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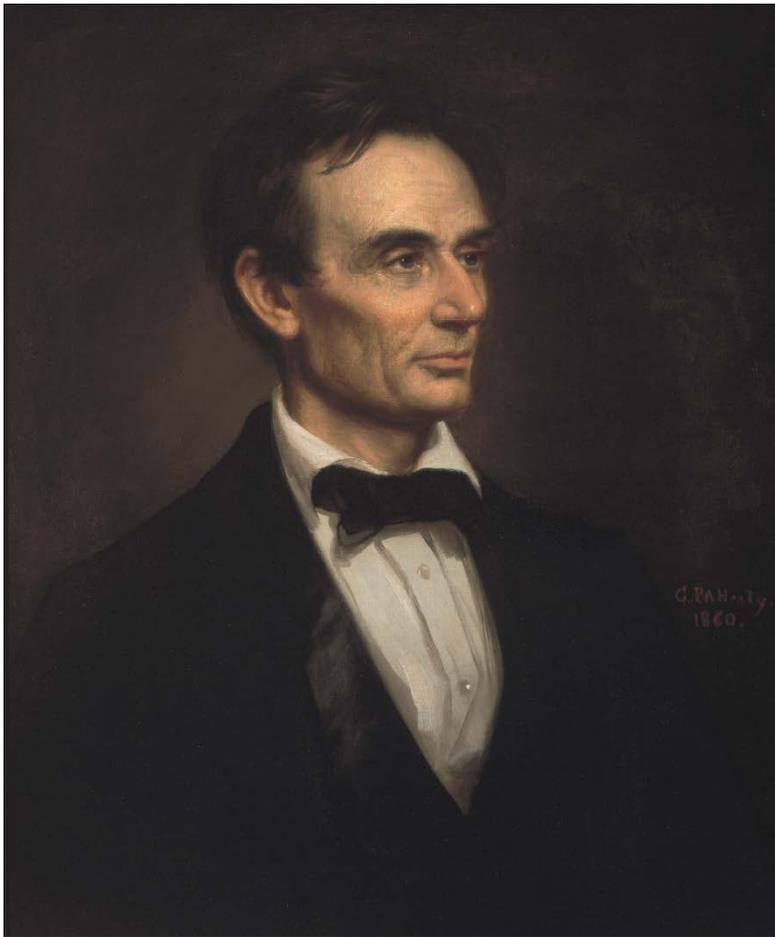
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CORCORAN EXHIBITS RARE LINCOLN PORTRAIT

On view 10 a.m. Friday, December 14 through
Friday, February 15

WASHINGTON, D.C.—On Friday, December 14, the **Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design** will exhibit *Abraham Lincoln*, 1860, a portrait by George Peter Alexander Healy (1813–1894). The oil painting, the last portrait made of Abraham Lincoln without a beard, will be on view in the Atrium to coincide with the sesquicentennial of the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation and the inauguration of President Barack Obama on January 20, 2013. The painting is one of 15 presidential portraits purchased by founder William Wilson Corcoran in 1879. Learn more about this and other works of historic American art in the Corcoran’s collection via <http://collection.corcoran.org/apcat>.

Shortly before Americans went to the polls to elect the nation’s sixteenth president, a young girl from Westfield, New York wrote a letter to Lincoln, counseling, “You would look a great deal better [with a beard] for your face is so thin.” Amused by the girl’s frankness, Lincoln shared the letter with Healy, who had traveled from his home in Chicago to Springfield, Illinois to paint the president-elect’s portrait. Healy recalls Lincoln saying: “As a painter . . . you should be a judge between this unknown correspondent and me. She complains of my ugliness. It is allowed to be ugly in the world, but not as ugly as I am. She wishes me to put on false whiskers, to hide my horrible lantern jaws. Will you paint me with false whiskers?” Healy refused Lincoln’s request; this 1860 portrait is a rare beardless likeness of the president, who would grow whiskers by the time of his inauguration on March 4, 1861.

A somber background and near-profile presentation distance Lincoln from the viewer, while dark shadows beneath his eyes, lines on his forehead and at his jowls, and an unshaven appearance hint at the physical and mental

demands associated with the recent campaign and his impending office. Painted over the course of several days and amid a continuous stream of well-wishers, office-seekers, and newspaper correspondents, Healy's portrait is a psychologically penetrating likeness—bringing out characteristics echoed by Daniel Day-Lewis in the recent Steven Spielberg film

The portrait is among the Corcoran's collection of American art, one of the finest in the country. Bechhoefer Curator of American Art Sarah Cash said: "As curator of the Corcoran's distinguished American art holdings, I am delighted to be able to share one of the great portraits from that collection. In this day and age of constant media coverage of President Obama and other politicians, it is nice to recall simpler times, when Lincoln took to heart a young girl's handwritten plea to grow a beard."

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Corcoran's hours of operation are as follows: Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; closed Monday and Tuesday. Beginning January 9, 2013, extended hours will change from Thursdays to Wednesdays. Admission to the Corcoran is \$10 for adults, and \$8 for seniors (62+) and students (with valid ID). Children 12 and under, active duty military (with ID) and Corcoran Members enter for free.

MEMBERSHIP

Corcoran Gallery of Art membership offers special access to the Corcoran's renowned collection, temporary exhibitions, lectures, films, concerts and an array of social events. Members also receive valuable discounts at the Corcoran Shop, Todd Gray's Muse at the Corcoran, and the Corcoran College of Art + Design classes. Corcoran Members may visit the Corcoran, including special exhibitions, an unlimited number of times for free. For more information, contact the Membership office at (202) 639-1753, membership@corcoran.org or online at www.corcoran.org/membership.

ABOUT THE CORCORAN

Established in 1869, the **Corcoran Gallery of Art** was one of America's first museums of art—dedicated, in the words of founder William Wilson Corcoran, to "encouraging American genius." Today it is Washington, D.C.'s largest nonfederal art museum, known internationally for its distinguished collection of historical and modern American art as well as contemporary art, photography, European painting, sculpture, and the decorative arts. A dynamic schedule of special exhibitions complements a range of educational programming, which together enriches the perspectives of the visiting public, support the local arts community, and encourage thoughtful interpretation of today's most compelling social issues. **The Corcoran College of Art + Design** was founded as a school of art in 1890 and stands as Washington's only four-year accredited college of art and design. The College is one of the few in the nation whose educational model includes an integral relationship with a museum, fostering the talent of the next generation of artists. For more information about the **Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design**, visit www.corcoran.org.



Hours

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Wednesday: 10 a.m.–9 p.m.

The Corcoran is closed on Monday and Tuesday.

Admission

Wednesday through Friday and Sunday: \$10 Adults; \$8 full-time students (with ID) and seniors (62+); children under 12 free; Corcoran Members free.

Image: George Peter Alexander Healy, *Abraham Lincoln*, 1860. Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 inches. Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. Museum purchase, Gallery Fund 79.19.