

LUCCA

In November, Lucca becomes the location for the Lucca Photo Fest, the most prestigious photographic event in all of Italy

Put together four friends having dinner together, an extraordinary common passion for photography, an exceptional location, Lucca: that's how the idea to create an international Festival of photography - the Lucca Photo Fest - was born.

Lucia Maffei

It was 2005 and today, after six editions, this appointment is internationally recognized as the most important Italian event for the most well-known photographers and for all the fans of this wonderfully expressive, artistic and narrative instrument.

An event that each year presents an increasingly articulated and engrossing program. The entire city thus becomes the "lieu" of the festival thanks to the many exhibitions organized inside the ancient palazzos, to the workshops held by the greatest names in international photography taking place in suggestive locations, to the video art installations and to the soirée that calls the winners of the three contests promoted by the organizers. A network of images that completely envelopes Lucca's historic center.

AN EXTREMELY RICH PORTFOLIO IF WE CONSIDER THAT IN SIX EDITIONS, LUCCA HAS HOSTED OVER 80 EXHIBITIONS. Among the most visited is doubtless the World Press Photo: a concentration of the best photographs that in the course of the years have received an award in the most important photojournalism contest in the world. This itinerant exhibition - the highest expression of international photography - arrives in Lucca after having been hosted by the cities of Milan, Rome, New York, Paris and London.

This fall's edition will feature an exhibition of the photographs that won the 2010 award, held in Amsterdam. Besides the winner, Jodi Bieber from South Africa, also many Italian photographers have received awards in the different contest categories; among these, Ivo Saglietti, winner in 2006 of the LuccaDigitalPhotoFest for his intense reportage on the stragi del sabato sera (young people victims of fatal car crashes upon their return from discotheques on Saturday night, translator's note).

AT EVERY EDITION, THE LUCCA PHOTO FEST FEATURES EXTRAORDINARY EXHIBITIONS like the one by Douglas Kirkland, author of one of the most famous portraits of Audrey Hepburn, Richard Avedon, Man Ray, the one by eclectic American artist Sandy Skoglund or, in the last edition, the exhibition of the photo-shots made by Horst P. Horst, alias Horst Paul Albert Bohrmann, one of the most famous fashion photographers who captured the glamour of Marlene Dietrich, Rita Hayworth, Coco Chanel (who allowed only him to portray her image), Maria Callas and Joan Crawford - her "Corset" photo inspired one of the most famous looks by Madonna in her "Vogue" video. In the 2010 exhibition, whose main theme was the woman, it is noteworthy to remember "Bye bye baby Marilyn", about eighty photos dedicated to the "divine" Monroe: a legend told through the images of great photographers, from Bert Stern who photographed the actress six months before her tragic death, to Richard Avedon.

"TODAY THE FESTIVAL IS A CONSOLIDATED REALITY RECOGNIZED ON AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL", says Enrico Stefanelli, creator and artistic director of the event. "We are being contacted by the major art galleries and museums in the world with proposals for important collaborations. We are greatly pleased with the success of the Epson Digigraphie Lounge, the space dedicated to art galleries and to collections: an experiment that we will certainly repeat. We can say without a shadow of a doubt that Lucca is now the privileged reference point for Italian photographic art."

THE GENERAL THEME OF THE 2011 EDITION, THAT WILL TAKE PLACE FROM NOVEMBER 19TH TO DECEMBER 11TH, IS THE EAST. In this issue of Perini Journal, two exclusive previews of photographs that announce the motley prospects used to tell the story of the thousand faces of Asia. The splendid, pictorial, "The Full Moon Story 04", where a fairy tale

girl is surrounded by kittens, is a photo by Kim Kyung Soo, fashion photographer born in Korea who works for magazines the likes of Vogue, Luxury and Marie Claire. "The tra-velling Cinemas of India", by Amit Madheshiya, is a freeze-frame of the astonishment and concentration on the face of an elderly Indian man while at the cinema. Indian photographer Madheshiya does not depict Bollywood but that place where, in the light of the projector - wherever it is placed - the looks, the gestures, the reactions of the most common and true spectators are frozen in the photo-shot.

"AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS ADVENTURE," continues Enrico Stefanelli, "we also contacted the VII Photo Agency, one of the main photo-reporting agencies in the world, who treats war scenarios in particular. At the time, they didn't take us very seriously. This year, they contacted us: not only will they be present with an important exhibition by their reporters dedicated to the East, but they have also chosen to celebrate their tenth anniversary right here in Lucca. I think this is the best confirmation of how, from that dinner several years ago, from an idea, a very important reality was born that is becoming increasingly recognized on an international level with each edition." •

Info: www.lupf.it