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Sophia Loren

The Myth of Beauty Drawn with Light

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- Accompanying catalogue for the *Sophia Loren: The Myth of Beauty Drawn with Light* exhibition at m.a.x. museo, Switzerland from 7 October 2025 to 08 March 2026

The book, like the related exhibition, is part of the strand of events that the m.a.x. museo cyclically devotes to photography. It presents a broad range of iconic images of Sophia Loren, which portray her at special moments in her life, during the filming of her famous movies or on more personal occasions, portrayed by some of the twentieth century's greatest photographers. Organised on thematic-chronological principles, the illustrations present a total of almost 200 photographs, mostly vintage, embracing the full span of Sophia Loren's life and conveying the profound feelings that the diva aroused in both her films (over a hundred) and her life.

The book is divided into seven sections: starting from the Naples of the Origins, the city where Sofia Lazzaro Scicolone, as she was known, lived with her mother and experienced the first difficulties of life, moving on to cinema with photographs of Screenplays, then to elegance and its particular relationship with art. This is followed by the parts of the exhibition devoted to public encounters and important awards received, and then those that capture her in more intimate moments with her family. The exhibition closes with a series of images expressing the identification of Loren with an Icon of Beauty. There is also an in-depth study of the relationship between Sophia Loren and Salvatore Ferragamo, and later Giorgio Armani, documented through photographs and designer objects such as the refined shoes from the Ferragamo Museum in Florence.

The exhibition interprets the guiding theme of Centro Culturale Chiasso for 2025-2026, namely pulchritudo, understood as both external and internal beauty, through a series of shots that, following the etymology of the word "photography" or "drawing with light", depict a global icon of beauty in the broadest sense, as a symbol of charisma as well as harmony of features. Born in Rome and raised in Pozzuoli (Naples), Sophia Loren has chosen to live in Geneva, Switzerland. This exhibition and its catalogue are intended to enhance this twofold connection, building a cultural bridge between Switzerland and Italy and revealing the diva as a paradigm of a beauty acknowledged worldwide.

Providing a critical interpretation of the works presented in the catalogue are essays by Angela Madesani, Francesco Casetti, Nicoletta Ossanna Cavadini, Giovanna Bertelli and Maria Canella, together with a rich bio-bibliographical apparatus.

Text in English and Italian.







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