

THE GORDON PARKS FOUNDATION

The Gordon Parks Foundation Hosts “I AM YOU” An Exhibition of Photographs by Gordon Parks

Exhibition to Open on May 11, and Remain on Display through July 13

May 1, 2018 - Pleasantville, New York – **The Gordon Parks Foundation** today announced exhibition dates for *I AM YOU*, a new exhibition of photographs by **Gordon Parks**. The exhibition, which explores Parks’ civil rights and social justice photographs, will be on view at the Foundation’s exhibition space from May 11 through July 13. The exhibition is free and open to the public.

I AM YOU offers both Parks’ iconic photographs and his lesser-known pictures side by side in an exhibition that investigates themes of racism, poverty, and bigotry that the artist explored throughout his seventy year career. The earliest picture on display—*American Gothic*, Washington, D.C., 1942—is not only Parks’ most recognizable, but also one of the most important photographs of the twentieth century. Little seen early color images of segregated Alabama are shown alongside leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, like Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Images of boisterous demonstrations are shown alongside moments of quiet protest.

In his poetic introduction to his 1968 photostory about racism and poverty for *Life*, Parks said, “What I want. What I am. What you force me to be is what you are. For I am you, staring back from a mirror of poverty and despair, of revolt and freedom.” Jelani Cobb, staff writer for *The New Yorker*, offers his impression of what Parks meant in his essay “Witness” written for the release of a limited edition portfolio of Parks’ photographs in 2017. He explained, “Parks was visually articulating a premise fundamental to democracy: that one is able to see the humanity of one’s fellow citizen.”

For more information about The Gordon Parks Foundation, please visit gordonparksfoundation.org and follow on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

For more information and press images please contact Amanda Smith at 914-238-2619 or amanda@mkfound.org.

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About Gordon Parks

Gordon Parks was born into poverty and segregation in Fort Scott, Kansas, in 1912. An itinerant laborer, he worked as a brothel pianist and railcar porter, among other jobs, before buying a camera at a pawnshop, training himself, and becoming a photographer. During his storied tenures photographing for the Farm Security Administration (1941–1945) and *Life* magazine (1948–c. 1971), Parks evolved into a modern-day Renaissance man; he found success as a film director, writer, and composer. The first African American director to helm a major motion picture, he helped launch the blaxploitation genre with his film *Shaft* (1971). He wrote numerous memoirs, novels, and books of poetry, and received countless awards, including the National Medal of Arts, and more than fifty honorary degrees. Parks died in 2006.

Hours & Admission

Free and open to the public.
M-F: 10am - 4pm
Sa-Su: Closed

General Information

48 Wheeler Avenue, Floor 1
Pleasantville, NY 10570
Tel: (914) 238-2619
Website: www.gordonparksfoundation.org

Social Media

Facebook: The Gordon Parks Foundation
Twitter: @GparksFound
Instagram: [gordonparksfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/gordonparksfoundation)

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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.

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