

GALERIE THADDAEUS ROPAC

ANTONY GORMLEY. ATAXIA II

4 APRIL — 23 MAY 2009

Opening on Saturday, April 4th at 11 am

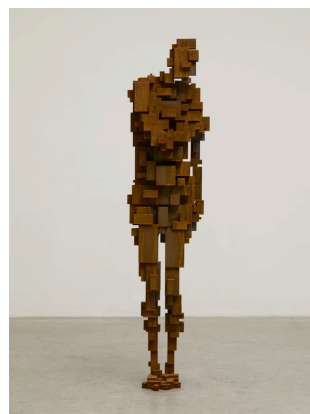
The artist will be present

On Friday the 3rd of April there will be a conversation between the artist and Professor Rod Mengham of Jesus College, Cambridge University, at 7pm in the gallery.

Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac is pleased to announce the upcoming exhibition **ATAXIA II** with new sculptures by British artist, Antony Gormley. *Ataxia* is a Greek word that implies a state of disequilibrium. In contemporary medical terminology ataxia is a condition illustrated by progressive loss of coordination, attributed to severe dysfunction of the central nervous system.



Antony Gormley, Haft II, 2008



Antony Gormley, Shy V, 2008

In this exhibition, the artist presents a new series of seven standing figures made of cast iron variable blocks, each shows a different body position perhaps caused by a moment of spasm. In ATAXIA II, the human figure has lost its centre of gravity.

For Gormley this becomes an innovative departure in his continuing analysis of the body as an architectural space. He presents this notion as a struggle between order and disorder, symmetry versus asymmetry. Well known for his interest in the boundaries of the physical and spatial coordinates body, grounded in the specifics of our physical condition. We inhabit our bodies, and Gormley believes are invisible within our skin; caught within a wider matrix of social and gravitational forces through which the individual is defined.

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By placing one figure in the centre of each room of the gallery, Gormley invites the viewer to ruminate on the particular pathology of each sculpture. The titles of these seven works themselves suggest the physical state of being: Turn, Splice, Shrive, Shy, List, Clutch, Haft. The body positions take the cast iron block figures into a twisted, gyrating motion, and they appear animated by an invisible impulse coming from somewhere deep inside their core.

This exhibition also includes two new works, *Scaffolding* and *Fall*, which describe the field of the body with interconnecting horizontal, square and rectangular frames. The effect is a grid-like structure built in forms reminiscent of the patterns in a Mondrian painting. The physical form of the body has been transformed into a field of orthogonal geometry that has its own perspectival dynamic suggesting that the self and context are indivisible.

Feeling Material XXXVIII hangs in the central staircase. The body void floats within an endless line of 5mm steel in a position of weightlessness or falling.

A catalogue with an essay, *Visible Entropy*, written by Professor Rod Mengham accompanies the exhibition.

Antony Gormley was born in London in 1950 and received a degree from Trinity College, Cambridge in archaeology, anthropology and history of art. Upon completing his undergraduate studies, he traveled for three years in India before returning to enroll in London's Central College of Art, Goldsmith's College, and the Slade School of Art. Gormley's works have been the subject of group and solo exhibitions in numerous, international museums and galleries as well as international art festivals such as the Venice Biennale and Kassel Documenta 8. He was awarded the Turner Prize in 1994, was made an Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1997 and has been a Royal Academician since 2003.

The last venue of Gormley's important European touring show, *Between You and Me*, opened recently at the Artium Museum in Vitoria (Spain). It includes major large-scale installations, *Critical Mass II* (1995) and *European Field* (1993) as well as other works: *Bread Line* (1979), *Reflection II* (2008) and *Quantum Void II* (2008), amongst others. An exhibition catalogue is available (in English, French and Spanish) with essays by Rod Mengham and Fernando Huici, as well as an interview with the artist by Pierre Tillet. This exhibition will run until 31 August 2009.

For further information regarding the exhibition, please contact Dr. Arne Ehmann

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