



HIGH MUSEUM OF ART ATLANTA

1280 PEACHTREE STREET, N.E. • ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30309

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CIVIL RIGHTS PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION AT HIGH MUSEUM OF ART TO
COMMEMORATE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF 1968**

***Featuring iconic historical images and contemporary works honoring the legacy
of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the civil rights movement***

ATLANTA, Sept. 18, 2017 – Taking its title from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s final speech before his assassination in 1968, the High Museum of Art’s photography exhibition “A Fire That No Water Could Put Out’: Civil Rights Photography” (Nov. 4, 2017, through May 27, 2018) will reflect on the 50th anniversary of that tumultuous year in American history. The more than 40 prints to be featured are drawn in large part from the Museum’s collection of photography documenting the civil rights movement, which is among the most significant in the world. Iconic historical images will be presented alongside works by contemporary photographers that illuminate the legacy of the movement.

“While Dr. King’s assassination is often cited as the closing bookend of the civil rights movement, activism over the past 50 years has continued efforts to advance racial equality and justice in the United States,” said Erin Nelson, the High’s curatorial assistant for photography and curator of the exhibition. “Through some of the most powerful images from our civil rights collection, including recent acquisitions, this exhibition underscores photography’s pivotal role in chronicling the important moments that shaped our past and the current events and perspectives that will influence our future.”

Presented in the High’s Lucinda Weil Bunnell Gallery for Photography, the exhibition will be arranged into three sections that explore the era of Dr. King’s leadership, the year of his death and contemporary reflections on the civil rights movement’s enduring legacy. Artists featured include renowned 20th century photographers Gordon Parks, Danny Lyon, Charles Moore, Roy DeCarava, James Hinton, Steve Schapiro, Diane Arbus, Ernest Withers, Doris Derby and Burk Uzzle as well as notable contemporary photographers David Alekhuogie, Dawoud Bey, Jason Lazarus and Sheila Pree Bright. The works on view demonstrate these artists’ wide-ranging approaches to documenting and responding to the civil rights movement, from the photojournalistic to the poetic, from tender portraiture to conceptual landscapes.

Highlights of the exhibition will include:

- **Gordon Parks (American, 1912–2006), “Outside Looking In, Mobile Alabama,” 1956.** In this photograph, a group of black children look through a fence at a whites-only playground. The image took up almost a full page in Parks’ Life magazine photo essay “The Restraints: Open and Hidden,” which documented how segregation affected the lives of a black family in the Jim Crow South.
- **Charles Moore (American, 1931–2010), “Martin Luther King Jr. Arrested, Montgomery, Alabama,” 1958.** On Sept. 3, 1958, Dr. King was arrested for loitering at the Montgomery courthouse after being harassed and denied entrance to a hearing for fellow civil rights activist Ralph Abernathy. Moore, a local photographer, followed the commotion from the street into the police station, where he captured this image of Dr. King being manhandled by the arresting officers. The Associated Press published Moore’s photograph, which propelled his involvement in the civil rights movement.
- **Steve Schapiro (American, born 1936), “Dr. Martin Luther King’s Motel Room after He Was Shot, Memphis, Tennessee,” 1968.** A staff photographer for Life magazine, Schapiro was sent to Memphis immediately following the assassination of Dr. King on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel on April 4, 1968. Upon arrival, he was granted access to Dr. King’s motel room by one of King’s aides. Schapiro captured this photograph of some of the last things that Dr. King touched, including a copy of Soul Force magazine and a Styrofoam coffee cup.
- **Eight recently acquired prints by American photojournalist Burk Uzzle (American, born 1938),** a distinguished member of the Magnum Photos cooperative. The works include poignant scenes from the March in Memphis, led by Coretta Scott King just four days after her husband’s death, as well as some of the most iconic images of Dr. King’s funeral procession in Atlanta.
- **Four photographs by Atlanta-based Dr. Doris Derby (American, born 1939)** that document her experience working for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in late 1960s Mississippi. Her portraits of women lawyers, politicians, grass-roots organizers and volunteers illustrate the civil rights movement’s reliance on collaboration between hundreds of unsung heroes working for change in their communities.
- **Two works by Los Angeles–based photographer David Alekhuogie (American, born 1986)** from “Baptism,” a 2013 body of work he shot in and around Atlanta during a self-described pilgrimage to the primary site of the civil rights movement and other important events in black history.
- **A powerful diptych from a recent acquisition of work by Chicago-based artist Dawoud Bey (American, born 1953).** The 2014 photograph, from his portfolio “Birmingham: Four Girls, Two Boys,” meditates on the lives lost during the 1963 16th Street Baptist Church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama.
- **Four photographs by Atlanta-based Sheila Pree Bright (American, born 1967)** that document the 50th anniversary of the Selma, Alabama, voting rights march as well as Black Lives Matter protests in Atlanta, Baltimore and Ferguson, Missouri.

Related programming:

On Dec. 1, 2017, at 7:30 p.m. in the Hill Auditorium, the High will present a conversation between photographers Derby and Pree Bright, moderated by Spelman College President Dr. Mary Schmidt Campbell, where they will discuss their work and the historical and contemporary perspectives presented in the exhibition.

Exhibition Organization and Support

This exhibition is organized by the High Museum of Art, Atlanta. This exhibition is made possible by Premier Exhibition Series Partner Bank of America; Exhibition Series Sponsors Delta Air Lines, Inc., and Turner; Premier Exhibition Series Supporters Anne Cox Chambers Foundation, the Antinori Foundation, Ann and Tom Cousins, Sarah and Jim Kennedy, Jane and Hicks Lanier, Louise Sams and Jerome Grillhot, and wish foundation; and Contributing Exhibition Series Supporters Barbara and Ron Balsler, Corporate Environments, Peggy Foreman, James F. Kelly Charitable Trust, Jane Smith Turner Foundation, The Lubo Fund, Margot and Danny McCaul, and Joyce and Henry Schwob. Generous support is also provided by the Alfred and Adele Davis Exhibition Endowment Fund, Anne Cox Chambers Exhibition Fund, Barbara Stewart Exhibition Fund, Dorothy Smith Hopkins Exhibition Endowment Fund, Eleanor McDonald Storza Exhibition Endowment Fund, Forward Arts Foundation Exhibition Endowment Fund, Helen S. Lanier Endowment Fund, Howell Exhibition Fund, and John H. and Wilhelmina D. Harland Exhibition Endowment Fund.

About the High's Civil Rights Photography Collection

With more than 300 works, the High Museum of Art holds one of the world's most significant collections of photographs documenting the civil rights movement. These images were made by committed artists, activists and journalists who risked injury, arrest and even death to document this critical moment of change in the United States. The collection includes deep holdings by Gordon Parks, Ernest Withers, Danny Lyon, Bruce Davidson, Leonard Freed and Charles Moore as well as documentation of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the activities of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. Recently, this collection has been expanded to include work by contemporary photographers that explores issues of civil rights and the movement's legacy in their work.

About the High Museum of Art

The High is the leading art museum in the southeastern United States. With more than 16,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American art; a substantial collection of historical and contemporary decorative arts and design; significant holdings of European paintings; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography, folk and self-taught art, and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists. Through its education department, the High offers programs and experiences that engage visitors with the world of art, the lives of artists and the creative process. For more information about the High, visit high.org.

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