

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**FROM THE STREETS OF HARLEM TO INTERNATIONAL CELEBRITY –
JAMES BALDWIN TO BE HONORED ON UNITED STATES POSTAGE STAMP**

WASHINGTON – Author James Baldwin will be honored with a new commemorative postage stamp to be issued by the U.S. Postal Service on July 23 in New York.

Baldwin's essays, novels, plays, short stories and poems explore various subjects, including race relations, the arts and human relationships, while always showing their author's strong moral conscience. His work made him a leading intellectual figure during the years of the civil rights movement in America.

The stamp dedication ceremony will be held in the Langston Hughes Auditorium of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 515 Malcolm X Boulevard, New York, NY. The event is free and open to the public. The stamp is the 20th in the Postal Services' Literary Arts series.

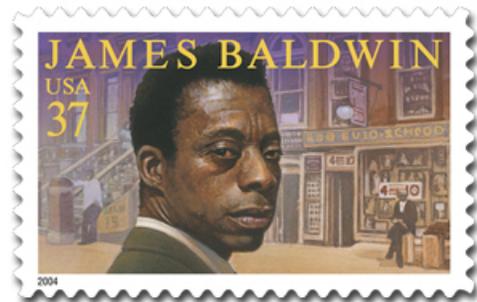
"We are pleased to show our profound respect for James Baldwin by honoring him in our Literary Arts series," said Henry Pankey, vice president, Emergency Preparedness, U.S. Postal Service, who will dedicate the stamp. "His fervent voice in 20th century American literature forced us to think about issues affecting our great nation, and his leadership in the civil rights movement continues to be an inspiration today."

Dr. Maya Angelou, world-renowned author and actor, and Amiri Baraka, poet and author, are scheduled to deliver tributes at the first-day-of-issue ceremony. Actor Avery Brooks will serve as master of ceremonies. Also participating will be actor Ossie Davis, acclaimed star of stage, film and television; Ruby Dee, actor, writer and producer; Howard Dodson, Chief, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; and Reverend Doctor Samuel Joubert, Sr., Pastor Emeritus, Community Baptist Church, Bayside, NY.

The incomparable Boys Choir of Harlem; Odetta, folk music's grand-dame, and actor; and singer Jerry Dixon will provide musical selections.

Stamp artist Thomas Blackshear II based his portrait of Baldwin on a black-and-white photograph taken around 1960, probably in New York. The stamp background is evocative of Baldwin's novel "Go Tell It on the Mountain," set in Harlem, and is based on a photograph by Berenice Abbot taken in Harlem in 1938.

James Baldwin was born on August 2, 1924, in New York City's Harlem Hospital. As a boy, he visited the library often and displayed exceptional intelligence. During his adolescence, Baldwin planned a career as a minister and was active for a time as a young preacher. However, by the time he graduated from high school, he had published articles, plays, fiction and poetry in his school literary magazine, and he knew he wanted to be a writer. He counted Dickens, Dostoevsky and Harriet Beecher Stowe among



the authors who influenced his desire to write. Traces of the preacher remain in the biblical rhythms and allusions in Baldwin's prose.

Baldwin's first novel, "Go Tell It on the Mountain," published in 1953, was partly autobiographical. This account of a young boy's struggle with personal and spiritual issues elicited praise for Baldwin's exceptional talent. His first essay collection, "Notes of a Native Son," published in 1955, enhanced his reputation as a master of American prose.

Baldwin's work eloquently articulated the complexities of race relations during the years when the civil rights movement was at its height. "The Fire Next Time," published in 1963, solidified Baldwin's status; that same year, his success landed him on the cover of Time magazine.

Baldwin's novels include "Giovanni's Room" (1956); "Another Country" (1962); "Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone" (1968); "If Beale Street Could Talk" (1974); and "Just Above My Head" (1979). His plays are "Blues for Mister Charlie" (1964) and "The Amen Corner" (1968). A collection of short stories, "Going to Meet the Man," was published in 1965. Other works include "Jimmy's Blues," a poetry collection published in 1985, and essays and nonfiction including "Nobody Knows My Name" (1961); "No Name in the Street" (1972); "The Devil Finds Work" (1976); "Evidence of Things Not Seen" (1985); a screenplay, "One Day When I Was Lost" (1972); and "The Price of the Ticket," a collection of essays printed in 1985.

James Baldwin received many awards during his lifetime, including France's highest civilian award, commander of the Legion of Honor, presented by President François Mitterrand in 1986. He died at his home in France on November 30, 1987, at the age of 63.

To see the James Baldwin stamp and other images from the 2004 Commemorative Stamp Program, visit the Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop and click on "Release Schedule" in the Collector's Corner.

Current U.S. stamps, as well as a free comprehensive catalog, are available by toll-free phone order at 1 800 STAMP-24. A wide selection of stamps and other philatelic items is also available at the Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop. Beautifully framed prints of original stamp art for delivery straight to the home or office are available at www.postalartgallery.com.

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. An independent federal agency, the Postal Service makes deliveries to more than 141 million addresses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$68 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. Moreover, today's postage rates will remain stable until at least 2006. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume - some 202 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year - and serves seven million customers each day at its 38,000 retail locations nationwide.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Issue:	<i>James Baldwin</i>
Item Number:	456600
Denomination & Type of Issue:	37-cent commemorative
Format:	Pane of 20 (1 design)
Series:	<i>Literary Arts</i>
Issue Date & City:	July 23, 2004, New York, NY 10199
Designer:	Phil Jordan, Falls Church, VA
Illustrator:	Thomas Blackshear II, Colorado Springs, CO
Art Director:	Phil Jordan, Falls Church, VA

Typographer: Phil Jordan, Falls Church, VA
 Engraver: N/A
 Modeler: Joseph Sheeran
 Manufacturing Process: Offset/Microprint "USPS"
 Printer: Ashton Potter (USA) Ltd.
 Printed at: Williamsville, NY
 Press Type: Stevens, Varisize Security Press
 Stamps per Pane: 20
 Print Quantity: 50 million stamps
 Paper Type: Prephosphored, Type II
 Adhesive Type: Pressure-sensitive
 Processed at: Ashton Potter (USA) Ltd.
 Colors: Black, Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, PMS 129 (Yellow)
 Stamp Orientation: Horizontal
 Image Area (w x h): 1.4 x 0.84 in./35.56 x 21.336 mm
 Overall Size (w x h): 1.56 x 0.99 in./39.625 x 25.146 mm
 Full Pane Size (w x h): 7.135 x 5.9 in./181.229 x 149.86 mm
 Plate Size: 180 stamps per revolution
 Plate Numbers: "P" followed by five (5) single digits
 Marginal Markings: © 2003 USPS • Price • Plate numbers in four corners of pane •
 Plate position diagram • Biographical text on back of stamp •
 Barcodes in four corners on back of pane
 Catalog Item Number(s): 456620 Block of 4 — \$1.48
 456630 Block of 10 — \$3.70
 456640 Full Pane — \$7.40
 456661 FDC — \$0.75
 456693 FP w/FDC — \$8.15

HOW TO ORDER THE FIRST-DAY-OF-ISSUE POSTMARK

Customers have 30 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at their local Post Office™, by telephone at 800-STAMP-24, and at the Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop. They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes (to themselves or others), and place them in a larger envelope addressed to:

JAMES BALDWIN COMMEMORATIVE STAMP
 POSTMASTER
 421 8TH AVE RM 2029B
 NEW YORK NY 10199-9998

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by August 21, 2004.

HOW TO ORDER FIRST-DAY COVERS

Stamp Fulfillment Services also offers first-day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service stationery items postmarked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly "USA Philatelic" catalog. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-STAMP-24 or writing to:

INFORMATION FULFILLMENT
 DEPT 6270
 US POSTAL SERVICE
 PO BOX 219014
 KANSAS CITY MO 64121-9014

First day covers remain on sale for at least one year after the stamp's issuance.

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