

Swann Galleries Hosts Auction To Benefit Martin Luther King Jr. Center For Nonviolent Social Change

Photography Portfolio and Handcrafted Leica Camera from the Traveling Exhibition, Countdown to Eternity

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Palm Beach Gardens, FL/December 10, 2001 --- Internationally acclaimed photographer Benedict J. Fernandez photographed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. throughout the year preceding his assassination. Countdown to Eternity, is the traveling exhibition resulting from those photographs (<http://www.artvisionintl.com/MartinLutherKingExhibit.html>). Through 78 black-and-white photographs, the exhibition provides an historic view of the pivotal events of Dr. King's last year and of the civil rights leaders instrumental in the movement.

Benedict J. Fernandez used a Leica M3 camera to photograph Countdown to Eternity. In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Leica Camera, Inc. has produced two special edition Leica M6 Summicron 50mm f2 cameras engraved with a replica of Dr. King's signature. Their value is priceless. One camera will travel with the exhibition, the second hand-crafted Leica M6 camera will be included in a commemorative art package to be auctioned at the famed Swann Auction Galleries in New York, February 28, 2002. Proceeds from the auction will benefit the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change in Atlanta, GA.

The art auction package will consist of the M6 camera and a limited edition portfolio of Benedict Fernandez' photographs from Countdown to Eternity. The first edition, 15 image portfolio and one hand-crafted Leica M6 will be on display at Swann Galleries during a preview reception. Bids on the camera and the Benedict J. Fernandez limited edition portfolio can be placed by contacting Daile Kaplan, Vice President and Director of Photographs at Swann Auction Galleries.

"Leica is honored to be a part of the Countdown to Eternity exhibition tour and auction to benefit the King Center in Atlanta," said Roger Horn, president of Leica Camera, Inc. "Since its inception the Leica camera has documented the important events of our time. We are proud to bring the sensitive photographs of Ben Fernandez, the struggle of the civil rights movement in America, and Dr. King's powerful work to light again in this new century."

The exhibition Countdown to Eternity will be shown next at the Richard F. Brush Art Gallery, St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York, from January 21 through February 13, 2002 and at the Historic Arkansas Museum, Little Rock, AR from February 1 through April 30, 2002.

Martin Luther King Jr. and his policy of nonviolent protest, were the dominant forces within the American civil rights movement during its decade of greatest achievement?1957 to 1968. Prime mover of the Montgomery bus boycott (1956), King laid the groundwork for the organization now known as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (1957). He was the keynote speaker at the historic March on Washington (1963) and the youngest Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1964).

During the time when the American civil rights struggle was defined as a predominantly black/white issue, no one communicated the idea of the American dream with greater moral and oratorical power or with greater political foresight than Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. His expression of the black's struggle for freedom in his "I Have a Dream" speech (March on Washington, August 28, 1963) captured the imagination of the world and established him among the pantheon of America's leaders.

Benedict J. Fernandez, former photography program chairman at the New School and Parsons School of Design in New York City and founder of the BFA program in photography at Parsons, is widely acclaimed as an exceptional photographer. He is also recognized as a gifted educator with a sensitive cultural and political

vision. Ben Fernandez' ongoing photographic projects are published and exhibited worldwide. His work is represented in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the International Center of Photography, and the Biblioteque Nationale in Paris among others.

Countdown to Eternity is sponsored by the Swann Auction Galleries, Leica Camera, Inc. Ilford Imaging, Dynacolor Graphics, and ARTVision International.

Leica Camera, Inc., headquartered in Northvale, NJ, distributes a complete line of traditional and digital point & shoot cameras, binoculars and lenses. For more information on Leica products, please contact Leica at (800) 222-0118 or visit Leica's Web site at www.leica-camera.com/usa.

ILFORD Imaging is a leading developer and manufacturer of digital inkjet products, photoprinting technologies and traditional black & white and color photographic materials. Since its inception, ILFORD has maintained an unwavering commitment to promoting and supporting the fine craft of photography as well as photographic artists themselves. For more information on ILFORD products, visit their website at www.ilford.com.

The exhibition, Countdown to Eternity, is circulated by ARTVision International, LLC. ARTVision is proud to give voice again to Dr. King's message through the exhibition, Countdown to Eternity. For additional exhibit information, limited edition photographs, event options or sponsorship opportunities, contact Vickie Rehberg, exhibition marketing manager, at (561) 883 2145. Please contact Julia Dietrich, public relations, at 561 694 7876; e-mail us at artvisionmktg@aol.com; or visit our web site www.artvisionintl.com.

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