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Press Release

BRITISH CONTEMPORARIES:
Portraits by Bern Schwartz
(Collections Gallery)
April 8 - May 29, 1983

Bern Schwartz, when he died unexpectedly at age 64 after a whirlwind four-year career as a portrait photographer, left behind a legacy worthy of a lifetime. Reared in Allentown, Pa., Schwartz was a successful businessman who at the age of 60 took up the serious full-time pursuit of portraiture. He studied under Philippe Halsman, who became his devoted friend as well as his mentor, and produced a series of vivid portraits of prominent contemporaries that are as important for the light they shed upon their complex subjects as for the subjects themselves. His photographs will be on view from April 8 - May 29, in the Collections Gallery at the International Center of Photography.

This exhibition of dye transfer prints will focus upon the wide range of distinguished Britons who sat before Schwartz's camera in 1977 and 1978; among them, Claire Bloom, Alistair Cooke, Lady Diana Cooper, Sir John Gielgud, David Hockney, the Duke of Marlborough, Admiral of the Fleet the Earl Mountbatten of Burma and Lord Olivier. The Mountbatten portrait, which has become a classic, was reproduced on the First Day Cover of the philatelic issue commemorating Maritime Heritage Year, and is the basis of a Wedgwood plaque.

Lord Kenneth Clarke, in his foreword to Contemporaries, a book of Schwartz's portraits, wrote that "...the historian of England in the 1970's will find these photographs an invaluable guide to the intellectual life of the time; and meanwhile we can enjoy them as wholly admirable examples of the art of photography."

A fully illustrated catalogue with an introduction by Ronny Schwartz will accompany the exhibition. The 28 dye transfer prints have been donated to ICP by the Bernard Lee Schwartz Foundation, Inc.

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BRITISH CONTEMPORARIES: Portraits by Bern Schwartz will be shown in conjunction with "Britain Salutes New York 1983," a New York International Arts Festival.

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
On Museum Mile, 1130 Fifth Avenue (at 94th Street)
ICP's galleries are open: Tuesday-Thursday, noon-8pm; Friday-Sunday, noon-6pm
Admission: $2.00, Students and Senior Citizens, $1.00
Tuesday evenings are free of charge - courtesy of the Chase Manhattan Bank, N.A.