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AUX ABONNÉS ABSENTS

Photographs by Simone Casetta

Accompanied by commentary by John Berger and a critical essay by Henri Peyre

This is a powerful narrative in which the reader is accompanied by pictures and words on a long journey through life and death, concepts that are inseparable from the act of creation.

This book contains the results of a photographic investigation by Simone Casetta, who had the chance idea while photographing doctors at work in a hospital. He learned of the existence of the Eugenio Morelli Anatomical Museum at the Carlo Forlanini Hospital in Rome, where "anatomical items" dating from the 1920s were preserved in formaldehyde. Other artists had taken an interest in this gruesome subject, generally making use of these articles as silent objects. But this series of portraits turns the normal canons for this kind of work on their head. The human beings represented appear to be outside time and their present condition. We are before true portraits, where the love elicited by this encounter triumphs and restores the voice of the person who had lived, without the least trace of morbidity or desire to shock. The photographs are accompanied by John Berger's "Twelve Theses on the Economy of the Dead." The combination of text and photographs broadens our horizon and enables us to encompass the immensity of space and time in a single vision.

Simone Casetta is a photographer and divides his time between making photographic surveys on the great themes of existence and teaching. He has worked for important newspapers in Italy and abroad, taking part in collective exhibitions and has displayed his work in solo shows in Italy, France, Austria, and Switzerland.

John Berger is known all over the world as an art critic, poet, journalist, novelist, screenwriter, playwright, and for his drawings. He is the author of *The Success and Failure of Picasso* (1965); *Ways of Seeing* (1972); *G.: A Novel* (1972); *Keeping a Rendezvous* (1992); *King, A Street Story* (1999); *The Red Tenda of Bologna* (2009). He has contributed articles as a journalist for newspapers such as *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, and *Le Monde diplomatique*.

Henri Peyre is a photographer and professor of photography. He is the webmaster of galerie-photo.com, the French high-resolution photography site.