

GLADSTONE GALLERY

“Anish Kapoor Exhibition In Sydney Proves Hit With The Public,” *artlyst.com*, March 4, 2013.

Anish Kapoor, Museum of Contemporary Art Sydney



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The first major exhibition in Australia by the celebrated British artist Anish Kapoor which opened as part of the Sydney International Art Series has proven to be both popular with the public and press, achieving record numbers of visitors for the gallery. Kapoor has in the past created some of the world's most ambitious and recognisable contemporary artworks, including, *Orbit* (2012), a 115-metre-high tower created for the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, *Leviathan* (2011) for the Grand Palais in Paris, *Cloud Gate* (2004) in Millennium Park, Chicago, *Sky Mirror* (2006) for the Rockefeller Centre in New York and *Marsyas* (2002) for the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern.

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In this selection of key works across two floors of the Museum, you can encounter Kapoor's powerful artworks up close and in-depth. Highlights include *1000 Names* (1979-80), his early powdered pigment geometric sculptures; *Void* (1989), a large deep blue sculpture that changes from a convex to a concave form depending on your position; one of the artist's most ambitious works, the 24-ton *Memory* (2008) which completely fills one of the MCA's spacious galleries as if squeezed between the white walls; and the monumental *My Red Homeland* (2003), which replicates the role of the artist. In this enormous circular sculpture, a large motorised steel blade slowly cuts a course through 25 tons of red wax, endlessly dissecting and re-shaping it into new forms.

Influenced by both his Indian heritage and western philosophy, in particular metaphysics, Kapoor's artworks seek to understand what it is to be human. Explore Kapoor's interest in the relationship between the contrasting forces of light and dark and see how he uses colour, form, size and medium to challenge perception, developing immersive and sometimes unsettling experiences.

Kapoor's continual experimentation with structure and medium has led him to work with a wide variety of materials from clay, fibreglass and paint pigment, to steel and wax, creating beautiful, strange and intriguing works that counter conventional ideas of art.



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This unique exhibition, which is the first major presentation of the artist's work in Australia, includes works from the early stages of Kapoor's career to the present day. It explores the artist's continual experimentation across a variety of materials including clay, plastic, pigment, steel and wax to create works of great visual power and emotional impact.

Highlights include one of the artist's most ambitious works for a gallery, *Memory* (2008), commissioned by Deutsche Bank in consultation with the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation for the Deutsche Guggenheim. In the work's first presentation in the Southern Hemisphere, *Memory* completely fills the MCA's sizable Level 3 Gallery as if squeezed between the white walls. Viewers experience the rust-coloured bulbous structure from several angles including a window that looks into the cavernous interior space. By restricting the ability to view the whole work from a single point, Kapoor challenges the public to imagine the object in its entirety by piecing together memories of the work from different locations.

The exhibition also comprises a selection of the early works that first brought Anish Kapoor to prominence. Created following a short trip to India, *1000 Names* (1979-80) consists of primary coloured geometric forms produced using brightly coloured powdered pigments placed on the floor or situated on the wall.

Another highlight is *Void* (1989), a large concave shape coated in a deep blue pigment that toys with perception. The shape changes from a convex to a concave form depending on where the viewer is situated, whilst the colour of the piece disrupts the ability to determine the object's true proportions.

The MCA's spacious Level 1 North Gallery is the ideal setting for the enormous wax sculpture *My Red Homeland* (2003). In this monumental circular sculpture, a large motorised steel blade slowly cuts a course through 25 tons of wax and Vaseline mixed with a deep red pigment. Over the period of an hour the blade traces the circumference of the structure, which measures 12 metres in diameter, endlessly dissecting and re-shaping the wax into new forms. Drawing associations with organic material such as blood, *My Red Homeland* stimulates not only an emotional but also a physical response.

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Anish Kapoor was born on 12 March 1954 in Mumbai (Bombay). He moved to London in the early 1970s where he has lived and worked ever since. He studied art at Hornsey College of Art (1973-1977) and at Chelsea School of Art (1977-1978). His first solo exhibition was held at Patrice Alexandre in Paris in 1980. He quickly gained international attention and acclaim for a series of solo exhibitions at venues including: Tate Gallery, London (1990-01); Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2003); Fondazione Prada, Milano (1995); Hayward Gallery, London (1998); BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead (1999); Piazza del Plebiscito, Naples (1999); Kunsthau Bregenz (2003); MAC Grand-Hornu, Belgium (2004); Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples (2004); Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin (2008) MAK, Vienna (2009); Royal Academy of Arts, London

(2009); Pinchuk Arts Centre, Kiev (2010); and Guggenheim Bilbao (2010).

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His major solo exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts in London (26 September – 11 December 2010) was the most successful ever presented by a contemporary artist in London. He has participated in many group shows internationally including those at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, Royal Academy of Arts and Serpentine Gallery in London, Documenta IX in Kassel, Moderna Museet in Stockholm and Jeu de Paume and Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. He represented Britain at the Paris Biennale in 1982 and at the Venice Biennale in 1990, where he was awarded the 'Premio Duemila'. He won the Turner Prize in 1991 and he received the prestigious Unilever Commission for the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern in 2002, which he realised with the much-acclaimed work, *Marsyas*. In 2011 his specially commissioned work *Leviathan* was unveiled in the nave of the Grand Palais in Paris in the *Monumenta* series.

Throughout his career he has worked extensively with architects and engineers on projects including *Tees Valley Giants*, a series of five large-scale sculptures created in collaboration with the leading structural engineer, Cecil Balmond. He created the site-specific work, *Dismemberment*, Site 1 for the outdoor art gallery of the same name in Kaipara Harbour, north of Auckland, New Zealand. Among his major permanent commissions is *Cloud Gate* (2006) for the Millennium Park in Chicago, considered to be the most popular public artwork in the world. His commissioned permanent artwork *Orbit* is the official London 2012 Olympics monument. He was elected Royal Academician in 1999 and has been awarded Honorary Fellowships by the London Institute and Leeds University (1997), University of Wolverhampton (1999) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (2001). He was awarded a CBE in 2003.