

The New Art Centre Sculpture Park & Gallery

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PRESS RELEASE

ANTONY GORMLEY: Insiders

Saturday 10th February - Sunday 22nd April 2001

The New Art Centre launches the programme for 2001 with an exhibition of **Antony Gormley's Insider figures**. These recent works will be shown in the new gallery, there will be a series of related drawings in the orangery and a new solid body sculpture in the park.

Artist's Statement

What is an Insider? An Insider is to the body what memory is to consciousness: a kind of residue, something that is left behind. It is a core rather than a skeleton. It is a way of allowing things that are internal to the body, attitudes and emotions embedded in posture or hidden by gesture, to become revealed. They are equally alien and intimate.

The idea is that the pieces carry in concentrated form the trace of the body and its passage through life. This has a direct relationship to pain. I see these reduced forms as antennae for a particular kind of resilience that exists within all of us, that allows us to bear suffering but is itself created through painful experience. There is no judgement about this. Their bareness is not the nakedness that reveals the flesh, it is the result of having had the flesh taken away, a loss, which is not sentimentalised, but accepted. The Insider tries to up the ante between being and nothingness.

A process of objective mathematical reduction leads to a particular form of abstraction; a found object never revealed before and certainly not invented. It is a body that lies within all of us.

The Insider suggests also that the most intimate is the most strange, that inside each of us is a self that we would maybe rather not recognise and constitutes a kind of third man, the Insider as alien witness.

Antony Gormley November 1999

The *Insiders* represent an important shift in Antony Gormley's work. The figures started as an experiment into the reduction and concentration of the body. It was the reverse procedure from the expansion of the body that concerned the artist in the 1980s and 1990s. When creating the *Angel of the North*, completed in 1998, the artist used a mathematical formula to reduce the body by 12.5 cm overall to enable the radial ribs to exist half within and half without the original body skin. This led Gormley to explore various possibilities for using this method to produce concentrated sculpture and the resulting series consists of fourteen body forms. All of these are a 2/3 reduction of the artist's own body, apart from the last four, which are three female figures and a child just able to stand.

Born in London in 1950, Antony Gormley is one of the most distinguished and prominent British artists working today. His work is well known to an extraordinarily wide audience as a result of showing his work in one man and group exhibitions worldwide and the work *Field*, an installation of thousands of terracotta figures that has been shown in many countries. His most important public commissions in Britain include *Angel of the North* (1998) at Gateshead, Tyne & Wear and *Quantum Cloud* (2000) for the Millennium Dome. Antony Gormley won the Turner Prize in 1994.

Further information and images from:

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