

16 May 2007

ANTONY GORMLEY: BLIND LIGHT

Sponsored by Eversheds LLP

17 May – 19 August 2007

The Hayward, as part of the relaunch season of Southbank Centre, is hosting one of the most exciting and ambitious exhibitions of recent years, presenting the first major London showing of the work of Antony Gormley.

The exhibition features a series of brand new monumental works specially conceived for The Hayward's distinctive gallery spaces, which move Gormley's work in a radical new direction. It includes one of the largest ever urban public art commissions, *Event Horizon*, which features 31 sculptural casts of the artist's body on rooftops and public walkways across central London, spanning outwards from the Southbank Centre, subtly punctuating the city skyline.

Awarded the Turner Prize in 1994 and the South Bank Prize for Visual Art in 1999, Antony Gormley is one of the most celebrated artists working in the UK today. Since the 1980s his work has focused consistently on the human figure, using his own body as the starting point, material, tool and subject.

For this exhibition Gormley has created a series of newly commissioned works which take the human form as their starting point but then abstract the figure to the limits of readability. Visitors to the exhibition are immediately confronted by *Space Station* (2007), a colossal six-metre high steel mass, weighing 22 tonnes, which from various vantage points in the gallery reveals itself as a human form curled into a foetal pose. The work is lit solely by the glow from *Blind Light* (2007), a luminous glass room filled with a dense cloud of mist. On entering inside the chamber the visitor is immediately disorientated by the enveloping mist, which reduces visibility to around two-feet, whilst visitors catch a glimpse of the figures moving within.

Whilst downstairs the gallery features these large-scale installations, along with the monumental work *Allotment II* (1996), the light-filled upper galleries provide a contrasting experience with one gallery filled with a spectacular series of suspended figures created in light-infused webs of steel

appear to float mid-air. The interactive experience continues with *Hatch* (2007), a room containing a three-dimensional maze of projecting aluminium tubes which visitors can enter. From outside the room visitors can look through the hollow tube which creates a fractured, kaleidoscopic view of the interior.

Gormley's provocative engagement with our physical and perceptual space continues outside the gallery walls with a major new installation *Event Horizon* (2007). Viewed from the vantage point of The Hayward's three sculpture terraces, the 31 life-sized figures are spread over a 1.5 sq km area, with some figures clearly visible and others sensed only as presences on the horizon. From daily commuters to tourists visiting London for the first time, *Event Horizon* encourages people to look afresh at the city and explores the way people view and interact with their everyday surroundings.

The exhibition has been chosen by Hayward Director, Ralph Rugoff and Curator, Jacky Klein, in consultation with Antony Gormley. As well as the compelling new works the selection includes a selection of earlier works including the vast installation of 300 concrete forms, *Allotment II* (1996) *Mother's Pride* (1982), and reworking of the installation *Drawn* (2000/2007).

Antony Gormley's association with The Hayward began more than ten years ago. His *Field for the British Isles* was shown in 1996 and became one of the most popular works ever shown at the gallery. Part of the Arts Council Collection, *Field* has been touring the UK as part of The Hayward Touring programme and has now been seen by over two million people.

A fully illustrated catalogue has been published by The Hayward to accompany the exhibition. Richly illustrated with newly commissioned photographs of Gormley's work and including an extensive interview by Rugoff and Klein, and essays by prominent authors, W J T Mitchell, Anthony Vidler and Susan Stewart, it offers fresh perspectives on the artist's practice.

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Cornelius Medvei, Managing Partner London Region said: "Eversheds LLP is delighted to sponsor this exhibition, part of our ongoing partnership with The Hayward and our commitment to the Arts and to London. As one of the world's largest law firms, we put a high value on challenging preconceptions and looking at the familiar from a different perspective. It is a great privilege for us to be associated with an event of such significance in the cultural life of London."

Additional support for the exhibition has been received from The Henry Moore Foundation.

Two new books on the artist will be published to coincide with the exhibition. A major new book on Antony Gormley, the first major retrospective of his career, has been published by SteidlMACK and Thames & Hudson has published a paperback edition of Antony Gormley *Inside Australia* which tells the story of the creation of the artist's installation on Lake Ballard, Western Australia.

For further information on the artist visit the website www.antonygormley.com

Antony Gormley: Blind Light opens at The Hayward on 17 May and runs until 19 August.

The Hayward, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London, SE1 8XX

020 7921 0813

www.southbankcentre.co.uk/gormley

New opening hours for The Hayward:

Open daily 10am-6pm:

Late nights Friday and Saturday until 10pm

Advance tickets are available at southbankcentre.co.uk, by calling 0871 663 2519, or in person at The Hayward ticket office.

Full Price	£8.00
Seniors 60+	£7.00
Concessions	£5.00
Students	£5.00
Under 16	£4.00
Under 12 (out of school hours)	Free
Southbank Centre Members	Free

Full price tickets half price on Mondays

Family Ticket (2 adults and 2 children under 16) £18.00

For further PRESS information please contact Sarah Davies, Press Manager, Southbank Centre Press Office on tel: 020 7921 0887/0631 sarah.davies@southbankcentre.co.uk

Notes to Editors:

Southbank Centre each year presents nearly 1,000 paid performances of music, dance, and literature; a dynamic education programme; more than 300 free foyer events and four major art exhibitions at the Hayward Gallery as well as Hayward Touring in more than 100 venues around the country. It attracts more than 3 million visits annually. While the Royal Festival Hall is closed for a major refurbishment, a full programme of activities continues in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery. The Royal Festival Hall re-opens in 2007.

Southbank Centre will be relaunched in June 2007 following the £91 million refurbishment of the Royal Festival Hall and the £20 million redevelopment of the surrounding area and facilities. Funds have been raised from Arts Council England, Heritage Lottery Fund, Department for Culture Media and Sport, London Development Agency and Transport for London – and the rest (50%) from the Centre's own resources, including the nation's most successful audience campaign, support from Trusts and Foundations, major individual donors and the corporate sector, notably a £1m contribution from Southbank Centre's neighbour Shell.

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