

Marco Pio Mucci

Maschile Romantico

23 settembre – 16 ottobre 2016

"Maschile Romantico" is composed of two distinct elements: an outdoor fountain, and a sculpture inside the exhibition space that depicts the artist in scale 1:1.

Installed in the courtyard is a fountain, adorned with a decorative element on the wall that takes the form of Mucci's face. A constant stream of water flows through the opening of the mouth.

Since ancient times, the fountain mask has appeared in many cultures. The Greeks for instance, employed it during rituals of exorcism and they usually resembled the head of a monster or the face of the hero who beheaded it. On this occasion, the artist makes use of this ornament, by taking advantage of its unequivocal celebrative and mythological aesthetic. A source of water and wellness, the fountain is embraced in fulfillment of a long felt desire to flaunt a bold sense of originality and an inspiration in the grotesque. The water gushes through Mucci's lips and is then collected into a small basin, from which the embellishing figure of his own dog is seen quenching its thirst from the well.

The reasoning behind the title "Maschile Romantico" (Romantic Masculine) becomes evident after encountering the life size sculpture of the artist, inside the exhibition space.

Everything, from the posture to the environment, makes reference to the distinctive communicative codes of Romanticism. The compositional structures of *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*, or *Woman before the Rising Sun* (*Woman before the Setting Sun*) by Caspar David Friedrich, specifically come to mind. The focal point is a sole subject standing against the light with his back to the observer. Located on the edge of a cliff, the subject makes use of his raised position to contemplate the scenery that extends in front of and around him. Irradiated by the immensity of these messages, that glorify the infinite, the sublime and the feeling of wanderlust, we are able to sense a behavior that moves between the codes instinctively and with ease, and cleverly takes us into a mental state where believing to be and wanting to appear so, are interwoven into an *external, objective point of view*.

The condition hiding in this dualism - the personality one wants to display and the persona perceived by others - persuaded Mucci against conceiving his sculptures as self-portraits, or as the remaining traces from the act of subjectively affirming one's own image and soul. As a result of this, he did not shape his figure - others were asked to contribute an observational and detached perspective by intervening in the process of molding the body and styling the outfit.

This choice reduces the self-referential attitude involved in the practice of self-portraying, and in doing so the artist proposes a rich and truthful version of himself, that allows a concentration on those areas of the body where the viewer's gaze may often linger. In this loop of *being self-portrayed*, the subject tries to achieve consciousness of his own image. Within the paradox of perceiving oneself through someone else's eyes, lies a willingness to develop a credible public persona. With this in mind, Mucci decided to produce his head in bronze, to relate his sculpture with those statues that, in the past and today, celebrate public representatives and popular characters.