

**UGO MULAS**

## **L'operazione fotografica**

curated by **Alberto Salvadori and Denis Curti**



*L'operazione fotografica. Self-portrait for Lee Friedlander, 1971*

The exhibition **Ugo Mulas. L'operazione fotografica** collects more than 300 images to celebrate one of the most important Italian photographers 50 years after his death. The rereading of Ugo Mulas' work has generated an exhibition and editorial path that moves with a thematic and chronological approach to underline the interest in the "totality" of the photographic language.

Alberto Salvadori, director of the Mulas archive and co-curator of the exhibition and catalog together with Denis Curti, declares: "an exhibition and a book to tell the experience of a photographer who acted with incredible awareness, to the point of overcoming of photographic genres".

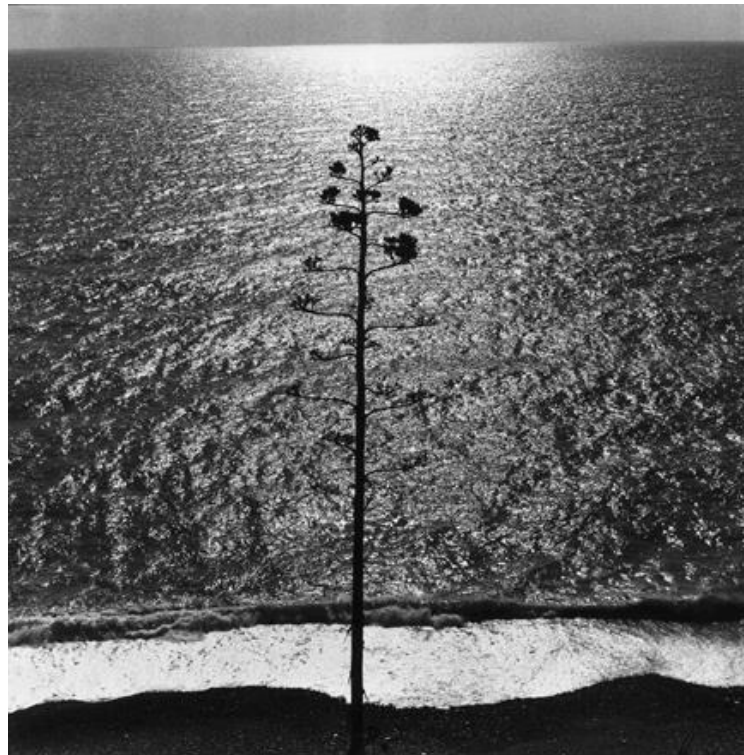
The exhibition retraces the fundamental stages of the photographer's career, starting from his debut at the Venice Art Biennale, at the Bar Jamaica di Brera in Milan, his first experiences with design, fashion, and Mila Schön. The exhibition then recounts Mulas' relationship with the world of theatre and with Giorgio Strehler, the experience at the Spoleto Festival, his friendship with Marcel Duchamp and Lucio Fontana, the immense reportage dedicated to the artists: Frank Stella, Lichtenstein, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, and many others. We then move on to analyze Mulas' link with the world of culture and literature, highlighting the photographer's closeness to Eugenio Montale, up to the images created for "cuttlefish bones". No less remembered is his visual account of the world of industry and production, with his work on Olivetti, Pirelli, Bormioli and the industrial fabric in Italy during the economic boom. There is no shortage of images taken by Mulas during great trips to Italian cities and around the world (the United States, Russia, Denmark and, of course, Venice).



*Bar Jamaica, Milan 1953-54*



*The lab. One hand develops the other fixed.  
A Sir John Frederick William Herschel. 1972*



*For "Ossi di Seppia", Monterosso 1962*



*Russia*



*New York, 1964*



*Juan Mirò, 1963*

The exhibition is accompanied by a bilingual Marsilio Arte catalogue.

## Biography



*Ugo Mulas photographed by Gianni Berengo Gardin, Como 1969*  
© Gianni Berengo Gardin/Courtesy Fondazione Forma per la Fotografia

Ugo Mulas was born on 28 August 1928 in Pozzolengo, in the province of Desenzano del Garda (Brescia). In 1948 he went to Milan where he enrolled in the Faculty of Law. He soon began to frequent the environment of the Brera Academy of Fine Arts and the Bar Jamaica, a meeting place for artists and intellectuals, where he began to take an interest in photography.

Mulas' research between 1953 and 1954 is guided by the awareness of wanting to provide a critical testimony of the society in which he lives, the first subjects being the suburbs of Milan, the central station and the friends of Bar Jamaica.

He obtained his first professional assignment as a photographer in 1954 when he was asked to cover the Venice Biennale together with photojournalist and friend Mario Dondero. He made his first reportage and it was published in "le Ore" at the Venice Biennale in 1954.

With this experience, he follows and documents every event of the Venice Biennale through all the years until 1972, photographing the most important moments such as Alberto Giacometti's protest at the 1962 awards ceremony or the success of the American artists in 1964.

He collaborates with the Pirelli and Olivetti advertising departments. He photographs the 1962 Spoleto Festival and David Smith in his atelier in Voltri. The photos of Eugenio Montale's poems, in particular of Ossi di Seppia, date back to this same period. After meeting the American artists at the 1964 Biennial he went to New York, the first trip was followed by other visits to the city in 1965 and 1967, during which he put together an extraordinary corpus of images documenting the world of New York art.

His collaboration with Giorgio Strehler led him to a new model of stage photography inspired by Brecht's notion of alienation. He stages photographs of Benjamin Britten's "The Turn of the Screw", Alban Berg's "Wozzeck", and Georg Büchner's comedy at the Teatro Comunale in Bologna.

In 1970 he became seriously ill and began his last series of photos, *Le Verifiche*, in the same year. He died on March 2, 1973 in Milan.



*Eugenio Montale, 1970 © Eredi Mulas*

*“The photographer  
has the task of identifying his reality,  
to the machine is to record it in its entirety”.*  
*Ugo Mulas.*



## TECHNICAL SHEET

*Production:* Marsilio Arte in collaboration with Archivio Mulas, Milan

*Curators:* Alberto Salvadori and Denis Curti

*Exhibition dimension:* approx 600-700 mq / 300 ml

### *Artworks:*

- 320 framed photographs (vintage, later, estate) external dimensions 55x60cm or 72x62cm;
- Books, magazines and archive documents;
- Video "Interview with Ugo Mulas" by Nini Mulas to be requested from the distribution company Teche Rai

### *Layout:*

- n. 14 artex sheets 2.5x2.8m with section texts
- n. 12 artex sheets 1x2.6m with biography timeline
- n. 6 artex sheets 2.5x2.8m with enlarged images

### *Contacts:*

Chiara Giudice. Mail. [c.giudice@marsilioarte.it](mailto:c.giudice@marsilioarte.it)

Anna Colussi. Mail. [a.colussi@marsilioarte.it](mailto:a.colussi@marsilioarte.it)

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