

GRANT MOONEY

sum

with Laura Aguilar, Olga Balema, Joseph Beuys, Patricia L. Boyd, Wisrah C. V. da R. Celestino, Hanne Darboven, Melvin Edwards, Niloufar Emamifar, Flint Jamison, Jannis Kounellis, Grant Mooney and Winona Sloane Odette, Robert Morris, Ulrich Rückriem, Karin Sander, and Takis.

March 29–September 20, 2026

Press Preview Invitation

Thursday, March 26, 2026, 11 am at Museum Abteiberg



Photo: Grant Mooney, *sphere music*, 2025. Detail. Commissioned and produced by Chisenhale Gallery, London in partnership with Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach. Courtesy of the artist and Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York.

The sculptural works of the US artist Grant Mooney approach material not as an autonomous property of a substance, but as the effect of a configuration in which material, bodily, and discursive forces intersect and generate one another. Matter is not passively shaped; it acts as a formative force in its own right, generating meaning. In this sense, it becomes an active participant in processes of aesthetic knowledge and experience.

The exhibition *sum* is Grant Mooney's first museum exhibition in Europe and, at the same time, a solo presentation that expands into a broader project including works by other artists. With his relational concept of sculpture, Mooney creates a field of currents and flows between objects from the collection of Museum Abteiberg, selected historical works, and works by other contemporary artists. Through this cross-generational constellation, *sum* examines how materials have behaved since the 1960s and reflects on the development of sculptural practice today.

The exhibition foregrounds processes of transformation and reveals layered connections between materials as they shift from substance to form. The resulting constellation invites a reconsideration of key categories of minimalist sculpture and Conceptual art—such as weight, density, and mass—not as fixed properties but as states shaped by immaterial forces, including biochemical processes and atmospheric change.

Interested in fat as a material that acts not as a socially coded or stigmatized substance but as a physical agent involved in processes of energy storage, heat retention, and physiological repair,

the exhibition echoes the remnants of Joseph Beuys's sculpture *Unschlitt/Tallow* (1977) at Museum Abteiberg, which was on display there from 1982 to 1996, as well as his *Fettecken* (Fat Corners) and *Fettwinkel* (Fat Angles). Fat and its mixtures generate and store warmth within the body and, in Beuys's work, soften crystalline spatial boundaries and initiate processes of change. As a silversmith and metalworker, Mooney likewise engages the interplay between cold and heat and the transformative potential that lies between them. In this respect, Mooney's work resonates with Beuys's concept of warmth—a dialectical principle linking body and mind, the sensory and the supersensory, life and movement, thought and transformation, and thus the plastic energy of sculpture.

sum brings together a range of sculptural practices, including melting, casting, welding, soldering, and cutting (as well as cutting apart), alongside other sculptural processes. These engage forces that shape our physical world yet often remain invisible—such as energy, gravity, and magnetism. In the exhibition, such forces function almost as materials, helping to determine form, meaning, and the arrangement of works. In this way, an expanded understanding of material becomes a curatorial principle.

A similar dynamic appears in Mooney's installation *sphere music*—a body of work produced in collaboration with Chisenhale Gallery in London that brings air and its movement into focus as a sculptural substance. Its central element is a harp designed by the artist and installed on the roof of Museum Abteiberg, set into vibration not by touch but by the elemental force of the air. Like this instrument, the other works relinquish agency in different ways, opening themselves to dissolution and transformation. The in-between, the ephemeral, and the immeasurable become points of reference. Materials and forms, intention and chance, participate equally in the processes of formation within the exhibition, articulating new movements of meaning.

Grant Mooney (b. 1990 in Seattle, Washington) lives and works in New York. He studied art at Central Saint Martins College in London and at California College of the Arts in San Francisco. Mooney's works were included in the 2024 Whitney Biennial: *Even Better Than the Real Thing*, organized by Chrissie Iles and Meg Onli at Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and have been presented in solo exhibitions at Chisenhale Gallery, London (2025); Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT (2024); Midway Contemporary, Minneapolis (2024); Progetto, Lecce, Italy (2023); Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York (2022/2023); Altman Siegel Gallery, San Francisco (2023 and 2019); Konrad Fischer Galerie, Berlin (2021); Kunstverein Braunschweig (2017); as part of the SECA Art Award at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2017); and CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco (2015). His works have also been shown in group exhibitions at the CCS Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY (2022); ICA, Los Angeles (2021); Yale Union, Portland (2020); Stadtgalerie Bern (2020); SculptureCenter, New York (2020); Fondation d'entreprise Ricard, Paris (2017); KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2017); White Flag Project Library, St. Louis (2016); and FUTURA Center for Contemporary Art, Prague (2016).

The exhibition *sum* was developed jointly by Alke Heykes and Grant Mooney.

The realization of the project is generously supported by Kunststiftung NRW and the Hans Fries Foundation. *sum* includes, among other works, a new body of work by Grant Mooney commissioned and produced by Chisenhale Gallery, London, in collaboration with Museum Abteiberg. Museum Abteiberg also thanks Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, for its support.

SAVE THE DATE

Opening: Sunday, March 29, 2026, 12 noon
Artist talk during the opening: 2 pm

Sound performance during ART DÜSSELDORF on Sunday, April 19, 2026, 2 pm
Dylan Kerr presents *Substratum*, a composition for voice and fixed electronics that draws inspiration from the Hindustani Dhrupad tradition.

Press preview with the artist in attendance: Thursday, March 26, 2026, 11 am

We warmly invite you to cover the exhibition. For further information, images, or interview requests, please contact:

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