

# Letizia Battaglia

## *Qualcosa di mio*

6th December 2015 – 6th March 2016

Curated by Alberto Stabile and Laura Barreca

Opening: Sunday 6th of December 2015 – at 12.00 p.m.



The Museo Civico di Castelbuono is pleased to present the exhibition *Qualcosa di mio*, planned and designed thanks to the suggestions of Letizia Battaglia, the internationally famous photographer from Palermo. The exhibition, curated by Alberto Stabile and Laura Barreca, collects images of women, young girls, their glances and everyday actions, captured in the crudeness of black and white, in a Sicily now "out of time", yet unmistakable. The exhibition, presented to the public for the first time last August in the former Florio Tuna Factory of Favignana and Formica, within the frame of the festival "FavignanaIncontri 2015" (curated by Alberto Stabile), is co-produced by the Museo Civico di Castelbuono.

When talking about Mario Farinella's memorable *réportage* into poor neighborhoods of the city, Alberto Stabile states: "Palermo photographed by Letizia Battaglia from the mid 70's to the late 80's, was a place where women represented the weakest link, within that chain that immobilized the city to the logic of violence and dishonesty, except for rare exceptions. Women nailed to a primordial role, as the "child brides". Women expected to do everything and to whom smiling, playing and happiness, are denied. " In Letizia Battaglia's work, the focus on childhood as a fragile state of temporary purity, functions as a counterpoint, or redemption, for the pain imprinted in the images that accompanied the Palermo's *anni di piombo* (*years of lead*, trad.) period. That Palermo that she feels as sick, and with which she has interwoven a long relationship of "rage and sweet despair."

The photographs of Letizia Battaglia offer an analytical research towards her own self, a tool for "salvation and truth", as she puts it. She portrayed places and dozens of victims of Mafia murders, but in this particular selection of images the objective goes beyond the report to become something else, something personal, deeply personal, what she calls "something of mine" (*qualcosa di mio*, trad.). The indicator of a pain, one she has to live with. Participation in a poignant, unacceptable, human condition.

The outrage that transcends the act of complaint. As Stabile says, "in the background of certain images, anyone can see the visible symptom of a general degradation, which hasn't remained unrelated to the hands and the logic of organized crime".

At the end of the exhibition, a work by Letizia Battaglia will become part of the permanent collection of the Museum.

## BIOGRAPHY

Letizia Battaglia (Palermo, 1935), among the reference personalities of reportage photography and winner of prestigious international awards - the first European woman to receive the "W. Eugene Smith" prize for social photography in 1985 - looks back on a long apprenticeship. From the photos of Pier Paolo Pasolini and Ezra Pound to the daily work for the newspaper *L'Ora* in Palermo, where her photos of the "illustrious corpses" (*cadaveri eccellenti* from the French, *cadavre exquis*) of mafia war have the weight and impact of editorials. The political commitment aimed at changing a reality seemingly embedded in an immutable logic, cannot be excluded from this intimate, and professional, painful path. This is when she was appointed City Councillor to Liveability in the first mandate (1985-1990) of the Mayor Leoluca Orlando. This year Letizia Battaglia has turned eighty and many acknowledgements have come from all over the world, confirming her as the most important contemporary Sicilian photographer. The City of Palermo has recently decided to create an International Center of Photography, with her artistic direction, inside the area of the Cantieri Culturali alla Zisa, which will build up its collection with pictures of the city donated by Palermo's photographers.

This exhibition catalogue contains the reproductions of all the photographs on show, essays by the curators, a text by Simona Mafai, and an interview with the photographer by Valentina Bruschi.

### Information:

Title: *Qualcosa di mio*

Author: Letizia Battaglia

Curators: Alberto Stabile, Laura Barreca

Texts by: Laura Barreca, Valentina Bruschi, Simona Mafai, Alberto Stabile

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Installation project: Corso di Progettazione degli Allestimenti, Pietro Airoidi, Accademia di Belle Arti di Palermo

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