton, Baron De Meyer, Man Ray and George Hurrell. From the magazine's re-launch in 1983, the works of photographers including Annie Leibovitz, Helmut Newton, Bruce Weber and Mario Testino will be featured, depicting a wide range of subjects from Arthur Miller to Madonna.

James Holloway, Director of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery: *"The Vanity Fair Portraits exhibition has been a great success in London and it is incredibly exciting to be able to show this*

beautiful show to the people of Scotland. Thanks to Vanity Fair, the National Portrait Gallery and Lloyds TSB Scotland this exhibition should be one of the highlights of the NGS summer season programme.”

Of the historic exhibition combining the early and contemporary periods of Vanity Fair’s photographic history, Editor Graydon Carter says: *“It’s only fitting that the august Scottish National Portrait Gallery will present the first exhibition of Vanity Fair’s iconic portraits. To have all of the works displayed together will serve as a remarkable photographic history.”*

Susan Rice, Chairman and Chief Executive, Lloyds TSB Scotland said: *“We are tremendously excited to be working in partnership with the National Galleries of Scotland once again, particularly when our collaboration leads to such an iconic exhibition being secured for Edinburgh. Vanity Fair Portraits is certain to bring many new visitors to the Scottish National Portrait Gallery and will be a major attraction during the summer season.”*

From the beginning, British, Irish and American authors were frequently profiled and their writings published in *Vanity Fair*, and among the vintage portraits shown in the exhibition will be iconic images of H.G. Wells, James Joyce, D.H. Lawrence, Rebecca West, Ernest Hemingway and George Bernard Shaw. The magazine’s mix of artistic seriousness and popular celebrity meant that commissioned portraits of these authors, and of artists such as Claude Monet and Augustus John, were displayed alongside photographs of actors, musicians and athletes.

In addition to showing the works of acknowledged leaders in early twentieth century portrait photography, *Vanity Fair Portraits* will feature the works of now lesser-known practitioners, among them the great British-born theatre photographer, Florence Vandamm. Her portrait of American actress Alice White and her group portrait of the Albertina Rasch Dancers, both taken in the late 1920s, remind us of her singular talent and re-establish her in the canon of great portrait photographers of the era.

Vanity Fair Portraits, mounted to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the modern-era magazine, will present a rare opportunity to see some of the definitive portraits of the ‘Jazz Age’, including now classic studies of Louis Armstrong, Josephine Baker and Noël Coward.

Although *Vanity Fair* suspended publication in 1936, it was resurrected in another period of decadence and excess, the 1980s. Its purpose remained true to the original publication: to record modern men and women of culture, stature and talent. As in the early period, portrait photography was the graphic bedrock of the magazine. In the tradition of its legendary editor Frank Crowninshield (1914-36), the revived monthly commissioned the world's leading portrait photographers, among them Jonathan Becker, Harry Benson, Nan Goldin, Annie Leibovitz, Helmut Newton, Herb Ritts, Mario Testino, and Bruce Weber.

Vanity Fair's iconic photographs continue to make news. Since the magazine's re-launch in 1983, cover images including the Reagans dancing (1985), a very pregnant Demi Moore (1991), Princess Diana of Wales at her last formal photo session (1997), a formal portrait of President Bush's Afghan War Cabinet (2002) and most recently a nude study of actresses Scarlett Johansson and Keira Knightley (2006) have been embedded in the collective cultural consciousness.

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Notes to Editors:

TOUR

Vanity Fair Portraits: Photographs 1913-2008 will open at the National Portrait Gallery, London on 14 February 2008 (until 26 May). *Vanity Fair Portraits* will tour to Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles / LACMA (26 October 2008 – 1 March 2009); and the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, Australia (12 June – 30 August 2009).

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For further information please contact the National Galleries of Scotland Press Office on 0131 624 6325/ 6332/ 6247 or pressinfo@nationalgalleries.org.

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