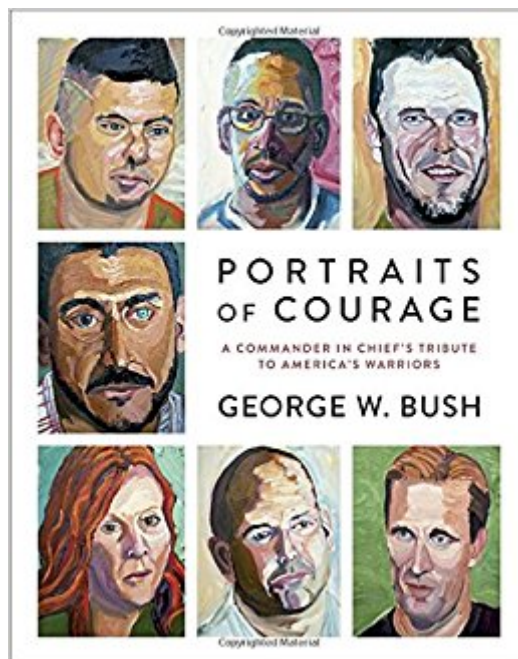




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Portraits Of Courage: A Commander In Chief's Tribute To America's Warriors



Synopsis

#1 New York Times bestseller | "Best Books of the Month" A vibrant collection of oil paintings and stories by President George W. Bush honoring the sacrifice and courage of America's military veterans. With Forewords by former First Lady Laura Bush and General Peter Pace, 16th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Growing out of President Bush's own outreach and the ongoing work of the George W. Bush Institute's Military Service Initiative, *Portraits of Courage* brings together sixty-six full-color portraits and a four-panel mural painted by President Bush of members of the United States military who have served our nation with honor since 9/11 and whom he has come to know personally. Our men and women in uniform have faced down enemies, liberated millions, and in doing so showed the true compassion of our nation. Often, they return home with injuries both visible and invisible that intensify the challenges of transitioning into civilian life. In addition to these burdens, research shows a civilian-military divide. Seventy-one percent of Americans say they have little understanding of the issues facing veterans, and veterans agree: eighty-four percent say that the public has "little awareness" of the issues facing them and their families. Each painting in this meticulously produced hardcover volume is accompanied by the inspiring story of the veteran depicted, written by the President. Readers can see the faces of those who answered the nation's call and learn from their bravery on the battlefield, their journeys to recovery, and the continued leadership and contributions they are making as civilians. It is President Bush's desire that these stories of courage and resilience will honor our men and women in uniform, highlight their family and caregivers who bear the burden of their sacrifice, and help Americans understand how we can support our veterans and empower them to succeed. President Bush will donate his net author proceeds from *PORTRAITS OF COURAGE* to the George W. Bush Presidential Center, a non-profit organization whose Military Service Initiative works to ensure that post-9/11 veterans and their families make successful transitions to civilian life with a focus on gaining meaningful employment and overcoming the invisible wounds of war.

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Customer Reviews

“[A] departure from anything anyone named Bush • or any other President • has published after leaving office . . . Accompanying the portraits are stories, also written by Bush, about how each subject dealt with setback and then mounted a recovery. The paths are anything but straightforward, and Bush’s book, in words and pictures, is a challenge and a road map for anyone who faces difficulty. • -TIME “What an uplifting volume. • It’s a testament to, for sure, the GIs it portrays • and, by implication, to all our soldiers, airmen, and sailors. • It’s also a tale of life’s capacity to surprise, its ability to hand up new and unexpected lives not only to these veterans but also to their constitutional commander. • -Seth Lipsky, New York Post “Evocative and surprisingly adept . . . After staring at the haunting close-up portraits of wounded warriors and reading the searing accounts of their suffering, I’m beginning to understand why this beautifully published book went to No. 1 on The Times’s nonfiction best-seller list. • -Jonathan Alter, the New York Times Book Review “Most of [the portraits] show the head and face full size, seemingly bursting out of the frame with genuine presence and considerable expressive energy . . . There is genuine empathy in Bush’s embrace of the stories told by these soldiers . . . He demonstrates in this book and in these paintings virtues that are sadly lacking at the top of the American political pyramid today: curiosity, compassion, the commitment to learn something new and the humility to learn it in public. • -Philip Kennicott, the Washington Post “[It’s] impossible to look at these 98 extraordinary images without thinking deeply about the artist who made them: A leader who sent troops off to the battlefield, and who, so many years later, spends his days channeling the damaged but determined warriors who came home . . . Spend a little time in the presence of these pictures, and one is overwhelmed by their subjects’ sacrifices, their courage, their strength and, in some cases, their turmoil. • -Task and Purpose

GEORGE W. BUSH is the 43rd President of the United States, serving from 2001 to 2009. He previously served as Governor of Texas. He and his wife, Laura, now live in Dallas, where they founded the George W. Bush Presidential Center at Southern Methodist University. President Bush is also the author of two number one bestsellers: *Decision Points*, his presidential memoir; and *41*, a biography of his father, President George H.W. Bush.

I'm an artist and a Liberal. My hats off to this man for spending his time and talent on something so dignified.

Politics and Presidents are touchy subjects, never more so then they currently are. So while I don't want to cross the line into the contentious, I have to be perfectly honest and say I never would have expected myself purchasing one of President Bush's books. But I watched an interview with him from Jimmy Kimmel's show while he was promoting this book, and when he mentioned that all the proceeds to to supporting causes for veterans, I said "I'm in". Because I think supporting our vets and our troops is something that needs to cross party lines. In this book, former President Bush gives a brief narrative for why he took up painting and why he chose to focus so many on veterans in particular. The main body of the book contains the paintings and then brief vignettes about the individuals in each painting. He closes the book with some ideas that everyone can do to educate themselves about challenges veterans face when they come home and ways the we can stand by them as they navigate those challenges. I bought the kindle book, and it was super well linked. Each individual service member has their own link to their section. Reading the way President Bush writes about these service men actually gave me a new and expanded perspective on him, it is very evident in the way he writes that he does care about their causes and is touched by them personally and as individuals. He mentions in the book that he's a novice, and he's not sure how people will receive his works. I read a piece a couple years back by some artists and critics who weren't very flattering in their assessments, so I imagine he's already been exposed to some of that. Look, it's hard to put yourself out there with artwork, it's so subjective and based on personal tastes and preferences. What one person loves another loathes. I took a drawing class in college and got a B on a project...the professor's only reason was she hated my subject matter, thought it wasn't mature enough, the thrust of her criticism was not about my technique. That's how the world of art goes. Highly opinionated. I think it's true that President Bush's former occupation has given him a platform for public success in his artistic endeavors that many artists don't have, so he has not had to rely strictly on how appealing his works are to others. And

yet, while the style he uses isn't my personal favorite, I do think his portraits convey emotion and give a sense of the personalities of the individuals he's painting, and in my mind, that's what makes a work successful...if it can evoke or convey emotion and expression. So overall, I think this is a well done, well written book that promotes a good cause and I find it to be an interesting and worthwhile read.

Have always been proud of my Commander in Chief and never had a doubt that he was always proud of us and our country. I was told that art should inspire emotion and every painting and story in this book did that with me. These portraits seemed crude to me at first glance, but once I read each story and looked a bit longer at each portrait, I could see that the president managed to capture each person's character in the eyes or mouth, or some other aspect of that individual's personality. Made me a bit teary eyed on occasion.

What an inspiring book! The love and honor is expressed in every brush stroke of the portraits. Truly a must have.

This is an amazing and inspiring book that every American should own. I feel this way because we, as American Citizens, really need to think more about the individuals who volunteer to preserve our freedoms; freedoms we often take for granted. These stories of men and women who have served our country and sacrificed much for us will help each reader to see beyond statistics and see a glimpse of the person who selflessly serves and protects. I have contributed to the Wounded Warriors project because of the wonderful support it provides - it is the least I can do for these brave individuals. I don't want to forget their commitment to the United States and this book is a wonderful tribute to them and to all who serve in any branch of the military and I will treasure it. Thank you President Bush for reminding us of the true meaning of being an American. And by the way, for the reviewer who said this book was printed in China??? really, where did they get that from; my book shows it was printed in the United States.

I suppose I never thought I'd be 5 starring an art book by George W Bush any more than he ever thought he'd be drawing one. But he did and I am. George Bush has both painted the pictures and written the text of "Portraits of Courage: A Commander in Chief's Tribute to America's Warriors". Those "warriors" were men and women who served in the Iraqi and Afghanistan Wars and were - mostly - terribly injured for doing their duty. Most lost limbs or suffered terrible brain traumas. Some

soldiers pictured had lost more than one limb. How does a man (or woman) dealt such a blow, regain their health and their self-confidence and their desire to live again in the wide world? Most of the portraits were painted at golf tournaments and mountain bike rides sponsored by the George W Bush Institute's Military Service Initiative, based in Dallas. Bush's art might best be described as "sorta Lucien Freud-ish". I liked his paintings and could make out emotional connection with the subjects he painted. The unspoken part of the book is the fact that most of these soldiers were wounded in a war - the Iraqi War - that had no business being fought. (I could see the need for the Afghanistan War after 9/11.) My main hope for George W Bush is that he somehow comes to terms with a war that was started under false pretenses and killed and injured many Americans and Iraqis. His administration send these soldiers off and he is working with them on their return. I just wish they hadn't been sent in the first place...

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