

ANTONY GORMLEY

BODILY FLUIDS, 1986 - 1992

'Gormley's use of his own bodily fluids as a medium for drawing spanned a number of years, from the mid-1980s through to the early 1990s. To Gormley, blood and semen are life materials which, in their giving, imply sacrifice. Thresholds are crossed "between inner and outer and between celebration and pollution". That which has been removed from the body is nonetheless memorialised in the work: "pain and pleasure, the putrefied and the sublimated". The membrane of the paper is seen as a place of becoming, of both form and meaning. In the transfer of such particularly resonant fluids, the drawing becomes the site of new life, possibility and energy. The first drawing in this series, UNTITLED, 1988, employs a jet of blood that spontaneously issued from a burst capillary on the artist's left middle finger to create an abstract trail across the paper. In others, puddles or drips of blood and/or semen are allowed to fall upon moistened paper, creating an explosive, cosmic effect.'

Text by Anna Moszynska, from ANTONY GORMLEY DRAWING, published by The British Museum Press, London, 2002
