

Digital Image of Anthony as a Child Created

August 18, 2010

North Adams Transcript

ADAMS -- An image of women's rights leader Susan B. Anthony as a child will be revealed at the home of her birth in Adams this month.

The image portrays Susan at age 6, wearing the simple clothing of a Quaker child in 1826. She is standing in front of the hearth in the kitchen of her home on East Road.

The high-quality digitally produced illustration was created by Diana Walczak of Synthespian Studios. The filmographers specialize in 3-D design and character animation and have produced a stereoscopic film for Radio City Music Hall's Christmas Spectacular, as well as ride films for Busch Gardens and Universal Studios ("The Amazing Adventures of Spider Man"). Their offices are in Hollywood and Williamstown.

The Susan B. Anthony Birthplace Museum provided Walczak with the necessary historical research for reference photos, Quaker clothing and styling to create the image.

"Photography was not developed at the time Susan was a child and lived here in this home," Carol Crossed, president of the museum, said in the news release announcing the unveiling. "The image of Susan standing in front of the kitchen hearth is so endearing. It brings to life this Anthony heritage."

The image, according to experts in the field, is also stunning in its could-be accuracy. In lay terms, the process is the reverse of how a composite sketch artist uses the picture of a kidnapped child and creates an image of how they may appear 15 years later.

"We were fortunate to find 2 frontal images of Susan's face, one at age 28 and one at age 32," Walczak explained in the news release. "Both images show that her eye and eyebrow were higher on her right side than on her left and that her right mouth corner was higher than her left as well. We incorporated these features into our interpretation of a younger version of Susan B. Anthony's facial structure."

Walczak worked with 3-D digital artist, Travis Pinnsonault, who built a 3-D digital database of the little girl based on Walczak's sketches. He went on to texture and light the entire scene and render the one image using the same computer graphics processes Synthespian Studios uses in film and TV production.

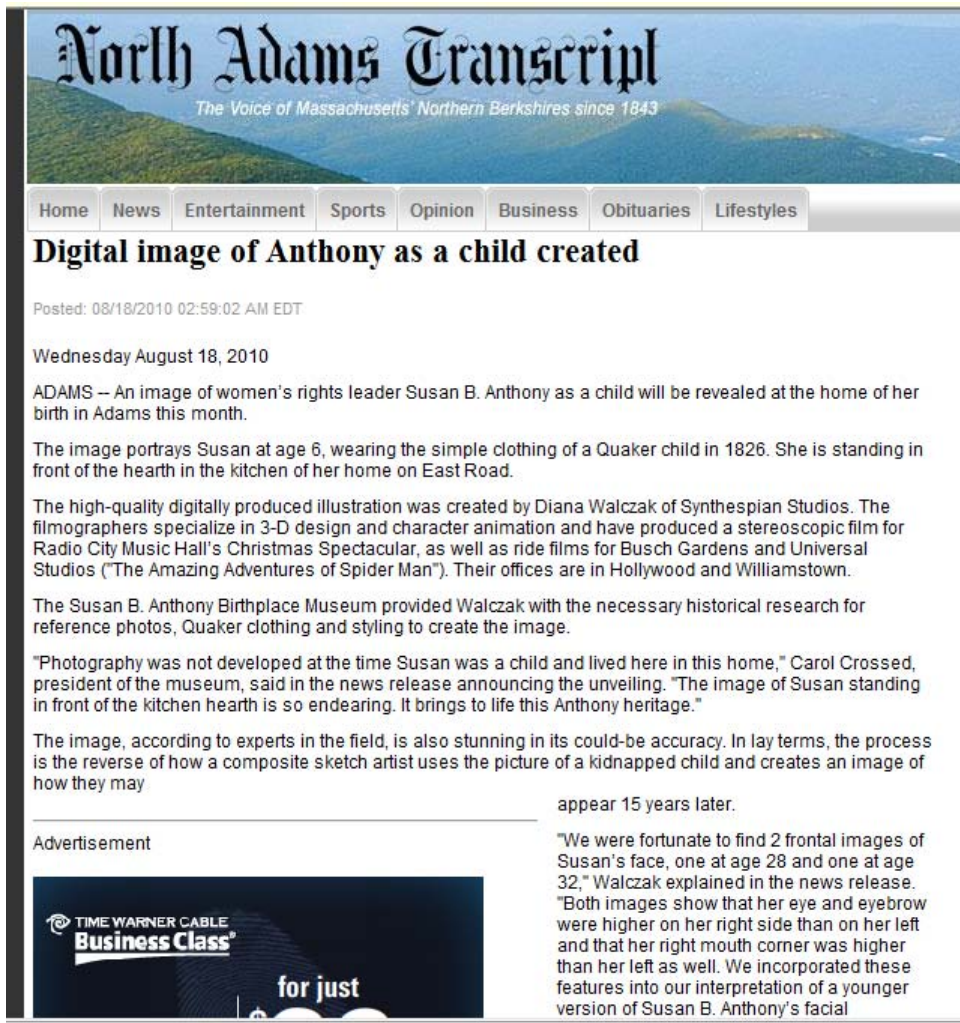
He then passed on the image with separate layers for Walczak to complete in Photoshop. She balanced the layers, and painted new elements, such as hair, facial details, and a cozy fire, which casts a warm glow on the little girl.

"I tried to give the young Susan B. Anthony an innocent, yet curious and determined look," Walczak said in the news release. "I felt highly responsible to be as accurate as possible, deeply

moved as our image gradually came to life, and truly honored to have had the opportunity to create a visualization of one of the world's most important historical figures."

The image will be revealed at the Birthplace, 67 East Road, in conjunction with the anniversary celebration of the Susan B. Anthony Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. It will be available to the viewing public beginning Aug. 21.

Regular museum hours of operation are Friday through Monday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



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