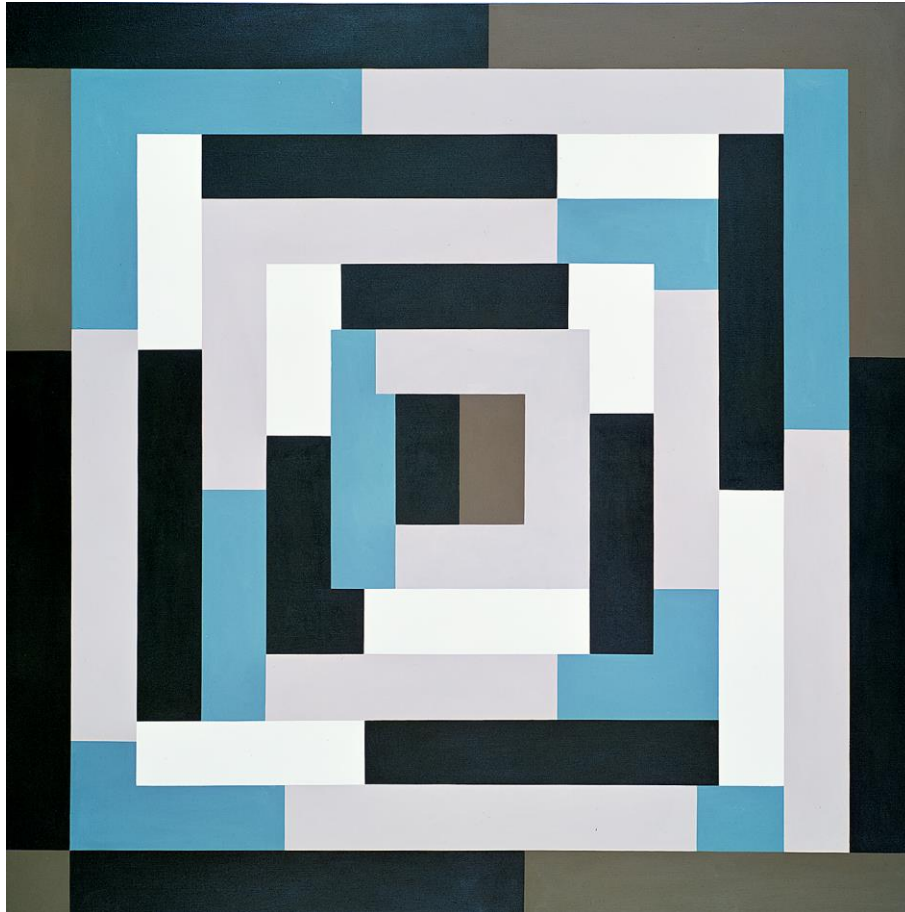


Press Release | New Exhibition

4 May 2021

**Rhythm and Geometry:  
Constructivist art in Britain since 1951**



*Fritton*, Mary Webb, 1971 © Mary Webb and the Sainsbury Centre

**Rhythm and Geometry: Constructivist art in Britain since 1951**

2 October 2021 – 30 January 2022

**Press View:** 1 October, 12 – 2pm with light lunch. More details to follow.

**High-resolution images available for download:** <https://bit.ly/3ncjuSk>

Drawn from the Sainsbury Centre collection, *Rhythm and Geometry: Constructivist art in Britain since 1951*, celebrates the abstract and constructed art made and exhibited in Britain since 1951. The free exhibition includes work from the beginning of the 1950s to the present-day, comprising c.120 objects across sculpture, reliefs, mobiles, painting, drawing and printmaking.

The exhibition examines the rise of this dramatic strand in post-war British art led by the example of Victor Pasmore, who famously converted to abstract art in the late 1940s. But it was 1951 that would prove to be a vital year for the arts in Britain. The Festival of Britain

was staged across the country to celebrate the arts, sciences, technology and industrial design. In the same year, the first exhibition devoted to abstract art since before the War was presented by the Artists' International Association; Victor Pasmore and Mary Martin made their first relief sculptures, and Kenneth Martin his first mobile.

Opening with a selection of significant reliefs – a pivotal art form in Britain in 1951 – the exhibition goes on to look at the transition into abstraction that occurred at this time. Process-based artworks from the 1950s will demonstrate their mathematical or scientific foundations, before charting the development into participatory or kinetic art forms. Exploring the emotive and optical effects of colour and pattern, the exhibition ends with work by the painters and printmakers who have engaged in geometric abstraction since the 1960s.

Artists include Robert Adams, Yaacov Agam, Rana Begum, Anthony Caro, Lygia Clark, Natalie Dower, Adrian Heath, Anthony Hill, Michael Kidner, Kenneth Martin, Mary Martin, François Morellet, Victor Pasmore, Jean Spencer, Takis, Mary Webb, Victor Vasarely, Gillian Wise and Li Yuan-Chia.

The exhibition marks a significant bequest to the Sainsbury Centre from Joyce and Michael Morris. Following an extensive conservation project, many of these important works will be exhibited in public for the first time in decades. The bequest greatly augments the collection of abstract art acquired by the University of East Anglia since the 1960s and more recent acquisitions.

Rana Begum's immersive installation *No. 670 Mesh* (2016) will be installed in the East End gallery, dynamically interacting with the Sainsbury Centre architecture. This follows its inclusion in *Rana Begum: Space Light Colour* in 2017, the first museum exhibition dedicated to the artist.

The exhibition is curated by Tania Moore, The Joyce and Michael Morris Chief Curator of Art at the Sainsbury Centre, who has been appointed to research the artworks in the Morris bequest and the related area of constructed abstract art in Britain. The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with new photography and research.

**Free tickets are available to book online at [sainsburycentre.ac.uk](https://sainsburycentre.ac.uk). Free parking subject to availability, cafe, shop.**

Booking link: [sainsburycentre.ac.uk/whats-on/rhythm-and-geometry/](https://sainsburycentre.ac.uk/whats-on/rhythm-and-geometry/)

– ENDS –

The conservation project has been supported by:



The Pilgrim Trust

# Gabo Trust

For Sculpture Conservation

## Notes to Editors

### Press Enquiries

Chloe Lamb | [chloe.lamb@uea.ac.uk](mailto:chloe.lamb@uea.ac.uk)

Amber Lawrence | [amber.lawrence@uea.ac.uk](mailto:amber.lawrence@uea.ac.uk)

### Exhibition Information

Rhythm and Geometry: Constructivist art in Britain since 1951

2 October 2021 – 30 January 2022

FREE for all visitors, but tickets must be booked

Visit [sainsburycentre.ac.uk](http://sainsburycentre.ac.uk) or call 01603 593199 (Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm)

Follow @sainsburycentre on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

### About the Sainsbury Centre

The Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts is one of the most important public university art galleries in Britain. It was founded in 1973 at the University of East Anglia (UEA) with the support of one of the nation's great philanthropic families, Sir Robert and Lady Sainsbury, who donated their extraordinary art collection which includes works dating from prehistory to the late 20th century from across the globe. A radical new building by Norman Foster was designed to house the collection and was his first public work.

The Sainsbury Centre holds one of the most impressive art collections outside of the national institutions. It includes a significant number of works by modern masters of European art such as Pablo Picasso, Edgar Degas, Alberto Giacometti, Henry Moore, Francis Bacon, Jacob Epstein, Jean Arp, Chaïm Soutine and Amedeo Modigliani. There are major holdings from Oceania, Africa, the Americas, Asia, the ancient Mediterranean cultures of Egypt, Greece and Rome, as well as Medieval Europe. Alongside these permanent collections, it hosts a range of exhibitions in the largest suite of temporary exhibitions galleries in Eastern England.

[sainsburycentre.ac.uk](http://sainsburycentre.ac.uk)