



ICP Receives Historic Gift from The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation



NEW YORK, NY (November 15, 2021) — The International Center of Photography (ICP) is excited to announce a recent major gift from **The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation** to name **The Bern and Ronny Schwartz Special Collections Room**, adjacent to ICP's William Randolph Hearst Library at 79 Essex Street on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

The Bern and Ronny Schwartz Special Collections Room will house ICP's expert team of librarians and specialists who will act as an essential resource to more than 3,500 students who partake in over 300 courses at ICP each year. Faculty at ICP will be able to include on-site visits to The Bern and Ronny Schwartz Special Collections Room in their curriculum.

This gift provides ICP students with several enriching opportunities, including hands-on learning experiences and assistance navigating professional research interests. Librarians and specialists at ICP

supported by this gift will be able to direct students toward archival materials, publications, and other resources to help develop their photographic vision.

Adjoining the library and ICP's administrative offices, The Bern and Ronny Schwartz Special Collections Room will provide students with access to ICP's unique photographic special collection, including first editions of mid-20th-century American and European documentary photography books, illustrated periodicals and the digitized archives of Robert and Cornell Capa, Chim, Weegee, and *LIFE Magazine*. In the new facility, ICP's students will have a rare opportunity to study unscanned negatives, audio materials, historic Lower East Side imagery through a space to engage intimately with the collection.

"To study from the source, to handle the pages of our histories – the dedicated Bern and Ronny Schwartz Special Collections Room means that our community, from our students and alumni to our instructors and staff as well as photography's historians to our interested neighbors, will all have the opportunity to learn directly from the very books that illustrate our discipline's historical beginnings, as well as the important histories of ICP's founders, and the legacy of photography in our neighborhood in the Lower East Side," says Anne Massoni, Managing Director of Education at ICP. "We are thrilled that this resource will be available to our community for generations to come."

Since the 1970s, ICP has been building its extensive collection of art books, periodicals, and exhibition catalogues. Connected to The Bern and Ronny Schwartz Special Collections Room, The William Randolph Hearst Library is a central hub for more than 70,000 students, visiting scholars, and the public. This library space contains a rotating selection of ICP's best resources and archival materials from its 40,000-volume collection of books.

The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation's historic contribution to ICP parallels the re-opening of its on-site School Full-Time Programs on October 4, 2021. Additionally, the recent arrival of ICP's new Executive Director, David E. Little on September 13, 2021 brings a resurgence to ICP's commitment to uplifting and embodying the practice of socially concerned photography.

"We could not be more grateful to The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation for their longstanding friendship with ICP and are honored to name this intellectual center in our new home," says ICP's Executive Director, David E. Little. "The Bern and Ronny Schwartz Special Collections Room is a unique resource in the Lower East Side dedicated to photographic research and remains a testament to the Schwartz's legacy and the shared values between Bern and Ronny Schwartz and ICP. It will serve as a vital scholarly resource for our international cohort of practicing artists and visitors for generations to come."

A critical selection of Bern Schwartz's dye transfer photographic prints was donated by the Foundation to ICP's collection in 1983 and was the focus of the exhibition *British Contemporaries: Portraits by Bern Schwartz* at ICP's museum the same year. The exhibition highlighted a wide range of distinguished Britons who sat for Bern Schwartz in 1977 and 1978 including Sir Laurence Olivier, Lady Diana Cooper, Alistair Cooke, the Duke of Marlborough and David Hockney among others. This longstanding relationship between Schwartz and ICP continues with the addition of The Bern and Ronny Schwartz Special Collections Room.

About Bern Schwartz

At the age of 60 businessman Bern Schwartz transformed his long-term hobby of photography into a new career. His fresh ambition was solidified when ICP's founding director Cornell Capa introduced Schwartz to [Philippe Halsman](#) in 1975 after a lecture by the master portrait photographer. Convinced by his enthusiasm, Halsman took Schwartz on as a student granting him a number of private sessions over several years. Schwartz drew on Halsman's expertise and spirited technique to help develop his own personal approach to portrait photography. Halsman later commented, "I never had a more enthusiastic or dedicated student." Schwartz photographed some of the most accomplished artists and politicians of his day. He had special entrée into British society where his work is nearly a catalog of creative and powerful personalities of the mid-1970s. Most of ICP's prints are of British subjects taken during

Schwartz's most active period 1976-77.
For more information visit www.bernschwartz.org.

About the Bern Schwartz Family Foundation

Named after the businessman and portrait photographer, The Bern Schwartz Family Foundation seeks to advance public knowledge and appreciation of photography as an art form. It endeavors to promote and maintain high standards consistent with the examples of portrait photographs taken by Schwartz and other noted photographers. The Foundation sponsors educational projects and initiatives in museums, libraries, schools and universities and donates photographs by Bern Schwartz from its archive.

About the International Center of Photography

The International Center of Photography (ICP) is the world's leading institution dedicated to photography and visual culture. Cornell Capa founded ICP in 1974 to champion "concerned photography"—socially and politically minded images that can educate and change the world. Through our exhibitions, education programs, community outreach, and public programs, ICP offers an open forum for dialogue about the power of the image. Since its inception, ICP has presented more 700 exhibitions, provided thousands of classes, and hosted a wide variety of public programs. ICP launched its new integrated center on Manhattan's Lower East Side in January 2020. Located at 79 Essex Street, ICP is the cultural anchor of Essex Crossing, one of the most highly anticipated and expansive mixed-use developments in New York City. ICP pays respect to the original stewards of this land, the Lenape people, and other indigenous communities. Visit icp.org to learn more about the museum and its programs.

ICP Statement of Accessibility and Inclusion

ICP is committed to offering space and programs that are accessible to all audiences. We believe that diversity, equity, and inclusion are values that are integral to offering an open forum for dialogue around photography and visual culture that is open to all. Through this lens, we hope to engage, educate, and inspire our visitors, students, and community at large.

ICP Land Acknowledgement

The International Center of Photography is on the island known as Mannahatta (Manhattan) in Lenapehoking, the homeland of the Lenape people. ICP pays respect to the original stewards of this land, the Lenape and other indigenous peoples, and is committed to supporting the inter-tribal Native American, First Nations, and Indigenous communities that continue to thrive in New York City. This acknowledgement demonstrates a commitment to beginning the process of dismantling the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism through our exhibitions, classes, and programming.

Press Contacts

For press inquiries, please email press@icp.org.