



# INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY



Hank Willis Thomas and Emily Shur. *Freedom of Worship*, 2018. Image courtesy of Hank Willis Thomas, Emily Shur, and For Freedoms.



Sheng Qi, *Memories (Me)*, 2000. International Center of Photography, Purchase, with funds provided by Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz, 2004 (7.2004) © Sheng Qi

## MEDIA RELEASE

# ICP MUSEUM PRESENTS *FOR FREEDOMS: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?* AND *YOUR MIRROR: PORTRAITS FROM THE ICP COLLECTION*

### ON VIEW

February 8–April 28, 2019

### MEDIA PREVIEW

February 5, 2019 • 11 AM–1 PM

### LOCATION

ICP Museum • 250 Bowery, New York, NY

**NEW YORK, NY (FEBRUARY 2019)** – The International Center of Photography (ICP) proudly presents its Winter/Spring 2019 exhibitions: *For Freedoms: Where Do We Go From Here?* and *Your Mirror: Portraits from the ICP Collection*. Both open February 8 and will be on view through April 28, 2019.

In the wake of the 2018 midterm elections, ICP’s new exhibition *For Freedoms: Where Do We Go From Here?* explores the role of art and visual representation in American civic life through the work of the For Freedoms collective. The exhibition features work from their 50 State Initiative—composed of a network of over 300 artists and 200 institutional partners—which featured concurrent exhibitions, art installations, and public programs as well as a nationwide artist-designed billboard campaign in all 50 states including DC and Puerto Rico, in the lead up to the midterm elections. Also central to the 50 State Initiative is the collective’s series of photographs that re-envision American artist Norman Rockwell’s *Four Freedoms* paintings—depicting freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear, as articulated by Franklin D. Roosevelt’s 1941 State of the Union address—which will be on the view for the first time. *For Freedoms’* stylized scenes of the everyday reference Rockwell’s iconic style while bringing new, more inclusive representations of the country to the discussion of our core values. Members of For Freedoms will be in residence at the ICP Museum, which will serve as the collective’s headquarters for the duration of the exhibition.

“The ICP Museum show marks the first time that audiences will be able to view the 50 State Initiative and Four Freedoms images displayed side-by-side as a full series,” says Mark Lubell, Executive Director of the International Center of Photography. “We’re pleased that the ICP Museum will serve as an active space in which members of For Freedoms, nonprofits, and the public are invited to discuss the importance of civic engagement and to develop educational programming based on the project.”

The second exhibition—*Your Mirror: Portraits from the ICP Collection*—surveys the nuanced ways people present themselves for the camera, how and by whom they are represented, and who is deemed worthy

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of commemoration. Featuring a range of images including studio portraits, snapshots, and documentary photographs—all drawn from the ICP Collection—this exhibit features a daguerreotype of a bedridden woman by Southworth & Hawes, a cart-de-visite featuring Sojourner Truth holding her knitting, Samuel Fosso’s performative self-portraits, as well as an FBI wanted poster.

“We live in a hyper-photographic culture, where we are creating and capturing images of ourselves and others at a rapid pace,” says Erin Barnett, ICP’s director of exhibitions and collections. “With *Your Mirror*, which explores the historic context of portraiture, we aim to gain understanding of the ways in which people made—or didn’t make—decisions about how they were presented for the camera and for society. There couldn’t be a more important time to examine the ways in which photography shapes our ideas about others and ourselves.”

“ICP was found by Cornell Capa in 1974 to preserve the legacy of ‘concerned photography’—images created as a means of action and social change. ICP’s mission endures even as the medium and practices of imagemaking have evolved,” says Lubell. “Thought-provoking and engaging shows like *Your Mirror* and *For Freedoms* help us look at and learn from the past—but set our eyes on the future. There’s no more fitting way to close out our time at 250 Bowery and set the stage for the reunification of our Museum and School at Essex Crossing in fall 2019.”

*For Freedoms: Where Do We Go From Here?* is organized by Ava Hess, exhibitions department manager, in collaboration with For Freedoms. *Your Mirror: Portraits from the ICP Collection* is curated by Erin Barnett, director of exhibitions and collections, and Claartje van Dijk, assistant curator, collections.

*Your Mirror: Portraits from the ICP Collection* has been made possible by the generous support of ICP’s Exhibitions and Acquisitions Committees and First Republic Bank.

*For Freedoms: Where Do We Go From Here?* has been made possible by the generous support of the ICP Exhibitions Committee.

Exhibitions at ICP are supported, in part, by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. Additional exhibition support is provided by The Andre & Elizabeth Kertesz Foundation and the Joseph and Joan Cullman Foundation for the Arts, Inc.

## ABOUT FOR FREEDOMS

Founded in 2016 by artists Hank Willis Thomas, Eric Gottesman, and others, For Freedoms is a collective of artists and a platform for creative civic engagement, discourse, and direct action. Inspired by American artist Norman Rockwell’s paintings of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s *Four Freedoms* (1941)—freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear—For Freedoms’ exhibitions, installations, and public programs use art to deepen public discussions on civic issues and core values, and to advocate for equality, dialogue, and civic participation. As a nexus between art, politics, commerce, and education, For Freedoms aims to inject anti-partisan, critical thinking that fine art requires into the political landscape through programming, exhibitions, and public artworks. In 2018, For Freedoms launched the 50 State Initiative: the largest creative collaboration in US history.

## ABOUT ICP

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 preserve the legacy of “concerned photography”—the creation of socially and politically-minded images that have the potential to educate and change the world—and the center’s mission endures today, even as the photographic medium and imagemaking practices have evolved. Through its exhibitions, school, public programs, and community outreach, ICP offers an open forum for dialogue about the role that photographs, videos, and new media play in our society. To date,

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it has presented more than 700 exhibitions and offered thousands of classes at every level. ICP brings together photographers, artists, students, and scholars to create and interpret the realm of the image. Here, members of this unique community are encouraged to explore photography and visual culture as mediums of empowerment and as catalysts for wide-reaching social change. Visit [icp.org](http://icp.org) to learn more.

The institution is slated to reunite its Museum and School at Essex Crossing on New York's Lower East Side in fall 2019.

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