

Conrad Shawcross: *Formation 1 (The dappled light of the Sun)*, 2015

Weathering steel



Four Questions:

1. What does this work remind you of and why?
2. What shapes can you see? Are they all the same size? Where are the biggest and where are the smallest?
3. What happens when the sun shines through the shapes onto the ground? If it's cloudy, what do you think would happen?
4. The work has two names. *Formation 1* and *Dappled Light of the Sun*. What do you think is most important to the artwork, the metal shapes or the shadows it creates?

In his work, Conrad Shawcross (b.1977) explores connections between geometrical shapes and nature. This makes him think about the infinite variety of shapes, forms and sizes and wonder about the beginnings of the universe, life and the human race. This sculpture of welded rusty steel is made up of thousands of tetrahedrons (pyramids made up of four triangular sides) and when put together they look like leafy trees, giving shade and shelter to those who sit beneath.

The interplay of light and shade on the ground gives a sense of movement and is always changing with the sunlight. Tetrahedron shapes create geometric sequences that, in theory, extend into infinity - without ever repeating the same pattern!

Drawing Activity: Using black paper and white chalk

1. A continuous Line: Without taking your chalk off the page and only drawing triangles, draw one of the sculpture trees. Start with the biggest triangle the (trunk) and work up to the smallest triangles at the top.

2. If it is a sunny day fold your drawing paper in half. On one half draw the sculpture tree as described in Activity 1. On the second half of the page, draw the shadows the tree makes. This time you don't need to keep a continuous line and can use the chalk to fill in shadows.



Talking Activity:

Conrad Shawcross wanted people to think of the 'universal idea of sitting underneath a tree, in the warm countryside, while dappled light and shadows cast by the branches cover the ground'.

1. What would you think about while sitting under the wavy shade of trees? What music might you listen to? What food would you like to eat? Who would you like to sit with?

By *Curious Curators 2020*