

BUILDING

Milan, June 4th, 2026

Press release

Vincenzo Castella. *Timeless Archaeology*

curated by **Marco Scotini**

05.06.2026 – 03.10.2026

press preview: Thursday, June 4th, 2026 at 11AM

opening: Thursday, June 4th, 2026 from 5PM to 8.30PM

BUILDING GALLERY

via Monte di Pietà 23, 20121 Milan

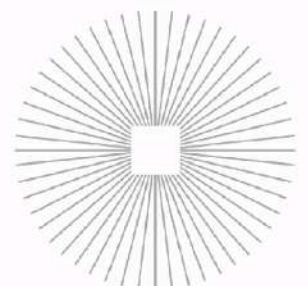
Tuesday – Saturday, 10AM – 7PM

www.building-gallery.com

From June 5th to October 3rd, 2026, seven years after the artist's last exhibition at the gallery, **BUILDING GALLERY** presents **Vincenzo Castella. *Timeless Archaeology***, an extensive solo exhibition **curated by Marco Scotini**.

The exhibition, which unfolds across **the three exhibition floors** of **BUILDING GALLERY**, brings together for the first time a **cohesive body of around sixty large and medium format photographic works**, offering a **comprehensive and layered reading of the artist's research on the industrial landscape from the 1980s to the present**. Through a selection of previously **unseen** works spanning four decades of activity, the exhibition conveys the continuity and distinctiveness of Castella's research, **exploring the processes of transformation in the landscape and visual memory**.

Vincenzo Castella (Naples, 1952), a **central figure in contemporary Italian photography**, established himself on the international scene in the 1980s, emerging in the context of the landmark 1984 exhibition *Viaggio in Italia*. Within this framework, his work takes the form of a multifaceted **exploration of the landscape**, developed through a progressive expansion of his fields of interest. Images of **urban landscapes**—including the well-known "coralline" portraits of cities, begun in 1998—alternate with views of **industrial scenes**, as in the series of vertical

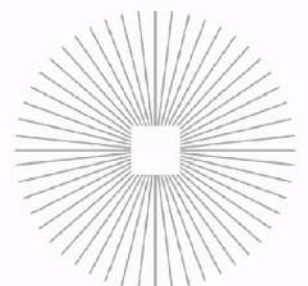


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photographs taken in Italy and exhibited on the first floor of **BUILDING GALLERY**. These are chapters of that “underground journey” into prohibited areas, first identified by Paolo Costantini in 1991, leading up to a more recent focus on the **natural landscape**, particularly the **botanical landscape**.

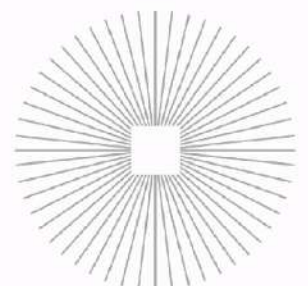
At the heart of this investigation lies a **radically de-subjectivized, non-metaphorical gaze, devoid of any mediation other than that offered**, in each instance, by the optical properties of the lens used: **an optical device that becomes an instrument of measurement and openness, capable of capturing the complexity of reality on film without imposing interpretive readings**. Castella is among the first in Italy to introduce a conscious use of color in industrial photography, he engages with a rich modernist tradition of pictorial origin ranging from the precisionism of the American Charles Sheeler to the frontal and structuralist compositions of the Bechers, and figures such as Paul Strand, Werner Mantz, and Albert Renger-Patzsch. **Castella, however, finds himself photographing these gigantic steel-making machines at the exact moment of their decline, during the transition phase between the Fordist, mechanized economy and the post-Fordist model** of flexibilization and digitization. As early as 1991, Irene Bignardi asked: “science fiction or archaeology?” in her introduction to Castella’s first publication on the industrial landscape. A landscape that Castella interprets as an opaque, worn-out, and posthumous territory, analogous to the zone in Tarkovsky’s *Stalker*.

Vincenzo Castella. *Timeless Archaeology* invites viewers to interpret this extraordinary body of photographic work through the lens of its own **temporality**. All these examples of oversized machinery characterized by fluorescent light, displayed at **BUILDING GALLERY** from the ground floor to the second floor in various formats, offer a truly **archaeological approach** that highlights the specific nature of memory that informs this body of work, as well as the rest of his *oeuvre*. But what kind of temporality is this? **Luigi Ghirri argued that rather than an image of memory, Castella’s photography was an archaeological artifact**. “I think of archaeology,” he stated, “as a method of deduction to discover things. **Archaeology as a science that aims to describe, reveal, and bring *what has happened* back into the light of the present.**” It is not, therefore, a dimension tied to the past—precisely because these industrial landscapes belong fully to the present—but rather a condition that manifests itself, by its very nature, as already **calcified, crystallized, fossilized**. A distinctive feature of Castella’s photography, repeatedly emphasized in critical literature.

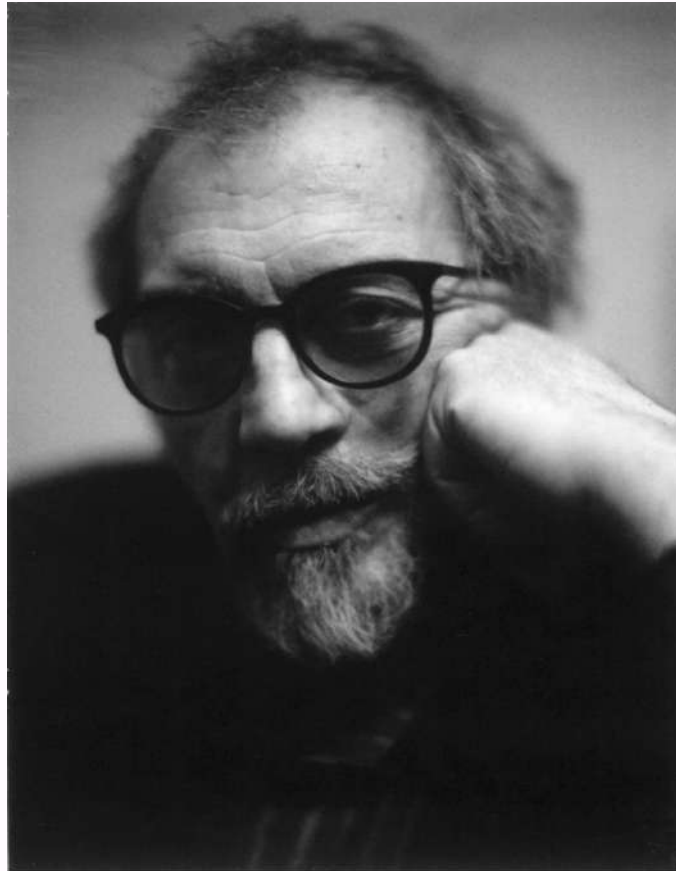


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It is precisely this aspect of “**calcification**” that gives these images a suspended, “**timeless**” quality, even though all the industrial plants depicted—from ILVA in Taranto to Italsider in Naples, and the large Ansaldo and Breda factories—are tied to a specific history and chronological context. Castella himself, in his first book (*Zone*, 1991), invited the viewer on a stationary journey through zones: “*I believe that photography is truly the art of entering the same room multiple times and establishing several distinct focal points within a dimension that, on paper, appears motionless.*” The paratactic value of his images, together with an almost Flemish attention to every detail within a single frame, clearly convey this non-directional conception of time. A significant example in the exhibition is the **series of ten vertical works shot in Baden (Germany), displayed on the ground floor of BUILDING GALLERY**. In these works, the artist breaks down a single second of footage into twenty-four frames, including #01 *Buehl, Baden* and #019 *Buehl, Baden*, both dated 2015/2026. This series, **the only digital work in the exhibition**, once again traces the unfolding of a single second of time back to the stillness of a “timeless” image.



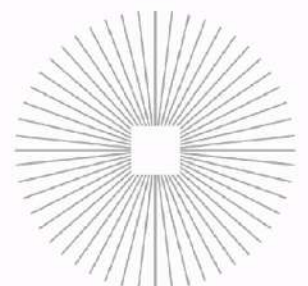
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Portrait of Vincenzo Castella, ph. Geoff Berliner

The artist

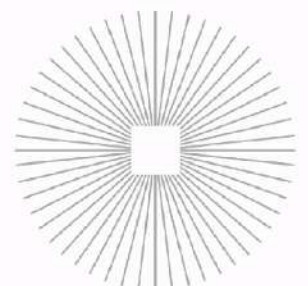
Vincenzo Castella (Naples, 1952) lives and works in Milan. He began his career with *Geografia Privata* (1975–83), a series of photographs of domestic interiors conceived as memories without recollections, and with *Hammie Nixon's People* (1976–80), a modernist documentation of the lives of African Americans in Southern U.S. cities. Since 1980, he has exhibited in Europe and the United States, focusing primarily on the investigation of landscape transformations (he participated in *Viaggio in Italia*, 1984, coordinated by Luigi Ghirri) and on architectural and industrial settings (his monumental work on San Siro, 1990). Castella's relentless exploration begins with the places where he has lived (Naples and Milan), eventually turning to continental and Mediterranean centers. Since 1998, his works, focused on the themes of distance and dislocation, have taken on



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a strongly non-narrative character. Since 2006, Castella's exploration of scale has led him to create installations based on large-format photographic negatives, while his work continues to expand into the space between nature and culture. In 2006, as part of the *Metropolitana per l'arte* project for the city of Naples, under the artistic direction of Achille Bonito Oliva, he created a permanent installation featuring five large-scale photographic works in the new Line 6 Augusto station. Between 2006 and 2008, Castella created *Cronache di Milano*, his first video installation consisting of six animated sequences playing simultaneously over six aerial photographs depicting six crime scenes in Milan.

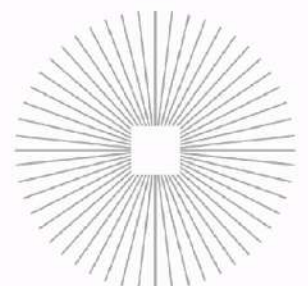
Castella has held solo exhibitions at major Italian and international galleries and museums, including: in 2005, *Opera Publica* at the Spruth Magers Galerie (Cologne); in 2007, *Art Unlimited* (Basel, Tirana Biennale), after which the artist participated in the Riwaq Biennale in Palestine; in 2009, he presented the video *Cronache di Milano*. A project featuring large prints and colors of Normandy is on display at the Museum of Fine Arts in Caen and the Malraux Museum in Le Havre. In 2011, he exhibited at the Maison Européenne de la Photographie (Paris), and later showed his works *Layers of Malta* at the St. James Cavalier Centre for Creativity (Castille Place in Valletta, Malta); in 2013, he participated in the Venice Art Biennale at Palazzo Fortuny with *TRA – The Edge of Becoming*; in 2014, his work was featured at the Venice Architecture Biennale in the Italian Pavilion, curated by Cino Zucchi, and at the Civic Museum of Natural History (Verona); In 2015, at *Fotografia Italiana* at Palazzo della Ragione (Milan), Galleria Studio la Città (Verona), and at the Shedhalle (Zurich); in 2019, he presented *Milano* in BUILDING (Milan), curated by Frank Bohem; *Urban Screens* as part of Reggio Emilia Fotografia Europea (Fondazione Palazzo Magnani, Synagogue) curated by Walter Guadagnini, *Recursions and Mutations* with Lynn Davis, Jacob Hashimoto, and Roberto Pugliese on Giudecca Island (Venice, Giudecca Art District), and the *Pedmont Pavilion*, Venice Biennale (also presented at the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo and the Castello di Rivoli); he also exhibits at Pietro Atchugarry (Miami); in 2024, he presents *Rinascimento, luce naturale* at the Rocca Roveresca (Senigallia), and *Viaggio in Italia* at the Italian Cultural Institute (Paris); in 2025, he exhibits *Viaggio in Italia* at the Italian Cultural Institute (London). Worthy of mention is *Intorno a Milano, dentro la città* (2019), an experimental public display project featuring nine 3 x 6 m images installed at 33 sites throughout the Milan metropolitan area, curated by BUILDING. He is the winner of the *Strategia Fotografia* call for proposals promoted by MiBACT (2020), thanks to which the Central Institute for Cataloging and Documentation in Rome acquired the project *Rinascimento Italiano*. In 2023, he presented: *Riccardo Dalisi – Radicalmente* at the MAXXI in Rome in collaboration with NABA. The artist's works are part of prestigious collections, including: Tate Modern (London), Deutsche Bank Collection (Milan), and UniCredit Collection.



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The curator

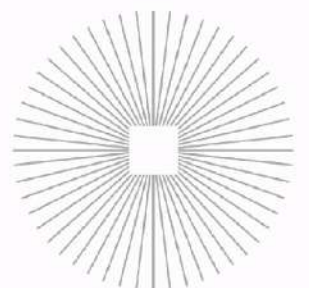
Marco Scotini is the Artistic Director of NABA (Milan, Rome, London), having led the Department of Visual Arts since 2004. He was previously Artistic Director of FM Center for Contemporary Art in Milan. He is now in charge of the exhibition program at PAV – Parco Arte Vivente in Turin. He has curated over 300 exhibitions worldwide, including shows for the Venice Biennale (2015, 2024), the Istanbul Biennale (2022), and the Bangkok Biennale (2020, 2022), as well as having curated the Prague Biennale (2003, 2005, 2007), the Yinchuan Biennale (2018), and the Anren Biennale (2017), in addition to the long-term project *Disobedience Archive*, presented internationally since 2005. He has collaborated on exhibitions and lecture series with major institutions such as Castello di Rivoli, Documenta, the Reina Sofía Museum, MAXXI, MAMCO Geneva, and the Migros Museum, and serves as Scientific Director of numerous artist archives, including those of Gianni Colombo, Bruno Di Bello, Bert Theis, Clemen Parrocchetti, Laura Grisi, and the Nanni Balestrini and Emilio Scanavino Foundations. He is author of *Artecrazia*, *Politics of Memory*, and *L'inarchiviabile*, he is Artistic Director of the *Geoarchivi* series for Meltemi.



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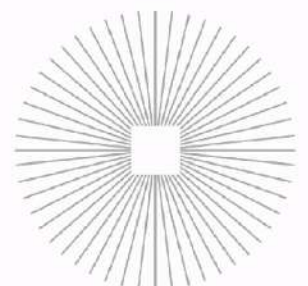
Vincenzo Castella
#01 Abano Terme Padova
1984
Archival color print
94 x 74 cm
(98,3 x 79 cm with frame)



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Vincenzo Castella
#3200 Venezia Marghera
1997
Archival color print
97,5 x 75 cm
(102,5 x 80 cm with frame)



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Vincenzo Castella

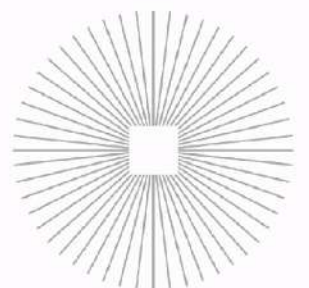
#0189 Savona

1995

Archival color print

194,7 x 63,7 cm

(200 x 69 cm with frame)



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Vincenzo Castella

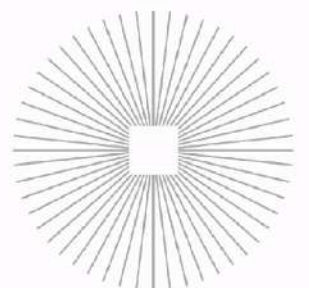
#6321 Cagliari

1995

Archival color print

194,7 x 63,7 cm

(200 x 69 cm with frame)



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Vincenzo Castella

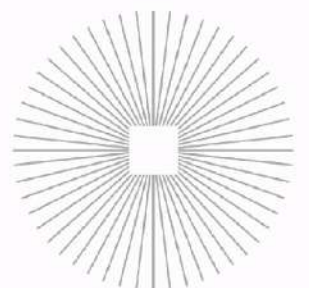
#1 Taranto

1987

Archival color print

75 x 100,5 cm

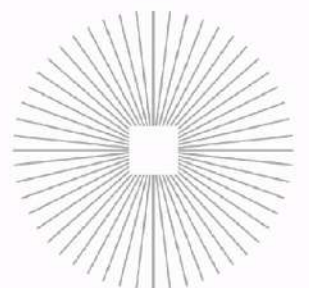
(80 x 105,5 cm with frame)



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Vincenzo Castella
#2 Matogrosso Brasile
1988
Archival color print
53 x 71 cm
(58 x 76 cm with frame)



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BUILDING is a project dedicated to art in its most diverse forms of expression, located in the centre of Milan. Founded in 2017 from the vision of Moshe Tabibnia, **BUILDING** focuses on artistic, historical, and contemporary research, aimed at a new concept of art gallery, where culture and the market move forward parallel.

BUILDING is conceived as a constellation of different spaces and projects, where young and international artists, both established and historicised, as well as artisans and designers, meet in a perspective of intergenerational exchange and encroachment of disciplines, aiming for constant experimentation and creation of culture.

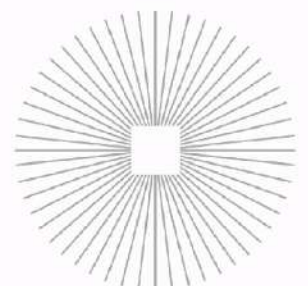
Located at Via Monte di Pietà 23, **BUILDING** houses three exhibition projects within its architecture, which, during the year, present three independent programs: **BUILDING GALLERY** is the exhibition space, inaugurated in 2017, that occupies the first three floors of the facility, hosting the main exhibitions of the gallery's annual program; **BUILDING BOX** is the yearly exhibition project, inaugurated in 2018 and located within two of **BUILDING**'s street-facing windows, visible from the outside 24/7, which monthly hosts artworks that are linked together by a temporal *fil rouge*; **BUILDING TERZO PIANO**, located on the third floor, is a space created in 2023 out of the desire to explore creativity in all its facets, its identity will evolve over time following an independent program.

BUILDING GALLERY

BUILDING GALLERY was inaugurated in 2017 as the first exhibition project of **BUILDING**, hosting since then solo and group exhibitions by established, *mid-career*, and emerging artists, both Italian and international.

Born from the vision of its founder, **BUILDING GALLERY** presents exhibitions across three exhibition floors, from the ground floor to the second floor, offering true narratives in dialogue with the gallery's architecture. On several occasions, exhibition projects, often curated by external curators, have gone beyond the walls of **BUILDING**, extending to the external and internal façades of the gallery, creating spontaneous dialogues with the city of Milan.

BUILDING GALLERY represents the first exhibition space where **BUILDING**'s research emerged in the Milanese art scene, presenting not only established artists but also young protagonists of the national and international art scene, in a spirit of intergenerational exchange and constant cultural enrichment.



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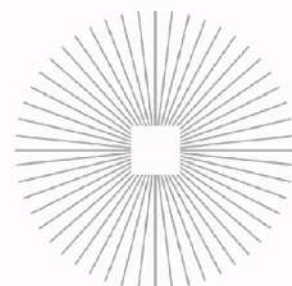
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