

Jean-Marc Caracci

Homo Urbanus Europeanus

Jean-Marc Caracci was born in Tunisia, his heritage is one hundred per cent Sicilian, but he has lived in Montpellier in the south of France since his early childhood. With help and support from his elder brother, Jean-Marc started photographing and using the darkroom at the age of 15. When he was 20 he joined the army and was fortunate to be appointed the official photographer of the regiment. During his time in the army he increased his skills and technical experience in photographing people.

After leaving the army, he worked on his own projects and had some successful exhibitions in France during the early 1990s. In 2000, after a ten year period of depression during which time he stopped taking photographs but continued to arrange exhibitions of his images whilst also writing a novel- which waits in limbo for a publisher. In 2005, he left his job as a controller in a highway company to realize his ambition as a full time artist. His central theme for research has always been the urban part of the human being, or as he likes to refer to in his own phrase, "the urban being". As a committed street photographer, capturing people in their urban environment is a way to explore his own humanity, to think about himself, about who he is, about where we all live and why. Whilst taking photographs in a city, he sees himself as a private detective, investigating the comings and goings of humanity, similar to a biologist observing the movements inside a cell. His artwork never takes any critical view of social, political or cultural issues. He views his work as a kind of mirror to all of us, everyday average people who busy themselves in life's daily schedules. His work is strongly influenced by the photos

of Henri Cartier-Bresson, Elliott Erwitt and Raymond Depardon; but he hopes that he has developed his own unique style of documentary photo reportage. His latest work, "Homo Urbanus Europeanus" absorbed 3 years of his time photographing in 31 European capitals! The biggest job was not the photography, but to organize travel and accommodation. He received no financial support and had little funds which meant he had to find free accommodation. So he surfed and surfed on Internet, looking for cultural organisations, galleries, artists, photographers, in fact anybody who could help. Determined to achieve his goal he sent thousands of emails explaining his project and his lack of funding. When the project was finished and people asked him why he selected those specific cities for the "HUE" project, he could only laugh and respond, "I didn't choose them... they chose me!"

He recalls that in 31 cities he has been hosted in the homes of 31 people whom he didn't know and they didn't know him, until they met they were virtual strangers. The most amazing and incredulous experience was to be hosted at some houses, by people who were not at home [because of holidays], people he had never met before or after, and who let him have the keys of their own apartment. It happened twice, in Amsterdam and Copenhagen, and he still wonders how some people can be so generous and trusting. It restored his faith in the compassion and kindness of humanity.

The anecdotes acquired in three years of travelling and photographing around Europe could fill a book. He remembers one moment in Madrid, Spain where he had remained static in front of a big building, the light was perfect, and he was just waiting for a single person to walk by to create a silhouette in front of the building. Suddenly he heard somebody calling and running towards him, it was a man from the Guardia Civil [Spanish police]. He wanted to know what he was

doing. Jean-Marc replied he was just a photographer waiting for the right moment. The policeman didn't understand and didn't believe him, so he was marched to the police office inside the building. Then the policeman demanded the memory stick from the camera. A passionate Jean-Marc exclaimed "NEVER, you have you to kill me first". After 45 minutes and meeting and discussing with a chief of the Guardia Civil, they let him go, with his memory stick still in his camera. What he had not realised is that he was attempting to photograph in front of the Ministry of Finance!

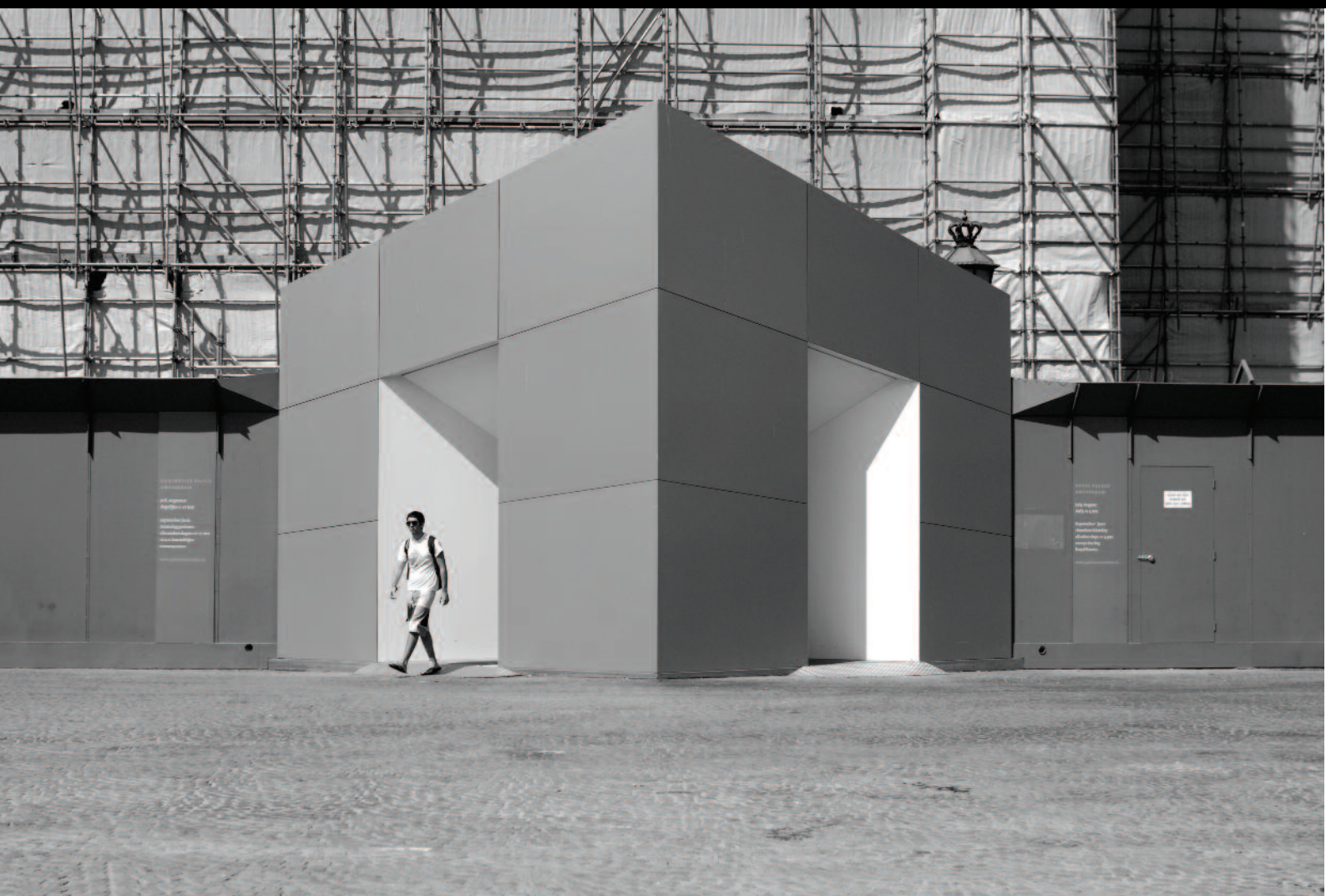
"Homo Urbanus Europeanus", is his first major work since revitalising his photographic career. Although he arranges exhibitions and sells art prints to European organizations and local collectives, it is not enough income to sustain a reasonable living standard. Fortunately he is still single and without children, so his financial commitments are modest. For the moment he will continue to be a full time artist photographer. He is now thinking about a new project, inspired by the famous work of Robert Frank's, "The Americans". Without wanting to sound like too much of a copy cat, the project could be called "The Europeans".

During the last three years Jean-Marc has been successful in holding 17 exhibitions from France to Macedonia, Germany to Finland and the UK to Australia on his "Homo Urbanus Europeanus" series. He is currently seeking a publisher for his novel and the photographic work on the "Homo Urbanus Europeanus" project.

More of his work can be viewed at:
<http://homo.urbanus.free.fr/europeanus>



Amsterdam 2010



Amsterdam 2010

Athènes 2010



Bratislava 2009



Copenhagen 2010



Copenhagen 2010

Dublin 2010



Istanbul 2008



Lisbonne 2009



Londres 2010



Luxembourg 2010



Oslo 2008

Reykjavik 2008



Rome 2008