

Rana Begum

September 10 – October 24, 2026

New York



Rana Begum, *No.1272 Chainlink*, 2023

Lehmann Maupin is delighted to showcase Rana Begum's first solo exhibition in New York. Over the past two decades, Begum has cultivated a distinctive visual language that explores abstraction through a phenomenological lens. Central to her work is light, which she treats as both subject and medium, allowing her sculptural works to absorb, reflect, and transform their surroundings in ways that feel both temporal and sensorial. The exhibition follows Begum's U.S. museum debut at the SCAD Museum of Art in Savannah and coincides with a series of public projects and exhibitions, including her recent site-specific commission for *Climate Clock*, an urban art trail in Oulu, Finland, organized as part of the European Capital of Culture program to promote environmental awareness. Notably, Begum is also one of three contemporary artists featured in a major outdoor sculpture exhibition at Kew Wakehurst in Sussex, England, alongside iconic works by Henry Moore. In fall 2026, Begum will unveil new site-specific commissions at the Ismaili Center in Houston, Texas, and Towner Eastbourne in Eastbourne, England.

Drawing on the history of geometric abstraction—as well as the practices of artists such as Agnes Martin, Donald Judd, Mary Martin, Sol Lewitt, and Tess Jaray—Begum's work is informed by both the urban environment and the geometric motifs of Islamic art and architecture. This is exemplified in her commission for the MFA Boston's reinstalled Art of Islamic Cultures Gallery, where her site-specific work responds to the ornate sandstone arch typical of South Asian Islamic architecture. The influence of Islamic art and the spiritual importance of repetition and meditation is also at the heart of Begum's practice. Often using industrial materials and reflective surfaces, Begum creates visually dynamic experiences that shift with the viewer's perspective and environment. Begum's focus on symmetry and rhythm evokes a sense of the infinite, creating contemplative spaces.

Begum's ongoing experimentation with color, light, and space expands the narratives of abstraction and minimalism to encompass a more global perspective. At the center of the exhibition in New York is a large-scale installation from the

artist's *Chainlink* series, which transforms chain-link fencing into a suspended, richly textured form that softens its industrial character. Removed from its familiar function, the material draws attention to the beauty of its woven structure and organic geometry. In developing the artwork titled *No.1272*, Begum looked to the paintings of Mark Rothko, reflecting on the way layered fields of color can evoke a distinct atmosphere and emotional weight.

Similarly, Begum's *Louvre* series draws inspiration from the formal simplicity of everyday materials such as louvres—architectural elements commonly found in ventilation panels, façades, and blinds throughout urban landscape. A decade of experimentation and research resulted in this series which explores ideas of permeability. Foregrounding materiality and color, spanning metal, stone, and glass, these works investigate how each medium interacts with and responds to light. Whether wall-mounted or suspended, the works possess a distinct physical presence, their material qualities conveying varying degrees of weight, density, and fragility. At times appearing ethereal and elusive, they shift with changing conditions before resolving into more defined and solid forms.

Additional highlights include new works from Begum's latest *Fold* series. Originating from Begum's experiments with paper, these wall reliefs explore the relationship between surface and space, transforming flat sheets of metal into dynamic three-dimensional forms. Begum has long been captivated by the way folded paper interacts with light, casting shadows and revealing subtle tonal variations—white is no longer simply white, but a surface through which colour gradually emerges. Inspired by Bangladesh's centuries-old tradition of kite flying, each work takes shape through a series of precise, meticulously executed folds. These geometric interventions create a compelling interplay of light, shadow, and color that shifts and intensifies as the viewer moves around the work. Angular shadows and diffused hues extend onto the surrounding walls, expanding the composition beyond the object itself and creating a sense of infinite spatial possibility.

Over the past two decades, Rana Begum has developed a distinct visual language rooted in repetition and abstraction. Drawing on the history of geometric abstraction—as well as the practices of artists such as Agnes Martin, Donald Judd, Mary Martin, Sol Lewitt, Jesús Rafael Soto, and Tess Jaray—Begum’s work is informed by both the urban environment and the geometric motifs of traditional Islamic art and architecture. Central to her work is light, which she treats as both subject and medium, allowing her pieces to absorb, reflect, and transform their surroundings in ways that feel both temporal and sensorial. Often using industrial materials and reflective surfaces, Begum creates visually dynamic experiences that shift with the viewer’s perspective and environment. The influence of Islamic art and the spiritual importance of repetition and ritual is also at the heart of Begum’s practice. Begum’s focus on symmetry, rhythm, and pattern evokes a sense of the infinite, creating meditative spaces in which seemingly static works are activated.

Born in Bangladesh in 1977, Begum lives and works in London.

In 1999, Begum graduated with a BA in Fine Art from Chelsea College of Art and Design, and in 2002, she earned an MFA in Painting from Slade School of Fine Art. Begum has exhibited in museums and biennials worldwide and created public art commissions in Europe, Asia, and the United States. Notable museum presentations include her participation in *Is this Tomorrow?* at the Whitechapel Gallery in London, as well as her site-specific installation at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, which remains on permanent view. Her work has also been featured in numerous biennials around the world, including the Taipei Biennial in 2026, Desert X in Coachella Valley in 2023, and the 11th Gwangju Biennial in South Korea in 2016, among others.

Her work is held in numerous international public and private collections, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Samdani Art Foundation, Bangladesh; The Farjam Foundation, Dubai; the Ashmolean Museum, UK; Sainsbury’s Visual Art Centre, UK; the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, India; and Wanas Konst, Sweden. She was elected a Royal Academician in 2020.



**Lehmann Maupin**

Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin co-founded Lehmann Maupin in 1996 in New York. Since inception, Lehmann Maupin has served as a leading contemporary art gallery with locations in the U.S., Europe, and Asia. For over 25 years, Lehmann Maupin has been instrumental in introducing international artists in new geographies and building long-lasting curatorial relationships. Known for championing diverse voices, the gallery's program proudly features artists whose work challenges notions of identity and shapes international culture. Today, the gallery has permanent locations in New York, Seoul, and London, as well as team members throughout Asia and Europe.

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