

ANTONY GORMLEY

BEARING LIGHT, 1990

This series of prints is a response to the physical act of printing: an image that leaves its own trace of weight on the paper. I wanted to return to its origins: wood, ink and paper. The works are made by dividing singular plates into a number of parts and inking them separately, using very high pressure and a mass of oil paint and drying agent. It is important that you can see the grain of the plywood of the plates very clearly when looking from the side.

BEARING LIGHT is a meditation on light and dark, mass and space, being and becoming. The prints invoke the darkness of the body. Objects normally rendered as forms revealed by light are transformed into planes of darkness, and volume is translated into silhouette. It is a play between positive and negative: the archway with a double lintel opening becomes, in a second print, the ground for the black rectangle of a door. The flipping of figure and ground is common to all of these works: the paired egg shapes of the eyes or testicles, for example, could be conceived both as both paired forms or openings out onto darkness.

The motifs of being, becoming and dreaming are figured in the back, the baby and the sleeping head, but there are also themes of generation: of binary division of a cell, the testicles and the lingam column.

The challenge was to make images that are both diagrams and evocations of the space of consciousness and the built world; to provide meditational devices that lead to an inner world of reverie and release. Representational art has concentrated on the way that objects are revealed through light falling on their surfaces; BEARING LIGHT attempts to address what lies at the other side of appearance.
