

TONY CRAGG

NEW SCULPTURES - FIAC

PARIS DEBELLEYME

26 Oct 2006 - 30 Oct 2006



Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is pleased to present a one man show of new sculpture by Tony Cragg at FIAC in the Grand Palais. Considered one of the most important contemporary sculptors working today, Cragg is a master of new forms and materials. The exhibition will include works in a variety of materials, polished stainless steel, wood, stone and bronze. There will also be a monumental stainless steel work titled "I'm Alive" on display in the Jardins des Tuileries in cooperation with both FIAC and the Louvre, during the time of the fair and afterwards.

Cragg has been working on several themes in his recent work. Taking the interface between figuration and abstraction, he is exploring the uses of splitting, merging, overlapping and morphing what begins as a face or a head, into something that resembles a thought process or continuous flow of material. His *Caught Dreaming*, 2006 began as a work that was conceived as if the sculpture was revealing the interior thoughts of several people, the sculpture was changed and made less figurative during its creation but what is left is pure imagination, a large horizontal series of wavy surfaces, similar to rock formations, but in fact there is the hint of heads joined in an abstracted way. This is a work that was originally conceived in, a colorful fiberglass composite material and will be presented at FIAC in bronze.

The opposite mood is presented with several vertical column works in bronze and wood. These structures offer a unique view of how a structure can be built, again with sometime attenuated references to the human head, sneaking in with a distorted play of forms compressed and elongated at the same time. In some cases looking up the side of one and then walking around and looking up at another angle one has the feeling of seeing two sides of the same image but with a shift in perspective, like reading something backwards. There will be a two meter double wooden column work, that opens a new kind of planar vocabulary in his vertical pieces. Here there are moments of natural forms like hollowed tree trunks that seem to be moving in space, the two columns line up as if in a conversational way one shivering next to the other like a dance.

We will show several stone works, a new white marble piece, and a very minimalist grey stone that lies horizontally on the floor and appears sand blasted like sea shells do on the beach; it is hollow and at moments the skin of the stone is perforated so you see into the belly of the work.

In the Tuileries will be *I'm Alive*, which is a large stainless steel punctuation mark that seems to fly through space though it is poised on three points of contact with the ground. From each side you see something different again, it looks like an animal, a splash of light flying above the ground, an imaginary idea of some bursting energy that is contained but still moving.

Tony Cragg's work can be found in most international major museums, and currently has an exhibition at the Akademie der Kunst in Berlin, and in the Contemporary Museum in Magdeburg. Four years ago he presented a large exhibition on works in Paris outside the Bibliothèque Nationale. Many people also would have seen the three five meter towers outside the stadium for the Olympics last year in Turin. He lives and works in Germany.