

LIFE
AMERICA'S WEEKEND MAGAZINE

Bening, star of *Running With Scissors*

Annette Bening

What I Know Now

(about love, life, and being happy)

George Washington: How He Really Looked • Try the High-Efficiency Workout

WEEKEND OF OCTOBER **20** 2008

LIFE OCTOBER 20, 2008

NO STONE UNTURNED
Data was made flesh (or at least foam and plaster) at StudioES, where references were always on hand. "It's not as if Gilbert Stuart and other portrait artists did a poor job," says Rees. "But [with modern technology], we've made models that seem very real in scale and presence."

NOISING AROUND
Says James Rees of the scanning process: "Think of a beam that travels very slowly over a surface and records every nook and cranny—four hours. It reveals everything."

VOILA! At StudioES, Ivan Schwartz puts the finishing touches on the model of the 57-year-old Washington, as he was dressed for his inauguration. The center model is Washington as 45, commanding troops at Valley Forge in the youthful version, he's 19 and surveying in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Says Rees: "The models actually help you understand the power of Washington as a great leader. He was a wonderful rider; Jefferson called him the best of his day. When he was commanding the troops, there were no microphones. But viewing Washington, at six-foot-two, across a camp or field or when he rode into town was positively inspiring."

CSi: George Washington

IT WASN'T A CRIME SCENE, BUT IT WAS AN INVESTIGATION—A SOPHISTICATED, HIGH-TECH INQUIRY INTO WHAT OUR FIRST PRESIDENT ACTUALLY LOOKED LIKE

By Robert Sullivan • Photographs by Erica Berger

At Mount Vernon, they could not tell a lie: Their main man had a big image problem.

Visitors were coming through here and saying "George Washington was great and all, but he's kind of boring," says James C. Rees, the executive director of what used to be Washington's beloved Virginia estate. "In our minds, he was one of the most attractive, adventurous, and dramatic of our Founding Fathers." But to others, he seemed as flat as a dollar bill.

How to bolster Washington's reputation? Live! Even things up, of course—it's the American way. To that end, a \$60 million makeover was launched; the new Mount Vernon will have its gala debut next Friday, unveiling all sorts of films, displays, and interactive exhibits. Three new tableaux will star—for the first time, says Rees—the real George, in superaccurate life-size models based upon sophisticated scientific inquiry. "I was watching a TV show about the Shroud of Turin, and they said that from the evidence they could figure out what Jesus looked like," says Rees. "I thought, There has to be more physical evidence of Washington. I'm not a scientist, but, what can I say, I do watch CSI." The museum's top brass initiated a forensic examination of the man, who died in 1799, peering at the minute details of portraits, statues, a life mask (derived from the living Washington's face),

THEY WEREN'T WOOD
Physical anthropologist Jeffrey Schwartz used these denatured Washingtons—with hair (or donkey), crow, and human teeth—to help him determine the correct shape of the face.

FACE-LIFT Among other details, a 3-D digital imagery of a 1786 mask of Washington revealed an asymmetrically viewed chin.

HEAD-TO-HEAD Scans were also taken of statues; specifically made no larger than life-size, as Washington requested. This technique revealed an asymmetrically viewed chin.

BUILDING A BETTER GEORGE
Designer Ivan Schwartz of StudioES in New York, poses with Mount Vernon's new Washingtons. Henry Cooke, who made the models' clothes, recalls one fitting at Schwartz's studio: "The face was so life-like, it seemed it could talk. Afterward, when the head was popped off, I thought: That's what would have happened if the Revolution had failed—Washington's head on a pike."

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