



Carlo Scarpa / Sekiya Masaaki
Traces of architecture in the world of a Japanese photographer

Photography exhibition

15 April-16 July 2023

Public inauguration on Friday 14 April at 6 pm
Ca' Scarpa, via Canova 11, Treviso

Press release
16 March 2023

Carlo Scarpa's work captured and interpreted by Sekiya Masaaki, but also architecture itself as included in the Japanese photographer's world of images.

It is around these two positions that the **Carlo Scarpa / Sekiya Masaaki** exhibition revolves. **Traces of architecture in the world of a Japanese photographer**, the photographic exhibition, organised by the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche and curated by **J.K. Mauro Pierconti**, an architectural historian, which will be inaugurated on **Friday 14 April at 6 p.m.** and will remain open until Sunday 16 July at Ca' Scarpa in Treviso, one of the exhibition venues of the Fondazione Benetton and for which J. K. Mauro Pierconti is curator.

Therefore, Carlo Scarpa (1906-1978) and Sekiya Masaaki (1942-2002). But not only that. Sekiya's professional career has gone through various phases, all centred around photography: from being an architectural photographer to an architectural design consultant, to becoming a promoter of talented photographers who were unknown and therefore needed support and publicity. And the exhibition will also account for these aspects of his work.

The exhibition brings together **85 photographs**, 54 in colour and 31 in black and white, and is divided into **four sections**, distributed over the various floors of Ca' Scarpa, a space recently restored by architect Tobia Scarpa from a monastic church that once stood in the heart of the city of Treviso. Here a large metal structure, already present inside the building, was recovered and reused to divide the internal volume into four equal and independent floors, served by a new suspended staircase.

The **first section**, on the ground floor, collects large images representing Sekiya Masaaki's activity as a promoter of talented photographers. An example of this is **Hattori Aiko**, a street photographer, who did a series of reportages on life in Tōkyō in the 1980s. Two themes are addressed by the photographer: the world of youth, portrayed in its expressions and exuberance, and that of work, serious and rigorous. Two realities often considered polar opposites, but equally bearers of energy, vitality and solidarity. And the theatre of many of their adventures is, indeed, the street. These are unpublished images, found in Sekiya's archive, with the immediacy and vividness of this type of photograph: the large panels on display have an immediate impact, capturing the eye and at the same time marking the path of the exhibition, which meanders between the exhibition structures, leading to the discovery, on the back of those large prints, of the photographs in their original format: a double stamp, therefore; and a double path. The viewer is thus led to immerse themselves in those images, where each one tells a story, represents lives, without the need for words or text.

The large staircase acts as a dividing and separating element between different and successive sections.

On the first floor are the second and third sections of the exhibition, devoted to Sekiya's work as an architectural photographer.

The **second section** displays a selection of shots from his first photographic work, the one on the ruins of **Angkor Wat** in Cambodia, taken when he was still a university student. The photographs are almost all black and white. The work is aimed at excavating those ruins consumed by time and devoured by the forest: remnants of a lost world that, through our gaze, powerfully return to life.

The **third section** is dedicated to the most comprehensive and important work of Sekiya's entire career in this field: the monographic work on **Otto Wagner in Vienna**, published in 1998. The quality of the work, the technical clarity (exposure, contrast, focus), the willingness and intellectual finesse expressed through the framing of the shots emerge in the succession of shots, from the choice of details, even taken using cranes in times when drones did not exist. In this way, Sekiya provides us with completely surprising views of Wagner's large buildings, such as the residences on the Linke Weinzeile or an aerial view of St. Leopold's church 'am Steinhof'.



The last two floors, where the **fourth section** of the exhibition unfolds, are instead dedicated to the work of **Carlo Scarpa**, the work that engaged Sekiya until his death in 2002, thus unfinished and fragmentary. In fact, Sekiya fails to capture the entire oeuvre of the Venetian architect. Yet, in his archive there are several thousand photographic plates, well over a thousand for the Brion Tomb alone, taken in successive campaigns.

The thousands of photographs thus reveal once again his way of working, made up of shooting campaigns, followed by a long process of correction and selection, and then by new shoots and new corrections: a process of continuous refinement and progressive selection that, while on the one hand seeks to capture and retain the changing weather and seasons, on the other strives to precisely define the parameters of exposure and the cut of the shot. These photographs offer the opportunity to reflect on Carlo Scarpa's work once again and, at the same time, the exhibition aims to show visitors a selection - the broadest possible - of Sekiya's shots, some of which are also screened on the top floor of Ca' Scarpa.

The incompleteness, in fact, in no way detracts from the interest and stimulus that these photographs provoke to look at the richness of the architectural work with renewed eyes, as confirmed by the **book created for the exhibition**: *Carlo Scarpa / Sekiya Masaaki. Tracce d'architettura nel mondo di un fotografo giapponese / Traces of architecture in the world of a Japanese photographer* (Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche-Antiga Edizioni).

Regarding the latter work, **Luigi Latini**, director of the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche, states: "The editorial work of the Fondazione Benetton sees for the first time, with this book, the appearance of a work that focuses on the figure of Carlo Scarpa, investigated through the eyes of Japanese photographer Sekiya Masaaki. The name of Carlo Scarpa has always accompanied the life and image of the Foundation, exercising a role of stimulus, inspiration and also warning for anyone wishing to venture into both the world of the garden and landscape, taking on the gaze of one who knew how to interpret its forms and meanings. And it is precisely around this word, - landscape -, that the Foundation's research and fieldwork has revolved for over thirty years. The book is in many ways a useful tool, undoubtedly a critical and operative contribution to the field of studies on Carlo Scarpa, but also a step beyond the Foundation's previous editorial work which, on this front, over a period of thirty years, has produced a substantial series of volumes linked to the various editions of the International Carlo Scarpa Garden Prize, the prize for a place in the world, promoted and organised by the Foundation".

With this exhibition, says **J. K. Mauro Pierconti**, "after the cultural programmes that have contributed to fostering the Foundation's activities since last year, a further thread is starting to consolidate the presence of Ca' Scarpa within the city of Treviso, with other exhibitions, books, public lectures, and with a new space that is being set up and that, under the name of Ca' Scarpa Archivi Ricerche, is destined to house Carlo Scarpa's personal library with a donation from his son Tobia".

Carlo Scarpa / Sekiya Masaaki

Traces of architecture in the world of a Japanese photographer

Exhibition organised by the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche, curated by J.K. Mauro Pierconti
Open from Saturday 15 April to Sunday 16 July 2023

Friday from 3pm to 7pm, Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 7pm
Public inauguration on Friday 14 April at 6 pm
Free entrance, Ca' Scarpa, via Canova 11, Treviso

Sekiya Masaaki (1942-2002)

he was a professional photographer who worked in various countries following in the footsteps of numerous 20th century architects, some of whom are only fragmentarily present in his archive, as signs of an interest that would lead him to produce many monographic volumes: on C.R. Macintosh, F.L. Wright, Le Corbusier, Mies van de Rohe and others, especially from the Viennese school. Since the 1980s, Sekiya had also been very active as a consultant for architecture in the field of design, and thus as a promoter of photographic talents, as demonstrated by the case of Hattori Aiko.



J.K. Mauro Pierconti

is an architectural historian trained at the Luav University of Venice. After teaching at the VIU in Venice, he was awarded prestigious post-doctoral fellowships from the Japan Foundation and the Japan Society, carrying out research at Tōkyō University and Waseda University over the years.

He is currently curator in charge of Ca' Scarpa in Treviso, at the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche.

He has published extensively on both Carlo Scarpa and Japanese architecture and has also lent his work for documentaries and exhibitions.