

Naples Untitled. Thirty-Nine Photographs in Public Spaces

Natalia Nebel (November 27, 2009)



Naples Untitled (Napoli senza titolo) opened at the Italian Cultural Institute of Chicago on November 5, 2009. Italian Cultural Institute director Tina Cervone, General Consul of Italy in Chicago Alessandro Motta, and Cultural Commissioner of Naples Nicola Oddati, introduced the exhibit and spoke about its connection to The International Forum of Cultures, which will host a conference in the City of Naples in 2013.

Made up of thirty-nine photographs by twenty of Italy's most accomplished photographers, including Mimmo Jodice, the exhibit's mission is to explore the ways in which public spaces in Naples have been used by Neapolitans over the last forty years. Naples is a city of extremes, famous for its beauty and creative spirit, but also associated with environmental degradation and corruption. In the public's mind, clichés and stereotypes on both ends of this spectrum prevail over a more tempered, multifaceted reality. In fact, the curators decided to call the exhibit Naples Untitled in order to encourage viewers to look at their city in a fresh way, uninfluenced by predetermined points of view or overt direction from the organizers. The photographs are untitled as well; this leaves viewers free to create their own personal narrative of Naples, narratives that are much more likely to incorporate



many aspects of the city's character by being formed through diverse images.

A girl in her First Communion dress, a couple embracing amid throngs of commuters, a horse and rider wading out into the ocean, death in the street, a young artist sketching in a great piazza, Mimmo Jodice's car wrapped in a white sheet in a dark alleyway – these are photographs of innocence and experience, of solitariness and great conviviality: they are haunting and surprising and delightful in turn. Each photographer has captured Naples as it's lived in by Neapolitans, Naples to be redefined and looked at anew, untitled for now.

On the occasion of the exhibit's opening, Nicola Oddati, Cultural Commissioner of Naples, also talked about the International Forum of Cultures, an important UNESCO initiative designed to foster inter-cultural dialogue and debate. As Oddati explained, the Forum seeks to promote values such as a respect for diversity, world peace and sustainable living. A Forum conference is held every three years in a different city, and lasts approximately three months.

The next conference will be hosted in Naples in 2013, and will feature a different city for every day of the event. The Forum will give Naples a chance to highlight its positive aspects, and showcase the progress it's made in the last several years in improving its territory, increasing the use of its public spaces, and developing its cultural life.

This project was made possible thanks to the collaboration of the Museum of Art in Naples, PAN (Palazzo delle Arti di Napoli) which provided the works on display from their collection, and the support of the Department of Cultural Affairs of the City of Naples. It was curated by Fabio Donato, Maria Federica Palestino and Maria Vergiani.

The exhibition will be on display until February 14, 2010.

More info on [Institute Web Site](#) [2]

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