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Houssin, Lauren, "Kapoor's 'Leviathan' Fills Grand Palais in Paris," *New York Times*, May 31, 2011

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Kapoor's 'Leviathan' Fills Grand Palais in Paris

By LAUREN HOUSSIN



Remy De La Mauviniere/Associated Press

Anish Kapoor's "Leviathan" at the Grand Palais in Paris.

Invited for the fourth edition of the Grand Palais's annual [Monumenta](#) exhibition, the artist [Anish Kapoor](#) chose to take the title of the event literally. His creation, titled "Leviathan," fills the large-scale venue with a giant sculpture — measuring about 775,000 square feet — that seems to push the walls of the building and, within its interior, drenches the viewer with a blood-red hue.

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Like the Biblical sea-monster of its name, Mr. Kapoor's creation, on show through June 23, resembles a bulbous monster of the underworld. "I wanted to make something dark in a space that is all about light," he said. Its shape echoes that of the Palais's nave. "It gives the impression of a pregnant Grand Palais," said Jean de Loisy, the curator of the exhibition.

The Indian-born, London-based artist is fascinated by color and space, which he considers as a material to be worked. In addition to the vast volume he had to deal with, Mr. Kapoor also had to face the challenge of the intensity of the light in the hall. "It's almost brighter in here than it is outside," he said.



Lauren Houssin

Inside "Leviathan."

Composed of two sequential experiences, Mr. Kapoor's sculpture, which is made from PVC, a sort of plastic, requires the visitor to first enter into the semi-obscure sculpture through a revolving door, in which variations of reds are created by the daylight flooding through the glass dome. The visitor then emerges to discover the object from the outside.

"The sculpture cannot be seized from the inside," explained Mr. De Loisy. "The viewer needs to walk around its contour in order to understand its shape and remember the inside experience."

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But what does it mean? And why is it here?

"I hope it's more than the object described," Mr. Kapoor said. But he insists that there is no hidden message behind the artwork, which can only find a complete circle of meaning with the involvement of the visitor and his interpretation. Even the title isn't prescriptive. Instead it's "a loose, poetic description of a certain possible way of looking at a work," he said.