

# Antony Gormley SUBJECT

## Kettle's Yard 22 May – 29 August 2018

### Primary 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

- Who do you think this person is?
- What do you think this person might be thinking or feeling?
- If the person started to move, which body parts would move? How and where would they move?

## 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.

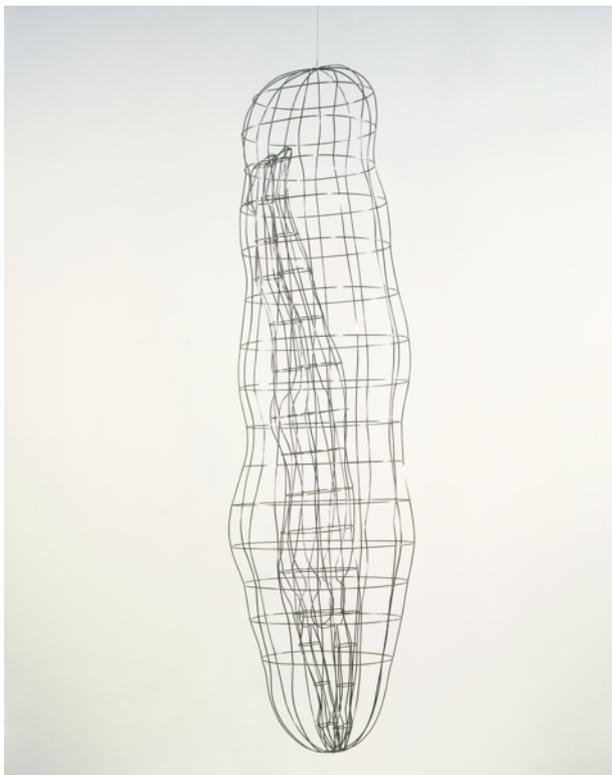
### Discussion-Starters and Imagination-Expanders

- 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.

- 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. If your foot was the measure, how many 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? How about little steps, fairy steps or giant steps?

### Back at school:

- Cut a piece of string to your own height.
- Make marks on it for other measurements – such as your feet, width, or hand-span.
- Use your string to measure our your classroom, corridor or playground
- Draw up a 'measured plan' of these spaces using your own body units (e.g. feet, steps and hands) instead of centimetres or inches.

## STILL LIFE

We spend most of our time moving in, around and through space. What does our body tell about space, and vice versa, when we are still, as unmoving as Gormley's figures?

- Pick a spot where there is lots going on – perhaps your school hall or playground - and stand or sit as still as possible.
- Study the elements that continue to move in your environment even as you remain still.
  - Which parts of your surroundings move irrespective of your body's movement (e.g. fluttering curtains, flickering shadows from tree-tops, branches moving in the wind)?
  - Which parts of a building move when your body moves (e.g. opening doors or windows, creaking floor boards)?
- Mark out the moments of movements on a sketch plan of the building or draw a cartoon strip of the 'moving moments' you've experienced.