

# THE GORDON PARKS FOUNDATION

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## THE GORDON PARKS FOUNDATION MOUNTS “A GREAT DAY”

An Exhibition celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *A Great Day in Hip-Hop*  
*Exhibition to Open on February 1 and Remain on View through March 29*



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – February 1, 2019 - Pleasantville, New York –** The Gordon Parks Foundation has mounted *A Great Day* – an exhibition celebrating the twentieth anniversary of Gordon Parks’ photograph *A Great Day in Hip-Hop*, Harlem, New York, 1998. The multimedia group exhibition features photographs by **Art Kane**, **Gordon Parks**, and **Jonathan Rheingold**; a documentary short video by **Nelson George**; and archival materials related to the photograph. It is free and open to the public from February 1 through March 29, 2019.

*A Great Day* explores the making of Parks’ famous photograph of 177 hip-hop artists, producers, and influencers that was published on the cover of the December 1998 issue of *XXL* magazine. Forty years before, **Art Kane** (1925–1995) photographed 57 jazz musicians spilling off a brownstone stoop at 17 East 126th Street in Harlem for an *Esquire* magazine issue about the evolution of the genre. As his photograph—commonly referred to as “A Great Day in Harlem”—ingrained itself in our collective memory, countless “Great Day” homages were created to record other historic gatherings.

**Gordon Parks** (1912–2006) visited this theme four decades after Kane. In 1995, *Life* magazine assembled ten of the twelve surviving musicians from Kane’s picture, and Parks photographed them standing where they had stood in 1958. Three years after the *Life* photo, *XXL* magazine tapped Parks to return to 126th Street to photograph the hip-hop artists who overflowed the stoop of number 17 to the two stoops on either side. The youthful bodies of a new genre’s golden age overtook the dilapidated brownstone, reclaiming the space for the next generation.

A selection of Gordon Parks’ photographs of Harlem made throughout his career will be on view in the foundation’s offices concurrently with *A Great Day*. The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *A Great Day in Hip-Hop* will be celebrated at the June 4, 2019 Gordon Parks Foundation Awards Dinner and Auction at Cipriani 42<sup>nd</sup> Street in New York; Questlove will give remarks. For more information about The Gordon Parks Foundation and the awards dinner, please visit [gordonparksfoundation.org](http://gordonparksfoundation.org) and follow on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). For media requests contact Amanda Smith at [amanda@mkfound.org](mailto:amanda@mkfound.org).

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## **About Gordon Parks**

Gordon Parks was a seminal figure of twentieth century photography. A humanitarian with a deep commitment to social justice, he left behind a body of work that documents many of the most important aspects of American culture from the early 1940s up until his death in 2006, with a focus on race relations, poverty, civil rights, and urban life. In addition, Parks was also a celebrated composer, author, and filmmaker who interacted with many of the most prominent people of his era - from politicians and artists to celebrities, and athletes.

## **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.