

ANTONY GORMLEY

CRITICAL MASS, THE ROYAL ACADEMY, LONDON, ENGLAND, 1998

27 May - 30 September 1998

Gormley installed CRITICAL MASS (1995) in the courtyard of the Royal Academy, London, to coincide with the Summer Exhibition. The series of sixty life-size iron bodyforms were placed in the centre and around the outsides of the courtyard, including fourteen bodyforms that were suspended from the facade of Burlington House and the neighbouring buildings. The sculptures were made from moulds of Gormley's body in twelve distinct positions, evolving from a vulnerable crouching bodyform engaged with the earth, to an erect standing figure which looks skyward. CRITICAL MASS, which had never been seen in Britain before, was originally devised for a former tram terminus on the outskirts of Vienna.

Speaking about this installation, Gormley said that:

'The Royal Academy is a cultural institution which celebrates the hierarchy of Western art, emphasised through its frieze of heroes. I am infiltrating, or invading that sense of august decorum by introducing victims.'
