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Harris, Gareth. "Antony Gormley lends sculpture to fill an empty spot on the medieval façade of Wells Cathedral in England." *The Art Newspaper*. March 4, 2021.



THE ART NEWSPAPER



"I have chosen this niche for its position and its visibility: the book at the end of the bookshelf," says Antony Gormley Courtesy of Wells Cathedral

Prolific sculptor Antony Gormley will unveil another major public art work later this year at Wells Cathedral in southwestern England, a Gothic landmark completed in the 15th century.

According to the website for Wells Cathedral, the sculpture is cast in iron, just over life-size and will occupy an empty niche below the north-west tower from late August. Wells Art Contemporary (WAC), an organisation that commissions works for the medieval landmark, and the Project Factory CIC social enterprise are leading the initiative.

"This is not a commission, it's a new work by Gormley. The sculpture is on loan to the city of Wells for around 18 months. It's not costing us anything but we will

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have to pay transport and installation costs and hope to raise funds for community engagement activities,” says a spokeswoman for the Project Factory CIC. “His work, usually seen in isolation, will be seen in dialogue with sculptures on the West Front.”

According to the heritage body Historic England, “the imposing west front of Wells Cathedral... is one of the most important galleries of 13th-century sculpture in northern Europe”. The façade is covered in 300 medieval sculptures of saints and kings.

Gormley says in a statement: “I have chosen this niche for its position and its visibility: the work at the end of the bookshelf. The work attempts to invoke the feeling of being isolated and exposed on this corner of a Gothic masterpiece. My purpose is to engage the eye and body of the viewer in empathic projection, to consider our time in the shelter of other times”

Another public work by Gormley, [unveiled in Plymouth last September](#), divided opinion in the coastal city. The three-ton cast-iron figure, *Look II*, was unveiled on West Hoe Pier as part of the inaugural exhibition at the Box, a new multi-disciplinary culture complex. According to a budget document shared by Plymouth City Council earlier this month, £425,000 was spent on the installation costs while the statue itself cost around £339,000.