

## The Rake's Progress

**Date**

1970

**Primary Maker**

Brian O'Doherty / Patrick Ireland

**Medium**

Aluminium

**Dimensions**

183.2 x 21.5 x 10 cm

**Description**

The Rake's Progress was executed in 1970 when Brian O' Doherty was exploring Ogham writing, a form of writing used in Ireland between the second and seventh centuries AD. Two slender, vertical shafts of polished aluminium are scored with little groups of short straight or oblique lines which form the letters of the word 'Here' on different places across the surface of the work. This work is part of a series where the words 'One', 'Here' and 'Now' are inscribed on the surfaces. The title of The Rake's Progress is derived from a ballet of the same name by the Irish choreographer Ninette de Valois, with sets by Rex Whistler, as well as referring to the eighteenth works by the English artist William Hogarth. In O'Doherty's work, the 'Here' lines are in an S shape, regarded by Hogarth as representing variety in nature and thus a line of beauty. The viewer's own reflection in the work and the mirrored lines of the alphabet also create a web of signifiers which wrap around the viewer, fusing the perceiver and the perceived.



