

Press Release

CONRAD SHAWCROSS: MANIFOLD

In the Gallery
23 May – 26 July 2015



In the gallery this summer, we are showing a body of work by Conrad Shawcross including examples from some of his most important series of sculptures. This is Conrad Shawcross' first exhibition at the New Art Centre and we are delighted he has also made a cast of 'Manifold 2 (9:8)' for the sculpture park. Imbued with an appearance of scientific rationality, Shawcross often appropriates redundant theories and methodologies to create ambitious structures in diverse materials. His constructions are conceived as systems - sometimes modular, sometimes mechanical - which could theoretically be extended into infinity.

The 'Perimeter Studies Set 3', in the current exhibition, comprises four sculptures based on the dodecahedron - the fourth of the platonic solids. They are a result of Shawcross' experimentation with the solidity of planes and lines in different configurations, and emanate from his desire to portray the origins of the universe and the first millisecond of time. The sculptures from the 'Plosion Series' we are showing, likewise, are a product of his fascination with the Big Bang, and how we might envisage such phenomena through sculptural form. The 'Three Perpetual Chord Studies' draw upon his ongoing study of light and harmonics and are maquettes for the monumental public commission Shawcross has made to replace Hepworth's 'Two Forms (Divided Circle)', which was stolen from Dulwich Park in 2011. 'Manifold 2 (9:8)' is a large-scale bronze sculpture which references the second chord in the Harmonic Spectrum. Shawcross visualised the precise mathematical ratios given by this chord with a machine based on a Victorian Harmonograph, its two pendulums - one attached to a pen, the other a piece of paper - recording the oscillations of its sound waves. The complex algorithm yielded by this process has here been rendered as a three-dimensional form, the end result seeming to grow like a tree from the ground.

Conrad Shawcross studied at the Slade, the Ruskin School of Art and at Chelsea. He has exhibited throughout the world and our exhibition coincides with major new projects in London at Dulwich Park and the Royal Academy of Arts. Other recent solo presentations include: ARTMIA Foundation, Beijing (2014); the Roundhouse, London (2013); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2013); Science Museum, London (2011-2012) and Turner Contemporary, Margate (2011). His work has also been exhibited at: Museum of Old and New Art, Tasmania (2014); the 55th Venice Biennale (2013); Hayward Gallery, London (2013); KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2012); National Gallery, London (2012); Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel (2012) and Palazzo Fortuny, Venice (2011).

PRESS PREVIEW: Saturday 23 May 2015. Free bus from London departing Tate Britain (Millbank) at 10 a.m. and leaving Roche Court at 3 p.m. Please contact the New Art Centre to reserve a place. For further information about the exhibition and for images, please contact Stephen Feeke on 01980 862244 or nac@sculpture.uk.com.