

FAHEY / KLEIN
G A L L E R Y

Danny Lyon, *Vintage Works*

November 9 through December 23rd, 2017

Opening Reception

Thursday, November 9, 7 – 9pm

The Fahey/Klein Gallery is pleased to present a comprehensive career survey of works by American documentary photographer Danny Lyon. This exhibition includes vintage works from The Silverman Museum Collection and other private collections, as well as a selection of “mural” size gelatin silver prints and modern photographs from Lyon’s major projects: Memories of the Southern Civil Rights Movement, The Bikeriders, Conversations with the Dead, Uptown Chicago, The Destruction of Lower Manhattan, as well as later work. Lyon’s retrospective, Message to the Future, which opened at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 2016, continues to receive worldwide acclaim with more recent openings at The de Young Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland and the Berlin Foundation, Germany.

For over 50 years Lyon has demonstrated a consistent engagement with social and political issues and concern for many of the people he photographed. Influenced by writer William Agee and photographer and filmmaker Robert Frank, Lyon immersed himself in the lives of his subjects, creating individual bodies of work accompanied by innovative books that documented their lives, whether it was a young civil rights worker, now Congressman, John Lewis or convicted rapist Billy McCune.

Upon graduating from the University of Chicago, Lyon set off on his motorcycle first to Cairo, IL and then Danville, Selma, Montgomery and Atlanta documenting the efforts of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee to train and organize civil rights workers. He then became a member of the Chicago Outlaws, a motorcycle club, riding, living with, and photographing the members of the club. During this time, Lyon also turned his attention to the plight of poor white families who had migrated from the South to Chicago in search of jobs. In the late 1960s, Lyon photographed inmates at six Texas maximum-security prisons and the leveling of 60 acres of lower Manhattan to make way for the World Trade Center. In the 1970s, Lyon photographed in Arizona, New Mexico and New York. In the ‘80s he worked in Haiti and spent time photographing his family. Examples from these projects and others will be on display at the gallery.

What sets Lyon apart from his peers is not only his unapologetic activism, but the ability of his images to forge connections with the past, present and future. As New York Times Magazine writer Teju Cole recently noted, “Cotton Pickers, (an image of inmates picking cotton at a Texas prison plantation) is an activist picture... It reaches back to images from the 19th century and before, and it stretches forward to the crouched and hooded prisoners of Guantánamo Bay.” Danny Lyon, *Vintage Works* demonstrates the capacity of Lyon’s images to have a conversation with work by other photographers, and conjure up references from slavery to modern-day xenophobia that speaks to his immediacy and importance.

(over)

148 NORTH LA BREA AVENUE LOS ANGELES CA 90036

PH: (323) 934-2250 | FX: (323) 934-4243

WWW.FAHEYKLEINGALLERY.COM

BIOGRAPHY

Danny Lyon (b. 1942-)

One of the most original and influential documentary photographers of the post-war generation, Danny Lyon forged a new style of documentary photography, described in literary circles as "New Journalism," an unconventional, personal form of documentary in which the photographer immersed himself in his subject's world.

A graduate of the University of Chicago, Lyon began his career in 1962 as the staff photographer for the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), covering and participating in Civil Rights marches. His first important project was published as *The Bikeriders* (1967), and was based on four years spent on the road as a member of a motorcycle club known as the Chicago Outlaws, from 1963-1967. Lyon described the series as "an attempt to record and glorify the life of the American bikerider," whose golden years were receding as the sixties drew to a close. In 1971, Lyon published his best-known work, *Conversations with the Dead*, which features photographs of six Texas prisons made over a period of fourteen-months, from 1967 to 1968. To make "a picture of imprisonment as distressing as I knew it to be in reality," Lyon juxtaposed his images with texts taken from prison records, interviews, inmates' writings, (particularly the letters of Billy McCune, a convicted rapist), and even fiction. Described by photographer, Martin Parr as Lyon's 'masterpiece,' *Conversations with the Dead* remains "as powerful and relevant as ever" in light of America's ever-expanding system of mass incarceration. Other important projects include *Uptown Chicago* (1965), *Tesca* (1966), *The Destruction of Lower Manhattan* (1966-67), *Haiti* (1986) and *Deep Sea Diver* (2009).

Having established new models for both documentary photography and the photography book, Danny Lyon went on to become an influential documentary filmmaker, winning numerous grants and awards in both fields, including the 2015 Lucie Award for Achievement in Documentary Photography. Over the course of his career, he has published more than 20 books of photography and been the subject of over fifty solo exhibitions. He is the subject of a travelling career retrospective, *Danny Lyon: Message to the Future*, curated by Julian Cox that opened at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 2016, was shown at the de Young Museum, San Francisco and travels to Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland and the Berlin Foundation, Germany in 2017. Danny Lyon's work is in the permanent collections of The Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, American Museum of Art, Smithsonian Institute, the J. Paul Getty Museum and many other public institutions. Lyon lives and works in New Mexico.

This exhibition is held in collaboration with Etherton Gallery, Tucson Arizona.

Press Photographs Available on Request