

Sandro Becchetti

(Rome, 1935 - Lugnano in Teverina, Terni, 2013)

Perhaps because his passion for portraiture emerged around the film personalities of Cinecittà and the magic of the big screen, Becchetti's photographs often contain elements that convey the truth of the body, but also phantasmatic, evanescent features, made more of spirit than flesh.

The images dedicated to Vincenzo Agnetti, Hitchcock and Pasolini have overwhelming physicality and presence: Hitchcock yawns with the intensity of a lion; Agnetti approaches the lens, almost arrogant, with a challenging air; and Pasolini seems sculpted in chiaroscuro. In one shot he even possesses a disturbing physicality that illness can sometimes convey, the body pushed forward so it can be abstracted in the glance.

In all Sandro Becchetti's work the reality of the person is roughly sketched out against a background in a state of dissolution, or sunk into profound darkness, as in the portrait of Agnetti, or dematerialized and abstracted by the light, as in that of Hitchcock. And then in some photographs there remains nothing of the immanent. Ingrid Thulin, portrayed behind a window, is made of the same matter as the reflection of the landscape that appears on the glass. Her open hands seem to recount her surrender to the realm of illusion, and the light fabric of her dress fades into the darkness of dreams. The face of Alain Resnais appears split, immersed in a space made of shadow. The reflection, upside down, possesses more solidity and clarity than the original. The director is portrayed in the act of looking away from the lens, engrossed in a different depth that continues beyond the space of the photograph's frame. He seems to dwell between reality and the imagination, with the same ambiguity with which actors' bodies and the reality of objects live and come to life again on film. (EV)