INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY

MEDIA RELEASE

ICP ACQUIRES THOMAS MCGOVERN'S *BEARING WITNESS (TO AIDS)* PORTFOLIO

NEW YORK, NY (September 30, 2016) – The International Center of Photography (ICP), the leading institution dedicated to photography and visual culture, today announced the important acquisition of 60-plus images created by photographer Thomas McGovern, all of which were published in his 1999 book *Bearing Witness (to AIDS)*. In addition to the 60-plus vintage silver prints, the donation includes several hours of audio featuring interviews with people affected by AIDS as well as correspondence received by the artists in response to his request for project participants. The prints will be catalogued, digitized, and made available for viewing on the ICP website.

"We're honored to be entrusted as a repository for Thomas McGovern's important work regarding those affected by AIDS," says Mark Lubell, Executive Director, ICP. "This treasure trove of images and documentation from the front line of the ongoing struggle is an excellent addition to our collection—which includes photographs by Brian Weil, Gideon Mendel, and others who also documented the AIDS epidemic here and abroad."

McGovern's *Bearing Witness (to AIDS)* spans 1987–1997, a time of intense AIDS activism, which forced the pandemic into the cultural and political dialogue. People with HIV/AIDS, rejecting the label of "victim," are seen actively taking control of their lives and their medical treatment in this straightforward and sober account.

"*(Bearing Witness)* was an attempt to merge the didactic and the expressive...I hoped to demonstrate some of the depth of people's experiences about AIDS, and particularly, my own experience of it," says Thomas McGovern. "I'm pleased to see the images—and my associated research and correspondence—be added to the venerable ICP archives as a way to extend its legacy of bearing of witness to plights of those affected by AIDS."

ABOUT ICP

The International Center of Photography (ICP) is the world's leading institution dedicated to photography and visual culture. Through our new museum—located at 250 Bowery—as well as our exhibitions, school, public programs, and community outreach, we offer an open forum for dialogue about the role images play in our culture. Since our founding, we have presented more than 700 exhibitions and offered thousands of classes, providing instruction at every level. ICP is a center where photographers and artists, students, and scholars can create and interpret the world of the image, exploring photography and visual culture as mediums of empowerment, and catalysts for wide-reaching social change.

These newly acquired works will be digitized and viewable in the near future at www.icp.org/browse.

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