



MAY 2016 - "THE BEST ART IN THE WORLD"

## ALBERTO BIASI: THE ARTIST OF THE INVISIBLE at GR gallery



Alberto Biasi, "Dinamica Circolare" (1965 - 1991), PVC relief and acrylic on panel, 24.2 in. (All photos by Larissa De Jesús)

### Alberto Biasi: The Artist of the Invisible

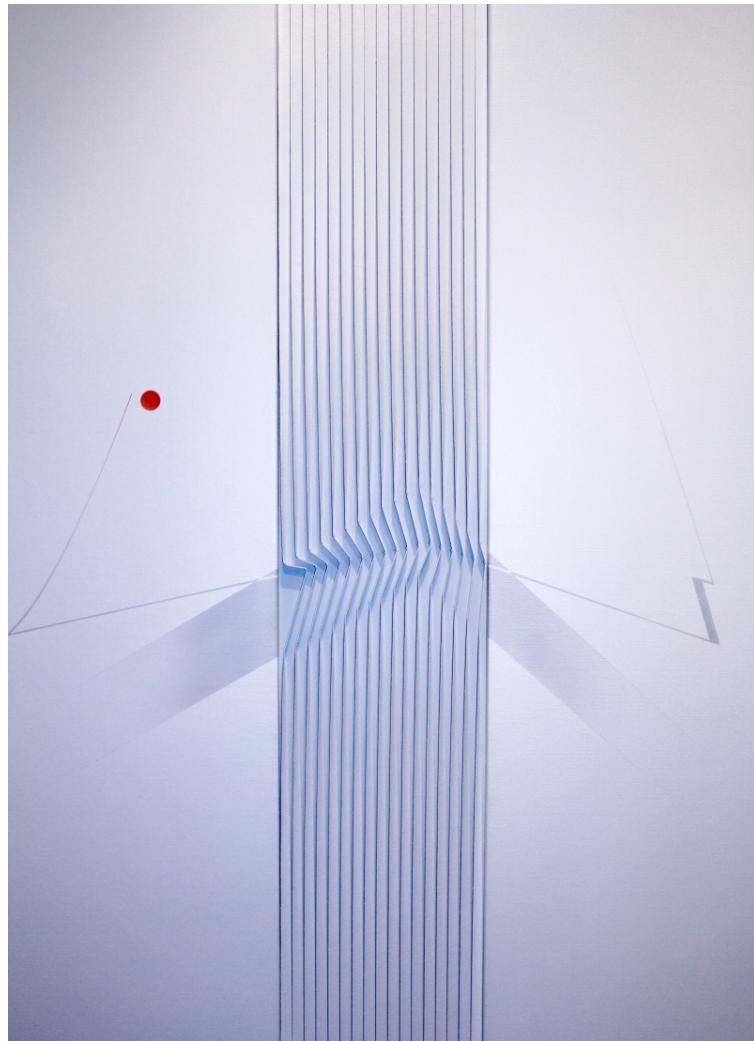
By EVA ZANARDI, MAY 2016

When I met with Alberto Biasi in New York at GR gallery to promote his upcoming exhibition, I also rekindled an old friendship. Mr. Biasi and his family were my neighbors in Padua (Italy) in the '80s and we used to share a beautiful garden with bountiful persimmon trees. I hadn't seen the Master in

over 20 years but, at 79, Alberto Biasi is as lively and friendly as I remember him. Best known as being the founder and leading spokesperson of Gruppo N, we talked about his relationship to Kinetic Art and “A Dynamic Meditation,” his first retrospective in New York, which spans 40 years' worth of work.

**Eva Zanardi** – Let's start from the beginning, from N Group. How did it start?

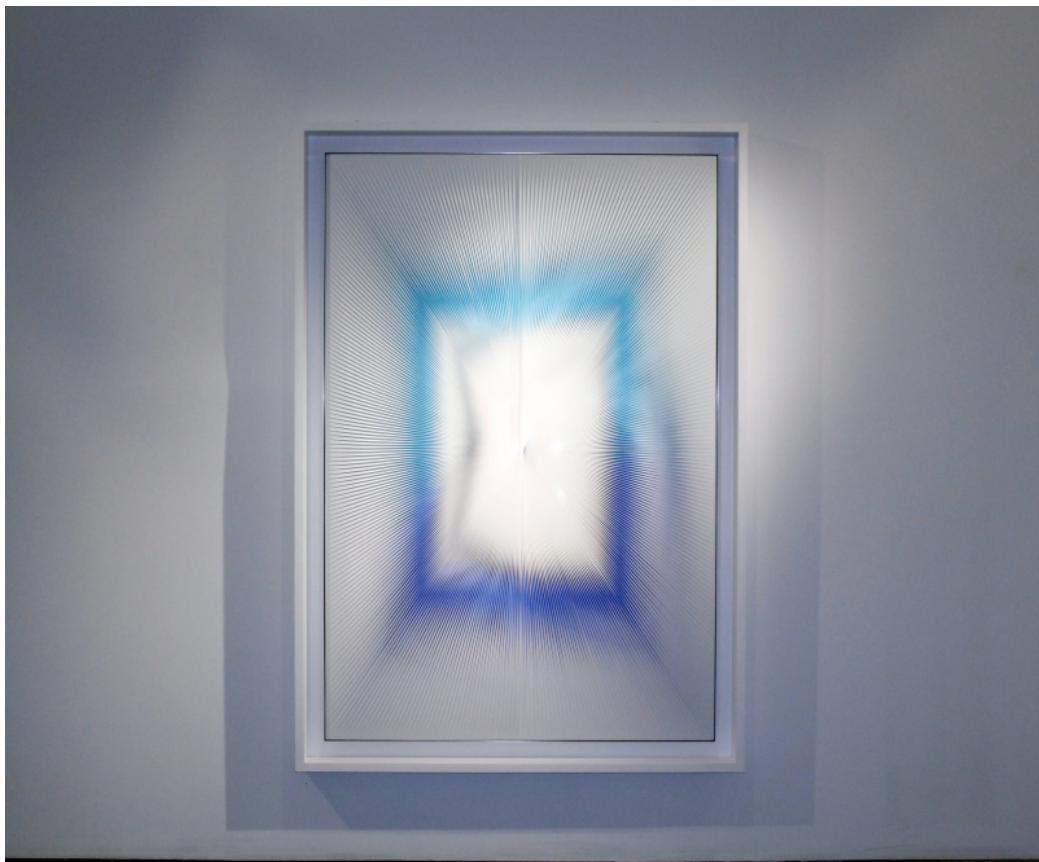
**Alberto Biasi** – It started in Padua (Italy). At the beginning there were two N Groups: the first one was called Gruppo Ennea (from the Greek numeral 9); an association of 9 young artists, among which the internationally renown architect and designer Gaetano Pesce, all attending the architecture faculty of the University of Venice. After the disbandment of Ennea Group, a second group, the one founded by Manfredo Massironi and myself, was created: the N Group (N because in math N it's “open” number). Other members of N Group were: Ennio Chiggio, Toni Costa, and Edoardo Landi. N Group was invited by the prestigious Apollinaire Gallery to show in Milan. Once in Milan we came into contact with Azimuth Gallery and T Group (our competition at the time). They were claiming to be the first programmed and kinetic art group, but it wasn't true. We were the first one in Italy and it didn't take long for art history books to take notice.



*"Come un Gambero"* (2006), acrylic and nails on canvas on panel, 70.8 in. x 52.2 in.

**E.Z.** – Tell me more about kinetics and your programmatic art...

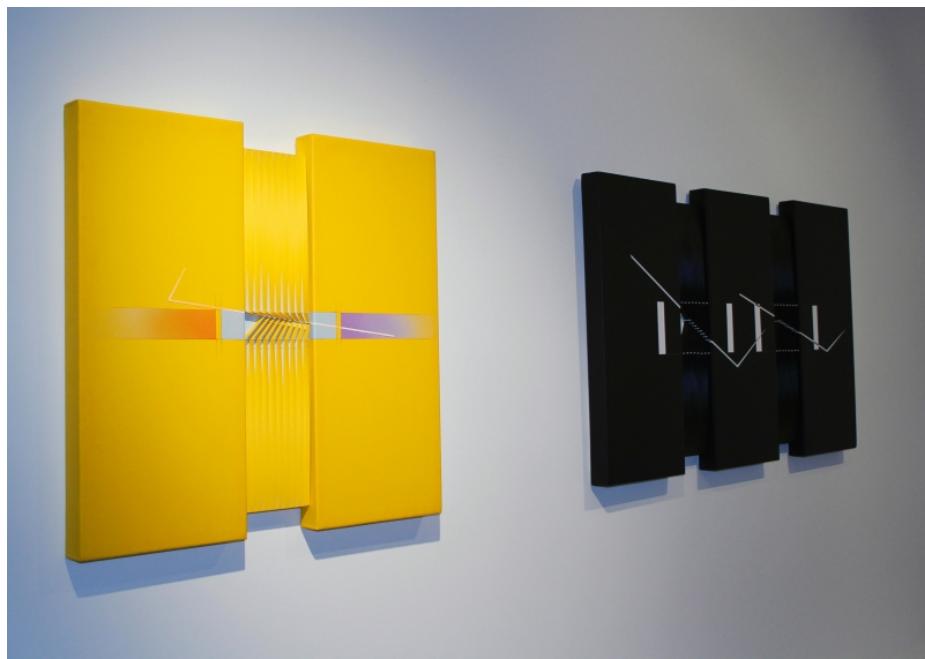
**A.B.** – My art is not really kinetic, I prefer to define it as dynamic. Kinetic art is actually art that physically moves, powered by a motor. My art is “dynamic.” My only kinetic artworks were early ones that actually needed to be moved by hand, by the viewer. I feel like a musical instrument manufacturer, the viewer is the musician and the artwork is co-created by the artist and viewer. But, because I like variety, I also enjoy using motors to create moving artwork. As I did with my ‘Light Prisms’ (1962), in which the protagonists are multicolored rays of light, constantly changing from red to blue, yellow, green, and then purple. In high school I studied some physics and I learned that a white ray of light can be broken down into colors by a prism. A white ray of light is composed by the seven colors of the spectrum. I decided to exploit this knowledge by creating a white surface floor in a darkened room with mirrored walls. I then shone a white ray of light through a prism which broke it down into the whole 7 colors spectrum which was then picked up by several blocks of plexiglas, placed on the white floor at specific intervals, and thus the rainbow was multiplied a myriad times and reflected onto itself by the mirrors! Truly psychedelic! Those were the years of psychedelia and my artwork was very much appreciated... This whole labour intense procedure to create art is why I also call my artwork ‘programmatic art’. By “programming art” one can obtain infinite amounts of images, always different, always in mutation, according to a program that I calculate using different velocities, different rotations, creating different angles, it’s so much fun!



*Dinamica Rettangolare* (1998), PVC relief and acrylic on panel, 70.8 in. x 47.2 in.

**E.Z.** – As far as the “light prisms” where did our inspiration come from?

**A.B.** – I got inspired in a very peculiar way. When I started getting really passionate about programmatic art and about the breaking down of the light spectrum, I remembered the huge spotlights that illuminated the night sky during the Second World War. I was a very young child then but I still clearly remember these lights so powerful that they could locate the bomber planes that flew over the Italian skies in those years. In my eyes, despite their tragic connotation, these spotlights were undoubtedly fascinating and spectacular and I think that in some way, they inspired my studies on light its composition.



*Left to right: Instabile (2008), acrylic and anils on canvas on panel, 23.6 in. x 24.4 in; Trittico (2012), acrylic and nails on canvas on panel, 23.6 in. x 38.2 in.*

**E.Z.** – What do you foresee in future for kinetic art?

**A.B.** – Art movements always fluctuate. In 1950's there technology was introduced to art and that was big news! Since then, in my view, there hasn't been a significant new "movement." The electronic art age will eventually take over. Whether there will be progress or a regression as a result, we will never know. But remember, the meaning of ‘art’ is hard to define. "Art is anything that people call art" said Dino Formaggio (Italian philosopher and art critic). I would add that art is essential to the human souls because it makes you see things that you had never seen before, it gives you different perspectives. Just think of cubism, impressionism the way Caravaggio knew how to play with perspective and re-create light in a way that no one else had been able to do before. To open windows into the unknown, unseen, is the magic and allure of art be it kinetic, dynamic or in its every form. **WM**

*Alberto Biasi's “A Dynamic Meditation” runs through May 22nd, at GR gallery.*

*For more information, check <http://www.gr-gallery.com/exhibitions/alberto-biasi-a-dynamic-meditation/>*



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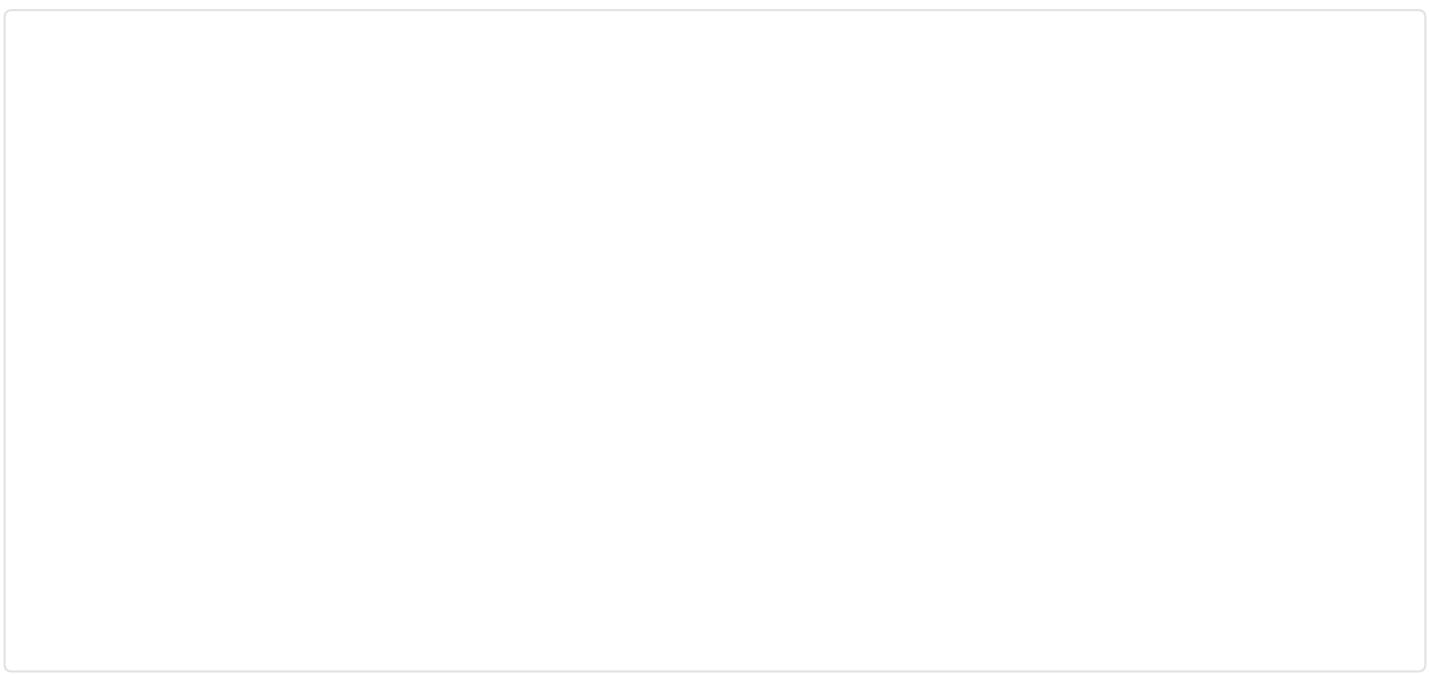
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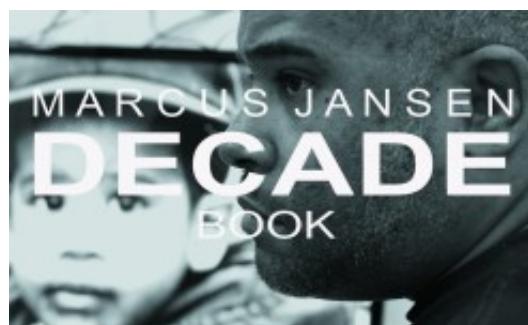
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