

ANTONY GORMLEY

CHICORY COFFEE, 1995 - 1996

'By the mid 1990s, Gormley was experimenting with chicory coffee substitute as a medium, a liquid material with a strong colour and pungent smell. More fluid than linseed oil, more akin to watercolour, its rich colouration and propensity to either dot or puddle in dark tones when tipped over the paper in liquid form is very apparent. As with some of the blood drawings of the early 1990s, Gormley uses the material singularly, without charcoal or additional pigment. Being less viscous, the chicory is easier to control and consequently results in the clear outlines for the blocked-in figure compositions found here. More often than not, the figure is now clearly juxtaposed against the ground, but a sense of fluidity is still suggested by different fields "touching, bleeding, osmosing" at intervals across each image. In the works such as ACROSS and CHANNEL, the fields encroach upon the external integrity of the body, partially obscuring it from view, but in TAKE CARE and YOU KNOW, their effect is confined to the interior of each figure, suggesting the potential viral contamination of aids. Some of the multi-figural drawings in this series relate to previous sculptural ideas. LEARNING TO THINK (AGAIN) for example, seems to be a meditation on the suspended five figure lead ensemble which he made four years earlier.'

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