

ALIGI SASSU

THE GREAT ROYAL HORSE

General information about the work of art

In a basic summary of Sassu's artistic research, the iconographical typology of the Horse plays a predominant role, and marks the time of the moment of his existence, of his artist's knowledge. The Horse is a symbolic personification of strength and virile vitality. In animal history, it was used for drawing carts from the sky, and symbol of the Sun, Christian symbol of the Victory of good over evil. Here, it is interpreted by Sassu as an image and synthesis of life and dynamism, taking on, furthermore, a particular significance of life and of the fight, an aspect that is intimately connected to the artist's life experiences.

The work in question, showing a horse rearing up on his hind legs, belongs to the happiest sculptural production of Aligi Sassu.

The small bronze model, just twenty-one centimetres tall, is fixed onto a wooden base. It has an artificial aquamarine coating, that gives the work an archaic aura and, at the same time, would seem to stress that precious testimony that is the model, or rather the signs of the passing of the artist's hands, that the work brings with it as a reminder sign. The body of this rearing horse is characterised by a twisting of part of the rear legs, marked by a full and impetuous muscular structure. The right leg rests on the ground, sustaining the weight of the entire body, whilst the left produces movement, as it searches for support on the unshaped underlying plinth.

The part of the trunk including the stomach is produced in a sort of cylindrical shape, curved upwards and to the left, sealed by the powerful neck, that ends in the head, characterised by its cuneiform lines. The back shows a marked and unnatural curving, a moment of plastic tension, and a joint between the horse's flanks and withers.

The sense of tension and great energy of this work is certainly reinforced by the presence of articulated shapes that follow with rhythmical and broken up lines.

This work can be considered as a scaled down model of the "Large royal horse" located in front of the headquarters of the Palace of the Province of Ancona

Scales, materials

The sculpture is represented as a relief image on to a special kind of paper, called micro granulated paper. The relief image is about 11 times smaller than the actual sculpture.

Description

Start your exploration from the bottom of the image and feel the wooden plinth on which the erect horse stands on its hind legs.

Move your right hand and explore the sinuous tail of the horse made of filaments. With the left hand reach the raised forelegs of the horse.

Now explore with both hands the whole body of the horse and perceive its muscular tension through the suddenly bent contours studied to express the strength of the upsurge. With your right hand, feel the mane at the end of the horse's back, and study its undulated movement.

On the opposite part of the horse move up with your left hand, and explore the fore legs that protrude ahead as if to balance the exactly opposite movement of the mane.

Go down along the legs and follow the line of the neck up, until you reach the face of the animal. Explore the face with both hands. Study the movements of great tension expressed by the open mouth, the dilated nostril and its lively eye. Perceive the triangular line of the head..

It is with the use of abruptly bending lines, triangular shapes and extremely expressive features that the artist conveys the idea of dynamism in this magnificent sculpture.