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Everett Raymond Kinstler - Ephemera

Everett Raymond Kinstler: Pulp to Portraits

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6-2012

## Everett Raymond Kinstler: Pulp to Portraits Exhibition Brochure

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Portrait of Tom Wolfe, 1987, Oil on canvas, 50 x 27 inches

relationship as his greatest influence. “What Flagg taught me is that technique isn’t important in itself. It’s only a means to an end.”<sup>11</sup>

During the 1950s, the world of illustration underwent a monumental shift as the result of technological advances in media. The popularity of television and the increasing reliance on graphic design and photography started to supplant the use of traditional illustration, which had dominated print publications.<sup>12</sup> Previously robust illustrated magazines found themselves in decline by the mid-1960s due to the erosion of readership and advertising revenues, which also reduced opportunities for skilled illustrators. Kinstler continued to work in the illustration field during this time of change, but his interest in painting and his skill in capturing likenesses made it possible for him to “back into portraiture,” a natural progression “since painting people was always what I enjoyed most.”<sup>13</sup>

A friendship with portraitist John Christen Johansen (1876–1954) inspired Kinstler to finesse his touch as a painter and gain the artistic chops to make inroads into portraiture. Like DuMond, Johansen emphasized the importance of observation and working from life. He stressed that an artist should not become overly reliant on photographs; rather, he should attempt to achieve “simplicity” in painting.<sup>14</sup> These were lessons that Kinstler took to heart. In the 1960s, the artist approached Portraits, Inc., a New York-based company that connected portraitists with sitters. This exposure led to commission after commission, and eventually portraiture became a mainstay for Kinstler, who, in the mid-1960s, left the field of illustration behind.

Kinstler’s success as a portrait artist is evident in even a cursory glance at his illustrious roster of sitters. A Who’s Who of American history and culture across the 20<sup>th</sup> century, his clients have included author and illustrator Theodor Seuss Geisel (Dr. Seuss); author Tom Wolfe; Presidents Gerald Ford, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush; artists Paul Jenkins, Jacob Lawrence, and Alexander Calder; actors John Wayne, Katharine Hepburn, Liv Ullmann, and Paul Newman – just a few of the famous and influential people whom he has captured on canvas through the years.

After almost seven decades in the arts, Kinstler keeps his skills sharp and his approach to his work fresh by painting from life. He also creates noncommissioned works that reflect both his interest in experimentation and his continued artistic growth. Be it a study of a nude, a Mexican landscape, or, as seen in this exhibition, his recent art inspired by classic cinema and popular American icons, he continues to express his love of the artistic process and his connection with his subjects and viewers – an affirmation of his father’s advice all those years ago when Kinstler first conveyed a desire to forge a career in the arts.

“It’s all about connecting.”

Martin Mahoney  
Norman Rockwell Museum

<sup>11</sup> Everett Raymond Kinstler: Fifty Years, An Artist’s Journey, exhibition catalogue, 1998-1999.  
<sup>12</sup> Reed, Walt. *The Illustrator in America 1860-2000*. New York: The Society of Illustrators, 2001. p. 335.  
<sup>13</sup> Everett Raymond Kinstler: Fifty Years, An Artist’s Journey, exhibition catalogue, 1998-1999.  
<sup>14</sup> Kinstler, Everett Raymond. Interview, 2011.

CHECKLIST!

## Everett Raymond Kinstler: Pulp to Portraits

June 14 – September 28, 2012

- Self Portrait (Everett Raymond Kinstler)*, 1994  
Oil on canvas  
24 x 18 inches
- Movies: Glamour*, 2011  
Oil on canvas  
52 x 60 inches
- Movies: Four Decades*, 2011  
Oil on canvas  
28 x 66 inches
- Movies: The Twenties*, 2011  
Oil on canvas  
36 x 30 inches
- Movies: Westerns*, 2011  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 48 inches
- Cowboy*, ca. 1950  
Ink on paper  
15 x 6 inches  
Unpublished illustration
- Portrait of Sidney Dickinson*, 1945  
Oil on canvas  
24 x 20 inches
- Women in Love*, 1955  
Oil on canvas  
14 x 10 inches  
Book jacket illustration for *Women in Love* by D.H. Lawrence, Avon Books
- Portrait of Tom Wolfe*, 1987  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 27 inches
- Portrait of Jacob Lawrence*, 1987  
Oil and charcoal on wood  
36 x 24 inches
- Portrait of Katharine Hepburn*, 1982  
Oil on cardboard  
27 x 21 inches  
Collection of The Players, New York City
- Portrait of Alfred Drake*, 1978  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 40 inches  
Collection of The Players, New York City
- Portrait of Paul Newman*, 1989  
Oil on canvas  
20 x 16 inches
- Portrait of Liv Ullmann*, 1984  
Oil on canvas  
32 x 38 inches
- Portrait of Benny Goodman*, 1980  
Oil on canvas  
27 x 20 inches  
Collection of the National Arts Club, New York City
- Knockout*, 1947  
Gouache on paper  
19 x 14 inches
- Tonal Study*, 1951  
Gouache on paper  
12 x 9 inches
- Sheriff Shoots Back*, ca. 1958  
Oil on masonite  
14 x 10 inches  
Book jacket illustration
- The Sea Witch*, 1958  
Ink and gouache on paper  
17 x 14 inches  
Illustration for *The Sea Witch* by Alexander Laing, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition
- Untitled (Couple)*, ca. 1958  
Oil on board  
18 x 14 inches  
Unpublished book jacket illustration
- When Doctors Marry*, 1960  
Ink and gouache on paper  
18 x 14 inches  
Book jacket illustration for *When Doctors Marry* by Elizabeth Seifert, published by Dodd, Mead & Co.
- Burr Staggered Through the High Snow*, 1949  
Ink on paper  
19 x 29 inches  
Illustration for *Adventure Magazine*, Issue #470
- Kenton of the Star Patrol*, 1952  
Ink on paper (comic book page)  
17 x 13 inches  
Illustration for *Strange Worlds*
- Zorro, Hawkman and the Shadow*, 2011  
Ink on illustration board  
After lost originals from ca. 1950  
20 x 15 inches
- Portrait Study of Christopher Plummer*, 2010  
Charcoal on paper  
20 x 16 inches
- Christopher Plummer Posing as Prospero*, 2011  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 42 inches
- Portrait of Tony Bennett*, 2006  
Oil on canvas  
36 x 24 inches
- Morning, Portugal*, 1990  
Oil on canvas  
34 x 44 inches
- Portrait Study of President William Jefferson Clinton*, 1995-97  
Oil on canvas  
52 x 62 inches
- Portrait Study of President Ronald Reagan*, 1991  
Oil on canvas  
30 x 24 inches
- Portrait of Dave Brubeck*, 2003  
Oil on canvas  
20 x 16 inches  
Collection of the National Arts Club, New York City
- Portrait of Father Aloysius Kelley*, 2000  
Oil on canvas  
34 1/16 x 28 3/16 inches  
Collection of Fairfield University, Fairfield, Conn.  
(installed upstairs in corridor)
- Portrait of Paul Jenkins*, 2006  
Oil on canvas  
60 x 60 inches  
(installed upstairs in the Great Hall)

All works are from the collection of the artist unless otherwise noted.

EVERETT RAYMOND KINSTLER

## Pulps to Portraits

June 14 – September 28, 2012



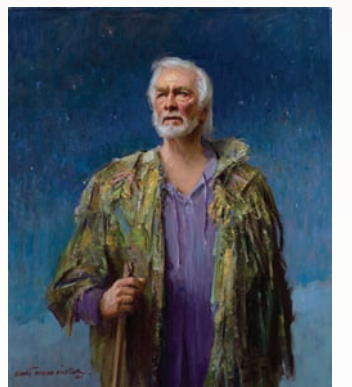
Morning, Portugal, 1990



Movies: Glamour, 2011



The Sea Witch, 1958



Christopher Plummer Posing as Prospero, 2011



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Self Portrait (Everett Raymond Kinstler), 1994, Oil on canvas, 24 x 18 inches

*Cultivate an ever continuous power of observation.*  
-John Singer Sargent (1856-1925)

*I cannot emphasize enough the value of making drawings, studies and sketches.*  
-E.R. Kinstler (b. 1926)

Everett Raymond Kinstler sees the world in hues. Unfettered by conventional color designations, Kinstler paints his subjects as he perceives them, rather than as he knows them to be. His shadows, then, are neither brown nor black but instead pulse in shades of indigo and violet, while his highlights dance unabashedly up and down the chromatic spectrum, from dusky peach to the palest of blues. Perhaps most importantly, Kinstler is able to harness such virtuosity to serve what he considers the principal aims of his art: the conveyance of emotion, the unleashing of imagination, and the craft of communication. The results are staggering: an ersatz world, conjured only in oil on canvas, suspends our disbelief while simultaneously speaking to our hearts, minds, and souls.

This touch – what art historians refer to as “painterly” – is the mark of a true master; one who can finesse an illusory depth of field from a two-dimensional support, while still respecting the fundamental qualities of his craft and the inherent characteristics of his media. In this, Kinstler’s admiration for the work of the great John Singer Sargent, is made manifest. For like Sargent, who died only a year before the younger artist was born, Kinstler possesses remarkable technical skill. He also, like the great master whose palette the latter not only possesses but also uses, wields incredible powers of observation. This capacity to observe – and transcribe – serves Kinstler’s creative impulses well, allowing him to breathe life and animation into the more than 2,000 individuals whose likenesses he has captured, as well as the countless landscapes and genre scenes he has created over the course of a career that spans seven decades.

Complementing Kinstler’s visual transcriptions of the world that surrounds him are his interconnected aims of storytelling and connecting with his sitters as well as his audiences. For the artist’s paintings do more than simply document physical appearances; they open windows onto his subjects, summoning up narratives (both real and imagined) of the people, the places, and the objects he immortalizes while simultaneously giving his viewers glimpses of deeper truths, rooted in our shared existence. Indeed, Kinstler’s work touches a chord in all of us: fragility and strength, joy and sorrow, impermanence and eternity all magically reside in his invigorating brushstrokes, and speak to the essence of what it means to be human.

The Bellarmine Museum of Art is delighted to have the opportunity to present 33 of this incredible artist’s signature works in *Everett Raymond Kinstler: Pulp to Portraits*, an exhibition that was originally organized by the Norman Rockwell Museum (Stockbridge, Mass.). These works, which span the length and breadth of Kinstler’s still-evolving career, showcase his talents as a young and confident illustrator who matured into one of our nation’s finest portraitists. They equally speak to the power of art to capture the transitory, to transform the prosaic into the poetic, to transcend the confines of the physical, and to touch the hem of the spiritual. What better place to show such work than on the campus of Fairfield University, with its deep connections to the Jesuit traditions of intentionality, mindfulness, and the never-ending contemplation of what lies beneath.

The Bellarmine Museum of Art is grateful to the many individuals and institutions who have made this show a reality, including the staff of the Norman Rockwell Museum, The National Arts Club, and The Players, as well as the faculty and administration of Fairfield University. We are also thankful for the support of Mr. and Mrs. Tony Bennett; Dr. Arnold J. Davis, Lord of Barnham Broom; Bill and Jane Donaldson; Mr. Gary R. Haynes, Haynes Galleries; Mr. James B. Murphy II; Portrait Society of America; Jack Richeson & Co.; and Westtown Publishing Company. Our final, and certainly largest, debt of gratitude is reserved for Peggy and Ray Kinstler, without whose unflagging support and boundless generosity none of this would have been possible.

Jill Deupi, J.D., Ph.D.  
Director, Bellarmine Museum of Art  
Assistant Professor of Art History, Fairfield University



Portrait of Sidney Dickinson, 1945, Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 inches

## Everett Raymond Kinstler: Pulp to Portraits



Portrait Study of President William Jefferson Clinton, 1995-97, Oil on canvas, 52 x 62 inches

able to work and do something one loves for a living.<sup>2</sup> Of his life as a boy in the 1930s and 40s, the artist has fond memories. “Growing up in New York City, I went to the usual city public school, played baseball, and did all the things that most kids do, but most of all, I drew.”<sup>3</sup> He developed an early appreciation for illustration during this influential period, becoming an avid fan of the periodicals that were loaded with top-rate illustrations. Talents like Mead Schaeffer (1898–1980) and John Atherton (1900–1952) were regular cover artists at the time, and most salient is his recognition of Norman Rockwell (1894–1978) and J.C. Leyendecker (1894-1951) as titans in the illustration field.<sup>4</sup> Kinstler also became an avid moviegoer, which sparked a lifelong interest in visual storytelling and the larger-than-life figures that populated the silver screen.

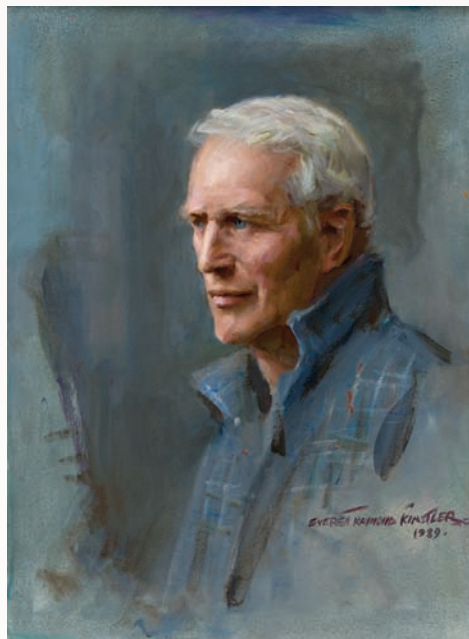
Talented academically and artistically in his youth, Kinstler gained entrance to New York City’s highly regarded High School of Music and Art, where he was surrounded by creative students and teachers but frustrated that his desire to study illustration and comic book art was not encouraged. In 1944, he transferred to the High School of Industrial Art, a trade school that trained young artists the skills to make a living in the field of commercial art, and there, Kinstler immersed himself in life as a working artist. Honing his skills as a draftsman and realist painter, he began to earn his first commissions and make a living in the field of his dreams.

At about the age of 16, Kinstler decided to leave school and enter the professional art world, a decision that influenced the rest of his life. Consumed with the desire to become “a living, breathing working artist,” he began to circulate his “meager” portfolio, and responded to a job advertisement from comic book publisher, Cinema Comics, where Richard Hughes was the editor. After a brief interview, Kinstler was hired as an “apprentice inker,” and for a salary of \$18 for a six-day week became a member of the working world.<sup>5</sup> The experience proved to be invaluable: Kinstler took on numerous assignments, from landscapes, figures, and animals to countless inanimate objects. His early work taught him to connect with the reader and tell a story, essential skills that brought him additional work as a freelance illustrator for comics and pulp magazines. Doc Savage, The Shadow, Hawkman, and Zorro are just some of the pulp figures that he brought to life.

1 National Portrait Gallery Website. Accessed November 23, 2011.  
2 Kinstler, Everett Raymond. Interview with Martin Mahoney for the *Everett Raymond Kinstler: Pulp to Portraits*, Exhibition. Norman Rockwell Museum, October 20, 2011.  
3 *Everett Raymond Kinstler: Fifty Years, An Artist’s Journey*, exhibition catalog, 1998–1999. Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT; Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, OH; The National Arts Club, New York; Boston University.  
4 Kinstler, Everett Raymond. Interview, 2011.  
5 Ibid.

“It’s all about connecting with the past,” says Everett Raymond Kinstler, a belief that he firmly asserts as he talks about his life as an artist and his 70-year career. Connections are indeed what it’s all about for Kinstler, whether speaking about his early career as a comic book and pulp artist, the inspiration he gleaned from John Singer Sargent (1856–1925), or his close friendships with influential illustrator James Montgomery Flagg (1877–1960) and noted painter Sidney Dickinson (1890–1980). This has remained so in his later years while working as a highly in-demand portrait artist whose compositions have been collected by noted institutions nationwide, from the Smithsonian Institution’s National Portrait Gallery and Ohio’s Butler Institute of American Art to New York’s Players Club and Society of Illustrators.<sup>1</sup>

A native New Yorker, Kinstler’s artistic interests were supported early in his life by his parents – in particular his father, who reminded him that it is a gift to be



Portrait of Paul Newman, 1989, Oil on canvas, 20 x 16 inches



Portrait of Tony Bennett, 2006, Oil on canvas, 36 x 24 inches

assigned during my period of service.”<sup>9</sup> After receiving his discharge, he took advantage of the momentum of his budding career and decided not to return to the Art Students League. Instead, he created images for comics, rendered book jacket illustrations in watercolor and oil, and developed a deepened appreciation for the masters through his exploration of the many great museums in the New York metropolitan area.

Kinstler’s explorations led to his use of life models and working with photo references of his models. While utilizing these techniques he again touched upon one of the recurring themes of his life and work: connections, in the sense of both making them and appreciating them in people, history, and art. Kinstler has a gift for connecting life to art, and art to life. In painting portraits, he has the ability to understand just who the sitter is and to convey both self-image and public persona. His renderings are at once iconic and immediately personal. A combination of hard work and talent, sprinkled with a smattering of propitious events, has made his career both inspiring and important.

In 1949, a touchstone year in his life and career, Kinstler moved into his own studio when his former teacher Frank Vincent DuMond assisted him in securing a space in the historic National Arts Club, where he continues to work today. That same year, he sought out and befriended one of his artistic idols, James Montgomery Flagg, who is perhaps best known for his finger-wagging Uncle Sam in *I Want You for the U.S. Army*, the iconic World War I recruiting poster. Their friendship would prove to be a boon for both of their careers, as Kinstler was able to absorb the knowledge of the older artist and Flagg would gain a lifelong advocate for his painting and his legacy. Connections in the artist’s life continued to remain strong because, as fate would have it, both Kinstler and Flagg studied at the Art Students League under DuMond. Both were also gifted illustrators who captured the likenesses of the noted cultural figures of their day. Their friendship continued until Flagg’s death in 1960.<sup>10</sup> Kinstler remembers this professional

6 *New York Creative: Portraits by Everett Raymond Kinstler*, exhibit catalog, Museum of the City of New York. Casper, Wyoming: Westtown Publishing, 2006.  
7 *Everett Raymond Kinstler: Fifty Years, An Artist’s Journey*, exhibition catalogue, 1998-1999.  
8 Vadeboncoeur, Jim and Everett Raymond Kinstler, *Everett Raymond Kinstler: The Artist’s Journey Through Popular Culture, 1942-1962*. Nevada City: Underwood Books, 2005.  
9 *International Artists* magazine article, p. 25.  
10 Kinstler, Everett Raymond. Interview, 2011.



Movies: Westerns, 2011, Oil on canvas, 40 x 48 inches