

**The Gordon Parks Foundation in Partnership with
NYU Tisch and Pratt Institute Host the First Ever “Gordon Parks Dialogues”
Examining Social Justice Themes through an Artistic Lens**

New York, NY (October 16, 2017) - **The Gordon Parks Foundation** (GPF) today announced that it will host the first ever **Gordon Parks Dialogues** – a symposium created in partnership with the **NYU Tisch School of the Arts** and **Pratt Institute School of Art** aimed at helping young people to, in the vein of Gordon Parks, explore social justice themes and the world around them through an artistic lens.

The full-day event will take place on **Saturday, October 28** from **8:30am to 1:00pm** at the Pratt Institute’s Brooklyn campus, and will include presentations from participating students exploring topics inspired by Gordon Parks’ famous assertion that he used his camera as “a weapon of choice” to contest racial injustice. These presentations highlight a diverse group of students’ engagement with contemporary social issues in their artistic practice.

In addition to these presentations, 2017 GPF Fellowship recipients, **Devin Allen** and **Harriet Dedman**, will both present and discuss how social justice themes have influenced their photographic work. The program will also include a discussion led by **Stephen Hilger**, Chair of the Photography Department at Pratt Institute and **Professor Deborah Willis**, Chair of the Department of Photography & Imaging at NYU Tisch, in response to the important themes presented by both the student presentations and by Allen and Dedman’s keynote talks.

“Since 2009, the Gordon Parks Foundation has partnered with renowned arts institutions to support promising and talented young people in their further exploration of the arts, so we are thrilled to partner again with NYU Tisch and with our new partners at Pratt Institute to bring these young people together to explore such important themes through the lens of the arts with the Gordon Parks Dialogues,” says **Peter W. Kunhardt, Jr.**, Executive Director of The Gordon Parks Foundation. “Through this symposium, our hope is to continue the scholarship program’s ongoing legacy of working to change the world by engaging issues regarding social injustice with fresh eyes.”

“Gordon Parks provided the model for a poignant interaction between the arts and social justice,” said **Stephen Hilger**. “The Foundation has enabled and encouraged young artists working in this tradition and the Dialogues provides these emerging artists an opportunity to share their work with a greater artistic community and to forge a deeper understanding of their collective vision for a better society.”

As part of the Gordon Parks Dialogues, Gordon Parks Scholars - including current and alumni students from **Fashion Institute of Technology/SUNY, Harlem School of the Arts, NYU Tisch, Pratt Institute,**

Purchase College/SUNY and **Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation** - will present their work in a symposium style setting moderated by a faculty lead from each program. Each institution will give a ten minute visual presentation that will be followed by a discussion about a selection of work that highlights the institution's connection to the scholarship program. The panel will then address how their artists' creative work defines today's society and how they can combat social injustice and perpetuate political and social change.

For additional information about The Gordon Parks Dialogues, please visit pratt.edu/gordonparks.

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About The Gordon Parks Foundation

The Gordon Parks Foundation's mission is to permanently preserve the work of Gordon Parks, make it available to the public through exhibitions, books, and electronic media, and support artistic and educational activities that advance what Parks described as "the common search for a better life and a better world." The primary purpose of The Gordon Parks Foundation's exhibition space is to present focused exhibits of Parks' photography, as part of the Foundation's commitment to educating the public and preserving his work. <http://www.gordonparksfoundation.org/>

About Pratt Institute

Pratt Institute is considered a leading center for creativity and innovation that has a transformative impact on society and the world. Pratt's Photography Department emphasizes a cross-disciplinary practice and a core curriculum that promotes student's technical and conceptual development with the medium as well as a broad arts and liberal arts education. In 2017, The Gordon Parks Foundation began awarding three scholarships annually to exceptional students with financial need.

About NYU Tisch School of the Arts

New York University's Tisch School of the Arts is the country's preeminent center for the study of the performing, cinematic and emerging media arts. The program pairs a broad grounding in liberal arts with the intensive focus of an arts curriculum, which focuses on both making and understanding images. Alumni are not just photographers, but also art critics, filmmakers, photojournalists, and curators. The Gordon Parks Foundation began providing scholarships to three outstanding students annually in 2016. The funds are applied to tuition, school-related expenses and creative endeavors during their academic years.