



GALLERIA CONTINUA

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ANTONY GORMLEY

HOST

Opening: Saturday, March 19, 2016
until August 20th, 2016

Galleria Continua is honoured to present a solo show by widely acclaimed British artist, Antony Gormley, in its Beijing space.

For the artist's second solo exhibition at Galleria Continua Beijing, the site-specific installation Host 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."

At the entrance to the gallery is Thought: a hollow, 1 metre diameter sphere produced from the same Changping clay used in Host. This object will be fired and seawater poured

over it daily. During the course of the exhibition a salt deposit will gradually form over the sphere's rough, fired, earthenware surface creating its own crystalline topography.

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 10 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 in 1997.

The opening of the exhibition in Beijing will coincide with the publication of the Chinese edition of Antony Gormley on Sculpture. This is the first book in which the artist conveys his personal thoughts on the history, ideas and process of his practice, bringing a portfolio of over 30 years of the artist's work to a Chinese audience. Gormley delves into the aspects of time and space in his larger works and describes the influence of Far Eastern religions. He also discusses artists he regards as particularly significant, including Brancusi, Giacometti and Beuys.

Currently on view in Hong Kong is Event Horizon, the most extensive public art installation ever seen in the city. Presented by the British Council with support from lead partner the K11 Art Foundation, the project will be on view until 18 May 2016. <http://www.eventhorizon.hk/>

Antony Gormley's work has been widely exhibited throughout the UK and internationally with exhibitions at Forte di Belvedere, Florence (2015); Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern (2014); Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia (2012); Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (2012); The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg (2011); Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria (2010); Hayward Gallery, London (2007); Malmö Konsthall, Sweden (1993) and Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark (1989). He has also participated in major group shows such as the Venice Biennale (1982 and 1986) and Documenta 8, Kassel, Germany (1987). Permanent public works include the Angel of the North (Gateshead, England), Another Place (Crosby Beach, England), Inside Australia (Lake Ballard, Western Australia) and Exposure (Lelystad, The Netherlands).

Gormley was awarded the Turner Prize in 1994, the South Bank Prize for Visual Art in 1999, the Bernhard Heiliger Award for Sculpture in 2007, the Obayashi Prize in 2012 and the Praemium Imperiale in 2013. In 1997 he was made an Officer of the British Empire (OBE) and was made a knight in the New Year's Honours list in 2014. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, an Honorary Doctor of the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Trinity and Jesus Colleges, Cambridge. Gormley has been a Royal Academician since 2003. He was born in London in 1950.