

Gallery Hopping

By PETER LIBSEY

After you've had your fill of American art history — "Outliers and American Vanguard Art" spans nearly a century — and taken in the latest presidential monument you'll probably be ready to explore some of the other art offerings Washington has on view. Here are some options:

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY In addition to the recently unveiled portraits of Barack and Michelle Obama, the museum is exhibiting "One Life: Sylvia Plath" (through May 20). The visual dimension of the writer's life is explored through photographs, artwork by the author and other objects that help fill in the blanks left behind by her books. If you prefer movie stars to writers, a display focusing on Marlene Dietrich is also on view through April 15. (National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; 202-633-8300, npg.si.edu.)

ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY Art and religion mix in "Encountering the Buddha: Art and Practice Across Asia" at this gallery, part of the Smithsonian's museum of Asian art. The exhibition showcases the diversity of Buddhist art and practices across the continent, and includes a Tibetan shrine room, a video installation about a Sri Lankan stupa and a wide range of sculpture. (Through Nov. 29, 2010, at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution; 202-633-1000, freersackler.si.edu.)

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WOMEN IN THE ARTS The printed work of the Chinese-born American painter Hung Liu is on view. Ms. Liu exploits the sculptural possibilities of the medium, layering her



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Visitors can stop by to see Barack Obama's new presidential portrait.

prints and dripping ink to create varied textures that augment her compositions. (Through July 8 at the National Museum of Women in the Arts; 202-783-5000, nmwa.org.)

SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN ART MUSEUM "Tamayo: The New York Years" (through March 15), featuring the work of the Mexican modernist Rufino Tamayo, is a testament to the rich relationship between the United States and Mexico. Kara Walker's "Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated)," a reimagining of the original prints is also on view at the museum. Here she examines the brutality of slavery and its connection to the imagery of the antebellum South (through March 11). (Smithsonian American Art Museum; 202-633-7970, americanart.si.edu.)

HIRSHHORN MUSEUM Like Ms. Walker, Mark Bradford confronts the same period of American history through "Pickett's Charge," eight abstract paintings that draw on images of Gettysburg, the battle many say determined the course of the Civil War. (Through Nov. 12 at the Hirshhorn Museum; 202-633-1000, hirshhorn.si.edu.)