

PACE/MACGILL GALLERY

H A R R Y C A L L A H A N

Harry Callahan (1912-1999) grew up in Detroit and briefly studied chemical engineering and business at Michigan State University in Lansing before taking a job at the Chrysler Motor Parts Corporation in 1936.

One of the most influential American photographers of the second half of the twentieth century, Callahan began his career as an amateur photographer. In 1938 he joined Chrysler's Camera Club and two years later became a member of Detroit's Photo Guild. After attending a lecture and workshop by Ansel Adams in 1941, and a meeting with Alfred Stieglitz in 1942, Callahan decided to devote his energies to photography. By 1946 he had established a strong enough reputation in the field to secure an invitation by László Moholy-Nagy, a veteran of the German Bauhaus, to teach at Chicago's Institute of Design. The school's experimental philosophy was formative for Callahan, who would become instrumental in introducing a vocabulary of formal abstraction into American photography at a time when descriptive realism was the dominant aesthetic. He taught a summer course at Black Mountain College in North Carolina in 1951, and eventually left the Institute in 1961 to chair the photography department at the Rhode Island School of Design. Callahan held that position until 1973 and retired from teaching altogether four years later.

Shot in both black-and-white and color, Callahan's subjects include his wife Eleanor and daughter Barbara, nature and light studies, pedestrians in downtown Chicago, telephone lines, architecture in Providence, landscapes in Cape Cod, and scenes from his travels to such places as Great Britain, France, Japan, and Morocco. He also photographed collages he had made using images cut from such magazines as *Vogue*.

Since his first one-person show in 1947, Callahan's work has been the subject of over 60 solo and group exhibitions, including retrospectives organized by the Museum of Modern Art, New York ("Callahan," 1976-77) and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. ("Harry Callahan," 1996-97). In 2006, the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona in Tucson organized "Harry Callahan: The Photographer at Work" that later traveled to the Art Institute of Chicago and the Museum of Photographic Arts in

San Diego. Most recently, the High Museum of Art in Atlanta mounted "Harry Callahan: Eleanor." The show will travel to the Rhode Island School of Art and Design's Museum of Art in November 2008.

Callahan was the recipient of numerous distinctions, including the Graham Foundation Grant for Advanced Studies in Fine Arts (1956); a Guggenheim Fellowship (1972); fellowship in the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, Cambridge (1979); the Distinguished Career in Photography Award from the Friends of Photography, Carmel, Calif. (1981); the Brandeis Creative Arts Medal (1985); the Achievement Award from the Illinois Academy of Fine Arts, Chicago (1992); the Edward MacDowell Medal (1993); and the National Medal of Arts (1996). Callahan was chosen to represent the United States at the 1978 Venice Biennial, the first photographer to be so honored.

Callahan's work belongs to many public and private collections here and abroad, such as the Akron Art Museum; the Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Cleveland Museum of Art; the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the George Eastman House, Rochester; the Hallmark Photographic Collection, Kansas City, Mo.; the High Museum of Art, Atlanta; the National Museum of Photography, Copenhagen; the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; and the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

Monographs of Callahan's work include *Photographs: Harry Callahan* (1964); *Harry Callahan* (1967); *Callahan* (1976); *Harry Callahan: Color* (1980); *Water's Edge* (1980); *Eleanor* (1984); *Harry Callahan: New Color, Photographs 1978-1987* (1988); *Harry Callahan* (1996); *Elemental Landscapes: Photographs by Harry Callahan* (2001); *Harry Callahan: The Photographer at Work* (2006); and *Harry Callahan: Eleanor* (2007).

Callahan's archive is located at the Center for Creative Photography in Tucson.