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**BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OPENS NEW EXHIBITION, *THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF BUILDER LEVY: HUMANITY IN THE STREETS*,
CURATED BY PRATT INSTITUTE STUDENTS, ON APRIL 26**

Brooklyn and its residents are captured in images depicting the changing physical, political and social landscape of the borough from 1960 to 1980

(Brooklyn, NY) April 8, 2019 – Brooklyn Historical Society and Pratt Institute are pleased to announce the opening of the student-curated exhibition *The Photographs of Builder Levy: Humanity in the Streets*, on display at Brooklyn Historical Society from April 26 through August 11, 2019. This exhibition showcases a selection of images documenting everyday life in New York City from the 1960s to 1980s, through the lens of Brooklyn-bred photographer Builder Levy.

Exhibited are images that have been published in Levy's latest book, *Builder Levy: Humanity in the Streets*. Levy's subjects depict the essence of everyday of New York City, from fighting for civil rights to socializing on the street. These images reveal a persistent conscience; formed from tacit connections between subject, streetscape and photographer, that ask the viewer to live and work alongside them.

Builder Levy grew up in Brooklyn during the Cold War and the McCarthy era in a family that encouraged art and believed in a world without war and hate, racism, sexism, exploitation and poverty. Levy received his BA in art from Brooklyn College in 1964, where he studied photography under his future mentor Walter Rosenblum, and a Master's Degree in art education from NYU in 1966. He is a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellow and Author of four photography books:

Images of Appalachian Coalfields, Builder Levy Photographer, Appalachia USA, and Humanity in the Streets New York City 1960s-1980s.

Levy has shown his work in more than 250 exhibitions and his photographs are in more than 80 collections throughout New York and in Europe. Over the years, photography has allowed him to visually capture the emotional and ideological experiences in which he was a partisan participant. The photos included in this exhibition are a corpus of his original work and the selection was made to give viewers a sense of the breadth of his interests in political activism and street life, largely in Brooklyn neighborhoods. These images chronicle the ways defining events have played out for Brooklyn's various multicultural communities.

The Photographs of Builder Levy: Humanity in the Streets presents a unique collaboration between Brooklyn Historical Society and Pratt Institute, two Brooklyn institutions with longstanding commitments to cultural preservation and education. Students from Pratt Institute's Spring 2019 Museology Class took on discrete roles as curators, designers, publicists and more, to bring the exhibition to life.

As a group, the students represent various fields of study, including History of Art and Design, Interior Design, and Fashion Design. Their backgrounds spanned an assortment of talent and skills including archival research and writing, exhibition and website design, the production of documentary film, and educational programming. While Levy provided students a studio visit, and video and audio interviews, Brooklyn Historical Society worked closely with Pratt Institute to bring guidance and an intimate experience of the many aspects of exhibition production.

"Pratt's Department of the History of Art and Design is delighted to partner with Brooklyn Historical Society for this exhibition," says John Decker, the Chair of Pratt Institute's History of Art and Design Department. "We are extraordinarily proud of all of the students who worked to make this project a reality. This type of hands-on, applied experience and engagement is part of what makes a Pratt education so beneficial."

"Brooklyn Historical Society is honored to partner with Pratt Institute and provide local students an opportunity to apply their classroom lessons in the real world," says Deborah Schwartz, president of Brooklyn Historical Society. "This collaboration exemplifies our commitment to community outreach and education, while nurturing the upcoming generation of cultural curators and producers."

In connection with the exhibition, Brooklyn Historical Society is hosting a public program on May 2, 2019 at 6:30 pm, titled *Photography through a Civic Lens: Builder Levy and Brian Palmer in Conversation with Bonnie Yochelson*. The program brings together Levy, and visual journalist Brian Palmer to reflect on the common threads in their art. Bonnie Yochelson, photo-historian and independent curator, moderates. Tickets are available at brooklynhistory.org/publicprograms.

Brooklyn Historical Society is located at 128 Pierrepont Street in Brooklyn, and is open to the public Wednesday to Sunday from 12pm to 5pm. Suggested admission is \$10 for adults, \$6 for

seniors and teachers, and free for members and students of all ages. For more information about the exhibition, please visit commons.pratt.edu/builderlevyphotographs.

About Brooklyn Historical Society

Founded in 1863, Brooklyn Historical Society is a nationally recognized urban history center dedicated to preserving and encouraging the study of Brooklyn's extraordinary 400-year history. Located in Brooklyn Heights and housed in a magnificent landmark building designed by George Post and opened in 1881, today's BHS is a cultural hub for civic dialogue, thoughtful engagement and community outreach. In May 2017 BHS opened a second site in DUMBO's Brooklyn Bridge Park.

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