

ANTONY GORMLEY

SUBJECT, KETTLE'S YARD, CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND, 2018

SUBJECT by Antony Gormley is the first solo artist exhibition to be staged in Kettle's Yard's new galleries. Gormley's site-specific installation will ambitiously push and test the boundaries of these spaces. The exhibition will include both new work and works not previously exhibited in the UK.

Taking as its basis the 'coordinate' as a means of measurement of space and of the body as space, SUBJECT is conceived as a site-specific installation that will occupy the whole site, including both galleries, the Learning Studio and the Research Space. The exhibition will continue Gormley's fundamental investigations into the relationships between the human body and space. Through an encounter with single works, visitors will experience sculpture as a direct and powerful physical dialogue with space, the body as a spatial vehicle both their own and the displaced and indexical trace of the artist's. Conceived as an intervention which breaches the walls of the exhibition galleries, the installation will highlight some of Gormley's key concerns over the past forty years. The works will consider how sculpture can activate both the space that it occupies and the body of the viewer, whilst also extending these dialogues to reflect upon broader metaphysical concerns.

Two taut steel lines will shoot through the galleries breaching their entrances and intersecting at head height, crossing the space but never touching. Another line will cut the Sackler Gallery vertically from ceiling to floor. This work, CO-ORDINATE IV (2018), will create a field in which the viewer is implicated. Like highly tuned strings of a musical instrument, these sculptural axes will act as both measures and energisers of the gallery spaces that urge the viewer to look and think beyond the gallery walls.

Inside the Sackler Gallery will stand a single figure, composed of steel rods that map the human body using the same three coordinates as CO-ORDINATE IV through their precise placement at 90 degrees to one another. The start of a new series of works, SUBJECT (2018), that gives its title to the show as a whole, is a meticulously constructed form in which mass and space create an implicit order. Rather than representing the body, or being concerned with appearance, this sculpture will become, like CO-ORDINATE IV, an instrument for projection, empathy and mindfulness.

In the adjacent gallery will be EDGE III (2012), a solid iron body that stands on the wall at the height of a bed. Its unusual placement, spinning the orientation of the space by 90 degrees, acting as a lever on the space prompting a sense of disequilibrium and suggesting that the stability of the world and therefore our orientation within it is relative.

In the Clore Learning Studio will hang SLIP I (2007), a work that maps a falling body in space using fine steel bars that follow a system of meridians familiar to us from a geographer's globe. This accurate mapping of the diving body is held within an expanded space frame derived from that same body. The inner body frame has fallen inside the outer. Both the inner and outer bodies are suspended in arrested fall.

In the Edlis Neeson Research Space, INFINITE CUBE II (2018) will be shown for the first time in the UK. This work was made in collaboration with the artist's friend Gabriel Mitchell, who died in 2012. Gabriel was obsessed with the grid and he and Gormley had talked about the possibility of making a three-dimensional cube with the potential of infinite expansion. Both Gormley and Mitchell were intrigued by 'The Aleph', a short story by Jorge Luis Borges in which the concept of a point in space that contains all other points is described. Measuring one metre cubed and constructed of one-way mirror glass and 1,000 LED lights, the path of the viewer and their angle of view when encountering INFINITE CUBE will create an ever-changing perspective of points of light, curving endlessly into infinity.
