



Fine Arts Center  
COLORADO SPRINGS

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## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Relive the Golden Age of Jazz Iconic imagery of musical genius at work on display at FAC MODERN

**COLORADO SPRINGS** (April 17, 2007) – In the late 1930s and early 1940s, America experienced the end of the Great Depression and the beginning of World War II. In the world of music, something no less monumental was happening, modern jazz – born out of big band jazz and swing – was being played by the form's greatest players.

A 22-year-old jazz reporter, William P. Gottlieb, was there and he took photos; and many of his pictures became canonical images of the era, the music and the players, like Billie Holiday, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, Frank Sinatra, Louis Armstrong, Nat 'King' Cole, Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington and Charlie 'Bird' Parker.

"Gottlieb stopped photographing jazz musicians in 1948. No one has surpassed him yet." wrote Whitney Balliett in an obituary published in *The New Yorker* following Gottlieb's death last April at the age of 89.

"Gottlieb was not taking pictures; he was photographing a music," Balliett added.

Musician David Was said, in his obituary for NPR's Day to Day program, "Bill will be best remembered as the sharp-eyed witness to one of the most creative musical decades in American history."

"You can almost feel the pop and heat of the flashbulbs in each image," said Was.

The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center is proud to present, ***Portraits from the Golden Age of Jazz: Photographs of William P. Gottlieb***, an exhibition of 71 of Gottlieb's finest works at the FAC MODERN in downtown Colorado Springs in the Plaza of the Rockies.

The **Exhibition Opening Celebration** is May 4 from 5-8 p.m. with music from Double Down in the Jazz Bistro with a full-service bar and a special "Comforts of Jazz and Home Cookin'" complimentary buffet service.

The buffet includes glazed meat loaf, oven-baked chicken breast, grilled cheese and tomato sandwich, cheesy grits and roasted butter corn. The menu is subject to change.

The exhibition runs through June 24.

**FAC MODERN Gallery, Museum Shop:**  
Monday - Thursday: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Friday - Saturday: 9:00 am - 10:00 pm  
Sunday: 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

**FAC MODERN Jazz Bistro:**  
Friday and Saturday: 4:00 pm – midnight  
Closed on Sunday

**ADMISSION:**  
FAC members - Free  
Adults - \$7.50 | Seniors - \$5.25  
Students with I.D. - \$5.25  
Children ages 13 to 17 - \$5.25  
Children ages 3 to 12 - \$3.75  
Children 2 and under - Free

These historic photographs were not taken by a veteran photographer. They were taken by someone who loved jazz and covered the scene for the Washington Post and Down Beat magazine. Times were tough. The publications couldn't afford to send a photographer, so Gottlieb would take photos to accompany his columns, but he would only take two or three pictures per session to save money on flashbulbs and film.

"I tried to capture a subject's personality or inner qualities," Gottlieb wrote. "I reached these elusive goals only occasionally, though sometimes very successfully, as with the shot of Billie Holiday that clearly shows the anguish in her voice."

Gottlieb took photographs from 1938 to 1948. Then he put his camera away and focused on other projects. It wasn't until his retirement in 1979 that Gottlieb revisited these photos and put together a collection for his book, "The Golden Age of Jazz," now in its 12<sup>th</sup> printing.

Gottlieb's images have been published in magazines, books, calendars, posters and on over 250 album and CD covers. In 1994, the U.S. Postal Service features four Gottlieb photos of Billie Holiday, Jimmy Rushing, Mildred Bailey and Charlie Parker on postage stamps and, in 1995, the Library of Congress acquired his collection.

In 2001, many of Gottlieb's iconic images were used in the PBS documentary, *Jazz, A Film by Ken Burns*.

"Jazz music itself is immortal: with these wonderful photographs, the remarkable human beings who made that music are, too," said Burns. "That's Bill Gottlieb's art."

*Portraits from the Golden Age of Jazz: Photographs of William P. Gottlieb*  
is sponsored by Alan and Barbara Steiner and The Gazette.

#### **FAC MODERN ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

The FAC MODERN celebrated its one-year anniversary as the downtown destination for arts and cultural aficionados this past weekend. The FAC MODERN, which opened on April 15 with *Annie Leibovitz: American Music*, comes full circle with *The Golden Age of Jazz*. Currently, the FAC MODERN is showing *Katrina: Catastrophe and Catharsis*, which includes over 150 photographs of the hurricane devastation. The exhibition following Gottlieb is yet another photographic tour de force: *Frida Kahlo: Through the Lens of Nickolas Muray* (July 1-Sept. 30).

Treasures from the FAC permanent collection follow *Frida*. *Faces in the Crowd: Portraiture from the Permanent Collection of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center* runs from Oct. 12 – Jan. 13.

The FAC MODERN, which includes a Museum Shop and the Jazz Bistro, has thrived with shows like *James McNeill Whistler: Selected Works from the Hunterian Art Gallery*; a Rocky Mountain regional offering *Spring Forward: Four Colorado Artists*; and the unveiling of the newly acquired Dale Chihuly glasswork and paintings in late 2006, in *Dale Chihuly: New Works from the Fine Arts Center Collection*.

The FAC MODERN is sponsored by the Gay & Lesbian Fund for Colorado, JPMorgan Chase, and Nor'wood Development Group.

#### **ABOUT THE FINE ARTS CENTER**

Founded in 1936, the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center is a privately funded, non-profit art museum, performing arts theatre, and arts education center. The FAC is currently embarking on a multi-million dollar building initiative. The renovated and expanded Fine Arts Center will open to the public on Aug. 4, 2007, with an *Extremely Grand Opening* celebration featuring a blockbuster traveling exhibition, special guests and events. Visit [www.csfineartscenter.org](http://www.csfineartscenter.org).