

ANTONY GORMLEY

EARLY SINGLE LEAD BODYCASE WORKS, 1983 - 1988

After the making of the three-part lead bodycase works, I started making single lead bodycases for a standing man: UNTITLED FOR FRANCIS, BREATH, ADDRESS, PART, ASK, STANDING GROUND, PEER, ACROSS THE AIR, MOMENT. These works tried to repossess the standing male figure, but in a different way from heroic sculpture. UNTITLED FOR FRANCIS uses the allusion to the stigmata to make five eye-shaped holes that give access to the darkness of the body. BREATH has bullet holes of the same calibre as SEEDS and the gun in FRUITS OF THE EARTH.

STANDING GROUND, again, reinforces the relation between the horizontal of the arms and the horizon, later found in WORK. PEER allows the two ends of the spinal column to look at each other and engages the tension between sexuality and intelligence. ADDRESS attempts to communicate across distance using a Tibetan tongue greeting. MOMENT suggests an ecstatic point of disequilibrium. INTO THE LIGHT and OUT OF THE DARK are enclosed darkness made visible. BOX is a self-referential empty case in human form. Trying to link an internal state with a thing, with reference to the "I" box of Robert Morris, or the black buried cube of Tony Smith. BOX, NIGHT and FREE OBJECT all deal with this objective correlative for the subjective space: the darkness of the body, relating sometimes to melancholy and to the night sky, as in NIGHT. These isolated, crouching self-reflexive works culminate with PROOF: a bodycase in the form of giving birth or shitting - a reference to self-determination through the production of another object that has been gestated through the body.

The last group of single bodycases deal directly with the surface of the earth, like RISE, PLATEAU and DESERT FOR WALTER, ending with CLOSE. All of them try to deal with the horizontal of the ground and the relationship between the skin of the body to the skin of the earth. DESERT FOR WALTER is a work for Walter De Maria: with one eye open and one arm out, it is a direct reference to his mile-long chalk drawing. CLOSE tries to reconcile, through the body, the forces of centrifuge and gravity.

The culmination of these investigations was ANOTHER SINGULARITY and CRITICAL MASS I. CRITICAL MASS I has six clear positions like a dice: it has no correct way up or orientation.
