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PHOTOJOURNALIST JOÃO SILVA HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENT, SPECIAL SPEAKER AT CORCORAN COLLEGE OF ART + DESIGN 2012 COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Director and President of the Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design Fred Bollerer and Provost Catherine Armour are honored to announce João Silva as the honorary degree recipient at the 2012 Corcoran College of Art + Design commencement ceremony. Silva, acclaimed photojournalist, will accept an honorary degree and serve as special speaker at commencement on **Saturday, May 19, at 4:30 p.m.** at DAR Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C.

Catherine Armour, provost and chief academic officer of the Corcoran College of Art + Design, said, “João Silva embodies both courage and artistry, and his inspirational story will mean a great deal to our graduates.”

Annually, the Corcoran College of Art + Design honors an artist who has contributed significantly to the advancement of his or her discipline and to the collective body of related knowledge in the visual arts. Past recipients of this prestigious award include Bruce Davidson, photographer (2011); James Rosenquist, artist (2010); Tim Gunn, fashion consultant (2009); Annie Leibovitz, photographer (2008); Phyllis Lambert, architect (2007); and Sally Mann, photographer (2006).

“I am honored to be part of the Corcoran family. The student work [on view in the exhibition *NEXT at the Corcoran: Class of 2012*] is emotionally brave and overwhelming in its power—a true testament to the vitality of the institution,” stated Silva. “It is evident that the photojournalism students, in particular, already understand that great photojournalists need to break the rules.”



Photo by Samuel Corum.

Silva is a renowned, award-winning, South African photographer who has covered conflicts in Africa, the Balkans, the Middle East and Iraq, and many other countries. He started taking pictures in 1989 and began his career with the *Alberton Record*, a local paper in South Africa. In 1991, Silva worked for *The Star*, a Johannesburg daily newspaper, as a staff photographer before joining the Associated Press in 1994. In 1996, Silva became a regular freelancer for *The New York Times* and in 2000 he became a contract photographer with *The New York Times*. That same year, Silva co-authored *The Bang-Bang Club* with Greg Marinovich, a factual account of press photographers who covered the end of the apartheid era in South Africa. In 2005, Silva published *In The Company of God*, a photographic book on the Iraqi Shi'a during the American occupation and fragile democracy that followed. Silva has won numerous awards, including the World Press Photo honorable mention and Pictures of the Year International award of excellence.

On October 23, 2010, Silva sustained injuries while on duty with the U.S. Army based in southern Afghanistan. Despite immediate help from medics, Silva lost one leg below the knee and the other leg above the knee. After months of rehabilitation on his prosthetic legs, he returned to work in July of the following year. Silva was born in 1966 in Lisbon, Portugal, and currently lives with his family in Johannesburg, South Africa.

***** MEDIA INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY ON SATURDAY, MAY 19 AT THE CORCORAN PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT *****

ABOUT THE CORCORAN

The Corcoran Gallery of Art, a privately funded institution, was founded in 1869. It was America's first dedicated art museum and today is Washington's largest nonfederal museum of art. It is known internationally for its distinguished collection of historical and modern American art as well as contemporary art, photography, European painting, sculpture, and the decorative arts. In addition, a dynamic schedule of special exhibitions is complemented and enhanced by a range of educational programming, which together seek to enrich perspectives, support the local arts community, and encourage interpretation. **The Corcoran College of Art + Design** was founded in 1890 and stands as Washington's only four-year college of art and design, offering BFA degrees in Digital Media Design, Fine Art, Fine Art Photography, Graphic Design, Interior Design, and Photojournalism; a BA in Art Studies; a five-year Bachelor of Fine Arts/Master of Arts in Teaching (BFA/MAT); an AFA in Digital Media Design, Fine Art, Graphic Design, and Photography; and MA degrees in Art and the Book, Art Education, Exhibition Design, Interior Design, Master of Arts in Teaching, and New Media Photojournalism. The College's Continuing Education program offers part-time credit and non-credit classes for children and adults and draws more than 2,500 participants each year. For more information about the **Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design**, visit www.corcoran.org.