

Antony Gormley SUBJECT

Kettle's Yard 22 May – 29 August 2018

Secondary School Teachers' Notes

Antony Gormley SUBJECT is a site-specific installation responding to Kettle's Yard and its new spaces. The exhibition invites the audience to consider how they encounter art and architecture through the experience of being in a body. The exhibition continues Gormley's fundamental investigations into the relationships between the human body and space. Each gallery contains a single work, but the exhibition extends to the bodies of the visitors moving amongst it, and their imaginative responses, as well as their memories of the work that they carry on to new places after they have left.

COORDINATE IV (2018)



The first work visitors encounter is '*Coordinate IV*' - two horizontal steel lines that shoot through the galleries at head height, and one vertical steel line, each passing each other and intersecting, but never touching. Together, they create a field of measurement that the visitor is implicated in, measuring and energising the space of the galleries and our bodies' movements within them.

SUBJECT (2018)



Subject is composed of steel rods brought together using the same 90 degree angles of *Coordinate IV* to create a meticulously constructed form of mass and space that maps the human body. Together, they create an instrument that the visitor can project their thoughts and reflections into, inviting empathy, mindfulness and reflection.

Discussion-Starters and Imagination-Expanders

- Study the material of the figures. How would a change in material affect your interpretation of the persons?
- Gormley has placed his figures in a range of different places and spaces. What kinds of other locations can you imagine these figures in? Where would they feel 'at home', where would they feel strange?
- Imagine the space without the figures. How would the space feel different? Is there anything about the space you would not have noticed without the sculptures bringing it to your attention?

EDGE III (2012)

Edge III is a solid iron body installed with its feet perpendicular to the wall at the height of a bed, turned to face the ceiling. Although possible to read as a body at rest, the work's lack of firm support is unsettling, suggesting that the stability of the world, and our position within it, is relative. As the viewer encounters this work in conversation with their own bodies' positions and experiences, the sculpture can also begin to activate wider metaphysical questions that go beyond the physical world.

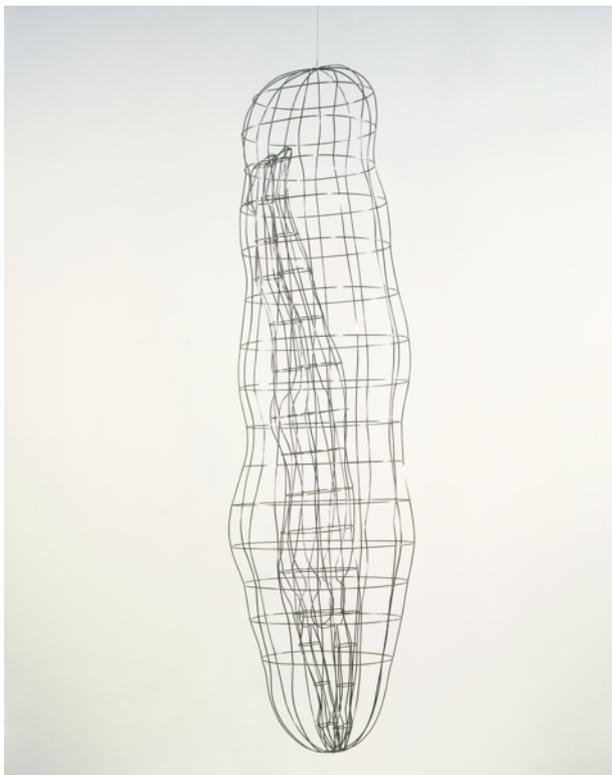
Discussion-Starters and Imagination-Expanders

- If there was a sculpture of you in this space, where would it be? What would it be doing?



SLIP I (2007)

Slip I hangs from the ceiling of the Clore Learning Studio, mapping a falling body in space. Its fine steel bars measure the body and the space it occupies like meridians on a globe. Both the body and the space are suspended in arrested fall.



This map of a diving body held within an expanded structure suggests both freedom and enclosure: the figure hangs unaided, seemingly free falling yet still contained within an external frame.

Creative Writing Activity: *WHO IS THIS?*

Who is this? What has just happened? Write a short story that tells the story of this moment, and what came before and will come afterwards. You might want to include how has this person ended up here in Kettle's Yard...

INFINITE CUBE (2018)



Infinite Cube is a one metre cubed construction of one-way mirror glass and 1,000 LED lights that creates multiple planes of infinitely receding points of light. The work's cube structure refers to the four structural bases of our DNA, and the title draws inspiration from *The Aleph*, Jorge Luis Borges' short story about a point in space that contains all other points, from which one can simultaneously see everything in the universe, from every angle. When encountering this work, the path of the viewer and their angle of view will create ever-changing perspectives and lines that curve endlessly into infinity.

Kinetic Gallery Activities:

LIFE-SIZE

The human body often serves as a measuring device: for example, distance can be counted in footsteps and height in heads. The body is a self-referential measurement system: a person's arm span is generally a close approximation of their height; a head is typically between one sixth and one eighth of the total body length, and a femur roughly one fourth.

- Look at the space of the gallery, and try to describe how big it is.
- Reflect - what kind of language are you using? Are you making comparisons with other places, or using precise numeric measurements, or approximate ones based on people?
- Now use your own body to measure the space. How many of your feet does it take to measure from one side to the other? Or how many normal steps does it take to cross the room?
- Draw up a 'measured plan' of the gallery using your own body's units instead of centimetres or inches

ENCOUNTERS

Keep a log-book of the encounters between still bodies (Gormley's figures) and moving bodies (exhibition visitors) in the Gallery:

- Choose a sculpture and a comfortable spot where you can see it clearly, but from a slight distance.
- Observe the people who come close to the figure in a given time window (e.g. 15 minutes). Write a bullet point or other note for each person, briefly describing the encounter between the visitor and figure each time.
- Can you discern any patterns of behaviour?
 - How close do people come to the figure?
 - What part of the figure do they study in detail (if any)?
 - How do they stand or walk around the figure?
 - How do their bodies act in response to viewing the figure?