



Smithsonian
***Donald W. Reynolds Center for
American Art and Portraiture***

***National Portrait Gallery
Smithsonian American Art Museum***

June 19, 2006

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Staff at the New Lunder Conservation Center Will Wear Mizrahi

Conservators at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the National Portrait Gallery will look their best when the innovative Lunder Conservation Center opens on July 1. Their blue denim work aprons are courtesy of renowned New York designer Isaac Mizrahi.

Mizrahi was asked by a member of the Smithsonian American Art Museum's board of commissioners, who is also a long-time supporter of the designer, to create a garment for the conservation staff. Mizrahi agreed, and came up with the final design after consulting with the staff on their requirements. The aprons have several carefully considered details, including deep, angled pockets for tools and brushes, and satin tape on the back of the ties that drapes to reveal the name of the Center.

The Lunder Conservation Center is the first art conservation facility that allows the public permanent behind-the-scenes views of the preservation work done by museums. Its five state-of-the-art laboratories and studios are visible to the public through floor-to-ceiling glass walls that allow visitors to see the modern collections care and techniques that conservators use to examine and treat the national treasures entrusted to both museums.

The Smithsonian will sell the aprons in the museums' stores (\$85) so visitors can take home a piece of designer museum fashion.

The Lunder Conservation Center is named in honor of the lead donor, The Lunder Foundation, which provided a \$4 million challenge grant that was the catalyst for attracting \$6 million in matching funds from 65 private contributors. Mizrahi donated his design fee.

The museums and the Lunder Conservation Center are located at Eighth and F streets N.W. in the heart of a revitalized downtown arts district, above the Gallery Place/Chinatown Metrorail station (Red, Yellow and Green lines). Hours are from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily. Admission is free. Smithsonian Information: (202) 633-1000; (202) 357-1729 (TTY). Web site: reynoldscenter.org.

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