

ANTONY GORMLEY

STILL MOVING, LONG MUSEUM, WEST BUND, SHANGHAI, CHINA, 2017

This will be the first major presentation of Antony Gormley's work in China. At its core is CRITICAL MASS II (1995) an installation of 60 life-size cast iron body forms. This seminal work has been widely exhibited in Europe, but this will be its first showing in Asia. Some of the body forms are installed in a linear progression recalling the 'ascent of man'. Some are suspended in arrested fall, others lie scattered across the space or form a jumbled pile. This multiple work celebrates the sculptural body as object and ground for feeling and engages our deepest hopes and fears; our attraction to light as well as to darkness.

The exhibition also includes spatial works that attempt to create instruments of proprioception. BREATHING ROOM IV [RIO] (2012) is an environment made of nesting photo-luminescent space frames all containing the same volume, but stretched in different directions. Ten minutes of darkness are interrupted by 40 seconds of blinding light. Its virtual, abstract architecture invites the viewer to look at it as an object and engage with it as a subject, providing both a soothing and confrontational experience.

A new work, PASSAGE II (2017), is a 15.5 metre-long tunnel, whose shape is modelled on a standing human form. It too is both object and experience, suggesting a correlative for the interior of the body and offering a journey into darkness and the unknown.

Four additional suspended sculptures (2008 - 2012), function like drawings in space, each transforming mass into energy and object into field to reveal an open body-space at its core. In these dematerialised works the bodies are free and weightless - evoking a state of being rather than illustrating an action.

Drawing has always been the fertile core of the artist's work and this exhibition will include a wide selection of work on paper from 1981 - 2016. The drawings and prints exhibited here chart intimate movements of the hand and impressions of the body and forms that result from an interaction between the behaviour of materials and intuition. The works possess an immediacy, range and intensity that is the result of immersion in time and substance.

With STILL MOVING, Antony Gormley offers an exhibition which interacts with the unique architecture of the Long Museum to create a test site for both the work and the viewer, while introducing the major themes that have concerned him over the last 40 years: body as space and space as object.
