



Painting A

Trevor Sutton

Not on display

Title/Description: Painting A

Artist/Maker: Trevor Sutton

Born: 1980

Object Type: Painting

Materials: Acrylic paint, Canvas, Oil paint

Measurements: h. 95.0 x w. 171.0 x d. 4.5 cm

Accession Number: 31274

Historic Period: 20th century

Production Place: Britain, England, Europe

Painting A is pieced together from four canvases. The three rectangular canvases are painted in acrylic and the central square canvas is painted in oil paint. Sutton adopts these differing mediums associated with traditional painting, and through his practice he inquires into what painting is.

The canvases were first stained green, before variously being painted in grey, black and brown. The stain shows at the edges, as Sutton is interested in the work evidencing its own history.

Sutton breaks out of convention by piecing the canvases together to form an irregular shape. His work thus becomes an object in space, rather than image. As he describes: 'I decided that it was interesting to make the paintings real or physical. They weren't just two dimensional. They actually had a physical presence'. His work follows a minimal, geometric aesthetic, in the tradition of the artists he admired, such as American Minimalist artists, Frank Stella, Agnes Martin and Ellsworth Kelly. Sutton's use of piecing canvases together were followed by works on plywood, pieced together 'like a jigsaw'.

In his process, Sutton physically constructs his works, which he says was influenced by his time as a Fine Art student at Hornsey College, where he was taught by artists who weren't just painters. Sutton is interested in architecture, in its representation, but also by how his work relates to space. As he says: 'It's to do with constructing something, it's about trying to make something, not just painting, it's not just picture making. It's actually bringing something into the world that has a structure. Which seems to relate very powerfully to everything that's around us'.

The title *Painting A* situates this work in a series, as *Painting B* and *Painting C* would have followed. Sutton often works in series, often influenced by where he makes the work, whether the UK, France, Ireland or elsewhere.

Painting A was created in London, and Sutton believes he probably made it in winter due to the dark colours, and 'toughness'. The mood of the studio is very important to Sutton, and he works with music to set the tone. He sees parallels with his own practice and that of musicians: 'It's an ongoing creative process, that you go back to, go forward to, turn sideways, overlap. It seems to be very analogous with my practice'. [1]

Tania Moore, June 2021

[1] All quotes from conversation with the artist, 30 June 2021.

Exhibitions

'Rhythm and Geometry: Constructivist art in Britain since 1951', Sainsbury Centre, UK, 02/10/2021 - 17/07/2022

'Rhythm and Geometry: Constructivist art in Britain since 1951', Djanogly Art Gallery, UK, 07/03/2023 - 23/07/2023

Further Reading

Tania Moore and Calvin Winner (eds.), *Rhythm and Geometry: Constructivist art in Britain since 1951* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre, 2021), p.54.

Provenance

Bought by the Contemporary Art Society from S East Gallery, 1981

Gift from the Contemporary Art Society to the Sainsbury Centre, 1983
