

Thomas Houseago *Almost Human*

15 March – 14 July 2019

Press preview : Thursday 14 March, 11 am – 2 pm

Official opening : Thursday 14 March, 6 – 10 pm

The Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris is presenting Thomas Houseago's first retrospective in France.

Now a major figure on the international art scene, sculptor and painter Thomas Houseago was born in Leeds (UK) in 1972. He has lived and worked in Los Angeles since 2003 and his work is represented in numerous museum and private collections. Through his use of materials including wood, plaster, iron and bronze, he is part of a sculptural tradition – Henry Moore, Georg Baselitz, Bruce Nauman – focusing on the human figure in space.

For the artist, the monumental spaces housing the exhibition are an integral part of *Almost Human*. The building itself, the Alfred Auguste Janniot bas-reliefs of 1937, and the Eiffel Tower contribute to the exhibition, anchoring the works in this architectural setting. Often large in scale and displaying the traces of their making, Houseago's sculptures fluctuate between forcefulness and fragility.

Almost Human follows the ongoing evolution of Houseago's work from the 1990s to the present. In addition, the exhibition will include *Striding Figure II (Ghost)*, a monumental work in bronze installed on the museum's esplanade.

For the most part chronological, the presentation is arranged into four rooms that represent both the artist's major geographical phases and his intimate relationship with his materials.

The exhibition begins with the dynamic, anthropomorphic sculptures that compose Houseago's early output and reflect the teeming atmosphere of his studios of that time. His use of raw plaster, at times tinted, heightens the impression of works in search of equilibrium.

The second room centers on hybrid and experimental pieces that bridge the gap between the early figuration and the immersive, architectural sculpture included in his current work.

The third room is home to monumental and darker visions. *L'homme pressé*, a towering bronze colossus stands in opposition to the horizontality of *Wood Skeleton I (Father)*, a carving of lying figure, while the massive *Black Paintings* series, rife with the sense of isolation and brooding introspection, line the walls in a frieze.

The fourth room is devoted to the immersive sculpture, *Cast Studio (stage – chairs – bed – mound – cave – bath – grave)*, made especially for the exhibition. Accompanied by a film and photographs that document its making, this work, cast from clay, acts as a transcript of the artist's movements and actions, marking Houseago's return to the performative dimension present in his early work.

Éditions Paris Musées will be publishing catalogues in French and English.

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Xavier Hufkens



Thomas Houseago

Serpent, 2008

Tuf-Cal, hemp, metal bar, Oilbar, pencil, wood

244 x 155 x 120 cm

Baron Guillaume Kervyn de

Volkaersbeke Collection

© Thomas Houseago

Photo : Fredrik Nilsen Studio

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Museum director

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Exhibition curator

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Visitor information

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de la Ville de Paris

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ⓘ During the renovations, please use the Seine-side entrance:
12-14 Avenue de New York 75116
Paris – Metro: Alma-Marceau/Iéna

Open Tuesday – Sunday

10 am – 6 pm

Open late Thursdays 10 pm

Admission

Full rate : 10 €

Concessions : 8 €

Cultural program

Information and bookings

Tel. 01 53 67 40 80



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