

'The Dream of all Italians': Artists unveil 'dead' Berlusconi artwork (with his hand down his trousers)

- The title of the installation 'The Dream of All Italians' is what the former Italian premier called himself on the phone to one of his girlfriends

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Lying in a casket on a velvet carpet, at first glance you could be forgiven for thinking Silvio Berlusconi had passed away.

But in fact it's just a very realistic waxwork which pokes fun at the beleaguered former Italian premier and hints at his sins.

Entitled *Il Sogno degli Italiani* or 'The Dream of the Italians', the controversial artwork has been created by artists Antonio Garullo and Mario Ottocento, the first ever married gay couple who tied the knot in Amsterdam in 2002.



'The Dream of all Italians': A waxwork figure of Silvio Berlusconi lies in a casket on a red velvet carpet



A close up of the former Italian premier's smiling face. He has his eyes closed and his head is on a satin pillow

The name of the installation refers to what Berlusconi apparently called himself on the phone to one of his girlfriends, according to Italian media.

The former prime minister, who is still very much alive at 75, is seen smiling as he lies in a glass coffin with his eyes closed.

Bizarrely he is wearing giant Mickey Mouse slippers as he lies on a satin pillow in a double-breasted blue jacket.

There is also one hand inside his unzipped trousers while the other hand rests on the History of Italy.

Positioned in a shrine at the Ferrajoli Palace, the shocking installation is available for all Italians to see and is just yards from Berlusconi's former stomping ground, the Palazzo Chigi, the official residence of Italian prime ministers.



Mocking: The artists have positioned the politician with a hand down his trousers to poke fun at his reputation

Garullo and Ottocento said of their work: 'We put Berlusconi's body into a glass case to emphasise the personality cult that he has been creating for all these years and which will possibly remain for years to come.

'At the same time we put a screen between the contingent reality and historical judgment.

'If Italians are ultimately "a people of saints, poets, seafarers" then the arch-Italian Silvio is a worthy simulacrum of this people'.

Berlusconi stepped down as premier last November after failing to come up with convincing reforms to help Italy exit from the sovereign debt crisis.

The last part of his term in office was marred with a constant stream of lurid revelations about his private life.

The sleazy politician is currently embroiled in a high-profile court case after being accused of paying for sex with underage minor Karima El Mahroug, also known as Ruby the Heartbreaker, in February 2010 when she was just 17-years-old.

In Italy the age of consent is 14 but paying a woman under 18 for sex is seen as prostitution with a minor and punishable by up to three years in jail.



Berlusconi's other hand is placed on a copy of the History of Italy. He's also wearing Mickey Mouse slippers

Prosecutors believe dozens of women were given money, cars and jewellery in return for spending the night with him and in return for attending his now infamous bunga bunga parties.

The trial has already heard how women dressed as nuns and police officers before carrying out seductive pole dances for Berlusconi and two of his cronies.

Berlusconi has insisted that nothing untoward happened at the parties which were simply 'elegant dinners' and belly dancer Miss El Mahroug, who he is accused of paying for under age sex with, has also insisted that nothing happened between them.

The sex charge carries a maximum sentence of three years while abuse of office is punishable with 12 years in jail.