



JENKINS JOHNSON GALLERY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gordon Parks: Centennial

February 21 – April 27, 2013



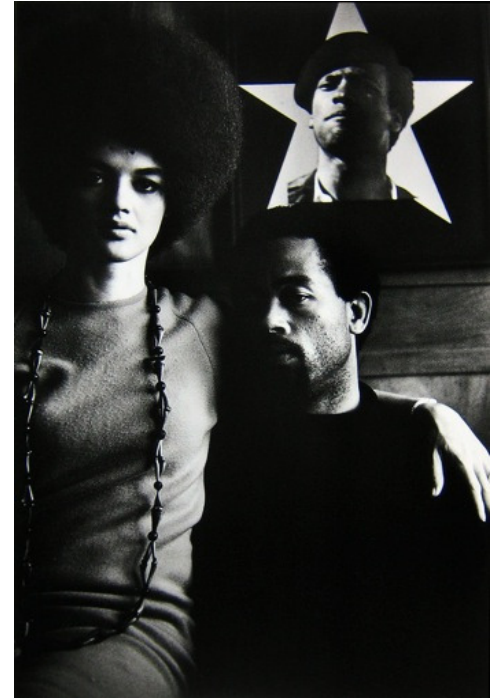
American Gothic, Washington, D.C., 1942

Gelatin silver print. © The Gordon Parks Foundation
Courtesy of Jenkins Johnson Gallery



Department Store, Birmingham, Alabama, 1956

Pigment print. © The Gordon Parks Foundation
Courtesy of Jenkins Johnson Gallery



Eldridge Cleaver and His Wife, Kathleen, Algiers, Algeria, 1970

Gelatin silver print. © The Gordon Parks Foundation
Courtesy of Jenkins Johnson Gallery

Gordon Parks is the most important black photographer in the history of photojournalism. Long after the events that he photographed have been forgotten, his images will remain with us, testaments to the genius of his art, transcending time, place and subject matter.

Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Director of the W.E.B. Du Bois Research Center for African American Research at Harvard University.

San Francisco — In celebration of the 100th birthday of Gordon Parks, one of the most influential African American photographers of the 20th century, **Jenkins Johnson Gallery** in collaboration with The Gordon Parks Foundation presents **Gordon Parks: Centennial**, on view from February 21 through April 27, 2013. Gordon Parks, an iconic photographer, writer, composer, and filmmaker, would have turned 100 on November 30, 2012. Jenkins Johnson Gallery will host an opening reception on Thursday, February 21, from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. Concurrent with the exhibition, **Macy's** Union Square and the American Black Film Festival will be celebrating the artist's centennial with *Gordon Parks: American Icon* an exhibition that runs throughout the month of February including a reception at Macy's Thursday, February 21st from 6:00 – 8:00 pm.

The exhibition will survey works spanning six decades of the artist's career starting in 1940. The exhibition consists of more than ninety gelatin silver and pigment prints, including selections from *Life* magazine photo essays: *Invisible Man*, 1952; *Segregation Story*, 1956; *The Black Panthers*, 1970; and *Flavio*, 1960, about favelas in Brazil. Also included in the exhibition is his reinterpretation of *American Gothic* and his elegant depictions of artists like Alexander Calder, fashion models, and movie stars.

Noteworthy highlights include groundbreaking prints from the **Invisible Man** series which unfolds a visual narrative based on Ralph Ellison's award winning novel. The images capture the essence of social isolation and the struggle of



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a black man who feels invisible to the outside world. Also on view will be a number of color prints from **Segregation Story, 1956**, which are a part of a limited edition portfolio of twelve color photographs with an essay by Maurice Berger. Newly released, these images were produced from transparencies found in early 2012, discovered in a storage box at The Gordon Parks Foundation. In the late 1960s *Life* magazine asked Gordon Parks to report on the Oakland, California-based **Black Panther Party**, including Eldridge Cleaver. Parks' striking image of *Eldridge Cleaver and His Wife, Kathleen, Algiers, Algeria, 1970* depicts Cleaver recovering from gun wounds after being ambushed by the Oakland police as well as an insert of Huey P. Newton, co-founder of the party along with Bobby Seale.

About Gordon Parks

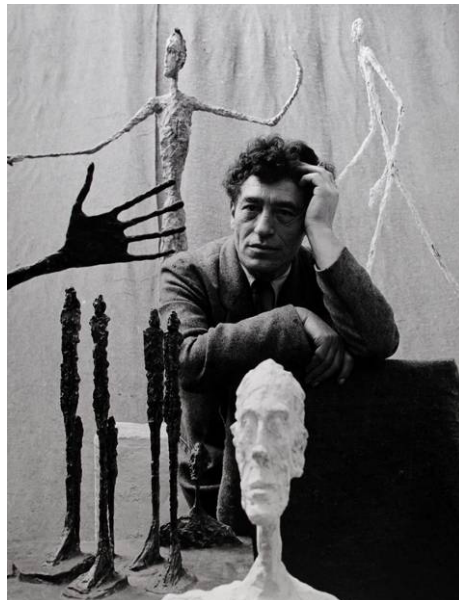
Parks was born into poverty in Fort Scott, Kansas in 1912, the youngest of fifteen children. He worked several odd jobs until he bought a camera at a Pawn Shop in 1937 in Seattle and was hired to photograph fashion at a department store in Minneapolis. In 1942 Parks received a photography fellowship from the Farm Security Administration, succeeding Dorothea Lange among others. While at the F.S.A., Parks created **American Gothic**, now known as one of his signature images, in which he shows Ella Watson, a cleaning women, holding a mop and broom, standing in front of an American flag. The image makes a poignant commentary on social injustice whilst referencing Grant Wood's celebrated painting *American Gothic* which it is also named after. He became a freelance photographer working for *Vogue* as well as publishing two books, *Flash Photography* (1947) and *Camera Portraits: Techniques and Principles of Documentary Portraiture* (1948). In 1948 Parks was hired by *Life* magazine to do a photographic essay on Harlem gang leader, Red Jackson, which led to a permanent position at *Life*, where he worked for twenty years. Parks developed his skills as a composer and author and in 1969 he became the first African American to direct a major motion picture, "The Learning Tree" based on his best selling novel and in 1971 he directed "Shaft". A true Renaissance man, Gordon Parks passed away in 2006.

As Philip Brookman, curator of photography and media arts at the Corcoran, states, "Gordon Parks' art has now changed the way we perceive and remember chronic issues, such as race, poverty, and crime, just as it has influenced our understanding of beauty: of nature, landscape, childhood, fashion, and memory."

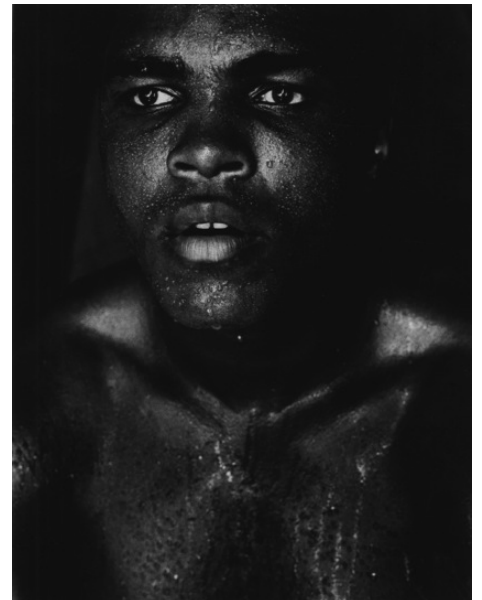
His photographs are in many public collections, including: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Library of Congress, Washington, DC; Oakland Art Museum, Oakland, CA; and the International Center of Photography, New York; among others.



Comtesse Alain de la Falaise, Paris, France, 1949
Gelatin silver print. © The Gordon Parks Foundation
Courtesy of Jenkins Johnson Gallery



Untitled, Paris, France, 1951
Gelatin silver print. © The Gordon Parks Foundation.
Courtesy of Jenkins Johnson Gallery



Muhammad Ali, Miami, Florida, 1966
Gelatin silver print. © The Gordon Parks Foundation
Courtesy of Jenkins Johnson Gallery



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Gordon Parks Exhibitions

Our exhibition will coincide with **The Studio Museum in Harlem's** *Gordon Parks: A Harlem Family 1967*, November 11, 2012 through June 30, 2013.

Celebrations across the country have been held in honor of Gordon Parks' centennial including *Gordon Parks: 100 Years*, International Center for Photography, May 18, 2012 through January 6, 2013; *Gordon Parks: 100 Moments*, curated by Deborah Willis at The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, July 12 through December 1, 2012; *Contact: Gordon Parks, Ralph Ellison, and "Invisible Man,"* curated by Glenn Ligon, and *Gordon Parks: Centennial*, at Howard Greenberg Gallery, September 14 through October 27, 2012; and *Gordon Parks: At 100*, at Weinstein Gallery, Jun 7 – July 28, 2012.

In honor of Black History Month, Macy's stores along with The Gordon Parks Foundation and the American Black Film Festival celebrate the 100th birthday of Gordon Parks. The In-Store exhibition will run February 1 – 28, at seven major store locations nationwide including San Francisco, New York, Chicago, Houston, Atlanta, and Washington D.C.. A reception at Macy's Union Square, San Francisco, *Gordon Parks: American Icon*, will be held Thursday, February 21 at 6:00 – 8:00pm on the 3rd floor. RSVP is required to attend the event.

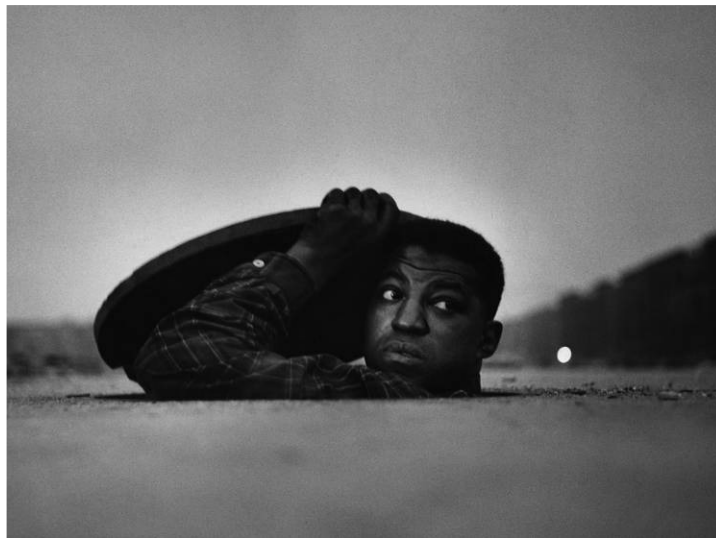
The Gordon Parks Foundation

The Gordon Parks Foundation permanently preserves the work of Gordon Parks, makes it available to the public through exhibitions, books, and electronic media and supports artistic and educational activities that advance what Gordon described as "the common search for a better life and a better world." The Foundation is a division of the Meserve-Kunhardt Foundation.

Our exhibition is corresponding with the release of the five-volume set, **"Collected Works" by Gordon Parks**, published by Gerhard Steidl and produced by The Gordon Parks Foundation that spans six decades of Parks' photographic career.

Jenkins Johnson Gallery

Jenkins Johnson Gallery is located at 464 Sutter Street, San Francisco, California. For more information on this exhibition please contact Susie Novak at 415.677.0770 or susie@jenkinsjohnsongallery.com or visit www.jenkinsjohnsongallery.com.



The Invisible Man, Harlem, New York, 1952, 16 x 20 inches
Gelatin silver print. © The Gordon Parks Foundation
Courtesy of Jenkins Johnson Gallery