

ANTONY GORMLEY

EARTH BODY

SALZBURG VILLA KAST

22 Mar 2018 - 12 May 2018



**Opening: Thursday, 22. March 2018, 7 pm
with the artist present**

Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is pleased to announce *Earth Body*, an exhibition of works by British sculptor Antony Gormley. This exhibition will be the most comprehensive presentation to date of Gormley's polyhedral sculptures.

The series, which began in 2008, replaces an anatomically described body with one made of tightly nested and sharp edged polygonal cells. This sculptural language derives from natural structures: the polycrystalline aggregation of basalt or quartz and the bubble matrices in foams and bone. The works *BRIDGE* and *FIX* (2017) recall in their condensed forms an earlier series, *Insiders* (1997- 2005), which isolates the body's core and concentrates internal sensation. Other sculptures in the exhibition, like *CONTRACT* (2016) and *COMPACT* (2017) use similar bodily postures but provide an organic foil to the orthogonal rectangles of the artist's *Blockworks* (2003 - present).

In describing body posture as "the language before language", the artist invites the viewer to empathetically project a range of emotional tonalities onto the work. With this exhibition, as with all his work, the primary challenge is to identify the body as a place in which thoughts, sensations and emotions arise, rather than as an object of idealisation or representation.

The show brings these geode-like bodies into the classical interiors of the Villa Kast, confronting its architecture with earthy forms that seem as random as they are absolute. They are cast in iron; the same material that forms the Earth's core and their rusting surfaces acknowledge the action of elements on matter and received ideas of how the body can be presented in sculpture while confronting us with our own being in time.

In the upper spaces of the gallery, similar forms such as *BRIDGE (NET)* and *BOLT (NET)* (2017), made in fine stainless steel bar turn these masses into fine webs or nets: three dimensional drawings that tremble in space.

Earth Body continues an investigation begun by Gormley over 40 years ago that asks where human being, human mind and human feeling fit within an unfolding world.

Antony Gormley was born in London in 1950. His work has been widely exhibited throughout the UK and internationally with exhibitions at Long Museum, Shanghai (2017); 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); 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). As long-term display *The Model Room* is currently on view at Tate Britain, London until 16 September 2018.

Gormley 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) and semi-permanent *Event Horizon*, a multi-part site installation (London, 2007 - Hong Kong, 2016). Gormley was awarded the Turner Prize in 1994 and the Praemium Imperiale 2013. In 1997 he was made an Officer of the British Empire (OBE) and he was knighted in the 2014 New Year Honours list.

A fully illustrated catalogue with an interview by Stephanie Rosenthal and an essay by Max Hollein accompanies the exhibition.