



In 1976, Gabriele Basilico was in Rimini for a project on the Grand Hotel. It was here that he met a number of artists who were performing at the Lady Godiva, the next-door nightclub. Intrigued, he shot a few photographs and was struck by the willingness of the artists to pose for him. In the meantime, the sun was setting on the revue genre, while many of the venues were being turned into adult film theatres. Perhaps as a way of testifying to the swansong of that world, or perhaps because he had been struck by the humanity of those artists (strippers, magicians and clowns), Basilico started photographing theatres and nightclubs around Milan. The idea was to make a book out of his images, but it didn't come to pass and was ultimately forgotten about. In 2020, that box of photographs came to light: an unseen work adding a new element to the work of the Milanese photographer. In these shots in black and white, Basilico shines through as a great photographer in a field which is not his own. There is no sense of melancholy in the reportage, but if anything, the pride, freedom and cheer of a group of artists at work.

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