



## VIVIAN MAIER PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION FAQs

### How did the Chicago History Museum acquire the collection?

Collector Jeffrey Goldstein donated part of his collection of Vivian Maier material—roughly 1,800 color negatives, transparencies, and slides-- to CHM in early 2020. This represents only a small fraction of Vivian Maier’s body of work.

Vivian Maier stored the photographic prints, negatives and undeveloped film she created during her lifetime in a Chicago storage locker. She died in 2009 with no will and no heirs, so the material in her storage locker was sold to several collectors. As a result, her entire body of work is not owned by a single person or organization. To date, her material is owned by private collectors, galleries, and a few public-facing institutions such as the Chicago History Museum and the University of Chicago.

### Are all Vivian Maier images owned by CHM?

No. CHM owns only a small fraction of Vivian Maier’s body of work; the rest of her known work is owned by other repositories and/or private collectors. Researchers interested in viewing more of Maier’s work held in public-facing repositories may wish to contact the [University of Chicago](#), which holds additional Maier material including photographic prints, ephemera, and artifacts donated by collector John Maloof.

### How is the collection organized?

The collection is arranged by image format and then by film roll. The images are arranged in such a way that preserves the arrangement of the collection as it was received from the donor, which approximately preserved the original arrangement by the photographer, Vivian Maier. Note that not all rolls are complete; some rolls contain many images, and some rolls only contain a single image.

Subseries 1 (Rolls 1C-50C) includes color transparencies and film negatives. Miscellaneous transparencies and negatives that could not be matched with an existing roll exist at the very end of the series.

Subseries 2 (Rolls 1-103) includes color slides. Miscellaneous slides that could not be matched with an existing roll exist at the very end of the series.

The images in each subseries are distinct and not connected to any images with similar roll numbers in the other subseries. For example, the images in Subseries 1, Roll 1C are not tied to the images in Subseries 2, Roll 1; they are unique rolls.

Please see the [finding aid](#) for this collection for additional information about the arrangement of the collection and more detailed roll descriptions.

### How did CHM assign dates for the images?

The dates provided for the images are derived from the processing envelopes they were originally housed in or notes on the slides themselves. These are considered the dates created, but not necessarily the date depicted. The dates depicted are derived either from hand inscriptions by Vivian Maier herself or from contextual evidence depicted in the image.



### **How much of the collection has been digitized?**

Digital reference images for this entire collection are available on our CHM Images website here: <https://images.chicagohistory.org/vivian-maier-collection>

### **How can I research the collection?**

You can browse digital surrogates from the collection on [CHM Images](#). You can search all images, browse highlights, or browse the images featured in the CHM's exhibition *Vivian Maier: In Color*, opening in May 2021.

You may also make an appointment to view the physical images in the form of transparencies, negatives, and slides via CHM's Research Center. Note that advance appointments are required to view color material in cold storage, please email [research@chicagohistory.org](mailto:research@chicagohistory.org).

### **Licensing and Reproductions**

#### **What if I want to license an image from the collection?**

Requests for licensing any Vivian Maier images should be sent to [rightsrepro@chicagohistory.org](mailto:rightsrepro@chicagohistory.org). Note that copyright is owned by the Estate of Vivian Maier.

#### **Can I get a higher resolution image than what is available online?**

Yes! Many of the digital images that are browsable on our website are lower resolution reference images, and CHM can create higher resolution digital files using the original negatives or transparencies.

Note that some of the existing digital images we inherited from the donor may have been edited/color corrected. CHM can only re-digitize based on the original negatives or transparencies and final high-resolution image may appear different than the reference image found on CHM Images.