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Mon - Sat 10am - 6pm | Sun 12 - 6pm

For Immediate Release:

“New York Artists At Work: Ben Martin Studio Portraits”

July 30 – August 6, 2022

Opening: Saturday, July 30, 2022, 4:00 – 7:00 PM

“I’ve come across packets of negatives of composers, authors, actors, politicians, sports figures, and personalities famous in their time, now all but forgotten. Taking on the job of organizing Ben’s archive is the last best thing I can do for him and his own legacy.”

- Kathryn Leigh Scott

Artplex Gallery is pleased to present *“New York Artists At Work: Ben Martin Studio Portraits”* in collaboration with Kathryn Leigh Scott, Martin’s former wife, close friend, and business partner.

Most notable for his photojournalism for TIME and the resulting documentation of pivotal moments of the 20th century, *“New York Artists At Work: Ben Martin Studio Portraits”* features intimate portraits of now-famous visual artists photographed in their studios by internationally acclaimed photojournalist Ben Martin. This collection of legendary photographs offers a rare glimpse into the lives of artists living and working in New York City during the early 1960s. Martin captures the complexity of each artist’s personality, art, and surroundings in photoshoots conducted for TIME during the early years of his decades-long photojournalistic career.

Ben Martin, TIME's first New York Bureau staff photographer, covered wars, fashion, politics, arts, business and sports for TIME, Life, Fortune, People and Sports Illustrated for thirty-three years.

He walked backwards in front of Martin Luther King for most of the Selma to Montgomery Civil Rights March, causing Chief U.S. Marshall, John Doar, to comment that “Martin was the best shield Dr. King could have, because he was always in front of [the black leader] photographing his every move.”

Despite having taken the "infamous" sweaty upper lip and five-o'clock shadow photograph of Richard Nixon during the Kennedy-Nixon TV debates in 1960 (a photograph Nixon claimed cost him the election and led to Martin being ostracized by him), many years later, Nixon asked that, “we let bygones be bygones” and commissioned him to photograph his official post-presidential portrait.

He was as lead photographer on TIME’s now famous “Swinging London” cover story that Hugh Hefner, founder and editor of PLAYBOY, called “pivotal” in defining the sensual, sexy “swinging sixties.”

He photographed major cover essays on the 25th anniversary of D-Day in Normandy and 40th anniversaries of Pearl Harbor and Hiroshima, the Japanese "Zero" pilot, who led the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Mozambique civil war from both the rebel and Portuguese sides, East African Safaris, and an arctic expedition to the North Pole. His three-day non-stop coverage of President John F. Kennedy’s funeral led to a LIFE magazine cover, and his coverage of the first traveling pontiff, Pope Paul’s trip to the Holy Land was a cover feature in TIME.

Born Benjamin Rush Martin III in Salisbury, North Carolina September 16, 1930, Mr. Martin became fascinated by photography at the age of eight when his father, a newspaperman, gave him a Bakelite “Univex 00” miniature box camera. At age fifteen he founded the first High School News Bureau in the nation, and became a staff photographer at the local newspaper, *The Salisbury Post*. At age seventeen he became the youngest member of the National Press Photographers Association.

Artplex Gallery discovers, supports, and promotes the latest generation of emerging and mid-career artists and provides the Los Angeles art community with new vision and fresh voices.



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He attended Ohio University, where he majored in journalism and photography, working his way through college cooking nights as a short-order “White Castle” hamburger chef, and as a stringer-photographer for UPI Newspictures. His photo essay on a traveling preacher published in the Columbus DISPATCH Sunday Magazine brought him to the attention of Wilson Hicks, executive picture editor of LIFE. Offered a position as a “photographic trainee/assistant photographer” on the LIFE staff after his graduation, he came to New York only to discover the magazine had eliminated the new position a week before his arrival. Not wanting to return to his hometown jobless, he accepted a position as a copyboy on TIME, coming to work every day with his Leica on his shoulder. Since TIME had no photographic staff at that time, Ben was called on to shoot last-minute assignments. After several months juggling his copyboy job with the ever-increasing photographic assignments, Henry Luce hired him as TIME’s first staff photographer in the New York Bureau.

Mr. Martin is the author of *Marcel Marceau: Master of Mime* and co-author of *A Different World: The Great Hotels of the World*. He photographed for all divisions of Time, including Life, Fortune, People, Sports Illustrated, Money, Entertainment Weekly, Architectural Forum, House and Home, Time-Life Books and HBO.

Mr. Martin was married to the actress Kathryn Leigh Scott (1971-1990), with whom he co-founded Pomegranate Press, a book publishing company. The two remained close friends and business partners until his death February 10, 2017, at age 86 from pulmonary fibrosis.

“New York Artists At Work: Ben Martin Studio Portraits” opens on Saturday, July 30, 2022, with a reception from 4-7 pm. The exhibition will be on view during regular gallery hours through Saturday, August 6, 2022.

Since the opening of Artplex Gallery in 2018, the gallery continues to be one of the world's leading art galleries specializing in high-quality, original contemporary art representing a broad spectrum of major international artists. Right at home in West Hollywood and within immediate proximity to its sister gallery Artspace Warehouse, Artplex Gallery is an expansive modern space that specializes in international urban, pop, graffiti, figurative, and abstract art catering to the visual impact.

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