

Graffiti on the wall below a window on buildings in the abandoned city of Matera, Italy

Date

1969-1979

Medium

gelatin silver print

Description

Matera is a city and a province in the region of Basilicata, in southern Italy. It is the capital of the province of Matera and the capital of Basilicata from 1663 to 1806. The town lies in a small canyon carved out by the Gravina. Matera was known as “the shame of Italy” for its dismal poverty. In the 1950s, the entire population of roughly 16,000 people, mostly peasants and farmers, were relocated from the Sassi to new housing projects in an ill-conceived government program, leaving it an empty shell.

Dimensions

Overall: 30.6 x 20.7 cm (12 x 8 1/8 in.)