

# ROME

Gabriele

Basilico

Palazzo Altemps, Rome

12.12.2024 23.02.2025

Exhibition curated by  
Matteo Balduzzi and Giovanna Calvenzi

Press preview  
Wednesday 11 December 2024, 11:00 a.m.

Rome, 26 November 2024 – The Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity of the Italian Ministry of Culture, in collaboration with the Museo Nazionale Romano - Palazzo Altemps, MUFOCO – Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, and the Basilico Archive, presents *Gabriele Basilico. Rome*. On the 80th anniversary of the birth of the grand master of Italian photography, the exhibition offers a unique overview of this visual research. The exhibition is open to the public from Thursday 12 December 2024 to Sunday 23 February 2025 in the rooms of Palazzo Altemps in Rome.

Curated by Matteo Balduzzi and Giovanna Calvenzi, the exhibition for the first time offers the public an itinerary which covers the main research undertaken by Gabriele Basilico on Rome, a city the Milanese photographer deeply loved and enjoyed to the full. A selection of over fifty works in a narrative specifically designed to dialogue with the spaces of Palazzo Altemps, the rooms of which establish a direct relationship with the subjects in the photographs on display.

The overarching theme for the exhibition is the bond between Gabriele Basilico and the Eternal City, a bond developed thanks to twenty professional engagements the photographer received between 1985 and 2011 and to the numerous photographic campaigns they generated.

Essential elements in Basilico's research, such as the stratification of eras and styles and the dialectic between monuments and the everyday urban fabric, find their apotheosis in Rome, offering the photographer the chance to tell the tale also of a modern city

which manages to combine imposing, bright and shining buildings of rationalist modernity with temples, arches, and palaces from ancient history in the same eye-catching grandeur.

The exhibition is broken down into two main parts and ranges from deep dives into rationalist architecture to the joint presence of civil and monumental architecture as a constant principle of Rome's urban fabric, from the various facets of the Coliseum, to the works which explore the relationship between the human figure and contemporary architecture. The beating heart of the exhibition and the meeting point between the two rooms is the focus on the photographer's archive, which offers 60 original contact sheets and a vast selection of notes which Gabriele Basilico produced over the seven main projects undertaken about Rome, for a total of over 250 images.

The exhibition *Gabriele Basilico. Rome* highlights the extraordinary investigative work dedicated to the urban condition which is a feature of Gabriele Basilico's research and shows the way in which the photographer managed to dialogue with one of the richest cities in the world in terms of iconographic references, drawing out new and surprising viewpoints from that.

The exhibition is amplified and completed by the *Electa* publication, promoted by the Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity of the Italian Ministry of Culture, in collaboration with MUFOCO – Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, and with the Gabriele Basilico Archive, and edited by Angelo Piero Cappello, Giovanna Calvenzi and Matteo Balduzzi.

**GABRIELE BASILICO**  
Milan, 1944-2013

After graduating in Architecture (1973), Gabriele Basilico ceaselessly devoted his energy to photography. The shape and identity of cities and changes in the urban landscape were the primary focus of his work from day one. *Milan. Portraits of Factories* (1978-80) was the first work that he devoted to the industrial hinterland and it was also the subject of his first exhibition in a museum (1983, Contemporary Art Pavillion, Milan). In 1984 he was invited to join the DATAR Mission Photographique organised by the French Government and it led him to document the coastline of northern France; In 1983-84 he took part in *Viaggio in Italia*, the collective project conceived by Luigi Ghirri, which would become the manifesto of the *Scuola italiana di paesaggio*. In 1991 he took part in another international photographic mission to Beirut at the end of a war that had lasted over fifteen years. He was to return to Beirut on three separate occasions thereafter, in 2003, 2008 and 2011. Working in conjunction with Stefano Boeri in 1996, he produced a meticulous report on the changing landscape entitled *Sections of the Italian Landscape*, which he submitted to the 6th Venice Architectural Biennale. Basilico produced a considerable number of works documenting cities both in Italy and abroad, together with a large number of exhibitions and personal books. Considered an unquestioned master of contemporary photography, he exhibited his work in many countries and was the recipient of numerous awards and prizes. He also combined his unflagging passion for the changing urban landscape with seminars, lectures, conferences and written reflections. His work features in many of the most important public and private international collections. In 2023-2024 the city of Milan dedicated two major exhibitions to him, at the Triennale and at Palazzo Reale, under the common title *My cities*.

[www.archiviogabrielebasilico.it](http://www.archiviogabrielebasilico.it)

## INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

*Gabriele Basilico. Rome*  
Curated by Matteo Balduzzi and Giovanna Calvenzi  
12 December 2024 – 23 February 2025

Museo Nazionale Romano - Palazzo Altemps  
Rome, Piazza di S. Apollinare 46

Opening hours  
Tuesday to Sunday from 9.30 a.m. to 7.00 p.m.  
The ticket office closes at 6.00 p.m.

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