

VIVIAN MAIER

Photographs from the Maloof Collection

December 15, 2011 – January 28, 2012

Opening reception Thursday, December 15, 6:30 -8:30pm



Howard Greenberg Gallery is proud to present the recently discovered work of street photographer, *Vivian Maier* (1926-2009), from the Maloof Collection.

A nanny by trade, Vivian Maier's street and travel photography was discovered by John Maloof in 2007 at a local auction house in Chicago. Always with a Rolleiflex around her neck, she managed to amass more than 2,000 rolls of films, 3,000 prints and more than 100,000 negative which were shared with virtually no one in her lifetime. Her black and white photographs—mostly from the 50s and 60s—are indelible images of the architecture and street life of Chicago and New York. She rarely took more than one frame of each image and concentrated on children, women, the elderly, and indigent. The breadth of Maier's work also reveals a series of striking self-portraits as well as prints from her travels to Egypt, Bangkok, Italy, and the American Southwest, among dozens of other international cities.

"My fascination with her story has only grown, as has my involvement with her photographs. It is such an unusual story with no resolution. At first her images are extremely well seen, quality photographs of life on the street, in New York City and Chicago. But as one looks at the body of her work, she reveals her deeper interests. Then one tries to imagine who she was, what motivated her, her personality. It is not everyday that one becomes so involved and even obsessed with a particular photographer," comments Howard Greenberg.

What little is known about Maier's life is the result of John Maloof's extensive research. He discovered her obituary on line in 2009 which was just the beginning of his investigative work. An American of French and Austro-Hungarian extraction, Maier split her time between Europe and the US, returning to NY in 1951. In 1956, she ultimately settled in Chicago where she worked as nanny for more than forty years. For a brief period in the 1970s she worked as a nanny to journalist, Phil Donahue's children. Towards the end of her life, Maier was supported by the children she had cared for in the early 50s. Unbeknownst to them, one of Maier's storage lockers (containing her massive group of negatives) was auctioned off due to delinquent payments.

After purchasing the first collection of Maier photographs in 2007, Maloof acquired more from another buyer at the same auction. He has since established the Maloof Collection to promote the work of Vivian Maier and to safeguard the archive for future generations. The archive consists of approximately 100,000 to 150,000 negatives; over 3,000 prints; hundreds of rolls of film; home movies; audio tape interviews, and other items representing roughly 90% of Maier's work. Through Maloof's efforts, Vivian Maier's photographs have been exhibited internationally and have received significant critical attention. In November, Powerhouse Books will publish **Vivian Maier: Street Photographer**, edited by Maloof with a foreword by Geoff Dyer. John Maloof is also co-producing a documentary about Vivian Maier.

For further information, please contact Ali Price at
ali@howardgreenberg.com or 212. 334. 0010