

LAW | ARTS FEATURE

Artists on the right side of the law

Pinsent Masons' residencies inspire close ties between the professions while a talk remembers the past and an exhibition provokes thought for the future

Edward Fennell

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Art



An exhibition at the London office of the US law firm Dechert focuses on the strong relationships between world-class athletes and their coaches

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The private view of the sculpture exhibition *Abstract vs Figure 1952-2019* in a large reception area at the City firm Pinsent Masons last night marked the culmination of the year-long residency of the sculptor Nick Hornby.

Drawing on his extensive contacts and his own output, Hornby has put together an impressive small scale exhibition including works by key modernist sculptors such as Arthur Fleischmann, Henry Moore and Eduardo Paolozzi together with a number of contemporary artists.

The firm's artist in residence scheme was launched in 2012. "To date we've had four artists engage with the firm, each working in a different medium," explains Maggie O'Regan of InSitu, the consultancy that co-ordinates the firm's art exhibitions.

The programme kicked off with Paul Catherall, a printmaker well-known for his images of London. The residency allowed him to have access to the views from the Pinsent Masons building and incorporate them into his subject matter.

Next in residency was photographer Rachel Louise Brown, who is currently photography director at *Harper's Bazaar* and *Town & Country*. She produced unconventional

portraits of staff, and was followed by filmmaker Rory Waudby-Tolley, who collaborated with the firm to make a playful nine-minute animated documentary called *Art for Lawyers*. The work won the audience vote in the British section of the London International Animation Festival.

David Isaac, the partner who chairs the firm's art committee and also holds a role at University of the Arts London, emphasises that during their residency artists should become a familiar sight around the office.

"Nick's frequent visits to the office, his enthusiasm to engage with staff and openness to share his knowledge have led to real enthusiasm for his work as well as sculpture in general," Mr Isaac said. "His energy and willingness to share his knowledge and insights have really been appreciated by all those who have been on his tours and studio

visits. We have all learnt from working with Nick and have also had a lot of fun along the way."

Hornby also seems to have enjoyed the experience. "In the last 12 months I have discovered many commonalities between art and law," he says. "Each have their own unique and strange vocabularies and both require acute observation and an incredible attention to detail.

"It has been very humbling to spend so much time with this down to earth, but brilliant community."

• *Abstract vs Figure 1952-2019* is open to the public and continues until February 22 at Pinsent Masons, 30 Crown Place, London EC2A 4ES.