

Rana Begum

The Space Between

30 June – 18 September 2016

(Preview: Wednesday, 29 June, 6.30–8.30 p.m.)



Left: Rana Begum, *No. 489, L Fold*, 2014. Paint on mild steel, 146 x 119 x 48 cm (57½ x 47 x 19 in). Courtesy of the artist and Jhaveri Contemporary. Photograph by Philip White. **Right:** Rana Begum, *No. 531*, 2014. Paint on powder-coated aluminium, 200 x 295 x 5 cm (78¾ x 116¼ x 2 in). Courtesy of the artist and Jhaveri Contemporary. Photograph by Philip White.

Parasol unit foundation for contemporary art is delighted to present an exhibition by **Rana Begum**, the Bangladeshi-British artist's first solo presentation in a public institution in the United Kingdom, bringing together a selection of past and recent works.

Drawing influences from constructivist and minimalist art, Begum's two- and three-dimensional works and installations clearly reveal the sophistication of her spatial and visual awareness. Her works are so irresistibly engaging that viewers find their response to them is both emotional and intellectual. In one work, *No. 531*, 2014, thirty parallel sections of industrially powder-coated aluminium bars hang vertically on the wall. Each front-facing surface is white, while the inner and outer sides are sprayed in bright hues of red and blue. Passing in front of the work, viewers discover dynamic shifts in its colour and form. Light is a vitally activating element in Begum's works, its shifts and changes producing an experience that is both temporal and sensorial.

Perhaps an 'urban Romantic',* Begum draws inspiration both from the city environment and her own childhood memories of the geometric patterns of traditional Islamic art and architecture. Thus, properties of light, colour, material, movement and form have become a hallmark of her abstract sculptures and reliefs. Often bringing a potentially infinite order to her works, Begum skilfully gives physical form to fleeting moments of aesthetic wonder.

Crucial to Begum's practice are the carefully selected colours and reflected light that accentuate the geometry within its forms. In her folded raw-metal wall pieces, such as *No. 489, L Fold*, 2014, and *No. 394, L Fold*, 2013, the vibrantly fluorescent colours of their painted undersides are reflected onto the supporting wall, thereby creating a new and subtle element that has a powerful effect. In other works, the play of light combined with Begum's articulation of colour and repetition steer the viewer's attention not only towards the object itself but also to the space between its parts. Her use of robust, industrial materials is often at odds with the ethereal lightness and fragility embodied in her works, a dichotomy that is ever present in her practice. Begum's works bring together moments of calm and exhilaration, their open-endedness allowing the viewer a sense of the infinite. In a new large-scale installation *No. 670*, 2016, created especially for this exhibition, sections of industrial steel-mesh fencing are arranged in a massive maze-like structure that invites visitors to walk through it and physically experience the sense of infinity bound within the geometric repetition of its architectural configurations.

* Nick Hackworth in *Rana Begum, 'Overview'*, Bischoff/Weiss, 2009.

This Rana Begum: *The Space Between* exhibition is curated by Ziba Ardan, Founder/Director of Parasol unit. It is accompanied by a limited edition of 10 sculptural wall pieces and a comprehensive publication which includes an interview of the artist by Ziba Ardan, and essays by Oliver Basciano and Murtaza Vali.

Note to Editors

Artist Biography

Born in Bangladesh in 1977, Rana Begum now lives and works in London. In 1999, she graduated with a BA in Fine Art from Chelsea College of Art and Design and, in 2002, gained an MFA in Painting from Slade School of Fine Art. Recent and forthcoming exhibitions include *Into boundless space / leap*, Maxwell Centre, UK (2016); *11th Gwangju Biennale*, Korea (2016); *Solo Show*, Galerie Christian Lethert, Cologne, Germany (2016); *New Visions*, Tensta Konsthall, Sweden (2015); *Towards an Infinite Geometry*, Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai, India (2015); *Future Light, Vienna Biennale 2015: Ideas for Change; Solo Show*, Galeri Mana, Istanbul, Turkey (2014); *Solo Project*, Dhaka Art Summit, Dhaka, Bangladesh (2014); *No.10*, The Third Line, Dubai, UAE (2013); *Manifold*, Galerie Christian Lethert, Cologne, Germany (2013); *Solo Show*, Bischoff/Weiss, London, UK (2012); *The Folded Page*, Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai, India (2011); *New Works*, Delfina Foundation, London, UK (2010); and *Fractured Symmetry*, Bischoff/Weiss, London, UK (2010).

She has also participated in many international group exhibitions, including: *New Visions*, Tensta Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden (2016); *Geometries of Difference: New Approaches to Ornament and Abstraction*, Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, New York, USA (2015); *The Language of Human Consciousness*, Athr Gallery, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (2014); *Summer Show*, The Third Line, Dubai, UAE (2014); *Summer Exhibition*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, UK (2012).

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VISITOR INFORMATION

Founded in December 2004, Parasol unit foundation for contemporary art is a registered educational charity and a not-for-profit institution that operates purely for the public benefit. Every year the foundation organises four challenging and thought-provoking exhibitions of works by international contemporary artists working in various media, arranges other artistic projects and each year grants its Exposure Award, which offers graduating students from an annually selected London art school the opportunity to exhibit their work professionally. The foundation also engages with the public and its neighbouring community through a full programme of educational events. In its genuine mission to serve the public, the foundation does not bear the name of its founder, and its exhibitions do not derive from any particular private collection. Admission to all exhibitions at Parasol unit is free of charge. Thanks to its innovative model between private funding and public support, one of London's most vibrant contemporary art spaces has come to exist and thrive.

Free Admission

Parasol unit
14 Wharf Road, London N1 7RW

Opening hours:
Monday by prior arrangement
Tuesday–Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm
Sunday, 12 – 5 pm

Directions:
Tube to Old Street or Angel
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