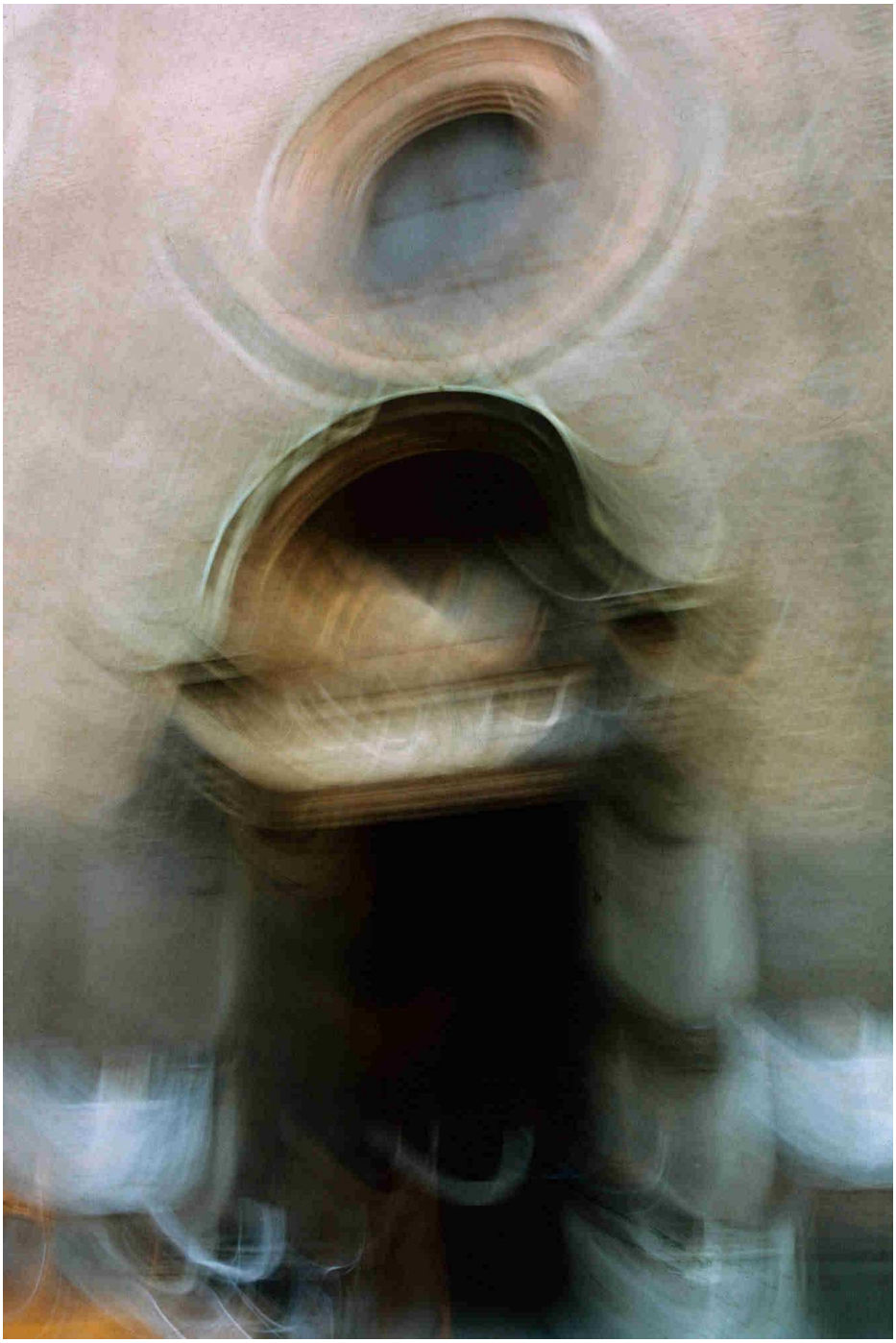
Giacomo Bucci



Giacomo Bucci

My journey with movimentist photography,
between photodynamism
and intentional camera movement

April 2026

Cover image
“Portal of Santa Maria delle Grazie”, Milan 1969
Giacomo Bucci

Introduction

I have had several occasions to discuss photography with Giacomo Bucci, and from the outset I was struck by the intensity of his engagement: an enthusiasm articulated through a clearly defined poetic vision and sustained by a passion for the medium cultivated over more than a decade. His interest in photography originates in the 1970s and leads him, for a formative period, to London — a city to which he remains profoundly attached. There, Bucci undertakes a rigorous programme of research and study, encompassing both the technical foundations and the historical development of photography, the object of what may rightly be described as a long-standing commitment rather than a fleeting attraction.
From its beginnings, Bucci's practice has been marked by experimentation. In the 1970s he embarked upon a personal re-reading of photographic genres through a photodynamic lens, exploring the potential of movement as both subject and methodology. The period produced a series of "agitated" images, including photographs of the wedding of Anne of England, alongside works that sought to animate objects, urban environments, and portraiture. These early experiments already reveal an ambition to transcend documentation in favour of a more dynamic and interpretative vision.

There exists, I believe, an opportune moment for action; the capacity to be understood, however, belongs to a different order altogether. The defining quality of the artist lies in the ability to recognise that moment — to grasp the instant in which one can see beyond the surface of things and articulate a personal vision of the world. It is a transition not everyone negotiates successfully. Kandinsky described this condition as "inner necessity": a threshold that separates competent practice from authentic artistic expression. This distinction lies at the heart of the present discussion. What, precisely, transforms an author into an artist? When does one move beyond the conscientious production of a knowledgeable practitioner to arrive at a work that communicates a genuine, non-derivative message — one that exceeds imitation, citation, or the seductive polish of the well-executed image?
It was in Bucci's account of his photographic methodology that I perceived this passage most clearly, particularly in his stated intention to capture the "soul" of the subject through a mechanical device such as the camera, combined with a deliberate, intentional movement of the apparatus itself. For Bucci, photography serves to restitute the authenticity of reality as it manifests before his gaze: an epiphanic event in which perception and gesture coincide.

Experimentation in photography, no less than in other artistic fields, rarely follows a smooth or reassuring path. Audiences tend to favour familiarity, aesthetic comfort, images that confirm expectations and offer visual consolation. To pursue

an alternative course requires determination, perseverance, and patience. Within this context, Bucci's affinity with Anton Giulio Bragaglia is particularly eloquent. Bragaglia, who formulated Photodynamism in 1913, famously encountered strong resistance in his efforts to establish photography as an autonomous art form.

Bucci's website recounts the acrimonious dispute between Anton Giulio Bragaglia, his brother Arturo, and their Futurist contemporaries, who warned against assimilating the Bragaglias' experimental Photodynamism to the Plastic Dynamism developed by Boccioni, Balla, Carrà, Severini, and Russolo. Bragaglia's 1913 publication on Photodynamism was dismissed as "a simply monstrous little book", allegedly the product of a "positivist photographer's graphomania". The ensuing hostility ultimately led Bragaglia to abandon photography altogether and to distance himself from the Manifesto of the Second Photodynamism (1930), despite Marinetti's unequivocal recognition of him as the founder of the movement and his assertion that photography had, by that point, become "pure art".
It was not until the 1950s that art historian Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, writing in conjunction with the Florence exhibition dedicated to Henri Cartier-Bresson, articulated a definitive reassessment. Ragghianti explicitly acknowledged photography as an artistic practice when it is characterised by "the expression of a continuous and personal style that guarantees its aesthetic authorship". He also credited Bragaglia and Photodynamism with having recognised "the full dignity and full aesthetic capacity of photography".

Against this historical backdrop, Giacomo Bucci's work situates itself within a clear lineage of artistic research. Beginning with Bragaglia's aim of evoking "the memory of the dynamic sensation of movement", Bucci advances towards a conception of photography that fully embraces the conditions of "pure art". In the 1970s, photographer and critic Ando Gilardi described works of this nature as "movimentist" in Photo 13, the journal he edited at the time. Bucci acknowledged this definition and has continued to adopt the term to describe his own images.

Among the photographs in Bucci's portfolio, certain images impose themselves with particular force upon the memory. These are the photographs of his places of the heart: Milan foremost, followed by Mantua and London. In these works, Bucci demonstrates a pronounced ability to capture what Norberg-Schulz defined as the genius loci — the spirit of place — together with the vestiges and presences that inhabit it.
Within such a fluid visual field, where the risk of losing sight of the essential — the subject's inner substance — is ever present, the articulation of rules becomes a necessity. Bucci formulates these principles with clarity and precision, echoing the practices of the early twentieth-century avant-gardes, whose protagonists carefully codified their poetics in order to avoid misinterpretation or critical dilution.

The rules defined by Bucci concern the preparatory procedures underlying the orchestration of movement:

1. *Long exposure times, ranging from one second to one-eighth of a second.*
2. *The optimal light condition: twilight.*

3. *Movement that may be continuous or delimited, with an intentional pause at the beginning or end of the exposure. Crucially, it is the camera that moves, implicating the photographer's eye in the attempt to capture the fleeting instant. This approach diverges from Bragaglia's, in which the camera remained fixed while the subject moved.*
4. *Lens selection: the telephoto lens produces a more uniform rendering of light and space through brief movements, while the wide-angle lens supports more complex gestures and imaginative outcomes.*
5. *During the planning stage, the identification of shadow zones into which areas of light will be inscribed.*
6. *Movement must be singular, decisive, and premeditated. Post-production intervention is deliberately excluded, as it would compromise the rigour of the original gesture.*

Over time, the articulation of these rules — this disciplined engagement with reality through photographic means — has become increasingly central to Bucci's practice, even overshadowing movimentism itself, which nonetheless remains its foundational impulse. This emphasis reveals the procedural and conceptual dimension that permeates his work and finds its most explicit manifestation in Foto oscura (Sant'Angelo d'Ischia, 2022).
In this work, the photograph is accompanied by a video document. Introduced by a passage from Dante, the video records the artist executing the photograph: rotating the camera through 180 degrees in a single, decisive motion while framing the rock of Sant'Angelo. Foto oscura, in its combined photographic and video form, exposes the making of the work and signals, in my view, a new phase in Bucci's practice — a visual vade mecum for those wishing to pursue this experimental path and develop it further.

Bucci's artistic photography, long poised between Bragaglian movimentism and affinities with the process-based art of the 1960s and 1970s, here adopts a performative dimension. The creative act is rendered visible, merging narrative and interpretative time. The resulting images are remarkably restrained and lucid, demonstrating with precision the rules set down in the artist's notebooks. The decisive camera movement causes the dark mass of the hillside to double its visual presence, not by reflection, but by inscribing motion within the plane of water that receives it.
No trace of motion remains visible. Reality doubles itself, closing a cycle and forming a synthesis between what is and what might constitute its hidden, darker counterpart. As McLuhan famously asserted, the medium itself becomes the message. In these recent works — among which the photograph of Milan's Duomo stands out as particularly compelling — Bucci appears to have reached, like Dante, the ultimate destination of his journey through photography: a destination that, as in all genuine journeys, is not a place but the journey itself.

Carla Pagliero
Art Historian

Turin, 15 May 2023

Futurist photography

Photodinamism

The earliest attempts to describe movement in photography are associated with the experiments of Étienne-Jules Marey and Eadweard Muybridge, whose work consisted in fixing a sequence of static images in chronological order to convey the perception of motion in its becoming. This significant late-nineteenth-century invention constituted a technical prelude to cinematography; however, it did not substantially enhance the artistic status of photography as such.

At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the introduction of artificial lighting in the studios of leading photographers — most notably in the work of the French photographer Constant Puyo — made it possible to achieve a high level of technical refinement. Photography at that time was predominantly represented by static portraiture, informed by a hybrid sensibility combining Romanticism and Decadentism. This was the era of Pictorialist photography, grounded in the faithful reproduction of visible reality.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, however, new social and cultural values emerged in response to industrialisation: speed and progress. It was within this context that the Futurist movement arose, proclaiming an emphatic celebration of dynamism and modernity, ideologically opposed to the culture and art of the past. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's *Manifesto Futurista* (1909) introduced poetic concepts such as the beauty of speed, the exaltation of movement, and the running step, alongside deliberately transgressive terms such as the slap and the punch, rebellion, and incendiary, overwhelming violence. It was within the Futurist milieu that the practice of photodynamism emerged, developed by Anton Giulio Bragaglia in collaboration with his brother Arturo.

First announced in 1910 in the journal *Lacerba* and subsequently articulated by Anton Giulio Bragaglia in his essay *Fotodinamismo futurista* (1913), photodynamism sought to capture "the memory of the dynamic sensation of a movement and its scientifically faithful form, even in dematerialisation […] towards a progress in photography: to purify it, ennoble it, and truly elevate it to art".

As early as 1909, Anton Giulio Bragaglia — working alongside his brother Arturo — had begun his initial experiments in photodynamism, and by 1911 he was disseminating his research through lectures and exhibitions, including the printing of photodynamic images on postcards.

In contrast to the chronophotographic techniques of Marey and Muybridge, photodynamism synthesised the perception of temporal flow within a single photographic exposure, drawing the viewer into an oneiric vision of reality. The Bragaglia brothers sought to represent “the continuity of gesture in space”. Their aim was not to reproduce the real world as such, but to record and preserve the spirit of living reality within a dematerialised image of movement. Photodynamism, therefore, was not merely a photographic technique but, above all, a vehicle for artistic expression. It was conceived as a means through which photography could legitimately claim a place among the so-called noble arts, alongside painting, sculpture, and architecture — despite the criticism it provoked.

Scholars remain divided regarding the publication history of the three undated editions of Anton Giulio Bragaglia’s *Fotodinamismo futurista*. Some locate all three editions in 1913, while others propose a publication span between 1911 and 1913. In the critical re-edition published in 1980 by *Einaudi* under the auspices of the Centro Studi Bragaglia, Antonella Vigliani Bragaglia argues that the first edition appeared as early as 1911, citing reports published in *L’Artista* in December of that year, announcing Bragaglia’s lectures and the release of the essay. She further maintains that the second edition was published on 30 June 1913, and the third in the autumn of the same year. Other scholars contend that the earliest version was merely a draft, and that all three editions were in fact published in 1913, in June, September, and December respectively.

What is generally accepted, however, is that on 30 June 1913 — following a lecture delivered by Bragaglia in Rome on 24 April 1913, attended by Marinetti, Altomare, and Folgore — *Nalato Editore* published an edition of *Fotodinamismo futurista*. This first edition comprised forty-eight pages with sixteen plates and was printed in ochre-coloured covers, priced at twenty soldi. The second edition, pale yellow in colour, was otherwise identical but sold at a reduced price of ten soldi. The third edition, matching the second in format, included an additional photodynamic image entitled “Un gesto del Capo”.

In an effort to persuade the Futurists to accept photodynamism as an expression of Futurist art rather than as a photographic technique, Anton Giulio Bragaglia stated in his essay: “For this reason, we wish to observe that my brother Arturo and I are not photographers, and stand far removed from the profession of photography — a circumstance which demonstrates that we are not merely beating the drum for our own trade.” This assertion, however, failed to dispel the Futurists’ distrust of photodynamism, despite its evident consonance with many of Futurism’s core principles.

Indeed, the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting* (1910), authored by Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, Balla, and Severini, declared: “For us, gesture will no longer be a frozen moment of universal dynamism; it will become the dynamic sensation itself, rendered eternal. Everything moves, everything runs, everything turns swiftly. A figure is never stable before us but appears and disappears incessantly. Through the persistence of the image upon the retina, moving forms multiply and distort, succeeding one another like vibrations within the space they traverse.” Yet one is compelled to ask: is this not, in essence, photodynamism?

The relationship between the Futurists and photodynamism was unquestionably complex and fraught with tension. Umberto Boccioni, one of its most vehement opponents, relegated photography to the status of a minor art, citing both the ease of its mechanical apparatus and the static nature of the image it produced. His hostility towards photodynamism — despite its pronounced dynamism — likely concealed motivations of a corporative nature. In September 1913, on the occasion of a Futurist exhibition, Boccioni wrote to the gallerist Sprovieri: “I urge you — on behalf of the Futurist friends — to exclude any association with Bragaglia’s photodynamism. It is a presumptuous uselessness that damages our aspirations to liberate ourselves from schematic or sequential reproduction of static form and motion […] Imagine if we have any need of the graphomania of a positivist photographer of dynamism […] His little book seemed to us simply monstrous.”

The attacks intensified in October 1913, when *Lacerba* published a joint notice by Boccioni, Balla, Carrà, Severini, Russolo, and Soffici. The statement asserted that: “Given the widespread ignorance in matters of art, and in order to avoid misunderstandings, we, the Futurist painters, declare that everything related to photodynamism concerns exclusively innovations within the field of photography. Such purely photographic research bears absolutely no relation to the Plastic Dynamism invented by us, nor to any dynamic research in the domains of painting, sculpture, and architecture.”

In early Futurism, alongside painting, poetry and music were fully recognised as constituent arts of the movement; photography, however, was excluded. This is made explicit in Marinetti’s 1911 essay *Uccidiamo il chiaro di luna!*, which lists: “The governing body of the Futurist Movement is composed of the Futurist poets F. T. Marinetti, G. P. Lucini, Paolo Buzzi, A. Palazzeschi, E. Cavacchioli, Corrado Govoni, Libero Altomare, E. Cardile, Luciano Folgore, G. Carrieri, and E. Manzella Frontini; the Futurist painters U. Boccioni, C. D. Carrà, L. Russolo, Giacomo Balla, and G. Severini; and the Futurist musician Balilla Pratella.” The Futurist leadership could not have been clearer: photodynamism was not regarded as an artistic discipline, just as photography itself was not acknowledged as art.

The manifesto of futurist photography

Official Futurism began to show a genuine interest in photography only in 1930, when Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and Tato published the *Manifesto of Futurist Photography* and reconciled themselves with “Photodynamism, or the photography of movement created by Anton Giulio Bragaglia” — who by then had already withdrawn from pursuing his original battle. This marked the second phase of Futurism, commonly referred to as Second Futurism, a period characterised by wide-ranging experimental and innovative research.

In contrast to the fluid, graceful softness of Bragaglian photography, an energetic photography now emerged. Reality was reinterpreted through photomontage, optical devices, improbable scenographies, and hybrid techniques combining photography and drawing. Forms and figures were thus rendered provocative, at

times irreverent, challenging conventions and opening new perspectives for exploration and experimentation within the photographic field.

The *Manifesto of Futurist Photography,* dated 16 April 1930 and signed by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and Guglielmo Sansoni (Tato), proclaims:

"A photograph of a landscape, of a person or of a group of people, achieved with such harmony, meticulous detail and typicity as to prompt the remark "It looks like a painting", is for us something absolutely surpassed. After Photodynamism, or the photography of movement created by Anton Giulio Bragaglia in collaboration with his brother Arturo, presented by me in 1912 at the Sala Pichetti in Rome and subsequently imitated by all the avant-garde photographers of the world, it is now necessary to realise the following new photographic possibilities:

1. The drama of immobile and mobile objects, and the dramatic intermingling of mobile and immobile objects;
2. The drama of the shadows of objects, contrasting and isolated from the objects themselves;
3. The drama of objects humanised, petrified, crystallised, or vegetalised through camouflage and special lighting;
4. The spectralisation of certain parts of the human or animal body, isolated or illogically recombined;
5. The fusion of aerial, marine, and terrestrial perspectives;
6. The fusion of views from below upwards with views from above downwards;
7. The mobile or immobile inclination of objects or of human and animal bodies;
8. The mobile or immobile suspension of objects and their state of equilibrium;
9. The dramatic disproportions of mobile and immobile objects;
10. The amorous or violent interpenetration of mobile or immobile objects;
11. The transparent or semi-transparent superimposition of people and concrete objects and of their semi-abstract ghosts, with simultaneity of memory and dream;
12. The overflowing enlargement of a tiny, almost invisible object within a landscape;
13. The tragic or satirical interpretation of activity through the symbolism of camouflaged objects;
14. The composition of absolutely extraterrestrial, astral, or medianic landscapes through thicknesses, elasticities, murky depths, clear transparencies, algebraic or geometric values, without anything human, vegetal, or geological;
15. The organic composition of the different states of mind of a person through the intensified expression of the most characteristic parts of their body;
16. The photographic art of camouflaged objects, intended to develop the art of war camouflage designed to deceive aerial observers.
All these investigations aim to push photographic science ever further into the realm of pure art, and thereby to foster its development automatically within the fields of physics, chemistry, and warfare."

The *Manifesto of Futurist Photography* outlined a vision of photography that, despite the commitment of several artists, failed to generate an innovation comparable to that achieved by Bragaglian photodynamism. Consequently, Futurist photography gradually dissipated amid the devastation of the Second World War and its inability to assert a strong autonomous identity distinct from painting.

During the Second Futurist period, numerous photographers sought to implement the principles articulated in the manifesto. Among them were Piero Boccardi, who produced iconic stylised compositions; Fortunato Depero, author of joyful and transgressive self-portraits; Maggiorino Gramaglia, creator of introspective photomontages; Filippo Masoero, who experimented with aerial photography using long exposure while in free fall; and Guglielmo Sansoni (Tato), who focused on photomontage and object camouflage.

Other Futurist artists — including Giacomo Balla, Umberto Boccioni, Giorgio Carmelich, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Alberto Montacchini, Vinicio Paladini, Enrico Prampolini, Mario Nunes Vais, and Wanda Wulz — also produced photographic works of notable interest. Nevertheless, despite these collective efforts, Futurist photography failed to sustain a position of prominence within the artistic landscape, marking its gradual decline.

The third moment of futurist photography

If Futurist photography can be said to have unfolded in two distinct phases, it is natural to ask which of the two might be considered the more representative. It would be easy to privilege the *Manifesto of Futurist Photography* of 1930, as it constitutes the official declaration of the Futurist artists. Yet, within that very manifesto, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti paid explicit tribute to “Photodynamism, or the photography of movement created by Anton Giulio Bragaglia […] subsequently imitated by all the avant-garde photographers of the world”. To Bragaglia, therefore, belongs both the recognition and the authorship of original Futurist photography — an approach that introduced an entirely new way of describing movement within visual art.

Marinetti and Sansoni also articulated a broader ambition, aimed at pursuing new paths “to push photographic science ever further into the realm of pure art”. In other words, they did not merely define the photography of their own historical moment; they projected Futurist photography into the future.

Thus, from the second half of the twentieth century onwards, following divergent and often contrasting trajectories, a prolonged third moment of Futurist photography has emerged — one that has inspired, and continues to inspire, generations of artists and photographers engaged in negotiating the boundary between the science of the image and the art of movement.

Photographic technique required decades to reduce exposure times to eliminate blur and represent space with maximum precision, based on the assumption that photography’s primary value lay in producing images faithful to reality. For this reason, blur has generally been considered an error, the result of accident or technical failure. Yet a blurred photograph is not necessarily a failed photograph. When blur is the product of a conscious creative intention, and when it sustains a productive tension between representation and transfiguration of reality, it possesses its own legitimacy. When, moreover, it captures an image through

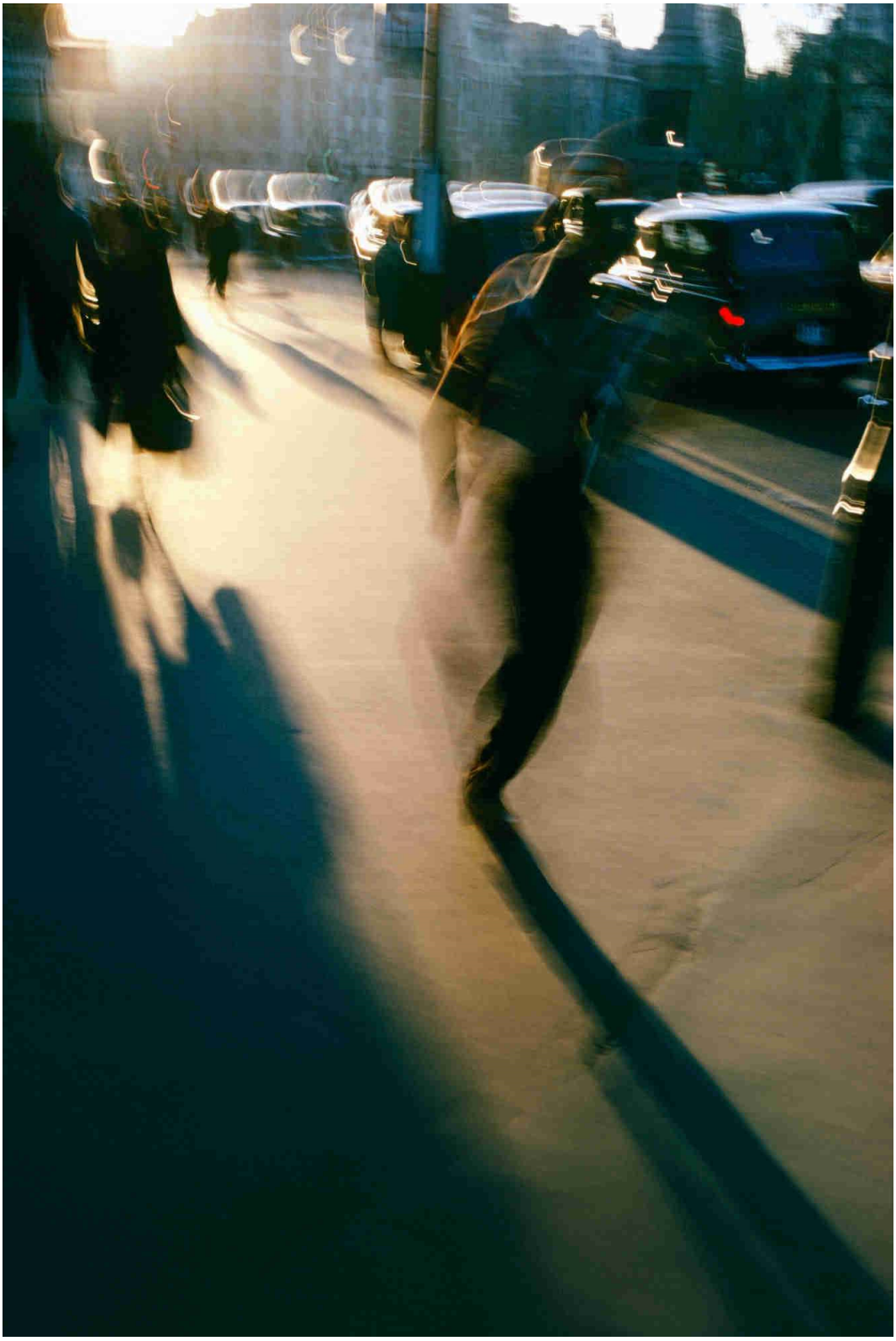
personal expressive choices that convey a coherent and authentic artistic vision, it may attain the status of art.

Addressing the complexity of this subject, Sergio Giusti writes in his essay *Il gesto e la traccia – Interazioni a posa lunga* (*Postmedia Books*, 2015) that motion blur — distinguished from optical defocus — occurs under low-light conditions, when the lens remains open for an extended interval, either because a moving figure exceeds the speed of the shutter or because the camera itself is unstable. Internationally, blur is generally described using the terms motion blur or, since 2000, intentional camera movement.

It must be acknowledged that photography does not admit a single form of blur, but rather several variations. Some photographers choose to emphasise the movement of a gesture, while others privilege the emotional resonance of the subject as a whole.

A range of techniques employ motion blur: when the subject moves while the camera remains static, the resulting image highlights traces of light or the dynamics of a gesture — this is the classic case of Bragaglian photodynamism; when the camera moves in pursuit of the scene's dynamics, a technique known as panning, the subject is isolated against an indeterminate background; when the subject remains static and the camera moves, the result is a transfigured vision of the scene. More daring still are combinations of these approaches, adopted by those who seek to capture not only the motion of objects but also the emotional charge of a reality bordering on the imaginary.

Numerous photographers have engaged with blurred imagery across different periods and contexts. Among them are Franca Agnetti, Johan Batho, Mario Cresci, Antoine d'Agata, Mario Giacomelli, Paolo Gioli, Ernst Haas, Roni Horn, Olga Karlovac, Ralph Eugene Meatyard, Rosetta Messori, Duane Michals, Paolo Monti, Matthew Pillsbury, Roberto Polillo, Gaetano Rummo, Roberta Sala, Otto Steinert, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Alexey Titarenko, Ira Vinokurova, Michael Wesely, Francesca Woodman, and Giovanni Ziliani.



“Go slowly”, London 1973
Giacomo Bucci

“I win”, Lecco 1971
Giacomo Bucci

“Where the soul leads”, Verbania 1970
Giacomo Bucci

The journey

The photography with a soul

I was born in Parma on 2 April 1949 to lower middle-class parents, and at the age of eight I moved with my family to Milan due to my father's professional commitments. My love of photography began when I was fifteen. While studying at the Istituto Rizzoli per l'Insegnamento delle Arti Grafiche in Milan, I nurtured a strong interest in art history, graphic drawing and lithographic printing, while at the same time consolidating my technical training in photography, aimed at my earliest publications.

Within the cultural landscape of the 1960s, I was searching for an alternative to the instantaneous photography of Henri Cartier-Bresson, whose work so incisively explored everyday life. I was not interested in representing the social phenomena taking place around me; I was drawn instead to something more philosophical: the yearning I sensed emanating from the things of the world. Capturing the decisive moment was not enough for me. What mattered more was probing space–time in order to discover the hidden soul of matter.

To focus my research on things rather than solely on people, I began seeking out strictly immobile objects and photographing them through unusual movements of the camera, hoping that something magical might occur. After several years of attempts marked by repeated failures and countless rolls of Kodachrome II slide film, in 1969 I produced my first photograph endowed with a soul. I encountered it in front of the portal of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. At last, I had succeeded in codifying the technique of programmed blur, which allowed me to establish an intimate dialogue between myself and the object.

This moment marks the birth of my movimentist photography: a practice rooted in colour photography — first in slide form and later digitally — and characterised by the articulated movement of the camera, aimed at capturing not only the dynamism of objects but, above all, the meaning of their existence.

Working with intellectual autonomy and free from external influences, in the early 1970s I refined my photographic language, which — unbeknownst to me — had arrived at the "*effective, realistic dynamism of objects evolving through real motion, which, more precisely, should be defined as movimentism*" as theorised by Anton Giulio Bragaglia.

Solo exhibitions and publications in specialist journals confirmed the interest in my work within the field of photographic research. Thus, in April 1974, Ando Gilardi described me in *PHOTO 13* as the *"heir (perhaps not the only one, but probably the most accomplished) of photodynamism, that is, movimentist photography […] Bucci, aided by the medium — and naturally by a precise awareness and sensitivity of what it makes possible and of what he wishes to achieve — has translated Bragaglian hypotheses — and dreams — into 'slide' reality."*

Everything seemed to be going well. At my first solo exhibition, held in 1974 at *The Photographer's Gallery* in London, my works were priced at £25 each. Another solo exhibition at *Il Diaframma* in Milan was proposed to me by Lanfranco Colombo in 1975, when I joined *Dimensione*, the avant-garde group of photographers based in Brera. At that time, nurturing the dream of devoting my entire life to movimentist photography and becoming a great photographer, I knocked on the doors of advertising agencies and fashion magazines in Milan and London, presenting my movimentist portfolio.

When I travelled to London to launch my professional career as a photographer, *Vogue* and other advertising agencies were intrigued by my innovative style, yet regretted their inability to use blurred images. They suggested instead that I produce commercial and fashion photography, strictly sharp and static, but I declined: it felt like prostitution. As a result, however, I had no money to live on. The only commission I obtained was from Decca Records in 1974, for the cover of a classical music album. It earned me £20, but I spent more than that travelling outside London to make a movimentist photograph of the renowned tenor Joseph Rouleau.

From that point on, I learned not to rely on commissions. In order not to betray the profound love I had for movimentist photography, I decided not to engage in other, more lucrative forms of photography and instead became my own patron. My work as a graphic designer was to provide the economic support needed to pursue my dream of becoming an artistic photographer. I was free to photograph whatever I wished, with a single constraint: the images had to capture the true soul of the fragment of life I was recording. When they succeeded, I printed them and entrusted them to my friend Edoardo Legrenzi, who sold them as artworks to friends and relatives. How many? Few. Not through any fault of his — the images were simply too blurred. This could not go on.

Better to get out of it, at least sentimentally

In Italy during the 1970s, few maintained that photography — like painting — should be recognised as a true form of art. I was among them, and I naively believed that I could contribute to bringing photography closer to the art world by presenting my movimentist photographs as paintings. I thought that aligning photography with painterly iconography would encourage its artistic recognition. Nothing could have been more mistaken. History later demonstrated — alas too late for me — that photography is an art form in and of itself.

Despite the encouragement I received from publications and exhibitions in London and Milan, I catalogued the 700 Kodachrome II slides I had produced up to that point and abandoned movimentist photography in a total and irreversible manner, almost as if to formalise a distance from a great love I could not attain because it was not reciprocated.

In order to avoid suffering from the closeness of artistic failure, I turned to what was most remote from photography. Thus I arrived at marketing management where, thanks to my degree in Economics from the Università Cattolica of Milan, I was able to channel my creativity — an experience that later culminated in the publication of the book *Il Maestro di Botteg@*, a model of business management founded not on profit but on human happiness.

Thus, in order not to betray my artistic vision of movimentist photography, in 1976 I definitively abandoned both the profession of photographer and my dream, consciously embracing the advice Ando Gilardi had given me in *PHOTO 13* (April 1974): *"Bucci ought to be dead; then his value could indeed be officially recognised, without risk. Mulas teaches us this. But we wish Bucci failure: which is the same as wishing him a long life. And we repeat here what we have already told him in person: the image is a beautiful and serious thing, but its world — that is, the environment of its production and consumption — is not. It is ugly, mean, and administered by rogues. Better to get out of it, at least sentimentally."*

From that moment began for me a long and difficult period of psychological rejection of photography, understood both as a cultural interest and, even more so, as photographic practice. My black Nikon F became nothing more than a historical relic. I could no longer hold a camera in my hands without feeling a wound to the heart. It was difficult to come to terms with mourning the loss of a great love: movimentist photography.

The sole exception came in 1993, when my friend Lanfranco Colombo invited me to take part in the celebration of the 25th anniversary of *Il Diaframma gallery*. On that occasion, I donated a 50 × 70 cm colour print of one of my movimentist photographs, which was exhibited at the Accademia Carrara in Bergamo.

The return to ICM in the New Millennium

Awakening from a long hibernation that had lasted forty-three years, the muse of movimentist photography called me back. In 2018, encouraged by authoritative figures from the worlds of art and photography, I returned to making photographs, embracing a new challenge: digital photography — yet still resolutely movimentist.

In 2019, Roberta Valtorta invited me to take part, alongside other leading photographers, in the exhibition on the iconography of fairgrounds held in Rovigo. Later, in 2022, I signed both the photography and the direction of the

short movimentist photographic film *Il villaggio di Francesco*, screened at the UNESCO Visitor Centre in Crespi d'Adda.

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the technical resources available have enabled many artists to approach digital graphic photography, sometimes at the cost of losing sight of the meaning inherent in the photographic act itself. In response, and in order to bring attention back to the original concept of photography, I chose to produce a new series of digital movimentist photographs: emblems of a contemporary neo-avant-garde, set in opposition to images manipulated by both human and artificial intelligence.

It was then that I realised how, alongside the advent of digital technology, the term Intentional Camera Movement (ICM) had also emerged during the 2000s — a genre now recognised internationally which, referring to the photographic technique of blur, has its roots in Futurist photodynamism and in twentieth-century artistic experimentation.

Nevertheless, while fully aware that my photographs entirely embody the principle of intentional camera movement, I have continued to use the term movimentist to describe my work, as it reflects a practice oriented more towards the creative process than towards photographic technique alone.

In searching for fragments of life that drift through time and space, I have found digital technology to be the right means of capturing the soul of things — on the condition that the file obtained at the moment of exposure is not graphically manipulated in post-production, exactly as was the case with Kodachrome II slides, which could be developed only by Kodak itself.

I have always believed that the soul passing through the lens offers itself only to those who respect its integrity, without resorting to dazzling digital graphic techniques to enhance it. One must accept it for what it is: not perfect or spectacular, but true and authentic.

All this serves to affirm that movimentist photography, even though it involves a distortion known as blur, is neither deceptive nor contrived, but a pure and simple dematerialised rendering of reality. This is why, while grasping within the soul of things the meaning of the beauty of creation, it simultaneously represents both the impression and the expression of reality.

The reflections

After producing several thousand photographs in a movimentist key, I wish to leave future generations this document, “written in ink” and accompanied — outside the text — by sixteen images “written with light”. This is the same number of images that Anton Giulio Bragaglia included in the first edition of his essay *Fotodinamismo futurista*. It is an homage to my maestro and, at the same time, an invitation addressed to future generations to continue experimenting and cultivating the noble art of photography.

Movimentist photography has revealed itself to me as a fascinating journey between science and philosophy — a path along which photographic art has never been a mere technical pursuit, but rather an authentic instrument for exploring creation and reflecting upon my own relationship with it. Throughout this journey, I have been struck by how seemingly random phenomena — shaped by chaos, entropy theory and the laws of quantum physics — can give rise to unpredictable images rich in meaning. Through prolonged camera movement, disorder becomes a creative force, transforming visible reality into a poetic dimension and inviting the viewer to access new levels of perception.

Crossing the borders into science

I have discovered that by combining many similar images, subtle variations can emerge with greater clarity and amplify in unpredictable ways. One of the principles underlying this phenomenon is chaos theory, also known as the butterfly effect: small initial differences may lead to large variations in final outcomes. Chaos theory emerged in the 1960s from the mathematical models developed by meteorologist Edward Lorenz and is famously illustrated by the example whereby the beating of a butterfly’s wings in Brazil could trigger a tornado in Texas.

Equally compelling is the concept of entropy, introduced into Information Theory by Claude Shannon in 1948, which measures disorder in communication and data processing. For Shannon, entropy represents the degree of uncertainty or unpredictability of an information source: the greater the quantity of information, the greater the unpredictability and, consequently, the greater the disorder.

I cannot deny that movimentist photography is the sum of a multitude of images superimposed upon one another and is therefore subject to chaos, shifting from a state of order — real — to a state of disorder — unreal. Its effects are thus closely linked to entropy as a measure of disorder within a system that tends to increase as it evolves towards states of greater disarray.

I have also been deeply intrigued by discussions surrounding the concept of probability as formulated in Werner Karl Heisenberg's uncertainty principle of 1927, which addresses the impossibility of knowing with absolute precision both the motion and the position of a subatomic particle at the same time. This means that, if one wishes to determine one of these quantities, the other cannot be known simultaneously. Indeed, particles have no definite positions until they are measured, but exist in a state of probability. Furthermore, when two particles become correlated such that the state of one is directly linked to the state of the other, the phenomenon of duplication — or entanglement — occurs, while maintaining a profound connection between them regardless of distance.

I sometimes wonder whether this fundamental pillar of quantum mechanics might also apply to the tangle of electromagnetic waves generated by the prolonged opening of the shutter and the convulsive movement of the camera while I produce my movimentist photographs. Who knows?

Nor do I know whether chaos theory, entropic disorder and the uncertainty principle have precise implications for the experience of movimentist photography. Yet, by experimenting with the probabilistic disorder of the final result, I have come to understand that the programming of blur must inevitably allow for a certain degree of unpredictability.

There is also the intimate nature of light to consider: an elementary particle with zero mass that propagates in a vacuum in association with an electromagnetic field. This is the photon, the "quantum" of light — a marvellous particle whose energy, when absorbed by matter, generates the photoelectric effect. The photon, however, is somewhat peculiar: it produces resonance as it vibrates perpendicular to the direction of its motion and oscillates along two vectors, one horizontal and one vertical. Thus, by continuously altering the point of observation — superimposing, stretching and dragging photons over one another — the focal plane breaks down and recomposes scenarios and background noise, recording new images of reality.

There is, moreover, a strong correlation between space, time and velocity as defined by physics. Space is a domain available to objects in reality, identified by their position and extension; time is an unlimited continuum, divisible in relation to the unfolding of phenomena; velocity is the speed at which a body moves, determined by the ratio between the distance travelled and the time taken to traverse it. Therefore, when we observe space, we simultaneously observe time as a single magnitude endowed with direction — an arrow. Space and time are inseparable, yet not absolute, and it is precisely the speed at which we move through space and time that defines our perception of reality.

In this regard, I can only observe that movimentist photography, through extended exposure time and the motion imparted to the camera, traces within the

becoming of space–time multiple meanings of reality — those revealed by the dynamic interaction between the object and the various points of observation.

While I am confident that future scientific discoveries will provide accurate explanations for the scientific component underpinning the experience of movimentist photography, for now it suffices to demonstrate that movimentist photography is the result of a multiplicity of information. One need only observe it attentively to understand — beyond the initial sense of wonder — how the movement imparted to the camera chromatically modifies the object and its form through the scientific principle of additive colour synthesis. The primary colours — red, green and blue — projected onto the camera's focal plane add together and intermingle, generating a wide range of new colours and new forms. Magic.

From science to philosophy

I have no doubt that everything that exists in the universe is the result of the communication of information. Not only do we all exchange information with one another, but we ourselves are information: the outcome of the transmission of a seed containing vast amounts of data that found room within an ovum and, over time, produced what we represent today. It is no secret that by using an organism's genetic information — DNA — it is possible to create an identical copy. A well-known example is Dolly the sheep, the first mammal cloned from an adult cell in 1996.

By extension, I have little difficulty imagining that every element — whether belonging to the animal, vegetal or mineral realm — is born, lives and dies thanks to the immense quantity of information it carries. Information that is communicated, received, combined, processed and retransmitted in an endless cycle that has persisted since the time of the Big Bang. Whether or not they contain life, I therefore believe that all "things" existing in the universe are governed by the same law intrinsic to matter, simultaneously passive and active as a vehicle for the communication of information.

It is precisely in grasping the meaning of the existence of things that movimentist photography invites me to perceive the vital energy of matter and to recognise that creation — from the vastness of the universe to the smallest dimensions of quanta — is set in motion by a law that continues to elude full human understanding. With every scientific breakthrough, new horizons unfold, seemingly pushing the definitive solution ever further away. Recent discoveries have revealed the existence of a dark energy that permeates the entire universe. We do not know what it is — only that it exists. What a pity.

In the meantime, I continue my enquiry into the vital energy that I sense emanating from all things — an energy often concealed within a dark zone of matter, difficult to apprehend through superficial observation. Although I do not fully understand what occurs in the world of things, I sometimes find myself experiencing, as I observe them, a sensory perception comparable to that which I feel towards a human being. I can feel affection for a piece of jewellery, a

painting, a city. I can intuit that a silk scarf, a red car or a house might possess a soul. This intuition has been reinforced by the distinction between “objects” and “things” proposed by Remo Bodei in his book *La vita delle cose* (*Laterza*, 2009). Bodei emphasises that objects belong to the material world and are often handled with indifference, as mere instruments of exchange. Things, by contrast, are those elements of the world to which we attribute emotional value, becoming symbols of historical, individual and collective relationships. They embody a bond that approaches love, understood as a relationship grounded in mutual respect for autonomy.

My love for movimentist photography reflects this sensibility. I approach objects with care, seeking to establish with them a transcendent relationship, transforming them into things. Every object I photograph — whether living or inanimate — is, for me, a living thing, insofar as it expresses, in its own way, the vital energy I strive to uncover.

Within the realm of philosophical contemplation, the thought of Henri Bergson assumes a strikingly concrete dimension for me. According to Bergson, intuition represents a fundamental instrument for apprehending the essence of things in their totality and dynamism. His philosophy rests on the idea that the soul of things emerges from the interaction between spirit and matter — a synthesis that intuition is capable of perceiving by overcoming the limitations of rational analysis.

Bergson draws a crucial distinction between analytical intelligence and intuition. Analytical intelligence, he argues, valuable though it may be, constructs fragmentary and static representations of reality, incapable of capturing the vital flow and continuous transformation that characterise existence. Intuition, by contrast, constitutes a higher faculty, able to penetrate the totality of being and to grasp directly the intrinsic dynamism of life. This perspective suggests the existence of a dimension of knowledge that transcends the boundaries established by logical and scientific methods: an immediate, unmediated understanding that allows us to perceive the mutable and creative essence of reality. In this way, Bergson invites me to recognise the value of lived experience and intuitive sensitivity as pathways to a deeper and more authentic form of knowledge.

Just as phosphorescent substances absorb light of a shorter wavelength and re-emit it at a longer wavelength, so my spirit ventures into the fabric of space–time in order to add to the multitude of visible information carried by light another form of information: obscure and transcendent, yet vibrant and infused with genius, reflecting the very soul of things.

It is a process in which visible knowledge merges with invisible knowledge, in which tangible reality allows us to glimpse, like a luminous echo, the living mystery that pulses beneath appearances. Thus my enquiry does not confine itself to what is immediate and rational, but moves towards the profound heart of existence, where the inner light of things reveals itself in its purest form.

A defining feature of pure art

Photography is a true form of art not because of the technical characteristics with which it is rendered, but because of the expressive capacity of its outcomes. The artistic value of movimentist photography therefore resides in the intensity of its meaning, rather than in the technical result of the blur through which it is achieved.

I have always believed that, within the perspective of art history, movimentist photography constitutes an aesthetic endeavour situated between philosophy and science — one that investigates real space without concern for technical perfection, in order to re-present it in a new expressive form grounded in the dynamics of universal movement. In this sense, photographic science approaches pure art through the harmony it succeeds in creating between order and disorder, bearing in mind that the legibility of the image depends on the quantity and quality of the camera's movements, as well as on the autonomous movements expressed by the subject. It should not be forgotten that too much order, or conversely too much or too little disorder, would prevent movimentist photography from achieving artistic resonance.

Is everything then left to chance? No. Within the apparent confusion of blur, I reorganise information according to new parameters to express new meanings, often very distant from the reality from which they originate. I thus seek the disintegration of one order in order to obtain a disorder that, in turn, represents a new order, whether unreal or abstract, yet always rooted in the value of the "here and now" of movimentist photography. It is the vision and execution of this process that enables me to "write with light" the emotions I perceive as emanating from the things of the world.

In photography, the concept of abstraction is highly heterogeneous. Some photographs are recognised as abstract even when they reproduce visible reality with perfect fidelity, while simultaneously evoking abstract situations through a particular perspective chosen by the photographer at the moment of exposure.

It is undeniable that movimentist photography has a pronounced tendency towards abstraction, owing to its distinctive capacity to represent reality simultaneously from multiple perspectives, all dynamically generated by blur during the extended exposure time. At times, through the movement of the camera, I imagine myself urging matter to transform its real foundation into an abstract vision — one that leads the future observer to search for the work's meaning and to confront it with their own emotions. The result appears paradoxical: a real abstraction, an imaginary distillation of reality.

When movimentist photography aspires, within an aesthetic project, to encompass not only an imagined reality or the dynamism of a body, but also the vital energy expressed by creation itself, scientific enquiry and philosophical thought merge with artistic research to represent, together, both the impression and the expression of reality in a sublimated image. The vitality that animates creation becomes an integral part of the aesthetic project, transforming the visible into something poetic and extraordinary.

Movimentist photography is therefore not merely a visual language, but an emotional and intellectual journey — a means of writing with light even that which the image of reality fails to express. In this way, worlds are created that reveal the hidden fascination of the present and transform it into visual poetry.

My vision of the world is one of continuous movement, generated by the vital energy that animates matter in whatever state it may be, and which calls upon human sensitivity to respect all things that surround us. It is not solely a matter of representing, along two Cartesian axes, the image of space in the becoming of time — a task that is already arduous and worthy in itself — but above all of grasping, through the allure of beauty, the meaning of the existence of things.

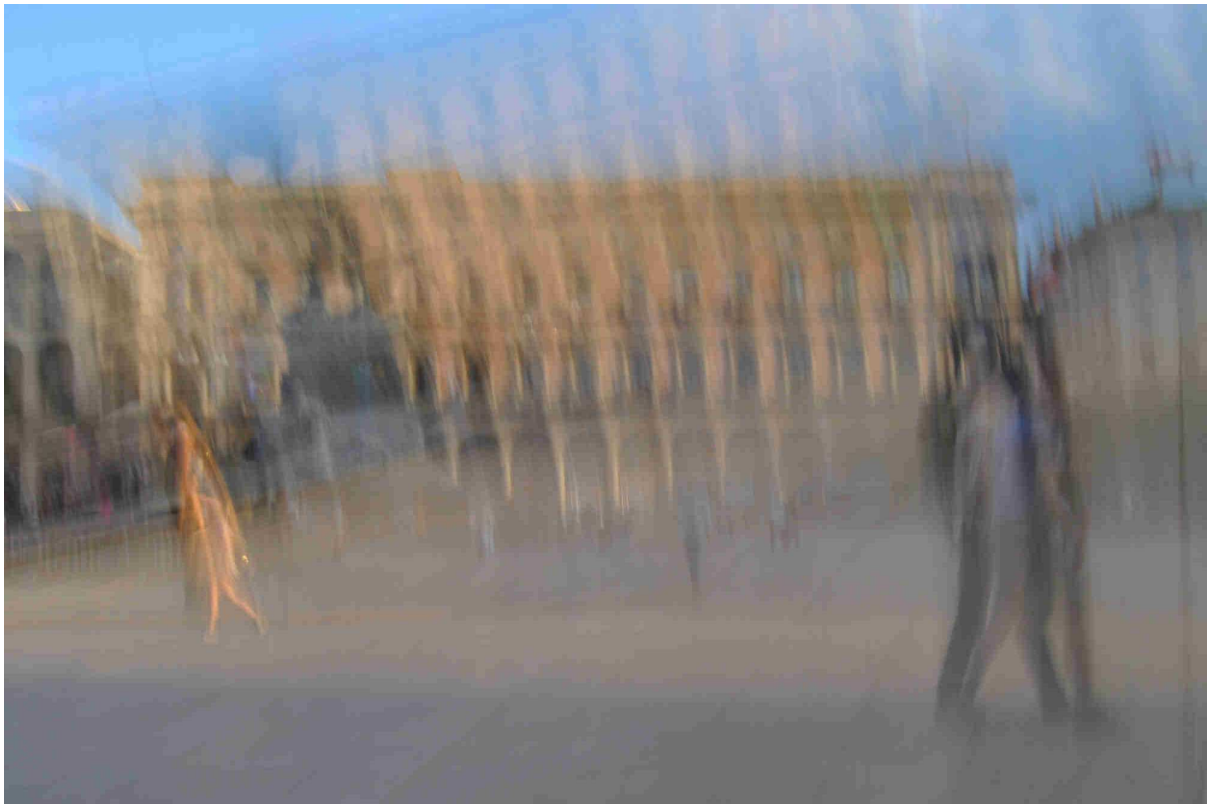
When, camera in hand, I seek beyond the appearance of visible reality the poetic sense expressed by matter, and travel with imagination in search of the hidden motivations that place things within space, I see through the viewfinder fantastical and disorienting visions that evoke the realm of the unconscious and lead me towards a dreamlike perception of reality. In this magical suspension of the real, I sense that the vital energy of matter invites me to understand the dynamism through which it expresses itself in the intimacy of its essence; and at times I even manage to perceive the yearning for an elsewhere, a place where things would wish to be, rather than the position that others have determined for them.

(Giacomo Bucci exhibits at the Giostre exhibition, Rovigo 2019)

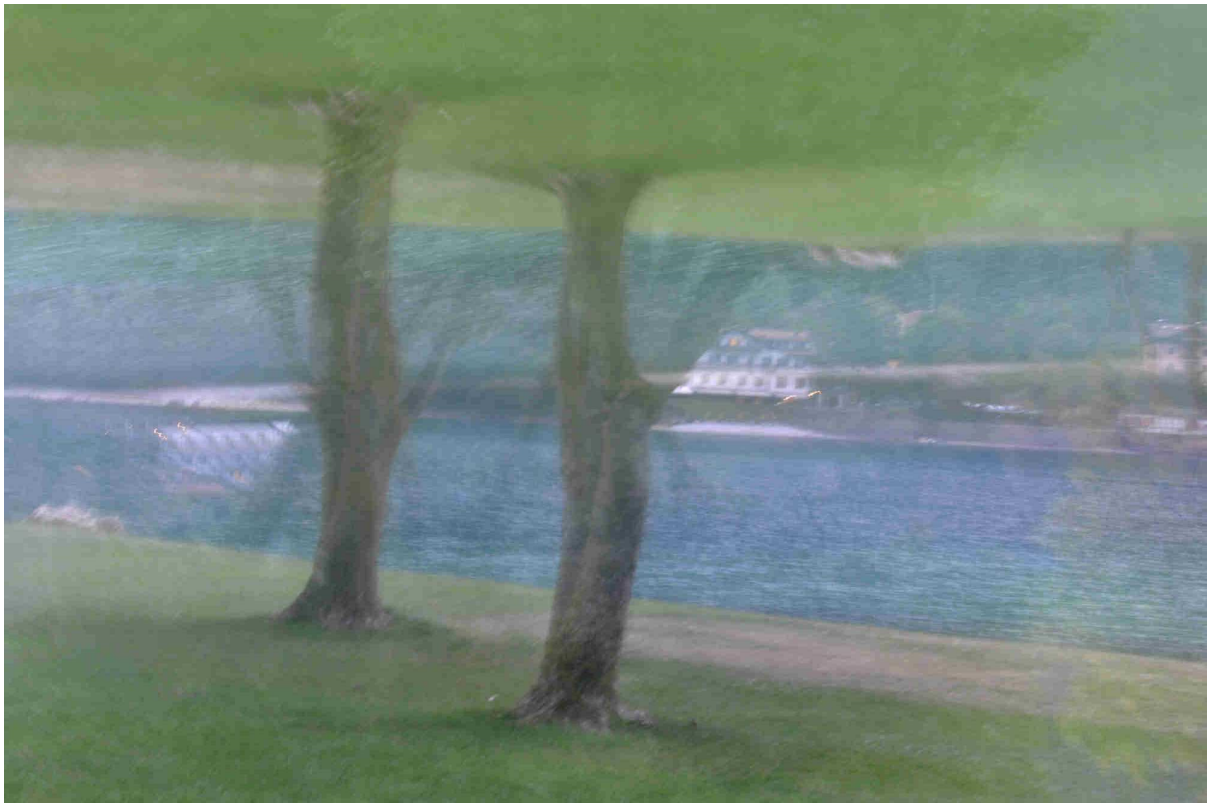
16 tables of movimentist photography

Tav. 1 “Life flows on the fantasy of desires”, Milan 2018
Giacomo Bucci

Tav. 2 “Dark photo”, Sant’Angelo d’Ischia 2022
Giacomo Bucci



Tav. 3 “Autumn rustle”, Milan 2020
Giacomo Bucci



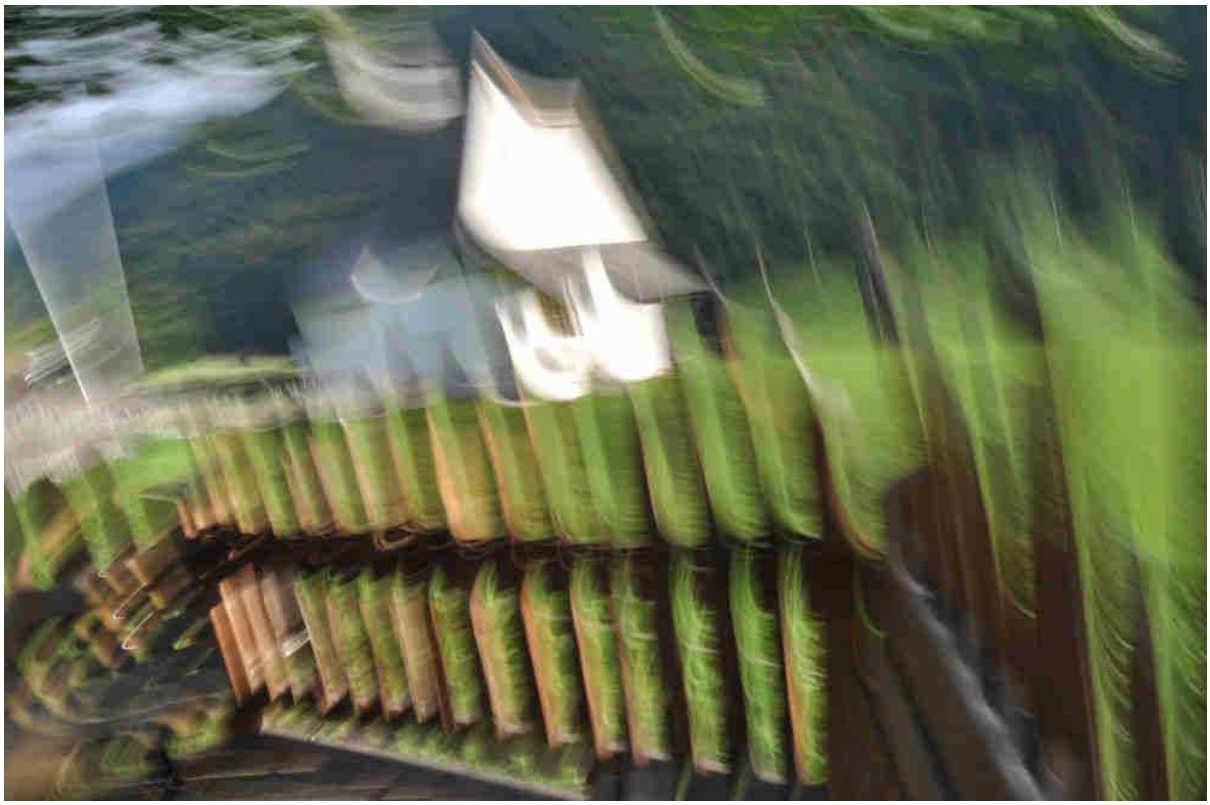
Tav. 4 “Green and blue rhapsody”, Molveno, 2022
Giacomo Bucci

Tav. 5 “‘Na sbordaceda”, Milan 2023
Giacomo Bucci

Tav. 6 “Energy and matter”, Finale Ligure 2024
Giacomo Bucci

Tav. 7 “Fantastic radiations on human people”, Milan 2018
Giacomo Bucci

Tav. 8 “Still life”, Milan 2023
Giacomo Bucci

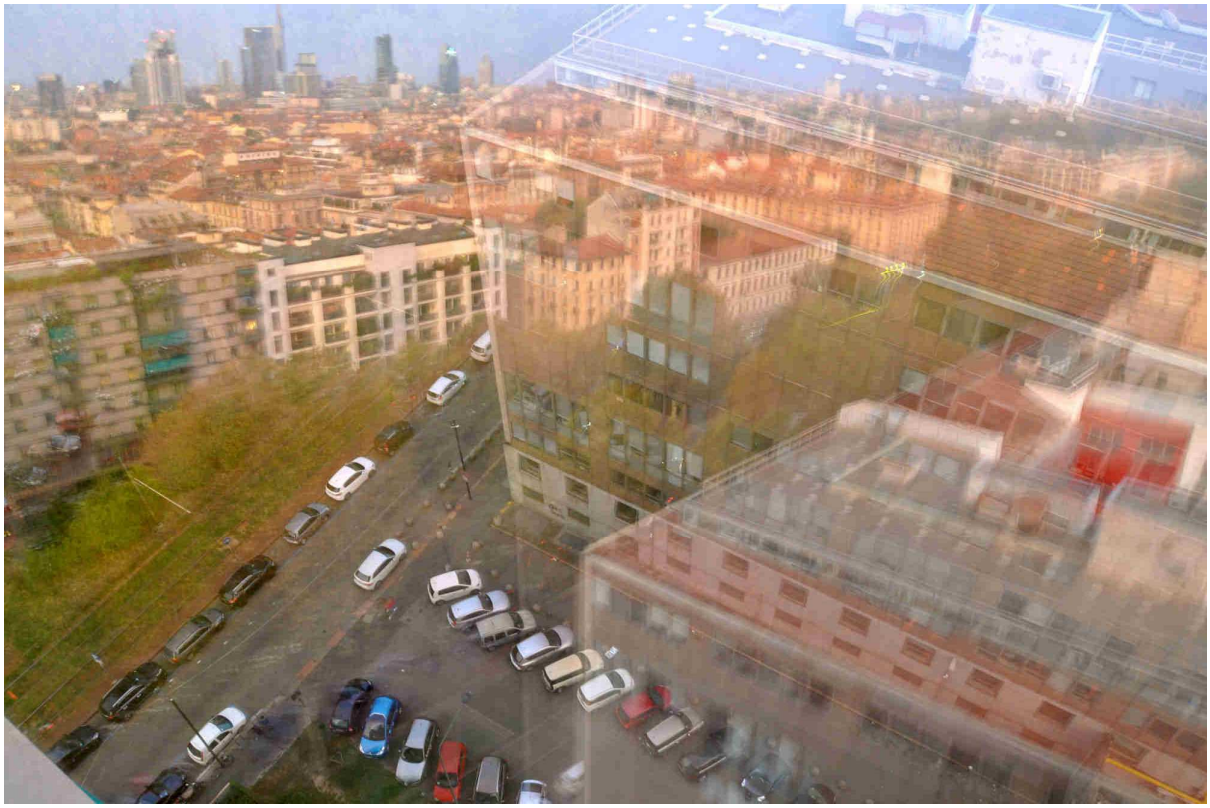


Tav. 9 “Scent of home”, Nova Levante, Trentino 2019
Giacomo Bucci

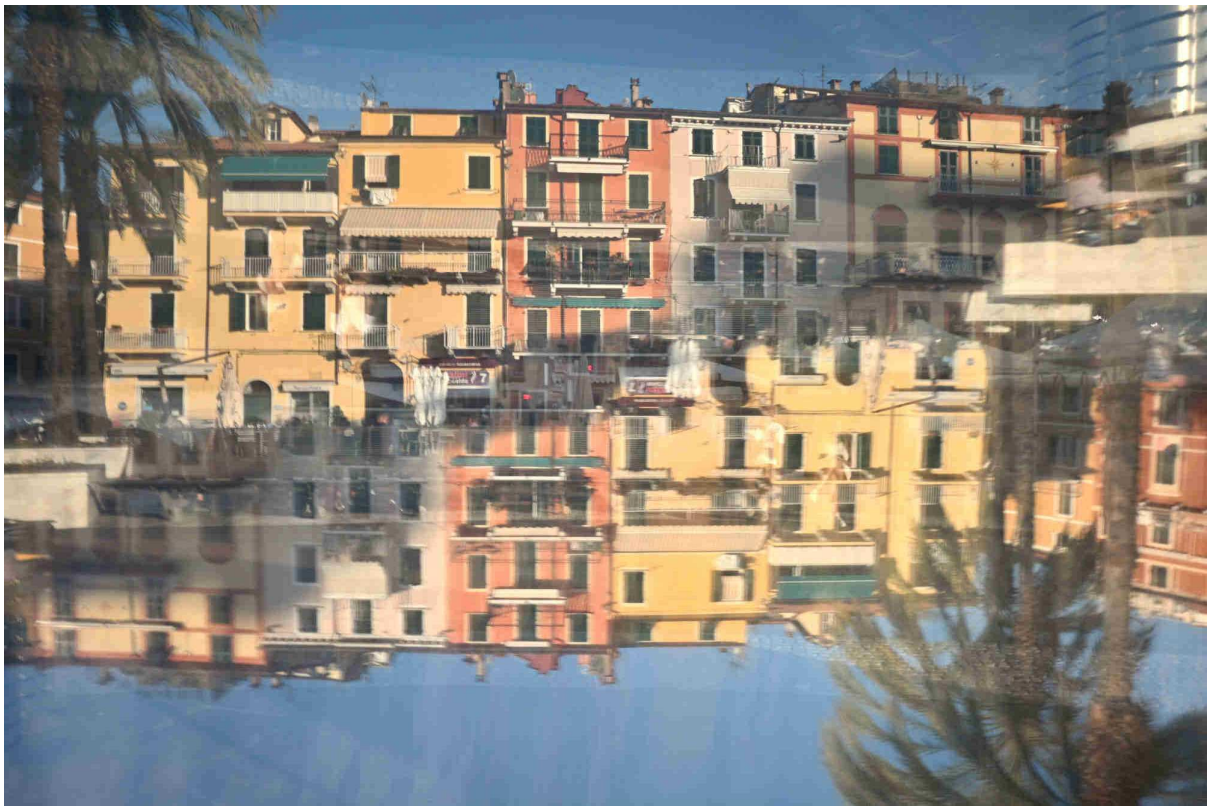
Tav. 10 “Venus strabismus”, Milan 2023
Giacomo Bucci

Tav. 11 “Summer is over”, Rimini 2023
Giacomo Bucci

Tav. 12 “Dogma of faith”, Milan 2022
Giacomo Bucci



Tav. 13 “Where the RAI lives”, Milan 2018
Giacomo Bucci



Tav. 14 “At the mirror”, Lerici 2023
Giacomo Bucci

Tav. 15 “Hourglass”, Milan, 2026
Giacomo Bucci

Tav. 16 “Spinning”, Rimini 2023
Giacomo Bucci

Bibliography and contributions

Anton Giulio Bragaglia, Fotodinamismo futurista, Nalato 1913
Riedizione a cura del Centro studi Bragaglia, Einaudi 1980

Giulio Briani, I Futuristi e la fotodinamica
https://media.agiati.org/page/attachments/atti-a-1995-giulio-briani-p.253.pdf

Sergio Giusti, Il gesto e la traccia – Interazioni a posa lunga,
Postmedia Books 2015

Ando Gilardi, Giacomo Bucci fotoreporter movimentista,
PHOTO 13 aprile 1974

Lanfranco Colombo, Fotografi italiani, Edizioni Bolis 1993
Accademia Carrara di Bergamo

Giacomo Bucci e Massimo Stori, Il Maestro di Botteg@,
MKT Editore 2002

Edward Lorenz, Deterministic Nonperiodic Flow, 1963

Claude Shannon, A Mathematical Theory of Communication, Bell System Technical Journal 1948

Werner Karl Heisenberg, Sul contenuto visivo della cinematica e meccanica quantistica, Zeitschrift für Physik 1927

Remo Bodei, La vita delle cose,
Laterza 2009

Henri Bergson, L'evoluzione creatrice,
Raffaello Cortina Editore 2002

Thanks to

Luciano Franceschetto, Carla Pagliero, Rosanna Pavoni, Roberto Rusconi

Milan, April 2026