



GEORGE W. BUSH  
PRESIDENTIAL CENTER  
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# THE ART OF LEADERSHIP

A PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL DIPLOMACY

## Personal Diplomacy

*"I placed a high priority on personal diplomacy. Getting to know a fellow world leader's personality, character, and concerns made it easier to find common ground and deal with contentious issues. That was a lesson I had picked up from Dad, who was one of the great practitioners of personal diplomacy."-- President George W. Bush*

- Personal diplomacy -- the forging of close relationships between world leaders -- is an important part of Presidential leadership that can strengthen alliances, diffuse disagreements, and foster a greater understanding among nations.
- President George W. Bush used personal diplomacy to build strong relationships with fellow leaders. He used meetings at the White House, Camp David, his ranch in Texas, and abroad to encourage international cooperation and address challenges such as terrorism, tyranny, disease, and the global economy.

## Painting

*"Two years ago, I was sitting up here wondering how to live life to the fullest. And I read Winston Churchill's essay *Painting as a Pastime* and it inspired me. I had never lifted a brush before. I'd never mixed a paint, and so I gave it a whirl." -- President George W. Bush (HCV\*)*

*"What people will be able to come away with is: how do I feel about somebody I painted? That's really the most important thing about it. Painting portraits of my friends and some people who weren't necessarily my friends gave me a sense to convey a feeling I have about them because I got to know them well during the Presidency. I learned about their families and their likes and dislikes to the point where I felt comfortable painting them." -- President George W. Bush (HCV)*

- President Bush began oil painting in 2012 and has painted a variety of subjects, including the leaders featured in "The Art of Leadership: A President's Personal Diplomacy. "
- In 2013, an art instructor from SMU suggested to President Bush that he was uniquely positioned to paint the world leaders he had served with. He agreed, and began work on the series.



## Exhibit Information

- Through “The Art of Leadership: A President’s Personal Diplomacy,” the Bush Center offers visitors an inside look into the important personal relationships developed on the world’s stage, and provides insight into the critical role that one-on-one diplomacy plays in Presidential leadership.
- “The Art of Leadership: A President’s Personal Diplomacy” is made up of two sections.
  - The first section includes a 7-minute film, produced by *The History Channel*, which provides an overview of the exhibit in President and Mrs. Bush’s own words. Dr. Condoleezza Rice is also featured in the film.
  - The second section of the exhibit includes portraits of more than two dozen world leaders. Approximately half of these portraits are presented with supporting photographs, artifacts, and text panels that narrate the unique relationships President Bush cultivated with each leader. More than a dozen additional portraits of world leaders hang in the gallery. Most of these portraits hang gallery-style on the north wall of the exhibit.

## Select Leaders Featured in the Exhibit

Prime Minister Tony Blair

*“He is not only a friend, but is also a visionary leader who has prepared his country to face challenges and opportunities over the horizon. Tony is a man who stands up for his beliefs and has the courage of his convictions.” -- President George W. Bush*

*“I painted a portrait of Tony with a lot of affection. I wanted people to look at him and say he’s a man of conviction. I like him a lot. I liked him when I was President. I liked him when I was painting it.” -- President George W. Bush (HCV)*

- Prime Minister Blair was the first world leader to visit President Bush at Camp David. He visited the White House more than 10 times, and spent time with President Bush at Camp David and on Prairie Chapel Ranch in 2002. President Bush visited Prime Minister Blair at 10 Downing Street, at Chequers, and at his private home.
- In 2009, President Bush awarded Prime Minister Blair the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Featured artifacts:

- Tan Wedgwood jasperware bowl with a black floral bas-relief border and the words, "Am I Not A Man and A Brother?" in bas-relief in the center of the bowl. Given to President Bush by Prime Minister Tony Blair at the 2007 G8 Conference in Germany.
- *Never Give In! Winston Churchill's Finest Speeches*, edited and signed by Winston S. Churchill (Prime Minister Churchill’s grandson), and inscribed to President Bush by Prime Minister Blair.



His Holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama of Tibet

*"The Dalai Lama is a friend of Laura and mine. He captured our hearts because he's a very sweet man and I painted him as sweetly as I could. I met with him quite frequently and we became friends."*

-- President George W. Bush (HCV)

- President Bush met with the Dalai Lama several times at the White House. In 2011, President and Mrs. Bush welcomed the Dalai Lama to their home in Dallas and on to the campus of SMU. His Holiness donated an original copy of the 1963 Tibetan constitution to the George W. Bush Institute's Freedom Collection.
- In 2007, President Bush participated in a Congressional Gold Medal ceremony honoring the Dalai Lama. It was the first time a sitting U.S. President met publicly with His Holiness.

Featured artifacts:

- White khata given to President Bush by the Dalai Lama. The khata is a traditional Tibetan greeting scarf, with eight auspicious symbols of Tibet woven into the fabric.
- Silver and gold Tibetan butter lamp, given to President Bush by the Dalai Lama on the occasion of the Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony for the Dalai Lama on October 17, 2007.

President Vladimir Putin

*"I've worked hard to have a personal relationship with Vladimir Putin so that when I discuss things with him, I can find areas of agreement -- but I've also got a relationship such that I can bring up areas of concern without rupturing relations." -- President George W. Bush*

- Vladimir Putin was the first world leader to call President Bush on September 11, 2001. He opened airspace to American military planes and encouraged former Soviet bloc countries to help the United States by providing basing rights to deploy troops to Afghanistan. President Putin and President Bush worked together on the reduction of nuclear weapons.
- Disagreements did arise between the two world leaders, including over the expansion of NATO and placing missile defenses in Europe. The relationship of President Bush and President Putin was forged in the complexities of 21<sup>st</sup> century foreign policy and the long history of U.S. – Russian relations. In the end, the two men had a frank, working relationship.

Featured artifacts:

- Book of original watercolor portraits of all of the American presidents through George W. Bush, given to President Bush during President Vladimir Putin's visit to Camp David on September 26, 2003. The red velvet bound book is studded with precious gems including rubies, amethysts, and pearls.
- Coins of Russian landmarks and a silver relief depicting the Kremlin. Given by President Putin to President Bush on occasion of their meeting in Brdo Pri Kranju, Slovenia on June 16, 2001.
- Seven gold commemorative coins given by President Putin to President Bush upon their meeting on February 24, 2005. The largest coin is stamped "Bush, Putin, Slovakia Summit 2005" and on reverse "Slovenska Republika, Bratislava, 24.2.2005."



## Chancellor Angela Merkel

*"I think in the portrait that George painted of Angela Merkel you can see that he likes her, that he sees her as really a lovely woman, which she is. She has an absolute commitment to freedom and democracy because she grew up in communist East Germany and she knows what it's like to have to live a cautious life always worried about the government or the Stasi or someone looking over your shoulder." -- Laura Bush (HCV)*

- In 2007, Chancellor Merkel and her husband visited President and Mrs. Bush at Prairie Chapel Ranch. President Bush and Chancellor Merkel met five times in the United States and five times in Germany.
- President Bush and Chancellor Merkel worked together on international security and trade issues.

### Featured artifact:

- Painted wood Christmas candle carousel, given by Chancellor Angela Merkel to President and Mrs. Bush during the chancellor's visit to Crawford. President and Mrs. Bush displayed the carousel in the White House residence during the Christmas season in 2008.

## President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

*"I traveled to Liberia, visited with Ellen -- she has got a strong determination to succeed. And so I painted her as a strong woman -- leader -- and she is." -- President George W. Bush (HCV)*

- President Sirleaf was elected in 2005, after 25 years of economic collapse, political coups, and civil war that left over 250,000 people dead in Liberia. The first woman to lead an African country, she grew her nation's economy, promoted stability with truth and reconciliation commissions, and strengthened democratic institutions. Mrs. Bush attended her Inauguration.
- President Bush and President Sirleaf worked on anti-malaria initiatives and trade, as well as education initiatives to improve Liberia's schools. They met five times at the White House and once in Liberia.
- President Bush awarded President Sirleaf the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2007.

### Featured artifacts:

- Two traditional wooden Liberian masks, given to President Bush by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.
- Grand Cordon in the Most Venerable Order of the Knighthood of the Pioneers gold-tone medal on a green sash and a 4-inch silver brooch replica of the Grand Cordon in the Most Venerable Order of the Pioneers medal. President Sirleaf presented the decoration of honor to President Bush during his visit to Liberia on February 19, 2008.



## Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki

*"I got to know Maliki well, intentionally, because he was the leader of a new democracy. And of course we wanted that democracy to succeed. I spent a lot of time talking to Prime Minister Maliki, listening to his concerns." -- President George W. Bush (HCV)*

- Prime Minister al-Maliki was elected in 2006, during a violent insurgency and faced the task of uniting a fragile governing coalition, increasing security, and building new democratic institutions in Iraq.
- Prime Minister al-Maliki and President Bush worked together on the surge of American troops in 2007 that broke the back of the insurgency and gave the Iraqis an opportunity to build a strong, stable, and free country.
- President Bush met with Prime Minister al-Maliki in the White House and in Iraq.

### Featured artifact:

- Silver palm tree figurine given during official meeting between Prime Minister al-Maliki of Iraq and President Bush at the White House on July 25, 2006.

## Prime Minister Koizumi

*"I called Koizumi to thank him for his leadership of Japan during my Presidency and he said he was going to come to the States. And I said, 'What would you like to do?' He said, 'I want to go to Graceland.' I knew he loved Elvis. I didn't realize how much he loved Elvis. It was a hoot. It was really fun. To me that was a sign of successful personal diplomacy." -- President George W. Bush (HCV)*

- The relationship that the United State shares with Japan illustrates how the spread of democracy can promote peace and stability in the world.
- President Bush met with Prime Minister Koizumi at the White House, at Camp David, at Prairie Chapel Ranch, and in Japan. At the end of Prime Minister Koizumi's time in office, President and Mrs. Bush took him to Graceland in Memphis, TN to see the home of the Prime Minister's favorite singer, Elvis Presley.

### Featured artifacts:

- Arrival Ceremony Program from Prime Minister Koizumi's visit to the White House on June 29, 2006.
- Bamboo arrow set given by Prime Minister Koizumi to President Bush.
- Representation of President Bush on a horse with bow and arrow. Given by Prime Minister Koizumi to President Bush.

\* HVC indicates a quote from *The History Channel* video in the first section of "The Art of Leadership: A President's Personal Diplomacy."