

Wim Wenders talks about his America

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After the exhibition by Turrell and Irwin, which brought over **70,000 visitors** from all over the world, to Varese, Villa Panza, the cultural heritage site, is opening its doors to photography, with the exhibition “America”, a selection of photographs by **Wim Wenders**.

Few know that, throughout his life, the famous German director has combined the work of a film maker with that of a photographer of places discovered all over the world. "**Landscapes shape our lives**, mould our personalities, define the human condition. My approach to places is very different. If I have to make a film and I have a story in mind, I travel to find the places that can help me tell that story, and I often don't even bring a camera with me. But it's very different when I travel alone, and I listen to the places that I come across," **the director explained**.

The photos on exhibition in Villa Panza, a selection of his immense archive, **are dedicated to America and were taken from the 1960s until 2003**. America is a dream place, a place of light and of large spaces, that, as well as the director, also fascinated Giuseppe Panza, so much so that it influenced his artistic tastes and his collection.

The thirty four photographs, which fit perfectly into the nineteenth century architecture of plaster and crystal chandeliers, portray spaces, landscapes, architecture and roads caught by

the photographic lens of Wenders, with an intense contemplation of the immensity of nature and of the power of light. And it is these themes that were dear to Count Panza and that can be found in the artists and works selected for his collection.

"If the combination of contemporary art and classic architecture works, it means that the quality is the same. They're just two different forms of expression," Count Panza would say. The photographs of Wim Wenders, some as much as 5 metres tall, look perfectly, surrounded by the villa and the artists that now "live there".

As **Anna Bernardini**, the director of Villa Panza and curator of the exhibition, explains, the idea came about last August, when the director and his wife, Donata, visited the Villa for the first time, and were fascinated by the place and the works. The similarities between the America of Wenders and the America of Panza were clear, and the idea became an exhibition project.

The photographs, which were taken using a Leica camera loaded with scrolling film, have not undergone any post-production work. "The places you see, are exactly as I saw them."

The exhibition is set out on the first floor of the Villa and ends in the stables, with a section, in five acts, dedicated to **Ground Zero**, which Wenders was able to photograph a few days after the attack. The ruins are still smoking, the firefighters are working in the chasm, caused by the collapse, but the sunlight can be seen passing through the dramatic sequence, like a prayer in images, that encourages a more general reflection on violence.

As often happens, the great masters and the great artists are able to tell the story, the ideas and the experience that accompanies their work with amazing simplicity and clarity. Wenders is pleasant, serious, but very deep. Amazed by the welcome, he thanks Italy for the creativity and stimuli that every visit to this country has given him. It would also be nice to see the photographs taken on his travels in this country.

The exhibition is dedicated to his friend **Dennis Hopper**, and to **Edward Hopper**, his artistic reference.

While the exhibition is on, a number of Wim Wenders films will be shown, in collaboration with the Association Friends of Piero Chiara and Filmstudio 90.

Wim Wenders. America
From 16 January to 29 March 2015
Villa Panza and Collection
Piazza Litta 1, Varese

For information www.wimwendersvillapanza.it

Opening Hours: every day, except working Mondays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Redazione VareseNews
redazione@varesenews.it

