

Riccardo Previdi

MOODCLOCK

curated by Ilaria Bonacossa

Inaugurated on June 7, 2025, MOODCLOCK is a site-specific installation by Riccardo Previdi (Milan, 1974), created for Fondazione La Raia and curated by Ilaria Bonacossa. The work is dedicated to the architectural context of the small village of the Langhe region in Cuneo province, particularly to the 17th-century bell tower of the church located in Piazza Umberto I, just a few steps from the castle and its famous 14th-century fortified French-style tower.

MOODCLOCK consists of four colored wooden panels that, like icons, depict emotional states expressed through facial features: a smiling face, a desperate one, and two faces representing intermediate emotions. The design draws from the existing architecture of the bell tower. Through a graphic play, the arched bell opening is inverted downward, taking the form of a shield—a reinterpretation of sundials, the historical timekeeping devices often featured on bell towers. Like the sound of bells marking the rhythm of the day, these visual cues resonate in a landscape punctuated by the distinctive towers of the Langhe.

The work, inspired by the poetic sensibility of radical architecture, establishes a strong connection between the winery, the bell tower, and the castle through an additional panel designed by Previdi for a window at Tenuta Cucco, visible on the road leading into the village center. From this vantage point, both the bell tower of San Sebastiano and the castle can be seen in the distance. Here, a fifth emotional state is represented: an upside-down laughing face. Its title is ZEITGEIST.

With MOODCLOCK, Previdi anthropomorphizes architecture, giving the spaces we move through the ability to express emotions and resonate with our inner states. Both playful and poetic, the work encourages us to imagine emotions as markers of time and its perception. The materials and techniques used in MOODCLOCK mirror those employed in traditional window shutters, with colors reflecting classic local tones—dark green and burgundy—that also evoke the colors of grape leaves and wine.

Ilaria Bonacossa, Artistic Director of Fondazione La Raia, states: “Riccardo Previdi’s artistic research explores the possibilities and limitations of contemporary thought, revealing the complex mechanisms behind the everyday objects and images that surround us. By recording and sometimes amplifying the imagery produced by our society—as with the emoji-like forms in MOODCLOCK—he highlights the infantile relationship our culture maintains with the world around us, our need to assign emotions to experiences with a single click. At the same time, the subjective nature of how we experience the passage of time emerges, with bell towers and sundials becoming storytellers of emotional states.”

The presence of the nearby castle, built of brick around 1350 and adjacent to San Sebastiano, played a crucial role in the development of the project. This landmark shapes the surrounding landscape and also serves as a backdrop to Tenuta Cucco.

Riccardo Previdi states: “While observing the castle and the nearby church of San Sebastiano, now deconsecrated, the idea for MOODCLOCK emerged. The church, whose bell tower lacks both a clock and a sundial, immediately made me reflect on the passage of time and how its measurement has become increasingly precise in a society—ours—that has embraced modernity and technology as its development model. My MOODCLOCK takes up a space traditionally devoted to timekeeping, but offers an alternative reading: one that is less segmented, certainly less efficient, perhaps less abstract, and consequently more attuned to the reality of things. Drawing on the medieval aesthetic of heraldry and specifically the coat of arms of Serralunga—which features a grape cluster (a series of circles) and a chalice (a semicircle)—I used these same geometric forms to create four masks representing four different emotional states. Four, or rather, five.”

Sergio Moscone, Mayor of Serralunga d’Alba, states: “Thanks to MOODCLOCK, Serralunga d’Alba joins a network of contemporary art presentations supported by major foundations and leading private entities engaged in this cultural mission within the Piedmont region. This is our municipality’s second opportunity to collaborate with Fondazione La Raia on publicly accessible art projects, highlighting the value and effectiveness of public-private partnerships.”

Giorgio Rossi Cairo, President of Fondazione La Raia, states: “The Foundation—which has commissioned eleven other permanent works from international artists—returns to Serralunga d’Alba with MOODCLOCK to create yet another opportunity for reflection on the town’s extraordinary and unique historical and natural landscape. Through art, we aim to foster deeper awareness of its most distinctive features: the keep, the Langhe panorama facing Monviso, the UNESCO-listed vineyards, the village, and the ancient church within the walls, now deconsecrated and part of Tenuta Cucco, which remains open to tourists and visitors upon request.”

San Sebastiano nel Borgo in Serralunga d’Alba is referred to in documents as “old” as early as 1550 and served as the town’s parish church until 1888. Its annexes housed the local school until the mid-1950s. Rebuilt in the 17th century on a medieval layout (with the entrance and altar positions reversed from the original), it was restored between 1886 and 1888. The church has a simple and sober architectural style, distinct from the Baroque aesthetic typical of the mid-17th century. Inside, the single-nave space features four altars placed in deep recesses.

Cherubic musicians, elegantly dressed Savoy nobility like Duke Amadeus IX of Savoy, saints, and scenes such as Adam and Eve expelled from Eden are among the frescoes still visible on the side walls, vaults, and choir area—painted by various artists across different periods. The bell tower, structured in four levels, stands as a visual landmark in the Langhe hills along with the castle. Built on the former façade of the medieval church, its stone sides culminate in a pointed spire typical of many bell towers in the area dating to the mid-1600s. Interestingly, the bell tower features an entrance directly from street level outside the church.

Now owned by Tenuta Cucco, the church is part of the winery’s wine tour and can be visited upon request. In July 2019, it hosted BIOMEGA Multiverso, a site-specific exhibition by Cosimo Veneziano, curated by Ilaria Bonacossa and promoted by Fondazione La Raia.

Riccardo Previdi (Milan, 1974) studied architecture and visual arts. He has exhibited at the first Moscow Biennale, Manifesta 7, the first Turin Triennale, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, MARTa Herford, De Vleeshal in Middelburg, the Italian Cultural Institute in New York, Villa Croce in Genoa, and Museion in Bolzano, among others. From 2001 to

2016, he lived in Berlin, where he created the Green Light Pavilion, a temporary exhibition space for solo and group shows. Since 2018, he has taught contemporary art at the Faculty of Design and Arts at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano.

Ilaria Bonacossa, Artistic Director of Fondazione La Raia since 2016, is Director of Palazzo Ducale in Genoa. From 2022 to 2024, she led the National Museum of Digital Art in Milan. A curator and art critic with a substantial body of publications and exhibition catalogs in multiple languages, she has curated numerous shows in Italy and abroad. From 2017 to 2021, she directed Artissima, the International Contemporary Art Fair in Turin. She spent nine years as curator at Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo and was a juror for the Golden Lion at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007. In 2013, she curated the Icelandic Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. From 2012 to 2016, she directed the Villa Croce Museum of Contemporary Art in Genoa. Bonacossa has served on the acquisition committee of FRAC Provence-Alpes Côte d'Azur in Marseille, the scientific committee of PAC Milan, the selection committee for the Prince Pierre Prize in Monaco, and as a selector for the Kyoto Inamori Prize in Japan. As of 2024, she is a member of the Scientific Committee of the Genoa Science Festival and in 2025 was appointed by the Ministry to the National Committee for the Bicentennial Celebration of Alessandro Volta's Death.

Fondazione La Raia – arte cultura territorio, established in June 2013, promotes critical reflection on the landscape in Italy and abroad through interdisciplinary contributions. It develops artistic, cultural, educational, scientific, and research activities aimed at fostering awareness of the Gavi region. To date, the Foundation has commissioned permanent works by Remo Salvadori, Koo Jeong A, Michael Beutler, Adrien Missika, Francesco Jodice, Teresa Giannico, and Tami Izko (all open to the public), organized a solo exhibition by Cosimo Veneziano at Tenuta Cucco, published a book with Elio Franzini (Corraini), and hosted numerous public lectures on landscape, featuring figures such as Gilles Clément, Coloco, Paolo D'Angelo, Adriana Veríssimo Serrão, Francesco Jodice, Francesco Zanut, Stefanie Hessler, and Franco Farinelli. The Foundation was founded by Giorgio Rossi Cairo and Irene Crocco and is currently directed by Ilaria Bonacossa.

With thanks to **Galleria Francesca Minini**.

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Site specific installation - wood, paint

From June 7, 2025

Church of San Sebastiano nel Borgo, Piazza Umberto I, and Tenuta
Cucco, Via Mazzini 10, Serralunga d'Alba (CN)

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