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**HIGH TO SHOWCASE PERMANENT COLLECTION INSTALLATION
OF WORKS BY PHOTOGRAPHER RALPH GIBSON**

Quartet: Photographs by Ralph Gibson
November 12, 2011–January 22, 2012

ATLANTA, November 28, 2011 – The High Museum of Art has organized “Quartet: Photographs by Ralph Gibson.” The show honors and surveys Gibson’s prolific career, presenting both his iconic and lesser known photographs together within the thematic contexts of their original creation. The exhibition consists of 12 groups of prints, gathered together from the High’s permanent collection to represent a wide array of conceptual series he has developed and published over the course of more than 50 years. The exhibition will be on view from November 12, 2011, through January 22, 2012.



“With the generous support of the Kuniandy family, the High’s permanent collection of photographs by Ralph Gibson has grown over the past ten years into one of the most important repositories of the artist’s work in the country,” commented Brett Abbott, the High’s curator of photography. “Gibson is fond of saying that his most important work is ahead of him. In that spirit, the High was delighted to include several photographs made in the months leading up to this exhibition, which is meant to celebrate the context from which his creative activity continues to flow.”

Gibson’s first important body of work, “The Somnambulist,” was published in 1970, followed shortly thereafter by “Déjà-Vu” (1972) and “Days at Sea” (1974). These three series were responsible for bringing the photographer his first serious acclaim as an artist. Critic A. D. Coleman proclaimed that Gibson seemed to have emerged into the art world “full-fledged,” with photographs that were “absolutely distinctive and unmistakably his.” Documenting everyday occurrences in disorienting, surreal and visually evocative ways, these three series set the stylistic and conceptual direction his work would follow for years to come.

Ralph Gibson

As an occasional child actor and the son of an assistant director for Warner Brothers Studios during the 1940s and 1950s, Gibson was born and raised around film. He was exposed to the era’s stylistic tendencies toward strong lighting and Hitchcockian aesthetics, but it was not until he served in the U.S. Navy during the 1950s that he became a practicing photographer himself. He learned solid technical skills at the Navy’s photography school in Pensacola, Florida, and perfected them as a lab manager aboard a Navy vessel in the north Atlantic. While attending the San Francisco Art Institute in the 1960s, his creative eye was honed as he assisted photographers Dorothea Lange and Robert Frank.

Gibson’s awards include fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, the Leica Medal of Excellence and the Silver Plumb Award from the Landmarks Preservation Committee. He is a Commandeur de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France and holds

honorary doctorates from the University of Maryland and Ohio Wesleyan University. In 2007 he received The Lucie Award for lifetime achievement in photography. He has worked exclusively with the Leica for almost 50 years.

High Museum of Art

The High Museum of Art, founded in 1905 as the Atlanta Art Association, is the leading art museum in the southeastern United States. With more than 12,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American and decorative art; significant holdings of European paintings; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists and is distinguished as the only major museum in North America to have a curatorial department specifically devoted to the field of folk and self-taught art. The High's media arts department produces acclaimed annual film series and festivals of foreign, independent and classic cinema. In November 2005 the High opened three new buildings designed by architect Renzo Piano that more than doubled the Museum's size, creating a vibrant "village for the arts" at the Woodruff Arts Center in midtown Atlanta. For more information about the High, please visit www.High.org.

The Woodruff Arts Center

The Woodruff Arts Center is ranked among the top four arts centers in the nation. The Woodruff is unique in that it combines four visual and performing arts divisions on one campus as one not-for-profit organization. Opened in 1968, the Woodruff Arts Center is home to the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art and Young Audiences. To learn more about the Woodruff Arts Center, please visit www.woodruffcenter.org.

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DIGITAL IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Image credit: Ralph Gibson (American, born 1939), *Untitled*, from *The Somnambulist*, 1969, gelatin silver print, gift of the Kuniatsky Family, 1997.137.

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