



Vivian Maier: Exposed

Vivian Maier: Exposed

Cleve Carney Art Gallery
Tuesday, June 17 to Saturday, Aug. 16, 2014

“Well, I suppose nothing is meant to last forever. We have to make room for other people. It’s a wheel. You get on, you have to go to the end. And then somebody has the same opportunity to go to the end and so on.”

– Vivian Maier

Vivian Maier: Exposed

Vivian Maier was more than a “street photographer.” She saw everything artistically: the odd, the mundane and the interesting. She photographed buildings, trees, shadows, street portraits, road kill, newspaper headlines, gang members, the kids she babysat, celebrities, self-portraits and shadows of herself. She photographed the commonplace, the ins and outs of everyday life that many of us have never taken a second look at— until now.

Ever since Maier’s photographs were exposed to the public, her story and work have attracted much attention and for good reason. Her pictures reveal something exceptional, captured with a unique eye by someone special—in the league of Robert Frank, Gary Winogrand and Lee Friedlander.

Born Vivian Dorothea Maier on Feb. 1, 1926, in New York, she traveled the world but eventually settled in the North Shore suburbs of Chicago working as a nanny for a variety of affluent families. For a short time, she even worked for talk show originator, Phil Donahue. Some of the children she watched over would come to say she was like “Mary Poppins,” taking them on exciting adventures with some unusual destinations like The Stockyards and the 1968 Democratic Convention. Others recall her to be a difficult person with a hoarding problem.

She rarely if ever showed anyone her photography. It was a lot to keep quiet because she photographed constantly. All her spare time was spent with her Rolleiflex camera, shooting anything and everything.

In her work we see the things most of us take for granted. So many moments frozen in time: buildings that no one missed until they were torn down; a campaign sign of a soon-to-be-slain politician; a childhood gesture gone unnoticed, a portrait of innocent youth long forgotten. The affluent in their lavish attire, the homeless in times of woe were all treated the same by Maier. She took their picture.

The magic ended in 2009—but in some ways had just begun—when Maier was hospitalized for injuries she suffered after slipping on ice. The Gensburg children she had watched over for many years, now watched over her. After she passed away, they conducted services and spread her ashes in a favorite forest preserve.

Sadly, many of her belongings from her apartment were sent to the dumpster. Fortunately, much of her photo archive was stored at a local storage locker. When payment lapsed on the locker, her belongings including her photo archive were sent to auction. Just like on those TV shows, her belongings were purchased by several bidders—including many rolls of unprocessed film, empty photo albums, drugstore film envelopes and other evidence of a life filled with her passion for photography.

Through connections at a local flea market, artist, carpenter and collector Jeffrey Goldstein purchased nearly 20 percent of what is known to exist of Vivian Maier's images and other possessions, including 275 rolls of unprocessed film. Goldstein understood he had something special; the undeveloped film remained a curiosity he wanted to see—soon.

Through a happenstance of events, a common friend, Paul Natkin (rock 'n' roll photographer) put Goldstein in touch with me, and I assembled a team of College of DuPage photography students—Tom Dietz, Jerry Cargill, Joanne Barsanti and Helena Kaminski, who became "Team Vivian"—to process hundreds of rolls of the undeveloped film.

Processing 40-year-old priceless film was not a matter to take lightly. A snip test of a small piece of film showed it was fogged. The age of the film caused it to deteriorate in a way that made the images look foggy and low in contrast, which in turn made it difficult to print in the darkroom. Digital technology can work wonders on this type of problem, and in fact, some of Maier's work was saved and printed digitally and displayed for exhibition purposes only. The film was washed and dried, carefully cut and placed in protective holders, then onto the light box, where the tiny images came to life—Maier came to life—photographs that she had never seen.

Throughout this whole process, a big question came to mind—why didn't Maier develop more of her film or for that matter show any of her work to anyone? People saw her taking pictures, but few saw the images.

It's often expressed among artists that the process is more rewarding than the final result. The simple fact that she shot so many images certainly indicates that she enjoyed the act of photographing and thought the process of exploration was important to her. Perhaps she used photography, the actual shooting of the

images, as her way of understanding the world, the current times and the culture around her. The way she chose to frame her images, what exactly to focus on and what she was able to capture must have produced some sort of personal satisfaction to the point that she didn't need to see a final image. Using a Rolleiflex allowed her to not have to directly look at her subjects, instead looking down into her viewfinder. Maybe this view led her into her own world, that of a dreamer, and quietly allowed her to believe she was much more important and much more interesting than just a nanny.

—**Frank M. Jackowiak**

Frank M. Jackowiak works for College of DuPage as the photography lab manager and program specialist. He is also a professional photographer, educator and consultant who lives and works in the western suburbs of Chicago. Jackowiak was a crucial component in the creation of the Jeffrey Goldstein Collection, Vivian Maier Prints Inc.





















Collector's Notes

The story of Vivian Maier's discovery is replete with moments of happenstance and serendipitous interactions. It's how I got involved in the project, and it's how Vivian Maier and College of DuPage have become permanently linked.

Over the years, I've been lured and fascinated by the hunt for treasures to be found at Wolff's Flea Market in the parking lot of the Allstate Arena in Rosemont, IL.

About four years ago, in the initial phase of organizing Maier's negatives, I visited the flea market with my buddy Shanks. While browsing we ran into a mutual acquaintance (Bill) when Shanks said, "Hey, Bill has a brother who's a photographer. Tell him the Vivian Maier story." Bill responded, "Oh, that story would really interest my brother. You should give him a call." So as it turned out, Bill's brother is Paul Natkin, the acclaimed Chicago-based "rock 'n' roll photographer" who made his reputation shooting the concerts of countless individuals and groups whose names we all recognize, including the Rolling Stones. And it just so happened that Bill and Paul are the sons of the well-known Chicago street photographer, Robert Natkin.

Paul Natkin offered to help out, taking the Vivian Maier project under his roof and wing. We began discussing the state of the 275 rolls of undeveloped film Maier had shot and what to do next. It was all from the 1960s and '70s. Could it even be developed? If processed, could prints be made? Paul mentioned a friend of his, an experienced photographer who might be helpful in processing the film. So I met his friend Frank Jackowiak, who works in the photography department at College of DuPage. He put together an experienced darkroom team (Tom Dietz, Jerry Cargill, Joanne Barsanti and Helena Kaminski), and with extreme care and dedication developed not only the rolls of film, but also an ongoing relationship with the Vivian Maier project. Many of the prints you see in this exhibition came from the rolls that Frank and his team processed at College of DuPage.

So, it's with heart-felt appreciation to College of DuPage and Gallery Director Barbara Wiesen, via Frank Jackowiak, via Paul Natkin, via his brother Bill, via my buddy Shanks, via the flea market; that we celebrate the artist, Vivian Maier, whose life focused on moments of happenstance and serendipitous interaction.

—Jeffrey Goldstein

Jeffrey Goldstein is an artist and collector living and working in Chicago. In the spring of 2010, Goldstein acquired a portion of the Maier collection from one of the original buyers. Since Goldstein's original purchase, his collection has grown to include 17,500 negatives, 2,000 prints, 30 homemade movies and numerous slides.

Images

Cover: *Vivian Maier, New York (Self-Portrait in Circular Mirrors)*, ca. 1951-55, vintage print, courtesy of the Jeffrey Goldstein Collection

6 *Chicago (Two Bikers Walking on Street)*, ca. 1960s, archival inkjet print, printed 2011, 10" x 10"

7 *New York (Dead Pigeon on Street)*, ca. 1951-55, silver gelatin, printed 2012, edition 1 of 15, 12" x 12"

8 *Los Angeles (Hands Behind Back, Holding Sandwich)*, 1955, silver gelatin, printed 2011, edition 1 of 15, 12" x 12"

9 *Los Angeles (Leaning on Fire Hydrant)*, 1955, silver gelatin, printed 2013, Edition 12 of 15, 12" x 12"

10 *Chicago, Michigan Ave. (Woman in Floral Hat)*, 1961, silver gelatin, printed 2011, edition 2 of 15, 12" x 12"

11 *Chicago, Maxwell St. (Man in Doorway)*, 1967, silver gelatin, printed 2012, edition 6 of 15, 12" x 12"

12 *Wilmette, IL ("Bobby Dies" Headline, Table Lamp at Night)*, 1968, silver gelatin, printed 2012, edition 1 of 15, 12" x 12"

13 *Florida (Couple in Wind)*, ca. 1967-68, silver gelatin, printed 2014, edition 12 of 15, 12"x 12"

14 *Wilmette, IL (Woman and Baby at Beach)*, 1968, silver gelatin, printed 2011, edition 1 of 15, 12" x 12"

15 *Chicago (Light Bulbs in Trash Can)*, ca. 1967-68, silver gelatin, printed 2011, edition 5 of 15, 12" x 12"

16 *Chicago (Man with Duck)*, 1967, silver gelatin, printed 2011, edition 5 of 15, 12" x 12"

17 *Chicago (Workmen with Woolworth's Sign)*, 1968, silver gelatin, printed 2012, edition 2 of 15, 12" x 12"

18 *Chicago, North Suburbs (Train Shelter)*, 1970, silver gelatin, printed 2011, edition 2 of 15, 12" x 12"

19 *Wilmette, IL (Family on Beach)*, 1971, silver gelatin, printed 2011, edition 2 of 15, 12" x 12"

20 *Wilmette, IL (Self-Portrait, Full-Length Shadow)*, 1968, silver gelatin, printed 2013, edition 7 of 15, 12" x 12"

21 *Chicago (Men in Sunglasses, Blackstone Theater)*, 1968, silver gelatin, printed 2012, edition 3 of 15, 12" x 12"

22 *Wilmette, IL (Christmas Tree)*, 1969, silver gelatin, printed 2012, edition 1 of 15, 12" x 12"

23 *Untitled (Woman and Baby with Flags)*, ca. 1960s, archival inkjet print, printed 2011, 10" x 10"

24 *Untitled (Couple Embracing)*, ca. 1960s, archival inkjet print, printed 2011, 10" x 10"

25 *Self-Portrait (Window, mirror reflection)*, ca. 1960s, archival inkjet print, printed 2011, 10" x 10"

Cleve Carney Art Gallery
Vivian Maier: Exposed

Tuesday, June 17 to Saturday, Aug. 16, 2014

The Cleve Carney Art Gallery at College of DuPage would like to extend a special thank you to Jeffrey Goldstein for his generous support and commitment to College of DuPage. The Goldstein collection, Vivian Maier Prints Inc., consists of approximately 15,000 negatives, vintage prints and other artifacts belonging to Vivian Maier. Goldstein maintains an extensive tour of Vivian's work worldwide for the enjoyment of others and future generations. He graciously provided the Cleve Carney Art Gallery at College of DuPage with the photographs for this exhibition, negatives for printing the limited edition posters along with expert advice and support.

The gallery would also like to thank co-curator Frank M. Jackowiak for his passion, patience and countless hours in developing Vivian Maier's film rolls and pulling together this exhibition and catalog. Special thanks to the photography team at COD, including photographer Frank Jackowiak and students Tom Dietz, Jerry Cargill, Joanne Barsanti and Helena Kaminski, for developing and processing the never before seen film. Much appreciation to the authors Richard Cahan and Michael Williams and printers Ron Gordon and Sandy Steinbrecher for participating in this project and exhibition, and Anne Zakaras, project coordinator for Vivian Maier Prints Inc.—thank you.

Barbara Wiesen

Director and Curator, Cleve Carney Art Gallery

Frank M. Jackowiak would like to thank co-curator Barbara Wiesen for allowing a glimpse of what it takes to put a show like this together. Her hard work keeping things in order and on schedule shows her intense appreciation for the art. Many thanks to the following people for their kind assistance along the way—Jeff Burk, Jeff Curto, Glenn Hansen, Terry Vitacco, Aline Fetter, Jamie Matthews, Tom Phelan, Mike O'Leary and the IT department, Zlatka Burtis and Frank Pittell (the other Frank), Anne Zakaras, Team Vivian Processing members, and lastly Jeffrey Goldstein, without whom none of this would be possible. Thanks everyone!



This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and by The National Endowment for the Arts.



Vivian Maier: Exposed was partially supported by PJ's Camera and Photo Supply in Glen Ellyn.



Vivian Maier: Exposed was partially supported by DuPage Framing Center in Wheaton.

A white square logo containing the text "CLEVE CARNEY ART GALLERY".

CLEVE CARNEY
ART GALLERY

425 Fawell Blvd.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137-6599