

# Harry Callahan at 100 at National Gallery of Art



Harry Callahan Eleanor,  
Chicago, 1948 gelatin  
silver print overall  
(image): 11.59 x 8.5 cm  
(4 9/16 x 3 3/8 in.)  
National Gallery of Art,  
Washington, National  
Gallery of Art,  
Washington, Gift of  
Joyce and Robert  
Menschel



Harry Callahan Eleanor,  
New York, 1945 gelatin  
silver print overall  
(image): 21.2 x 16.83 cm  
(8 3/8 x 6 5/8 in.)  
Collection of Harry  
Callahan Estate



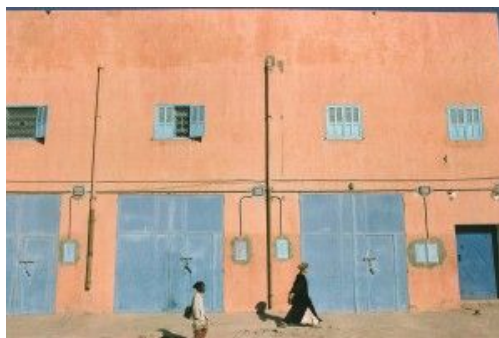
Harry Callahan Cape Cod,  
1972 gelatin silver  
print overall (image):  
23.7 x 23.9 cm (9 5/16 x  
9 7/16 in.) National  
Gallery of Art,  
Washington, Gift of  
Joyce and Robert  
Menschel



Harry Callahan Ansley  
Park, Atlanta, 1992  
gelatin silver print  
overall (image): 15.72 x  
15.72 cm (6 3/16 x 6  
3/16 in.) National  
Gallery of Art,  
Washington, Gift of  
Susan and Peter MacGill



Harry Callahan Kansas  
City, 1981 dye  
imbibition print overall  
(image): 24.3 x 36.7 cm  
(9 9/16 x 14 7/16 in.)  
National Gallery of Art,  
Washington, Gift of The  
Very Reverend and Mrs.  
Charles U. Harris



Harry Callahan Morocco,  
1981 dye imbibition  
print overall (image):  
24.2 x 36.7 cm (9 1/2 x  
14 7/16 in.) National  
Gallery of Art,  
Washington, Gift of the  
Collectors Committee

One of the exhibitions we worked on this summer is the Harry Callahan exhibition for the National Gallery of Art (NGA).

Because the NGA is one of my favorite museums, I started to do a little research on the photographer and the museum. The exhibition marks the centenary of his birth (1912 – 1999). It is on view in the West Building of the NGA from October 2, 2011 – March 4, 2012. [www.nga.gov/callahan](http://www.nga.gov/callahan)

**Harry Callahan** was born in Detroit. He began to photograph in 1938 and was self taught. His talent was immediately recognized. In 1946 László Moholy-Nagy hired him to teach at the Institute of Design in Chicago. There and at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) he taught generations of younger photographers. The exhibition of some 100 photographs explores all facets of Callahan's art, from its genesis in Detroit in the early 1940s and its flowering in Chicago in the late 1940s and 1950s to its maturation in Providence and Atlanta from the 1960s through the 1990s.

**NGA photography collection** This could not have a better story. In 1948 Georgia O'Keefe visited the museum to determine where she was going to donate Alfred Stieglitz's photography collection. One year later she donated 1311 works which became the beginning of the NGA's photography collection. "Stieglitz worked for the recognition of photography as a fine art—the National Gallery means something in relation to that." We all owe a debt of gratitude to these two pioneers of fine art. In fact, **Sarah Greenough**, the Senior Curator of Photographs at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, has just written "**My Faraway One: The Letters of Georgia O'Keefe and Alfred Stieglitz**".

The NGA now has 10000 photographs in their collection. A separate department of photographs was established in 1990. Among the greatest strengths of the collection are groups of photographs by several major twentieth-century American practitioners: Paul Strand, Ansel Adams, Walker Evans, Frederick Sommer, Robert Frank, Harry Callahan, Irving Penn, and Lee Friedlander. Modeled after the Stieglitz collection, each of these holdings include works from

throughout the photographer's career and illustrates all aspects of the artists' contributions.

### **Videos and podcasts**

The NGA has a feature on their website that has videos and podcasts about all aspects of their collection from conservation, to talks on individual artist's work, to exhibitions. The viewer gets to meet the conservators, curators, and collectors that have and continue to contribute to this wonderful institution. It is art history at it's best. [www.nga.gov/podcasts/index.shtm](http://www.nga.gov/podcasts/index.shtm)