



CALOUSTE  
GULBENKIAN  
FOUNDATION

## CONTEMPORARY ART FOR HOXTON SQUARE Part Three

**Fernanda Fragateiro**  
**Bridget Riley**  
**Alison Turnbull**

The major work in this display is Fernanda Fragateiro's work *(Not) Connecting #1, 2007*. Monumental yet fragile, the sculpture is made from hundreds of silk threads attached, under great tension, to two steel brackets, 10 metres apart. The work was first made for the Museum of Communication in Lisbon and was commissioned by Isabel Carlos, Director of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's CAM – Centro de Arte Moderna. Allusions to telephone and telegraph wires, lines of communication and threads of conversation are clear and explicit. The silk threads were bought from a traditional haberdashery in Lisbon and were made by the famous German firm of Gutterman. Fernanda Fragateiro bought the shop's entire stock.

She often works with material that she has uncovered or rescued and that holds meanings beyond the aesthetic of their colour, texture and form. Here there is a strong pull between modernist design and feminine craft. The threads allude explicitly to communication but their previous usage can provide further links to architecture and translation. This is specifically strong buttonhole thread and, in Portuguese, buttonhole is "casa", the same word as "house". In English we use buttonhole as a verb, meaning to grab and hold someone's attention in order to say something important.

Fragateiro draws our attention to the clear beauty of line and colour, strength and fineness. If you stand at a distance, the metal supports become invisible and the threads look like thin lines of paint applied to the wall or light trails in night photography. The way in which the silk shimmers makes reference to the study of optical effects and Fernanda Fragateiro pays tribute in a second work, made especially for this exhibition, to one of the most important and distinguished artists working with colour and optical change, Bridget Riley.

The art critic Robert Melville wrote in 1971 that 'No painter, dead or alive, has ever made us more aware of our eyes than Bridget Riley.'

*After Bridget Riley, 2013*, reveals, inside a large sketchbook, reproductions of two early paintings by Bridget Riley in the collection of British art in CAM in Lisbon. Also visible are hand drawn excerpts from an interview between Riley and David Sylvester in 1967 in which they discuss the power of optical effects and the way her work stimulates sensation. Riley's own vibrant screenprint, *Large Fragment, 2006*, is nearby.

Alison Turnbull's *Peppered Moth Print, 2008*, was part of the *Darwin's Canopy* exhibition supported by the Calouste Gulbenkian

Foundation UK at the Natural History Museum. The blocks of colour and panels of stippled grey refer to methods of classification and the patterns on the wings of The Black Peppered or Darwin's Moth. (Tania Kovats was invited to create a permanent work, *Darwin's Canopy*, for a ceiling in the Natural History Museum to mark the Darwin Bicentenary in 2009 and used a 17 metre vertical cross section of a two hundred year old tree. Related examples of her work can be seen, alongside prints by Henry Moore from the CAM collection, in the Boardroom.)

Turnbull is an artist with a long-standing interest in translating data and ordering systems into pictorial abstractions. Inspired by evolutionary thinker Charles Darwin, she discovered the manual *Werner's Nomenclature of Colours*, a copy of which Darwin himself had taken on his voyage to the Galápagos Islands. The book contains small, hand-painted swatches of colour, each of which refers to objects from the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms. Turnbull was one of eleven artists invited to participate in the major Gulbenkian Galápagos Artists' Residency Programme 2007-2011 and the exhibition that toured to Edinburgh, Liverpool and to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, 2012-13.

**1. Fernanda Fragateiro  
(Not) Connecting #1**

2007

Polished stainless steel and silk thread  
Courtesy of the artist

**2. Fernanda Fragateiro  
After Bridget Riley**

2013

Acrylic and notebook with insert of inkjet print on paper  
From "*As Dreamers Do - The 60's in the British Art Collection of the Modern Art Center of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation*", Bridget Riley: "Metamorphosis", 1964 and "Shuttle", 1964 (page 70-71) and drawing from quote of Bridget Riley interview by David Sylvester in 1967 (page 26)  
Courtesy of the artist

**3. Bridget Riley**

**Large Fragment**

2006

Screenprint

Edition of 50

Courtesy of Karsten Schubert

**4. Alison Turnbull**

**Peppered Moth Print**

2008

Edition of 3

Archival Pigment Print

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation UK

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Fernanda Fragateiro lives and works in Lisbon  
Bridget Riley CH CBE lives and works in London, Cornwall and France  
Alison Turnbull lives and works in London

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[www.mattsgallery.org/artists/turnbull/home.php](http://www.mattsgallery.org/artists/turnbull/home.php)