

LES CARATS

A LUXURY LIFESTYLE GUIDE

Chanel and Willy Rizzo on Park Avenue



For the man who became as legendary as his subjects, Willy Rizzo, a cornerstone in the fashion and starstruck Hollywood worlds, is still celebrated today.

Last week we had the privilege to visit the Galerie Dumonteil for the Chanel and Rizzo exhibition with the lovely guest of honor none other than Dominique Rizzo, the late photographer's wife of forty-four years. Madam Rizzo was charming and gracious amongst her husband's work as she signed copies of the latest book, a compilation of Rizzo's work with the iconic Coco Chanel.

A limited edition of prints were created from a carefully chosen selection of Chanel and Rizzo's work together. It was immediately obvious how deep Willy Rizzo's talent ran. His composition and lighting formed timeless pieces where he illuminated the ladies of Chanel in chic and lively personalities. The behind the scenes look he was able to give of the designer working on the dresses as the models wore them, the pinning, the sewing, the twirling, still come alive in the intimate setting. Rizzo kept his work as a celebration of women, never straying into the questionably provocative that is all too often seen today. Instead he captured their spirit. The obvious focus and determination of Coco Chanel at work, to the carefree and comfortable way the models had about them, even private tete-a-tetes were never to lose their intimacy. It is as if you were in the room with them.

The book and art collection has been met with great enthusiasm and one can expect it to continue given Rizzo's incredible resume having worked with the likes of; Winston Churchill, Brigitte Bardot, Sophia Loren, Vivien Leigh, Audrey Hepburn, Jane Fonda, Gene Kelly, Fred Astair, Salvador Dali and Pablo Picasso. He even photographed Marilyn Monroe in February 1962. He was one of the last photographers to take pictures of her. In his twenty years of working with *Paris Match* he also covered the Nuremberg Trials and the French Indochina war. Last but not least, you can find special pieces of his furniture collection exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. With all these stars in your eyes it's easy to be dazzled and imagine Monsieur Rizzo as grand, larger than life, and bathed in the limelight, far away somehow. But, as Brad Pitt so eloquently put it, "*The woman is the reflection of her man.*" That being the case Dominique Rizzo still glows, sweet and demure, in the lifetime of love they shared together. Still his biggest cheerleader, supporter and lover.

If you would like to experience the art of Willy Rizzo you can visit the Galerie Dumonteil in New York or the Willy Rizzo gallery in Paris. Of course remember to get your copy of '*Chanel par Willy Rizzo*'.

Chanel

par Willy Rizzo

