

ANTONY GORMLEY

SAN ANTONIO DRAWINGS, 1995

"These drawings are derived from a suite of twelve individual works which were made and exhibited in San Antonio, Texas, in 1995. The suite was made in response to a residency invitation from the ArtPace organisation during late December 1994 and early January 1995. Gormley used this time as an opportunity to work in a free yet focused manner on his drawing while also responding to the particular features which seemed to characterise the local place - the relationship of the river, railway and road; the weather fronts; the transmissions of cargo and migrations; the flatness, openness and presence of the sky. In an interview with Annette DiMeo Carozzi in July that year, he explained the whole project as "an attempt to undermine dualistic thinking - the idea that here is part of there, in being everywhere - an idea of making the distance intimate, recognising that notions of identity and place can be defined by ideas of horizon". While the images in the drawings reflect ongoing concerns that had previously occupied the artist - such as "describing the limits of physical space which can then be used by the viewer to test conceptual limits" or "making an attempt to orient the body in space" - the materials used to make them indicate the extent of his experimentation and interests at this time. Certain substances, like a slice of melon, sit entirely on the surface of the paper, some are absorbed within it (oil), and others sit amongst the paper's fibres (charcoal). CENTRE was made from a brand of bottled pimento Louisiana sauce. Besides the attraction of the colour, the bottle appealed as "an ejaculatory implement, you could shake it and it would spurt and make a trajectory through the air before it became paint". In these respects, the series as a whole epitomises Gormley's entire approach by this point. "For me, drawing isn't about making pictures, it is about testing ideas and testing materials as well." He has since described the period as "a time to concentrate on drawing. What these drawings try and do is codify, diagrammatise, isolate my concerns with space and image in drawing... with the drawing as an event - a splash, a moment captured and focused by the 'frame' of drawing."

Text by Anna Moszynska, from ANTONY GORMLEY DRAWING, published by The British Museum Press, London, 2002
