

IN RECOGNITION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH AT THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESIDENT AND MRS. MICHELLE OBAMA WELCOME YOU TO THE WHITE HOUSE

"GOVERNMENT CANNOT ENDURE PERMANENTLY HALF SLAVE, HALF FREE..." were the words uttered by President Abraham Lincoln in 1858 during his famous "House Divided" speech in Illinois. These profound words foreshadowed a growing unrest simmering throughout the country and, in the years that followed, a devastating civil war would bring an end to the institution of slavery and forever alter the American landscape. For this year's celebration of Black History Month, the works on display showcase a snapshot of the contributions of African Americans. The two photographs and one painting displayed on the East Landing in the East Wing of the White House powerfully illustrate the arc of progress, from the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, to the urgent push for equality during the civil rights movement, to the present day. The photographs on display along the remainder of the tour highlight legendary African Americans – many of whom were pioneers who paved the way for future generations – that have visited presidents in the White House.



In the Oval Office on January 18, 2010, President Barack Obama unveiled an 1864 printed copy of the Emancipation Proclamation signed by President Abraham Lincoln. This featured copy was used to raise money for a Civil War charity supporting wounded Federal troops. Official White House photo by Pete Souza.

The First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation Before the Cabinet. While staying at the White House in 1864, artist Francis B. Carpenter painted a scene of President Abraham Lincoln introducing the Emancipation Proclamation to his Cabinet in 1862 (now hanging in the U.S. Capitol). Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863 freeing 3.1 million slaves. White House Collection.



President Lyndon B. Johnson confers with Dr. Martin Luther King in the Cabinet Room, March 19, 1966. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a clergyman, activist, and perhaps the most recognized leader of the civil rights movement in the 1950's and 1960's. As a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, he was recognized around the world for his commitment to non-violence and equality. Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library and Museum.



Historian John Hope Franklin receives the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President William J. Clinton, 1995. Dr. Franklin was a renowned scholar of African-American history. His book, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African-Americans*, transformed the study of American history by comprehensively chronicling the African-American experience from its beginning to the end of the early twentieth century. William J. Clinton Presidential Library.

Baseball-great Jackie Robinson visits with President Dwight D. Eisenhower in the Oval Office, 1957. Mr. Robinson was a pioneer who helped integrate American professional sports. When he debuted with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947, he became the first African American to play major league baseball since its inception.





George H.W. Bush looks on while poet Maya Angelou speaks at a Black History Month program in the East Room, 1992. Ms. Angelou is a celebrated poet, memoirist, novelist, educator, dramatist, producer, actress, historian, and civil rights activist. She is best known for her series of autobiographies, including the highly lauded *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. George Bush Presidential Library and Museum.

President John F. Kennedy visits with athlete Wilma Rudolph in the Oval Office, 1961. Ms. Rudolph was a famous African-American athlete. During the 1960 Olympic Games, became the first American woman to win three gold medals in the track and field competition.



Photo: Actor Sidney Poitier hugs President Barack Obama after receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom during the East Room ceremony, 2009. Mr. Poitier is an acclaimed writer, director, thinker, critic, humanitarian, and diplomat. In 1963, he became the first African American to win the Academy Award for Best Actor for his role in *Lilies of the Field*. Official White House Photo by Pete Souza.

Jazz vocalist with President and Mrs. Gerald Ford at the diplomatic reception, 1976. Ella Jane Fitzgerald was an American jazz and song vocalist. Over a recording career that lasted 59 years, she was the winner of 14 Grammy Awards and was also awarded the National Medal of Art by Ronald Reagan. Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.



Jazz composer Eubie Blake performs for President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter and guests at the White House Jazz Festival on the South Grounds, 1978. As a pianist and composer of ragtime, jazz, and popular music, Mr. Blake is best known for his collaboration with singer and lyricist Noble Sissle in the 1921 Broadway musical *Shuffle Along*.



Future Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall meets with President Lyndon B. Johnson outside of the Oval Office, 1965. Justice Marshall was the first African American to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States. He successfully argued the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* case, where the Supreme Court declared racial segregation in American public schools unconstitutional. Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library and Museum

Accompanied by President Richard M. Nixon on piano, entertainer Pearl Bailey sings during an East Room performance, 1974. Pearl Mae Bailey was an actress and singer and began her career appearing in vaudeville. She won a Tony Award for the title role in the all-black production of *Hello, Dolly!* in 1968.



African American Artists in the White House Collection:

- Henry O. Tanner – *Sands of Dunes at Sunset, Atlantic City*, c. 1885 (Green Room)
- Edward Bannister – *The Farm Landing*, 1882 (China Room)
- Jacob Lawrence – *The Builders*, 1947 (Green Room)
- Simmie Knox – portraits of President Bill Clinton, 2001 (Entrance Hall) and Hillary Rodham Clinton, 2003 (Ground Floor Corridor)