



FONDAZIONE
PASTIFICIO CERERE

Namsal Siedlecki

Mvaḥ Chā

exhibition curated by Marcello Smarrelli
within the framework of Italian Council

Opening day: Tuesday September 22th 2020, h 16-21

Dates: 23rd September – 30th November 2020

reservation required
www.pastificiocerere.it

Fondazione Pastificio Cerere

Via degli Ausoni 7 - Rome

PRESS RELEASE

Fondazione Pastificio Cerere presents *Mvaḥ Chā*, personal exhibition of **Namsal Siedlecki**, curated by **Marcello Smarrelli**, which will be open **from 22th September until 30th November 2020**.

For the first time in Italy the event presents the results of the **Crisalidi** project – shown in a January preview by the Patan Museum (Kathmandu, Nepal) – supported by the Italian Council (6th Edition, 2019) program to promote contemporary art in the world by the Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity of the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism.

“The scientific and anthropologic interest in phenomena, the almost alchemic approach to matter and its ‘changing states’, the attention to different styles and techniques, the reflections on the value of artistic work – says Marcello Smarrelli, curator of the exhibition as well as Fondazione Pastificio Cerere’s artistic director – are the reasons behind the inclusion of the artist’s project in which Fondazione Pastificio Cerere is participating in the Italian Council program”.

The main focus of the exhibition is made up of **five big bronze sculptures**, titled *Mvaḥ Chā* (*Chrysalis*), realized by Siedlecki in 2019 during the various residency periods in Kathmandu, where he had the opportunity to experiment and elaborate on the Nepalese lost-wax method in some of the most relevant local foundries, which are devoted to producing sacred sculptures. Particularly, the artist was left aghast by the various passages preceding the fusion: while in the West the wax model is covered by shredded brick and chalk, a peculiar, albeit effective compound is used in Nepal: the *Mvaḥ Chā*, a type of mortar obtained by mixing clay, cow manure, and chaff, the casing of rice grains.

The title of the sculptures derives therefore from the daily practice of shops, from the very moment the wax model is covered in various layers of *Mvaḥ Chā*, creating a shell so thick to hide the original shape. By choosing those shapes, Siedlecki has elevated these elusive artefacts to artworks, which, though necessary for the creation of the sculptures, would never have become such, as they are usually destroyed in order to carry out the fusing process.

The result of this unusual process is a series of sculptures of indefinite mass, 'non-mocks', forms given a powerful, primal expressivity, escaping conventional canons of proportions and precise anatomical reference points, which, however, preserve a thin but powerful association with Hindu and Buddhist religious iconography, referencing at the same time the archaizing aesthetics of the early '900.

There is an element that strengthens the spirituality mood that permeates the exhibition, namely the presence of objects such as candies, money, flowers, eggs, and spirits; those are traditional offerings that worshippers give to divinities to prevent their wrath. By triggering this ritual in the exhibition, Siedlecki creates a relationship between the thousand-year old Nepalese culture and the contemporary art language.

Artworks creating a dialogue between past and present, East and West, highlighting how the fascination for the unknown and spiritual has always been escorting mankind, with no regards to époques nor latitudes.

As required by the Italian Council project – its main objectives being incrementing public collections with the addition of new productions – the **Centre for Contemporary Art Luigi Pecci in Prato** will be the final recipient of the various artworks created. About this Cristina Perrella, the director, said: "I'm glad to know that the art by Namsal Siedlecki will join our collection thanks to the Italian Council, *Chrysalis* shows not only a rare sensibility on the reflection upon matter, techniques, and sculpting processes, but also a strong interest in comparing traditions and other cultures' artistic practices which makes these jobs very representative of our idea of what a museum should be: open to the interaction between different languages of creativity, able to welcome voices, cultures and different points of view, and let them converse."

The exhibition path is enriched by other sculptures, which were created after the original cluster, during following periods of sojourn and relations with other foundries, which allowed the artist to carrying on his reflection on the Nepalese techniques and sculpture history.

The activities aimed at diffusing the project on both a national and international scale are numerous: some artist-talks have often taken place by the London Italian Culture Institute, by Kronika - Centre for Contemporary Art of Bytom in Poland and by In extenso, in Clermont-Ferrand, France; lectures by the artist are also programmed Academy of Fine Arts in Rome, Florence and Carrara, the latter collaborating with mudaC | Carrara museum of arts; a workshop has also been realized with the students of Rome's "Caravaggio" Arts High School with the *Collezione di Classe* project, promoted by Fondazione Pastificio Cerere, promoting education in schools through contemporary art.

In November 2020 a book on this project will be shown, edited by Nero, with written work by Marcello Smarrelli, Artistic Director of the Fondazione Pastificio Cerere, Sangeeta Thapa, Director of Siddharta Arts Foundation, Charles Jamyang Oliphant of Rossie, Ph. D of Oxford University, Department of Oriental studies.

Biography of Namsal Siedlecki

Namsal Siedlecki was born in Greenfield (USA) in 1986. He lives and works in Seggiano (GR). In 2015 he won the fourth edition of the Moroso Prize and the Cy Twombly Italian Affiliated Fellow in Visual Arts by the American Academy in Rome; in 2019 he won the Club Gamec Prize and the Cairo Prize. Lately he displayed his art by numerous national and international institutions including: In extenso, Clermont-Ferrand; MAXXI, Rome; Villa Medici, Rome; Centre for Contemporary Arts Luigi Pecci, Prato; Boavista Gallery, Lisbon; Villa Romana, Firenze; Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, Turin; 6 Moscow International Biennale for Young Art, Moscow; Chertludde, Berlin; Magazzino, Rome; American Academy in Rome; Museo Apparente, Naples; Fondazione Pastificio Cerere, Rome; Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, Venice; Antinori Art Project, Bargino; Galeria Madragoa, Lisbon; Frankfurt am Main, Berlin; Cripta747, Turin. From 2008 to 2013 he managed the independent space GUM studio, first in Carrara, then Turin www.namsalsiedlecki.com

Rome, September 2020

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EXHIBITION INFORMATION CARD

Opening day: Tuesday September 22th 2020, h 16-21

Dates: 23rd September – 30th November 2020

Time schedule: Monday to Saturday: 15.00 – 19.00

Reservation required: www.pastificiocerere.it

Info: info@pastificiocerere.it; Tel. +39 06 45422960

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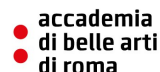


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