

For Immediate Release: September 2, 2008

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**In Focus: National Geographic Greatest Portraits Exhibit at
Southern Utah University Braithwaite Fine Arts Gallery**

(Southern Utah University, Cedar City, Utah) Portraits are reflections of ourselves, and the memorable ones have a simple, yet profound universal appeal—as evocative to a teenage girl in Brooklyn, N.Y., as to an elderly Bushman in South Africa. This September, the Braithwaite Fine Arts Gallery at Southern Utah University will host “In Focus: National Geographic Portraits” one of the most distinctive collections of photographs in recent history.

“In Focus: National Geographic Greatest Portraits,” an exhibition consisting of 56 striking color and black-and-white photographs, will open at the Braithwaite Fine Arts Gallery on the Southern Utah University campus in Cedar City, on September 11 and will remain on view through November 1, 2008. There will be an opening reception at the gallery on Thursday, September 11, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. The reception is open to the public and admission is free.

Created by the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History and National Geographic, the exhibition is organized for travel by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES). “In Focus” was generously sponsored by the Friends of the Braithwaite Fine Arts Gallery.

This exhibition showcases photographs from the book “In Focus: National Geographic Greatest Portraits,” which was published in October 2004 as a sequel to the New York Times bestseller “Through the Lens: National Geographic Greatest Portraits.”

“In Focus” parallels National Geographic’s interest in ethnographic studies and reveals the magazine’s efforts to divert attention away from the hardships of domestic life during the Great Depression and World War II. From fascinating archival images of tribal leaders, fishermen and American workers, to riveting modern pictures of refugees, city dwellers and

urban laborers, “In Focus” takes visitors around the globe and through the heights and depths of human emotion.

The exhibition highlights the work of some of National Geographic’s most celebrated photographers. National Geographic photographers have taken more pictures of people than of any other subject, indicating “a photographer’s desire to connect with people—to capture something consequential about another person,” wrote National Geographic magazine associate editor Chris Johns in his forward. “To capture the spirit and essence of other human beings is a challenge beyond measure, but when it happens and the photograph comes together, the creation brings joy.”

The striking image of a rancher’s 15-year-old daughter from Elko, Nevada, was made by Robb Kendrick in September 2003, using the historic tintype, or ferrotype, process.

Invented in the 1800s, this lengthy photographic process requires that the subject commit time and energy, which makes for a deeper relationship between photographer and subject. In the process, the image becomes a collaboration between the two and has an intense intimacy in which the viewer is drawn.

Such remarkable images reveal deep-rooted connections to the environment, to national identities, to gender roles and to cultural preferences. They reveal the historical context of the moment while shedding light on larger world views that have been modeled and re-cast throughout the centuries. An unforgettable portrait does all these things, but, most importantly, it echoes the spirit of the sitter.

One of the world’s largest non-profit scientific and educational organizations, the National Geographic Society was founded in 1888 “for the increase and diffusion of geographic knowledge.” Fulfilling this mission, the society educates and inspires millions every day through its magazines, books, television programs, videos, maps and atlases, research grants, the National Geographic Bee, teacher workshops and innovative classroom materials.

The Braithwaite Fine Arts Gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, Noon to 7:00 p.m., and is located on the ground floor of the Braithwaite Liberal Arts Center building on the east end of the SUU campus. Admission is free. For more information, contact the Gallery at 435-586-5432 or visit our website www.suu.edu/pva/artgallery.

The Braithwaite Fine Arts Gallery is supported in part by the Friends of the Braithwaite Gallery, The Utah Arts Council, with funding from the State of Utah and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.

The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) has been sharing the wealth of Smithsonian collections and research programs with millions of people outside Washington, D.C., for more than 50 years. SITES connects Americans to their shared cultural heritage through a wide range of exhibitions about art, science and history, which are shown wherever people live, work and play. For more information, including exhibition descriptions and tour schedules, visit www.sites.si.edu.

About the college:

The Southern Utah University College of Performing and Visual Arts is comprised of the departments of Art and Design, Music, Theatre Arts and Dance, and a graduate program in Arts Administration. The college's affiliate organizations include the Braithwaite Fine Arts Gallery, American Folk Ballet, Utah Shakespearean Festival, and the performance group Acclamation and the Ballroom Dance Company. Over 550 students are majoring in 16 different degree areas in the arts. Both liberal arts B.A. and B.S. degrees are offered as well four professional degrees: Bachelor of Music (B.M.); B.F.A. in Studio Art, Graphic Design, and Arts Education; and the B.F.A. in Theatre. The College's Art and Design, Music and Dance programs are nationally accredited. More than 60 full and part-time faculty and staff are engaged in teaching and mentoring students in their pursuit of a degree in the arts. The college regular enrolls 1100 students each semester over 195 classes on the SUU campus. For more information about the College of Performing and Visual Arts contact Office of the Dean 435-865-8561 or by e-mail at byrnes@suu.edu.

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