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Dr. Ermanno Grinzato (1952-2012)

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OBITUARY

Dr. Ermanno Grinzato (1952–2012)

Dr Ermanno Grinzato passed away on 21 August 2012, not being yet 60 years old. The scientific community has lost an eminent personality widely recognised for development and worldwide spreading of Infrared Thermography, primarily in civil engineering.

He completed his master degree in physical science at University of Padova defending a thesis on the application of a sun tracker for handling of solar panels. This idea was conceived in the late 70s of the last century, well ahead of the actual growth of attention towards solar applications. When going back to the beginning of its scientific carrier, Ermanno used to say 'I was inspired by the sunflowers'.

In the early 80s, he joined the National Research Council where he worked, as a researcher, until the end of his life. Almost immediately, he wished for acquisition of novel instrumentation and succeeded in obtaining the first IR camera of his laboratory. That was the starting point of his interest in thermographic applications.

During the 80s he designed and realized tools for digital acquisition and storage of IR images coming from a thermographic equipment that was completely analogical at that time. Brilliant and open-minded researcher, he turned his attention in various directions, trying to apply to IR images the processing tools coming from other technological fields, and at the

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same time contributed actively to the deployment of thermography as non-destructive testing (NDT) technique.

A great part of his work was dedicated to the use of infrared thermography in the evaluation of works of art, especially regarding detection of humidity in walls of antique building, detachments of frescoes and of inner structures. In this field, he has been recognised worldwide as an initiator and a reference scientist. During the last part of his life, he was mainly involved within the use of thermography for mapping of heat fluxes, air velocity and relative humidity in buildings, to guarantee comfortable indoor thermal conditions within both living and working rooms.

Dr. Ermanno Grinzato was recognised, amongst the thermography and NDT communities, as a leading person and was invited to give lectures in many conferences around the world. He was also a board member in several conferences and workshops steering and scientific committees. Among the other, he attended the QIRT (Quantitative InfraRed Thermography) conference from the first edition, becoming soon a member of the steering committee. In particular, he successfully organised, with the help of his research group, the eighth QIRT Conference in Padova in 2006.

He was also member and coordinator of the thermography section within the NDT standardisation committee. This because of his profound involvement in transferring results coming from research and academic environments to industry and service companies, and in providing best practice regulation. His application interest is also witnessed by his activity in the education field, both in regular academic courses and in special workshops.

From a personal point of view, he was a very amiable person, with a great sense of humour, especially in social life. He liked to pun with words and his brilliant mind amazed friends, sometimes highlighting unexpected aspects in the topic of discussion. It was remarkable its ability to motivate his collaborators, inspiring enthusiasm for new achievements and promoting new ideas, or as he used to say ‘ideucce’, pretty small ideas brought to his mind during the night.

He loved nature and to live in the nature. He practiced equestrian sports and used to ride during the weekend.

His ultimate desire was to be cremated and his ashes be scattered in the garden as humus for plants.

He is survived by his beloved wife Luciana and son Alessandro.

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