

Tony Cragg

28 November 2012 – 12 January 2013
29 Bell Street

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This autumn, Tony Cragg presents a powerful new selection of works at Lisson Gallery in London. This is Cragg's twelfth exhibition at Lisson Gallery, representing more than three decades of collaboration since his groundbreaking first show in 1979.

Cragg's work is based first on observation and understanding of the natural and material worlds, then an intuitive and exuberant engagement with the possibilities of volume, material, scale and image. He continues to find endless possibilities of formal and associative significance in two broad bodies of work: Early Forms, in which vessels are turned into and around themselves to create delightful paradoxes of containment; and Rational Beings, where human profiles provide the sometimes evident, sometimes deeply hidden source material for wild improvisations on natural processes and the forms they give rise to.

New Early Form works in the show, cast in bronze, demonstrate an ever greater boldness and formal assurance. The core of the exhibition however is dedicated to dramatic extensions of the Rational Beings methodology. Cragg explores the tension between dynamic form and surface by using materials with widely varying qualities of mass and surface, including richly veined marble, vibrantly patinated bronze, cast iron and wood. His invention is most notable in the way these new works are both more complex in their detail, and at the same time presented within strong 'whole' forms such as spheres or discs. The exhibition contains work on both intimate and larger sculptural scales, provoking different engagements with the viewer. Most dramatic is a new, never previously shown wooden work on a monumental scale nearly four metres wide and over three metres tall.

LISSON GALLERY

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Tony Cragg's restless, ambitious search for new meanings in the fabric of the world has its core in studio practice, from the intimate discipline of drawing to the material experimentation and large-scale fabrication carried out with his longstanding studio team in Wuppertal in Germany, where the artist has been based since 1977. The past two years have also seen important new presentations of recent and older work at the Louvre in Paris, the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh, the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas, and CAFA Museum in Beijing followed by a tour to other Chinese venues in Chengdu and Shanghai. Most recently, he presented major sculptures in Exhibition Road, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Natural History Museum and the Science Museum in a project curated by Cass Sculpture Foundation.

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Cragg also devotes much of his considerable energy to his sculpture park, Waldfrieden, in Wuppertal and to his important work as Director of the Kunstakademie in Dusseldorf, Germany's leading and historic school of art.

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Notes to Editors

About the Artist

Tony Cragg (b. 1949 Liverpool, England) studied at Gloucestershire College of Art, Cheltenham, from 1969-70, Wimbledon School of Art, London, from 1970-73 and the Royal College of Art, London from 1973-77. Cragg took up his first teaching post at the School of Fine Arts, Metz, before moving to the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in 1978. In 1988 he was awarded a professorship, and was appointed director in 2009.

In 1979, Cragg had his first solo exhibition at the Lisson Gallery, London. This has been followed with a string of national and international solo museum shows, including the Tate Gallery, London (1989); Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (1996); the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (1997); the Tate Liverpool (2000) the Nasher Sculpture Centre, Dallas (2011); the Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh (2011); the Musée du Louvre, Paris (2011) and the CAFA Art Museum, Beijing (2012). His work has been shown in countless important group shows worldwide, including at the Hayward Gallery, London (1987); the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice (1992); MoMA PS1, New York (2000); MoMA Museum of Modern Art, New York (2005); Skulpturepark Köln, Cologne (2007) and the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2008).

Tony Cragg won the Turner Prize in 1988 and represented Britain at the XLIII Venice Biennale in the same year. In 1994, he was elected Royal Academician and in 2007 he was awarded the Praemium Imperiale for sculpture. In 2012 he was awarded the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Most recently, Cragg has installed a series of monumental sculptures along Exhibition Road and inside some of its neighbouring museums, including the Science Museum, Natural History Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. He lives and works in Wuppertal, Germany.

Exhibition Facts

Opening Hours: Monday-Friday 10am-6pm, Saturday 11am-5pm

Location: 29 Bell Street, London, NW1 5BY

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Website: www.lissongallery.com

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