



REGIONE PIEMONTE BANCA CRT FIAT GRUPPO GFT
CASTELLO DI RIVOLI

PRESS RELEASE

EXHIBITION

MARIO GIACOMELLI

CURATORS

Ida Gianelli and Antonella Russo

PRESS OFFICE

Massimo Melotti

OPENING

THURSDAY OCTOBER 1st, 1992, 7 pm

For the press
Opening at 11 am
Visit with the curators
and the artist at 5 pm

EXHIBITION DATES

October 2nd - November 29th, 1992

MUSEUM HOURS

10 am - 7 pm
Closed on Mondays

Castello di Rivoli
Museo d'Arte Contemporanea
Piazza del Castello
10098 Rivoli TO



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THE EXHIBITION

The retrospective exhibition "Mario Giacomelli", which will run from October 2nd to November 29th in the galleries of the third floor of the Castello di Rivoli, pays homage to one of the greatest Italian photographers of our times. With over 130 photographs, the exhibition, organized by Ida Gianelli, director of the museum, and by Antonella Russo, curator of the photography section, traces the key moments of Mario Giacomelli's photography, from his first portraits and landscapes of the Fifties to the famous series which are part of the history of contemporary photography. All the photographs in this exhibition were acquired and became the core of the Castello di Rivoli, permanent photographic collection.

Mario Giacomelli includes the following photographic series: *Verrà la morte e avrà i tuoi occhi*, *Scanno*, *Lourdes*, *Puglia*, *Io non ho mani che mi accarezzino il viso*, *La buona terra*, *Luna vedova per strade di mare*, *Il mattatoio*, *Il canto dei nuovi emigranti*, *Storie di terra*, *Il mare dei miei racconti*.

The exhibition also includes some of Giacomelli's less known photographs and some which will be shown for the first time to the audience such as *Non fatemi domande*, *Paesaggi*, *Il mare dei miei racconti*.

Mario Giacomelli is accompanied by a catalogue of 121 pages and 79 full-page black and white illustrations.

It includes critical essays by Charles-Henri Favrod, director and warden of the Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne Museum of Photography, and by Antonella Russo, curator of the photography section of the Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, as well as an in-depth history and biography of the photographer.

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MARIO GIACOMELLI
 Biographical notes

Born in Senigallia (Ancona) in 1925 from a farmers' family, Giacomelli is considered by International critics to be one of the most significant Italian contemporary photographers.

From the beginning of the Sixties and up to the present, his works have been selected and included in the permanent collections of prestigious museums and institutions of photography, such as the Department of Photography in New York's Museum of Modern Art, The International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House in Rochester, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, The Victoria and Albert Museum in London, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Atlanta's Milwaukee Art Museum, the Centro Studi e Archivio della Comunicazione at Parma University, the Staatliches Puschkin-Museum fur Bildende Kunst in Moscow and the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photograpy.

Giacomelli's work was included in over 200 photography exhibitions both in Italy and abroad.

Despite this success, Giacomelli defines himself as a professional printer and keen amateur photographer, stubbornly self-taught, who uses the camera following his own intuition and his imaginative vein.

Giacomelli's childhood was overshadowed by the death of his father, when he was nine; it was then that he began to paint and write poetry, activities which he still cultivates to these days.

He was attracted to the world of printing, dropped out of school and at thirteen he got a job at a printer's.

For Giacomelli, printing was always a real passion, and his enthusiasm propelled him on to become the owner of the printer's shop he worked in as a boy.

A turning point of his life came in 1953. When he bought a cheap Comet camera and took his first photograph on the beach. He was

impressed by the image he had taken following the movement of a wave, so became convinced that the camera could become like a canvas on which one can work, favouring the creative-poetic aspect over the technical-realistic one.

His passion for photography united him with other friends: Silvio Pellegrini, Ferruccio Ferroni, Adriano Malfagia and, later, Giuseppe Cavalli.

Cavalli was a lawyer, film director, photographer and also racing driver; for the "illiterate" Giacomelli, he represented the intellectual, who combined cultural knowledge to "savoir faire".

In 1947, Giuseppe Cavalli had founded a photo-society, "La Bussola", with Leiss, Finazzi, Vender and Veronesi, which played an important role in photography research and promotion in Italy. In the same year, besides "La Bussola", based on Benedetto Croce's ideas, another photo-society, "La Gondola", was founded by Monti, Bevilacqua, Bolognini, Bresciani and Scattola.

In 1954, in Senigallia, the "Misa" was launched. Its founding members included Cavalli, Balocchi, Camisa, Bocci, Ferroni, Malfagia, Pellegrini and two young photographers: Piergiorgio Branzi and Mario Giacomelli.

"Misa", unlike "La Bussola", guided by Cavalli's ideas, became a meeting place for debate on various tendencies. It was through this group that Giacomelli had the opportunity to know and appreciate the works of Paolo Monti, so far from Cavalli's convictions.

And it was Monti, in a jury including Fulvio Roiter, Comisso and others, at Castelfranco Veneto in 1955, who awarded a prize to the works which, Giacomelli had sent to this national competition.

"Suddenly" wrote Monti "among the flood of thousands of photographs, Giacomelli's works appeared to us, and "appeared" is the closest verb for our joy and emotion, because the presence of those images convinced us that a new and great photographer was born".

Though he was invited to join the group "La Bussola", in 1956, Giacomelli decided to continue his research on his own: after "Verrà la morte e avrà i tuoi occhi", (1955), he began to work on "I colori del paesaggio" and "Il cantiere del paesaggio".

He photographed the pilgrims at Loudes (1957), immortalized the life of the inhabitants of Scanno (1957-59), the gypsies' wanderings (1958). In 1960 he completed "Un uomo, una donna, un amore", and that year Lamberto Vitali presented him to the Milan Triennial. The following year he worked on the series "Il mattatoio". In 1962, he began the series "Io non ho mani che mi accarezzino il viso". Two years later the photograph "Scanno" was selected for the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. In 1964, he also began to work on the series "La buona terra". In 1967 he began research for "Taglio d'albero", which continued through 1969. Two years later he began to work on "Spoon

River Anthology", and in 1974 he travelled to Ethiopia to photograph a tribe at Wollamo.

In 1980, the Centro Studi e Archivio della Comunicazione of Parma University dedicated a large retrospective of his photographic work curated by Arturo Carlo Quintavalle.

Photographic series such as "Verrà la morte e avrà i tuoi occhi" (1955-56, 1966-68), Lourdes (1957) and the unforgettable "Scanno" (1957-59), which brought the village in Abruzzi to the attention of the entire world, are among Giacomelli's most appreciated photographs, because of their severely poetic quality. The photographs, of the series "Io non ho mani che mi accarezzino il viso" (1962-63) show images of charming thoughtlessness, whereas those in the series "La buona terra" (1964-65) are passionate records of peasant life, marked by the artist's creativity.

Among his most recent works, "Il mare dei miei ricordi" and "Paesaggi" stand out: they are considered "classic" themes in Giacomelli's work, on which the photographer goes back to periodically, producing visually captivating images.

Recently Giacomelli was awarded of important prizes, such as the "Spilimberg '91" and the "Città di Venezia 1992" prizes for photography, awarded for his international recognised artistic activity.