

Chapter 1 : Carl Van Vechten - Wikipedia

Iowa - An American Portrait chronicles the enduring bonds between past and present and explores the human spirit nourished by a deep and pervasive love of land, community and family.

June 8 3: By Mia Fineman Of all the famous images in the history of art, only a handful have risen or some might say sunk to the status of cultural icons. These images have been relentlessly copied, parodied, and reproduced in every conceivable form—from posters to neckties to life-sized inflatable dolls. The variations are endless: In a museum shop not long ago I came across a little flip-book in which American Gothic gradually morphs into The Scream—two for the price of one! But how and why does an image become an icon? Nearly everyone knows the image through copies and parodies, though few know much about the original painting. When Biel showed the picture to 59 Harvard sophomores, they all recognized it, but only 31 knew the title and only five could name the artist. Advertisement The story of American Gothic begins with a trim white cottage in Eldon, Iowa, that Wood, an Iowa-born artist with European training, spotted from a car window in August He based the man on his stern-looking Cedar Rapids dentist, Byron McKeeby, whom he posed in a black jacket, collarless shirt, and clean denim overalls. In one hand, McKeeby holds a three-pronged pitchfork, which is visually echoed in the stitching of his overalls and in the Gothic window in the gable. In fact, Wood modeled each element separately—Graham and McKeeby never actually stood together in front of the house. In the fall of , Wood entered the painting in a competition at the Art Institute of Chicago. The patron also convinced the Art Institute to acquire the painting for its collection, where it remains today. The image quickly became famous through newspaper reproductions, first appearing in the Chicago Evening Post, and then in the rotogravure sections of newspapers in New York, Boston, Kansas City, and Indianapolis, often with the caption, An Iowa Farmer and His Wife. When the picture finally appeared in the Cedar Rapids Gazette, real Iowa farmers and their wives were not amused. To them, the painting looked like a nasty caricature, portraying Midwestern farmers as pinched, grim-faced, puritanical Bible-thumpers. One Iowa farmwife told Wood he should have his "head bashed in. Stung by the criticism, Wood declared himself a "loyal Iowan" and insisted that the figures were not intended to be farmers but small-town folk, not Iowans but generic Americans. His sister Nan, perhaps embarrassed about being depicted as the wife of a man twice her age, started telling people that Wood had envisioned the couple as father and daughter, not husband and wife. Wood himself remained vague on this point. Mencken called the "booboisie" of the "Bible Belt. American Gothic was no longer understood as satirical, but as a celebratory expression of populist nationalism. Critics extolled the farmer and his wife as steadfast embodiments of American virtue and the pioneer spirit. In , the photographer Gordon Parks posed a black cleaning woman with an upright broom in front of a large American flag and called it American Gothic. So, what is it about American Gothic that it makes such an indelible impression? Biel stops short of drawing any real conclusions, explaining how American Gothic became an icon, but not why. Of course, part of the answer lies in the built-in ambiguity of the image. Is the painting a satire or a celebration of the American heartland? Even Grant Wood seemed uncertain about this. These are types of people I have known all my life. I tried to characterize them truthfully—to make them more like themselves than they were in actual life. Think about the other iconic images from art history: All of them depict human figures directly facing the viewer—just like the flatly frontal images of saints in medieval Christian icons. Rendering figures in this way imprints them on our memories and endows them with both authority and immediacy. Early Christians believed icons were like portals that allowed the viewer to communicate directly with the sacred figure represented. Modern secular icons like American Gothic still retain some vestige of sacredness, in the sense that they connect with something larger—not with the divine, but with the collective memory of our image-loving culture. Correction , June 9, The article originally and incorrectly explained that the original American Gothic house was in Elton, Iowa when in fact the name of the town is Eldon, Iowa. Return to the corrected sentence.

Chapter 2 : American Gothic - Wikipedia

The film "Iowa- An American Portrait" was narrated by Tom Brokaw. It described the land, people, education, work, religion, and family life of Iowa. One of the main topics of the film was the general view of Iowa- the Farm State.

His Aunt Betty Jean Furgerson was an avid jazz fan and through her and his Uncle Lee he developed a great love for many forms of jazz, gospel and blues. Peter started playing in rock bands and developed a serious interest in music theory and composition. While in school, he performed professionally with a wide array of talents from torch singer Liza Minnelli to jazz great Joe Williams; jazz guitarist Pat Metheny and worked his first jobs with Bruce Hornsby, who later put together Bruce Hornsby and the Range. After his tour with Blood, Sweat and Tears he returned to freelancing but was soon hired by Chuck Mangione, the number one jazz crossover artist in the US and after four years, decided to concentrate less on guitar and more on composing, leaving to pursue a film career in LA. He started playing piano at the age of 4 and eventually turned to saxophone at age 7. Billy started playing professionally while still in high school with a band for school dances and weddings. He received a full ride academic scholarship to Indiana University in Bloomington Indiana. Here he honed his musical talents by being taught by the best classical saxophonist, Eugene Rousseau, as well as voice by world renown opera teachers. After leaving college in , Billy returned to Cedar Rapids joining a group called Madness who later changed their name to Akasha in and they were signed to the record label "Chrysalis Records" which also had artists like Pat Benatar on the label. He left that group, returning to Cedar Rapids and helped form the group Daugherty, Davis and McPartland, staying with them for 14 years. While with them, in , they were appointed Ambassadors of Culture for the State of Iowa, by the then Governor Terry Branstad which led them to travel to the Soviet Union to perform in the southwest region of this country. He left this group in and was a guest soloist with the Cedar Rapids Symphony. Billy has been a saxophonist for hire recording with numerous Iowa artists as well as having his own group called Billy D and Friends performing worldwide for corporate events. In , Billy worked on an album project called Billy Lee Janey which later became known as Compact Three where they produced an album called "Crazy Eight". One of the songs on the album "American Dream" was nominated for a Grammy in two categories: Billy states he loves sharing the gift of expression through music! He moved to Cedar Rapids with his parents in . At the age of 13, Charlie got his first guitar, but never got into playing the guitar the way he wanted. Blues and Gospel are his favorites. He feels the music makes you feel good when things are going bad and tough and lifts you up while playing it and listening to it. Sydney Wingfield Sydney Wingfield was born January 23, . He is an accomplished organist, pianist, and singer of Rhythm and Blues and Jazz. Although he lives in Florida, he still visits and takes the time to perform in Cedar Rapids at least once a month in the Piano Lounge at 2nd Ave SE, which was the old Merchants National Bank building in the lower level. His art career started in high school but really took off in earnest while attending Drake. He began his studies to become a teacher but circumstances directed his path to Art and sculpting. Fred took no formal art classes until college. He has works that he did for Ducks Unlimited. Much of his work consists of animals - correct, not abstract, although he has done some abstract art. Fred worked for Rockwell Collins for 30 years as a Commercial Artist until his retirement. Miller was born January 11, . He attended the University of Iowa and created scenery for the Drama department. While living in the Bahamas, he became quite well known and received many awards and citations from the Prime Minister. He also taught at a Bahamian Middle School and he continues to work in his home. He has performed solo and has been affiliated with a group called Mean Street and the Hell Horns. Marcus has performed during Juneteenth at the African American Museum and can sometimes be seen playing at Noelridge Park during summer for their concert under the stars. They were formed in out of a love to sing rich Gospel music. They perform quartet-style 4 part harmony with a lead as well as contemporary, spirituals, and hymns for family reunions, festivals and benefits. Rehearsals start with the melody, then parts are added and finally the words; a process that can take about 3 weeks. What is most important about their music is to sing with feeling and understanding; to put the spiritual element and the life experience into the music. Barbara describes music as "food for the soul " She is a well known soloist in Cedar Rapids, having sung for

countless functions throughout the years. Elam is a long time resident of Cedar Rapids who has been active in her community while enjoying a variety of employment opportunities. Barbara was employed for many years as a Loan Officer at Merchants Bank. Elam was hired by Governor Harold Hughes to develop jobs for the hard to employ. In this capacity she developed numerous jobs at Collins Radio and other local companies. Ms Elam has served on many boards and committees. She has served as a United Way coach who worked with businesses and individuals to assist their annual fund raising efforts Under the United Way umbrella she initiated and organized the traditional annual Martin Luther King luncheon now in place. For the past eight years Barbara has lent her singing talent as a regular participant at the Follies. The youngest of 8 children, her family moved to Cedar Rapids when she was a toddler. Edith studied voice for 14 years and from she performed with her brothers, Wallace and Cecil Reed, in a group they called the Gold Flashes Dance Trio. In , Edith enrolled at Coe College where she studied foreign languages to further develop her operatic phrasing. She sang in 8 different languages and entertained throughout the Midwest. Edith was a classically trained singer. In , she had a radio show on WMT where she sang requests and also performed for such celebrities as Nat King Cole during the dinner hour. Upon her retirement from Collins Radio now known as Rockwell Collins in , she continued to teach people about African American history through her music. And sometimes it takes a few spins around the turn table or passes through the mp3 player queue.. As a result, the CD is one that parents can listen to without worrying about kids overhearing. The lyrics are clean, without reference to violence or profanity October Left Front: It was the first and only African-American-owned radio station in the city. One of the originators of the project, Robert Love, said the station started as a sort of dream in The board members obtained donated equipment and space from area businesses.. The purpose of the station was to facilitate communication within the black community and between racial and ethnic groups in the cityboard planned to broadcast 12 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition to providing ethnic and cultural enrichment, the board hoped the station KOJC-FM would allow teens to gain training as technicians. Love said the birth of the station had truly been a community effort. Lovar Davis Kidd C. So far, Kidd- known as L.

Chapter 3 : Iowa an American Portrait on Vimeo

An affectionate look, combining historic photographs and recent footage, at the people and places of Iowa, past and present. Produced to commemorate the state's sesquicentennial.

His father was a wealthy and prominent banker. His mother established the Cedar Rapids public library and was musically talented. He described his hometown as "that unloved town". In order to advance his education, he decided in to study at the University of Chicago. As a student, he became increasingly interested in writing and wrote for the college newspaper "University of Chicago Weekly". After graduating from college in , Van Vechten accepted a job as a columnist for the Chicago American. In his column "The Chaperone" Van Vechten covered many different topics through a style of semi autobiographical gossip and criticism. This was the first time he was thought to have experimented with photography which would later become one of his greatest passions. Some described his contributions to the paper as "lowering the tone of the Hearst papers". He was hired as the assistant music critic at The New York Times. He returned to his job at The New York Times in , where he became the first American critic of modern dance. This was an innovative type of art which explores new styles or subject matters and is thought to be well ahead of other art in terms of technique, subject matter and application. He also attended premiers in Paris where he met American author and poet Gertrude Stein in He was considered to be one of Steins most enthusiastic fans. In his piece Van Vechten attempted to demystify Gertrude Stein and bring clarity to her works. In his piece Van Vechten came to the conclusion that Gertrude Stein is a difficult author to understand and she can be best understood when one has been guided through her work by an "expert insider". He writes that "special writers require special readers". They were also known to attend public gatherings for black people and even on occasion visit black friends in their homes. His Life and Works and ending with Parties. As an appreciator of the arts, Van Vechten was extremely intrigued by the explosion of creativity which was occurring in Harlem. He was drawn towards the tolerance of Harlem society and its draw towards black writers and artists. He also felt most accepted there as a gay man. However for a long time he was also seen as a very controversial figure. In other words he believed that black people should be free to explore their sexuality and singers should follow their natural talents such as jazz, spirituals and blues. He was credited for the surge in white interest in Harlem nightlife and culture. He was also involved in helping well respected writers like Langston Hughes and Nella Larsen find publishers for their first works. A Portrait in Black and White explores the messy and uncomfortable realities of race, and the complicated tangle of black and white in America. Van Vechten died in , at the age of 84, in New York City. The Beinecke Library also holds a collection titled "Living Portraits: American Portraits, Harlem Heroes was completed in This novel was recognized as contemporary and an important work to the collection of Harlem Renaissance history. In his novel autobiographical facts were arranged into a fictional form. In addition to Peter Whiffle, Van Vechten wrote several other novels. One of them, The Tattooed Countess, was a disguised manipulation of his memories of growing up in Cedar Rapids. Van Vechten called this book "my Negro novel". He intended for this novel to depict how African Americans were living in Harlem and not about the suffrage of Blacks in the South who were dealing with racism and lynchings. Although many encouraged Van Vechten to reconsider giving his novel such a controversial name, he could not resist having an incendiary title. Some worried that his title would take away from the content of the book. Some saw the novel as depicting Black people as "alien and strange" while others valued the novel for its representation of African Americans as everyday people, with complexity and flaws just like the average White person was. Alain Locke sent Van Vechten a letter from Berlin citing his novel Nigger Heaven and the excitement surrounding its release as his primary reason for making an imminent return home. In addition Gertrude Stein sent Van Vechten a letter from France writing that the novel was the best thing he had ever written. Stein also played an important role in the development of the novel. Du Bois and Black novelist Wallace Thurman. Du Bois dismissed the novel as being "cheap melodrama" [15] Decades after the book was published, literary critic and scholar Ralph Ellison remembered Van Vechten as a bad influence, an unpleasant character who "introduced a note of decadence into Afro-American literary matters which was not needed.

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Chapter 4 : Iowa- An American Portrait Essays

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Chapter 5 : The most famous farm couple in the world.

Iowa An American Portrait is an Iowa Trademark Or Service Mark filed on January 10, The company's filing status is listed as Inactive and its File Number is The Registered Agent on file for this company is Iowa Public Broadcasting Board and is located at Corporate Dr, Johnston, IA

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