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Philippe Halsman to Lecture at Final Cameo Concert

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The University Arts Series at the University of Dayton will present in its final Cameo Concert of the year Philippe Halsman, one of the ten greatest photographers in the world, and a specialist in magazine cover pictures of famous men and beautiful women, Wednesday, March 11. Mr. Halsman will lecture on his photographic insights at 8:15 p.m. in the Kennedy Union Ballroom, illustrating his program with slides of some of his most celebrated and inventive pictures.

A top portrait and fashion photographer in Paris before he came to America, Mr. Halsman obtained his first break in 1942 with a Life cover. Since then he has done 100 Life covers, his 100th appearing on the January 23, 1970 issue—the portrait of Johnny Carson. Reaching his 100 mark, he has done 50% more than any other photographer and literally hundreds of covers for most leading publications. In 1956 Life sent him around the world on an assignment to find and photograph "the most beautiful women in the world."

Halsman was chosen by an international poll conducted by Popular Photography in 1958, as one of the world's ten great photographers. During 1962 he was on assignment from Time to photograph the most beautiful Queens and the Presidents' wives. His work is represented in the permanent collections of the New York Museum of Modern Art and the Smithsonian Institute.

Attributing his success not so much to any particular lighting or camera technique, but rather to a psychologically appropriate conversational ability, Halsman tries to capture the essence of a human being in his portraits. "Most people stiffen with self-consciousness when they pose for a photograph," he says. "Lighting and fine camera equipment are useless if the photographer cannot make them drop that mask, at least for a moment, so he can capture on his film their real, undistorted personality and character. I try to create that moment by diverting the subject with conversation. I get his mind off the camera by talking to him."

Though he has photographed most of the world's leading statesmen, scientists and entertainers, he also has created outstandingly inventive surrealistic pictures. He has posed people and furniture floating in mid-air, and models rising out of the ground like plants. He once made a picture of Salvador Dali as an unborn baby inside an egg. But he considers such "stunts" easy compared with the making of a "simple-looking, straightforward portrait of an individual."

In 1966, two of Halsman's portraits, Adlai Stevenson's and Professor Albert Einstein's, were used on U.S. Postage stamps. And in 1967, Halsman received the Golden Plate Award presented by the American Academy of Achievement. He is also a member of the Guiding Faculty of the Famous Photographers School in Westport, Conn.

Halsman's The Frenchman was a best seller, and was the first of the photo-caption books that are now so prevalent. His theory that a person expresses his personality by the way he jumps is engagingly presented in Philippe Halsman's Jump Book—illustrated with photos of the world's great in mid-air, including even the dignified Duke and Duchess of Windsor. His other books are: Piccoli, Dali's Mustache, and Philippe Halsman on the Creation of Photographic Ideas.