

Antony Gormley's *Event Horizon* successfully created interaction between the city and citizens. It consists of 31 life-size sculptures of Gormley's body cast from typical material for public sculpture, iron and glass fiber. The four placed on ground are made of iron, allowing viewers to feel the stillness. For instance, the one at Statue Square is made of iron, allowing visitors to touch it and feel the stillness, and it also represents a normal citizen facing the statue of the square. (see Figure 1) Glass fiber, a strong and lightweight material, made it possible to install twenty-seven sculpture on top of buildings for public viewing.

Event Horizon depicts our existence and position in city and encouraged citizens to 're-assess our own position in the world'¹. Although these nude male statues are of the artist himself, they are rather generalized for personalization of these bodies with subjective emotions. According to Gormley, the sculptures indicate 'a subjective place that could be anybody's but indicates a human space within space at large'.² However, compared to the idealized statue with designed balanced gesture and polished surface like *Anavysos Kourus* (see Figure 2), Gormley's are simply standing straightly, being even 'unfinished' with rough surface, angular foot and strange 'buttons' for assembling. Admittedly, unlike the ancient Greek statues that intend to show a god, Gormley's work only represents a body for subjective perception, and there is no need to be precise and polished. However, these identical roughly cast figures are arguably symbol of mass production with contemporary industrialization. Like *Marilyn Diptych* by Andy Warhol (see Figure 3), figures are produced identically like products. Instead of capturing an identifiable character, Gormley made them obscure, so viewers could assess the indifferent existence of citizens in the city. Installed in different locations, identical figures create various effects. Statues on ground are approachable for physical interaction, while those on the top of buildings are visually shocking. This contrasting effect of scale is obvious when multiple statues appear in sight simultaneously near City Gallery (see Figure 4). Although some declare that these sculptures are related to suicide, this should not be the intention of Gormley. Their upright, static pose and their uniform coloration and their reproduction discouraged misperception of suicide.³ Such setting on top shows the tiny scale of people in contrast with skyscrapers, which is ignorable as a subtle composition of a contemporary metropolitan.

^{1,2} Gormley, Antony. Accessed February 21, 2016. <http://www.eventhorizon.hk/en>.

³ Taylor, Lib. "The Hanging Man: Death, Indeterminacy and the Event." *Performance Research* 15(1) (2010): 4-13. Accessed February 21, 2016. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13528165.2010.485757>.

The procedure of seeking statues further promotes interaction between citizen and the city. Gormley states that ‘the transfer the stillness of sculpture to stillness of observer is exciting’⁴, which shows his intention for this sharing of reflectivity. Since passers-by would look up as what other viewers do, *Event Horizon* captured viewers imitating behavior. Visitors would discuss with friends, ask about its meaning, and post pictures on Instagram and Facebook. Hence, it managed to "activate the skyline in order to encourage people to look around"⁵ as intended. Citizens could know more about the city by this public exhibition, and understand its meaning.

As Gormley stated, the tension between the palpable, perceivable and imaginable is heightened. Each statue looks out straightly, although their horizon is blocked by buildings, or limited by natural horizontal line, as we are. Viewers are outside the ‘event horizon’ of statues which viewers do not see, and they are obvious blocked by the buildings. Since statues may disappear as viewers move, there is mismatching between vision and recognition. Viewers questions themselves on the existence of the statues when they become no longer perceivable, due to the limitation on palpability. Imagination helps here, to convince the viewers that statues do exists when we see them. Furthermore, viewers would realize the limitation of their horizon, and realize the existence beyond their sight and beyond the city. However, if we ‘overuse’ the imagination, we likely perceive other objects or people as statues (see figure 5). But then we could correct this superfluous imagination by checking the map, which means knowledge helps us to modify some misleading perception.

In a word, Event Horizon promotes interaction between citizens and city by encouraging them to assess their position in the city, to look into the city and consider what is beyond the city.

^{4, 5} Gormley, Antony. "Antony Gormley *EVENT HORIZON*." 2007. Accessed February 21, 2016. <http://www.antonygormley.com/projects/item-view/id/256>.



Figure 1: Statues at the Statue Square

Figure 2: *Anavysos Kourus* Figure 3: *Marilyn Diptych*



Figure 4: Statues near City Gallery



Figure 5: A statue or not?



^{4, 5} Gormley, Antony. "Antony Gormley *EVENT HORIZON*." 2007. Accessed February 21, 2016. <http://www.antonygormley.com/projects/item-view/id/256>.