A tentative study on the strange picture at the end of "Contattismi di massa"
Teresa Barbatelli - © 2009

The lucky readers of "Contattismi di massa", by Prof. Stefano Breccia, are going from a coup de theatre to another, while reading the appealing reconstruction of the contact cases with supposed aliens, not from the part of single earthlings, as we are used to be told by the most of the literature, but by groups of people who, usually, have preferred to conceal their experiences. He starts from a group of scientists who, in past centuries, have shown intuitions and inventions well in advance of their age, then presents the well known "Ummo case", with many details unknown up to date, then, in the third chapter, he presents the most astonishing part of his book, the "Amicizia case". At the end of his very detailed story about Amicizia, that went on for more than 30 years, a tale with many details that may be verified even today, mostly focused on the character Bruno Sammaciccia, the the author presents us with the picture of a supposed W56.

The picture is clear and bright (it's incredible to scholars, who have been used to see blurred and out of focus pictures, badly lighted and disputable, when supposed aliens are concerned); it shows us a young man in a garden, smiling. He doesn't show anything that might make us think of a being from another world; he looks to be very tall, and the only strangeness consists in his head, a bit too small with respect to his body.

As Prof. Breccia tells about aliens like us, but 2 or even 3 meters tall (Sammaciccia speaks of beings even 6 meters tall), I have been immediately urged to verify whether the boy of the picture was as tall as that; such a discovery would have definitively demonstrated that aliens do exist. It was necessary to go to work.

Unfortunately the picture, although very clear, does not look to show measurable details, therefore no perspective-based computations may be conducted. The plants present in it look to be very young (the lemon plant in the foreground is kept by a small rod), therefore they might have been not too tall, when the picture has been taken.

I was already disappointed in my hope to evaluate how tall the man was, when I noticed, just over his head, what in all evidence were pine-needles; making use of Photoshop, I have taken one needle, and replicated it as many times as to equating the height of the man. This is the result:

It's evident that 20 to 21 needles are required to do the job; moreover, the man is slightly bent to one side.

Now the problem is: how long is a pine-needle?

I must admit I have started looking at all the pine plants that I was meeting along the streets of Rome (I believe there must be millions of them), hoping to meet a plant sufficiently low to permit me to take some needles (contrary to the man of the picture, I'm very short), but I never found one, because they were all very high, outside my possibilities.

Hopefully, one day a strong wind blow has thrown a whole branch just to the entrance of my house; under the perplexed look of my house-keeper, I've collected the branch, and taken it home; making use of a photo camera as a witness, I made my measurements.

As it may be seen in my picture, pine-needles are 15-16 cm long, therefore the man should have been 3 meters tall (if we consider only 20 needles, each 15 cm long), or 3.36 (21 needles, 16 cm long).

ciuffo di aghi di pino preso per riferimento

From 3 to 3.36 meters tall? I must admit that I had a shock! Further enquiries were needed, hopefully with a more detailed copy of the picture. My friend Eng. Carlo Bolla has been able to supply me with a higher resolution copy, so I started to work on my Mac trying to find out details that might be of some help.

My search found out some railings, almost in-visible in the dark, that surround the garden where the picture had been taken.

At the end I had an object, whose dimensions are known, at least with some approximation: railings typically have bars 10 to 15 cm away from each other, and, from these figures, a simple (so to say) geometric projection could have led to the height of the man.

Perspective laws have allowed painters from the past to rendering three dimensions scenes over a bi-dimensional support; this was made making use of an horizon, and a set of straight lines.
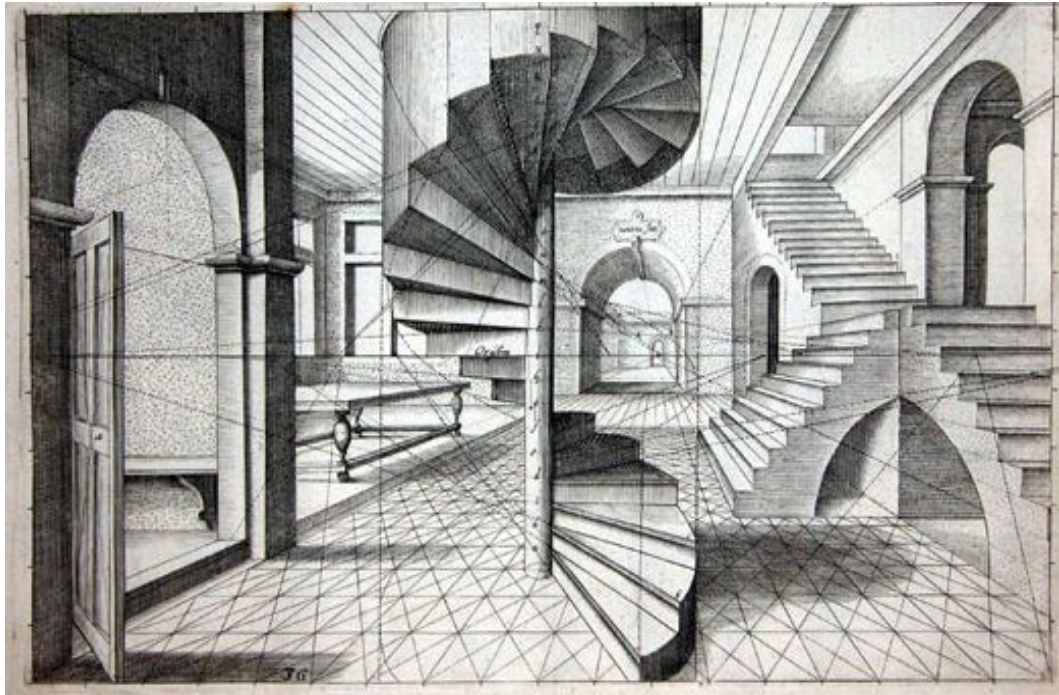
They have been generating scenes making use of perspective, I was to do the inverse process, may be roughly.

Once having taken railings into account, I decided to take the main character away from the picture, in order to better understand the geometry of the railings:

As it may be seen, railings are now more evident, but another problem appears: the picture is not vertical: in all evidence, whoever has taken it has not kept the camera in an horizontal attitude, therefore the whole scene looks a bit slanted. In order to make use of perspective laws, the picture was to be straightened up.

After having straightened the picture, whatever horizontal line could have been used as an horizon. In my case, as I was unaware of the height and the reciprocal distance of the bars, I was believing that it should have been sufficient to project the bars unto the ground, so that, estimating a distance between each couple, an unit of measure could be

derived, able to allow to compute the dimensions of the other objects present in the picture.

Then, I stylized the railing, therefore enhancing it. I started supposing a 10 cm distance between each couple of bars, making use of ten of them, therefore over a length of 1 meter. We must obviously remember that usually such distances may be anything

Nuova linea
orizzonte presunto

Ringhiera da
stilizzare

between 10 and 15 cm.

I've taken again the character away from the picture, have chosen at random a focal point and an horizon line. The result (10 cm distance between bars) is that the guy is 2.40 meter tall (of course, 12 cm distance would give 2.88 meters, 13 cm 3.12 meters, and so on).

Ringhiera stilizzata:
dieci sbarre di 10 cm ciascuna= 1mt.

240 cm
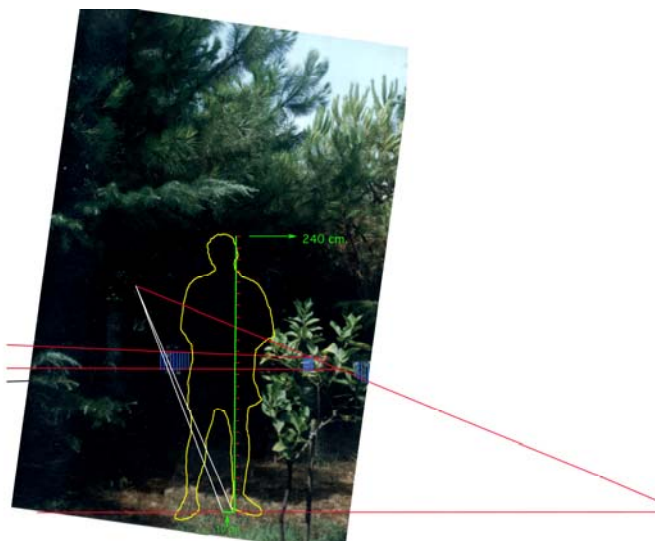
Indeed such absurd figures were disconcerting, they could not be true, and, in the CICAP style (a group of supposed scientists, indeed just debunkers – translator) I started wandering where I was going wrong. I found out that, according to the infinity point I had chosen on the horizon, dimensions could vary considerably.


più è lontano il punto di origine delle ombre, più esse si stringono, più è vicino, più esse si allargano.

Therefore it was silly to base oneself on a random horizon line and an infinity point. It was necessary to establish, at least roughly, the point of view of whom had shot the picture, and, above all, it was necessary to find on the ground a grid of lines with two different origins.

Looking at the picture, it seems that who has shot it was, roughly, at the height of the hips of the man. That doesn't mean that the shooter was smaller, because may be he was kneeling, or may be the man was on the top of a bounce, and so on.

I was now aware that it was not possible to go on by suppositions, and therefore I started computing the grid, basing myself on an horizon at the height of the man's hips, and on two origins.

In order to find the second origin, I've been forced to extend the railings, again supposing 10 cm of distance between their bars, supposing that they were encircling the garden, and therefore generating a set of squares on the ground, whose sides were 1 meter long by assumption.
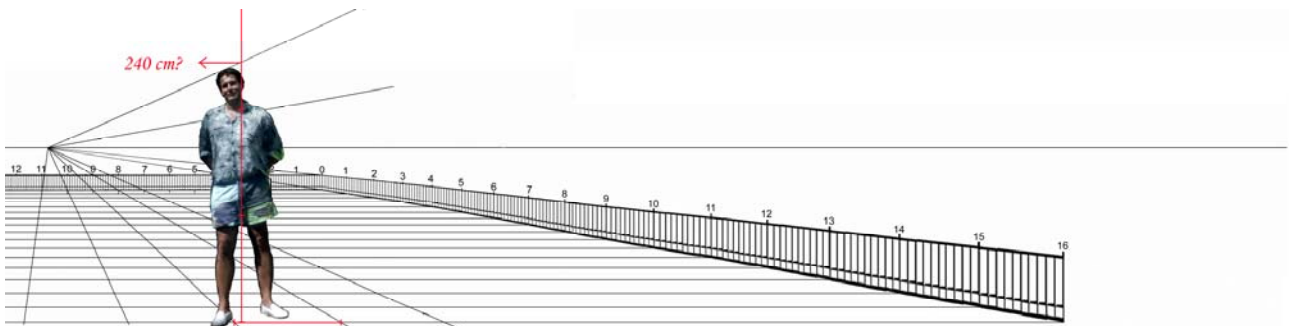
One again, supposing bars 1 meter high, and 10 cm distant from one another, the man results to be 2.40 meters tall (the mark is slightly higher, because the man's head is slightly tilted). His height would reach 3.60 meters supposing a 15 cm distance between bars!

According to the point of view of debunkers (if it doesn't look possible, it is impossible) the problem was absurd. Therefore I sought the help of a friend of mine, an architect, without telling him that my goal was to compute the height of a supposed alien. I just asked him: I have a picture of a garden, where some railings are present; how may I compute its planimetry? My friend sighed, and told me that it was a difficult operation, with logarithm-based projections, and I got into despair, because I'm not acquainted with logarithms, after my humanistic studies.

Having tried three different approaches to the problem, I was on the point of giving away, because of my ignorance in mathematics, when I remembered that a very useful software packet exists, Google Sketch Up.

Google Sketch Up may be downloaded from the Internet free of charge; it is able to reconstruct three-dimensional structures and to look at them from every possible point of view, rotating and translating them, and so on. It's a software packet that allows three-dimensional architectural designs, similar to the ones obtainable from technical experts in this subject.

An interesting feature is that it presents the user with a set of pre-defined objects, for instance sofas, pipes, pianos, and… railings!

Therefore I decided to make a fourth approach: making use of Google Sketch Up, I was to define a plane whatever, put standard railings over it, put the picture from "Contattismi di massa" on the scene, moving it until the result would match the picture itself. Then, I was only to measure the man's height, making use of the instruments offered by Google Sketch Up.
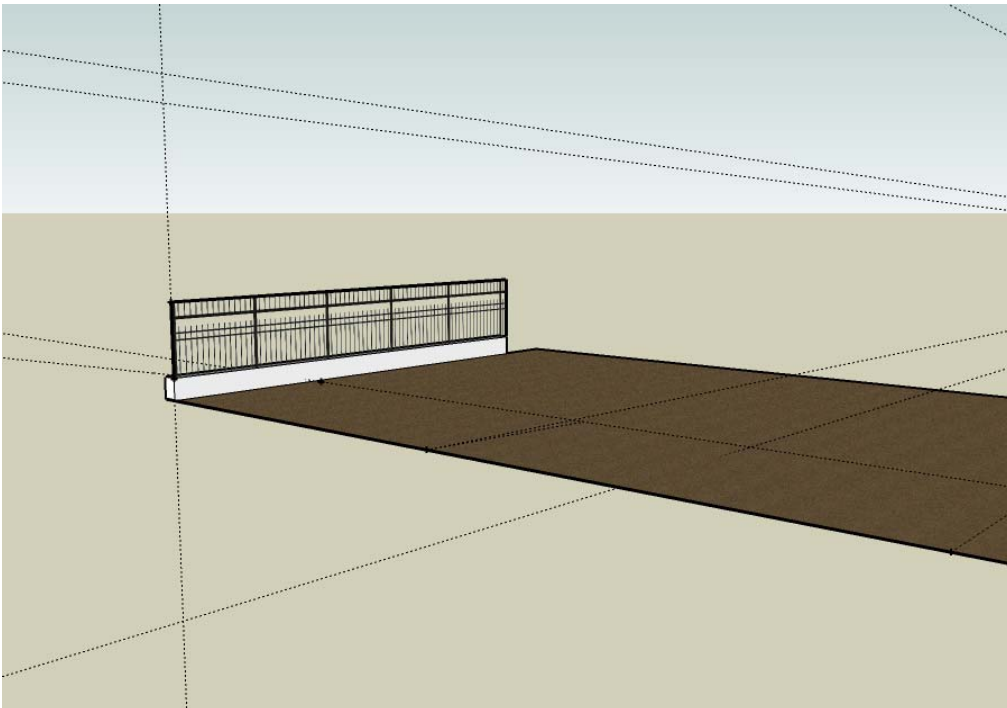

That's an example of a standard railing, given by Google Sketch Up; after the object has been inserted, the whole scene may be rotated, so that one may look at it from every possible point of view.
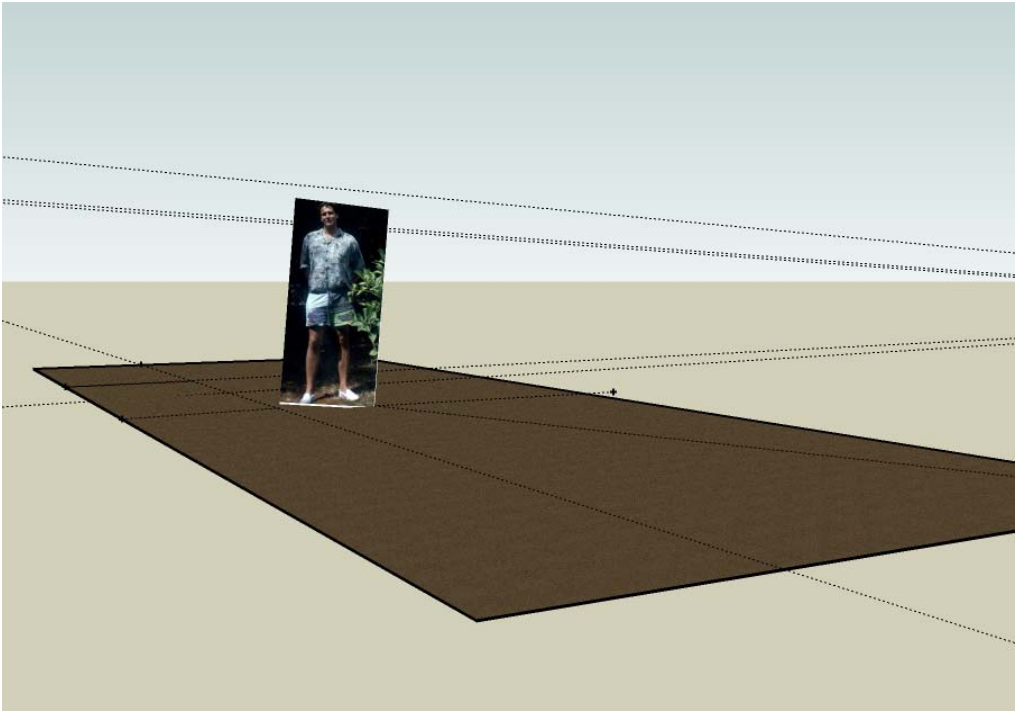
Then, I inserted the picture from "Contattismi di massa" into the three-dimensional scenery generated by Google Sketch up.
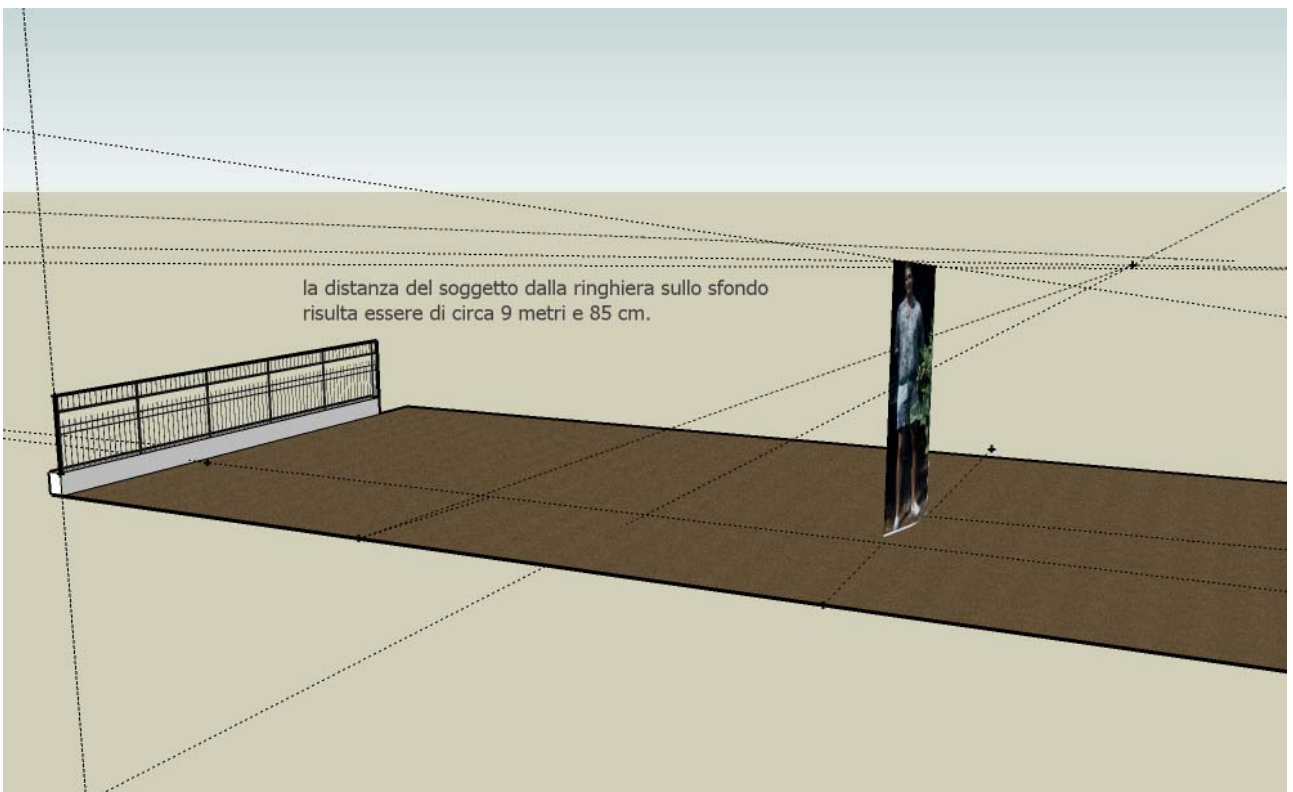
Then, it was necessary to move the objects, so that the distance among the bars of the real railing could match that of the virtual object; that's the result:
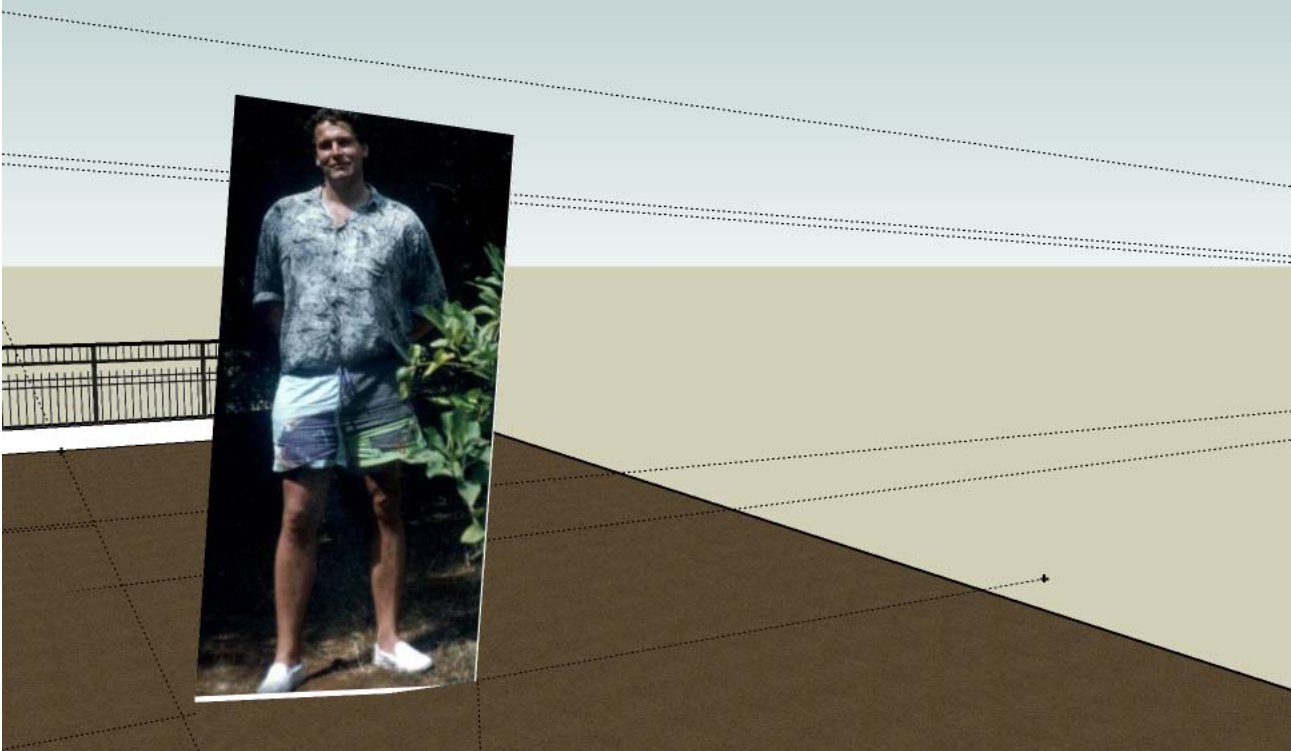

I rotate this image, to better overlap the railings:
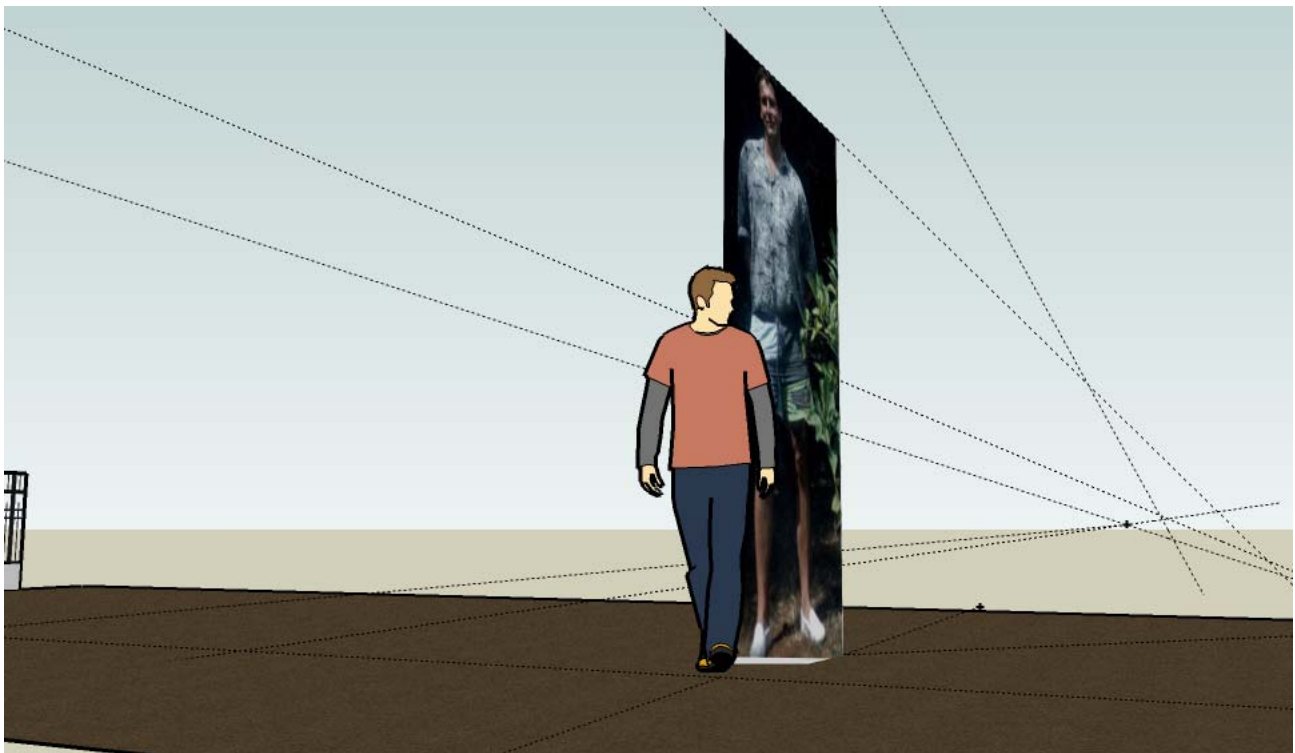
When I finished it has been possible to establish that the distance between the man and the railings has been about 9.85 cm.
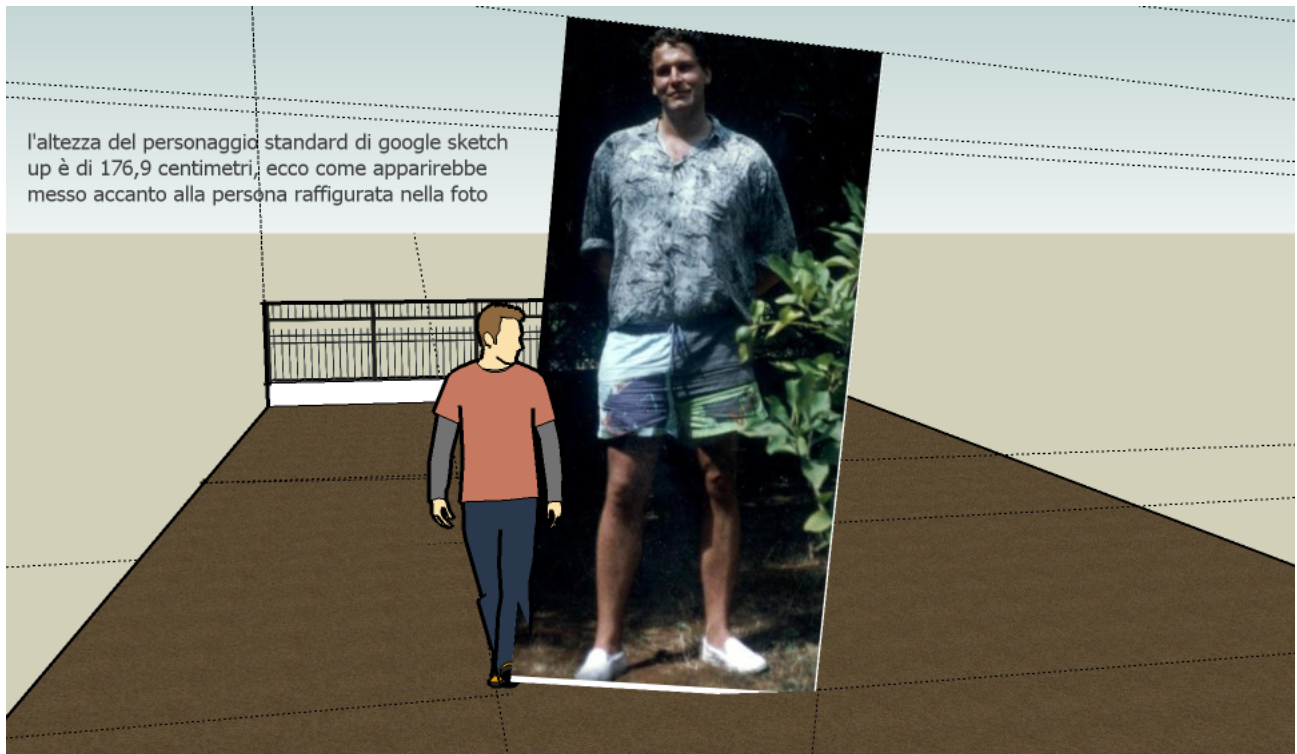

la distanza del soggetto dalla ringhiera sullo sfondo
risulta essere di circa 9 metri e 85 cm.

At this point it was possible to measure the man's height, and I have been shocked to verify that it was 3.07 meters:

la misura con l'apposito righello di google skeych up dà 307 centimetri !
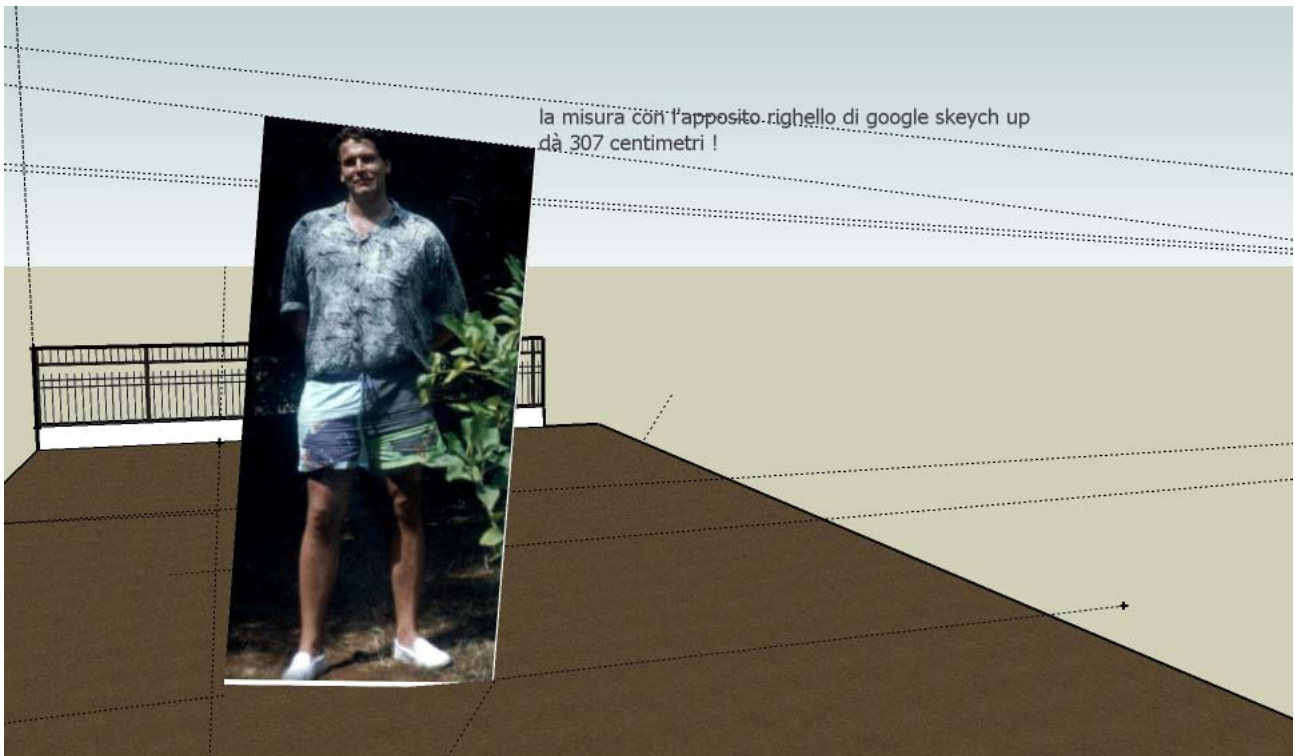
Just to be sure, I've made use of another possibility offered by Google Sketch Up: it presents its user with a model of a normal man, 1.77 meters tall; I put this object into the scene, near to the supposed alien, and this is the unbelievable result:


In short, a man 1.77 meters tall would have looked this way, near to the man from our picture:

l'altezza del personaggio standard di google sketch up è di 176,9 centimetri; ecco come apparirebbe messo accanto alla persona raffigurata nella foto

What could I say?

Of course someone could counteract: "Roger, this guy is very tall but what's strange? Since ever there are men very tall. That man may well be from this earth".

I too grabbed this idea (or, at least, the CICAP-like portion of my mind did so), therefore I started searching the Internet, looking for the tallest men on Earth, and that's what I've found:
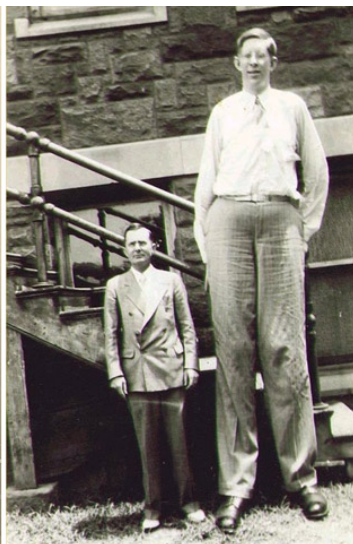
Robert Pershing Wadlow, 2.72 meters tall (Alton, Feb 22, 1918 – Manistee, July 15, 1940); he has been the tallest man over Earth whose height has been officially measured.

He started to over-grow after he underwent an operation on his hypophysis. Has been the major character in an advertising champaign in the USA for a shoe company. When he died, he was still growing.

He has been surnamed the "weak giant", because he was very fragile and subject to infections, due to his height; his death has been due to an infection derived from a device designed to help his ankles to support his weight. His coffin was 3.28 meters long, 0.86 wide, and 0.74 high.

Leonid Stadnik: the last time he has been measured, he resulted to be 2.57 meters tall. He now lives with his mother in a village in Ukraina, named Podolyantsy. Leonid started to grow after having undergone an operation to remove a tumor from his hypophysis. It's very difficult to him to walk, or just to move, because he has problems in controlling his legs. When he walks, he has to clutch nearby trees. He is still growing.

His muscular system doesn't work well, because of his height, and he needs peculiar orthopaedic devices.

Bao Xi Shun, 2.36 meters tall, is supposed to be the tallest man on Earth, because of problems with measuring Mr. Stadnik; his height resulted after six different measurements, taken at the Chifeng Hospital, in Mongolia. He won, for only 2 millimeters, over Radhouane Charbib, another contestant to the title. He tells that he has been normal up to 16, when, for unknown reasons, he started to grow in height. Strangely enough, the physicians who examined him in 2005 did not find any trace of acromegaly, or gigantism.

Mr. Radhouane Charbib, from Tunisia, who is "only" 2.36 meters high.

Ijaz Ahmed, from Pakistan, 24 years old, is 2.54 meters tall. The picture shows him in front of the Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur. He has been born in Punjab, was normal up to 15 years of age, then he started to grow. He pretends to be the tallest man on Earth.

Sultan Kose is a Turkish basket-ball player, 2.42 meters tall. He is supposed to be the tallest basket-player in the world; he is going to undergo an operation on his knees, after he will be 2.27 meter tall. He had been born in a small village, near to Iraqi border. He had been noted by a talent scout from Galatasaray, who enrolled him, although he had never played basket-ball.

Another basket-ball player, and actor, has been Suleiman Ali Nashnush, born in Tripoli in 1943, dead in February 25, 1991. He he supposed to have been the tallest basket-ball player, as he was 2.45 meters. In 1960 he underwent an operation, in Rome, aimed to reduce his growing rate. In 1962 he played within the Libyan national team; he also staged in Fellini's "Satyricon".

Gabriel Estêvão Monjane (1944÷1990) has been one among the 12 people recorded in the history of medicine, for having been taller than 2.40 meters. He had been born in Manjacaze, Mozambique, and he started to grow abnormally, probably because of a problem with his glands. When he was officially measured, he re-sulted to be 2.43 meters. He suffered serious problems at his legs, and became lame, after having fallen at home, breaking his hip. In 1988 he has been credited the title of tallest man on Earth.
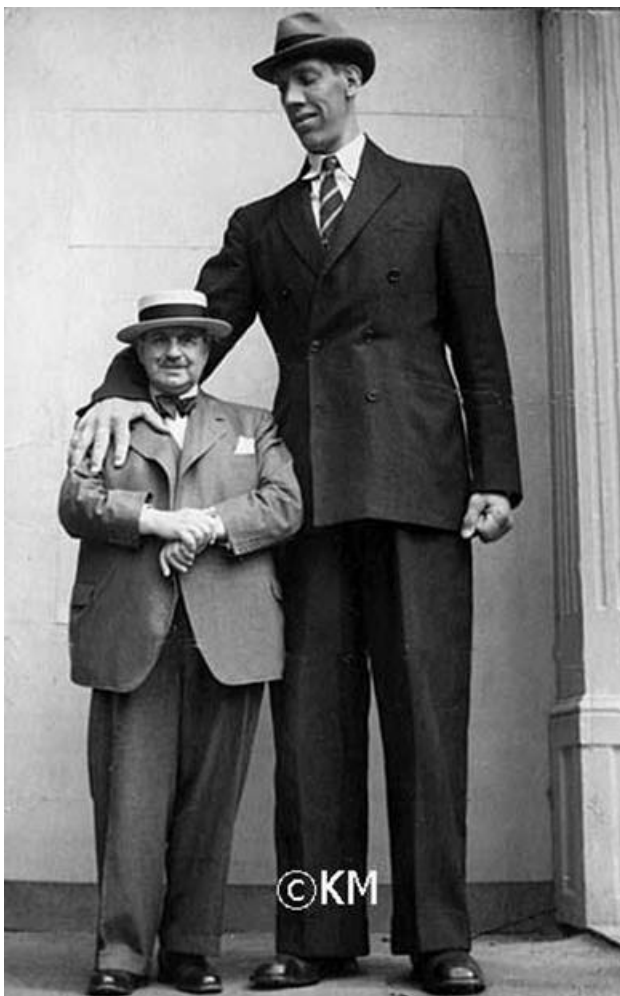
Väinö Myllyrinne (Helsinky, 1909 ÷ Järvenpää, Finland, 1963) has been the acromegalic giant who won the title of tallest man in the world from 1961 to 1963. When 21 he was 2.22 meters tall, but after 30 years old he started to grow again, reaching 2.42 meters.

It looks that the rare cases of terrestrial "giants" are often due to an illness named "acromegaly". It affectes people, making them grow continuously, but, as far as it is known, they never exceed 2.72 meters (Robert Pershing Wadlow). Any way, when a person exceeds 2.2 meters, he starts suffering

a lot of different physical pathologies, and statistics tell us that they face a short life. That's because they endure their bones weigh, their hearth is forced to pump blood stronger than usual, blood pressure goes mad, and all the internal organs are subjected to unusual stresses. In short, over this planet, a 2.20 meters high biped is due to a short life (if he is not a grizzly).

Does that mean anything? I do not know.

I must say that, looking at the pictures of the tallest men in the world, I've found all of them awkward (either legs too long, feet too big, heads malformed), while, looking at the picture at the end of "Contattismi di massa", I see a man with an harmonious structure (may be just his head is a bit too little), with slim legs, small feet wearing "espadrillas", a relaxed and smiling face, and a general impression of energy and dynamism. Nothing to do with the pictures of the unholy "tallest men in the world", almost always forced to resort to crutches.

Of course personal sensations have no objective value, then the possibility exists that the person who appears in "Contattismi di massa" is no giant at all.

Conclusions

This has been an amateur analysis, made by a person without great mathematical skills. A part within myself hopes strongly that I've been mistaken (at least because the idea that "giants" walk among ourselves generates an ancestral anguish feeling), another part within myself hopes that I'm right, it would be great if what written in the third part of "Contattismi di massa" were true, it would mean that to men just a little step is required.

I hope that my modest work may induce people better qualified than myself to scientifically analize that picture.

(Translation by Stefano Breccia)