



79 Essex Street
New York, NY 10002
icp.org



Barron Claiborne, Biggie Smalls, *King of New York*, Wall Street, New York, 1997.

The International Center of Photography Opens New Home with Inaugural Exhibition *CONTACT HIGH: A Visual History of Hip-Hop*

On View

January 25–
May 18, 2020

Media Preview

Thurs., January 23
11 AM–1 PM

RSVP

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Location

79 Essex Street
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NEW YORK, NY (JANUARY 10, 2020) — The International Center of Photography (ICP) will open its new integrated center at Essex Crossing on Manhattan’s Lower East Side with *CONTACT HIGH: A Visual History of Hip-Hop*, one of four inaugural exhibitions. It will be on view at ICP at 79 Essex Street from January 25 to May 18, 2020.

Produced and originated at the Annenberg Space for Photography, Los Angeles’s premier destination for photography, *CONTACT HIGH: A Visual History of Hip-Hop* is a journey through nearly four decades of photography, documenting a movement that impacted music, politics, race relations, fashion, and the culture at large. Curated by Vikki Tobak, based on the bestselling book of the same name, and with creative direction by Fab 5 Freddy, the exhibition includes nearly 150 works from 60 photographers, including Janette Beckman, Jamel Shabazz, and Gordon Parks.

This expanded *CONTACT HIGH* exhibition includes nearly 10 new works and more than 75 unedited contact sheets from Barron Claiborne’s iconic Notorious B.I.G. portraits to early images of Jay-Z, Kendrick Lamar, and Kanye West. It will also display the Dapper Dan jacket made for Rakim and the crown worn by the Notorious B.I.G.

“*CONTACT HIGH* celebrates a musical genre that speaks truth to power and the photographers who played a critical role in bringing hip-hop’s visual culture to the global stage. It provides a rare, inside look at the work of hip-hop photographers through their unedited contact sheets,” said Tobak.

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“ICP is thrilled to open our new space on Manhattan’s Lower East Side with *CONTACT HIGH* and bring this important work to a New York City audience. As relevant now as when they were made, the images in this exhibition reveal complex and nuanced negotiations of self-presentation—foreshadowing our own selfie age—within and without the confines and stereotypes of the hip-hop scene,” said Mark Lubell, ICP’s Executive Director.

“The overwhelming number of visitors in the Los Angeles region to *CONTACT HIGH* was a testament to the importance and impact of these images,” said Wallis Annenberg, president and CEO of the Annenberg Foundation. “The role these photographers played in shaping hip-hop culture and beyond is incredible. It’s only right that our most popular exhibit to-date come to New York City, the birthplace of hip-hop.”

The exhibit also includes a documentary short film featuring *CONTACT HIGH* photographers at work and in conversation, including Barron Claiborne, Brian “B+” Cross, Eric Coleman, Estevan Oriol, Jorge Peniche, Jamel Shabazz, Janette Beckman, Joe Conzo, Jack McKain, Dana Scruggs, and Danny Clinch. The film is produced by the Annenberg Foundation and Radical Media.

During the run of the exhibition, Tobak and several photographers featured in *CONTACT HIGH* will participate in public programs and other events for students, museumgoers, ICP members, and the general public. In addition, new exhibition-related retail products will be available exclusively in ICP’s new shop. More details will be announced in the coming weeks.

About ICP

The International Center of Photography 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. Visit icp.org to learn more.

About Annenberg Space for Photography

Annenberg Space for Photography is a cultural destination dedicated to exhibiting both digital and print photography in an intimate environment. The space features state-of-the-art, high-definition digital technology, traditional prints by some of the world’s most renowned photographers, and a selection of emerging photographic talents as well. The venue, an initiative of the Annenberg Foundation and its trustees, is the first solely photographic cultural destination in the Los Angeles area, creating a new paradigm in the world of photography. Visit annenbergphotospace.org to learn more.

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About Contact High

The Contact High project celebrates the legendary photographers who have played critical roles in bringing hip-hop culture imagery onto the global stage. Visit contacthighproject.com to learn more.

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Special Thanks

CONTACT HIGH: A Visual History of Hip-Hop, produced and originated at the Annenberg Space for Photography, is created by Vikki Tobak and Creative Director Fab 5 Freddy. This exhibition is based on the book *Contact High: A Visual History of Hip-Hop* by Vikki Tobak.

CONTACT HIGH was created in partnership with United Photo Industries.

CONTACT HIGH is made possible by CÎROC Ultra-Premium Vodka and Crown Royal Regal Apple.

Exhibitions at ICP are supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

Additional exhibition support is provided by the Joseph and Joan Cullman Foundation for the Arts, Inc.



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