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MEDIA ALERT

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Harry Belafonte to Offer Remarks at Center for Black Literature Fund-Raiser “Freedom Journey 1965: Photographs of the Selma to Montgomery March by Stephen Somerstein”

The 1960s was one of the most compelling and dramatic decades in American history. In an era that was met with challenges for the advancement of civil rights in America, a pivotal event was the 1965 march from Selma, Alabama, to the state capital of Montgomery that helped to raise awareness of the injustices Blacks in America faced and that galvanized the passage of the Voting Rights Act.

In recognition of the significance of this historic protest, The Center for Black Literature at Medgar Evers College, CUNY, cordially invites you to attend a preview of the exhibit “Freedom Journey 1965: Photographs of the Selma to Montgomery March by Stephen Somerstein,” Thursday, January 15, 2015, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West (at Richard Gilder Way; 77th Street) New York, NY 10024. Civil rights activist, actor, and humanitarian Harry Belafonte will provide opening remarks at the exclusive event, which is a fund-raiser to benefit the Center for Black Literature and is presented in partnership with the New-York Historical Society. The evening features a VIP viewing of the exhibit “Freedom Journey 1965: Photographs of the Selma to Montgomery March by Stephen Somerstein,” and a cocktail reception.

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COURAGE. STRENGTH. FORTITUDE.

Freedom Journey (cont'd.)

“As the Center focuses on the literary works that help to define Black culture and history, it is important to recognize the groundbreaking events in American history that have helped to shape the ideas and politics of our contemporary zeitgeist,” says Dr. Brenda Greene, executive director at the Center for Black Literature. “Visual documentation of this historical moment is a powerful reminder that we should never forget and that we have a responsibility to shape our future by engaging in activities that promote justice and freedom for ourselves, for our community and for the larger world. We must continually ask, what is the price of freedom?”

The exhibit features 55 photographs that document the historic Selma to Montgomery Civil Rights March in 1965, where determined Blacks marched to the Alabama capital to raise awareness for civil rights and voting rights legislation. Stephen Somerstein, who was a student at the City University of New York and photo editor of the student newspaper, went to the South to document the monumental crusade.

Pre-registration for the fund-raiser is \$50 at cblfreedomfundraiser.eventbrite.com. Onsite registration is \$65. For more information about the exhibit at the New-York Historical Society, go to www.nyhistory.org/exhibitions/freedom-journey-1965.

About the Center for Black Literature

The Center for Black Literature at Medgar Evers College was established in 2003 to institutionalize the National Black Writers Conference (NBWC). In addition to hosting the NBWC, the Center has a mission to provide a forum for the dissemination of knowledge about Black literature and to support Black writers and Black literature through author readings, workshops, retreats, and conferences. To achieve its mission, the Center partners with high schools, the college, and community and cultural organizations to provide literary arts to youth, college students, and the general public. The mission of the Center for Black Literature is to expand, broaden, and enrich the public's knowledge and aesthetic appreciation of the value of Black literature. The Center for Black Literature serves as a voice, mecca, and resource for Black writers and the general public to study the literature of people from the African Diaspora. It is the only center devoted to this in the country.

About the New-York Historical Society

The New-York Historical Society, one of America's pre-eminent cultural institutions, is dedicated to fostering research, presenting history and art exhibitions, and public programs that reveal the dynamism of history and its influence on the world of today. Founded in 1804, New-York Historical is the oldest museum in New York City. New-York Historical has a mission to explore the richly layered political, cultural and social history of New York City and State and the nation, and to serve as a national forum for the discussion of issues surrounding the making and meaning of history.

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