



In memoriam: Riccardo Faletti (1979–2026)

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Marco Gatti, Anna Palmisano, on behalf of the Italian College of Cardiac Radiology by SIRM and the Department of Radiology of the University of Turin.

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Cicero wrote it once: “*Vita enim mortuorum in memoria vivorum est posita.*” The life of the dead lives on in the memory of the living. For those who knew Riccardo Faletti, this isn’t philosophy. It’s a morning when the meeting starts and something feels wrong. It’s the discussion that goes sideways and nobody quite manages to fix it. It’s picking up the phone and remembering. It’s knowing, in a way that still doesn’t feel real, that there was so much he hadn’t done yet.

“*Un lungo pezzettino di vita insieme che non c’è più.*”

He died on April 28, 2026. He was 46. There is no way to make that sentence sit right. Colleagues in academic radiology, friends from cardiovascular imaging, people who had simply shared pieces of life with him, nobody has found the logic in it yet. There probably isn’t one.

Born in Asti on October 5, 1979, Riccardo spent his early childhood in Turin, in the Cit Turin neighbourhood, a place he never stopped mentioning with warmth. High school brought him back to Asti, where he graduated from the Liceo Scientifico F. Vercelli in 1998. Medicine followed, at the University of Turin’s Orbassano campus. He graduated in 2004, with a thesis in vascular radiology.

At the end of his studies, Riccardo chose to devote himself to radiology, a decision undoubtedly influenced by the example and mentorship of his father, Dr. Carlo Faletti, one of the most distinguished musculoskeletal radiologists of his generation and a past President of the Italian Society of Medical and Interventional Radiology (SIRM).

He attended the Specialization School in Radiodiagnostics at the University of Turin, under the guidance of Prof. Giovanni Gandini. He obtained his Specialization Diploma with a thesis on carotid imaging and vascular pathology on December 16, 2008. After completing his specialization, he moved to the Netherlands for a Fellowship in Cardiovascular Imaging at the Department of Radiology of the Leiden University Medical Centre, from March to June 2009.

Back in Italy, after a brief period at the San Giovanni Antica Sede Hospital in Turin, Riccardo returned to Molinette Hospital, which would remain the centre of his professional life for more than a decade. He joined the University

Radiology department in November 2010 as a Consultant Radiologist, and from there progressed through every academic stage step by step: Assistant Professor (RTD-A 2013–2018; RTD-B 2018–2021), and subsequently Associate Professor until July 2025, at the Department of Surgical Sciences of the University of Turin led by Prof. Paolo Fonio. The next step was the headship of the Radiology Unit at the IRCCS in Candiolo on August 1, 2025. In November of the same year, he was appointed Vice Director of the Residency Program in Radiology at the University of Turin. And it was not over yet: on March 17, 2026, he reached the highest rank in Italian academic life: Full Professor of Radiology at the University of Turin.

Professor Faletti's scientific activity spanned every corner of radiology. Over the course of his career, he authored more than 150 scientific publications and developed collaborations applying advanced imaging techniques to every field of radiology: from the heart to the liver, from oncology to musculoskeletal radiology. Cardiovascular imaging was the beating heart of his research and clinical activity, yet his curiosity never stopped there.

Starting in 2005, he became a member of the SIRM, and from 2007 onwards, he began to assume roles of increasing responsibility, initially serving as the junior representative for the Piedmont and Valle d'Aosta regional group and subsequently becoming an active member of the Cardioradiology Section. He was elected as a council member of the Cardioradiology Section for the 2019–2020 term and re-elected for 2021–2022. During his tenure on the Executive Committee of the Cardioradiology Section, he served as delegate for inter-society relationships between radiologists and cardiologists and he contributed to several initiatives and consensus documents, most recently a joint statement on the management of acute chest pain, endorsed by SIRM and the Italian Society of Cardiology (SIC). He organized two editions of the National Congress of the Cardioradiology Section in Turin over the last 6 years, together with the respective Section Presidents Prof. Antonio Esposito and Prof. Guido Ligabue. Subsequently, even in the absence of formal appointments, he continued to devote himself with unwavering commitment to all activities of the Cardioradiology Section. He actively promoted and organized several practical conferences, contributed to developing the format of the cardiac radiology schools, and organized the Pollenzo Winter School. During the last National Congress of the Cardioradiology Section in 2025, he was elected President of the Cardioradiology Section for the 2027–2028 term. This appointment, widely supported, was the natural outcome of everything he had given. As he prepared to begin his biennium as President, he had envisioned a broad range

of projects he was eager to pursue. Although this path was tragically interrupted, these plans remain vividly preserved in the minds and hearts of his collaborators and friends. It is through them that his vision will live on.

Many of the most memorable initiatives were born where professional dedication and sincere friendship met, and it's impossible to count the moments, big and small, that would never have happened without him. Among these, we cannot fail to remember the unforgettable ski journeys across some of the world's most beautiful peaks, from the Dolomites to the Western Alps, culminating in the last great ski outing together in his beloved Sestriere. A group of friends and colleagues of a lifetime was born and nurtured within the Cardioradiology Section of SIRM over the past twenty years: the Cardioimaging skiing group. Riccardo leaves this group orphaned of his most natural and incomparable gift: his ability to bring people together in the true spirit of friendship—a spirit that came naturally to him. All those who are part of this group carry his joy for life with them. In this spirit, the group's founder, Dr. Maurizio Centonze, has pledged that all future Cardioimaging skiing initiatives will be carried out in memory of Riccardo Faletti.

Those who shared with him the life of the Cardioradiology Section of SIRM remember him this way: “for some reason, despite the absence of any meaningful age difference, Riccardo was always perceived as the youngest among us. We all remember his first appearances in medical congresses, his passion for kite surfing, skiing and for Torino FC, but above all his extraordinary desire to belong to a community that, over the years, he became an irreplaceable cornerstone of. Riccardo possessed the rare ability to always be present. He was the human bond that kept together a group of friends and colleagues who shared scientific meetings, travels, and moments of life originally brought together through radiology. His charisma, generosity, and genuine affection allowed him to connect individuals with profoundly different personalities and backgrounds. This is what true leadership means: first and foremost, leadership as a human being”.

Riccardo also played a key role in advanced academic training through his directorship of the II-level University Master in Cardiac Radiology (CARAD), developed in collaboration with Prof. Antonio Esposito and Prof. Nicola Galea. Under his guidance, the CARAD became a home for those who wanted to learn cardiac imaging: a community. Young radiologists from all over Italy came and left with something harder to teach: a way of looking at the discipline—and the patients who are part of it—that was unmistakably his own. Those who have passed through CARAD, and those who will, carry this with them.

“Niente sarà più come prima”

Those who knew Riccardo Faletti know this is not a rhetorical statement: he was one of those rare people whose presence could truly be felt. Things changed when he walked into a room—the perspective, the mood, sometimes the whole direction of a conversation. He brought energy and ideas wherever he went and that vitality that made people want to be around him. Difficult things became simpler in his presence. People who struggled to work together found themselves doing it naturally, without quite knowing why. Many remember that going to work, on the days he was there, was genuinely something to look forward to.

You notice it looking at an image. Going over a case. Sitting around a table trying to make something work. Something is different, and you know what it is. He is not there and yet, in all of these moments, somehow he is.

On behalf of the radiological community, we extend our deepest condolences to his family, friends, colleagues, and students.

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