

ANTONY GORMLEY

STRAPWORKS, WHITE CUBE WEST PALM BEACH, USA, 2021

23 November - 31 December 2021

An upcoming exhibition by Antony Gormley at White Cube's off-site project space in West Palm Beach, Florida, will debut a new series of sculptures. Titled *Strapworks* (2018-ongoing), the life-size works each map the space of a standing body with a line, or 'strap', of oxidised 4mm Corten steel that continually appears to flip as our perspective changes, furthering Gormley's inquiry into the dynamic between still object and moving viewer. Gormley has likened the structural and conceptual journey of these works - in which the inner and outer surfaces of an object switch function - to the Möbius strip or the Kleinian bottle.

The five new pieces on display have evolved from Gormley's *Open Blockworks* (2003-07), which applied the logic of the post and lintel system in architecture to the human body, using overlapping, steel blocks of various sizes. The *Strapworks* further Gormley's interest in liberating separate blocks into spaces of their own to create a shift in perception, where forms perpetually appear to oscillate from constriction to openness - a shift that is both perceptual and emotional.

Gormley states: 'I have always been moved and impressed by the way that the variegated plumage of flocks of starlings shockingly displays extraordinary transformation at any alteration of flight line in a flash not dissimilar to that of a shoal of fish all turning at the same time. Something of this is carried in the oxidised surfaces of the *Strapworks*.'

Among his influences, the artist also cites the weaving line found in calligraphic notation, Celtic shields and illuminated manuscripts that he describes as 'precursors of the printed circuit that animate a serpentine line'. In the *Strapworks*, Gormley liberates the line into three dimensions, allowing it the greatest possible freedom, while also making it conform to structural dictates. There is a progression in the series as the language evolves: in some of the works, a compression through the foot and ankle rises into a more open upper body space.

A selection of seven drawings continues Gormley's project of mapping connective systems within the body and space. These include key works on paper from the *Rooter* series (2017-18), which portray the human subject emerging from or receding into gridded structures, caught between lines that follow the three Cartesian coordinates. Also included are works from the *Cosmic* series, drawn evocations of supernovas and black holes in cosmic space.
