

CARLO MOLLINO

## MESSAGE FROM THE DARKROOM



ADARTE

Carlo Mollino's  
"musée imaginaire"  
of photography

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448 pages, 12 colour plates,  
323 b/w photos,  
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## MESSAGE FROM THE DARKROOM

by Carlo Mollino

► On the occasion of the four great exhibitions in Turin and Rome to celebrate Carlo Mollino's hundredth anniversary, his book *Message from the Darkroom* is being published in English and is therefore finally available to an English-reading public. This is the only text in which Carlo Mollino (Turin 1905–1973), renowned Italian architect, designer, writer and photographer, one of the most brilliant characters of the twentieth century, expresses his views on photography. With the introductory essay and a selection of explanatory images, the book (whose original title was *Il messaggio dalla camera oscura*) was published in 1949 in a highly-prized graphic edition and in a large format

It is the most important contribution from the first half of the twentieth century to the acceptance of photography among the higher arts, an acknowledgement that was anything but commonplace in an era in which photography was considered a purely mechanical art and endlessly reproducible.

With the publication of 323 plates illustrating the work of 132 photographers and 9 painters, Mollino traces a history of photography and of the evolution in taste over the years, highlighting the work of Nadar and Hill, Atget, Alvarez Bravo and Man Ray, to whom he dedicates specific chapters. He dedicates an equal number of pages to an explanation of the art message that the photographer offers his public with each single photograph that is printed, retouched, cropped and brought with every means – all legitimate for Mollino – to coincide exactly with what the artist had in mind.

For Mollino, to reach the status of art, and communicate it as one's own message, it was necessary to distinguish between the 'beautiful' and art, to be authors of 'subjective transformations', to know and master photographic techniques, to which he devotes ten chapters.

This new edition of Mollino's book replicates the design for the first edition conceived by Mollino; it is a splendid edition with colour plates pasted in by hand, each page being inserted by hand too.

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