

## **GUSMANO CESARETTI**

### *East LA Diary*

June 14 – July 13, 2012

Opening Reception, Thursday, June 14th, 6-8pm



*East LA Diary series, 1974, b/w gelatin silver print, 24x36 in.*

Anna Kustera Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of vintage photography by Gusmano Cesaretti. The suite of twenty-four gelatin silver prints created by the artist in the 1970s was recently discovered in his archive and was shown for the first time in Los Angeles. This unforgettable series has come to be known as the *East LA Diary*. Cesaretti captured slices of subcultures in Los Angeles, from young Chicanos in a graffiti filled world to the burgeoning lowrider and gang scenes. The artist, by gaining the trust of these proud and private individuals, was able to create a time capsule, one that is respectful of differences, nonjudgmental, timeless and striking.

At the center of the Southern California life – then as now – is that symbol of success and mobility: the automobile. Tricked out car bodies and shiny wheels appear in several of the photographs, the vehicles posed with Cesaretti's subjects as if part of the family. As gallery visitors can observe, all-important status within these communities was communicated not only by one's car and clothing but also by means of body ornamentation, hand signals, "bling" (before the term existed) and most of all, attitude.

For Cesaretti's camera, men show off knives, guns and fighting cocks while women brandish earrings and eyelashes. Weddings and dances are memorably depicted and street denizens appear flattered to be the focus of the lens. Indeed, one of the most salient aspects of the series of images is that prototypically "tough" groups are shown experiencing the most human of the moments life brings us. We struggle, we couple, we primp, we pose, we party, we love, we live. Cesaretti's majestic 1970s diary of emotion, style and human interaction manages to reveal how things change – and how they remain exactly the same.

Gusmano Cesaretti was born in 1946 in Lucca, Italy, and currently resides in Los Angeles, CA. Cesaretti has published two books: *Street Writers – A Guided Tour of Chicano Graffiti*, and *Physical Graffiti-4x4=24*. His photographs have been exhibited at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Recent exhibitions include *Art in the Streets*, at the Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles, CA), and *This Side of Paradise: Body and Landscape in Los Angeles Photographs*, at The Huntington Library (San Marino, CA). His photographs are in the permanent collection at the Smithsonian Institute (Washington D.C.) and the Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles, CA). This will be his debut exhibition in New York.

For additional information please contact the gallery at 212-989-0082 or visit our website, [annakustera.com](http://annakustera.com)

Gallery Hours: Through June, Tuesday–Saturday, 11-6pm; July & August, Monday–Friday, 11-6pm