

From January to April 2010, artist [Andy Holden](#) will be displaying a giant knitted rock as part of [Tate Britain](#)'s Art Now program of contemporary displays. Never before shown in the UK, Pyramid Piece 2009 is a vastly enlarged replica of a small Egyptian stone fragment, created from knitted yarn and foam over a steel support. It will be on display alongside a companion film work, Return of the Pyramid Piece 2008, and a collection of tourist souvenirs, In Place of an Ending (Pyramid Souvenirs, Second Visit) 2008.



Holden's practice is driven by an investigation into the relationship between stories and objects. While on a trip to Egypt as a young boy, he took home a small lump of rock from the pyramid of Cheops in Giza. Over a period of 13 years the object came to embody the artist's sense of guilt, until he decided to travel back to Egypt and return it to the exact spot from which it was taken. A shaky amateur video, filmed by a man Holden met in a café and enlisted to help him, documented this mission and became the film Return of the Pyramid Piece 2008. The transformation of this rock from building material to historical relic to stolen souvenir is contrasted with a collection of more conventional pyramid merchandise, entitled In Place of an Ending (Pyramid Souvenirs, Second Visit) 2008, which use similarly small, solid objects to suggest a variety of multi-layered stories and histories.



After returning from his pilgrimage to Egypt, Holden set about creating a giant knitted replica of his stolen fragment. Working from paintings, diagrams, models and notes made before the trip, Holden's colossal reproduction embodies the emotional importance of this tiny rock. The scale of the resulting work, *Pyramid Piece 2009*, seeks to convey the wide-eyed, awestruck feeling that Holden experienced during his first encounter with the pyramids. The laborious, repetitive process of knitting could also be seen as an absurd work of penance for the artist's theft, or even as a scaled-down recreation of the mass labor it took to build the pyramids in the first place, with each woollen stitch or block of stone charting the time it took to construct the whole. This complex, millennia-spanning narrative becomes a kind of parable. At once charmingly quixotic and boldly monumental, it explores how we understand our place in the world through the objects that surround us.





Andy Holden was born in Bedford in 1982. He graduated from Goldsmith's College in 2005 and now lives and works in Bedfordshire. Holden has exhibited widely, including recent solo shows at Hidde Van Seggelen, London; Works/Projects, Bristol and Kunstfort Vijfhuizen, Netherlands, and will be curating a music festival at Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridge in September 2010.

The Art Now program at Tate Britain reflects the latest happenings in contemporary British art. Supported by Tate Patrons, it consists of a regular series of exhibitions, designed to demonstrate the quality and variety of new art in the UK.

**Art Now: Andy Holden**  
**Pyramid Piece and Return of the Pyramid Piece**

9 January – 10 April 2009

Tate Britain, Level 2

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Admission free