



No. 684, L Fold

Begum, Rana

Not on display

Title/Description: No. 684, L Fold

Artist/Maker: Begum, Rana

Born: 2016

Object Type: Sculpture

Measurements: H1480 x W1020 x D470 mm

Accession Number: 31532

Credit Line: Purchased with support from Arts Council England/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, Art Fund and Sainsbury Centre Founding Friends.

A large-scale wall mounted relief sculpture from a series known as the 'large folds'. **These works have complex geometries that manipulate, fold and collapse space. They twist and tilt, redefining the space around them and rendering the spectator more spatially alert. Reflective surfaces and fluorescent colour on the reverse give a sense of lightness. Begum cites diverse influences including Constructivism, Minimalism, Islamic art, architecture and the urban built environment. She describes 'a common language of colour, form and pattern' that 'transcends nationality, class and gender'. [1]**

Due to the reflective nature of the pristine painted surfaces, the large folds seem to hold a heightened attraction to light. The effect can change the geometry of these irregular polygons, so that form can expand, contract or completely collapse depending on the viewpoint. The coloured surfaces reflect against the gallery wall creating a shimmering effect that suggest the work could be about to take flight. The effect is often ethereal and gives a sense of weightlessness to the work and yet they still retain their mass. Begum is particularly sensitive to how we perceive light falling on surfaces and the rapture this can evoke.

Rana Begum's (b. 1977) practice blurs the boundaries between sculpture, painting and architecture and has a transformative, sensory and immersive quality. The Sainsbury Centre staged Begum's first museum solo show in 2017. This exhibition called, *Rana Begum: Space Light Colour*, included a selection of works made over the previous decade. Her working practice engages with the urban fabric and the built environment. Space, light and colour are her raw materials. To enhance these three essential elements, she uses industrial, often ready-made, modular components. Her works are constructed as repeated units and grids, in systemised arrangements. There are titled as numbers in

sequential order.

The repetition of motifs is strongly associated with Modernism and industrialised cities. Begum is inspired by the built environment but also the geometric patterns of Islamic art and architecture. Her childhood memories are also important such as the rhythmic repetition found in the daily reciting of the Koran she remembers from her formative years. Public Art projects are an important part of her practice.

The work was selected by Begum for the Sainsbury Centre so that one of her early large-scale folds was in a public collection. There is another large fold in the Arts Council Collection.

Calvin Winner, January 2021

[1] Correspondence by email with the artist, February 2017.

Exhibitions

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

Further Reading

Tania Moore and Calvin Winner (eds.), Rhythm and Geometry: Constructivist art in Britain since 1951 (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre, 2021), p.130.
