

TONY CRAGG –

17th November 2018 – 26th January 2019

Opening: Saturday, 17th November, 6 - 8 pm



*Untitled (Multiple Skull)*, 2017  
Wood  
240 (h) x 227 x 172 cm  
95 x 89 x 68 in

Buchmann Galerie is delighted to announce an exhibition featuring new sculptures and drawings by Tony Cragg.

In the main exhibition space, a monumental sculpture from the new series *Skulls*, measuring 240 x 227 x 172 cm, makes a powerful impression with its complex interlock of internal and external spaces. The entire volume of this work constructed from layered plywood is permeated by innumerable close-lying and in some cases interlaced, tube-like forms. They open up a surprising insight into the sculpture's internal depths. Resembling foam and yet conveying solidity, the work evokes organic forms, the innermost part of

which generates the exterior. Tony Cragg explains: "There exists a real psychological pressure and need for the viewer to see beyond the surface and that all the forms we see provide a connection to the greater and more fundamental external and internal forces that make them."

The group of work *Hedges*, inspired by Tony Cragg's childhood memories of landscapes with hedges in his English home region, comprises filigree leaf- and blade-like forms. The red-brown, matt shimmering patina of the steel contributes to these natural associations. However, looking more closely, it becomes clear that the forms, in their buoyancy and arrangement, are synthetic – they are man-made. Like a mobile, the formations seem to float in a perfectly balanced state, as if their shape could alter at any given moment.

*Conversion*, made from aluminium, adopts the leaf-like structure of the *Hedges* but transposes it into a floral setting, which in turn seems to explode the limitations of abstraction with its camouflage glazing.

Tony Cragg is an artist who has always utilized a study of natural science in order to challenge nature. The absolute loyalty to material that Peter Schjeldahl attests to the artist<sup>(1)</sup> meets with a will to form in Tony Cragg's

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work that is not exhausted in the work itself but wrestles with nature. "I am an extreme materialist" the artist maintains repeatedly. And Peter Schjeldahl adds that it is from this alone that the fantastic spectrum of material and formal freedom can emerge, which characterizes this great sculptor's extensive oeuvre.

In the Buchmann Box a selection of recent sculptures and drawings is on display, which exemplify the artist's work as it continues to unfold in an almost encyclopaedic manner. The sculptor's outstanding significance was recognized impressively in 2007, when he received the Praemium Imperiale for Sculpture.

In the last two years several important solo presentations of Tony Cragg's work have taken place, including in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Mudam Luxembourg, and a comprehensive retrospective exhibition *Parts of the World* in the Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal, in 2016. *A Rare Category of Objects* in the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, UK, was one of the most extensive outdoor exhibitions of his art seen to date. A five volume monographic publication examining Tony Cragg's work is currently being issued by the Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Cologne. Besides a volume about his drawings and prints, it comprises three volumes on his sculptures since the late 1960s, as well as a volume of the artist's own writing. Three of these volumes are already available.

For more information about the artist and for images you are welcome to contact the gallery at any time.

1.) Peter Schjeldahl, Cragg's Big Bang, in: Anthony Cragg, *Parts of the World*, Cologne 2016, pp. 155-166