

ANTONY GORMLEY

HOST, GALLERIA CONTINUA, BEIJING, CHINA, 2016

19 March - 27 August 2016

For the artist's second solo exhibition at Galleria Continua Beijing, the site-specific installation *HOST*, 2016 will flood the central spaces of the gallery to a depth of 23 centimetres. Approximately 95 cubic metres of red clay from Beijing's Changping district and seawater from the nearby Tianjin Coast will be mixed at a ratio of 50:50. The experience of the work is not only visual, but sensate: the viewer is invited to stand at one of the three thresholds leading into the space and to sense the relationship between the built world and un-inscribed nature. *HOST* is one of the artist's most potent environments for proprioception, allowing art to become an instrument through which the viewer becomes the viewed.

Gormley describes *HOST* as 'the site of becoming'. He states: 'This is the elemental world, a primal soup brought within the frame of a museum as a changing painting that you can sense, as well as see. The point is to heal the division between inside and outside, and bring the elemental world into a cultural frame. Here is a materialised landscape not pictured, formulated or interpreted.'

In addition, a series of five sculptures in mild steel, collectively called 'Stations', will be exhibited together for the first time. These works, like many of the artist's recent body sculptures, use the syntax of architecture to translate body mass into the equivalent of a high-rise tower. In much the same way as the skeleton of a building is composed of columns and floors, here the body is intersected by clear horizontal divisions and vertical pillars, the dimensions of which vary from 5 to 20 millimetres thick. Although architecture aims to produce a stable world, these works suggest vulnerability and potential instability.

The themes of reverie, disorientation and the undermining of the certainties of the built world are introduced at the start of the exhibition with the inclusion of two versions of *EDGE III*, 2012. Fixed horizontally so that they stand perpendicular, two massive indexical cast iron 'bodyforms' jut out from the walls. One looks up from bed-height and the other looks down from the ceiling. Together, the works undermine the determination of architecture, preparing the viewer for the liminal experience at the threshold of *HOST*.

This is the third showing of *HOST*: the work was first conceived for the Old City Jail, Charleston, USA in 1991 and re-presented at Kunsthalle zu Kiel, Germany in 1997.
