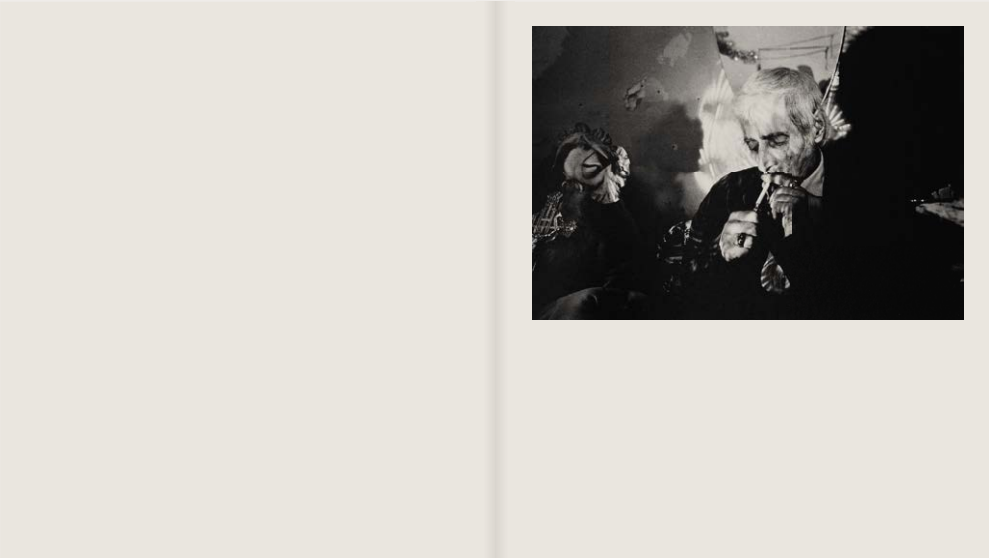


1. SILENCE IS A GIFT
CIRO BATTILORO



This beguiling photobook, with its muted, uncoated cover, contains quiet black and white images on coated interior paper. The antique map drawn across the end sheets is a particularly nice touch and reminds me of a story book. At first, you might think these are images of one big family, but it soon becomes apparent that these are variously different people, so what is the connection? **Ciro Battiloro.**

This is southern Italy in Naples and Cosenza, where Battiloro has chosen to focus his compassionate eye on the people he knows, or perhaps has just met, and followed into the confidentiality of their most private spaces. Seemingly fascinated by the mechanics of family: the love and the pain and the joy. If loneliness is portrayed, it is from the perspective of the photographer, whose intent seems to be more than to gather images from deprived Italian

neighbourhoods. This is a tender portrait of people he cares deeply about.

Battiloro documents the intimacy behind the façade, life inside a family home in all its beauty and imperfection, maybe even taking part, but there is also an objective quality to these photographs that hints at longing. Other social and cultural themes are also being portrayed in these images. If people are drawn to document what they fear will soon be lost, we must question what is at stake in these gentle, everyday, utterly appealing images.

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