

ANTONY GORMLEY

BLOCKWORKS, 2003 - 2007

The BLOCKWORKS series, still ongoing, makes physical pixelisations with a rising canon of four blocks, each eight times the volume of the one before, keeping the same 1:1:2 proportion.

The first works in this series were made in moulds, working relatively blind, allowing the largest blocks where possible. All the blocks are contained within the constraints of the mould.

This was an attempt to apply the logic of the post and lintel structures of building to the body, making a massive, crystalline precipitate. All of the early BLOCKWORKS allude to these chemical states: CONCENTRATE, PRECIPITATE, SUBLIMATE. They are all evocations of the inside of the body under the skin.

As the series has developed, the challenge is to try to liberate each of the participant blocks into a space of its own, where the dynamic between space and mass permeates the whole body. I try to build the maximum tension between cohesion and expansion (or perhaps breakdown).

All of the BLOCKWORKS try to accept the basic lexicon of the positions of the body at rest, even if some of them, as in PRECIPITATE, have an attitude of impending movement. But the challenge is to attempt to make the dynamic of the hovering blocks, and an intimation of explosive expansion, a substitute for the obsession with movement that has characterised figuration in the history of Western sculpture.

In applying the rules of architecture and its absolute geometries, using an objective register of a particular human life, I try to let an improvised construction evoke an internal state. The success of any one work depends on there being an absolute tension between the sharp material clarity of the steel blocks, and a sense of vulnerability and exposure in the gestalt.

The edge of the works is very important. Light and space eat into the embodied core, so the works have a quality of incomplete resolution. The works demand participation from the viewer.
