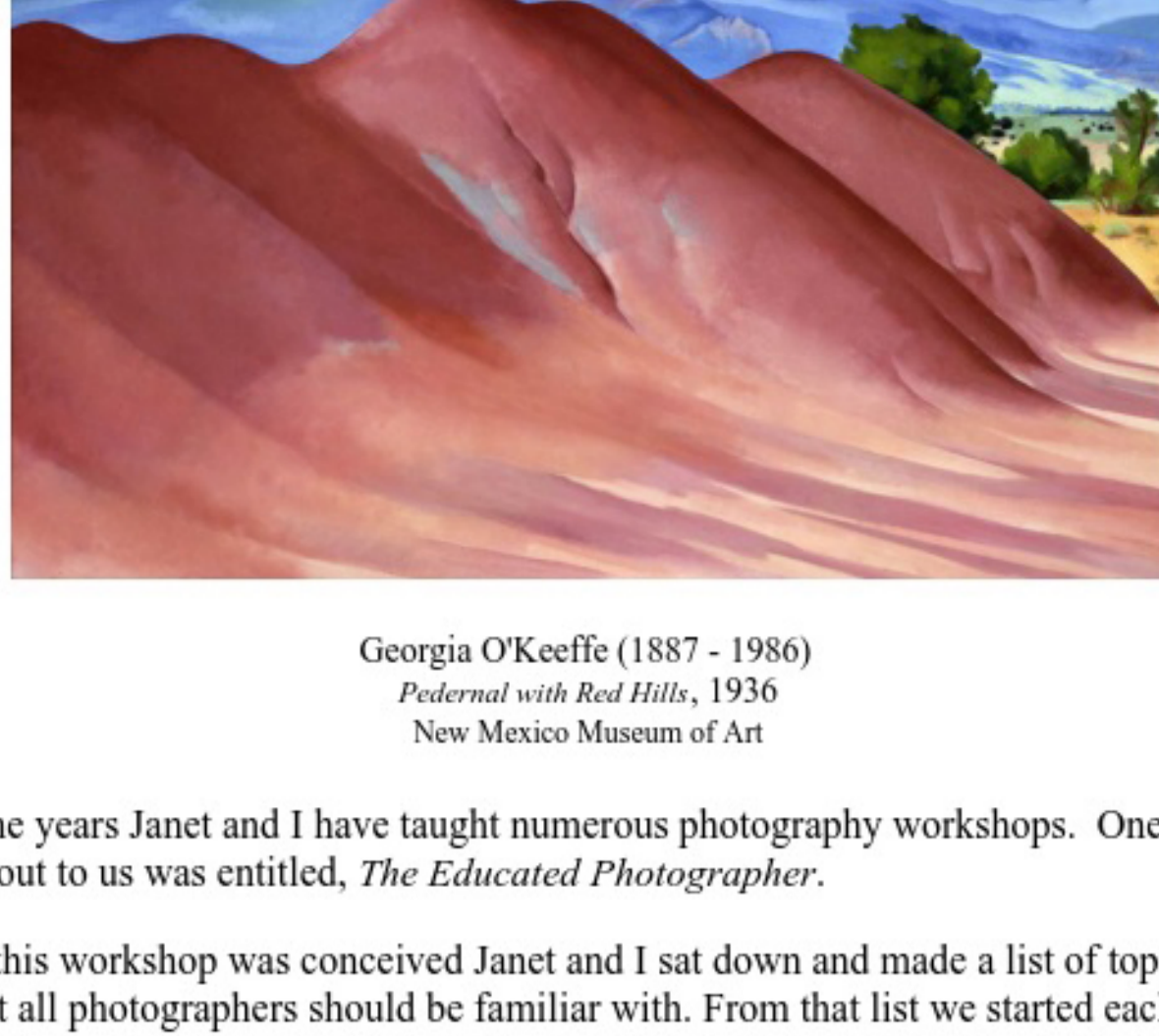


**Georgia O'Keeffe and the Interpretive Landscape**



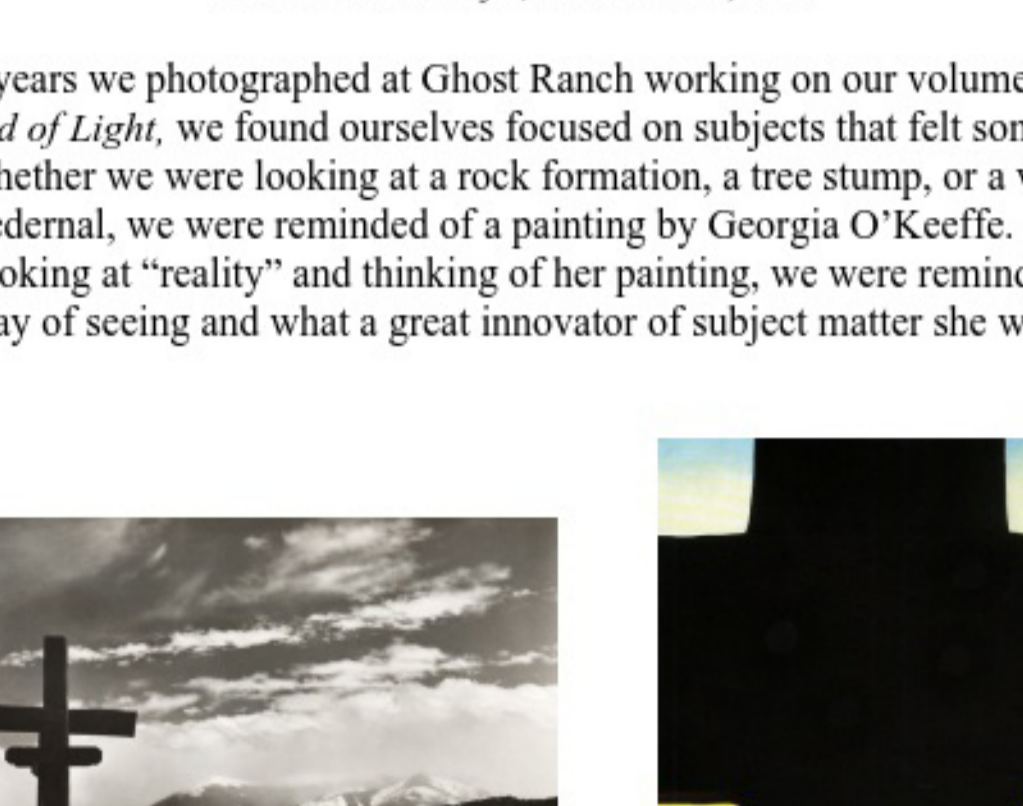
Georgia O'Keeffe (1887 - 1986)  
*Pedernal with Red Hills, 1936*  
New Mexico Museum of Art

Over the years Janet and I have taught numerous photography workshops. One that stands out to us was entitled, *The Educated Photographer*.

When this workshop was conceived Janet and I sat down and made a list of topics we thought all photographers should be familiar with. From that list we started each day with a lecture on the History of Photography, then went on to cover, printing and print quality, building a portfolio, matting, mounting and framing, navigating the gallery and museum worlds, and more. At first, not knowing how this would be received, we were happily surprised that there was great interest. However, after teaching this workshop a few years we realized there was also a need to spend more time with students on their image-making.

Photographers working either analog or digital had a good understanding of their camera, lenses, and knowledge about exposure, etc. Technique seemed to be what everyone was focused on. What we often found lacking was original imagery - finding your own voice, and personal style. What was the strength of your vision and how to expand it and transcend the subject matter? These aspects are more ethereal. Unlike reading a camera manual or watching a video tutorial, learning to see is a much more personal endeavor. It requires an honest look at your own work and a serious critique, and a study of others working in your chosen visual direction. Minor White said it best: " *The camera records superbly, it transforms better*".

Much of the art of photography resides in the power of seeing and that transformative ability. Of course, a marriage of good technique and vision is what we are striving for, but technique alone is not enough. How does one transform a subject truly making it your own?

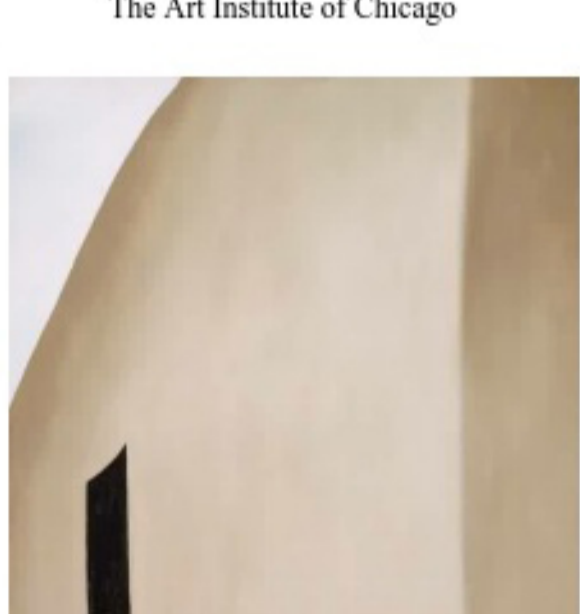


Minor White (1908 - 1976)  
*Sun Over the Pacific, Devil's Slide, 1947*

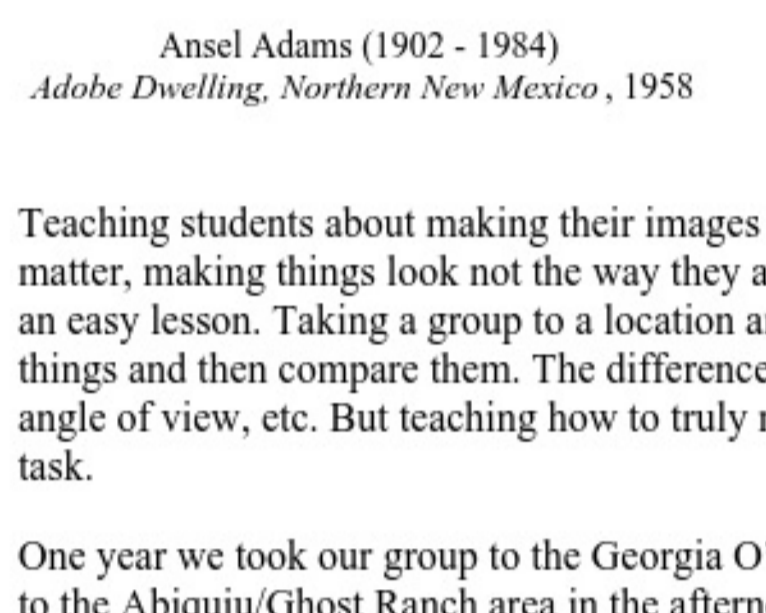
During the years we photographed at Ghost Ranch working on our volume; *Ghost Ranch: Land of Light*, we found ourselves focused on subjects that felt somewhat familiar. Whether we were looking at a rock formation, a tree stump, or a vista of the powerful Pedernal, we were reminded of a painting by Georgia O'Keeffe. Standing there and looking at "reality" and thinking of her painting, we were reminded of her powerful way of seeing and what a great innovator of subject matter she was.



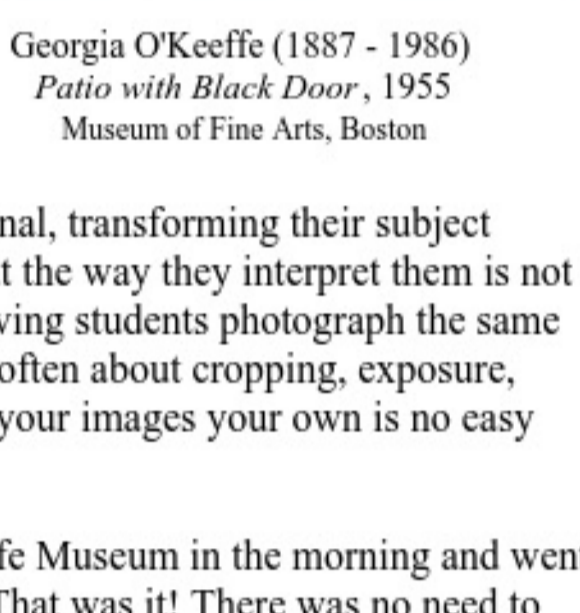
Eliot Porter (1901 - 1990)  
*Cross, Truchas, New Mexico, 1940*



Georgia O'Keeffe (1887 - 1986)  
*Black Cross, New Mexico, 1929*  
The Art Institute of Chicago



Ansel Adams (1902 - 1984)  
*Adobe Dwelling, Northern New Mexico, 1958*



Georgia O'Keeffe (1887 - 1986)  
*Patio with Black Door, 1955*  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Teaching students about making their images personal, transforming their subject matter, making things look not the way they are, but the way they interpret them is not an easy lesson. Taking a group to a location and having students photograph the same things and then compare them. The differences are often about cropping, exposure, angle of view, etc. But teaching how to truly make your images your own is no easy task.

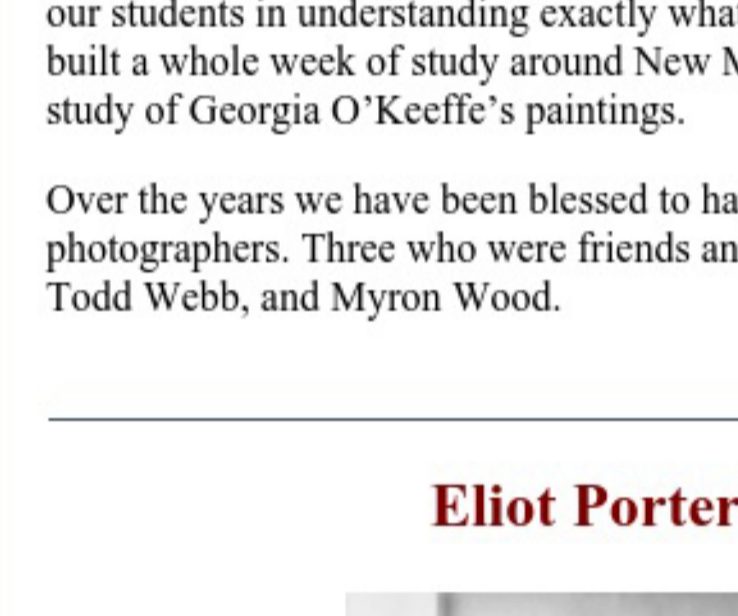
One year we took our group to the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum in the morning and went to the Abiquiu/Ghost Ranch area in the afternoon. That was it! There was no need to talk so much. Bringing our students to see her paintings and then to those locations was all we needed to do to have them understand what "interpretation" is really about. The photographs the students made that day had that extra ingredient.



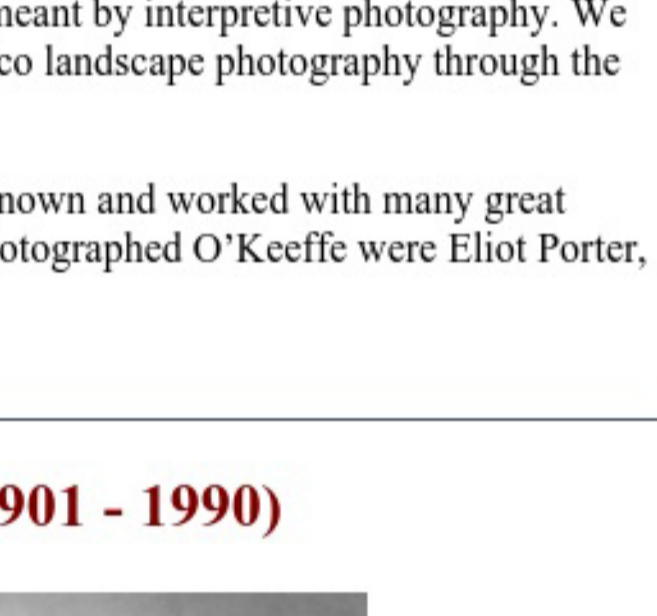
Eliot Porter (1901 - 1990)  
*Horse Skull, Georgia O'Keeffe's House, Abiquiu, New Mexico, 1952*



Georgia O'Keeffe (1887 - 1986)  
*Cows Skull- Red, White, and Blue, 1931*  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art



*The White Place, Abiquiu, New Mexico*  
(Please note the person in the center of the frame for scale)

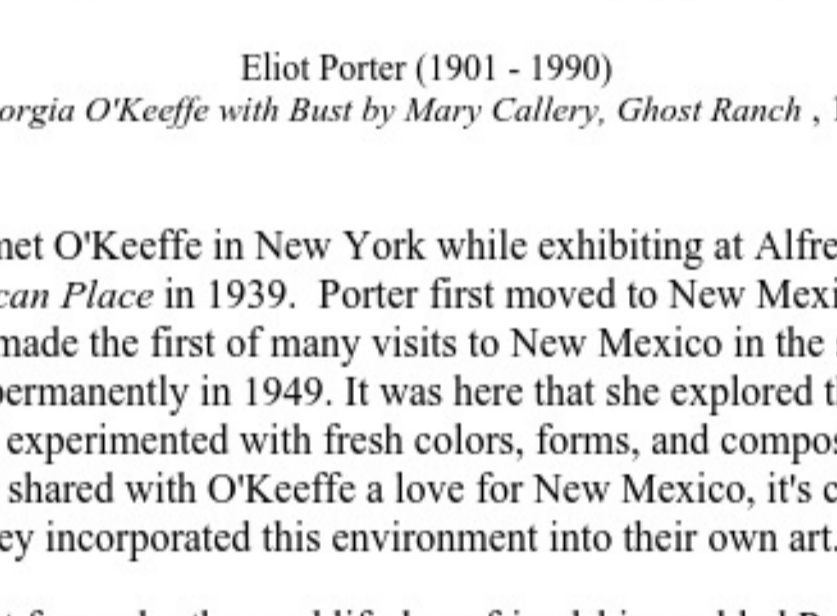


Georgia O'Keeffe (1887 - 1986)  
*From the White Place, 1940*  
The Phillips Collection

Georgia O'Keeffe was an amazing interpreter of our landscape and had much to offer our students in understanding exactly what is meant by interpretive photography. We built a whole week of study around New Mexico landscape photography through the study of Georgia O'Keeffe's paintings.

Over the years we have been blessed to have known and worked with many great photographers. Three who were friends and photographed O'Keeffe were Eliot Porter, Todd Webb, and Myron Wood.

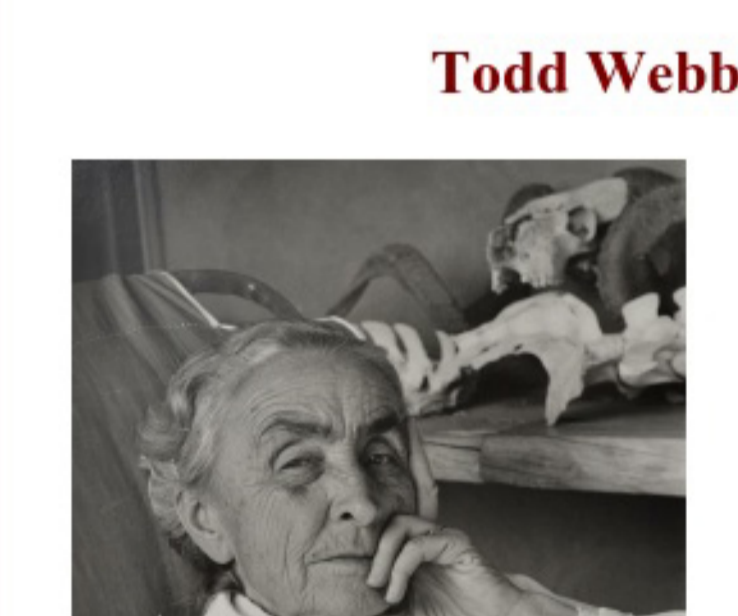
**Eliot Porter (1901 - 1990)**



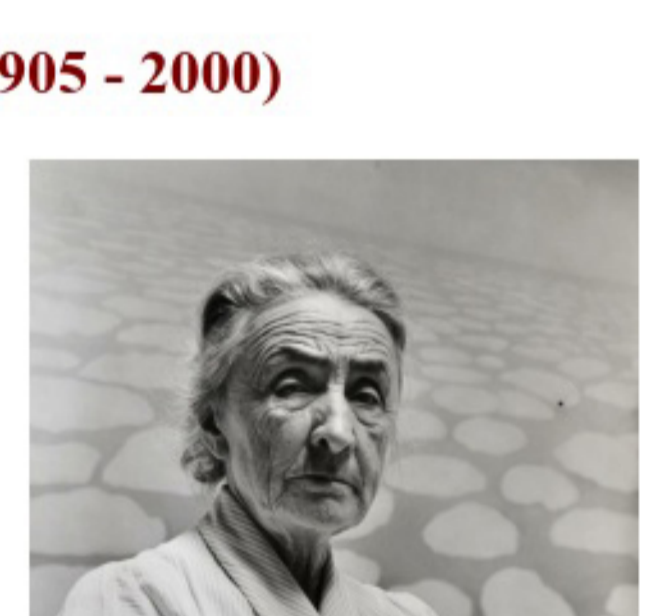
Eliot Porter (1901 - 1990)  
*Georgia O'Keeffe with Bust by Mary Callery, Ghost Ranch, 1945*

Eliot Porter had met O'Keeffe in New York while exhibiting at Alfred Stieglitz's gallery *An American Place* in 1939. Porter first moved to New Mexico in 1939. O'Keeffe made the first of many visits to New Mexico in the summer of 1929 and moved here permanently in 1949. It was here that she explored the unfamiliar environment; she experimented with fresh colors, forms, and compositional strategies. Porter shared with O'Keeffe a love for New Mexico, its culture and landscape, and they incorporated this environment into their own art.

Their deep respect for each other and life-long friendship enabled Porter to make an intimate and striking portrait of O'Keeffe. They shared an aesthetic, a lifestyle, and a passion for living and working in New Mexico. O'Keeffe introduced Eliot Porter to many unique sights in New Mexico that had been inspirational to her, among them the Black Place and the White Place. Porter, in turn, shared many of his loves of the southwest with O'Keeffe by including her on several of his journeys through the Glen Canyon area.

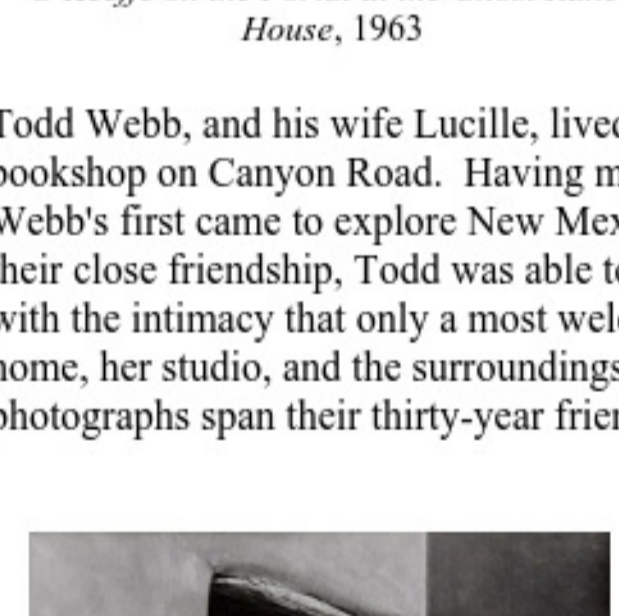


Eliot Porter (1901 - 1990)  
*White Boulder, Black Place, New Mexico, 1945*

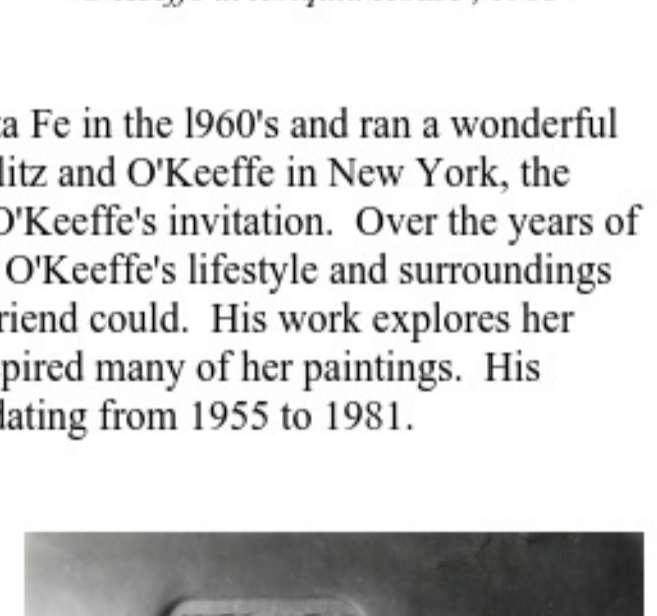


Eliot Porter (1901 - 1990)  
*Cathedral in the Desert, Utah, 1965*

**Todd Webb (1905 - 2000)**

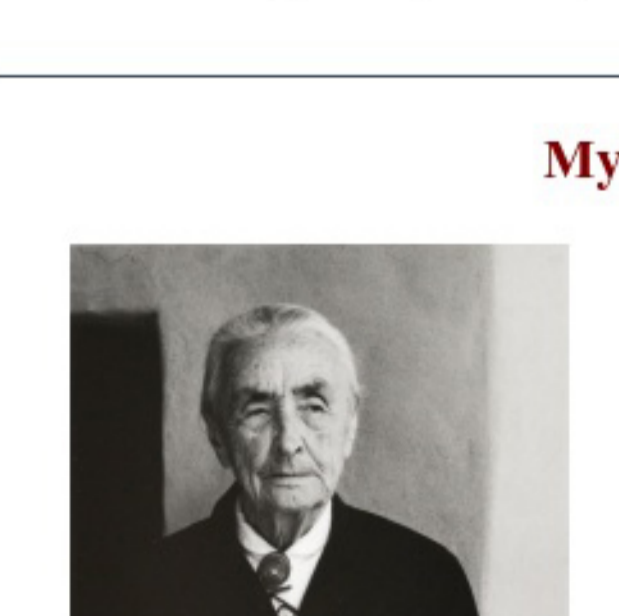


Todd Webb (1905 - 2000)  
*O'Keeffe on the Portal at the Ghost Ranch House, 1963*

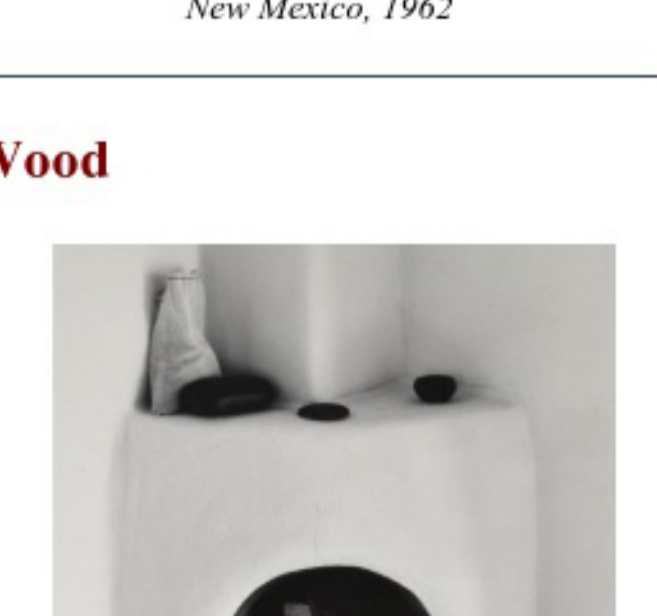


Todd Webb (1905 - 2000)  
*O'Keeffe at Abiquiu House, 1966*

Todd Webb, and his wife Lucille, lived in Santa Fe in the 1960's and ran a wonderful bookshop on Canyon Road. Having met Stieglitz and O'Keeffe in New York, the Webb's first came to explore New Mexico by O'Keeffe's invitation. Over the years of their close friendship, Todd was able to record O'Keeffe's lifestyle and surroundings with the intimacy that only a most welcomed friend could. His work explores her home, her studio, and the surroundings that inspired many of her paintings. His photographs span their thirty-year friendship, dating from 1955 to 1981.

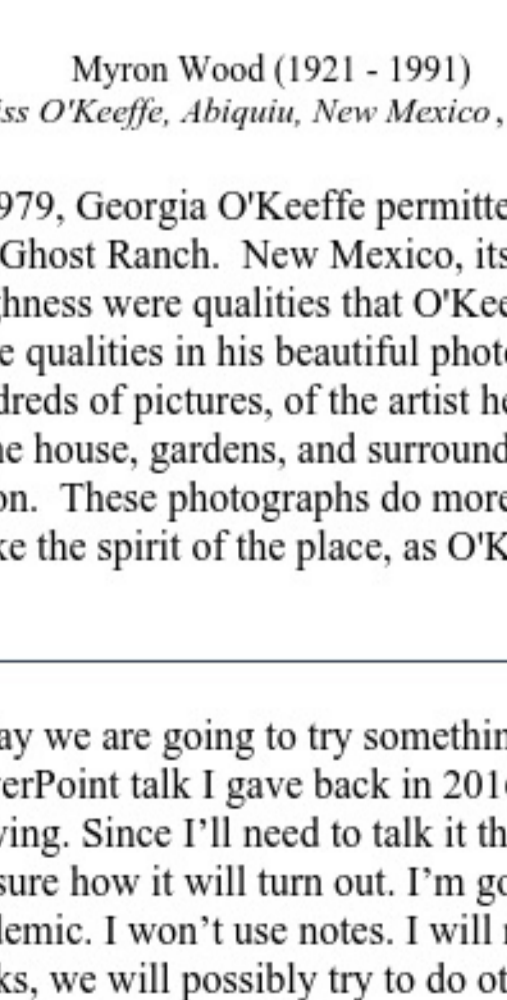


Todd Webb (1905 - 2000)  
*Patio Door at O'Keeffe's Abiquiu House, 1977*

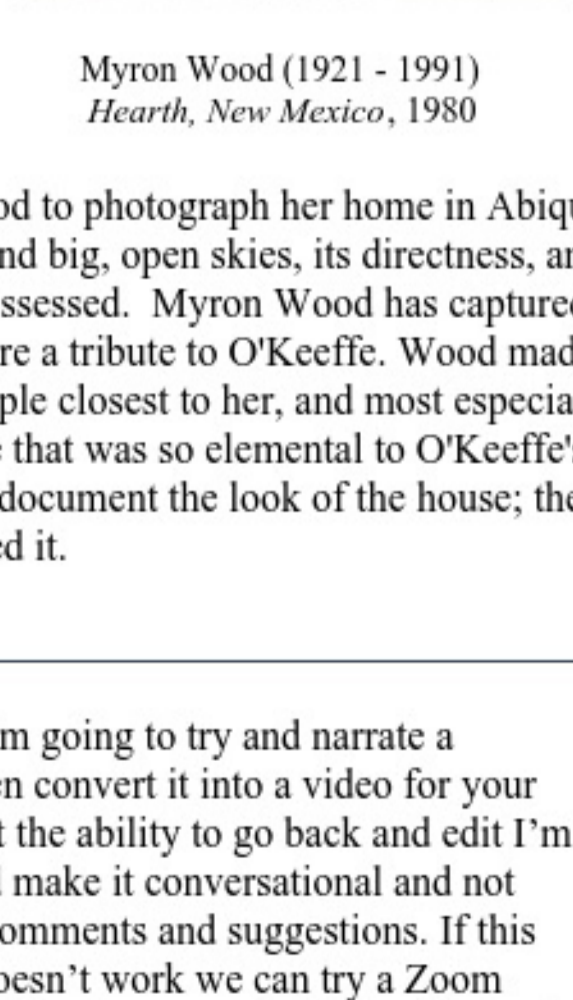


Todd Webb (1905 - 2000)  
*O'Keeffe's Studio at the Abiquiu House, New Mexico, 1962*

**Myron Wood**



Myron Wood (1921 - 1991)  
*Miss O'Keeffe, Abiquiu, New Mexico, 1980*

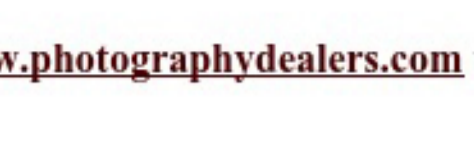


Myron Wood (1921 - 1991)  
*Hearth, New Mexico, 1980*

In 1979, Georgia O'Keeffe permitted Myron Wood to photograph her home in Abiquiu and Ghost Ranch. New Mexico, its fierce light and big, open skies, its directness, and toughness were qualities that O'Keeffe herself possessed. Myron Wood has captured those qualities in his beautiful photographs that are a tribute to O'Keeffe. Wood made hundreds of pictures, of the artist herself, the people closest to her, and most especially of the house, gardens, and surrounding landscape that was so elemental to O'Keeffe's vision. These photographs do more than merely document the look of the house; they evoke the spirit of the place, as O'Keeffe inhabited it.

Today we are going to try something different. I'm going to try and narrate a PowerPoint talk I gave back in 2016. We will then convert it into a video for your viewing. Since I'll need to talk it going without the ability to go back and edit I'm not sure how it will turn out. I'm going to try and make it conversational and not academic. I won't use notes. I will rely on your comments and suggestions. If this works, we will possibly try to do others. If this doesn't work we can try a Zoom format, but that would impose on your time more than I am comfortable with. Inspired somewhat by the Democratic Convention this week, where speakers were talking to empty rooms, I'll try and inspire myself talking to a computer screen imagining all of you in front of me. I'll try and talk fast so it's not too long. Let's try it! Apologies in advance!

**Georgia O'Keeffe Through the Lens**



We again want to thank you for the feedback. Your emails and calls mean the world to us and continue to motivate. We have had some wonderful responses.

Many of you have also asked about accessing our previous emails. We have added a new page on our website entitled "[History of Photography](#)". All our past and future weekly mailings will be located there for viewing. Please feel free to share them and encourage interested parties to join our mailing list under "[contact](#)".

Thank you, please stay safe, healthy, productive, and involved.

Please visit our website [www.photographydealers.com](http://www.photographydealers.com) to view our current inventory.