UNIVERSE
BODY MYTH AND
ART 品位艺术

迷惑之成长

卡普尔于1954年出生在印度孟买，他的母亲是一位犹太人，父亲是印度海军的水文专家。卡普尔的童年时期，父亲大部分时间都是在海洋上收集数据并绘制海图。在这个国际化精英家庭里，卡普尔被送到一所声望很高的全男生寄宿学校，在那里，男孩们对欧洲的了解和对印度的了解一样多。由于接受了这种独特的教育，加上家庭内部的多样性与前瞻性思维，卡普尔童年时的感觉就像是局外人，无法确定自己在印度社会中的身份。十几岁时，他的归属感演变成深刻的内心动荡。“我被深深地钳制了，内心充满了冲突，我不知道该如何解决。”

卡普尔小时候很喜欢整理母亲的画，但他无意成为一名画家。17岁时，他和他的兄弟用免费机票去了以色列，在那里他体验了集体生活的沉重和压力。这个带有理想主义色彩的生活经历，对年轻的卡普尔来说是一次极好的解放，他打算留在以色列学习成为一名工程师。但是，三年后他意识到自己并不擅长数学，开始认真考虑要成为一名艺术家。他决心要为自己的职业生涯开辟新的道路。在欧洲待了两年，他于1973年在伦敦定居，就读伦敦艺术大学。动荡不安的心此时安静下来，他意识到自己正在做自己真正喜欢的事情。

进入切尔西艺术学院攻读研究生，一年后卡普尔退学。他不确定自己的艺术事业会走向何方，决定回不那么熟悉的印度去看看。那是在1979年，他回忆说：“我突然意识到我在学校里的所有事情都与我在印度看到的东西有联系。”而这次的拜访让他对出生地有了新的观点：在印度的传统市场上，商贩们会把各种颜色的色粉在盘子里堆砌成一个个小山，这启发了卡普尔创作出自己的第一个重要的艺术品。用饱和的颜料色粉和几何形状创建了极为简单的雕塑组合《100个名字》。这些物体似乎是从地面或墙壁中生长出来的，粉末定义了其形状，暗示着在表面之下有一些东西，就像一座冰山从潜意识里冒出来。操纵观众对空间和形式的感受。

人们最初认为卡普尔是一位女性画家，尽管存在这种偏见，他还是迅速在国际艺术界获得认可。虽然卡普尔的许多雕塑在材料和意义上都显得很沉重，与年轻的英国艺术家在90年代以震撼人心的艺术风格时不同，卡普尔更喜欢采用一种温和的方法，用不那么直截了当，但引人注目的形式吸引观众。

生命与神话

从90年代中期开始，卡普尔扩大了对材料的使用范围，包括抛光的不锈钢，后来的红釉和水。看起来卡普尔是在向极简主义的信念致敬，包括轻巧的体积、抽象、特定的材料、饱和的色彩和简洁的形式。同时他还探索了不同材料的视觉效果。然而，卡普尔的许多雕塑从材料和意义上都显得很沉重，与年轻的英国艺术家在90年代以震撼人心的技艺风格时不同，卡普尔更喜欢采用一种温和的方法，用不那么尖锐但引人注目的形式吸引观众。

《天镜》由一个20英尺宽的圆环组成，该圆环朝着天空倾斜，卡普尔把世界颠倒了，牢固地种植在地面上的抛光不锈钢表面提供了一个直径，它可以观看不断变化和经过的云层，通过远离颜色和石头，转
而使用镜面表面来制作作品，卡普尔更加明显地希望他的观众反思自己周围的环境和自己。卡普尔本人称此作品为“非物体”，因为其反射面使雕塑在周围环境中消失。

真正让卡普尔声名鹊起的，是他在近二十年里巨大的城域定制作品，他在伦敦泰特现代美术馆的雕塑被认为是他最著名的作品，也是卡普尔早期的大型雕塑作品之一。《马丘比丘》，以古希腊的里昂斯大命名，后者是古罗马骑士的领袖。而作品则常用于崇拜雕像的仪式，所以整部作品由红色PVC布覆盖在铜框架上构成一个巨大的双喇叭形结构。当椅听音乐而人沉浸时，卡普尔试图使用视觉刺激来模仿相同的效果。喇叭是类最实用的扩音器的乐器，好像会宣布要引起注意。此外，它还像一个漏斗，在本质上又似乎对身体和生命的诞生充满暗示。观众被作品吸引入深邃的神话与日常的丰富经验之中。《马丘比丘》恰好位于泰特美术馆大厅的巨大空间范围内，其大小和位置使观众无法从任何地方看到整个作品。卡普尔不再像过去那样巧妙地操弄空间，填满一切的《马丘比丘》进发出的震撼力才获得了巨大的成功，而对于它的大小，卡普尔解释说：“每个雕塑都有其规模。《马丘比丘》如果是现在规模的三分之一，那将无法成立，金子塔之所以备受瞩目也是因为它们的大小，规模是一个工具，雕刻的工具。”

巨大与黑色

艺术需要极简吗？当然论未停止，卡普尔继续利用反光表面和大比例尺，在芝加哥千禧公园创作了《门》，33.53英寸高66英寸长的雕塑，灵感来自波浪和水的外表和浓厚的黏度，被昵称为“豆子”，它由168块抛光不锈钢面板焊接在一起构成一个异物形状的镜子，鼓励游客在雕塑周围走来走去，观察雕塑扭曲反射的方式。像所有艺术家的大型雕塑一样，《门》造价昂贵且制造技艺上具有挑战性。负责雕塑制作的工程师首先认为不可能进行设计，而预计500万美元的成本在项目完成后最终接近2300万美元。保安人员每天24小时在场，以防止任何事情发生昂贵的物品上，从而增加高昂的成本，并在金钱变得千丝万缕地缠绕在一起时引发了关于艺术品“价值”的进一步辩论。《芝加哥论坛报》曾为卡普尔评出最佳艺术家，2014年，卡普尔获得了Vantablack的独家使用权，使他成为唯一可以使用这种世界上最黑的黑色进行绘画的人。环绕颜料的暗淡性概念似乎很荒谬，引起了一部分艺术家的愤慨，但黑色的比例在卡普尔的作品中增加。作品《下沉》由一个巨大的圆形水漩涡组成，漩涡在漩涡中旋转，使作品在无底的宇宙中。卡普尔继续扩大他的虚空概念，用黑色染料处理了漩涡状的水，从而产生了黑洞的错觉，该作品以一种非同寻常的方式处理了普通材料，这表明卡普尔有能力破坏对自然世界的先入之见。

与国共振

当阳光的不锈钢巨型雕塑不再反反射太阳的光芒，庙宇室内的阴暗为卡普尔的作品增添了黑暗而传统。2019年11月，太庙西馆展出了卡普尔著名的镜面作品及作品的雕塑雕饰《S曲线》（2006）和《C曲线》（2007）将被放置在太庙的正殿。《S曲线》是两片大型不锈钢无缝连接形成的“S”形雕塑，而《C曲线》则是一整片巨大的弧形不锈钢，人像随着众作品的距离而变化，人像放大变小，比起镜的像变亮，将被置于另一个空间，后退一些，太庙里的钟声，屋顶上的装饰会再次出现，镜面的边缘，真实和幻象以不被现代方式相连，作为第一位在这里举办展览的当代艺术家，卡普尔非常惊叹于雕塑作品在室内表的表达，当一个人看到镜子，可联想到反射光，但是在这里环境里，到处都是黑暗，我的作品就住在这里的环境里，凹陷处呈黑色的环境让整个作品呈一种绘画的形态，像从传统的荷兰绘画，充满了黑暗和专注，不同之前的反射室外的光线和天空，有了一些意义。

中国同样也是与红色渊源颇深的国度，他在北京的同名个展也在中央美术学院美术馆开幕，《中央美术学院美术馆开幕》，中国红是一种纯粹的红色，而是带有几丝黄色，是一种独特的红色。《红》作品中经常使用的红色比中国红更深一点，但是色彩上的差距不会给建筑意义带来改变。中央美术学院美术馆里展出的四件作品，是他在中央美院总部的最新展览。标题都充满诗意的语汇，《献给大红的太阳的交响乐》《远行》《将变为奇特单细胞的截面图》《我的红色故乡》。其中，中国红的故乡性通过“旋转”的机械结构，让物质循环生成艺术作品。《献给大红的太阳的交响乐》则由两条由不同色彩的线段组成，将血红色的线段旋转到中轴，然后像内旋一样倾斜而下。红色是我作品的核心颜色，人类身体的大部分一部分就是红色，人类总是被红色环绕，而在中国的语境下，红色自身的意义会让作品引出不同的含义。

卡普尔曾说，世界上的作品都是象征的，只有三种形式，凸出的，倾斜的和凹陷的。在他的中国传统文化中，经极化的概念也很常见，白天和晚上，好的和坏的，男和女的。我认为，极化或者说是正反对立化是我们在看待事物的一个标准。卡普尔说，当我一个人坐在眼前外太空，按照这个角度看，这个人正在离开地球。但我从自己的角度看，这个人离开了光明和四周的黑暗。当我们在看待女性化的时候也应该有这样的观点来看，这是一个内在的感受，人类是脆弱的，我们是复杂的，人生不总是向前走，也是关于往回走向死亡，是一个向内的过程。
全球公认超敢说的男人来了，屡次挑战女性道德底线，女生却排队去看

可能是2019年最后一个重磅展览——
安迪·沃霍尔的中国首次个展。
这位国际艺术明星，
带着过去35年的代表作品，来到了北京。
作品在中央美术学院美术馆和太庙艺术馆，
两馆同时展出。
于10月底和11月初先后开幕，
“涵盖了声势”。“
开展后红遍全网，
“视觉盛宴，不够看！”
“就等这个展了，一定得去打卡！”
周迅的最新时装大片，
也选择了在他的作品前拍摄。
卡普尔在印度长大，于英国成名。今年65岁，是全球最敢试敢做的艺术家之一。卡普尔认为所有雕塑都与身体有关。他的许多作品，都有性隐喻。最疯狂的一件，是在法国凡尔赛宫正中央摆放的名叫《肮脏的角落》的巨型雕塑。有人曾私下将它暗指“皇后的阴道”。

同时，他也是全球最负盛名的艺术家之一。在芝加哥的户外公共雕塑《云门》，曾有2亿5千万人看过。今年11月，一条在太庙对他进行了专访。
今年11月初，卡普尔回到北京，为个展做准备。初见这位65岁的印度大爷，头发灰白，在太庙大厅检查不锈钢镜面作品，拿着毛巾擦拭几滴不起眼的污渍。

在开幕之前，奥地利对卡普尔进行了专访。与作品的“极端”不同，卡普尔给人感觉温和，语速也不快。他个头不高，一米七上下，却着迷于做巨型的公共雕塑，“公共空间的力量是很强大的，比如现在我们坐在天安门广场旁边，就能感受到它的气韵扑面而来。”

这次个展体量巨大、备受关注。他35年来的73组重要作品，被分成了两个部分同时展出。
太庙个展：与皇家建筑的碰撞

故宫东侧的太庙，本是明清皇帝祭祖的去处。在这里坐落着卡普尔的13件抽象的大雕塑，与传统的太庙建筑形成一种对立，古老又科幻。

在中间的享殿大厅，摆着六件不锈钢装置。工作人员原计划在每件作品下垫一个基座，但卡普尔希望它们直接触碰地面——有着600年历史的金砖地板。

殿内屋顶的金箔、梁柱上的彩绘，全都倒映到不锈钢凹镜面上。
从90年代末以来，他一直在跟这种材料打交道，最感兴趣的是圆镜。因为它能把世界弄得天翻地覆，“它就像一个视觉的‘吸尘器’，随着人走近走远，镜子里的景象变得虚幻缥缈，甚至从某些角度看基本上看不到镜子里的自己。

他希望这些‘镜面’能与太空碰撞出火花，“它们不应该像异国的外未物，而是应属于这个地方。”

但也有观众觉得这和太空格格不入：“无论色彩与形状都与恢宏厚重的太空不搭，笔直的沉香木和金丝楠木，在镜面作品中被反射折射、模糊扭曲。”

在东西方文化中，是一系列“色粉”作品，他较为早期的创作，常常会使用彩色粉末。当时他还是个到

在英国学习艺术的印度学生，假期回到印度，看到传统市场里小贩常常堆成一个个小山的色粉堆，唤起了内心深处对家乡的敏感。
安尼施·卡普尔，1954年出生于印度，现生活在英国伦敦，是当代最受争议的艺术家、雕塑家之一。他以大型公共装置闻名，甚至著名的作品都免不了被一顿议论。

伦敦的《阿塞洛米塔尔轨道》，被说丑；
巴黎的《肌肤的角落》，被说粗俗；
芝加哥的《云门》，被说笨拙……

但他享誉国际，拿的奖也没几个人能与之匹敌：
36岁，卡普尔代表英国参加威尼斯双年展；
37岁，摘得英国特纳奖——欧洲最重要、最有威信的视觉艺术大奖；
55岁，成为第一个在英国皇家艺术学院举办个展的在世艺术家；
2013年，被英国女王授予骑士爵位……

对非艺术专业的观众来说，卡普尔的作品“十分当代”，不好理解。但展览依然足够吸引人，成为北京新晋网红打卡地。
央美个展：中国红

距离大度10公里开外的中央美术学院美术馆内，卡普尔的作品占据了整个一到四层，三楼的白墙上印着他的一句话——“作为艺术家，我要使我的每一件作品不只是物体，而且是思想（大部分是东方思想）的呈现。”

四件大型装置刺激眼球，以“红”为主。

一进入，首先看到的是高三四层楼的主作品《献给心爱太阳的交响曲》。

它的中心是巨大的红色圆盘，像一个太阳，旁边的轨道在不断往上输送血红色的螺块，但在终点总会坠落在地上的螺块堆里，一遍遍循环往复。
卡普尔的初衷“这是一个带有悲剧色彩的作品”，不过它也让人能往温暖的方向解读，有观众说这场景就像海子的诗一样：你来人间一趟，你要看看太阳。

周迅的最新时装大片拍摄地也在这里，她不禁感触：“当它们动起来的时候，在那一声‘咚’之后，你才能体会到作品的真正奇妙之处。”
在卡普尔看来，所有的雕塑都与身体有关。"身体是一种非常私密、又有公共性的东西，甚至充满性隐喻。"

《将成为奇特单细胞的新面体》是一个方块体，有四面通道，"就像我们的身体一样。"
观众可以走进它的内部，看看里面像血管又像纤维的结构。"太浪漫了，愿每次与你折叠进同一个虫洞徜徉，" 有观众这样感叹。
再往前走，还是一片红色。

《我的红色家乡》，20吨混合了凡士林的红色颜料形似红毯，堆在一个直径12米的圆台上，中间一个像大铁锤的金属块伸出长杆，缓缓地推移熔块。

“这些红色，象征动物内脏，包括人，我们的肉身、血液、五脏六腑都是红色的。”卡普尔说，红色的另一层含义，是东方、是家乡、是一切的起源。“中国和印度一样，都是一片红色的土地。”
《远行》像一个景观，曾经只在2017年于阿根廷纪念公园展出。这次搬到了室内。一辆饱和度极高的蓝色挖掘机，爬伏在几百吨红色土壤上。

颜色完全占据了你的视野，好像整个人都要被眼前的蓝色或红色吞没，包裹着你，让你身临其境。

安尼施·卡普尔

一个印度男孩的国际艺术之路

15年的精神治疗

1954年，卡普尔出生在印度孟买的一个犹太家庭，父亲是印度人——一名海军物理学家，母亲是犹太人，外祖父是犹太教堂的牧师。他从小在宗教氛围浓厚、民族成分复杂的家庭长大。
青少年时，卡普尔就读于印度首屈一指的精英高校——杜恩中学（Doon School），这是一所男校，学校历史上曾教育了印度无数的王公和亿万富翁的子女，相当于印度的“伊顿公学”。但卡普尔受不了这种教育，甚至“憎恨”这段日子，他想逃离。

1971年，卡普尔和他的兄弟搬到以色列，学习电子工程。但六个月后他就放弃了，“我很庆幸自己在很小的时候，就明了了想当艺术家的愿望。”

1973年，他前往英国，先后在霍恩西艺术学院（Hornsey College of Art）和切尔西艺术与设计学院（Chelsea School of Art and Design）学习。但留学之路并不轻松。

他从上学期间，一直到结婚生子前，接受长达15年的精神治疗。卡普尔回忆说，对于一个在东方文化中长大、又在西方教育里被“重塑”的印度男孩来说，“居无定所”是他最大的心理障碍。

于是他每天都去工作室，“无论如何，今天一定要创作点什么东西出来。”对他来说就是一种冥想和自我治愈的过程，直到现在65岁了，依旧坚持每天去工作室，工作10小时，每天至少要创作一件作品，有时甚至一天两三件，这也是为什么，他能成为当代艺术界最高产的艺术家之一。
两亿五千万人看过它

卡普尔最为人所知的作品，是芝加哥的《云门》。它竖立在芝加哥的千禧公园里12年了，是这个城市最出名的地标和“打卡点”。

这个豆形的不锈钢雕塑，长约25米，高15米，宽10米，体积巨大，却没有任何焊接点。它表面光滑，能把周围的景色和城市都“收入囊中”。

听说有两亿五千万人看过它，有五亿张自拍是和它一起的。但卡普尔说，他并不喜欢这种作品与人的互动方式。
“虽然一个雕塑做完了摆在那儿，它的命运就不是我能控制的了，但我认为作品要保持一定的严肃性，”他说得人们拍拍照就走了，打个卡，没有什么意义，“它毕竟不是迪士尼乐园里的一项游乐设施。”

卡普尔也因“敢说敢做”背负了不少骂名，比如被放在巴黎凡尔赛宫的一件作品，就让他被骂惨了。

“皇后的阴道”

2015年6月，卡普尔受邀在巴黎的凡尔赛宫举办个展，共展示了六件作品，其中一件大型装置《失踪的角落》引起了轩然大波——有人将它戏称为“皇后的阴道”，并暗指路易十六皇后。
Le 2ème viol de la Nation Française par l'activiste Juif
Honte a l'honneur
Cet cœur

Juifs Tradis & Kabbalistes : Ce ter est vous mettre en danger

观众在作品上泼漆、涂鸦，以示抗议
这激怒了一大批人，开展没几天就被喷油漆，清理后不到三个月又一次遭受破坏。

把一件叫做“肮脏的角落”的作品放在皇宫中央，他说早就知道这肯定有争议。之所以还这样做，部分原因就是想看看在我们认为的自由的欧洲、自由的巴黎，能发生什么？

卡普尔的工作人员在被破坏的作品部分贴上金色的叶子
大众认为它充满性隐喻。‘可我们生活在一个充满男性性象征的世界里，那么多高耸的象男性生殖器的雕塑、物件，为什么我在地上放一件可能有女性象征的东西，大家就突然被冒犯了？这就很有问题了！’

那段时间也是难民大量涌入法国的时候。他们被当作入侵者。而对卡普尔作品的讨论也进入这个范围。它被认为是挑战法国皇权，在引发种族歧视。凡尔赛镇上的议员以引发种族仇恨为由，起诉了卡普尔和凡尔赛宫馆长。

《坠入地狱》 1992

为了一个颜色拼得你死我活

卡普尔本人也很喜欢‘挑事儿’，曾经和另外一名艺术家有过一场关于颜色的大战。

卡普尔一直以来都对科学痴迷。2014年，和他合作的一个英国实验室，研发出一种“最黑的物质”，起名叫Yantablack。这种超黑涂层黑到极致，可以吸收99.965%的可见光，人眼根本看不到的褶皱、形状和轮廓都丢失了，只留下一个看起来像黑洞的物体。
由于开发成本昂贵，英国政府不仅对Vantablack的配方进行保密，还严格限制售卖。结果卡普尔买断了Vantablack的版权。大声宣扬：“只有我能用！”

另一位艺术家斯图尔特·塞普（Stuart Semple）不爽了，研发出了一种粉色叫PINK——史上最粉的粉色，并扬言谁都可以使用和购买，但就是不卖给卡普尔。

最戏剧化的一幕出现，卡普尔不知如何买到了PINK，并在社交媒体上炫耀，两人的骂战至今还没看到大结局。
卡普尔说自己的作品和埃菲尔铁塔“拥有相同的命运”。在埃菲尔铁塔刚被建成时，遭到了大量巴黎人的漠视和批评，后来，铁塔却成为当代最伟大的一件艺术品，一个国家的象征。

卡普尔说：“我认为雕塑并不需要以取悦为目的，它被觉得尴尬、被骂，都没关系。我愿意给大众时间，慢慢来不用急。”

“在我们的生活里，几乎所有东西都能被命名和定义，只有在艺术世界里，存在不能被定义的东西。”卡普尔在无数次的采访中重申他的观点，他的目的是“play a game with the viewer（与观众做游戏）。”

他的梦想听起来也很异类：“我这一生能创作出一件作品，它浑身上下都带有问号，‘那是什么？我怎么看不懂呢？’如果能做到这一点，我就大大地满足了。”
“我没有话要说”是Anish Kapoor一直以来的态度，他将自己投入“做”的行为之中，并让“行为”成为认知形成的初始途径。

在10月25日与11月10日，Anish Kapoor首次大型中国个展于中央美术学院美术馆与北京太庙美术馆联合开幕。展览涉及这位声望国际的印度裔英国艺术家在不同时期创作的多件代表作。作为Kapoor长期来对物质与能量能量感性的专注探讨，他的雕塑以独特材质所形成的抽象和具象来创作，从作品的形态来看，他的创作探索着形而上学的二元性，将物质与能量、形成与虚无，表面与深度，抽象与具象，反射与吸收的特性释放而出。唯有当我们深入到这些作品的象征之中——虚无的空间、深邃物质的黑暗空隙、表面所折射的反光、下沉的深渊以及旋转的角落深处——才可能感知到它的路途，而艺术家本人也弃废创作中的思索与结构，质疑万万其而言的路径性与无时性，且排除作品被物质性赋予意义的可能性。那些堆砌物与立体雕塑的模型作品——其中一例为Kapoor最为著称的艺术作品之一《Cloud Gate》（2004）是这座巨型公共雕塑坐落于芝加哥世纪公园中央。在雕塑状结构的建造中，在于其结构中所反射天空的光与光，以次级性的建筑与城市的象征，作品中看似金属模式的象征性则指向存在于物质和能量内核中的阴影。我想在这些以仪式性或意义的非物质体植入人类——这种独特形式与仪式所筑建筑乎于一九三五年，这种丰富与仪式所筑建筑乎于一九三五年的可能，这必是Kapoor最为丰富的一件艺术作品之一《Cloud Gate》（2004）。这座巨型公共雕塑坐落在芝加哥世纪公园中央。
所作的场域特定装置（Marsyas）（2002），作品轻薄的PVC表面因受到旋转扭曲的不请自来的身体而形成一个鲜艳红色的管状物，其庞大的体积令观众无论从什么角度欣赏，都无法窥探它的全貌。

从此，透过探索物理界的瞬间现象，Kapoor的立体雕塑艺术家并非造物者，他制造的是一种具有具体性的非物质真实，将尚未显现的力量加以释放，唤醒人们存在中被忽略的体验。

“对于此次展览，我认为最重要的就是如何批判地方性的不安全感。”Kapoor说，“作为一名艺术家，我没有必要说，我希望我的作品指引的是一种构造意义的可能性，而不是意义本身。”

Kapoor的雕塑需要我们去观察行为本身构造意义——观众是参与者，不是旁观者。

展览开幕在即，我们应感谢Kapoor位于伦敦南部Camberwell区的工作室。Kapoor工作室的前身为烟毒品工厂。在此街区驻扎的30余年中，Kapoor委托Caseyferro Architects于旧工厂扩展至至街区公寓，构成一组拥有不同体积、光线、风格和空间尺度的半开放式综合空间，并以功能区分隔为六个工作室，用于放置“得与失”作品的展示空间，用于创造和重建纤维模型的材料实验室，用于创作不锈钢材料作品的大型空间，用于创造和渲染不锈钢画面的空间，用于艺术家的休息室及工作室等。其中，一室只为Kapoor才能进入的“独立工作室”是艺术家的工作室。墙壁上画着的白色标记，代表工作室的轮廓线，以及各种功能的名称和指示图解。每个工作室都设有单独的休息室、卫生间和储藏室，各工作室之间通过一个大型调色板向两端的架子上铺设着两层染料红色和蓝色的布料，这是一个环境环境将艺术家的身体和精神向外延展，布满整个物理空间。

作为艺术史界的四十年来，Kapoor始终是一位坚定的实践者，他相信，工作室是艺术家构想思想和创作的绝对空间，他坚持每天创作一个作品的习惯，总是在创作的夜晚，享受日常的早餐和午餐，每天晚上九点至早上六点在工作室创作。而当夏天，刚从威尼斯双年展回来的Kapoor从行李箱中拿出一套泡面，显然，他并不介意度假。

“我来到这里，开始他们要作出不同的行动，是希望这样的规律能够清除一些不必要的东西，这并不因为做了什么不同尝试。而是在这个过程中，像古堡一样，用冰块等进行创作。然而，同时作为一个艺术家创造的艺术品的媒介，艺术家如何在灵感和精神之间进行选择和调和？Kapoor认为，我非常具有批判性，尤其针对我自己，这当然会令人痛苦，但这样才好。我又经常在他。”在实践中，雕塑家是一个漫长的过程，通常要花费数月时间才能完成。这当中的转折点是如何解决当下所面临的难题，而不是去刻意实现，而是让事情自然发生。在

因此，在这个过程中，留白显得更加重要。Kapoor的工作室四处放置了形态各异的作品，而那些随意放置在特定材料空间中的作品，其余的创作并无明显的时间或主体分类，令外界几乎

“我希望我的作品指向一种构造意义的可能性，而不是意义本身。”
从我的作品中，他们也会将我称呼为女性，对此，我并不介意，甚至感到有某种意义。在艺术中，雕塑本身是一种充满男性气质的创造。一直以来，我们生活在一个布满雄性符号的世界中，但即便如此，我对我个人对女性的感知是内向深刻的，尽管可能看似荒谬。但有关于女性的事物，我几乎确认其具有女性特质的。

在他的雕塑与绘画中，人们或许能够轻易地联想到女性的形态，不论是圆润、柔软、细腻以及表面的鲜明，还是红色与身体、血液和分隔的关系。然而，Kapoor对女性的表达并无兴趣。他关心的是从女性特征「feminine」衍生的起始与孕育的力量——这是强烈的，也是细致的。在《Mother as a Ship》(1989)与《Mother as a Void》(1981)。两件作品中，Kapoor曾塑造了向内凹入的蓝色砖面体，并令其表面所形成的画面具有吸收声音与力量的功能。在《When I’m Pregnant》(1992)这一作品中，艺术家在白色墙上打造了一个看似简单的白色画面，令人不禁想起女性怀孕时的肚形。这种对女性自我意识的寻求与

Kapoor的成长背景也息息相关。艺术家曾经在一次研讨会上分享，他的家庭由犹太裔母亲与印度裔父亲构成，但即便在印度生活，他们也保持着犹太家庭的种种特征。十七岁时，他移居以色列而被看作是犹太人。后来，他的母亲从印度来美国位于他的家中，母亲所做的这项工作减轻了Kapoor的痛苦，或许从那时开始，他便和得知来自母亲以及某种超自然的力量。

正如作品在现实生活中所经历的转变，Kapoor擅长于塑造各种形状。他所做的大部分工作都是在雕塑中寻找不存在的状态。在这些空中雕塑中，Kapoor使用了Proto-Object（原始物体）一词描述他的作品——即用于建筑或空间关系，美感、思考与造物的存在。正是承载着这样的观念，他一直强调：「我没有什么要说什么。」Kapoor追寻的是自然，也是超然。
安尼施·卡普尔，作为当代艺术领域最著名艺术家之一，他的名字自千禧年之后便被视为大众所熟知。区别于其他有着深刻经历的当代艺术家，他的作品中往往带有鲜明的“形而上”特质，且充满趣味。然而部分“形而上”特质却从未出现在他的作品中。今年十月，受中央美术学院美术馆邀请，安尼施·卡普尔带着他的9件大型装置作品及56件曾在世界各地展出过的公共项目的作品，在中国举办他的首次大型个展展览。

Anish Kapoor，《内部线》，2011，P.V.C. 33.5 x 99.89 x 72.23 m.
2011年“纪念岛”艺术项目展出现场（大英宫，巴黎），摄影：赵力。
Anish Kapoor，《致愛森伯格小姐》，2007，複合材料，488 x 122 x 50 cm。

在此次展覽中，無論是黃海英的《致愛森伯格小姐》或是Olafur Eliasson的《致愛森伯格小姐》等作品，運用了塗料和紙張的材質組成，模擬出材料與紙張的穿衣的意念。當觀眾觀賞藝術家的作品時，便可以感受到與真實世界的傳統和現代藝術的穿插。這些作品讓人們重新思考藝術的本質，關於藝術、情感和實體的界限。

現代藝術中，黃海英的《致愛森伯格小姐》和Olafur Eliasson的《致愛森伯格小姐》等作品，運用了塗料和紙張的材質組成，模擬出材料與紙張的穿衣的意念。這些作品讓人們重新思考藝術的本質，關於藝術、情感和實體的界限。
无论黑蓝色、暗红色、紫墨色，单元色的运用极具新意和强烈的冲击力。单元色是一种色彩的纯色，它并不直接存在于自然界，反而是在某种深层意义上被表现的颜料。单元色极富魅力，而在纯度主义中纯色的运用，某种意义上是对于色彩之美的展现与确认。色彩在二维的运用，无论是与条纹重组、至上主义时期的作品，或是穆里略的古典形式下抽象的色彩表达，都不仅仅是带着一种“不可言喻”之力，是一种审美的象征。在这些作品“触动人心，却不可言”时，它们无须去了解粗糙的观念，带有一种艺术作品背后灵魂的魅力。正如米勒・卡维尔的作品。

在艺术上，卡塞尔的作品中，以其以颂歌般的形式开始艺术创作生涯。“土”元素在其作品中占非常大的比重，自然色彩组合出一种粗犷的气质。“风”和“水”元素在画中往往以一种潜在的、媒介化形式出现。《Ascension》和《Decension》便是最典型的例子。《Cloud Gate》和《Sky Mirror》作为两个最为出名的公共艺术项目，即是与天空云动与自然的装饰性与光波进行融合，构成了“风”与“水”元素可塑性的重合。

作为最著名的印度当代艺术家，为“概念身份”的命题并不出现在他的艺术创作中。生于蒙特利尔的他，自小痴迷音乐，由此对于艺术的批判性是与生俱来的。对于现代生活现象的批判，卡塞尔的表现是在一个“外来人”或“新来人”的身份，而对于音乐家来说，他是一位音乐家的公寓，他对他人的生活现象“尤其是”世界的现实的必然存在，对于这些现象“内在”世界的可能性，以及对于这些现象“内在”世界的可能性，这即是他的艺术创作的内核。而“其它”则是由他的音乐身份来担当。
British artist Anish Kapoor’s debut solo exhibition in China creates the illusion he has transformed a temple. Stainless steel works in the form of a concave mirror “turn the world upside down” at the Imperial Ancestral Temple, just outside the Forbidden City in Beijing, the artist says.

“[They] are hard to understand as objects, and kind of play a game with the viewer. The real project is this question about the status of the object, whether the object is a real thing or an illusory thing. We know that paintings are illusions of reality. A sculpture is supposed to be a real thing. But the question I am asking is ....is it a real thing? It is kind of in between.”

Kapoor, 65, says of the temple site: “It’s something that I understand has great weight. I hope ... there will be other artists who follow me to show [their works] in these incredible buildings. They are really very powerful and are full of all kinds of psychic memory.”

More than a dozen of the Indian-born artist’s most significant works were unveiled this week in Beijing, at the temple and the Central Academy of Fine Arts Museum. The former houses some of his earlier works and the latter more recent ones.
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US Ambassador to the EU Gordon Sondland will testify today with his own and Trump’s future at significant risk.

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Outspoken artist Anish Kapoor opens retrospective in Beijing

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Anish Kapoor
Artist

On another site, Kapoor’s works are being exhibited at Taimiao Art Museum, in Beijing’s 600-year-old Imperial Ancestral Temple near the Forbidden City.
'Part of the conversation': Outspoken artist Anish Kapoor opens retrospective in Beijing

Updated 20th November 2019
Outspoken, politically opinionated and a longtime friend of Ai Weiwei -- artist Anish Kapoor may not have expected to be high on Beijing’s invite list.

Yet the sculptor’s first solo show in China could hardly be closer to the heart of the country’s establishment: a career retrospective at a temple in between the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square.

This only tells part of the story, however.
For one thing, just a portion of Kapoor's landmark exhibition is showing at the 15th-century Imperial Ancestral Temple. The rest is on display 10 kilometers away at Beijing's Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA), a prestigious school that has produced multiple generations of leading Chinese artists since its founding a century ago.

For another, the Mumbai-born British sculptor doesn't consider a collaboration with a respected Chinese arts institution as somehow incompatible with his activism. After threatening to pull out of the 2016 Yinchuan Biennale over its exclusion of Ai Weiwei's work, and turning down opportunities to exhibit in China over the dissident artist's treatment, Kapoor now says it is time to be "part of the conversation."

"I understand your question about being politically outspoken -- about standing up, as I have done, against, if you like, oppression," he says during an interview at the CAFA Art Museum. "I have to mediate (this) in relation to showing in China. And (I) take the view that culture has a voice, and a cultural conversation is a conversation about joining up, not one about separating."

In "Destierro," Kapoor transforms part of the CAFA Art Museum into a surreal red landscape. Credit: Anish Kapoor / Lisson Gallery
Though clearly opinionated, Kapoor, who turned 65 this year, has never let politics overshadow his art. Rather, he has always been more concerned with confronting dualities through his work -- bold, challenging creations that are at once smooth and textured, convex and concave, reflective and absorbent.

These contrasts are widely explored in his Beijing retrospective. Bringing together some of his most celebrated sculptures and installations, it’s a body of work that spans 35 years -- a time in which Kapoor has been knighted, won the coveted Turner Prize and represented the UK at the Venice Biennale.

The most ambitious artworks are set across three floors of CAFA’s on-campus museum. Chief among them is "Destierro," an entire room transformed into a surreal red landscape, and "My Red Homeland," a circular mass of wax almost 40 feet across around which a steel block, propelled by a motorized arm, slowly rotates.
At the temple, meanwhile, a selection of more understated sculptures is spread across three of the complex's buildings. It is here that visitors find Kapoor's curvilinear experimentation with stainless steel, alongside abstract objects that seem to emerge from -- or disappear into -- the the floor beneath them.

"Of course, it's true to the work that I've made, but it has some relation with the site," Kapoor said of the decision to exhibit in this unusual setting, adding that he likes "the idea of this non-art space."

"So one building has a group of pigment works from late '70s to the early '80s, (and) one building has the big work called "Angel," which is a series of pigment stones, kind of floating in the space."

Made between 1979 and 1980, "1000 Names" is one of the earliest works included in Kapoor's retrospective. Credit: Anish Kapoor / Lisson Gallery
In China, red is a color that carries connotations of good fortune, patriotism and even revolution. So while Kapoor stresses that his latest exhibition isn’t specifically designed for Chinese audiences, he is acutely aware that his work may be received differently.

"China, as we all know, has a very long deep history of (the) color red itself. And I think that makes (the art a) kind of strange bridge ... which I hope engages something in the Chinese context, in the Chinese psyche. It’s the color that you walk into the space and the color grabs (you)."

"So, celebration ... but also, blood, death and decay," he adds. "Whether you are Chinese or not Chinese, we all have red inside our bodies."


CNN’s Mun Ng and Karsten Hohmann contributed to the video.
Artist Anish Kapoor plays with reality in his debut solo show in China, which brings his mirror sculptures indoors for the first time
British artist Anish Kapoor’s debut solo exhibition in China creates the illusion he has transformed a temple. Stainless steel works in the form of a concave mirror “turn the world upside down” at the Imperial Ancestral Temple, just outside the Forbidden City in Beijing, the artist says.

“[They] are hard to understand as objects, and kind of play a game with the viewer. The real project is this question about the status of the object, whether the object is a real thing or an illusory thing. We know that paintings are illusions of reality. A sculpture is supposed to be a real thing. But the question I am asking is ....is it a real thing? It is kind of in between.”

Kapoor, 65, says of the temple site: “It’s something that I understand has great weight. I hope ... there will be other artists who follow me to show [their works] in these incredible buildings. They are really very powerful and are full of all kinds of psychic memory.”

More than a dozen of the Indian-born artist’s most significant works were unveiled this week in Beijing, at the temple and the Central Academy of Fine Arts Museum. The former houses some of his earlier works and the latter more recent ones.
Anish Kapoor’s 2007 work C-Curve at the Imperial Ancestral Temple in Beijing.

Known for public sculptures that are considered by many as feats of engineering, his outdoor works often invite viewers to go on a visual and spatial adventure that is both stimulating and stretches conventions.

At the temple, his works are installed in three buildings. “I tried to think about the temples as places of history, ancestors and memory,” he says.
Kapoor’s Non-Object (Spire) (2007) on display at the temple in Beijing.

His sculpture *Cloud Gate* (2004–2006), also known as “the Bean” for its shape, is seen by thousands of visitors to Chicago’s Millennium Park on a daily basis. Made up of 168 stainless steel plates welded together, the immense sculpture with a mirror surface reflects and distorts the city’s skyline. Those walking around and under its 3.7-metre-high arch will get a warped sense of the city.

Visitors to the ancestral temple will have a similar experience as they stroll past works including *Stave* (2013), *C-Curve* (2007) and *S-Curve* (2006). The magisterial wooden beams, columns and roofs, and ancient copper bells lining the temple all look distorted in the reflections.
Kapoor says showing his mirror sculptures indoors at the ancestral temple strays from his usual practice.

Kapoor’s 1989 work Void at the Imperial Ancestral Temple.

“I have shown them outdoors many times. There’s the sky and light. This is a complete reversal of that ... In this [new] situation, [the mirror works] are full of darkness because they are concave ... even though one thinks of a mirror as reflecting the light ... I really like [the darkness].

“[Like] the C-Curve, which sits on the ground. It’s like a Dutch painting [of a scene with people sitting around]. Dutch paintings of the 16th and 17th centuries are full of blackness. I like that,” the artist says.

Kapoor says he wants to bring physical sensations to Chinese audiences.
“The works are open enough to allow for multiple interpretations,” he says. “They don’t have some very direct narratives. They are not trying to tell you something. It’s [a presentation] of a situation, a group of objects, a colour, or no colour, or a reflection. So it’s these physical sensations that I feel are translatable into many [different] kinds of languages.”

“The inner part of our bodies is red. So we all carry red with us,” says Kapoor. “Chinese red is slightly more orange red. It’s sort of fun … My instinct tells me that the Chinese red is triumphant. It is the colour that hits you. It’s not like blue which retreats …
“The red I have used most is darker than that. These subtle differences make big differences [in] the emotional meaning of a colour. ... I’m interested in these little differences between different sorts of red and what their significance could be.”

“Anish Kapoor” runs at the Imperial Ancestral Temple until December 28, and at the Central interested in these little differences between different sorts of red and what their significance could be.”


This article appeared in the South China Morning Post print edition as: Artist plays with reality in debut solo exhibition in China

Art   Chinese history   Chinese culture
Tourism
Lisson Gallery

CGTN (China Global Television Network)
12 November 2019

Anish Kapoor opens solo exhibit in Imperial Ancestral Temple

By U Qiong

Indian-born British artist Anish Kapoor has brought many of his important pieces to the Imperial Ancestral Temple, opening the second half of his solo exhibition in the Chinese capital.

Taimiao, or the Imperial Ancestral Temple, is said to be the largest ancient palatial structure in the world. Kapoor’s stainless steel and pigment sculptures give a nod to the architectural and spiritual history of the site.

"S-Curve" by Anish Kapoor, /CGTN photo
Some of Kapoor’s mirrored steel works are displayed in the central atrium of the Imperial Ancestral Temple, like the S-Curve and C-Curve.

Visitors are also challenged to view their surroundings – and themselves – in the installation, which tries to turn the world upside down by bending and twisting everything in front of them. Ancient and contemporary art reflect each other and become part of each other in this exhibit.

‘To Reflect an Intimate Part of the Red’ by Anish Kapoor. /CGTN photo

In the two galleries flanking the central Temple, Kapoor displays a seminal series of pigmented sculptures, emerging from the wall and floor, rendered in intense, alluring colors that deceive the eye through their forms and protrusions.

This is the first solo exhibition Kapoor’s held in China. Quite a number of his works are exhibited in another ongoing exhibition in the Central Academy of Fine Arts Museum in Beijing.

The artist invites viewers inside the structure through an inconspicuous door. It opens into a network of glowing red orifices, intravenously connected, and conjures powerful metaphors about the body, existence and spirituality.

The exhibition in the CAFA Art Museum runs through January 1, 2020. And the one at the Art Museum of the Imperial Ancestral Temple will last till the end of this year.
Anish Kapoor is a famous British sculptor – a specialist in installation art and conception art who has been putting "spectacular" artworks in the public domain for 40 years. He was the first living artist to be given an entire galley to display his work by the Royal Academy. For the first time, he is holding a public exhibition in China. In CGTN's Icon, host Ji Xiaojun sits down with Kapoor to find out why he thinks his work receives so much public attention.
British artist Anish Kapoor puts on 1st solo museum show in China

Updated 19:13, 29-Oct-2019
By Li Qiong

Renowned British artist Anish Kapoor has opened a major solo exhibition in Beijing at the Central Academy of Fine Arts Art Museum. It presents some of his most significant and celebrated works in the last 15 years – with powerful, self-generated installations. The color red dominated the four major large-scale art pieces of Anish Kapoor's first solo museum show in China.
"Symphony for a Beloved Sun" reveals a landscape, activated by a machine that's calmly processing masses of aggregating material. This system – watched over by a vast, red sun that hovers above the scene – takes place with no evident human interactions. It allows the viewer an opportunity to commune directly with the mysterious entity.

"To Anish Kapoor, the color red is like a symbolic icon," said curator Wang Chunchun. "He was born in India, where red is largely applied in religious rituals. It represents communication between human beings and god, as well as energy, passion and vitality."

The themes of some pieces are not obvious from their looks, like the "Sectional Body preparing for Monadic Singularity." It's a very important piece of Anish Kapoor. The artist invites viewers inside the structure through an inconspicuous door. It opens into a network of glowing red conduits, intrinsically connected, and conjures powerful metaphors about the body, existence and spirituality. The construction explores the relationship between the interior and exterior, not only of the work but of the body and space itself.

Red is not the only symbol of Kapoor. The application of mirror reflection is another. At the exhibition hall, visitors are presented with various miniatures of Kapoor's acclaimed public art displays.

"Cloud Gate" is one of them, better known as "The Bean." Displayed at Millennium Park in Chicago, it is one of the world's largest permanent outdoor art installations. The mirror-like surface reflects the activity and lights of the park and city skyline. Visitors could also see their images reflected from different perspectives. This art piece is a symbolic contemporary one. It has a simple shape, which goes well with urban life, but actually looks different in different weather, at different times. Meanwhile, the mirror fully enables the public installation to communicate with people," Wang said.

The exhibition in the CAFA Art Museum runs through January 1, 2020. And many of his other important works will be on display at the Taichung Art Museum of the Imperial Ancestral Temple next month.
虽然偶尔才在社交媒体上发声，但Anish Kapoor有什么作品？

1992年创作的蜡制作品《沉降》（Descension）和巴林大皇宫内的《斯维岩》（Svarga）的涂层，堪称当时“世界上最黑的物质”，比宇宙中的黑洞还要黑。Kapoor买断了碳纳米管黑体的使用权，成为世界上唯一可以量产的黑色物质。

对页由上至下

伦敦的里森画廊今年春夏陈列了一些女性主题的绘画作品，但绘画的抽象表现主义影响，或许是他的作品趋于克制和审慎，我很难将眼前这个身材瘦削的长者与那些宏大的雕塑联系起来。在那个年代，Kapoor的创作是如黑洞一般不断吞噬下沉的宇宙。《坠入地狱》（Inferno）和《我红色的祖邦》（My Red Homeland）在伦敦的里森画廊的独立展厅内观赏这件雕塑作品，它如湖底般沉静启发冥想。

除了神秘莫测的超级黑，Anish Kapoor解读了中国青花瓷器的冷峻。即便在最小的作品中，他也会数次试验，直到满意。1999年，加州旧金山现代艺术博物馆将他的作品《Das Gerede》（Das Nichts）（Das Nichts）收藏。2001年，International Contemporary Art Fair (Fiera d'Arte Contemporanea)在米兰为他举办了一次个展。他的工作室位于伦敦南部的坎伯韦尔区，紧邻伦敦艺术学院分校，是一个流动的，不断变化的存在。‘

“艺术是自然产物，自生命和经验而来。’

Anish Kapoor

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观点，观者去践行并亲临体验，并以各自独有的视角和深意去解读。当他们看到我的作品说，‘这就一那什么！’我觉得这样很好，至于是不是和我想的一样没有关系，也并不重要。当然受众很重要，我想做出至少是大众喜闻乐见的作品。他的大部分作品都是一种安定的存在，悄声地试探着众人感官，营造愉悦的沉浸式体验，试图激发观众的集体共鸣。这种感官体验也绝不仅限于视觉，他的创作也不乏听觉体验。今年夏天，伦敦新开的皮特香格庄园盛大开馆，邀请Kapoor展出他的凹形幻彩镜面——《由红到蓝》（Red to Blue, 2016），这些镜面不仅能反射出让来宾们目眩神迷的倒影，还包括声音，看展的两个人相隔一定距离地站在作品的不同角度，也能实现在彼此耳边私语的效果，与北京天坛回音壁有着异曲同工之妙。作品《升腾》（Ascension, 2011）是一股徐徐上升的烟雾，在纽约古根海姆博物馆展出时变身羽化升仙般的一抹红色，气流声之间洋溢着魔幻主义色彩；与之相对的作品《沉降》（Descension, 2017）则是一轮不停旋转的神秘漩涡，代表了他对流动和空间的诠释，寓意对生命永无止尽的探索以及如黑洞一般不断吞噬下沉的宇宙。当《沉降》出现在纽约布鲁克林大桥公园1号码头等诸多公众视野中时，旋转震荡所发出的轰隆声响，更为原本神秘的水流漩涡增添了戏剧化氛围。上升，下沉，抬头仰望星空，俯首坠入地狱，Kapoor一直在虚无和黑洞中间寻找生命的意义，不断发现拓展领悟与提升的空间。他还热衷于引用女性与母体的形象追溯生命的起源，作品反复出现洞穴、孕育、经期和女性身体等元素。在女性议题和政治正确趋向于白热化的环境下，作为一名男性艺术家，他毫不掩饰地大胆展示自己理解中的那处“肮脏的角落”，或是漫不经心地在一个空荡的展厅墙上画出一道口子。在虚无的现实当中，Kapoor并不认为艺术有义务做出任何解释和交代，或去明辨是非、真相和谎言。他从不拘泥于任何限定的格局与形式，哪怕这种形式会显得突兀、暴力甚至血肉模糊；他根据创作和表达的需要，将空间扭曲、合并或赋予明暗色彩，并且收放自如。“体积是一种神秘的变量，也是雕塑的助力。我喜欢规模宏大的作品。作品的关键是一定要不忘初衷，表达出背后的意义，或是其他一些本质的东西。”当年在准备皇家艺术学院的展览时，Kapoor就对BBC说：“艺术作品一方面需要营造出参与感，另一方面又要令人肃然起敬。”十年后，我们的生活进入了一个愈加充斥着商业利益和炮制“参与感内容”的时代，而Kapoor依然坚守他的艺术阵地——“严肃艺术是一个永恒的话题，它既不是一场游戏，也不是迪士尼乐园。当今世界参与感泛滥却又乏善可陈，因为这一切几乎都是发生在这糟糕的手机屏幕上，哪怕在中国亦如是。”在他眼里，资本和名利削弱了生命意义。“说到底是谁的荣耀？我的，他们的，国家的，谁的？这中间的问题就在于自我意识过分强烈。”Kapoor鼓励人们来亲身体验艺术，感受真实世界中的存在，“如今一切都可以用钱买到，就连爱都可以拿来变卖。但人类最深层的话题是不可以被销售的——我出生前源自哪里？死后又会去哪？——唯独这两个问题是千金不换的。”极简迷幻而意味深远，亲近神秘又充满诗意。很多看客会被Kapoor的展出吸引入神，许久不离开，仿佛消失在作品当中，走入了天人合一的境界。对于当代艺术，有句人尽皆知的评价是：“这个我也会做！”而Kapoor向来以一种开放的心态静待公众对他作品的回应：“艺术家抛出一个全英国的最高公共雕塑，也被称为‘伦敦的埃菲尔铁塔’。奥运闭幕后，时任伦敦市长的Boris Johnson提议将这座雕塑与世界上最长的滑梯——另一名公共雕塑艺术家Carsten Höller所创造的作品合二为一。Höller与Kapoor同为在伦敦泰特当代美术馆涡轮大厅（Tate Turbine Hall）中装置过巨作的艺术家，分别为《试验场》（Test Site, 2006）和《马西亚斯》（Marsyas, 2002）。二人合作修建的这座螺旋塔滑梯如今是东伦敦必去的景点之一，游客可顺着半透明管道从80米高的滑梯滑下，吸引着极限运动爱好者前往体验疯狂。Kapoor擅长通过大型雕塑与公众互动，他的作品遍布巴黎、伦敦和纽约等大都市，其中最为人称叹的当数芝加哥千禧公园的《云门》（Cloud Gate），也被当地人亲切地称作“豆子”。作品由多块不锈钢板焊接而成，重达110多吨，经过高度抛光的、拥有流线型弧度的外表光滑明亮，映照着周围的城市地标和人群，构成一幅妙不可言的互动图景。和《云门》同样具有倒映效果的公共雕塑还有《天空镜》（Sky Mirror）——一面倾斜放置、面向天空的凹形抛光不锈钢圆盘，这件35英尺宽的雕塑被放置于纽约洛克菲勒中心门口。此外，该作品的小型版本也曾出现在伦敦泰晤士河南岸、肯辛顿花园、布莱顿皇家行宫草坪和英国诺丁汉惠灵顿广场剧场门前。Kapoor倾力挥洒着当代艺术的手法，将作品气势磅礴的体积与柔美的流线型弧度进行相得益彰地结合。变换的几何凹凸镜面绘制出流动画面：城市灯光、原野云彩、花鸟鱼虫。
卡普尔的镜与境

在芝加哥千禧公园内，有一座庞大的雕塑——"镜盒子"。它由不锈钢镜面覆盖的金属结构，加上一个支撑其高度的混凝土底座，而雕塑表面则被镜面反射形成巨大的"镜盒子"。卡普尔的公共艺术雕塑在城市中的布局，形成了一种独特的观赏视角。雕塑本身呈现出一种动态的视觉效果，使观众在不同的位置都能看到不同的景象。
ART

KEREN DAVID
INTERVIEWS
SIR ANISH KAPOOR

Anish Kapoor’s latest exhibition may not seem immediately attractive to those still recovering from this week’s Game of Thrones. Torrents of blood flow on to giant canvasses; the stuff of life, death, dirt and shame splashing and dripping with an exuberance that suggests that one of our best-known sculptors has very much enjoyed a move to painting in oils.

It’s curious, this joyful undertone, because his intent could hardly be more serious, a stark warning against the politics of hate and separation which stalk so much of the world today. Brexit is very much part of that: “Our obsession with purity is very much what Brexit has come to be about,” he says.

His starting point is menstrual blood, and the purificatory rituals of his dual heritage – the Judaism of his Truman mother and the Hinduism of his Indian father.

The “ancient practice” of treating menstruating women as impure, different, and separate and the cleansing ritual that takes place in a mikveh, is, he says an act which “affects everything else, our points of view, our sense of who’s in the tribe and who isn’t.”

Treating menstruating women as impure is the beginning of tribal affiliation, he says. “The question we have to ask is whether that’s good for us? In the 21st century, it seems the world is going that way more and more and more, which is huge. And if it isn’t joyful and playful, it’s serious play.”

His ideas about separation and its dangers are very much part of his Jewish identity. He is not a “practising Jew” he says, he never was, although his maternal grandfather was the chasid of shuls in India. But he is “hugely conscious of my Jewishness, it matters to me massively.”

Born in Mumbai in 1954, he moved to a kibbutz in Israel as a teenager, later studying electrical engineering. It was in Israel that he decided to be an artist, and moved to London, where he has lived ever since.

His warnings about boundaries extend to the Jewish community, and argues that patrilineal descent should be accepted. If we did that, he says, we could double the number of Jews in the world. Inclusivity is all. “Instead of who we exclude, who do we include, and who decides? And is it a matter of the colour of your skin, the place you come from?”

Jews, he says, come in all sorts and should be celebrated. And that includes anti-Zionist Jews, “because you can be anti-Zionist and pro-Palestinian and be very Jewish and not anti-semite.”

So confine those things to a huge mistake, and we must remember, it is our tradition.

“All the major writers of the left, from Marx onwards were Jewish,” he points out. “In fact Judaism, with its emphasis on community is intrinsically left. ‘I implore our Jewish sisters and brothers to not be taken in by the right wing press.’”

Including the JC. “Yes!”

Our wish to protect ourselves, he says, should not go so far as to endanger us. “Really we have to get this in some perspective. These are all ways of isolating ourselves and we mustn’t do it.”

Anish Kapoor is at the Lisson Gallery until May 16.
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Artish Kapoor on Brexit and wealth

All Out Politics

ARTIST
SIR ANISH KAPOOR
The body and the blood
Anish Kapoor’s menstrual art and the vexed question of appropriation

“Can a man deal with women’s issues?” the British artist wonders. “Is a man allowed to?”
BLOOD LEAKS and gushes from the art in Anish Kapoor’s new show at the Lisson Gallery in London. Almost literally in the case of his silicone and fibreglass reliefs: the gauze dangling beneath them is spattered with scarlet. In his oil paintings, meanwhile, blood-red spurts emanate from corporeal pinks and black cavities and orifices. Black is deathly, says Mr Kapoor, but also, like red, a colour of earth.

Mr Kapoor, a British artist who was born in Mumbai, is best known for his monumental sculptures (including a gigantic tubular installation in the Turbine Hall of the Tate Modern in 2002). His new series of paintings contemplate the idea of ritual, and the meaning of blood—which, as he puts it, is “associated with the abject and impure”. In particular, the paintings evoke menstrual blood. That motif raises another question, a version of which these days confronts artists in every genre and form. “Can a man deal with women’s issues?” Mr Kapoor muses. “Is a man allowed to?”

Would that anxiety have occurred to him, say, 20 years ago? “We live in times of political correctness,” he responds, adding: “I am for it.” All the same, Mr Kapoor insists, “we have to manage it rather carefully”—in other words, being sure to safeguard artistic freedom. “Give me a break! What crap is that?” he asks of the notion that, for instance, a white artist should not explore a black person’s experience. Such leaps are the purpose of what he calls “the artistic imagination”. The only real question, he thinks, is whether the resulting work of art is good or bad.
Some of the shapes in his paintings—“partial objects”, Mr Kapoor calls them—are distinctly female, but the bodily references of others are more ambiguous. His white canvases suggest purity, and contamination, but also an androgynous disembodiment. In fact, while these paintings trespass on a particular “taboo” in their concern with menstruation, the curves and concavities of much of Mr Kapoor’s previous work likewise convey a preoccupation with bodies and sexuality. In his telling, the turn towards characteristically female forms goes well beyond him: he reckons that the entire history of art since Freud has involved a reorientation from phallic forms to the inward kind. In another of Mr Kapoor’s metaphors, instead of peering from the mouth of the cave up into the sky, artists have instead turned back into the shadows.

The layout at the Lisson Gallery reinforces the theme of ritual. Several of the canvases hang around a pink onyx sculpture, in which twin ovoid shapes are encased in a sarcophagus or urn. As Mr Kapoor sees it, the blood in his paintings is pouring into the recesses of the stone, which to him resembles a mikveh or Jewish ritual bath (he is Jewish, but also describes himself as a practising Buddhist). To this reviewer’s eye, the sculpture evokes a receptacle for the blood of a sacrifice; Mr Kapoor accepts that interpretation, too. Purity and defilement, sacrifice and cleansing: in art, as in life, contradictory things are often bound together.

“Anish Kapoor” is showing at the Lisson Gallery, London, until June 22nd.
Anish Kapoor unveils new paintings that evoke menstruation

British artist says men should be able “to deal with women’s questions”, as first major solo show in China is announced

ANNY SHAW
14th May 2019 16:35 BST
The British artist Anish Kapoor today unveiled a new series of paintings, depicting blood streaming from wounds, or, it would seem, vaginas.

His fascination, he says, stems from blood as “ritual matter”, but also its association with “the abject, with death, with the impure”. He adds: “It’s so strange that both are a place of origin and a place of dirt, or other matter, menstrual [blood].”

Speaking at the unveiling of the works at London’s Lisson Gallery, Kapoor acknowledged the problems he faced as a male artist addressing issues such as menstruation. “One of the things that arises is, inevitably, can a man deal with women’s questions? Is a man allowed to?”

Kapoor says that the “whole point” of artistic practice is that “reality can be borrowed, to be shared, envisioned, imagined”. He argues that it is a “kind of purity [to say] you can only do it if you are really black, or really Indian or if you are really a man. The point is to measure the work, not in terms of whether a man is allowed to do it or not, but in terms of whether it’s any good or not”.

He defended the US artist Dana Schutz, whose painting Open Casket sparked protests at the 2017 Whitney Biennial for its portrayal of the corpse of the black teenager Emmett Till, who was lynched by two white men in 1955. “What a weird idea, that a white artist makes work that is supposedly cultural heritage of black artists and she is given shit for it. How can it be?” Kapoor says.
It was also announced that Kapoor is to have his first major solo show in China this autumn. The sprawling retrospective will take place across two locations: the Central Academy of Fine Arts Museum and the Imperial Ancestral Temple, by the walls of the Forbidden City in Beijing.

Built during the early Ming Dynasty in 1420, the Forbidden City attracts more 10 million visitors annually. As a place where Chinese emperors worshipped during ancient festivals and ceremonies, the Imperial Ancestral Temple is one of the most scared sites in Imperial Beijing and has never been used for a contemporary art exhibition before.

Kapoor’s relationship with China has not always been plain sailing, however. In 2015, he criticised the country's stance on copyright after an uncannily similar version of Cloud Gate, his bulbous monument in Chicago known as the bean, appeared in the town of Karamay in the Xinjiang region of China.

Kapoor today described the situation as complicated. “I did at first try quite robustly to fight a plagiarism case but things take so long,” he says. “It’s going, but very slowly. We’ll see, copyright in china is very complicated.”
Anish Kapoor at the Lisson Gallery

Helena Wadia
14th May 2019

He is known around the world for his sculptures, but the latest exhibition from Sir Anish Kapoor also focuses on his works on canvas. Rarely shown in public, his paintings often relate closely to his works with stone and mirror.

The new collection, at the Lisson Gallery, is accompanied by three standing stones, placed outside the building. Anish Kapoor is showing at the Lisson Gallery from 15 May - 22 June 2019.
Anish Kapoor’s Brexit artwork: Britain on the edge of the abyss

Anish Kapoor has exposed a bottomless void at the heart of Britain. You could topple in there and never stop falling. In fact, that is exactly what we have done - and solid ground still seems to be nowhere in sight.

This artwork, which Kapoor has created for the Guardian, is his response to our current predicament and the new Britain that appeared after the leave vote. Although the Mumbai-born artist has given it a title - A Brexit, A Broxit, We All Fall Down - he does not wish to make any further comment about the piece, preferring to let it speak for itself.

The use of colour to suggest infinite voids is one of Kapoor’s most mind-bending abilities as an artist - as a visitor to an exhibition in Portugal recently discovered. The man actually fell into one work, a black hole in the floor of the gallery. The artist’s use of the world’s blackest paint, which is actually called Kapoor Black, made it impossible to gauge the hole’s depth. When the man fell in, it turned out to be a lot shallower than it looked, luckily for him.
This wound, however, is anything but shallow. Britain has inflicted a dreadful injury on itself: a gory rip stretching from Glasgow to the south coast. Our fellow Europeans are watching aghast from across the water as we near the abyss of a no-deal Brexit. Kapoor suggests the damage is even visible from space. His artwork might serve as a warning to any passing flying saucers: avoid this riven nightmare of a nation.

While he wants this image to speak for itself, Kapoor has been a consistent and vocal opponent of Brexit since the 2016 referendum. He recently characterised our political paralysis as a descent into strange mental territory. “We’ve allowed ourselves as a nation to enter a space of unknowing,” he told the i newspaper. “I can’t help but see it in terms of a depressive self.” He compared it to “self-harm”.

Like a black hole of melancholy, something about this bottomless pit is alluring. Part of you wants to fall in.

And here is the result of that self-harm. This is a surrealist work, one that seeks to let the unconscious out. But instead of his own demons, Kapoor lets out the shadows in the nation’s psyche: yours, mine and Jacob Rees-Mogg’s. For, like a black hole of melancholy, something about this bottomless pit is alluring. Part of you wants to fall in.

So this work goes well beyond simple sloganeering. It is not another protest. It is an attempt to psychoanalyse the British. Is there something about us that wants to fall into shadow? There may be fear down there, but there's mystery too. What if, like that man in Portugal, we jumped? Britain's domestic history is remarkably middle of the road - a story of reform and stability - and yet there are moments when things go haywire and we find ourselves in a trench of blood.

Kapoor has captured our morbid obsession with the futile chasm of Brexit, the perverse character of a nation that wants, in some sad corner of itself, to be back in the trenches. A bigger trench this time, where meaning ends and reality dissolves.

Anish Kapoor’s latest exhibition is at Pitshanger Manor, London, until 18 August.
Anish Kapoor: ‘Brexit is like what teenagers do when they self harm’

Glossy mirrors vs dirty orifices: as he opens two new exhibitions, Hettie Judah asks who is the real Anish Kapoor?

I did not realise, until I sat down to write, that Anish Kapoor had turned 65 the day before our interview. Had he, in retrospect, been a little dishevelled, a touch morning-after? Sure, there was paint on his quilted jacket – scraps of the hot reds, oranges and pinks that lick across his works on paper – but I had assumed that was part of a studied pose.

These days, the sculptor responsible for Chicago’s massive Cloud Gate (aka The Bean) and London’s even more massive ArcelorMittal Orbit is rather a snappy dresser. Knighted in 2013, he rolls with an international art elite more given to Gucci and Prada than battered Uniqlo.
Thus his choice of attire for a high-profile press conference seemed calculated to communicate hands-on involvement in the world of making. I thought Sir Anish was serving Jackson Pollock realness, but maybe he just woke up late after his birthday party and grabbed the first thing to hand?

"I've always been very interested in exotic materials"

The first of two Kapoor shows opening in London this spring, this is the inaugural exhibition in the gallery adjacent to the freshly restored Pitshanger Manor in Ealing. A gorgeous little jewel-box of a building, it was Sir John Soane's country house from 1800 to 1810 and is full of the great architect's luscious flourishes: delicious proportions, domes, mirrors, painted ceilings and coloured glass.

You can see immediately why they chose Kapoor to open the gallery: he shares Soane's fascination with perceptual trickery. Concavities, concentric forms, framed views, eccentric perspectives and the desire to give intense pleasure in the act of looking are shared concerns for artist and architect alike.

"I've known of Soane a long time. It's good to recognise, from my perspective, that many of these things that I've been playing with over the years were played with before in a different way," says Kapoor. "There are a lots of overlaps. What's interesting about Soane is that it's very playful."

We're sitting in Pitshanger Manor's small dining room, and the sculptor nods approvingly at the blood-red walls: Soane was not shy of bold colour. Red, too, is something of a Kapoor signature, he has "made hundreds of red works" in materials ranging from powdered pigment to aluminium to silicone to wax ("I've always been very interested in exotic materials").
The exhibition in the adjacent gallery includes a red, mirrored work – *Glisten Eclipse* (2018) – concealing a classic Kapoor illusion. Two red convex mirrors joined like a clamshell are shown in a corner – except that as you walk past the colour drains off one mirror in a sudden flash, revealing the colour as perfect reflection.

“For many years I've worked with concave mirror forms of all types: concavity of course invites interiority which is why I'm interested in it. It turns the world upside down.”

The theme of concavity runs through Kapoor's exhibition at Pitzhanger, which is entrancing, despite its apparent simplicity. On paper, it's a small array of convex mirrors, and hollow, mirror-polished metal balls, but all perform subtly different tricks. Working out where exterior surface ends and interior begins, and vice versa, engages you in a constant game of wits.

The newly restored Pitzhanger Manor in Ealing, 2018. Photo: © Andy Stagg

The modest scale of this space with its glass ceiling domes allows circular reflections to zip around the room between the various objects, creating vistas of overlapping geometry that recall Soane's echoing archways in the main house.

“Geometry when taken to perfect extremes is also mysterious,” says Kapoor. “Geometry is a mind thing, it's not a body thing, it's completely made of mathematics and precision. Yet it can have this unknowable quality and that I think is another weird relationship with Soane – geometry does something that is less than graspable when given free rein.”
Ah, the mind-body thing. This show is all about ethereal pleasures and perfection: when I last sat down with Kapoor, exactly two years ago, he was unveiling an exhibition of rather different work at the Lisson Gallery.

The sculptures in that show resembled vast, bloodied, festering bones bound with gauze. Works on paper looked like he’d been sketching the corrosive flames of hell. Many featured orifice-like forms that recalled his monumental trumpet-like sculpture Dirty Corner seen head on (which is a roundabout way of saying they look a bit vaginal.)

At the time, the artist was vocally incensed about the racism, xenophobia and intolerance whipped up by UKIP and the Leave campaign. The exhibition seemed a visceral response. How’s he feeling now, I wonder? I mention Brexit, and there is some cathartic swearing.

“Read more: Can Martin Parr’s jolly exhibition cheer up Brexit Britain? Maybe

In May, he has a new exhibition at Lisson Gallery. It’s largely of paintings, and they’re picking up where that last, visceral show left off. Are his thoughts about the psychic state of the nation feeding into these paintings? He thinks it’s inescapable.
“An artist’s job is to try and uncover what’s unknown, otherwise it’s not worth doing. What is not known in the deeper self. Making paintings is about trying to uncover something I didn’t know before. The zeitgeist of course affects that – it’s bound to.”

These two Anish Kapoors – the artist of the mind and the artist of the body, if you like – have coexisted for a while. The red wax sculpture *Swayambh* (meaning self-generated) was first installed in 2007. Running on rails it left scraped traces of itself as it passed through doorways, messing up the immaculate whiteness of the art gallery.

The canon-like *Shooting into the Corner*, installed at the Royal Academy in 2009, fired red wax, building up an oozing messy heap over the course of his exhibition. Both seemed deliberate, wilful transgressions: a kind of acting out by an artist that had attained a status that put him beyond reprimand.

Read more: The best exhibitions to visit in 2019, from Van Gogh to Bridget Riley

There’s no question that he’s more drawn to this visceral, bodily side at the moment, and has been “for the last few years.” How does all this dirt relate to the polish: how does the Anish that wants to please with perfection relate to the Anish who wants to disgust and horrify?

“I ask myself all the time – how do I reconcile these two things? And I’ve given up. I can’t reconcile them. They are just two aspects of the stupid idiot that I am,” he says, flashing a winning smile and shrugging his shoulders within that delicately paint-besmeared jacket.

John Soane's Pitzhanger Manor, review: a brilliant addition to London’s art scene

It’s a magnificent mansion, designed and lived in by the visionary neo-classical architect Sir John Soane (1753-1837), with a gallery alongside, set on the edge of a handsome park in Ealing, a mere tube hop from the centre of London. So how come you’ve probably never heard of it?
Substantially this is because Pitzhanger Manor spent much of the past century in the ownership of Ealing Council, functioning as a public library and little-visited gallery, and acquiring so many coats of municipal emulsion, the hand of Soane was barely visible.

Four years ago, however, the council closed Pitzhanger, forming a trust to restore the house and turn the adjoining library, built in the Thirties on top of Soane’s demolished kitchens, into an art gallery.

The superb restoration, which opens on Saturday, returns the building as far as can be imagined to its original condition, while providing fascinating insights into Soane’s creatively fertile, but ultimately troubled time here.

An Oxfordshire builder’s son, who worked his way up to become architect of the [Bank of England](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bank_of_England) and President of the Royal Academy, Soane bought this plot, then in deepest rural Middlesex, as a weekend retreat, laying out extensive gardens – now Walpole Park – where he enjoyed fishing with his close friend, the painter [J.M.W. Turner](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J.M.W._Turner).
The house, with its row of Grecian maidens atop ionic columns, appears a typically eccentric Soanean classical fantasy, a style familiar from his Dulwich Picture Gallery and his other more famous London residence in Lincoln’s Inn Fields, now the Soane Museum. Stepping inside, you enter the theatrical world of Soane’s imagination, the lower walls painted in sepulchral grey, while muted amber light filters eerily from a dim space overhead – actually from inner windows in the children’s bedrooms. With a statue of Minerva standing over the oval sky-lit staircase, it’s like being in a Roman tomb that also functions as a family house.
Soane retained two floors of an earlier building on the site designed by his mentor, George Dance the Younger, and a comparison of the two architects is revealing: where Dance’s airy reception rooms, including a beautifully restored “Chinese” room with hand-painted wall-paper, have a typically neo-classical light and clarity, Soane obsessively plays with space, using mirrors, curving ceilings, arches and looming gaps between doorways to create a sense of ambiguous monumentality. You soon lose track of how big the house actually is. It feels grand, but is actually pretty tiny.

In the immaculately restored breakfast room, the circular ceiling, with its trompe l’oeil painted sky, seems to float in the curving “canopied” vaulting. Such a preoccupation with bending space, and Soane’s use of infinite mirrors (in the library) and ambiguous illusion, means he could hardly have found a better contemporary foil than the sculptor Anish Kapoor, whose mirrored spheres look superb here, apparently floating against the white walls of the new gallery.

Kapoor’s sculptures are all recent, with one, the extraordinary Red to Blue (2016), seen here for the first time: three enormous rainbow-tinted discs that seem to swell out from the wall. The reflected room swivels alarmingly in the burnished surfaces, which reveal themselves as shallow concave dishes as you approach.

But the most Soanean of Kapoor’s works, in which you can feel a real meeting of minds between architect and sculptor over two and a half centuries is the square, Untitled (2018), in which the entire space is reflected, with you the viewer walking upside down across the ceiling.
Soane’s time here didn’t end well. Disappointed by his children’s lack of interest in architecture and his wife’s boredom with country weekends, he sold up after only ten years. This sympathetic restoration, however, with inspired use of modern art in the gallery, makes both a perfect introduction to Soane’s unique architectural vision and a brilliant addition to London’s art scene.

(Kapoor exhibition) Until Aug 18; 07756 866739; pitzhanger.org.uk
Britain has gone through the looking glass and the artist's new show follows it into the abyss. He talks about the upsurge in racism, fighting for Shamima Begum - and his clash with France's president.

At 7.30 on the morning after Britain voted to leave the European Union, Anish Kapoor left his London flat for an appointment with his analyst. On the street, he heard two men talking. “Bet he doesn’t even speak English,” said one. “I turned around and they were talking about me. I was so furious.”

Sir Anish Mikhail Kapoor, CBE, RA, the 65-year-old, Turner prize-winning, Mumbai-born British-Indian artist, who has lived in London since the early 1970s and (though this is hardly the point) speaks better English than most of his countrymen, had woken up in a new land. “Since then permission has been given for difference, rather than being celebrated, to be undermined.”
Kapoor’s latest exhibition, a suite of mirrors and other discombobulating reflective sculptures, some inspired by Lewis Carroll, opens on Saturday at Pitzhanger Manor in London. Like Alice, Britain has gone through the looking glass, splintered its image and emerged in darkness.

Last year, a visitor to the Serralves museum in Porto jumped with Kierkegaardian heedlessness, into another of Kapoor’s works, a 2.5-metre circular hole called Descent Into Limbo, fell eight feet and had to be taken to hospital. Perhaps that’s an unwitting allegory too: Britain is broken, and is now stuck in the eternal limbo of Theresa May’s Brexit strategy.

The sense of being diminished for the colour of his skin in a resurgently racist Britain is one reason Kapoor has decided to campaign for Shamima Begum, the young Londoner who joined Isis in Syria aged 15 and has since had three children die there, most recently her three-week-old son, Jarrah. “One of the good things about Britain is that people from all over the world lived here, reasonably tolerantly with different views,” says Kapoor. “Increasingly that’s less likely to be the case. We’re seeing a kind of enforced normality where you have to prove you’re a real Brit in some way that fits the populist agenda. Come on! Britons are better than that.”

Kapoor is not Muslim, but Jewish (he was born to a Jewish mother of Iraqi ancestry and a Hindu father). Nevertheless, Begum’s case resonates with him. “There’s this real sense for me of who’s next? There’s an atmosphere of vilifying Muslims for having extreme views. If I was a young Muslim, would I feel angry enough to have joined Isis? I would at least think about it.”

Kapoor has experience of being vilified as an artist. In 2015 he installed Dirty Corner, a vast steel funnel made for the gardens of Versailles, a sculpture he described as “the vagina of the queen”. He intended it to disrupt landscape gardener André Le Nôtre’s perfect geometric perspectives. “Before it opened I did an interview with the psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva in which I said I wanted to create some unease in this ordered space. It worked beyond my wildest dreams. Within two weeks it was covered with graffiti, which we cleaned off. We’d hardly finished when antisemitic graffiti appeared on it.”
The sculpture and surrounding rocks were sprayed with such phrases as “SS blood sacrifice” and “the second RAPE of the nation by DEVIANT JEWISH activism”. Kapoor decided not to erase them, but to display the ugliness manifested, the return of the repressed.

“I felt from the start this was an inside job. They have cameras everywhere, but when we asked the police to open an investigation they found nothing. I say phokey to that.” Then a councillor took Kapoor to court, bizarrely accusing the artist of displaying antisemitic material. He was invited for an audience at the Élysée Palace with then President François Hollande.

“It was around the time Isis bombed Palmyra” - the ruins of an ancient city that for 1,500 years had been one of the best preserved sites from antiquity. “So I said, ‘Mr President, the thing to do is call on people in France to speak out against the destruction of culture.’ And he replied, ‘C’est vous qui devriez le faire.’ It’s you who must do it. I thought, ‘Pathetic shit.’ Then he asked me to remove the graffiti. He said, ‘From a pedagogic point of view I understand what you are doing, but as a citizen I cannot agree.’ Complete waste of time!”

In the end Kapoor covered the bits of graffiti that were prominent with gold leaf - gold leaf being Louis XIV’s go-to decorative material. Just enough not to land him in jail.

What about antisemitism this side of the Channel - does Kapoor have compunctions about Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn? “No. I’m Jewish and I believe he has done his best on this. He’s an anti-Zionist. And you can be anti-Zionist and pro-Palestinian without being antisemitic.” Kapoor suspects this is a distraction from a bigger political issue. “What this all misses is that we have probably the most rightwing government in Europe. If Corbyn comes to power he will be the first prime minister since Thatcher to believe people matter more than or as much as business. Blair was just a continuation of Thatcher. And that matters because the biggest polluters of our world are all big businesses.”
Sporting a hazmat suit, Kapoor guides me through his vast warehouse complex near the Oval cricket ground in London. Masked assistants, like a dozen Jesse Pinkmans to his Walter White, are cooking up not crystal meth, but carefully buffed painted mirrors, blood-red resin sculptures that look like placentas, and a work consisting of what Kapoor calls a hair of metal shards overlaying a dark conic space.

We pause before a large sculpture consisting of fabric folded in on itself on a mesh carapace. The fabric is curled up like a bouquet of roses, dark spaces between each petal. It’s an unsettling variation on a theme that increasingly obsessed Kapoor in recent years: the negative space opened up by folds in fabric, paper, any material. While early folded works, such as the 2016 etching Fold IV, were riffs on open books (or just possibly variants on his Versailles vagina, but certainly not at all phallic) this piece is a symphony of holes that contain more than you’d think.

“The story we were told at art school is that the Renaissance’s great discovery was perspective. But there’s another aspect, which is the fold. Being is represented in the involuted fold. The body of the Madonna is represented by the fold of her cloak.”

We should, Kapoor tells me, look into the spaces between. “We live in a world of phallic objects. It’s as if Brancusi’s modernism led to the rocket, the forward-thrusting. I’m anti-phallic. Plato wanted to lead us out of the cave into the light. But what about the back of the cave, the upside down which is dark, perhaps even menacing and abject?” His is the art of stranger things, with Kapoor as sculpture’s answer to Joyce Byers excavating voids into uncanny realms.

“I am the luckiest man alive,” he says, as we stroll through the studios. “In the 60s there were perhaps five artists – Francis Bacon, Henry Moore and a few others – who could live by making art. Now the art world is huge and everything is for sale. I expected to spend my life teaching art rather than being able to be an artist.”

But you’re an artist making commodities even though you despise neoliberal commodification. “It’s a system I’ve benefited from, no question. We risk becoming further cogs in the wheel of production. Only poetry and the more serious classical music seem able to resist becoming commodities. There’s a sense that art has been eroded by the market. The world that Steve Bannon wants is here. And it’s our fault.” Whose? “Liberal lefties like me. I’m going to dare the art world is a part of it.” Part of what? “The ruin of art’s ability to stand opposed to the order of things.”

It is as if art had fallen, bewitched by its own reflection, into Narcissus’s pool. Which brings us back to Pitzhanger Manor. It’s a brilliant coup to get the modern master of mirrors to do the first show at architect Sir John Soane’s former country house after its lottery-funded refurbishment. Soane’s spaces, after all, involve a play of mirrors “to infer a multitude of elsewhere”, as artist Mark Pimlott puts it in his essay for the show.
Kapoor’s mirrors are mostly concave, Soane’s convex or flat. Where Soane’s mirrors point beyond or back, Kapoor’s point within. It’s Nietzschean: we look into the abyss, and the abyss stares back.

Kapoor likes that idea. “Perhaps that is the mission of the artist - to make something that isn’t knowable, that bears long looking, that’s a dangerous thing, a deep space full of darkness.” Such is his best art: mirrors that trap, voids that eat you up, bloody wall hangings that menace.

Kapoor thinks once more of the Portuguese man who fell into a hole. “Bless him, poor soul, he thought it was an illusion, even though he’d been given a piece of paper to tell him it was eight feet deep. And then he jumped in as if to prove it wasn’t. In a way I was 100% successful. Art had taken him somewhere unexpected.”
The NRA Used Anish Kapoor’s Most Famous Work in a Political Ad. Now the Artist Is Blasting Back.

The artist behind ‘The Bean’ stands off against the NRA’s ‘Clenched Fist of Truth.’

Eileen Kinsella, March 12, 2018

Artist Anish Kapoor today blasted the National Rifle Association in an open letter in collaboration with the gun control advocacy group Everytown for Gun Safety. Specifically, he slammed the NRA for appropriating the image of his famed Chicago sculpture Cloud Gate, affectionately dubbed “The Bean,” that sits in Millennium Park, where it was installed in 2004.
Kapoor said the NRA used an image of the work—which shows the bean and a surrounding crowd in the plaza—without his consent in a “politically charged advertisement” called the “The Clenched Fist of Truth.” In his letter, Kapoor says the ad “plays to the basest and most primal impulses of paranoia, conflict and violence, and uses them in an effort to create a schism to justify its most regressive attitudes.” The artist added that he was “disgusted” to see his work used by the NRA “to promote their vile message.”

In the wake of recent shootings in Florida, Las Vegas, and Texas, Kapoor said that it is “more urgent than ever that this organization is held to account for its ongoing campaign of fear and hate in American society.”

The advertisement in question is a one-minute video available on the NRA website, featuring national spokesperson Dana Loesch. As Loesch speaks, images flash across the screen in black-and-white showing crowds in time-lapsed movement. One of these is Kapoor’s ‘Cloud Gate’ with people shown in stop-motion moving around it. Another shows the Hollywood sign, as Loesch speaks about an unidentified “They,” who, she says, “use their media to assassinate real news,” “use their schools to teach children that their president is another Hitler,” “use their movie stars and singers and comedy shows and award shows to repeat their narrative over and over again,” and “use their ex-president to endorse the Resistance.”

Loesch ends by stating: “I’m the NRA,” and calling the gun lobbying organization “Freedom’s safest place.”

Kapoor begs to differ, writing that the NRA video “gives voice to xenophobic anxiety, and a further call to ‘arm’ the population against a fictional enemy.”

The complete letter is below:
Last year an image of my work Cloud Gate (in Millennium Park Chicago) was used without my consent in a politicised advertisement for the National Rifle Association (NRA), entitled The Clenched Fist of Truth. The NRA’s ‘advertisement’ - as they describe the video on their own website – seeks to whip up fear and hate. It plays to the basest and most primal impulses of paranoia, conflict and violence, and uses them in an effort to create a schism to justify its most regressive attitudes. Hidden here is a need to believe in a threatening ‘Other’ different from ourselves. I am disgusted to see my work – in truth the sculpture of the people of Chicago – used by the NRA to promote their vile message. Recent shootings in Florida, Las Vegas, Texas, and a number of other towns and cities, make it more urgent than ever that this organization is held to account for its ongoing campaign of fear and hate in American society.

Cloud Gate reflects the space around it, the city of Chicago. People visit the sculpture to get married, to meet friends, to take selfies, to dance, to jump, to engage in communal experience. Its mirrored form is engulfing and intimate. It gathers the viewer into itself. This experience, judging by the number of people that visit it every day (two-hundred million to date), still seems to carry the potential to communicate a sense of wonder. A mirror of self and other, both private and collective, Cloud Gate – or the ‘Bean’ as it often affectionately referred to - is an inclusive work that engages public participation. Its success has little to do with me, but rather with the thousands of residents and visitors who have adopted it and embraced it as their ‘Bean’. Cloud Gate has become a democratic object in a space that is free and open to all.

In the NRA’s vile and dishonest video, Cloud Gate appears as part of a montage of iconic buildings that purport to represent ‘Liberal America’ in which the ‘public object’ is the focus of communal exchange. Art seeks new form, it is by its nature a dynamic force in society. The NRA in its nationalist rhetoric uses Cloud Gate to suggest that these ideas constitute a ‘foreign object’ in our midst. The NRA’s video gives voice to xenophobic anxiety, and a further call to ‘arm’ the population against a fictional enemy.

The NRA’s nightmarish, intolerant, divisive vision perverts everything that Cloud Gate – and America – stands for. Art must stand clear in its mission to recognise the dignity and humanity of all, irrespective of creed or racial origin.

Gun violence in the United States affects every citizen of your country– all religions, all cultures, all ages. The NRA’s continued defence of the gun industry makes them complicit in compromising the safety of the many in favour of corporate profit. I support Everytown for Gun Safety and their efforts to build safer communities for everyone across the United States.

Anish Kapoor
Artist
There's almost nothing in this Hayward show – and that's the point

*Shape Shifters* at the Hayward Gallery is intriguing, elusive, contains at least one masterpiece and is full of menace

*Martin Gayford*

A reflection on still water was perhaps the first picture that Homo sapiens ever encountered. The importance of mirrors in the history of art has been underestimated. Alberti, Vasari and Leonardo recommended them as a tool for painters. Van Eyck delighted in them. Caravaggio had one in his studio. And they haven’t stopped fascinating artists. *Shape Shifters*, the new exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, might as well have been entitled ‘Modern Art through the Looking Glass’.
Consequently, you see yourself all over the show, generally in surprising forms and positions. Early on, for example, you come across Anish Kapoor’s ‘Non-Object (Door)’ (2008), a rectangular block of highly polished stainless steel, each side of which is curved and convex. The result is that, as you approach it, your reflected image — and the surroundings — swirl and fly around. Meanwhile, the work itself, which is, after all, a large metallic object, effectively disappears.

Dematerialisation is, you might think, an unexpected effect for a sculptor to aim at. After all, traditionally, sculpture has been about form, mass and weight. But making solid objects melt away is one of Kapoor’s constant preoccupations. His ‘Sky Mirror, Blue’ (2016), installed on one of the rooftop courts at the Hayward, scoops up the skyline of London, and the clouds above, turns them upside-down and colours them a steely cobalt. Viewed at a distance, from inside the gallery, this is a strangely compelling sight: a cool, contemporary equivalent to the celebrated black obsidian mirror in which the Elizabethan magus Dr John Dee claimed to see spirits.

Reflections can do two intriguing things. They can make what’s really there disappear and, perhaps simultaneously, create a new setting that doesn’t actually exist at all. Richard Wilson’s celebrated piece ‘20: 50’ (1987) does both of these tricks, which adds an undertone of existential threat — and perfectly rational anxiety.

It consists of a huge tank of black recycled engine oil (the title refers to the grade of its viscosity, a particularly thick and glutinous one). You advance into this along a gangway that gets progressively narrower, so that at the end you are standing almost completely surrounded by this dense liquid. You can’t really see it, but — and this is the sinister part — you can certainly smell it.

What you actually see is the top part of the room, reflected in the perfectly smooth surface — a black mirror much better than Dr Dee’s. Like most contemporary art fans, I’ve experienced this piece many times in various iterations of the Saatchi Gallery over the years. Nonetheless, for a second the illusion fooled me. I was visiting the show before the installation was quite complete, and briefly wondered whether the oil had been pumped in yet. Then I realised that what I had assumed was some space below the gallery floor was in fact a vast and faultless reflection of the ceiling.
This work by Wilson — a masterpiece — is sui generis in its injection of a hint of menace (a worry about the consequences if a trailing cuff or scarf were to dip into the art). Most of the pieces on show are more serene, though there is a subtly disquieting quality to Yayoi Kusama’s ‘Narcissus Garden’ (1966–2018). This is another room-filling installation, but rather than thick, inky oil she has covered the floor with shiny metal globes the size of bowling balls. Each of these, the title suggests, is like a tiny mini-you, mirroring the spectator in almost but — because the angle changes — not quite the same way as all the others.

Several of the artists included in the show were based in California in the 1960s and afterwards, and represent a movement or tendency that hasn’t yet been given a satisfactory name. Various tags have been suggested: ‘light and space’, ‘West Coast minimalism’ and, slightly desperately, the ‘LA look’. But none caught on in the way that, say, ‘pop art’ did.

In a way, it’s appropriate that this group, if it was a group, should be nameless, since the works on show by Larry Bell and Robert Irwin are exceptionally elusive. Irwin’s ‘Untitled (Acrylic Column)’, 1969–2011, is close to not being there at all. It’s a long, thin, transparent prism suspended in front of you. The artist calls it an ‘optical instrument’.

When you look through it, what you see is inflected. Only slightly, but enough to suggest that everything we look at is illusory — or is at least created by our sense organs and brains, working together, on the basis of evidence that is always partial and sometimes wrong.

This is also the message of the exhibition. You might complain that there’s almost nothing in the Hayward — just a lot of mirrors and reflections — leaning against the wall, on the floor, in mirror glass mazes, and even carried around by live performers. But that is also the point.
ALL FORM IS GOOD: INTERVIEW WITH ANISH KAPOOR

Anish Kapoor first exhibited at London’s Lisson gallery in 1982. In the 35 years since then, he has used a wide variety of materials, including pigment, stone, mirrors and wax to extend his artistic enquiry in both private shows and high-profile public commissions.

Now, in Lisson’s 50th year since owner Nicholas Logsdail founded the gallery, Kapoor is exhibiting there for the 16th time with an unusually eclectic selection of works. Among them are painted three-dimensional silicon objects wrapped in gauze, mirror pieces and a collection of “drawings” that more closely resemble traditional paintings. ArtAsiaPacific caught up with Kapoor at the show’s preview to talk about the spaces he creates, the problem of the artist’s hand with which he has struggled throughout his career, and the development of mythology in both art and life.
You’ve spoken about developing languages in your practice—a “pigment” language, a “void” language, a “mirror” language—how would you describe the language here?

It’s confusing. I don’t have a phrase for it yet, but I think what I’m trying to get at is that the object includes its shadow. One of the things the gauze does is include a space within the space of the object. It’s only half-physical.

Would you call the space a heterotopia?

Yes, something like that. I haven’t made enough of them yet and I haven’t fully formed it, but it’s happening there somewhere . . .

**ANISH KAPOOR, Shade, 2016, silicone, fiberglass and gauze, 136 x 325 x 225 cm. Copyright the artist. Courtesy Lisson Gallery, London.**

**Do you believe there’s such a thing as an ideal language?**

I don’t believe there’s an ideal language at all. Some of them have been geometric and, if you like, utopic; others have been entropic and acknowledge decay. I don’t see entropy as not being mathematical; it’s just a different kind of geometry, even though it doesn’t appear to be so at a first reading. A normal flow of art history would tell us that artists work in that way or that way. For some reason, I need both sides.

**What does it mean to you then to have both entropic and geometric “languages” under the same roof?**

In my first studio I wrote on a wall: “There is no hierarchy of form. All form is good.” And I’ve stuck with it. I guess they both acknowledge psychic reality. One is a pursuit for an absolute or a purity, while the other is uncertain, and I’m more interested right now in uncertainty than I am in purity, especially as purity seems vulgar in this political moment.

**There’s something very fleshy and visceral about these silicon paintings. They seem to suggest violence, but also a kind of genesis. What is this doing?**

Those two words you’ve used, one is beginning and one is the end. All our ideas about the universe seem to suggest a big bang, a blow-up beginning and a blow-up end, and one wonders to what extent those things are mythological, even in physics. One of the real pursuits of art—perhaps more so of abstract art—is consciousness. Science on the whole hasn’t been so good at talking about this. I think it’s legitimate to ponder what is a beginning, what is consciousness. It necessarily implicates things like meaning, that moment when a non-thing becomes a something, and, in the conversation between a viewer and a thing being viewed, where and how meaning arises and recedes. I think that to-and-fro is essential, and has something to do with both consciousness and, weirdly, with beginning and end. It’s not fully logical, but it has something to it.
In your drawings, there seems to be clear cosmological imagery. You’ve got your crescent moons and supernovas and nebulæ . . .

Definitely! Definitely! I think it’s definitely there. Some parts of it are conscious of course, but some parts are to do with scale. When you have a sun and moon, you make the space bigger. I’m really interested in that. Enlarging the space isn’t simply making a big space and putting a thing in it. Does the so-called “voiding” of a thing or a space—either by painting it black or all the other things I’ve tried to do over the years—merely paint it black, or does it do what is more poetically poignant to my mind, which is to make more space? Is it possible to make more space than there was when you started out? I think that’s an ambition worth pursuing, and weirdly kind of possible.

You veil these silicon objects with translucent gauze, while also describing them as paintings. Does this gauze function like a picture plane?

I’m glad you put it like that because that’s exactly right. Exactly right. It’s the thing through which you need to look. It mediates the interior. The first ones I made weren’t painted. Curiously, painting it black makes it most transparent—the opposite of what you think it would be. When I first did it I naively thought painting it black would make it darker. I’ve been playing with that: levels of transparency.

You’ve always tried to remove the artist’s hand from your work. Here you have both two-dimensional and three-dimensional works, the former of which can’t really escape the “hand” . . .

Correct! Correct!
...And when you have both together, as here, it reveals this developmental process, and thus even more of the “hand.” How do you feel about this? Is it something you’re more at peace with here?

I’ve made the decision to put the drawings in. I think it’s the first time I’ve ever put drawings in the same space as objects, and drawings—they’re more like little paintings really—are clearly of the “hand” I’d love them not to be, but there they are. I hope it’s not fetishized as an idiosyncratic kind of thing. It’s also to do, in this particular group of works, not so much with line but with color. So, as you say, the “hand” is there, there’s no denying it!

You once said artists don’t make objects, but rather mythologies. There’s a certain sense of history around this show, how do you see your own mythology?

First of all—50 years—Nicholas is unbelievable. I have to say big chapeau to him for this way of really working with artists. I’m really proud of him for that. I’ve tried to be associated with Lisson and what it stands for in that respect.

The first time I realized that mythology mattered was when I did the Venice Biennale [in 1999]. I was a young artist. It was one of my first fully international shows and, extraordinarily to me, people were telling me what my work was about. They were telling me the stuff I’d been saying for the last few years. I thought, “Wow, that’s so weird.”

That’s pretty much what we’ve been doing here in our conversation!

Exactly. And it works! Objects represent an evolving mythological process. Who knows where it goes? I’m convinced that’s the reason it takes more than a lifetime for art to have a real effect. With truly great artists like Yves Klein, for example, it’s taken 40 to 50 years for us to see him in a particular way and be able to say that color is mythologized, that blue is a part of his image, his hand. It’s a hell of a process. . .


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Five of the best

1 Anish Kapoor
One of our greatest artists, this modern Rubens continues the exploration of colour and its emotional power that started with his early experiments in bright-hued sculptural forms in the 1980s. In his latest works, he plays with the idea of painting in the same way a child might play with a doll — by pulling it apart. Spectacular, intensely vivid, somehow erotic wall works deliberately confuse two dimensions with three and voluptuously celebrate the power of art.
Lisson Gallery, NW1, to 6 May

2 Graham MacIndoe
It’s Trainspotting, only real. Scottish photographer MacIndoe, who lives in New York, took the brutal self-portraits in this exhibition when he was trying to overcome an addiction to heroin. Later, once recovered, the artist rediscovered his unflinching pictures; they preserve a story that is both unsettling and matter-of-fact. There is no sentiment or self-pity here, only real life.
Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, to 5 Nov

3 Rachel Kneebone
Fantastical porcelain sculptures that create fountains of body parts, white grottos of surreal desire and tottering towers of pale flesh. Kneebone has something in common with Turner-nominated sculptor Rebecca Warren as well as being consciously inspired by Rodin’s Gates of Hell. Her exuberant sensuality is eerily undercut by the icy coldness of her works’ bright glazed surfaces — it is as if a witch has frozen a decadent court.
V&A, SW7, to 14 Jan

4 Marlene Dumas: Oscar Wilde and Bosie
Two portraits of the joyously provocative late Victorian dandy and the young man he began a relationship with in 1891. Lord Alfred “Rosie” Douglas was the son of the Marquess of Queensberry, whose court battle with Wilde led to the writer’s downfall. These portraits haunt in their overtly decadent colours and sensual expressiveness. Dumas brings a dark eroticism and sense of doom.
National Portrait Gallery, WC2, to 30 Oct

5 Erik van Lieshout
Cats that live in the cellars of the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg are among the stars of Van Lieshout’s videos, which also feature his family and a mysterious dead man called Janus. These blackly comic meditations on modern life are shown in an immersive installation by this Dutch artist, whose anthropological eye offers ironic reportage on the social world, from spontaneous portrait drawings to doc-style interviews.
South London Gallery, SE5, to 11 Jun

Jonathan Jones
Lunch with the FT: Anish Kapoor

Over a fusion takeaway feast at his London studio, the artist talks to the FT’s Jackie Wullschlager about sex, psychobiography and the ‘madness’ of his towering new sculpture at London’s Olympic Park.

Although I have the address, it is impossible to pinpoint the entrance to Anish Kapoor’s studio in Camberwell. It turns out that the artist owns all the buildings in the street – a low-rise row of former rollerblind factories that line one side of the road. On the other side is a construction site, piles of rubbish and an abandoned Routemaster bus – nothing to do with Kapoor. All around are the tower blocks of south London.

“I’ve been here for 25 years,” says Kapoor, a trim, small figure with floppy silver hair and matching grey glasses, when he emerges at the end of the terrace. This is where, a few months ago, the last factory was converted into a huge, glass-walled, white-painted box, the atelier where he works alone, undisturbed by the 20-strong technical and office staff on the rest of his site.

“Life’s gone pretty well and I’ve been able to get the whole street,” Kapoor explains, speaking softly but precisely, with a slight Indian accent – he was born in Mumbai in 1954. “I hope it’s not just megalomania – well, a certain amount of it is, of course! – that drives all this.”

Dressed in jeans, open-necked shirt and dark jacket, he is relaxed and immediately friendly, taking my arm to negotiate the muddy puddles on the pavement as we begin a tour. One of Britain’s most acclaimed sculptors, he has made an estimated fortune of £80m from his art and won the Turner Prize. But this summer his work, which is abstract and depends on formal contrasts of light and dark, surface and depth, inside and outside, will reach a vast new public with “Orbit”, at 115 metres the largest public sculpture in the UK. Commissioned for London’s Olympic Park after a competition in which Kapoor was chosen ahead of other celebrated names, including his keen rival Antony Gormley (“He did make a bit of a scene about it”), “Orbit” was completed days ago and launches next week.
Kapoor first suggested meeting at La Petite Maison in Mayfair but a last-minute visit to the Olympic Park in the East End of town left him short of time, so we relocate for a studio lunch, beginning in his serene working space. Walking past walls lined with his characteristic concave mirror pieces and yellow, purple, pink discs which look solid but are radiant voids – “Monochrome is incredible, isn’t it?” – we arrive at a model of the rollercoaster steel coils and giant canopy of “Orbit”.

“It’s a bit of madness,” Kapoor laughs. “The canopy is dark and menacing. I’m interested in this journey from dark to light – you go into this dark heavy object, then up the lift and you’re tipped out into an observation platform with two concave mirrors, so you’re in a kind of instrument for looking. You’re inside a telescope … I’ve been looking at this for two years and it still looks uncomfortable. That’s the point. I can make long, sleek elegant things, but this object needed to be the opposite.

“There’s so much in the tradition of the tower that’s about symmetry but even though ‘Orbit’ s bolted steel is a 19th-century method, it’s a 21st-century result, it’s asymmetrical, it’s tipping, a mess of a knot, the elbows sticking out. I hope Cecil [Balmond, the structural engineer, Kapoor’s collaborator] and I get away with it! It has the language of sculpture, but also archaic architecture – the Tower of Babel, an ant’s nest, people storming, climbing all over an object. It’s the idea of participation, performing, you act it out, you go up.”

I think “Orbit” (or “ArcelorMittal Orbit” to give it its full title, after the company that contributed £19.6m towards its cost) manages to combine a mythic quality with the inventiveness, humour and subversions of history that are a mark of 21st-century sculpture. But it is also the most extravagant example yet of how, in the past two decades, sculpture has become spectacle, performance, architecture – from Gormley’s “Angel of the North” (1998) to installations in Tate Modern’s Turbine Hall Unilever Series such as Rachel Whiteread’s mountain of 14,000 white boxes in “Embarkment” (2005) and Carsten Höller’s giant slides “Test Site” (2006). With this gigantism, sculpture has won wider popular engagement; but has it also suffered losses – of seriousness, of innovation and experimentation?
“Public sculpture is problematic because it always becomes an emblem,” Kapoor says. “I’ve tried to avoid it being a logo. I’m interested in scale because it’s a genuine, actual tool of sculpture. We live in a world where there are lots of big things but few have scale. That jaw-dropping moment – when you say, ‘Can it really be?’ – there are only a few of those: like in a cathedral, when your body is thrown into it, and it brings all kinds of emotional repercussions. That’s what I’m aiming for.”

At this rather hubristic instant, there is a loud, resounding bang: a mirror piece crashes down from the wall, shattering into fragments. Kapoor strolls over, phones a technician and shrugs: “Stuff happens.” But he hurries from that studio into another, packed with a cement mixer and a work-in-progress of piled-up cement turds, then invites me into a long pristine room with oak floors, white walls, two white chairs and a white table set with salads and platters of fish. Kapoor’s studio manager, Lucy, offers drinks: he chooses Coke, I request mineral water.

The food has been ordered from the fashionable deli Ottolenghi. Its rich western/Middle Eastern/Asian mix of colours and flavours offsets the streamlined purist interior in a way that almost parodies Kapoor’s aesthetic of late-minimalist abstraction revitalised by brilliant hues and sensuous textures. The artist, however, surveys the luscious offerings mournfully, presumably thinking of what might have been. “Have you been to La Petite Maison?” he inquires. “You must go, Jackie! It’s superb, Provençal food done so well – and owned by an Indian!”

Nevertheless, he tucks in readily. We begin with chargrilled tuna steaks with chilli, on which Kapoor heaps miso yoghurt. “I love food!” he announces, adding some salad – a spoonful of mixed green beans, shaved asparagus with spinach, chilli, garlic and chervil; another of cucumber, celery and radish with coriander, mint and nigella seeds. I follow suit and, wondering whether these dishes share something of the fusion cuisine of his childhood – Kapoor’s maternal family came from Baghdad, emigrating to India where his grandfather was cantor of the Pune synagogue – I question him about his mother.
“My mother? Oh God, don’t ask! God knows!” he answers hastily, adding without enthusiasm, “It was a great childhood.” The oldest of three brothers, Kapoor left India at 17 for Israel: “My parents were very cosmopolitan, we grew up with Judaism as a cultural reality, a family reality, rather than a religious one – which is right, I believe in that.”

Initially, he lived on a kibbutz, then studied engineering before realising “it really wasn’t for me, it was too tight. I went back to the kibbutz and decided I had to be an artist. I got myself a little studio and made some really bad paintings. My parents weren’t over the moon. I was so young and so naive. I’d hardly looked at any art, hardly ever seen a painting. Then I came to art school [Hornsey College of Art] in London and felt utterly liberated. They were very difficult years emotionally, but in a way I’m grateful for them. It took me many years of psychoanalysis to get over it.”

Was the problem a standard coming-of-age neurosis? Kapoor looks vaguely amused at this understatement. “Er, no. It was much, much, much more than that. It was a sense of disorientation, not culturally, but with myself, which I needed to live with, understand, be less afraid of. Perhaps I was also coming to terms with an idea that I wanted to do something. No – wait, it’s difficult to find the right words – a sensation that I had something to do, but I didn’t know how to do it and didn’t know if I could allow myself to do it.

“The first years when I was making art, I felt as if I didn’t exist if I didn’t work. Now I don’t. The work got better when I didn’t feel that. Now I’ve allowed the work to be the work, I can be me, and somehow we can live together.” He quit psychoanalysis around the time he married medieval art historian Susanne Spicale in 1995; the couple have a daughter, Alba, 16, and son Ishan, 15.

We move on to grilled salmon served with avocado, coriander, chilli onion and mustard seed salsa, helping ourselves to further salads: baby potatoes with parsley pesto, courgettes, walnuts, radicchio and watercress; roasted squash with green olive and yoghurt sauce, red onion, capers, mint and sumac. Everything is fresh, robust and tastes less complicated than it sounds.
“The psychoanalytic method is somewhat the studio method,” Kapoor expands. “The speculative process, the space between analyst and patient where there’s a third object, the fantasy object – that’s very much like sculpture. In a post-Freudian world, it’s not very interesting if you don’t speculate. After the idea that human motivation is complex, that there is Jewish guilt and taboos, that there is anxiety in all projects, there’s no such thing as an innocent eye. All looking is done with envy, hate, love.

“That’s a problem for the maker of things, this question of the anxiety of the viewer and therefore the anxiety of the object. [Marcel] Duchamp came to the idea that the viewer needed to look with a particular stance. ‘The Large Glass’ (‘The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even’) is divided into male and female – looking is divided, it’s about desire, stripping something bare.”

I say that I often ask artists whether creativity and sex come from the same place. “Definitely, yes! Does any artist ever say ‘No’? It’s pretty bloody obvious, isn’t it? A fundamental thing of the world is that it’s made up of male and female, night and day, up and down, all opposites, from the moment we are born until we die, life and death. It’s almost silly to say it. One of the riches of abstract language is that it can point to these bits of deeper content.”

Kapoor’s earliest powdered pigment pieces in the 1980s featured thrusting red stalactites and rounded lemon-orange breasts. Tate Modern’s popular “Ishi’s Light” (2003, named for his son) is an incomplete egg with a distorting mirrored red lacquer interior that you enter through a slit. In “Shooting into the Corner”, an installation at his 2008 Royal Academy show, a gun of red paint was fired across a gallery (“Corners are crucial to sculpture. A corner has all kinds of implications – sexual, architectural, the secret part of the room, womb-like”). This was a parody of masculinity – as is the curving, looping “Orbit”, which can be read as a feminised, circular, open-ended version of the phallic tower form.

Why has Kapoor so relentlessly explored abstract forms of sexual polarity? “Look, Henry Moore spent his whole career making women in a landscape. I think he didn’t acknowledge fully the sexuality – they were almost asexual presences. I have always been interested in involuted form, which is often vaginal, female. It would be dishonest not to recognise that it’s blatantly sexual. You can’t be coy about it. Art is good at intimacy: it can say, ‘Come here, be part of this’, beckoning. It’s a tool of intimacy.”
Is his art, then, autobiographical? “No! No, but yes. You can’t avoid your psychobiography. In psychoanalysis, you go into the room with a problem, lie on the couch, and something else emerges, which has repercussions way more interesting than anything you might have gone in with. Similarly when you go into the studio, you get unexpected connections. If I had a great message to deliver, god how boring it would be. Boring for me above all. Not knowing, yet daring – that’s the métier!”

Lucy comes in to offer coffee – “Oh I’d love one!” he exclaims. “No I wouldn’t, I’ve already had too much” – and pudding: chocolate fondant cake and lemon mascarpone tart. We both declare that we are full, yet the cake, moist and flavoured with coffee and rum, is irresistible. “I can’t help it,” says Kapoor.

“I love poetry, I read a lot,” he continues, as we each slowly slice wedges off the cake until we have finished it all. “Rilke was a great constructor. And Twombly, a bit of paint and he scribbles something on canvas, how does he get away with it, the fucker – conveying a whole passionate universe with the smallest of means!

“That’s what poetry is about – condensing experience into a meaningful few words, gestures. ‘Vir Heroicus Sublimus’ by Barnett Newman, it’s a big red painting with a strip in, and yet it isn’t – it’s something mysterious. Newman is one of my favourite artists. Duchamp is another – ‘The Large Glass’, there are very few objects in the world that remain mysterious like that. And the third artist for me is Joseph Beuys: if Duchamp’s idea was that all objects are art, Beuys’ was that all objects have mythological potential.

“It’s compelling, a deeply serious idea but also playful. I hope with increasing confidence that I’m being playful ...You know, who cares? I have the guts to do it.”

*Jackie Wullschlager is the FT’s chief visual arts critic*
Anish Kapoor at the Royal Academy, review

Anish Kapoor's retrospective at the Royal Academy is an awe-inspiring riot of the senses. Rating: *****

By Richard Dorment
6:28PM BST 21 Sep 2009

SOMETHING and nothing, form and formlessness, concave and convex, hard and soft, rough and smooth, inside and outside, slow and fast, presence and absence, colour and non-colour, reflection and absorption, surface and depth, clean and dirty, big and small, movement and stasis, austerity and excess, illusion and reality, creation and destruction: Anish Kapoor's joyful mid-career retrospective at the Royal Academy is a like an inventory of the possibilities of sculpture.
The show begins with pieces made from wood covered in gesso and powdered pigments such as you see sold in neat conical piles in Indian street markets for use in dyes, cosmetics and at Hindu festivals. Small in scale, they sit on the gallery floor, spiky red stalactites, orange-yellow breasts, a lemon wedge of pure yellow, a miniature mountain range of intense blue. By turns sensual and cruel, they look so fragile that you fear a sudden gust of wind could blow them away.

Looking through the door leading into the next gallery, we see what looks like a veil of saturated yellow floating in front of the wall. In fact, it is a six-square-metre disc made from fibreglass and covered in 12 coats of yellow paint which, when seen from a distance, fills our field of vision.

Only when you approach it do you understand that the wall is not flat but concave, and that what looked solid is actually a void. Drawn into its inviting nothingness, we are suffused with pleasure even as our sense of self feels diminished by its enveloping radiance. The last time I felt something similar, it was in front of another giant disc – Olafur Eliasson’s famous mirrored sun in Tate Modern’s turbine hall.

Elsewhere Kapoor shows free-standing stainless-steel sculptures and hanging discs, in whose polished curves we expect to see our own reflections, as in the sculptures of Michelangelo Pistoletto. But Kapoor’s surfaces are concave, so that when you see yourself in them, you and your surroundings are either upside down or grotesquely distorted in a way that makes you feel that what is important to Kapoor is not the object, but the animated gallery space around and behind you. More worryingly, in a vertical statue entitled Non-Object (Pole), from certain angles and distances you can’t see yourself at all.

Almost the opposite sensory experiences occur in Kapoor’s new series of sculptures, where concrete shapes that look like slugs, turds or phalluses, are piled up to make dozens of mounds of different shapes and sizes. Some look organic, like worm casts or piles of dung, while others feel architectural, like the crumbling ruins of a forgotten civilisation. Whereas in the first galleries Kapoor succumbed to light, colour and sleek, inviting shapes, here he repels by using a material that absorbs the light and evokes things that either disgust us or feel ancient, damaged, decayed.

So far, you could say that for all his innovation, Kapoor is at least working with the materials and techniques of traditional sculpture. But in two other works in the show, he moves decisively into the realms of performance art. Not since the days when J M W Turner arrived at the Royal Academy on varnishing days to work in public with brush and palette knife on pictures he had submitted as mere dabs of colour, has Burlington House seen anything what remotely like what will go on in those galleries this autumn.

Kapoor is using a powerful cannon to shoot heavy pellets of crimson wax from one gallery onto the wall of another. By the end of the show’s run, 20 tons of wax will have built up on the gallery floor and spattered the walls.
But the essence of the art work is not on the walls, but in the performance. Every 20 minutes, an attendant in black enacts a carefully choreographed ritual, and I defy you not to feel a shiver of fear and excitement when he loads the cannon and the gallery explodes with the sound of the shot.

Shooting into the Corner has been discussed in terms of its Freudian symbolism, but I think it is closer to Kapoor's intention to see it as following on from the famous sculpture Richard Serra made in 1968 by flinging molten lead against a gallery wall.

The other never-to-be-forgotten performance Kapoor is staging for this show takes the form of a 40-ton block of red wax, paint and Vaseline that moves on tracks through five galleries at the RA. So high and so broad that it only just fits through each archway, the huge object leaves a splattered residue of crimson grunge on the walls and floors as it passes, like the great juggernaut that is dragged by devotees of the Hindu god Jagannatha at the festival of Rathayatra and which is said to crush everything in its path. The silent presence travels so slowly that it takes an hour and a half to complete its journey. It's like a dream in which all the paint in all the paintings ever shown at the Royal Academy has somehow returned in the form of a giant brushstroke slapping paint back and forth, back and forth, all over the galleries.

No other contemporary British artist has Kapoor's range of imagination and no one else routinely works on this scale. Over the years, he's become more of a public than a private artist – or at least one whose most effective works are intended not for private contemplation, but to inspire awe in large numbers of people.

In the courtyard of the RA, there's a giddy example of Kapoor at his most grandiose and light-hearted, a new sculpture in the form of a column of large polished, stainless-steel spheres that appear to rise up from the ground weightlessly like giant bubbles in a bottle of champagne, and look so precariously balanced that they could come tumbling down with a gentle push.

Stop to look and what you'll see in the mirror-like silver surface of each sphere are reflections of the buildings surrounding the courtyard and the people walking among them. It's like an animated version of Brancusi's Endless Column, reflecting the whole world, in fact, in constant change.