

## Art & Design

Published: July 2, 2009

### CONRAD SHAWCROSS

#### ‘Control’

*Location One*

*26 Greene Street, SoHo*

*Through July 31*

The first impression of Conrad Shawcross, a young British sculptor, is that he aspires to be an American minimalist from the 1970s. The second is that he should have gone into physics or molecular biology.

“Lattice Cube II” and “Lattice Cube IV,” white powder-coated aluminum sculptures based on the form of the tetrahedron, bear resemblance to [Sol LeWitt](#)’s open cubes and the collapsible child’s toy known as the Hoberman sphere. (One sculpture looks to be an expanded version of the other.)

The even more cerebral series “Celestial Meters” plays off the historical relationship between the meter and the earth’s surface. (A meter, as determined during the French Revolution, is one ten-millionth of the distance from the Equator to the North Pole through Paris.) Mr. Shawcross extends the concept to the other planets in stainless-steel bars of varying length. It’s a take-nothing-for-granted version of Walter De Maria’s “Broken Kilometer.”

The show’s highlight is the installation “Slow Arc III.” A computer system moves a halogen light around the inside of a metal cage, projecting a constantly changing grid on the walls, ceiling and floor. It’s part of a series of sculptures inspired by the chemist Dorothy Hodgkin, who likened deciphering the structure of pig insulin to “trying to work out the structure of a tree from seeing only its shadow.” The reference seems unnecessarily obscure — Mr. Shawcross could just as easily have cited Plato’s cave — but the piece offers a dizzying, hyperkinetic experience.

The same can’t be said of a dull series of drawings titled “Dumbbells” and made with what is described only as “gravity-driven machine.” Mr. Shawcross has solid left-brain ideas but needs to let his right brain supervise the presentation. **KAREN ROSENBERG**