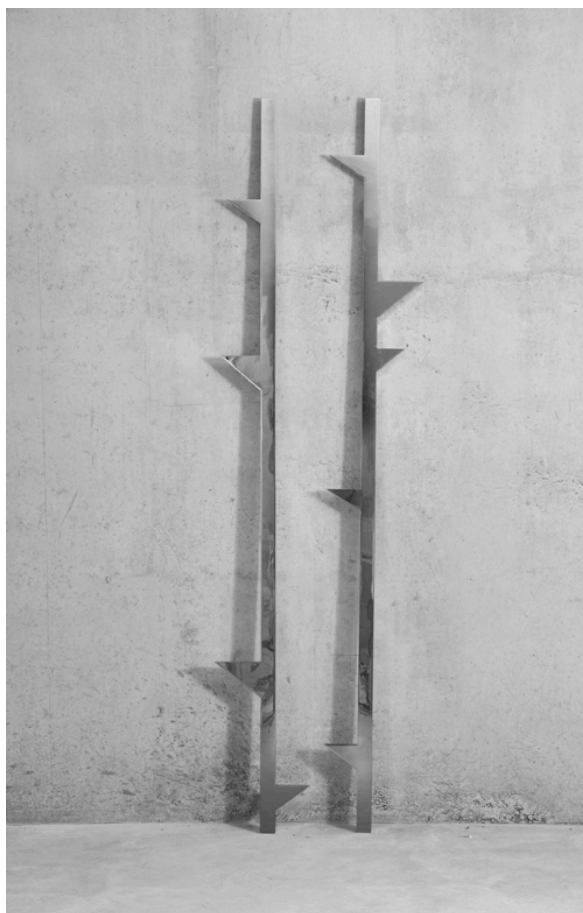


# GALERIE THADDAEUS ROPAC

LONDON PARIS SALZBURG



**Not Vital, *David and Goliath*, 2016, Stainless steel, Each 300 x 6 x 4 cm**  
Courtesy Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac London · Paris · Salzburg  
Photo: Joschi Herczeg

## **NOT VITAL** ***DAVID & GOLIATH***

**29 JULY – 31 AUGUST 2017**

**Opening: Saturday 29 July 2017, 10.30 am**

Salzburg Halle  
Vilniusstraße 13, 5020 Salzburg, Austria

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## PRESS RELEASE

Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac presents *David & Goliath*, an exhibition by Swiss artist Not Vital in the Salzburg Halle space. Combining sculptures, installations and works on paper, the exhibition features a selection of his most recent works.

Not Vital's practice is influenced by his nomadic lifestyle. Born in 1948 in Sent, a village located in scenic valley of the Engadin in the Swiss Alps. At the age of 18, he started travelling the world, immersing himself in the cultures of the places where he settled successively: New York, India, Niger, Brazil, Patagonia, the Philippines. Since 2008, he has established a studio in Beijing, where he spends five months a year. He met skilled craftsmen who allowed him to apprehend materials in a free way and imagine without technical boundaries.

The exhibition will present ceramic *HEAD* sculptures, made in Jingdezhen, the city renowned for being the capital of ceramics in China. Drawing inspiration from the impressive chimneys used to fire the kiln, Not Vital adapted the ancestral techniques of Chinese ceramics to produce totem-like sculptures, among the highest ever realized in this medium.

Not Vital will also present five marble sculptures made of 'Dali stone', a type of white marble named after the region of Dali in southern China. The marble pieces have been sliced open to reveal the hidden landscape-like lines within the texture, echoing the rugged alpine scenery of his birthplace.

His series of *POLES* (2016) is a reference to the road signs used during the periods of snow in his native Engadine. Presented individually or in groups against a wall, they become totems featuring at their top elements reminiscent of sculptures previously realized by the artist.

Like Henry Moore, the artist is also interested in the sculptural presence of the bone and gives the skeleton an architectural dimension. *Pelvis* (2008) is an enlarged version of a camel's pelvic bone that epitomizes the close relationship Not Vital maintains with the animal world in his work.

Inspired by his on-going nomadism, *A Plane, A Boat, A Car, A Sled* (2011) combines a variety of forms to materialize an imaginary and universal vehicle that expresses the multiplicity of means of transport necessary to reach the remote places where he settles.

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The broad diversity of his work has always been inspired by the relationship between sculpture and architecture but also by nature, exploring the boundaries between abstract and figurative forms. Not Vital's work is marked by a large array of media such as plaster, steel, marble and ceramic. Using their potentiality with extreme dexterity, as if they were as many different languages, he likes to twist their usual function to give them another way of being.

His work has been featured in the 49th Venice Biennale, Italy (2001) entitled *Plateau of Humanity* curated by Harald Szeemann. Major recent exhibitions followed at the Kunsthalle Bielefeld/Germany (2005), The Arts Club of Chicago/Illinois (2006), Ullens Center for Contemporary Art Beijing/China (2011), the Cabinet d'Arts Graphiques, Musées d'Art et d'Histoire Geneva/Switzerland (2014) and the Museo d'arte di Mendrisio/Switzerland (2014–2015). In 2013, the large-scale installation *700 Snowballs* was on view on the Isola di San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice, Italy. In 2016, the Yorkshire Sculpture Park hosted the first major UK exhibition of Not Vital's work and his largest museum project to date.

Not Vital has established a foundation in Ardez, a small historic village in the Engadine, in 2003 with the aim of preserving the cultural assets of the valley. He also has a sculpture park near Sent and has realised contemplative buildings all over the world, among which *NotOna Tunnel* and *NotOna Island*, both 2009 in Patagonia, Chile.