

The International Center of Photography and Harlowe Present A Symposium on Photography's Role in Healing Trauma

Symposium featuring photographers, artists and clinicians explores the healing power of photography at the intersection of art & science

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, March 18, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The International Center of Photography (ICP) and Harlowe present "[Through the Light of Hope](#)", a groundbreaking [symposium](#) exploring the intersection of art and science in healing trauma through photography. Taking place on April 29th at ICP at 84 Ludlow Street, New York City, this full-day event features renowned photographers, artists, and clinicians leading discussions and interactive programming on how photography can document pain while catalyzing resilience and transformation.



Harlowe x ICP Symposium

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*Helena Bian, CEO & Founder,
Harlowe*

Photography has long served as a witness to the world's most profound moments, yet its role as a tool for healing, self-reflection, and reconnection is often overlooked. This symposium brings together leading photographers, artists, and mental health professionals to illustrate how images facilitate trauma understanding, foster dialogue, and offer hope. Designed around three core pillars—Reflect, Repair, and Reframe—the program guides attendees through a journey of discovery, expression, and renewal.

James Rice, a photographer whose healing journey began 40 years after his mother's death to gun violence, will deliver the keynote. Using his Leica rangefinder cameras, Rice discovered how photography processes trauma and lost memories. His work, developed in collaboration with trauma-informed clinicians, suggests that rangefinder photography can spark neural pathways that promote healing. His black-and-white images

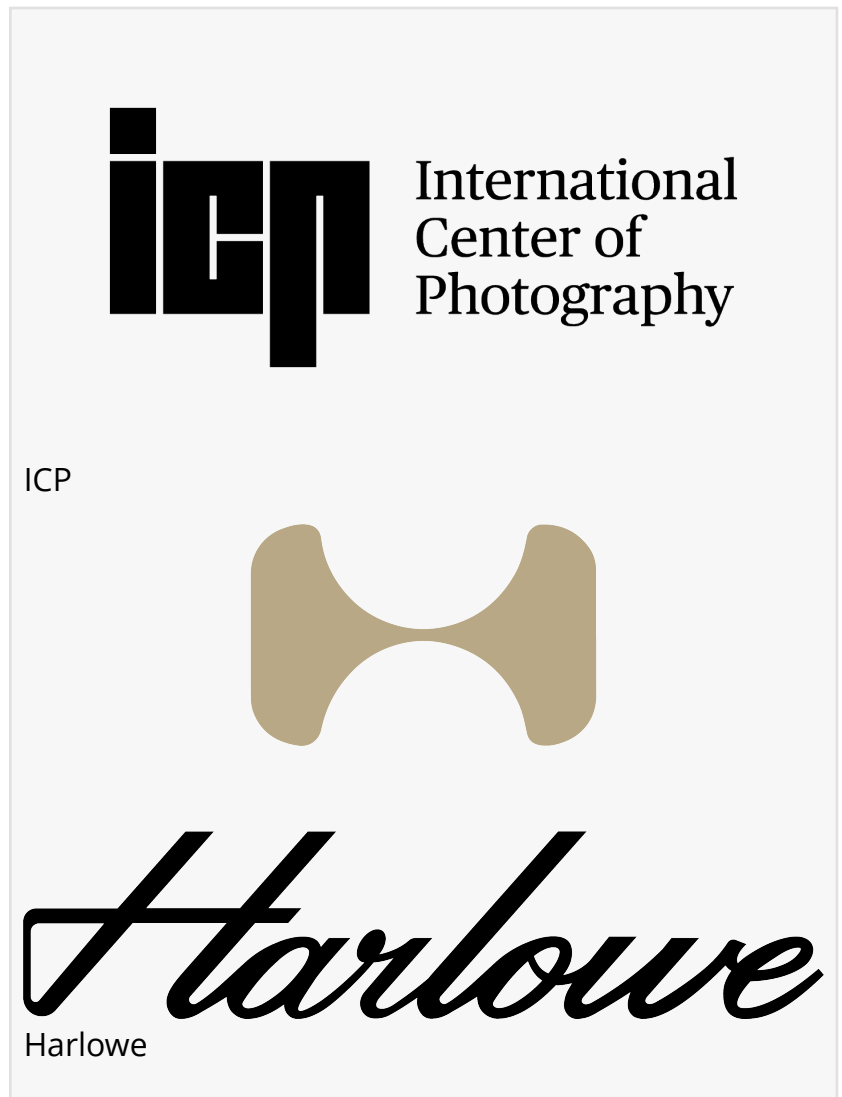
reflect both his past and future, viewed through the lens of hope. His session invites attendees to examine photography as a medium for personal transformation.

Gene Beyt, physician, professor at Tulane University, and visual artist, will discuss how trauma affects the brain and body, particularly in memory, emotional processing, and resilience. Drawing from both his medical and photographic expertise, Beyt will illustrate how creative expression—especially photography—can serve as a powerful neurological and emotional healing tool. Blending scientific insight with personal narrative, he will explore how engaging with images can help process trauma, reframe past experiences, and create new neural pathways that support psychological well-being.

Acclaimed photojournalist David Butow, whose work has appeared in National Geographic, TIME, and The New York Times, has documented war zones, civil unrest, and humanitarian crises. While his images demand empathy and action, witnessing trauma carries an emotional toll. In his session, *Healing Through the Eyes of a Witness*, Butow will share insights into balancing the emotional weight of his work while preserving personal well-being. He will also introduce a personal photographic project developed as a means of creative reinvigoration and healing.

A panel discussion will explore photography's role in processing trauma, reframing memories, and fostering resilience. Katya Gruzglina, a Juilliard-trained artist and therapist, who specializes in the intersection of memory, emotion, and relationships, will discuss how the arts help individuals reconnect with fragmented experiences and reshape their personal narratives. James Rice, David Butow, and Gene Beyt will join Gruzglina in examining how photographing, viewing, and engaging with images can promote emotional restoration.

Sarah Blesener, a documentary photographer, will lead an exploration of *Trauma-Informed Visual Storytelling*, examining how visual narratives influence recovery and identity.



Experts from medicine, photography, and creative therapy will discuss the intersection of creativity and healing in a panel discussion featuring:

- Dr. Natalie Gukasyan, psychiatrist and researcher at Columbia University Medical Center, specializes in psychedelic-assisted therapy for mood and eating disorders. She will discuss how substances like psilocybin can be safely integrated into mental health care.
- Oliver Halfin, a renowned portrait and music photographer, explores how portraiture fosters self-discovery and how the act of being seen can be a healing force.
- Lynn Johnson, a National Geographic Society Explorer and two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist, has spent her career documenting trauma and resilience. Her work focuses on social justice and the human experience, using photography as a bridge for storytelling and advocacy. She will share insights on photography as a tool for witnessing, fostering connection, and facilitating emotional restoration.

Together, these experts will discuss how photography extends beyond the frame—serving as a catalyst for self-reflection, emotional processing, and even neurological transformation.

The symposium encourages active participation through experiential programming including:

- Sharing Circles: Attendees engage in guided discussions with panelists, reflecting on how photography has shaped their personal or professional journeys.
- Take-Home Photo Assignment: Participants will continue their creative exploration post-event and regroup for a follow-up session.
- Self-Reflection Portraits: Attendees will capture a personal transformation moment, using Harlowe's creative lighting solutions.

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The event provides a rare opportunity to engage with photography as a transformative and healing medium, underscored by scientific research.

Event Details & Registration:

Participation is available for a full-day or single-session experience.

Attendance is complimentary with [RSVP](#) required.

Date: April 29, 2025

Time: 9:30 AM onwards

Location: ICP, 84 Ludlow Street, New York, NY 10002

About Harlowe:

Harlowe is a premium brand of continuous LED photography lights, designed for creative professionals. With over 20 years of expertise through parent company AEC Lighting Solutions, Harlowe provides award-winning lighting kits that empower creative expression. Available worldwide and online at harlowe.com, follow @harlowecreators on Instagram, Threads, Facebook, and YouTube.

About ICP:

Founded in 1974 by Cornell Capa, the International Center of Photography (ICP) is the world's leading institution dedicated to photography and visual culture. ICP champions concerned photography—images that educate and drive change. Through exhibitions, education programs, and public initiatives, ICP fosters dialogue about the power of imagery. Visit icp.org for more details.

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