

21st-Century Time Capsule

Artist Lincoln Schatz creates a compelling, dynamic portrait of Washington's players **BY SOPHIE GILBERT**



Smithsonian Secretary G. Wayne Clough and House minority leader Nancy Pelosi as seen in "The Network," a multi-subject video portrait of Washington's powerful.

How do you make a portrait of a city—its industries, residents, nuances, trends, and sense of purpose? "The Network," a groundbreaking video portrait being unveiled at the National Portrait Gallery on December 11, tries to encapsulate modern Washington in a single cutting-edge work. Chicago multimedia artist **Lincoln Schatz** has been working on the project for four years, interviewing 89 Washingtonians, each representing a sphere of influence.

The list is a who's who spanning politics, media, law, science, the military, arts, and sports. Schatz filmed Internet pioneer and Wizards owner **Ted Leonsis** describing his interests in technology and literature; Kennedy Center president **Michael Kaiser** talking about how his grandfather, a New York Philharmonic violinist, fostered his love of the arts; and former undersecretary of Defense **Michèle Flournoy** discussing the ways she thinks the **George W. Bush** administration flouted the rule of law.

Schatz—whose fascination with Washington started when he arrived here at age 19 to intern for Senator **Ted Kennedy**—also interviewed some of the most powerful people in government, from **Eric Cantor** and **Nancy Pelosi** to **Ray LaHood** and **Barney Frank**. The first challenge, Schatz says, was "trying to figure out who the portrait should be of." He did the natural Washington thing: hired a pollster to research who was most widely regarded as influential. The answers? Mostly **Barack Obama**.

Next, Schatz made a list of names of people high up in the federal workforce, but the sheer scale of it made him queasy. So he started with a core of people he dubbed the "seed group" and asked them for recommendations. One of the most responsive was Americans for Tax Reform president **Grover Norquist**, who called Schatz so regularly that Schatz's wife started telling the artist his "boyfriend" was on the phone.

Before filming his subjects, Schatz set about researching their histories, reading books they'd

written, looking for interviews they'd done, trying to ascertain key moments in their lives and their main achievements.

During Schatz's interviews, the subjects were filmed by three cameras, and the topics they discussed were sorted and tagged into more than 9,000 video files. When the work is displayed, it randomly selects a segment of one person discussing an issue, then segues to another person talking about the same thing.

Schatz recalls being surprised when the software presented National Rifle Association president **David A. Keene** immediately followed by Emily's List president **Stephanie Schriock**. They were paired because both spent time talking passionately about freedom.

The portrait itself constantly recalibrates, presenting people in different order. "You can tell a story a lot of ways, and by changing the order you can change the story significantly," says Schatz. "I want this piece to offer a different way of understanding these people."

LOSING STREAK

Paul Clement is the GOP's unofficial superlawyer. Solicitor general during the **George W. Bush** administration and a partner at the DC firm Bancroft, Clement has recently argued some of the biggest pieces of the Republican agenda. Trouble is he can't seem to win. ¶ Clement's peers consider him one of the nation's best appellate advocates. When he argued against **President Obama's** health-care law at the Supreme Court earlier this year, pundits largely agreed he'd wiped the floor with his opponent, solicitor general **Donald Verrilli**. But the justices upheld the legislation. ¶ This fall, Clement lost his second battle at a federal appeals court arguing that the Defense of Marriage Act, which defines marriage as between a man and a woman, is constitutional. The Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in October that DOMA violates the Constitution's Equal Protection Clause. Clement lost the same fight at the First Circuit Court of Appeals in May. The DOMA losses may carry an extra sting, given that Clement very publicly gave up his partnership at 800-lawyer King & Spalding to defend the law. When House Republicans retained Clement to defend DOMA last year, King & Spalding withdrew from the representation amid backlash from clients and the LGBT community. Clement resigned and joined small, conservative Bancroft. ¶ One thing Clement isn't losing is money. The House Administration Committee revealed in October that, under a contract with Bancroft, House Republicans have so far paid nearly \$1.5 million of taxpayer money in legal fees to Clement's firm for the Defense of Marriage representation.

—MARISA M. KASHINO

PHOTOGRAPH BY LINCOLN SCHATZ