



## Memory and Passion. From Capa to Ghirri. Masterpieces from the Bertero Collection

Turin, CAMERA – Centro Italiano per la Fotografia

**20 February – 10 May 2020**

**19 February 2020: opening**

Exhibition curated by Walter Guadagnini, with the collaboration of Barbara Bergaglio and Monica Poggi

With *Memoria e passione. Masterpieces from the Bertero Collection*, from 20 February to 10 May 2020, **CAMERA - Centro Italiano per la Fotografia** comes to life through the stories and tales hidden within the most intriguing photographs from the **Bertero Collection**, a unique collection in Italy in terms of the originality of its approach and the quality of the images it hosts.

Among the more than 2,000 images that make up the collection, the curators have picked out **over 200**, produced by around **50 photographers** all around the world. Among the many, certain names stand out such as those of **Bruno Barbey, Gabriele Basilico, Gianni Berengo Gardin, Robert Capa, Lisetta Carmi, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Mario Cattaneo, Carla Cerati, Mario Cresci, Mario De Biasi, Mario Dondero, Alfred Eisenstaedt, Luigi Ghirri, Mario Giacomelli, Jan Groover, Mimmo Jodice, William Klein, Herbert List, Duane Michals, Ugo Mulas, Ruth Orkin, Federico Patellani, Ferdinando Scianna, Franco Vimercati and Michele Zaza.**

Curated by **Walter Guadagnini**, director of CAMERA, with the collaboration of Barbara Bergaglio and Monica Poggi, the exhibition recounts both our past and the roots of our present, as well as the evolution of Italian and international photography over a period spanning some 50 years (1930-1980).

In CAMERA's exhibition rooms, history itself serves as the backdrop against which countless stories unfold, telling us the history of this country and that of many others. The protagonists are peasants, priests, families, noble ladies, soldiers, children and most of all the photographers themselves who, in the widest range of accents and languages, catch the memory of these events on film. The masters



of Italian and world photography put together a story which starts in Italy when it had just been freed from Fascism, and where despite the debris and poverty, an intense desire may be sensed to go out into the streets, to dance and to use the most remote corners of nature to make love instead of hiding from the enemy.

Among the numerous works on show, there are some of the best-known shots from this period, **masterpieces which made the history of international photography** such as *La strada per Palermo*, taken by Robert Capa in 1943; *An American Girl in Italy, Florence* by Ruth Orkin in 1951, and the reportage on Italy by Henri Cartier-Bresson in 1952. There are many works that left a lasting mark on the evolution of Italian photography, genuine **milestones** that are now well-known throughout the world such as *Gli italiani si voltano* (1954) by Mario De Biasi, in which a group of men admire the beauty of Moira Orfei as she walks along the streets of Milan; two lovers hidden away among the dunes of a Venetian beach, captured by Gianni Berengo Gardin in 1958; *Palermo, via S. Agostino* (1960) by Enzo Sellerio, portraying a couple of children carrying two chairs above their heads; the iconic seminarians playing in the snow, depicted by Mario Giacomelli in 1961; the series *Mondo Cocktail*, produced by Carla Cerati at the start of the 1970s during the openings of the art galleries and shops of uptown Milan.

Despite the most numerous set in the collection being made up of images by photographers from the neorealist period, Bertero's choice was one of great foresight. In fact, the collection includes tales from the following decades, ones that contributed to the start of a new way of relating to the image, progressively breaking away from a documentary vocation to become ever more conceptual. Thus the show also features the famous *Verifiche* (1969–72) by Ugo Mulas, through which the photographer investigated and pieced apart some of the dogmas of the photographic language; the fundamental journey that Luigi Ghirri carries out in 1973 across states, deserts, oceans and galaxies while browsing through the pages of an atlas; the *Ritratti di fabbriche* (1978–80) by Gabriele Basilico, where the alterations in the Milanese industrial panorama become a pretext through which to understand the complexity of our era; the millennial Mediterranean culture reinterpreted around the turn of the 1990s through the expressive force of the images of Mimmo Jodice, to name but a few of the most particularly iconic research projects to be found in this precious collection.

Nevertheless, this exhibition is also – and above all – the story of a collector, Guido Bertero, who since the end of the 1990s has collected around 2,000 prints. His is a collection which started off almost by chance here in Turin, where Bertero has always lived, during a visit to the Artissima art



fair in 1998, where the then collector of ancient and contemporary art came across two photographs by the American artist Jan Groover, which he decided to purchase for his daughters. Within a few months, the opportunities for contacts with this language multiplied, but it was from a proposal to take part in an edition of 'PHotoEspaña' for a show on Italian Neorealism that the idea took shape to put together a genuine collection, compiled with the help of Enrica Viganò. It was a period of endless journeys up and down the peninsula to get to know and purchase the works of dozens of photographers which would then shortly afterwards be featured in the major exhibition 'NeoRealismo. The New Image in Italy, 1932–1960', staged in Cagliari, then in Spain, Dusseldorf, Rotterdam, Ljubljana and Winterthur. This was an experience recalled with great enthusiasm despite countless difficulties, due above all to the desire and the foresight to acquire vintage prints in a period when the awareness of the artistic value of the photographic image was still scarce. Thanks also to his determination, today the collection is a key point of reference for the study of Italian post-war photography, to the point that since last year, in the wake of a major donation made to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, which Bertero also contributed to, a selection of this heritage has been crossing the United States in a touring show on Neorealism, again in collaboration with ADMIRA, which has already been put on show in New York, San Francisco and Reno.

*This is an exhibition - comments **Walter Guadagnini** - that aims to offer a new gaze over a great collection, one famous both in Italy and abroad, bringing to light that boundless passion for photography and art which has always been found deep within Guido Bertero. An exhibition linked to the territory, given Italy's central role in the various depictions and, at the same time, international by virtue of the names of the many other photographers on display. The coupling of these two elements reveals Bertero's foresight not only in the choice of the purchase of works by great artists, but also in his interpretation of the history of the last century.*

*"We are grateful and at the same time proud" - continues Emanuele Chieli - "to be able to host here in CAMERA a part of the rich and diverse collection of Guido Bertero, to whom I am personally bound by a sentiment of respect and profound friendship. The images on show testify to the sensitivity and the great aesthetic sentiment of one of the most important collectors in Italy. And so let us be guided by his love for art and beauty in the discovery of a heritage which, with generosity and a great spirit of sharing, is offered to us in the present display."*

An exhibition realized thanks to **Guido Bertero's** desire to share his collection with the public, with a sense of great opening and a desire to promote a wider awareness of this language. As the collector himself states in the interview published in the volume accompanying this exhibition, "what is most gratifying is the baggage of human experiences that I have gathered during the search



*for works, the people I've met, the friendships I've made. Each of these photographs reminds me of a story, an anecdote that makes it even more precious."* Thus, personal and collective histories intertwine in images that are both documents and memories, read through the gaze of a keen collector.

A rich and varied collection, based on a personal passion which on this occasion is displayed thanks to Guido Bertero's desire to share his imagery with the public, in an approach of extreme aperture and a desire to promote wider awareness of this language which has always characterised him.

The exhibition is accompanied by a volume published by Umberto Allemandi Editore with an introduction by Walter Guadagnini. As well as the reproduction of over 250 images, the stories behind them also emerge through a dialogue between collector and curator.

CAMERA's work is made possible thanks to Intesa Sanpaolo, Lavazza, Eni and Reda, and in particular the exhibition and cultural programming is supported by the Compagnia di San Paolo.

## **INFORMATION**

### **CAMERA – Centro Italiano per la Fotografia**

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### **Opening hours** (Last entrance 30 minutes prior to closing)

Monday 11 am – 7 pm

Tuesday Closed

Wednesday 11 am – 7 pm

Thursday 11 am – 9 pm

Friday 11 am – 7 pm

Saturday 11 am – 7 pm

Sunday 11 am – 7 pm

### **Tickets**

Adults: €10

Concessions: €6 (under 26 and over 70)

Members of Touring Club Italiano, Amici della Fondazione per l'Architettura, members of the Ordine degli Architetti, AIACE, Enjoy, Slow Food, Centro Congressi Unione Industriale of Turin, and holders of the MenoUnoPiuSei card.

Entrance ticket holders for: Gallerie d'Italia (Milan, Naples, Vicenza), Museo Nazionale del Cinema, MAO, Palazzo Madama, Borgo Medievale, GAM – Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, Forte di Bard, MEF – Museo Ettore Fico and FIAF.



### Free Entrance

Children under 12

Holders of an Abbonamento Musei Torino Piemonte, holders of a Torino+Piemonte Card, holders of a valid ICOM card, handicapped citizens and an accompanier.

Booking and presales by Vivaticket.

### Contacts

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