

PRESS PACKET

Mauro Marinelli and Rob Lloyd
Under Old Stars: Wanderings in Italian Hill Towns
Kehrer Verlag, fall 2016

A complete version of this press packet is available at www.mauromarinelli.com/press-packet-under-old-stars/, including 24 downloadable photos including cover image with copyright clearance for reviews, interviews, feature articles, and promotional purposes.

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To book an exhibition please email aldedom@gmail.com, Allison DeDominick, ARTe.



Under Old Stars: *Wanderings in Italian Hill Towns* Mauro Marinelli and Rob Lloyd

Through black and white images and prose sketches you discover a world largely lost today, among people deeply at home with their old ways, in remote hill towns in south-central Italy. Mauro Marinelli's stark, yet lyrical, photographs reveal the beauty and wonder in small things – a foot on the stair, sunlight on a wall, the flower pot atop a confessional. His unsentimental and intriguing portraits invite us deep into the lives of people time forgot. Rob Lloyd's sensual and meditative prose sketches include historical reveries, street scenes, snippets of overheard conversations, and private moments, real and imagined. His vignettes of village life stand both apart from and together with photographs to provide a dreamscape of a disappearing past.

96 images in black & white. 128 pages. Hardcover.
Heidelberg: Kehrer Verlag. November 2016.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



SMALL TOWN LIFE CAPTURED IN NEW BOOK

Photographer and Writer celebrate time and people past
Kehrer launches *Under Old Stars: Wanderings in Italian Hill Towns*

At a time when the Census headcount shows that the largest metropolitan areas are growing at far higher rates, the prognosis does not look good for small towns, which continue in steady decline as young people chase bigger dreams in cities. It's a trend consistent across America and around the world that shows no signs of slowing down.

But the decline of the small town, which holds a revered place in the personal history of many people and many families, means the forfeiture of a small town way of life and way of being—a loss that diminishes us all.

From photographer Mauro Marinelli, writer Rob Lloyd, and German fine arts publisher Kehrer, *Under Old Stars: Wandering in Italian Hill Towns* captures the life of a quintessential small town.

Part documentary record and part imaginative work of art, *Under Old Stars* sparkles with memorable images and vignettes of small town life. Set in south-central Italy among descendants of refugees who arrived from the eastern Adriatic five-hundred years ago and who

speak one of the world's endangered languages, *Under Old Stars* takes readers to the timeless small towns of their ancestors.

Mauro Marinelli (*Old Timers, Burden of Wings*) has been a working photographer for nearly 40 years. Raised in an immigrant family in New York and steeped in stories of the old country, he took his camera to discover for himself the places, people, and old ways that he grew up on. He was joined in this project by poet, TV producer (Family Feud, To Tell the Truth), and professor Rob Lloyd.

Award-winning commercial and fine art photographer Sean Kernan says that *Under Old Stars* beckons us into a “village beyond time, and the world that our immigrant ancestors left.”

Of interest not only to Italian-Americans, who make up the fourth-largest European ethnic group in America, *Under Old Stars* appeals to all who trace their ancestry to somewhere else. It is both a record and a celebration of time and people past.

To request a review copy of *Under Old Stars: Wanderings in Italian Hill Towns*, view high-res images, author bios, and multimedia, visit www.mauromarinelli.com/press-packet-under-old-stars/.

REVIEWS

“A beautiful and evocative book with some of the most exquisite prints I’ve ever seen.”

–Alan Arkin, Actor

“Under Old Stars is a masterful interweaving of Mauro Marinelli’s black and white photographs and Rob Lloyd’s prose sketches depicting images of a harsh world of Italian hill towns that seem unchanged for hundreds of years. Stone houses, stone streets, and long vistas across wide valleys to snow-capped hills: this blend of words and pictures results in a stark and uninviting beauty, where hardship carves its story into the faces of its people and even the dogs wear dour expressions. But beautiful it is, and one feels nothing but admiration and wonder for the men and women who make their lives among such fierce stones.”

–Stephen Dobyns, Poet and Novelist

“One could say Italy is as much a feeling as it is a place and Mauro Marinelli’s photographs are full of that feeling. A major work on an ancient culture . . . seen through the eyes of today. Bravo!”

–Ralph Gibson, Photographer

Under Old Stars: Wandering in Italian Hill Towns allows readers to wander too, to journey with our eyes like insiders through Italian hill towns, to peer into hidden corners and shy faces through the artful photos of Mauro Marinelli and the compelling prose and poetry of Rob Lloyd. The photographs are tender, fierce, gorgeous and wry. These crisp black-and-whites remind us of the magic of light and shadow, they let us see more clearly and imaginatively through the eyes of a master photographer. Pair these with the artful narrative entries of Rob Lloyd and readers feel that we too are strolling through hidden country towns, seeing details and vistas with extraordinary lenses. Add to this Lloyd’s rhythmically perfect, startling poems and you have bonus beauty–“gravy,” as Raymond Carver might have said. This is a perfect gift book, but you won’t want to give it away.

–Marilyn Kallet, Author

“Under Old Stars takes us on a journey to a place that is clearly Italy, but it might also be Ireland, France, Croatia, Greece, China—wherever our forebears came from. Words and photographs, both of them beautiful and austere, beckon us through innumerable doors into this village beyond time, and the world that our immigrant ancestors left comes to life before our eyes. It’s a work that is powerful and gentle, with meaning for us all.”

–Sean Kernan, Photographer

EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

September 22, Thursday, 6-7 pm..... American Italian Center, New Orleans

As a part of the American Italian Cultural Center's bi-monthly lecture series, photojournalist Mauro Marinelli will deliver a lecture on his photo technique and his travels, describing what it is like trying to document a subculture. Mr. Marinelli will present on his artistic images and the corresponding prose of his work *Under Old Stars: Wanderings in Italian Hill Towns*, elaborating on the collaboration between the photographer and the writer and divulging the advantages and barriers to this type of creative project.

Free for American Italian Cultural Center Members and students with a valid university or high school ID. For non-members, the suggested donation is \$10.

American Italian Center, 537 South Peters Street, New Orleans, LA 70130.

October 7, Friday, 5-8 pm.....Eye Gallery, Ithaca, NY

A one-man show of prints from *Under Old Stars: Wanderings in Italian Hill Towns* will be on exhibition the month of October. On Friday, October 7, as part of Downtown Ithaca's First Friday Gallery Night, meet Mauro Marinelli at this book launch gala event and book signing.

Eye Gallery, 126 East State Street, Second Floor (Ithaca Commons), Ithaca, NY 14850

October 9, Sunday, Columbus Day, 12-3 pm..... Boiano Bakery, Mamaroneck, NY

Join Mauro Marinelli in a celebration of Columbus Day at Boiano Bakery. Owner Pat Colallilo offers authentic Italian pastries and a café. It's the perfect setting for an author reading and book signing.

Come have cappuccino at 258 Mamaroneck Avenue, Mamaroneck, NY 10543.

October 16, Sunday, 1-3 pm..... Vestal Museum, Vestal, NY

Also during the month of October, the Vestal Museum hosts an exhibition of Mauro Marinelli's images of Italy. Meet the author and hear a presentation on his techniques and travels at this book signing in the southern tier.

Next to the Vestal Public Library, the museum is at 328 Vestal Parkway East, Vestal, NY 13850.

AUTHORS

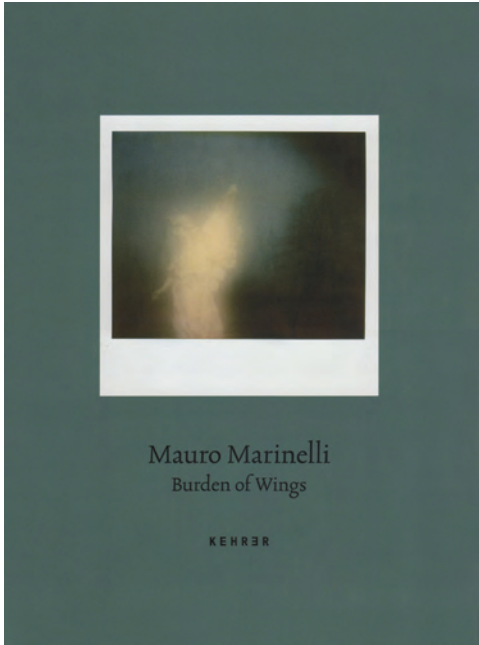


MAURO MARINELLI is an artist, photographer, contractor, great cook, one-time novice, and former photojournalist. Born and raised in White Plains, New York to Italian immigrant parents, he earned a BFA in Photography and English from Manhattanville College in 1977. His art is inspired by the work of his teachers, Ralph Gibson, Eva Rubenstein, and Sean Kernan. In the late 1970s Marinelli traveled around the US to photograph the last of the original Italian immigrants before they were gone. St. Martin's Press published Marinelli's book of photography, *Old Timers: The Italians* in 1979. His iconic cemetery images captured on Polaroid, *The Burden of Wings*, was published by Kehrer Verlag in 2014 (US release April 2015, distribution by Perseus Books).

ROB LLOYD was born in New York City and grew up in the Finger Lakes district of upstate NY. He graduated from the Creative Writing Program at The University of New Hampshire where he studied with Charles Simic, the fifteenth U.S. Poet Laureate, and novelist Russell Banks. Breaking into television as a writer on a popular show, Lloyd spent most of his career in Los Angeles writing and producing TV shows for network and syndication, eventually serving as show runner for daytime talk shows and producing news in markets around the country. Currently, Lloyd is an English professor, teaching writing, literature, and film in Knoxville and directs study-abroad programs in Paris.



PREVIOUS BOOKS BY MAURO MARINELLI



Burden of Wings, Kehrer Verlag, 2014.

Iconic cemetery images captured on Polaroid juxtapose the inherent contradictions of the immediate moment: instant and everlasting. In homage to the 16th century Dutch still life style of Nature Morte, the stone of mortuary sculptures softens like flesh and graveside tokens and bouquets of colorful flowers depict life becoming death. A weathered stuffed animal across a grave, little polished stones, toy soldiers frozen in action, rosaries, porcelain angels, plastic flowers, roses; touches of grief in bas relief.

ISBN: 978-3868285642

EUR 35,00 / US\$ 40.00

www.mauromarinelli.com/books/



Old Timers: The Italians, St. Martin's Press, 1979.

In OLDTIMERS, Mauro Marinelli, a young and gifted photographer, has preserved for us a vital part of our heritage. Our parents and grandparents, part of the wave of millions of European immigrants who came to America at the turn of the century, will not be with us forever. Many of them are no more than familiar stories repeated at family gatherings. These pictures, living documents of a disappearing past, recall the touch of a hand, the taste of homebaked bread, a pair of high-buttoned shoes, a heavily accented word. The people in the pictures are Italian, but they could be of any ethnic group. The photographer was inspired not only by his own heritage, but by the dramatic Indian portraits of Edward S. Curtis, who documented the last days of another generation of vanishing Americans. With a similar eloquence, but with an emotion born of his own memories, Mauro Marinelli offers a tribute to tradition, to the oldtimers who remain a fragile link with our past, whose portraits will inspire our memories in the future.

ISBN: 978-0312583644

www.mauromarinelli.com/books/



KEHRER VERLAG

Founded in 1995, Kehrer Verlag Heidelberg Berlin specializes in books in the fields of photography, fine arts, and culture. Working together closely with international artists, authors, museums and cultural institutions, Kehrer Verlag creates its publications in alliance with Kehrer Design, the affiliated design and communication agency. Each book is a unique creation testifying to the constructive collaboration between the respective partners - with consistently high technical and design quality as the unifying element. We put our heart and soul into every Kehrer book, with an attention to detail that can be felt page after page. Kehrer books are available wherever fine art and photography books are sold, and are distributed in most European countries, the USA, Canada and Asia.

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Q&A WITH MAURO MARINELLI



Q: What was your inspiration for *Under Old Stars: Wanderings in Italian Hill Towns*?

MM: I was sitting at the dining room table with my family having our Sunday dinner when I asked my Uncle Peter what he dreamt of. "I dream of Italy when I was a little boy," he said. And I thought, wow, what a great subject. I went to Italy with that in mind. I found my uncle's dreamscape, in these little hill towns with three or four hundred people, where things were still kind of untouched by time. These towns were so small, they didn't even have a Pensionne. I would have to find the priest in these towns and explain what I wanted to do. He would then take me to someone he knew and vouch for me so I could rent a room in their house. You know, that takes trust. There's a lot of trust in those towns, and I think much of that trust lives in these photos I've taken. There's one picture of a man closing his eyes that reminds me of the responsibility of taking someone's picture. People don't like having their picture taken because they're afraid it will reveal what they don't want others to see. To have a stranger be that vulnerable while allowing me to take their picture, well, it's just incredible and a privilege.



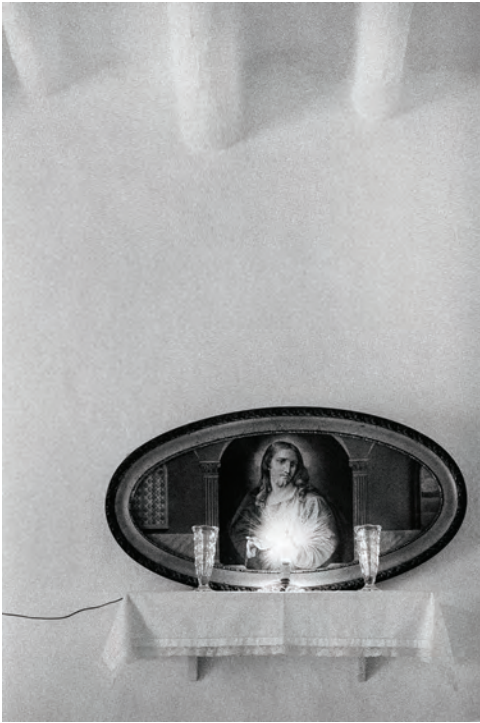
Q: Describe the ways you worked together with writer Rob Lloyd on this book. How did you weave the words and images together?

MM: I had read *Wanderings* by Hermann Hesse. It's one of my favorite books of his even though it's not very well known. Hesse walked from Switzerland to Austria and made pencil sketches of what he saw. He also wrote prose pieces to accompany his sketches, and I thought that was beautiful concept. Rob Lloyd and I went to these Italian hill towns together with this structure in mind. The words and images reflect and build on each other but neither directly illustrates or captions the other. It is an ambitious project and a unique format for a photo book.

Q: How has being an art photographer changed the way you look at the world?

MM: Well you know a box of film is kind of like Pandora's Box. Once you start seeing the world and its potential in terms of possible photos that's all you see. Whenever I see a beam of light, I try to envision how to capture it and the moment it lives in. Mind you, this will happen with or without a camera. A beam of light on the wall will pull me in, and I'll need to take a picture. As a photographer, you become a slave to the light, really!





Q: When did you decide you wanted to be a photographer?

MM: I took a photography class at Manhattanville College because I thought it wouldn't be that much work. That was where I met my mentor, Sean Kernan. He introduced me to the world of Photography. Sort of Photography with a capital "P." In the very first class he introduced me to the work of Eugene Smith and I was startled by the power of black and white photography. It all moved forward from there.

Q: Which photographers influenced you, and how did they influence you, when you began to take pictures?

MM: My mentor Sean Kernan was a huge influence for me. His assignments were eclectic and complex and that helped prepare me for my later projects such as *Under Old Stars*. Ralph Gibson also taught me not to necessarily look at photos but paintings for inspiration. Painters have been working with the elements of creations far longer than photographers. This is why I'm drawn to Edward Hopper. His painting *Seaside Rooms* actually inspired the cover of *Under Old Stars*.

Q: What three writers, living or dead, would you like to have dinner with?

MM: Definitely Salinger, and I love T.S. Eliot. And I know he's not a writer, but I would have to sit down with Edward Hopper, whose paintings have spoken to me from the very beginning.



Q: Do you have a favorite photograph or set of photographs you've taken?

MM: Honestly the cover of *Under Old Stars* is my favorite. I had been looking – for that beam of light for a long time. What a blessing to have found it.

Q: What motivates you to take a photograph?

MM: Light and graphics. I have a strong sense of the graphic possibilities of the shot before I take it, and I'm always attracted to the subtleties of light. The shot has nothing to do with the camera, it's about understanding the light. A good photographer is always a good technician, but a good technician isn't always a good photographer. I remember that whenever I'm setting up a shot. You can be great at all the technological aspects of photography, but if there's no feeling in the shot then the photo is worthless. Ralph Gibson would always tell me I needed to respect the hundreds and thousands of people whose effort went into making the machine (the camera) in your hands and the picture you're about to take.

Q: There are images of passageways—doorways, gates, windows, a view of the mountain between sheets pinned to the clothesline—without any people in the picture. Why do you give these spaces emphasis?

MM: I wanted to stay true to the unwritten premise of my uncle's dreamscape. The images were meant to capture the waking memory and glimpses of his dream world.

Q: What are your three favorite movies?

MM: *The Hours*, for sure. I love the Philip Glass soundtrack in that movie, and I like the way the story and characters interweave through time. *True Romance* is on my list for the same reason of interweaving all the characters' lives together. And of course, *Goodfellows*. There's an authenticity to the film that reminds me of how I grew up.

Q: If you were to return today to those Italian hill towns, what camera would you take? And why?

MM: I used film for *Under Old Stars* because I wanted the grain. Now, of course, I would probably shoot digitally. It would be like watching a movie for the second time, I'd be able to catch all the little things I missed the first time around.

Q: This is the second book you've published with Kehrer Verlag. Are you working on a third? If so, will you tell us its subject?

MM: My next book is titled *Five Disciplines*. There will be five groups of fifteen photographs each focusing on a different discipline of photography: portraits, nudes, light, the road out, and nebulae. Nebulae will be focused on images that are nebulous in its tone or feeling, and that discipline will be the only one in color.

