

CAMBIO DELLA GUARDIA | BEKHABAATAR ENKHTUR

Cambio della guardia (Changing of the guard) is an impermanent intervention that lived in the garden of Villa Giulia, a private residence in Bologna, in 2021. The artist Bekhabaatar Enkhtur, works with sculpture privileging the use of materials that can highlight their own fragility and transience, in search of an approach that guides the viewer's attention on a spiritual level of art.

With *Cambio della guardia*, the artist places a series of sculptures depicting lions in the garden of Villa Giulia, made by mixing uncooked clay with the material used for domestic animal bedding. The choice of this material and the title ironically winks at the role that is often entrusted to sculptures in villas and palaces. These small sculptures scattered in the garden of the private villa seem to make fun of the classic garden sculptures, replacing their strength and rigidity with the fragility of their essence. This uncooked clay, placed outdoors, without protections, is destined for progressive deterioration right from the initial stage of construction. The loss of the form given by the artist and the consequent disintegration on the ground coincides with a process of returning to the origins of the material itself and the fading of forms. This daily and no-noble material, ironically, takes away both form and function from the sacredness of art and its figures.

These new lions make possible this contemporary 'change of guard' of the classical sculptures: Bekhabaatar Enkhtur chooses these ephemeral forms in an attempt to replace the intrinsic historical memory in the monuments. A new memory is conceived in its becoming, which can be made by creating or destroying itself. History in the artist's work is no longer made through its stabilization, rather by seeking a dialogue between matter and forms, between human and natural.

The days pass and the lions lose their traits and connotations, abstracting themselves as if they shake off the illusion of the representation of reality: Enkhtur, showing the relativity of historical memory and its different images, elects the abstract and the mobile matter as a possible solution to create a spiritual link with the past of a place. The rigid commemorative sculptures can go to rest to make room for these shapeless mountains of clay, symbols of new representative canons.

Bekhabaatar Enkhtur

Leone, 2021, clumping litter (clay), six sculptures, dimensions about 80x40x40 cm each, installation views *Cambio della guardia*, curated by Gabriele Tosi e Filippo Tappi, Giardino storico di Villino Giulia,

Bologna, © Courtesy the artist, photography by Gabriele Tosi

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