

## **Vorticist Composition**

By Helen Saunders, 1885-1963

Graphite and ink, about 1915



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Saunders was a member of the London-based Vorticist group. Formed in 1914, they aimed to express the dynamism of the

modern world through imagery derived from machines and the urban environment.

The geometric shapes in this drawing explode outward from the centre of the composition, and the hatching lines create varying levels of tone. We might see objects in these forms but Saunders emphasised, in line with the group's aims, that 'the shapes and their relationships have a meaning of their own apart from any literary or representational overtones'.

This short-lived movement was brought to an abrupt end by the First World War. After 1920, Saunders stopped making abstract pictures. Instead she worked in still life, landscape and portraiture, adopting a more naturalistic style.

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