

# PARADIGM

Commissioned by the Francis Crick Institute and funded by the Wellcome Trust, *Paradigm*, by artist Conrad Shawcross, is one of the tallest public sculptures in central London at an imposing 14 metres, comprising a twisting stack of tetrahedra that grow in size. The work is a feat of engineering and continues the artist's long-standing collaboration with structural engineering practice Structure Workshop.

Thomas Kuhn's theory of the 'paradigm shift' provides a starting point for Shawcross' work for the Crick. Kuhn, an American philosopher of science, believed that scientific advancement does not progress in a seamless linear fashion, but rather through massive shifts that lead to breakthroughs, which change the course of thought, comprehension and application.

*Paradigm* provides a metaphor for potential: to grow; to advance; to discover. Its majestic form embodies boldness and courage whilst the material it is constructed from (COR-TEN weathering steel) gives a respectful nod to the industrial heritage of the area.

The commission is the result of a long and considered selection process by the Crick working with Artwise Curators, for a new sculpture which would reflect the ambitions of the institute. A group of eminent international artists was shortlisted in 2013 and, after a rigorous process, Conrad Shawcross' concept for *Paradigm* was selected.



*Paradigm*, detail Photo © Marc Wilmot

The four Ø300mm pile foundations are 19.3m deep

**'It is important for the Crick that researchers collaborate with colleagues from other disciplines. New advances often occur when we are able to look at things from a different perspective. Conrad's stimulating design for *Paradigm* draws on both artistic and scientific inspiration, and is an interesting piece of engineering.'**

**The Crick is proud to contribute to the cultural landscape of London through this impressive public sculpture, which echoes the industrial heritage of King's Cross and encapsulates the ethos of the Crick with its boldness and ambition.'**

Sir Paul Nurse,  
Director of the Francis Crick Institute

**14<sub>M</sub>** The sculpture stands 14 metres tall

**17<sub>△</sub>** It consists of 17 tetrahedra

**5<sub>M</sub>** The width of the largest tetrahedron is approx 5 metres

**800<sub>MM</sub>** The base is just under 800mm wide



View with St Pancras Photo © David Sandison

#### The Artist

Conrad Shawcross (b. London, 1977) is quickly becoming recognised as one of the most exciting and innovative sculptors in the UK today. His work weaves together the practicalities of geometry, mathematics and engineering with symbolism found in philosophy and metaphysics. Rooted in his work is an interest in science that he explores rather than illustrates in his sculptural and kinetic works of art.

Elected to The Royal Academy of Arts in 2014, Conrad Shawcross is the youngest living Royal Academician. His work has been seen in museums and public spaces all over the world. He currently lives and works in London and is represented by the Victoria Miro Gallery.

#### The Francis Crick Institute

The Francis Crick Institute is dedicated to discovering the fundamental biology underlying human health. Our research will help to understand why disease develops and to find new ways to diagnose, prevent and treat a range of illnesses, including cancer, heart disease, stroke, neurodegenerative conditions and infectious diseases.

The institute will be a world-leading centre of biomedical research and innovation, with the scale, vision and expertise to tackle challenging scientific questions underpinning health and disease. It will have a strong national role, training scientists and developing ideas for public good.

**'*Paradigm* playfully toys with an idea at the very heart of the scientific process; but it also demonstrates just how much public art can add to a city, interacting in intriguing ways with both King's Cross built environment and its history.'**

Ken Arnold, Creative Director, the Wellcome Trust



Installation of *Paradigm* Photo © Marc Wilmot

**19.3<sub>M</sub>** The four Ø300mm pile foundations are 19.3m deep

**27<sub>TN</sub>** The sculpture weighs more than 27 tonnes

**2<sub>TN</sub>** Around 450 metres of welding wire weighing approximately 2 tonnes was used to make *Paradigm*