



On 14 July 1933 at around ten in the morning, in room 224 of the Grand Hotel et des Palmes in Palermo, the lifeless body of Raymond Roussel was discovered.

This is the opening of the story-cum-inquest by Leonardo Sciascia dedicated to the death of the French artist in the legendary hotel which hosted musicians, artists and literati, from Guy de Maupassant to Richard Wagner, and from Oscar Wilde to Giorgio De Chirico. A visionary writer, charming dandy, radical traveller, eccentric President of the Republic of Dreams, Roussel was among the most daring innovators of the last century.

Via Roma 398 Palermo draws inspiration from the mystery surrounding Roussel's death and the enigmatic room 224. It brings together thirty international artists and authors from various disciplines and fields of expertise to provide a choral homage to the poet and his work. The publication, edited by Luca Trevisani, also features the English translation – published here for the first time – of the pamphlet *Atti relativi alla morte di Raymond Roussel (Documents Relating to the Death of Raymond Roussel)* by Leonardo Sciascia."

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Via Roma 398 Palermo by VV.AA.

Publisher	Humboldt Books
Release Place	Milan, Italy
Edition	1st edition
Release Date	2018
ISBN	9788899385477
Credits	Author: Leonardo Sciascia Artist: VV.AA.
Printrun	500
Availability	Available
Price	25.00 Euro

Work	
Subform	Architecture Book
Topics	Architecture, Homage, Poetry, Raymond Roussel, Writing
Language	English
Object	
Format	Softcover
Dimensions	13.0 × 22.5 cm
Weight	249 gram
Interior	
Pages	152