



# editorial

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A Foot in the Past... An Eye to the Future

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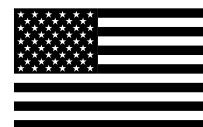
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## facescapes

If you think gridlock exists within the political process in Washington, DC, you should see the gridlock that exists when it comes to changing anything around the National Mall. Not only is there a regulation forbidding a building taller than the Washington Monument, but any new memorial or change of any kind must make it past an interminable number of review committees. Needless to say, this slows the approval process down immensely.

So, it was with great surprise that I learned the National Park Service had agreed to allow artist Jorge Rodriguez-Gerda to create one of his giant face sculptures on five acres of land between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial. I suspect the fact that the land had already been earmarked for the creation of soccer fields had something to do with it, but nonetheless, the National Portrait Gallery project turned out great.

Topcon—along with hundreds of volunteers—provided a great deal of support for the half-million dollar project, using RTK GPS to set the more than 15,000 points necessary. Once the points were established, string was pulled between them and 2,300 tons of light sand and 800 tons of dark potting soil was brought in to create the sculpture. The artist has created these sculptures in Belfast, Amsterdam and Spain, and Topcon has assisted with those projects as well.

The artwork is titled *Out of Many, One*, and is a composite of 50 photographs of men between the ages of 18 and 24 the artist took in the DC area last summer. I went down for the dedication and for sure, when you are standing on the ground, all you see are dark and light bands, but as you can see in the image below—taken from the top of the Washington Monument—from above the face is quite dramatic. We will have an in depth article about it in an upcoming issue.

The artwork won't be there for long, and indeed, the Cuban-born artist says, "The importance of the piece is the whole process of creation, destruction and memory. It's about reflection. Finding the protagonists, how the city comes together to create the work, the narrative, the memory. The piece is all these things combined." ■

