

# TONY CRAGG

## AT REGGIA DI VENARIA

CURATED BY GUIDO CURTO

**From 9 June 2022 to 8 January 2023**

*In collaboration with*

*Tony Cragg*

*Tucci Russo Studio of Contemporary Art, Torre Pellice/Turin*

*Skulpturenpark Waldfrieden, Wuppertal, Germany*



Photo by Pino dell'Aquila

Three very tall bronze sculptures with the unusual shapes of sinuously twisted columns and elliptical spirals that rise towards the sky in a seemingly precarious balance, stand out in Corso Sebastopoli, Turin, right in front of the entrance to the Olympic Stadium, the former municipal stadium so renamed during the 2006 Turin Winter Olympics.

The triple installation, named *Punti di Vista* (Points of view), was commissioned by the De Fornaris foundation for the occasion as a symbol of the Olympic event to **Tony Cragg, one of the most successful British contemporary artists in the world**, born in Liverpool in 1949 and resident in Wuppertal, Germany, since 1977, where he has created a large sculpture park with exhibitions and works by many famous contemporary artists.

After a 16-year-long absence, Cragg returns to Turin, invited by Guido Curto, the general director of the Consortium of Royal Savoy Residences, to hold an exhibition at Reggia di Venaria. From 9 June 2022 to 8 January 2023 a selection of ten sculptures created between 1997 and 2021 will be placed **along the permanent exhibition tour of the Reggia** that starts from the Court of Honour, passes through the Upper Park of the Reggia's Gardens and ends in the atrium of the Juvarra Stables.



Tony Cragg, *Runner*, 2015  
Bronze, 420 x 280 x 158 cm  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photo by Pino Dell'Aquila



Tony Cragg, *Senders*, 2018  
Fibreglass, 650 x 290 x 250 cm  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photo by Pino Dell'Aquila

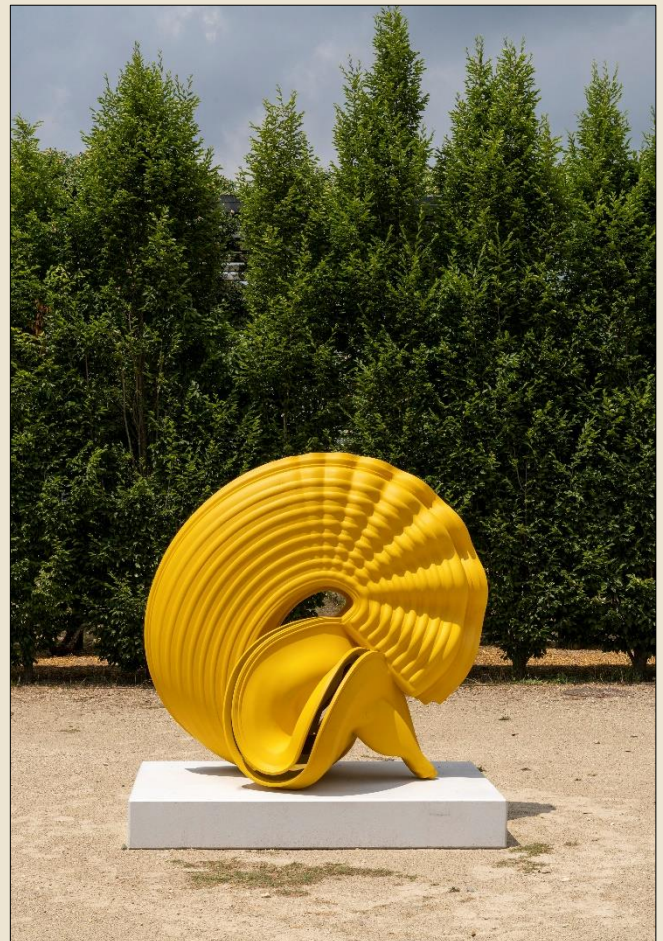
Shaped using various materials such as bronze, wood, fibreglass and steel, these large works all feature the typical wavy and sinuous lines that seem fashioned on a gigantic potter's lathe and recall the *genius loci* of the Reggia in **a sort of post-modern redefinition of the Baroque and Rococo style.**



Tony Cragg's work explores the multiple relationships existing between human beings and the environment. Using a wide selection of materials and sculptural techniques, the **artist thematises the complex connection between the figure**, the object and the landscape which, in Cragg's view, includes both geological and microbiological systems as well as urban and industrial contexts.



Tony Cragg, *Manipulation*, 2008  
Bronze, 225 x 224 x 240 cm  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photo by Pino Dell'Aquila



Tony Cragg, *Outspan*, 2008  
Bronze, 190 x 200 x 124 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Tucci Russo Studio of  
Contemporary Art, Torre Pellice/Turin  
Photo by Pino Dell'Aquila

The focal point of Tony Cragg's artistic work is also hinged upon an incessant process that leads him to **explore the possibilities of the material and to remodel the world around us**. The artist says: "There are many more things that don't exist than those that do exist" referring to situations that are still beyond our perception.

For Cragg, sculpture is a method of opening this enormous potential to new forms and meanings as well as dreams and the languages associated with them.

Alongside Tony Cragg's exhibition stands the work *Dove le stelle si avvicinano di una spanna in più* (*Where the stars are coming one span closer*) by Giovanni Anselmo, another great contemporary master whose works have been exhibited at Venaria for a long time. This sculpture, despite having been permanently exhibited in the centre of the Gardens' Grand Parterre for several years, has never had an official presentation to date.



Giovanni Anselmo, *Where the stars are coming one span closer*, 2001-2013  
Six slabs of African Black granite with inscriptions.  
Reggia di Venaria, Upper Park, Juvarra's Grand Parterre

Giovanni Anselmo, an artist of extraordinary stature, was born in 1934 in Borgofranco d'Ivrea though he has lived and worked in Turin all his life. Anselmo, aged 88, deserves a proper tribute for being a leading exponent of Arte Povera and a key figure of the group of artists mostly from Turin (including Mario and Marisa Merz, Giuseppe Penone and Gilberto Zorio) who rose to international fame in the 1970s thanks to the intellectual commitment of late art critic and curator Germano Celant. Consisting of **six gigantic slabs of black granite** bearing a deeply-etched inscription that gives the work its name, the installation recalls **a sort of bradyseism approximately as high as the size of an open hand**. The work, on which visitors can stand, allows the stars, which follow each other day and night on the vertical line of the installation, to come a span closer.

This new exhibition resumes and strengthens the **connection between the Venaria Residence and contemporary art** that was initiated by the first director of the Reggia, Alberto Vanelli, with the inauguration of the *Garden of Fluid Sculptures* by Giuseppe Penone – the founding core of the 'contemporary Reggia' project.



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## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Tony Cragg** (Liverpool, UK, 1949) has lived and worked in Wuppertal, Germany, since 1977, where, in 2008, he established the Skulpturenpark Waldfrieden, a foundation that bears his name. Among his recent personal exhibitions, it is worth mentioning the following: HEART-Herning Museum of Contemporary Art, Herning, Denmark, 2022; Haus am Waldsee, Berlin, Germany, 2021; Houghton Hall, Norfolk, UK, 2021; The Boboli Gardens, Florence, 2019; Yorkshire Sculpture Park, UK (2017); National Museum of Havana, Cuba (2017); MUDAM Luxembourg, Luxembourg (2017); Ludwig Museum, Koblenz, Germany (2017); Wroclaw Contemporary Art Museum, Wroclaw, Poland (2017); The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, Russia (2016); Von der Heydt Museum, Wuppertal, Germany (2016); Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece (2015); Gothenburg International Sculpture Exhibition, Gothenburg, Sweden (2015). In 1988, he represented Great Britain at the 43<sup>rd</sup> Venice Biennale and, in the same year, he was awarded the Turner Prize by the Tate Gallery in London, UK. Elected Royal Academician by the Royal Academy of Arts in 1994, he received the Praemium Imperiale for Sculpture from the Japan Art Association in 2007. He was named CBE in 2002 and Knight's Bachelor in 2016.

**Giovanni Anselmo** (Borgofranco d'Ivrea, 1934) lives and works in Turin. The first personal exhibition in 1968 was followed by numerous exhibitions in Italian and international museums and institutions, among which the most recent are listed below: Academy of San Luca, Rome (2019); Querini Stampalia Foundation, Venice (2017); Rivoli Castle's Museum of Contemporary Art, Turin (2016); Musée d'art Modern et Contemporain de Saint-Étienne, France (2015); Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Switzerland (2013); MAMbo, Bologna (2006); Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, UK (2005); Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Germany (2004). In 2019 he was awarded the prestigious President of the Republic award by the National Academy of San Luca; in 1990 he received the Golden Lion prize for Painting. He participated in the Venice Biennale in 1972, 1978, 1980, 1986, 1990, and 2007 and in Documenta, in Kassel, in 1972 and 1982.

## **INFORMATION AND TICKET OFFICE:**

**Where:** Reggia di Venaria

**When:** from Thursday, 9 June 2022 to Sunday, 8 January 2023

**How:** the exhibition is included in the tour of the Reggia and the Gardens

For more information: **[lavenaria.it](http://lavenaria.it)**