

# Basic Detail Report

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## Sofa

### Date

1997

### Primary Maker

Rita Duffy

### Dimensions

91.5 x 162 x 88 cm

### Description

As a child, Rita Duffy lived close to the Ulster Museum and she has said that the proximity to its diverse collection was a huge influence on her becoming an artist. In 1986 she gained a Masters Degree in Fine Art from the University of Ulster. While the Mexican artist Frieda Kahlo and the Portuguese artist Paula Rego are among her most marked artistic influences, Duffy's subject matter draws heavily from the socio-political environment of Northern Ireland and is often autobiographical. Through her superb draughtsmanship and richly distinctive painterly style, she articulates and explores intense and sometimes difficult emotions. Ranging from the universal to the particular, themes such as identity, family and femininity are explored, occasionally through the symbolic language of everyday objects. Sofa originally formed part of an exhibition of work by Duffy called Banquet (1997) which also included paintings and charcoal drawings. As on other occasions, an additional layer of meaning was added through poetical collaboration. A quasi-surreal piece, which plays on visual perception and assumptions, Sofa transforms essentially familiar and non-threatening objects - a sofa and hairclips - by combining them in an unusual way. Now defensive and on edge Sofa raises issues of territory and underlying violence. (JO'D)