CHIARO/SCURO

CAROLINE GAVAZZI

'Revelation' ©Caroline Gavazzi

Chiaroscuro, written as a single word, derives from the Italian term for the contrast of light and dark in paintings, but Caroline has chosen in this instance to refine the difference to call up that side of Milan which does not "show off" its own qualities, the scuro (dark) hidden behind the chiaro (light). She unveils often unacknowledged aspects of the anatomy of this cosmopolitan city of 1.3m people. Collating the acuity of light and dark, Caroline conjures images of beauty, whether of the gorgeous heritage of the city's treasure, or honed from the quotidian life of passers-by.

Caroline left Italy's second largest city when she was 19 but it holds a fascination for her. She thus has what she calls a "distant" but at the same time very "familiar" eye.

Her perspective as both outsider and insider sharpens her focus on what she feels makes Milan unique, from its prestigious past, its dynamic present and its future development. For instance, she shows in the same photo people shopping and tourists admiring the town but also "watching it from a distance."

In the image *Close to Distance* we have people talking on the phone, but reduced to ciphers amid the grandeur of blinding light and deep shade.

Caroline has been one of 12 photographers participating in the project *L'Accademia dei 5 Sensi* (Academy of the Five Senses). The project was organised by Fondazione Serbelloni, a private foundation promoting art and culture, in collaboration with AFIP CNA (Associazione Fotografi Professionisti aderente CNA Professioni) and master-minded

by the foundation president Giovanni Gastel, a prominent fashion photographer. CHIARO/SCURO was based on photographs taken in July 2013 and exhibited in May 2014 at Palazzo Serbelloni, the headquarters of the foundation.

In her contribution to the series, Caroline draws on the majestic aura of that neoclassical palace originally constructed for the military lord Gabrio Serbelloni (1509 – 1580). The palace, occupied for three months in 1796 by Napoleon and Josephine, was restored after severe damage from air raids in 1943.

Caroline, in a triptych, Light of Hope, illustrates the three subjects assigned for the project: the city of Milan, its people, and the Palazzo Serbelloni. Exactly in the centre, the dark hands of an immigrant – the Italian word 'extracomunitario' signifies the artificial separateness of such people – hold the small medal of the Ambrogino d'Oro. The medal, says Caroline, represents the generosity of the city: named after Saint Ambrose, the patron saint of the city, it is an award given each year by the municipality to 30 people or associations who have contributed great deeds to the city.

Caroline's image of the medal puts it into the context of a city which is open to foreigners and to poor people, and represents the quiet assistance of citizens to people in need. On either side of the image are photographs of two chandeliers: on the left the ("extremely beautiful," says Caroline) fixture from the magnificent palace and on the right from the renowned Teatro alla La Scala. The opera house is a symbol of "history, music, colour, beauty," emphasises Caroline.
Reinforcing the theme of the generosity of the city, the two chandeliers – givers of light – are seen as illuminating the benevolence that distinguished the aristocracy and middle class of the city in the past, "and which is still alive in the hearts and minds of people today." Throughout the project, "I wanted to focus on the fact Milan is the town you can see but there is a lot you cannot see." Caroline perceives the city as "extremely humble, but doing incredible things."

by James Brewer
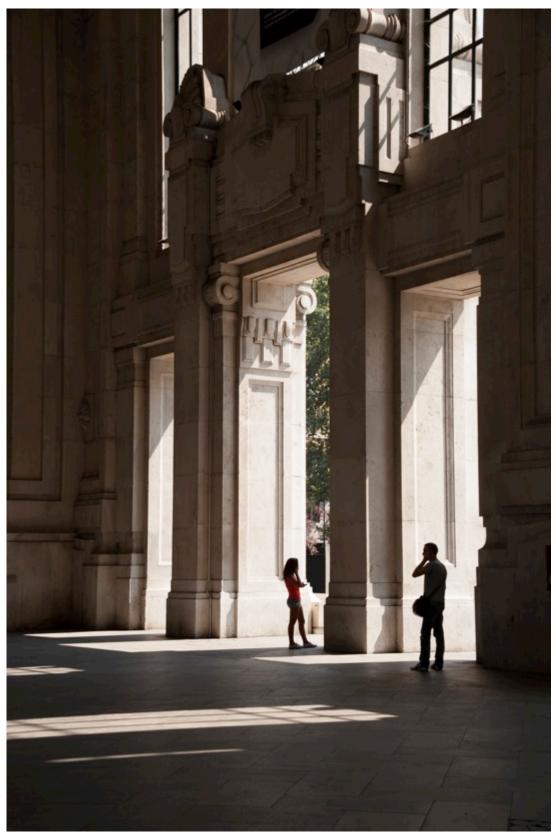
'Backstage'

'In the Spotlight'

©Caroline Gavazzi

'Exposure'

©Caroline Gavazzi

'Journey to Light'

'Close to distance'   ©Caroline Gavazzi

'Retrospection'

'Obsession'   ©Caroline Gavazzi
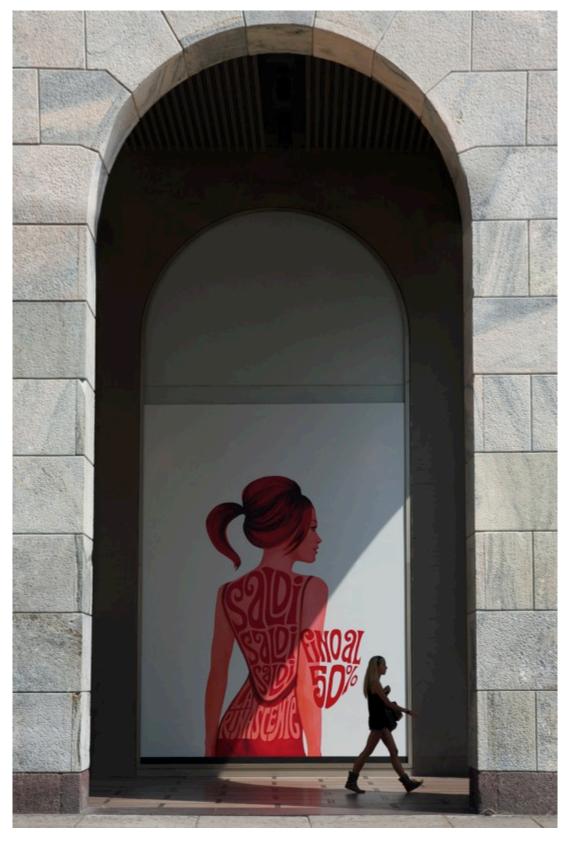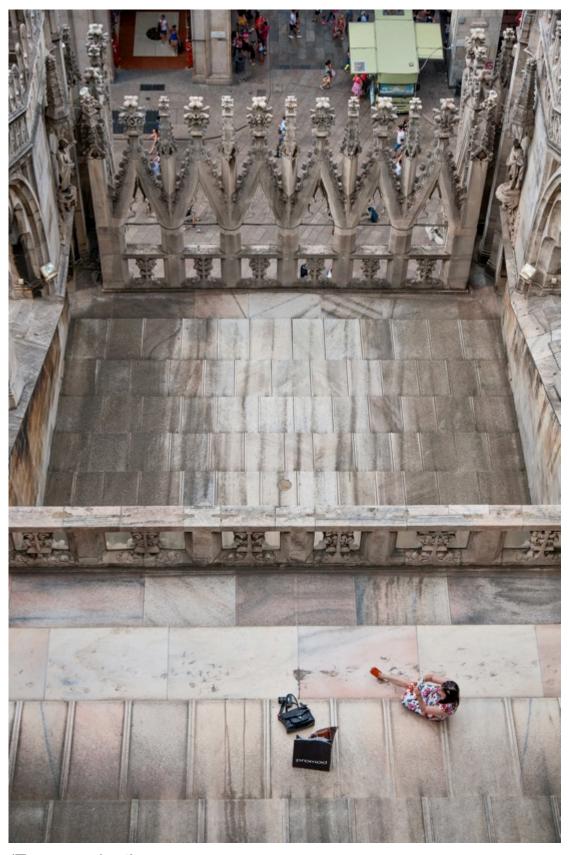
'Transcendent'   ©Caroline Gavazzi
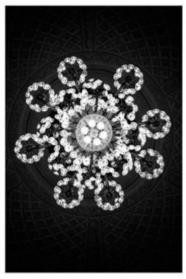
'Light of Hope'   ©Caroline Gavazzi

Caroline Gavazzi *is a Franco-Italian photographer based in London.*
At the age of 19 Caroline left Milan to study in Paris where she graduated at the **Sorbonne University***, in 1994. During her studies she began working as an assistant photographer for Studio Astre and mastered the B&W printing techniques at* **Speos Photography School***.*
In 1995 Caroline moved to London and obtained an MA in Professional Photography Practice at the **London College of Printing and Communication** *(LCC). During this period she continued to assist a number of well-known photographers, including Michael Thompson, Hiromasa, Jean-Jacques Castre and Martyn Thompson.*
In 1996 Caroline started working full time as Picture Coordinator in the Art Department at **Vogue UK** *and then as Picture Editor at* **Harvey Nichols Magazine***, in 1997. She started publishing her photos in several British and Italians magazines.*
In 1998, Caroline gave up all other employment to dedicate herself full-time as freelance photographer, focusing on commercial work (interiors, still life and portraits) and publishes in many magazines including **Vogue UK, Vogue Spain, House & Garden, Tatler, Conde' Nast Traveller, Elle, Country Living, ES Magazine, Sunday Times, D-La Repubblica delle Donne***, to mention just a few.*
In parallel to her commercial career, Caroline nourishes her passion for artistic photography, leading to the production of several collections which have been exhibited **in London, Paris and Milan***. Her work often explores - with sensitivity and discretion - the theme of "appearance".*