Anish Kapoor: No it is not. I do not think that a religious reality is impossible, especially if it can be separated from the ethnic and redefined in its true context as metaphysical system.

FRANCESCO BONAMI: Is your work a way to define the impossibility of a religious reality?

Anish Kapoor: I am not interested in a historical view of religion. For me religion is here, now, in this moment.

FB: Is religion move a formal state of mind rather than a real one?

AK: I am not interested in a historical view of religion. For me religion is here, now, in this moment.

FB: In your early work you were using the pigment to disguise the real identity of the material, its surface. Today it is the inside of the work which nullifies the external appearance.

AK: The skin, the outermost covering, has always been for me the place of action. It is the moment of contact between the thing and the world. The film that separates inside from outside, I feel it to be the place of tension, the place of weight, the place of illusion.

FB: Is this reflecting your being an Indian outside of India inside another culture very much related to India?

AK: That is not the center of my focus. I don’t think in terms of either masking or revealing my origin.

FB: Are you concerned with manufacture?

AK: Manufacture is of course the problem I deal with every day, but it is irrelevant to the looking. The eye is an astonishingly quick and efficient instrument. It can almost instantaneously tell the difference between that which is well and truly made, in Meister Eckhart’s sense, and that which is not. This has more to do with conception than manufacture.

FB: The transformation of a culture of images into a culture of visions. Are you going beyond the ethnicity of culture?

AK: In looking at another culture, one often is drawn to the most exotic part, the fastest aspects of that culture. I am not sure that is the real place of art. It is not speed that is art for me, but slowness.

FB: The visualization of a culture does not need to be mediated. Is that why you try not to leave any sign of manufacture or of hand? Getting closer to a natural event rather than a cultural one?

AK: As I said earlier the hand is overrated. We tend to exorcise the artist’s hand. From my very earliest work I have been looking for ways towards the auto generated object. One which does not need the personality of the artist in order to sustain itself.

FB: Does sound has any relation to your work?

AK: I have always been interested in the interrelation between the eye and the other senses. The need for the hand to reaffirm the uncertainty of the eye, the temptation to touch and the denial of it. There are some works like Eyes Tuned Inward in which sound and vision are each as important as the other.

FB: The possibility of a sound?

AK: More like sound embodied, maybe like echo embodied. Sound and, perhaps especially echo, remind us of our physical presence, remind us of our relationship to the work, the here and the now.

FB: How has the western experience transformed your perspective on India?

AK: It simply does not exist, this supposed “Indian” experience. We are all hybrid. Purity comes more and more to resemble vulgarity.

FB: What is not interested in is the hybridization of two perspectives. Two experiences that end up mirroring each other, making the source indistinguishable.

AK: We are talking about inbetweeness. I am very excited by the possibility that one day in the future Gandian principles could be re imported into India, having been forgotten in their place of origin. A situation in which the primary becomes the secondary, so to speak.

FB: Could you re-implement your identity in India, working there again as an Indian artist?

AK: This is an artificial problem. What is interesting however is that one cannot distinguish between the lover and the beloved. They have become interchangeable. Consequently it seems to me location has also become interchangeable.

FB: Does it create an altered psychological condition?

AK: The psychological condition where we are both exiled and exiler. What I mean
is that all artists today are in the same condition relative to their own culture. We are all in exile. This has not to do with being distant from the source but is a positive sense of cultural ambiguity.

**FB: Does fear play a role in your work?**

**AK:** Fear is inseparable from art. The void works I have made over the last few years are on one level an attempt to deal with the fear of oblivion. Perhaps the work which deals with this most directly is *Descent into limbo*, the work made for the last Documenta. Fear and beauty is what I was trying to deal with. When Yves Klein jumped into the void he did so theatrically, photographically, fearlessly. I believe that the sublime needs to be conscious of oblivion, of the loss of the self, of fear. This cannot be theatrical. It needs to be real fear, that is why I made a real hole in which one could really fall. *Descent into limbo* is not theatrical. The fear is real. Jumping in is ever possible.

**FB: You ask the viewer, “Will you dare to jump?”**

**AK:** It is a question to the self, about loss and about the idea of release.