



New Orleans
Museum of Art

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**NOMA Presents *The Art of Caring:*
*A Look at Life through Photography***

***200 photographs capturing life's milestones, from intimate
moments to historic tragedies, May 16 to Oct. 11***

[Hi-res images available upon request.]

NEW ORLEANS (Monday, March 23, 2009)—From May 16 to October 11, the New Orleans Museum of Art presents *The Art of Caring: A Look at Life through Photography*, a major exhibition of more than 200 works exploring the moments that shape our being, from intimate memories to historic tragedies. Renowned photographer **Annie Leibovitz** sets the tone with a preface comprised of images hand-picked from her archive to illustrate the exhibition's seven thematic components: **Children and Family, Love, Wellness, Disaster, Caregiving and Healing, Aging, and Remembering.**

The Art of Caring showcases several works from Time & LIFE Pictures, including recognizable classics by such legendary photographers as **Alfred Eisenstaedt** and **W. Eugene Smith**. Contemporary artists include other established photographers such as **Tina Barney, Nan Goldin, Chester Higgins, Sally Mann, Nicholas Nixon, Tatsumi Orimoto, Robert Polidori, Dona Schwartz, Neal Slavin** and **Larry Sultan**. The exhibition features as well the work of emerging artists **Elinor Carucci, Jeff Charbonneau, Eliza French, Peter Granser, Jessica Todd Harper** and **Misty Keasler**.

A series of corresponding HBO Films will further illustrate the seven themes. For example, Spike Lee's *When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts* will complement the still photography of the "Disaster" segment.

"With its Katrina experience in mind, the New Orleans Museum of Art felt that this exhibition could serve as an important reminder of the essential elements of the human experience and how they need to be nurtured and sustained," said New Orleans Museum of Art Director **E. John Bullard**. "The arts are not luxuries but necessities in troubled times—a source of solace, comfort and rejuvenation."

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All exhibitions and public programs at the New Orleans Museum of Art are **free to Louisiana residents** through the generosity of The Helis Foundation. *The Art of Caring* is organized by guest curator **Cynthia Goodman, Ph. D.**, prominent contemporary art historian and museum director, for the New Orleans Museum of Art.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue, with an extensive essay by Dr. Goodman, published by **Ruder Finn Press**.

Initial funding for *The Art of Caring* was generously provided by the **National Hospice Foundation**. Additional funding was received from the **Steere Family** and from **Wally Findlay Galleries International Inc.**

More about *The Art of Caring*

Beginning at the conclusion of World War II, the slightly more than 60-year time span encompassed by the photographs in this exhibition allows the viewer to witness many of the great events that shaped the last half-century, as well as those that are shaping the new millennium. The stage was set during World War II for photography to take on an unprecedented role as chronicler, consciousness raiser and educator. Throughout the war, new magazines like *Life*, as well as *Vu* in France and the *Picture Post* in Britain, were credited with turning “documentary photographers into photojournalists and photojournalists like ... W. Eugene Smith into heroes.”

After the World War II, photo-essays by photographers like Smith and **Gordon Parks** in *Life* were credited with helping to stoke “the ‘can-do’ energy of the times.” By the 1970s, many of the same established photo-journalists, whose images stirred a nation and world, saw their professional lives evolve from careers replete with opportunities to have work published in *Life*, *Look* and other magazines, to earning a livelihood from less constant sources upon the demise of these same publications. At the same time, the advent of color photography and its acceptance as a legitimate artistic medium closed the gap between fine art and commercial work in new ways.

Caring Partners

The people of New Orleans are critically aware of how desperately help can be needed in order to survive, and how a timely, caring hand, gesture or other assistance can determine one’s very survival. In organizing this exhibition the New Orleans Museum of Art has reached out and invited to participate as our community partners a number of organizations that played and continue to play a role not only in the recovery of New Orleans after Katrina, but also New York after September 11, Indonesia after the tsunami in 2004, in the Sudan today, as well as in innumerable disasters around the globe over the time span covered by the photographs on display.

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The following organizations have been selected and paired with the seven exhibition themes: for Children and Family, **Children's Defense Fund**; for Love, **American Heart Association**; for Wellness, as well as Caregiving and Healing, **American Medical Association**; for Disaster, **American Red Cross** and **Habitat for Humanity**; for Aging, **AARP**; and for Remembering, **National Hospice Foundation**.

Said Goodman: "These relief, humanitarian and educational organizations were selected to be our community partners not only because their interests reflect the thematic components of the exhibition, but also because they have the potential to contribute to the lives of visitors and other community members in each location where the exhibition will travel through education and other critical outreach efforts."

Public Programs

For the most up to date information on public programs, please consult the "Special Events" section of NOMA's website, www.noma.org. A number of special events designed to raise awareness of our partners' causes are in the works, along with a series of screenings of HBO Films related to the exhibition's themes.

About NOMA and the Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses more than 30,000 art objects encompassing 4,000 years of world art. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing temporary exhibitions, are on view in the Museum's 46 galleries Wednesdays from noon to 8 p.m. and Thursdays to Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission to the Museum is free to Louisiana residents through the generosity of The Helis Foundation.

Admission to the adjacent Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden, featuring work by 59 artists, including several of the 20th century's great master sculptors, is always free during regular Museum hours.

The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs are available from the front desk.

For more information, call (504) 658-4100 or visit www.noma.org.

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