

[Prologue](#) | [Exhibition](#) | [Education & Programming](#) | [Visitor Information](#) | [Credits](#)

### Late Night Triad

Part I: *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*

Part II: *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*

Part III: *Late Show with David Letterman*

Jason Salavon's *Late Night Triad* (2003) captures three of America's most influential late-night hosts: Jay Leno, David Letterman, and Conan O'Brien. Recognizing the political and cultural impact of their commentary, Salavon created the video portrait during the opening weeks of the Iraq war. A combination of sixty-four nights of continually taped programs, Salavon's composite, which runs approximately three-and-a-half minutes, accentuates the typical features of the routines deployed by each television personality. Unlike conventional portraiture, we do not recognize these performers from their faces, which cannot be readily deciphered, but rather from their combinations of movement and vocal intonations. Using a program of his own devising to layer video imagery digitally, Salavon expands traditional conceptions of portraiture. In challenging the traditional "transparency" of photographs and video, Salavon reveals the formulas that define the way we present ourselves to the world and that we use to recognize others.



#### *The Late Night Triad*

Jason Salavon (born 1970)

Three synchronized digital video and audio files, 2003

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

© 2003 Jason Salavon

 [Enlarge](#)