

HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON

Fotografo

8 marzo > 17 giugno 2018
Ancona, Mole Vanvitelliana

Press Release

On 8 March, the monumental exhibition *Henri Cartier-Bresson Photographer, 140 photographs* opens at la Mole Vanvitelliana in Ancona. It is promoted by the **Comune di Ancona** and organized by **Civita Mostre**, in collaboration with the **Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson** and **Magnum Photos Paris**.

This is the second opportunity to see the work of a great photographer at the Mole, following Steve McCurry's extremely successful exhibition, held in the same location until last June. After having admired the work of the most famous contemporary photographer, we are able to immerse ourselves in the world of the greatest photographer of the twentieth century and discover the richness of each of his images, which are testament to his mindful and clear vision of the historical and sociological context he lived in.

When Henri Cartier-Bresson took the photo seen on the poster campaign for this retrospective exposition, he was only 24 years old. He had bought his first Leica only two years previously, but was still deciding what his future profession would be. He was uncertain and tried many paths, from cinema to painting, stating *"I'm a nervous type, and I love painting...I know nothing about photography."*

Not knowing anything about photography meant, amongst other things, never personally developing his own pictures, leaving the job to specialists in the field. He didn't want to improve negatives or review framing, because for him a shot should capture *the here and now*, the immediate reaction of the subject.

For Cartier-Bresson, photographic technique represented only a means, which shouldn't influence or upset the initial experience, which is the real moment the meaning and value of a piece is decided.

"For me the camera is a sketch book, an instrument of intuition and spontaneity, the master of the instant which, in visual terms, questions and decides simultaneously. In order to 'give a meaning' to the world, one has to feel oneself involved in what one frames through the viewfinder. This attitude requires concentration, a discipline of the mind, sensitivity, and a sense of geometry. It is by great economy of means that one arrives at simplicity of expression."

Henri Cartier-Bresson never went on to frame or select his photographs. He only went as far as to accept or reject them, nothing more. He was absolutely right to say that he knew

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nothing about photography in a world which, conversely, has raised this art form to the highest level.

For him, taking a photograph was the step between imagination and reality. A 'nervous' step, because it was clear and rapid, characterized by the mastery of the photographer and his ability not to lose the transient moment.

"To photograph is to hold one's breath, when all faculties converge to capture fleeting reality. It's at that precise moment that mastering an image becomes a great physical and intellectual joy."

His photographs grasp the contemporary aspect of life and objects, they demonstrate the clarity and precision of his perception and order of structure. He geometrically arranged shots only in the few seconds between framing them and taking the photo. Henri Cartier-Bresson's composition came from his quick understanding without analysis, a reflex which allowed him to fully seize the opportunities offered by his surroundings, his skilful eye perceiving things that are not always noticed by others.

"To take photographs means to recognize—simultaneously and within a fraction of a second—both the fact itself and the rigorous organization of visually perceived forms that give it meaning. It is putting one's head, one's eye, and one's heart on the same axis."

In order to talk about Henri Cartier-Bresson, it is important to understand his life, affirms **Denis Curti, the curator of the exhibition** in Ancona, as the artist's experience in the field of photography is completely intermixed with his personal life. Two episodes clearly demonstrate this. In 1946 Cartier-Bresson discovered that MOMA New York was planning a 'posthumous' exhibition of his work, as he was believed to have died in war. He got in touch with the curator to clear up this misunderstanding, and, with great irony, dedicated more than a year to preparing the exhibition, which opened in 1947. In the same year he founded, with Robert Capa, George Rodger, David Seymour and William Vandivert, the famous Magnum Photos agency. Clearly, Cartier-Bresson is a photographer destined for immortality, capable of re-writing the vocabulary of modern photography and influencing entire generations of new photographers.

Regarding the creation of Magnum Photos, it is still today an important agency for photo-journalism. Ferdinando Scianna, for many years the only Italian working with the agency, wrote:

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"Magnum continues to survive due to its founders egalitarian and utopian values. Mysteriously, it has allowed the most violent contradictions to coexist, and this is the thing that excites me most. As an individualist Sicilian, it's difficult for me to feel like part of a group, but if I have to see myself as part of one, this is the tradition that I recognize myself in."

Henri Cartier-Bresson, photographer exhibits a selection of photographs originally curated by his friend the editor Robert Delphire, who passed away last year, and is realized in collaboration with the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson. The institution was created in 2003 by Cartier-Bresson, together with his wife Martine Franck and his daughter Mélanie, with the aim of collecting his works and creating an exhibition space open to other artists. The setup project of the exhibition is conceived by Denis Curti and Andrea Holzherr on behalf of Magnum Photos.

The objective of this exhibition is to share and understand Cartier-Bresson's *modus operandi*: his search for contact with others in the most diverse situations and places, treating us to habit-breaking surprises and mind-opening wonders, thanks to these moments immortalized by his camera.

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INFORMATION

Title	Henri Cartier Bresson. Photographer
Where	Mole Vanvitelliana, Ancona
When	8 March - 17th June 2018
Promoted by	<i>Comune di Ancona</i>
Arranged by	<i>Civita Mostre</i> in collaboration with the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson and Magnum Photos Paris.
Curated by	Denis Curti
Opening hours	Tuesday - Sunday: 10.00 - 19.00 (ticket office closes at 18.00) Closed Mondays Open Easter Monday 2nd April
Tickets	Full price € 9.00 Reduced €8.00 valid for groups (min. 12 people), holders of special discount cards, non-accredited journalists and those presenting a ticket for the exhibition <i>Robert Doisneau: le Temps Retrouvé</i> (Senigallia, Palazzo del Duca, 29 March - 2 September 2018) Special reduction €3.00 for school pupils under 18 years old.

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Free entrance: Children under 6 years old, teachers accompanying school groups, differently-abled people and their carers, accredited journalists, licenced tour guides.

Advanced sale fee

€1.00 per person

Educational tours

Guided tours: Classes up to 25 students € 4,00

Guided tour with workshop for classes up to 25 students

€ 6,00

Prices are per student and do not include the entry ticket (special reduction €3,00), free for accompanying teachers, differently-abled people and their carers.

Guided tours for groups up to 25 people € 80,00

Guided tours for groups in English or German up to 25 people

€ 120,00

Reduction for two or more classes from the same institution.

Info e bookings

mostre@civita.it

cartierbressonancona.it

Guided tours and workshops

info@museieducativi.it

museieducativi.it

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