

VENEZIA/TRE OCI
FROM 20 MARCH TO 18 AUGUST 2019

LETIZIA BATTAGLIA
Photography as a life choice

curated by Francesca Alfano Miglietti

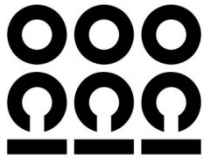
From 20 March to 18 August 2019, the Casa dei Tre Oci in Venice will be hosting a large-scale anthological show of the work by Letizia Battaglia (Palermo 1935), one of the most significant protagonists of Italian photography, and it will range over her whole career.

The show, curated by Francesca Alfano Miglietti, organised by **Civita Tre Venezie**, promoted by the **Fondazione di Venezia**, and with the participation of **Tendercapital**, presents **300 photographs, many of which have never been exhibited before**, and which reveal the social and political context in which they were shot. The selection of photos, undertaken together with the Letizia Battaglia archive, from the first had the help of Marta Sollima and, for the search for further choices, of Maria Chiara Di Trapani.

The exhibition itinerary will focus on those arguments that have been at the heart of the most characteristic expressive aspects of Letizia Battaglia and that have led her to make a deep and continuous social criticism while avoiding clichés and questioning the visual premises of contemporary culture.

The portraits of women, men, animals, and children are only some of the chapters that make up the show; added to these are photos of cities such as Palermo, and then those devoted to politics, life, death, love, as well as two films that inquire into her human and artistic activities.

The result is a genuine portrait of Letizia Battaglia, a nonconformist intellectual but also a poetic and political photographer, a woman who interests herself in what surrounds her and in what, distant from her, arouses her interest.



Tre Oci

As she herself has said, *“I have experienced photography as a document, as an interpretation, and as many other things [...]. I have experienced it as salvation and as truth”*.

She also stated, *“I am a person and not just a photographer. Photography is part of me, but it is not the absolute part, even if it takes up so much time.”*

Speaking of Letizia Battaglia’s career, Francesca Alfano Miglietti remarks, *“What the exhibition project aims at showing are ‘forms of attention’: something that comes about even before the photos, because Letizia Battaglia questions herself about everything that her eyes fall on, perhaps a murder or a child, a view or a gathering, a person or the sky. Looking has been her main activity and has ‘materialised’ in extraordinary images”*.

Known above all for having recorded with her photos what the mafia has represented for her city, from murders to mourning, from political intrigues to the struggle represented by Falcone and Borsellino, during her career Letizia Battaglia has also recounted the life of the poor and public uprisings, always with her city as the centre of her observations of reality, as well as its urban landscape.

Letizia Battaglia “treats” her work almost as a poster, exhibiting her convictions in a direct, true, poetic, and educated manner, thus revolutionising the role of news photography.

She learned her technique while “on the street”, and her images at once distinguish themselves for their attempt to capture a powerful emotion and almost always a feeling of “pietas”.

The subjects of Letizia, which are never selected by chance, trace out an itinerary aimed at strengthening her own ideologies and convictions about society, political involvement, marginalised situations, the violence provoked by power wars, and the emancipation of women.

Many documentaries have investigated her figure both as a woman and as an artist, the most recent of which was presented at the 2019 edition of the *Sundance Film Festival*. The film *Shooting the Mafia*, directed by Kim Longinotto, recounts Letizia Battaglia as a journalist and artist who, with her camera and her own eventful life, is a firsthand witness to a historical period fundamental to Sicily and to Italy, the period that culminated in the barbarous slaughter of Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue published by **Marsilio Editori** with essays by Francesca Alfano Miglietti, Leoluca Orlando, Maria Chiara Di Trapani, Filippo La Mantia, and Paolo Ventura.

Biographical note

Letizia Battaglia was born in Palermo in 1935; she has three daughters. She is one of Italy's leading photoreporters. From 1974 to 1991 she directed the photographic team of the communist afternoon daily newspaper "L'ORA" in Palermo, and she also founded the "Informazione Fotografica" agency. Her images recount with an activist's passion the bloodstained years of the wars of the Sicilian mafia. With a black and white full of contrasts, her archive overflows with photos that are heart-wrenching in their composition. She creates silent and solemn images that are far from the uproar that is often part of the news. Besides the bodies of judges and of nameless victims, she continues to recount her favourite subjects: children and young women portrayed to express a possible future.

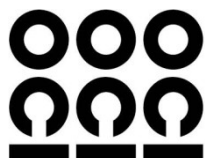
She is not only a photographer: she is also a film director, an environmentalist, a councillor for the Green Party with Leoluca Orlando's city council, a member 3 of the Sicilian regional government, and the editor of the Edizioni della Battaglia. She was a co-founder of the "Giuseppe Impastato" investigative research centre.

She was the first European woman to receive, in New York, the Eugene Smith award for social photography and, in San Francisco, *The Mother Johnson Achievement for Life* was conferred on her (1999).

In 2007 she received "The Erich Salomon Award" from this German photographic society.

In New York in May 2009 she received the "Cornell Capa Infinity Award".

In 1991 she founded "Mezzocielo" a bimonthly magazine for women only. She was on the list of 1000 women signalled for the Nobel Peace Prize, having been nominated by *Peace Women Across the Globe*. The New York Times nominated her (the only Italian) as one of the eleven most representative women of 2017. She has been asked to give lectures and hold workshops by museums and institutions in Italy and abroad. In 2017 a dream came true when she opened the Centro Internazionale di Fotografia at Zisa in Palermo. She directs it and curates the selection of shows and meetings about historical and contemporary photography.



Tre Oci

Press conference

Tuesday 19 March at midday

MATERIAL AND IMAGES FOR THE PRESS

<http://www.treoci.org/index.php/it/sala-stampa>

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Venue

Casa dei Tre Oci

43 Fondamenta delle Zitelle, Giudecca, Venice

Water bus

Water bus stop: Zitelle

From Piazzale Roma and from the railway station, line 4.1 – 2

From San Zaccaria, line 2 – 4.2

Dates

20 March 2019 – 18 August 2019

Press conference

Tuesday 19 March at midday

Opening hours

Every day 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., closed Tuesday

Info

tel. +39 041 24 12 332; info@treoci.org; www.treoci.org

hashtag #treoci; #letziabattagliatreoci #fotografiacomesceltadivita

**Booking (obligatory for groups)**

Ticket One. Call centre: 199 757519

Tickets

€ 12, full price

€ 10, special reduced price for students under 26, the over-65s, those with accredited special passes

€ 8, special reduced price each Wednesday for residents and those born in the metropolitan city of Venice; each Thursday for the holders of a Feltrinelli card; the holders of entrance tickets for the exhibition venues of the Gallerie d'Italia; MyPass

€ 6, for students at Ca' Foscari and IUAV (promotion extended to all students on Friday); Ca' Foscari Alumni associates

€ 24, reduced family tickets (2 adults + 2 under 14-year-olds)

€ 5, reduced price for schools

Free: children under 6, an escort for each group, the disabled and escort, two teachers for each class, journalists with press card, tourist guides

Guided tours

For groups of 15 to 25 persons, only with advanced booking info@treoci.org

Italian € 100, English € 120

Dog friendly