

ANTONY GORMLEY

BLACK PIGMENT, OIL & CHARCOAL, 1984 - 1989

These black pigment, oil and charcoal drawings made between 1985 and 1988 and generally on a smaller scale, were executed on a heavy density etching paper, Somerset Weave, which Gormley first discovered as a support in 1984 and which he has consistently used since. Large sheets of paper were folded and torn to scale, either in quarters, sixteenths or more generally, as in this case, eighths. Either way, the uneven edges were left uncut, complementing the coarse but highly atmospheric ground texture provided by the dense weave of the paper. This highly productive period in Gormley's drawing career when he found himself working, sometimes 'for hours at a stretch in a frenzy', is characterised generally by a pervasive blackness. The first drawings were made while staying near Tintagel, a historical, windswept shoreline in north Cornwall, mythically connected by its castle to the legend of King Arthur. The imagery of hot rock pools, seascape, sheer cliff and night sky relates specifically to the place and suggests its very particular atmosphere. The rest of the drawings were made in the drawing room of a new studio converted from an old laundry in Peckham, South London. The physical darkness of these drawings contributes to a melancholic gravitas in terms of atmosphere and tone, paralleling the dark interior of Gormley's lead sculptures. Text by Anna Moszynska, from ANTONY GORMLEY DRAWING, Published by The British Museum Press, 2002
