

Diversione

Theodor Nymark

4 March—6 April 2026
Pachinko, Oslo

Landscape has always been a victim of physical, theoretical and visual circumscription.

For centuries it has endured terminological constraints, definitions, yet it has remained one of the privileged subjects of art history, through its mimetic capacity to render it as an image. Art has a longstanding familiarity with this genre: from imaginative landscapes that framed classical scenes, to the eighteenth century *capricci*, from the realistic views, such as Canaletto's meticulously detailed grand vistas, to the Romantic sublime and the atmospheric *picturesque*.

Of the vivid natural environment, today only a distant, fleeting memory remains — a melancholic semblance glimpsed within symbolic frames, like paintings or phone screens, or in physical ones, strolling through the domesticated nature of elegant city gardens, private or aristocratic.

It is precisely these places — spatial realms defined by human intervention — that are emblematic examples of historical and cultural layering, true *hortus conclusus* that preserves the last gentle trace of a nature that has become suspended, tamed and hybrid: flourishing where it can, spontaneous only when induced. Here

accumulate shelves of dusty natural memories, ecosystems woven from stories and casual encounters, ruins and artistic forms: a pile of traces and meanings that loom over the contemporary individual.

In Theodor Nymark's work, however, faded recollections of a primordial and triumphant nature flow, now degraded at a symbolic state, deprived of authenticity, like decoration or a trinket. During his stay in Rome at the Danish Academy, the artist immersed himself in the courtly gardens of villas and palaces, succumbing to their romantic and enchanted allure. Walking within them retracing the steps of Golden Age Danish artists — such as Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg or Thorald Læssøe — he observed the garden and its archival overlays for what they truly are, without being overwhelmed by its palimpsestic impressiveness.

Confronted with the weight of history in Villa Borghese, the artist chooses to intervene in this suspended place, furtively marking its main elements — the trees, the statue of Pushkin and the fountain, also known from Læssøe's *Fontana Oscura* — with luminous, reflective spray paint, which he photographs and displays in the exhibition within polished and chrome-plated aluminium frames, creating a double play of light and reflection. In the garden, he follows the melancholic luminous trajectory of the last natural inhabitant of the darkness. It is a firefly, alone, in a Roman spring night, flying amid the blinding artificial lights that filter between branch and branch, in a confusion that is exaggerated and saturated in a concealed iPhone video.

Nymark plays with this small framed landscape, observing it as a result of human intervention. Thus it becomes a conceptual device and it is transposed into the exhibition spaces of Pachinko. Here, a mirrored floor not only attempts a parallel with the ponds so dear to art history but also reflects awareness of its own staging and packaging. The individual stands naked in front of their own subjugation; yet they are also made responsible and conscious of their own actions. The chaos of lights and reflections generates an atmospheric tension between nature and artifice, from which emerges a hybrid cardboard figure: a Dachshund, a domesticated German hunting dog, turned into an ornament among many, an ironic witness to bourgeois knick-knackery.

Matteo Giovanelli