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# Stratum

Raneem Fadul  
*Claremont Graduate University*

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## **Raneem Fadul**

My work is an expression of the relationship between my own culture, and the American culture and way of life that I have had a chance to interact with, observe, and reflect on throughout the past few years. My concepts were inspired by the industrial nature of the area that I live in, where I gradually realized that I was surrounded by dozens of workshops and garages. Given that my home is the spiritually-rich, fairly traditional, and non-industrial Saudi Arabia, this typical American experience has been, to me, one with much room for reflection, due to the extreme contrast. The abundance of home improvement and hardware stores in the vicinity further provided me with unprecedented, convenient access to tools and supplies that sometimes I did not even know existed, which eliminated a significant barrier that had previously affected my ability to engage in actual craft, and provided inspiration and motivation to create. In this new reality, I could envision any work, and likely figure out a reasonable means to make it come to life. My art is communication between both my Saudi and American experiences, where my professional background as a graphic designer interplays with my more recent drive to explore my relationship with Art, which I pursue here in Southern California.

Patterns are a life-long fascination of mine, they give me peace and bring to my mind spirituality and meditation. I view them as words and phrases that could be read and translated to a universal language. However, I find pleasure in deconstructing these patterns and creating new visual boundaries. As such, my work transforms traditional, decorative Islamic patterns that are both ancient and stable into contemporary, industrial sculptures. My genuine interest in traditions and cultures leads me to subconsciously communicate with them. In my work, I attempt to examine tradition and challenge our perception of traditions through cultural symbols.

Bringing such traditional objects into the contemporary world fascinates me, in terms of both the process and the outcome. I find it enriching to explore the extent to which I can dive deeper into this holistic and rich world, and to come back with new meanings that constitute potential media of expressing both myself, and the world as I view it.