

UGO MULAS

NOVEMBER 9 – DECEMBER 22, 2017

To mark the opening of PARIS PHOTO, the Librairie Marian Goodman is pleased to present an original exhibition of portraits by Ugo Mulas (1928–1973), a major figure in Italian photography.

The exhibition highlights his talent as a portraitist of the artistic, literary, and intellectual milieus. From the 1950s, Ugo Mulas socialized with artists who were regulars at Bar Jamaica in Milan. Subsequently, and throughout his life, he made portraits of the biggest artists of his generation, such as Lucio Fontana, Alexander Calder, Andy Warhol, Marcel Duchamp, and Giorgio Morandi, whose 1962 portrait is featured in the exhibition. Mulas photographed artists most often in their atelier, surrounded by their works, such as the one where Fausto Melotti poses among his metal sculptures. Some portraits show the artists in the creative process, like Alberto Burri laboring over one of his *Combustioni* sculptures, which required the use of fire and a blowtorch.

At the 1964 Venice Biennale—for which during the years 1954 and 1972 he served as the event's official photographer—Mulas met the American art critic Alan Solomon, the gallery owner Leo Castelli, as well as several American Pop Art artists. That same year, Mulas flew to New York to experience first-hand the new avant-garde represented by Robert Rauschenberg, Claes Oldenburg, Frank Stella, Jasper Johns, as well as Roy Lichtenstein, two of whose portraits are on display at the bookshop. The following year, during another visit to the United States, Mulas took portraits of Kenneth Noland in his studio in Vermont and of Jasper Johns at his Edisto Beach studio in South Carolina.

A privileged witness to artistic life in Italy, Mulas also created exceptional documentation of the most important exhibitions of his time, including *Sculture nella città* in Spoleto in 1962 and *Vitalità del negative nell'arte italiana 1960/70* held at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Rome in 1970. The views of the latter exhibition are a masterful record of the works of the thirty-four participating artists, reflecting the diversity of contemporary artistic currents. In the room dedicated to the work of Michelangelo Pistoletto, Mulas created an ingenious self-portrait in a mirror.



Roy Lichtenstein. New York, 1964

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Lastly, Ugo Mulas immortalized stage designs by theater directors like Giorgio Strehler, and collaborated with fashion designers and the media by publishing his photographs in *L'illustrazione Italiana*, *Settimo Giorno*, and *Domus*. He spent the last years of his life working on a single project he called *Verifiche* (Verifications), which constitutes a veritable study of the photographic medium: "In 1970, I began taking photos that adopted photography as a theme, a sort of analysis of the photographic process aiming to identify the individual elements and their intrinsic value." Ugo Mulas died in 1973 in Milan; today, the city is home to the Archivio Ugo Mulas.

Major international institutions that have exhibited his work include: Kunsthalle, Basel (1971); Musée Rath, Geneva; Kunsthaus, Zurich (1983); Museo Cantonale d'Arte, Lugano (1990); Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea and Accademia Carrara, Bergamo (1995); Institute Valencià d'Art Modern, Valencia (1996); PAC-Padiglione d'arte contemporanea, Milan, MAXXI, Rome, GAM-Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Turin (2007–2008); Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome (2010); the Centre Pompidou, Paris (2015); and Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, Paris (2016).

Press contact:

Raphaële Coutant [raphaele@mariangoodman.com](mailto:raphaele@mariangoodman.com)

+33 (0)1 48 04 70 52