



GIOVANNI GASTEL *My Ladies*

curated by
Nicola Davide Angerame
e Valerio Tazzetti

Milan
October 20 – November 25 2017

Spazioborgogno and **Photo&Contemporary** are pleased to announce **My Ladies**, a wide anthological exhibition by Giovanni Gastel, focusing on a selection of about 70 **fashion and portraits' photographs**, dedicated to the most famed women and models of the international scene, realized by the famous Milanese author.

Severe and witty, poetic and austere, elegant and masculine, charm and algid, Giovanni Gastel's women take new aspects and gazes through which **the evolutions of the female identity**, that have occurred in recent decades are being read.

"Women saved me," says the photographer. They are the protagonists of **My Ladies** on display in Milan from 20 October to 25 November at Spazioborgogno: a hymn to femininity, style, elegance and a world made of subtle seduction, sensitivity and hidden fragility.

Muse that inspired Giovanni Gastel's work during his 40 years of professional career, recently presented in a dedicated anthology at Palazzo della Ragione in Milan, curated by Germano Celant.

'My Ladies "focuses on some of the most significant works of the Milanese photographer, immortalized on the most famous fashion magazine's covers, from Vogue, Elle and Marie Claire. The curators, **Nicola Davide Angera and Valerio Tazzetti**, made a selection that highlighted some of the Gastel's key aspects, linked to his personal way of feeling and interpreting femininity through the photography: "We would like to offer some suggestions about a possible reading - **say the curators** - that doesn't follow a well-known score. The spectator will face an emotional impact, full of emotions, suggestions, surprises, and constant evocations. " Rather than sketching a sectional path, the curators identified and highlighted some of the distinctive features of Gastel's art in a kaleidoscopic game of references and allusions to its female universe.

Primary shapes: In many photographs, Gastel's taste is perceived for clean and essential lines; a formal elegance that is, first of all, the elegance of the spirit.

Between cinema and theater: the works are influenced by the world of cinema and theater, showing the taste for the setting with which Gastel staged their models, wrapping them in dreamy, woody and circular scenes.

Women's gazes: It's a very important topic, in addition to being the one who looks, the photographer also becomes the one who is looked at, even scrutinized and almost bare by his own Muses. These looks that reach us with strength. Disconcertingly, they sometimes save us and sometimes judges. The gazes belong to languid, amusing, windy, sweet and severe women.

Cult of classicism: this theme is beloved to Gastel and is peculiar to his style and personality; touches one of the core of his aesthetics, is a funnel that brings nourishment to work and that sink into the long family history, resulting in the highest aspirations, in ideals of elegance, strictness, and ethical values.

Textures and patterns. Women revealed. Playing between the skin and the different textures found or induced by the fashion world, which stimulate Gastel to "dress" her women without ever covering them, rather exalting their shapes and personalities. The strong fragility of femininity is exalted by the desire that the veil activates in a seductive short-circuit. As Nicola D. **Angerame** points out: *"This exhibition tells us how Gastel's gaze has always been his own, almost faustian, journey, in which woman becomes a symbol, a vestal guarding secrets and a way to reach more high truth "*.

Valerio **Tazzetti** adds: *"Without the woman there is no light and without the photograph maybe there is no real light of the light that woman emanates. Gastel, with great respect, joy and elegance, has shown her in a kaleidoscope of shimmering images, but always immersed in an aura that has sublimated multiple identities. "*



Biographical notes.

Gastel was born in Milan son of Ida Pace Visconti and Giuseppe Gastel, entrepreneur. He studied aesthetic and cultural in theater's field, influenced by his uncle Luchino Visconti, a famous cinema and theater director, reciting in an experimental company. He writes poetry and at 16 years he published *Kasbah*. Since 1972 he began to photograph. Between 1975 and 1976 he began producing still life for the Christie's and realized the visual identity of several Italian companies. From the early 1980s to today, Gastel has co-operated with more than 50 Italian and international titles and published about 130 covers; has produced over 500 of campaigns and catalogs for several fashion maisons and great brand of beauty, jewelery and design; he has shot more than 300 portraits in black and white and colored. Its 40 years of photography have been marked by the privileged use of the Polaroid 20x25 Optical Desk and Polaroid plates, and then opened up to digital technologies by imparting the new potential they offer to their creativity.

Icon of the Italian and international photography, in 2002 he received the Oscar for the photography at the Kore Oscar della Moda show.

He has exhibited in personal exhibitions in Milan, Venice, New York, Paris and Japan. Several published books, especially poetry. In 2015, the autobiography was released at "An Eternal Moment" by Ed. Mondadori and the following year, the monograph published by Silvana Editoriale S.p.A. curated by Germano Celant, in which pictures, documents, declarations, testimonies and works are collected, to form an unpublished volume throughout the photographer's story.

Gastel is a permanent member of the Polaroid Museum in Chicago and since 2013 is President of the Association of Photograph Professionals (AFIP)

AUTHOR : GIOVANNI GASTEL

TITLE : My Ladies

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LOCATION : Spazioborgogno, Ripa di Porta Ticinese, 113, 20143 Milano

OPENING HOURS: from Tuesday to Saturday 3 p.m–7 p.m

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