

ANTONY GORMLEY

London 1930

Transfuser IV

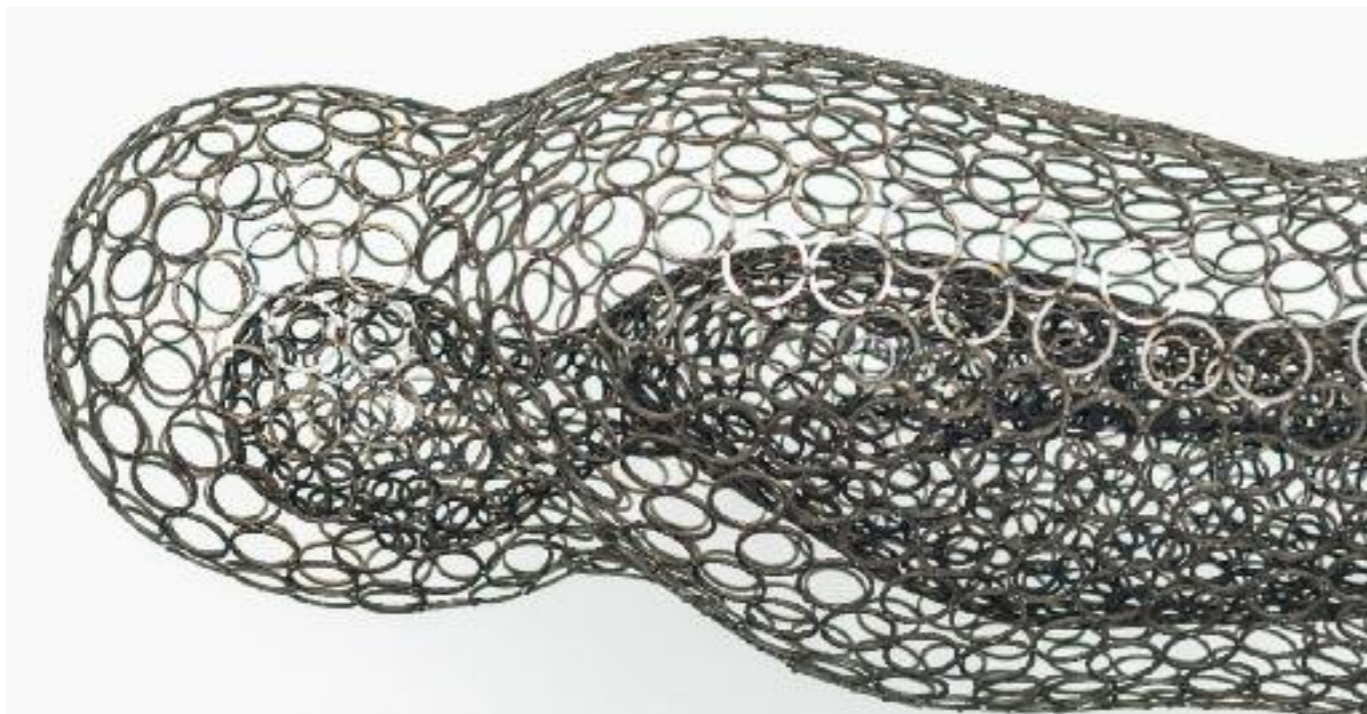
mild steel rings
2002
209 x 63 x 45 cm
82 1/3 x 24 3/4 x 17 3/4 in.
unique piece from a series of four works

Provenance
- Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac
- Private collection, Paris (since 2003)

Exhibited
- Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Villa Kast, Salzburg 2003. Antony Gormley – Standing Matter. P. 49, col. ill. (this work).
- Parco Archeologico di Scolacium, Roccelletta di Borgia, Catanzaro, Italy, 2006. Time Horizon.
- KunstRaum des Deutschen Bundestages, Berlin 2007. Antony Gormley – Feeling Material. (Transfuser III)

Literature
- Bernhard-Heiliger Stiftung, Berlin 2007. Antony Gormley. Published on the occasion of the conferral of the Bernhard Heiliger Award for Sculpture 2007 to Antony Gormley in connection with the exhibition Antony Gormley. Bodies in Space at the Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin. Ill. p. 54 (Transfuser III)





In Antony Gormley's sculptures of the human body, for which the model is almost exclusively the artist himself, the main theme is the self-awareness of the human being in regard to space, its individuality and the investigation of physical presence. One of the most important British sculptors, Gormley has created works that are influenced by a philosophical-humanistic idea of humanity, which, at the start of his career, persuaded him to lead sculpture out of abstraction and geometric forms back to figural representation.

In contrast to the solid, hermetically closed bronze figures of his early works or the most recent blocky sculptures made of piled-up cuboids, the series of works to which *Transfuser IV* belongs has a comparatively delicate, open structure, which, moreover, radiates a special lightness and ephemeral appearance by means of the suspended installation.

The sprawling body, with its back facing upwards, floats free in a shell modelled roughly on the form of the human body. Both parts are constructed from welded metallic rings that form a netlike structure and hover in an almost illusionistic fashion, each being installed with only one anchorage point roughly at the eye level of the observer. Depending on the gentle motion of the two steel corsets and the angle of the observer, this gives rise to differing impressions and view of a work that is actually static in character.

The form that surrounds the body itself, rather like a cocoon or a sarcophagus, seems to resemble an aura as a result of the unstable position caused by the motion – a radiance, which Gormley has also indicated much more clearly in other works, also sculpturally. For Gormley himself, the two forms are to be understood as two skins of the same body, which take up as a theme the latter's almost dissipated materiality and their relationship to, their reality in the space surrounding them. The permeability for light and air of both shells – or bodies – is expressed in the title, for it poses the question of what materials here are actually being decanted, transfused, or are flowing through it. Are the inner and outer spaces connected with each other through these shells, and do they influence one another?

Indeed, it is just in such a bipartite work that Gormley is apparently addressing the question of the individuality of a person, whose body and soul nonetheless display a dichotomy through which the physical takes on an aura of the spiritual. This, in turn, is a fundamental problem of intellectual history, at least in the western world: how does the spirit reside in the body, and how do the physical body and its mental awareness influence each other? These are the issues that Antony Gormley has showcased in *Transfuser IV* in both virtuoso and poetic manner alike.

Or, as Antony Gormley phrased it himself: "Sculpture is a direct way of allowing mind to dwell in matter."

