

**GAGOSIAN GALLERY**

**Bloomberg**



*Sculptor Anthony Caro beside his work at the Museo Correr in Venice. The 89-year-old artist has an exhibition at the Gagosian Gallery in London through July 27, 2013.*

## **Caro Lashes Junk as He Shows Park Avenue Sculptures**

By Farah Nayeri

New York's Park Avenue came close to getting a three-block-long steel sculpture by the British artist Anthony Caro.

When Caro realized he'd have to raise more than 1 million pounds (\$1.54 million) for a half-year display, he gave up -- and reworked the maquette into 12 sculptures. Ten of these scrap-metal contraptions are now on show at London's Gagosian Gallery (through July 27), where the concrete floor is strong enough to hold them. They carry poetic titles -- "Clouds," "Morning Shadows" -- some of which come from Schubert songs.



*"Morning Shadows" (2012) by Anthony Caro. The rusted-steel work is a smaller part of a three-block-long sculpture that Caro originally planned for New York's Park Avenue and that he cancelled for cost reasons*

"I had this quarter-sized model sitting across the studio, and I walked out of my tearoom and I suddenly saw parts of it had the beginnings of a sculpture," says Caro in an interview at Gagosian. "I said, 'Let's cannibalize what we've made already.'"

“I don’t know whether they’re recognizable as anything to do with Park Avenue,” he says. “They’re called the Park Avenue Series because that’s how they derived.”

At 89, Caro is still making physically imposing work. With a small crew of assistants, he creates menacing-looking sculptures with steel pipes, farm tools, and discarded metal. “I go to the scrapyards and I hope for the best,” he says with a playful smile.



*"Clouds" (2012) by Anthony Caro. The rusted-steel sculpture, reworked from a much larger piece designed for New York's Park Avenue, is now on display at the Gagosian Gallery in London through July 27, 2013.*

Caro has just opened a well-reviewed show of his work at the Museo Correr in Venice. He looks slightly more frail than when we met in 2010. He still sports a Hemingway-esque white beard, and wears a wool sweater under his beige suit.

Caro says the series originated after he was asked by a New York official when he'd put up a sculpture on Park Avenue. The designated spot was the central reservation separating northbound from southbound traffic.

“I hummed and hawed, and I thought to myself, I don’t really think that I want to show a lump there, because you pass it so fast,” he recalls.

After seeing Michelangelo’s frescoes in the Sistine Chapel, he decided to create a frieze-like sculpture that could be enjoyed by pedestrians and drive-by viewers alike.

While someone offered to make the mega-sculpture for free, the transporting and installing was up to Caro, and as it had to be done on a weekend, costs climbed.

“You don’t want to raise that money for six months, do you? It’s crazy,” he says. “I said it’s getting too difficult, and I’m spending my time being a fundraiser, which I don’t want to do.”

### **Henry Moore**

Caro was Henry Moore’s assistant as a young man. He then chose steel as his medium, inspired by the example of David Smith. He lived and taught in the U.S. in the 1960s, an experience he terms life-changing, and also taught in London, where his students included the quirky duo Gilbert & George.

I ask Caro how he liked the art at the just-opened Venice Biennale. He says that except for the work of a woman whose name he can’t recall, he saw “a lot of junk.”

“There was a lot of stuff that was very political and interesting and jolly, but it didn’t seem to me to be addressing art problems,” he says. “It seemed to be addressing something come today, gone tomorrow.”

Although he finds it “wonderful” that more people are liking and buying art, “the quality is mostly not very good.” Living artists he rates include Doris Salcedo (who created the crack in Tate Modern’s floor) and Cristina Iglesias, though he says he hasn’t seen any new work by them in five years.

Next on his schedule: a show of works in steel and Perspex at the Annely Juda gallery, his regular dealers.

“I would be bored not to work, and I would be bored to try and repeat myself,” he says. “That would be terrible. So I keep going.”