

WHITE CUBE

Anselm Kiefer

*For Vicente Huidobro: Life is a parachute
voyage and not what you'd like to think it is*

28 September – 11 November 2018

9 × 9 × 9

White Cube Bermondsey

'One day, I gathered up my parachute and said: 'Between two swallows and a star.' Here death is coming closer like the earth to a falling balloon. [...] And now my parachute drops from dream to dream through the spaces of death.'

– Vicente Huidobro, *Altazor*, Preface, 1931

(Translated by Eliot Weinberger)

White Cube is pleased to present a major new sculpture by Anselm Kiefer at Bermondsey. Titled *For Vicente Huidobro: Life is a parachute voyage and not what you'd like to think it is* (2018), this large-scale vitrine directly responds to the spatial proportions of the 9 × 9 × 9 gallery.

For Vicente Huidobro [...] is informed by Kiefer's career-long focus on themes of mortality, spirituality, history and the metaphorical power inherent within objects and materials. Referencing lines of poetry from *Altazor* (1931), the master work of avant-garde Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro, it exemplifies the artist's signature poetic and potent transformation of matter, played out on a monumental scale.

The vitrine measures more than 6 metres tall, reaching out into the entire height and width of the gallery space. Contained within it is an old rusted bicycle, discarded and lying on its side on a bed of dry, cracked and bleached earth. Tethered to the bicycle are a number of thin strings, connecting it to a white silk parachute above, listlessly draped over a wire mesh armature. Organic and amorphous but nonetheless conveying a kind of animism, the parachute appears as if in perpetual upwards motion, although trapped by the vitrine's glass ceiling. Suggestive of an 'absent' body the sculpture addresses themes of life and death, metaphorically gesturing towards heaven and hell, and the duality of beauty and melancholy that resides within a continuous cycle of human toil and endeavour.

9 × 9 × 9

1 Anselm Kiefer

*For Vicente Huidobro: Life is a parachute
voyage and not what you'd like to think it is*
2018

Glass, metal, wood, clay, lead, fabric,
nylon thread, rope, copper

610 × 295 × 295 cm (240³/₁₆ × 116¹/₈ × 116¹/₈ in.)

BIOGRAPHY

Anselm Kiefer was born in Donaueschingen, Germany in 1945 and has lived and worked in France since 1993. He has exhibited widely, including solo shows at The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (2017); Albertina Museum, Vienna (2016); Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2015); Royal Academy of Arts, London (2014); Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2011); Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (2011); Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark (2010); Grand Palais, Paris (2010); Guggenheim Bilbao (2010); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2006); Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas (2005); The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (1998); Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin (1991); and The Museum of Modern Art, New York (1987). In 2007 Kiefer became the first artist since Georges Braque 50-years earlier to be commissioned to install a permanent work at the Louvre, Paris. In 2009 he created an opera, *Am Anfang*, to mark the 20th anniversary of the Opéra National de Paris.

White Cube Bermondsey is open

Tuesday–Saturday, 10am – 6pm and Sunday, 12 – 6pm.

Admission is free.

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