



# Columbia Museum of Art in Columbia, SC, Features Works by Annie Leibovitz

Columbia Museum of Art in Columbia, SC, will present *Annie Leibovitz: Pilgrimage*, on view from Oct. 4 through Jan. 5, 2014.

*Annie Leibovitz: Pilgrimage* charts a new direction for one of America's best-known living artists. Unlike her staged and carefully lit portraits made on assignment for magazines and advertising clients, these photographs were taken simply because Leibovitz was moved by the subject. The exhibition, including 78 photographs were taken between April 2009 and May 2011.

The CMA is the only exhibition presentation in the Southeast. The exhibit is an evocative and deeply personal statement by a photographer, whose career now spans more than 40 years, encompassing a broad range of subject matter, history and stylistic influences. The work shows Leibovitz at the height of her powers and pondering how photographs, including her own, shape a narrative of history that informs the present.

"These pictures may surprise even those who know Leibovitz's photography well," guest curator Andy Grundberg, former *New York Times* photography critic, said. "They are more intimate, personal and self-reflective than her widely published work, combining the emotional power of her recent black-and-white portraits of her family with an awareness of her own cultural legacy. All photographs are in a sense intimations of mortality, but the pictures of *Pilgrimage* make this connection explicit."

Working on this body of works took Leibovitz to places she could explore with no agenda. She wasn't on assignment. She chose the subjects simply because they meant something to her. The first place was Emily Dickinson's house in Amherst, Massachusetts, which Leibovitz visited with a small digital camera. A few months

later, she went with her three young children to Niagara Falls.

"That's when I started making lists," Leibovitz said. She added the houses of Virginia Woolf and Darwin in the English countryside and Freud's final home, in London, but most of the places on the lists were American. The work became more ambitious as Leibovitz discovered that she wanted to photograph objects as well as rooms and landscapes.

"From the beginning, when I was watching my children stand mesmerized over Niagara Falls, this project was an exercise in renewal," Leibovitz said. "It taught me to see again." The pictures, although there are no people in them, are portraits of subjects that have shaped Leibovitz's distinctly American view of her cultural inheritance. Visiting the homes of iconic figures, including Eleanor Roosevelt, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Louisa May Alcott, Pete Seeger and Elvis Presley and places such as Niagara Falls, Gettysburg and the Yosemite Valley, she let her instincts and intuitions guide her to related subjects-hence the title *Pilgrimage*.

Annie Leibovitz was born on Oct. 2, 1949, in Waterbury, Connecticut. Her father was an officer in the Air Force and her childhood was spent on a succession of military bases. She began her career as a photojournalist for *Rolling Stone* in 1970, while she was still a student at the San Francisco Art Institute. Her pictures have appeared regularly on magazine covers ever since. Leibovitz's large and distinguished body of work encompasses some of the most well-known portraits of our time.

Leibovitz's first major assignment was for a cover story on John Lennon. She became *Rolling Stone's* chief photographer in 1973, and by the time she left the magazine, ten years later, she had shot one

hundred and forty-two covers and published photo essays on scores of stories, including her memorable accounts of the resignation of Richard Nixon and of the 1975 Rolling Stones tour. In 1983, when she joined the staff of the revived *Vanity Fair*, she was established as the foremost rock music photographer and an astute documentarian of the social landscape. At *Vanity Fair*, and later at *Vogue*, she developed a large body of work-portraits of actors, directors, writers, musicians, athletes, and political and business figures, as well as fashion photographs - that expanded her collective portrait of contemporary life. In addition to her editorial work, she has created several influential advertising campaigns, including her award-winning portraits for American Express and the Gap. She has also collaborated with many arts organizations. Leibovitz has a special interest in dance, and in 1990 she documented the creation of the White Oak Dance Project with Mikhail Baryshnikov and Mark Morris.

Several collections of Leibovitz's work have been published. They include *Annie Leibovitz: Photographs* (1983); *Annie Leibovitz: Photographs 1970-1990* (1991); *Olympic Portraits* (1996); *Women* (1999), in collaboration with Susan Sontag; *American Music* (2003); *A Photographer's Life, 1990-2005* (2006); *Annie Leibovitz at Work* (2008), a first-person commentary on her career; and *Pilgrimage* (2011).

Exhibitions of Leibovitz's work have  
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