



# KIT TEEN AGERS

A tool for exploring the exhibition  
designed for visitors aged 12 to 19  
Anish Kapoor Untrue Unreal

## Let's start here

Palazzo Strozzi is the building that Filippo Strozzi began constructing in 1489 as his family home. Today it is an exhibition center hosting exhibitions ranging from ancient art and old masters and contemporary art.

From October 2023 to February 2024, Palazzo Strozzi is presenting *Anish Kapoor: Untrue Unreal*, a major exhibition dedicated to the contemporary artist who has redefined the concept of sculpture and experimented with various materials such as wax, pigments, stone, steel, and silicone, creating works that even reach architectural dimensions.

Anish Kapoor is interested in the relationship between opposites: emptiness and fullness, interior and exterior, concave and convex, finite and infinite, matte and reflective surfaces, hard and soft.

These seemingly contrasting characteristics coexist in his works, generating perceptual ambiguities: an object can be simultaneously two distinct things. What we see when observing his works does not always correspond to our experience of reality, and the exhibition's title "*Untrue*" and "*Unreal*" derives from this very concept.

## What is the teenager kit?

The Teenager Kit is a tool addressed to young people aged 12 to 19 for exploring *Anish Kapoor: Untrue Unreal* exhibition on their own or with friends.

The kit offers a tour through the rooms and allows to discover the artist's biography and some of his artworks.

## How to use the Kit?

Use the map to guide you between the exhibition rooms; the numbers correspond to the room where we suggest you stop.

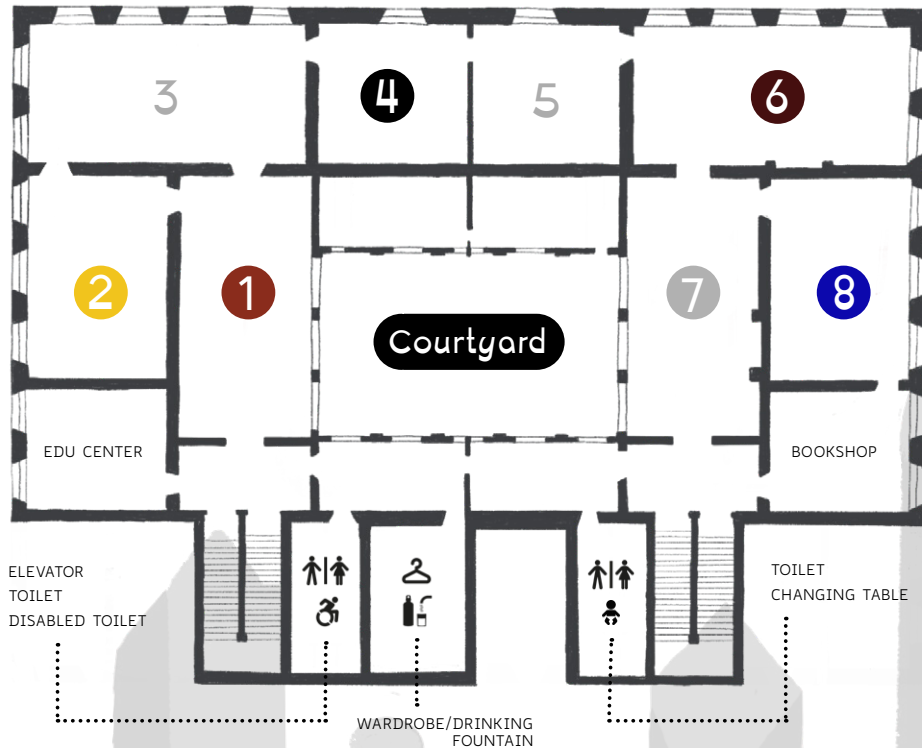
Decide how long you want to devote to your tour using the Kit.

Remember to keep at a proper distance from the exhibits and please try to show consideration for other visitors.

You can sit on the steps under the windows while using the Kit. At the end of the path on the first floor, go down to the courtyard to visit the artwork *Void Pavilion VII*.

# Who is Anish Kapoor?

Anish Kapoor was born in Bombay, India in 1954. During his adolescence he lived in Israel, where he briefly studied engineering, however, at the age of 19, he moved to England to fully dedicate himself to art. In 1990, at only 35 years old, Kapoor was selected as the most significant artist to represent Britain at the Venice Biennale, one of the world's most important events dedicated to contemporary art. The following year, he won the *Turner Prize*, another of the most relevant awards for artists living or working in England. These two events brought Kapoor international attention, and his fame grew further in 2004, when he created *Cloud Gate*, a monumental public sculpture made of reflective steel and placed at Chicago's *Millennium Park*. The sculpture became a symbol of the city and is now known worldwide as "*The Bean*".

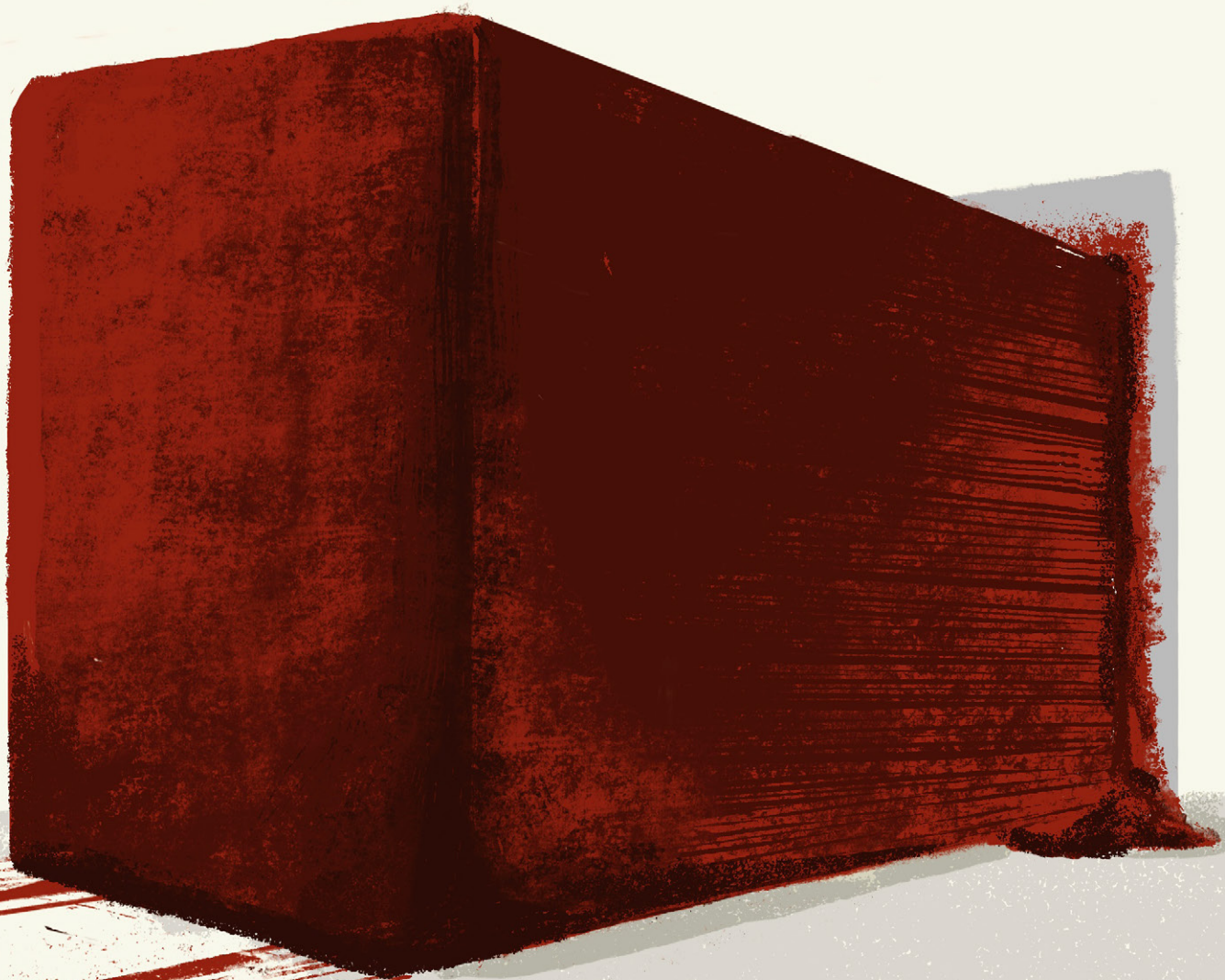


1

## WAX AS SKIN

A monumental block of wax and oil-based paint moves slowly on a nearly twenty-meter track through two rooms of Palazzo Strozzi. Kapoor's sculpture passes through a portal that shapes its form, on the jambs and lintel thicken layers of excess material. Wax has always been used in Western artistic production, and Kapoor employs it because it is a living material which, in this case, retains traces of its journey between the two spaces, as if it were a skin bearing the marks of an experience.

Think about the moments you have gone through that have changed you. What are the experiences that have left a mark and shaped you into the person you are today?



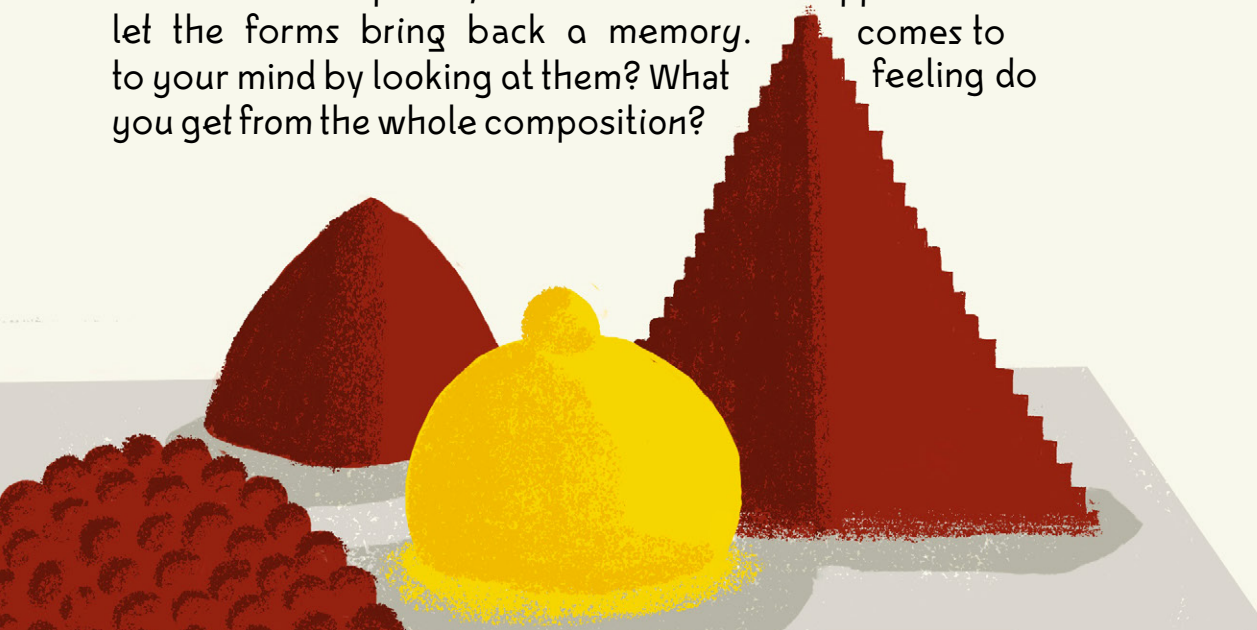
2

## BEYOND THE SURFACE

After a trip to India in 1979, Kapoor returned to England and began working on a series of works entirely covered in pure pigment. The sculptures in this room, which seem to emerge from the floor as if a part remains hidden beneath the surface, are from that period.

These objects are suspended between two worlds: the one of physical reality we know and that of imagination. Kapoor says that a visit to his home country has ignited great creativity in him, and natural and geometric forms, perhaps suggested by memories of places and experiences of the past, started flowing uncontrollably from his imagination.

The artist's experiences and memories were condensed into these sculptures, we can do the opposite and let the forms bring back a memory. comes to your mind by looking at them? What feeling do you get from the whole composition?



4

## BLACK INFINITE

Our experience of the world is closely connected with light, which allows us to understand the space we live in. If we enter a completely dark room, we find ourselves in a visually infinite environment. If an object does not project its shadow, it may appear flat rather than three-dimensional.

The relationship between light and darkness, three-dimensionality, and surface is a recurring theme in Kapoor's works, and this room is an example of it. In the artwork enclosed in the display case, *Non-Object Black*, the artist has experimented with Vantablack, a material developed in the scientific field capable of absorbing 99.965% of light, generating a completely unexpected effect.

Move around the room and observe how light and black color affect what we can perceive and understand as real.

6

## AMBIVALENCES

In this room, we are greeted by a sculpture made of steel and resin, measuring over 7 meters long. For Kapoor, the artwork does not represent something real, but it evokes various interpretations: a crater, a wound, a giant living being harnessed in a metal mesh, or a geological stratification.

Kapoor's art can be multiple things simultaneously, just as it happens with the hanging works made of silicone and red paint. Speaking of these artworks, Kapoor uses the word "*interior*": in a literal sense it means what is inside us, the flesh and blood, in a metaphorical sense our inner world and emotions.

This play of ambivalence is also present in the use of the color red, which carries layers of meanings. Traditionally, it is associated with fire and blood, but it is also the color of power and aristocracy, revolutions and the proletariat. It is the color that evokes danger (think of red alert), but also passion and vital energy.

"I have an obsession with red. My favourite colour of all, the one I use by the ton, is Alizirin crimson. What's interesting about red is that it links to black so unbelievably easily. Red makes great darkness. And of course one might say red is fully a colour of the interior."

Anish Kapoor



7

## NON EUCLIDEAN GEOMETRY

What happens when we observe ourselves on a reflective surface, concave or convex? The reflection we see does not correspond to our experience of reality. Our image, along with the space we know according to the principles of Euclidean geometry (depth, height, and width), is called into question. Kapoor's reflective sculptures present a shifting, precarious, and dizzying reality, and it is perhaps for this reason that we are fascinated and drawn to them. There are specific distances from the artworks where particular visual effects occur: the image of our body expands and contracts, loses definition, or even flips upside down.

Try experimenting with different positions in space and do not take anything for granted. What you see is different from what others in the room with you see.

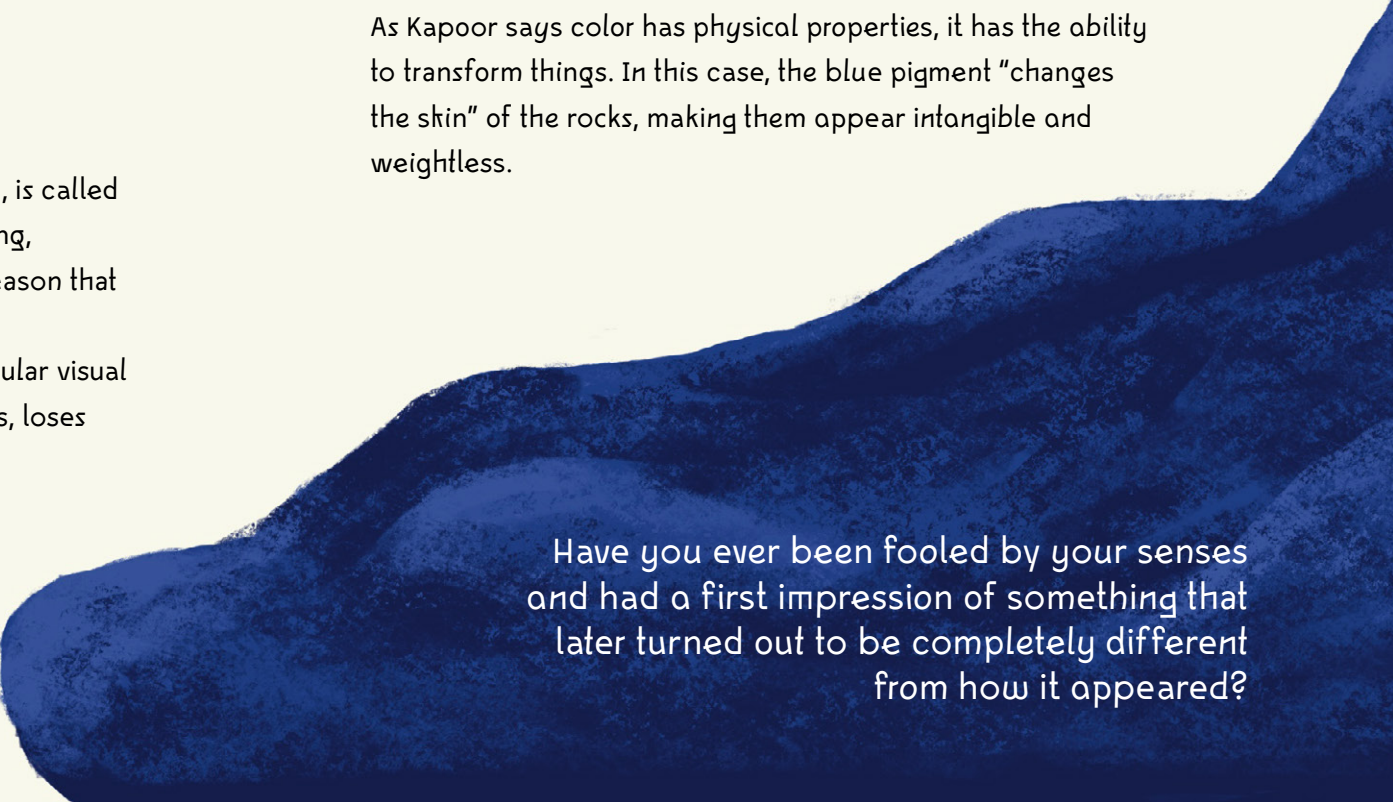
8

## BETWEEN MATERIAL AND ILLUSION



Day by day, our brain stores experiences and information that enable us to recognize everything around us more quickly. The relationships between shapes and colors we have assimilated influence our perception of reality and immediately suggest plausible responses to what we see. But what happens when we observe something completely new and the sensory cues are discordant with our previous experiences?

The blue shapes in this room appear soft and light, they seem to float on the floor. In reality, they are eight heavy slate slabs. As Kapoor says color has physical properties, it has the ability to transform things. In this case, the blue pigment "changes the skin" of the rocks, making them appear intangible and weightless.



Have you ever been fooled by your senses and had a first impression of something that later turned out to be completely different from how it appeared?

Courtyard

## INTO THE VOID

In the courtyard, there's an architectural structure, enter in it, and take your time to immerse yourself in the contemplative atmosphere. On the walls there are three deep black rectangular openings, the ends of which you can not see, they appear to be thresholds to boundless space.

How is it possible that the room can contain such depth? For Kapoor, this blackness is a void full of possibilities. It is "the circumscribed arena of potential infinity".

Kapoor succeeds in the impossible task of creating a container that encloses the infinite. Art has the ability to make sensations and experiences visible that are difficult to express in words.

Imagine being an artist, what "impossible" concept would you like to encapsulate and to exhibit?

## Teenager at Palazzo Strozzi

Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi gives special attention to activities for teenager. Plurals, the PCTO project (Pathways for Transversal Skills and Orientation) addressed to secondary school students, is designed to introduce young people to the languages of art and allows them to engage in activities within the cultural institution.

On Thursday, January 25, 2024, from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM, there will be the event No Gronwups

Students from the Plurals project will lead guided tours, telling their peers about the works of Anish Kapoor. Free activity with exhibition entrance fee.







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The Teenager Kit is a Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi project.

Devised and written by Martino Margheri  
and Azzurra Simoncini

Illustrations and graphic design by Simone Spellucci.

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