

# NICK HORNBY

## SELECTED PRESS

# WIRED



## MODERN ART IS A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

Nick Hornby's computer-modeled transforming sculptures bend both brains and artistic license

You can get a crash course in Nick Hornby's work over the course of an hour-long London walk. The artist has three permanent sculptures installed across the city, metal silhouettes that start off familiar but change with your vantage point. In St. James, his conquering equestrian, modeled on Richard I, becomes an amorphous squiggle as you circle in Kensington, his take on Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer* turns abstract, and a bust of Nefertiti doubles as the Albert Memorial.

Raising questions about power and the role of the monument, the trio are a clever combo of craft and concept. But they're also feats of digital innovation. The equestrian, for example, started out as a digital model scripted in Python. It was then unrolled into individual components to be laser-cut from metal, then assembled by fabricators. "It was

**"A distinct feature of my work is its ambition to capture the imagination of anyone, not limited to the art world."**

a lovely, seamless relationship between concept, digital processes and mechanical fabrications—165 pieces manipulated into the six-and-a-half-ton object," says Hornby, from his studio in northwest London. "But when people look at it, they don't see that at all."

"I like to think that one of the distinctive features of my work is its ambition to capture the imagination of anyone, not limited to the art world; to try to address complicated ideas in plain English. Anyone will recognize the trope of the man on the horse, and will have a reaction to how I have manipulated it." This kind of technical-conceptual wizardry is Hornby's calling card. Favoring the screen over the sketchpad, he uses 3D modeling as the foundation for abstract sculptures that reference the art-historical canon and challenge notions of authorship—contorted mashups of works by Hepworth, Brancusi, Rodin and more; one series of sculptures takes the profile of Michelangelo's *David* and extrudes it to a single point, legible only from an angle. He started young, creating life-size terracotta figures in school while his classmates labored over simpler pots. "But then I went to art school, and it was like, I didn't want to do pastiche of Rodin. I wanted to be part of the future. I wanted to be innovative," he says. "So I jumped on technology."

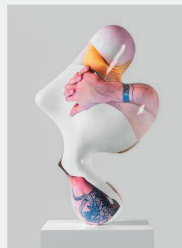
don, where he enrolled in the late 1990s, Hornby thrived in the new. There were forays into video; a semester at the Art Institute of Chicago, where he joined the artist-hacker collective Radical Software/Critical Artware; and musical experiments with MAX/MSP, the object-oriented programming language employed by Radiohead in the early 2000s. But it was only after pursuing a Master's in his thirties that his career took its current shape. "I actually had quite a radical sea change in my relationship to tech," he says. "I got quite frustrated by people saying, 'Wow, that's really cool. How did you do it?' because I find that question really boring. I'm much more interested in the question, 'What does it mean?'" So, in the last decade, Hornby has eliminated "any form of human subjectivity," he says. The wires and screens were obscured, the rough edges erased with laser precision. All the better to invite questions of substance rather than process. But now Hornby feels his focus shifting again. "I thought that the reason I had been embracing this perfect digital realm was for rigorous conceptual questions around authorship. But when I turned 40, I came to realize that there was no visibility of me in my work at all. I'd eliminated myself," he says. It's something, on reflection, he ties in part to ambivalent feelings about his own queer identity: "I only realized 15 years later [after coming out] that I had been systematically erasing my subjectivity because I didn't feel that my opinion—and who I really was—was valid, legitimate, or something that I was willing to reveal." After a decade reckoning with the canon, he's ready to insert himself into the work. A glimpse of this new stance comes through in a recent series of fiberglass sculptures wrapped in the liquefied photos of former lovers using a technique called water transfer-printing. (He started the work in 2020, in the month he

Nick Hornby inspects *Power*. Over *Others* during assembly at Benson Söderqvist in Dagerhamn.

START

turned 40, and broke up with a long-term partner). And, after three years largely spent coordinating the creation of three colossal monuments, Hornby's eager to level up his hands-on technical skills. "I've been so enmeshed in production, making things, realizing projects, that I haven't had very much time to experiment and play," Hornby says. Now, there's time to get his parametric design and 3D-modeling skills up to scratch, to find new ways to combine his established processes (water transfer-printing on bronze?), and to investigate new tech on his radar. There have already been some experiments with generative AI, which Hornby finds "intoxicatingly exciting, exhilarating, and terrifying." "Watch this space," he says. "I'm just at the beginning of my career."

ALLYSSIA ALLEYNE is a London-based writer covering art and technology.



Resting Leaf (Joe) is from a set of autobiographical works created using hydrographics—each resin sculpture is dipped into a wet medium containing an image transfer.



Face-on, De if (All presents) is a realistic silhouette of the Albert Memorial—but step around 90° to its left or right, and it transforms into a profile of the iconic Nefertiti bust in Berlin's Neues Museum collection.

Still and Still Moving (TS Elliot) is one of a series of sculptures that take Michelangelo's *David* and twist it into a stretched and distorted form.



# Dirty

## TIMELY GHOSTS

Nick Hornby picks a lot about ghosts and detritus.

In his 2008 article *Spiders and Chaperones*, the artist placed a group of realistic sculptures into liquidated objects. The liquidated photographs of male bodies – some, Hornby's lovers – and the reacting arteries present distorted body parts stretched into horizontal-shaped forms. The effect is hallucinatory, as if you are in the presence of unacted ghosts.

Hornby's mother died when he was 20, ten years later he made *Spiders and Chaperones*, the same year in which his childhood friend John G. Singer accepted his, turning 48, indeed on his very birthday, and also the same he set up from his long-term partner.

Objects are liberally everywhere in the world; you can't see a muscle, think a thought, without a ghost involved in the process. Ghosts are the microcosm of our daily lives; they are the vehicles for our flights of fantasy. Ghosts are our memories. And when we see the architecture when white ghosts rely to prove their existence and assert their continuing will to power.

In 2002, renovation gear in the UK and so a year full of ghosts and detritus, Hornby has set about penetrating London with a cluster of three multi-located tightly choreographed as their main spaces to the street and which, together, present a psycho-geography of the city's architectural and sculptural history. Of the three, the first is an unmet in 1910; these two others in 1960s designed as strength and is a five-meter high (three feet sculpture composed of 150 loose cut pieces, arranged using Nylon one and seven), by physical manipulation, into its final form. As with all three sculptures, the finished, and its multiple bands manifest the separate layers into being approached from one side, a viewer sees an abstract, vertical sculpture. From the other, a second viewing one step a horse ride into view. The second piece, 'Here and There', is made of rough-hewn, straggly stone metal rods, and one side presents a stiffer abstract form to 'Power over stress in Waterloo designed as strength' until the other side reveals the back of an old building's door. In it all, the last of the three to be installed, is made from about 1000 and is the tallest of just under six metres, with a neoplastic building and an angular silhouette of a female head supporting the two forms visible on either side of the sculpture.

All three works are visually engaging – the fun of one form metamorphosing into another is a sure crowd drawer – and they do not require anything to be engaged. But Hornby has given more than one reason with attention to those willing to peel away the layers: As any commentary on the nature of public sculpture, the theory of abstract sculpture and sculpture movement, seen in the of the work, stands in the two types of public art: what normally occupies prime real estate in unoccupied spaces around the world: street sculpture for the more or shiny marble for a known new world. The artist has also noted history's oldest and dressed his sculptures with an array of references. The man on the horse is Richard I (Richard the Lionheart / Richard One of Lion), the Chaucer King of the 14th century, and is based on a 14th-century sculpture with the one of Queen Victoria's (Victoria actually, the London-based artist sculptor Carlo Marochetti); the shape of the back of a man with a sword that in the subject in 18th-century French painter's *Portrait of a Man in a Sword*. Moreover above the line of fog, the range of the building and the female portrait (London's Great Marlborough) and the profile of the ancient Egyptian Queen, Nefertiti. Lastly, that sculpture is a reference to the illustration above that illustrates the back in Lawrence Sanders' 18th-century novel *Tristram Shandy* to describe the fashion of a skirt created by one of the book's protagonists. Hand in hand with this well-known of *John Bull* (literary, mythical, and historical) – Hornby sets off on a journey through a London of his own mental mapping, one that intertwines personal biography with public history.



Photographer: Jack Giffin



It is May 2003, and London is agog with the spectacle of the Great Exhibition which has just opened in an extraordinary glass construction and the beauty of High Park, with 100,000 visitors a day around the world, this grand occasion in connection is as much a sign to show trade, industrialisation, and capitalism as it is a marker of Britain's superiority, independence, and isolation. At the entrance to the hall's video sculpture Carlo Marochetti's reputation in city, Queen Victoria and her husband Prince Albert, one to all they created all the exhibition and are captured. It had been a new permanent home and they considered it to be made in London. Paul James has gone to all 10th December in London in 2002. Albert is dead, Victoria is unrecognisable, and Marochetti is at the height of his fame. The bronze version of Richard One of Lion has recently been installed next to the Parliament building and Marochetti has just been commissioned for a monument that would come to mark British imperialism in Delhi (a monument was visited by the Victoria than the Taj Mahal); the material is the same and although killed in 1840 (see *Shadows*) during the First War of Indian Independence in 1857. Hornby's choice of subject in Richard the Lionheart is as telling as the choice of the material as whose version he has preferred for the form of the piece. At a moment when offers around the world are reaching with the ghosts of the past living in the moment of the present, the little 'Power over stress in Waterloo' equipped as strength' stands both at the height of the 'here' as much as it does to the underlying reason why these subjects end up being remembered in the first place.

In the London sculpture, Hornby has set a game of odd and remove with the Albert Marochetti's subject come up again in the shape of the figure. The bronze version of Richard One of Lion has recently been installed next to the Parliament building and Marochetti has just been commissioned for a monument that would come to mark British imperialism in Delhi (a monument was visited by the Victoria than the Taj Mahal); the material is the same and although killed in 1840 (see *Shadows*) during the First War of Indian Independence in 1857. Hornby's choice of subject in Richard the Lionheart is as telling as the choice of the material as whose version he has preferred for the form of the piece. At a moment when offers around the world are reaching with the ghosts of the past living in the moment of the present, the little 'Power over stress in Waterloo' equipped as strength' stands both at the height of the 'here' as much as it does to the underlying reason why these subjects end up being remembered in the first place.

Hornby is 42 in 2002, Albert was 40 when he died, Frederick was 40 when he painted *Richard One of Lion*. The sculpture of *Richard One of Lion* presents a history as Hornby creates white eye and the accident in his name. For the first time he can consider his artistic output retrospectively, until still being plenty of time left to explore new directions in his work. He has found himself having to reckon with the ghosts of the past and has decided to become them as he faces his own future. In his role of London architect, the significance of reusing materials, and the manner with which they are arranged, are symptomatic of the artist's understanding of the diversity of audience – each arriving with their their own ghosts – that sets up any London street in 2002; cultural memory is no longer a homogeneous sector that can be entered in force and put on a pedestal.

Neil Chatwin for *Artforum*, July 10



# TIMES RADIO

# TIMES RADIO



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# HOUSE & GARDEN

INSIDER *art*

## Art scene

EDITED BY FIONA MCKENZIE JOHNSTON

### Sculpture towns and public art

If you have paid a visit to Wakefield in Yorkshire recently, you might have spotted some additions. Wakefield Council, in collaboration with The Hepworth Wakefield and Yorkshire Sculpture Park, is unveiling a series of new monumental site specific sculptures by artists such as Annie Morris, Halima Cassell and Jason Wilsher Mills. Public artwork is not new – statues have adorned streets since ancient times – but its current emphasis dates from after the Second World War when, on a mission to beautify the Essex new town of Harlow, the founders of Harlow Art Trust declared that high quality art should be part of the social fabric of everyday life. Some of the greatest artists of the 20th century – Henry Moore, Elisabeth Frink, Barbara Hepworth, Leon Underwood – created pieces for Harlow’s parks, shopping centres and office plazas, and new works are still being added ([sculpturetown.uk](http://sculpturetown.uk)). In Wakefield, the contemporary commissions can be found at Westgate train station, outside the library and in The Hepworth Wakefield’s garden designed by Tom Stuart Smith (featured in the November 2022 issue of *House & Garden*). In London, two of Nick Hornby’s latest works have been installed, opposite St James’s Park tube station and on a residential street in Kensington. Our environment affects everything, from our mood to our morals, he says. **Pictured** (from top) *Not in Anger*, 1979, Leon Underwood. *Power over others is Weakness disguised as Strength*, 2023, Nick Hornby



000 OCTOBER 2023 HOUSEANDGARDEN.CO.UK

Three more to see . . .



**BARNABY BARFORD:**

**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM**

The artist's work across ceramics, painting, moving image and drawing is reflected in this exhibition at David Gill, SW1, inspired by the flora and fungi of Epping Forest. Excitingly, it is also a chance to see Barnaby's first foray into furniture. *September 8 - October 3; davidgillgallery.com*

**Pictured** *Untitled (Living Painting)*, 1hr10mins loop, 2021



**MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ**

The first major UK solo showcase of this pioneering performance artist's work is coming to the Royal Academy of Arts, W1. As well as providing an overview of Marina's extraordinary practice, it features four seminal works performed live in the galleries. *September 23 - January 1, 2024; royalaacademy.org.uk*

**Pictured** *The Hero*, 2021



**CLAUDETTE JOHNSON: PRESENCE**

One of the most significant figurative artists of her generation, Claudette Johnson was a founding member of the Black British Art Movement. This compelling new exhibition at The Courtauld Gallery, WC2, surveys her artistic development throughout her career. *September 29 - January 14, 2024; courtauld.ac.uk*

**Pictured** *Figure in Blue*, 2018 □

JAMES SMITH © NICK HORNBY STUDIOS, BARNABY BARFORD AND DAVID GILL GALLERY; COURTESY OF THE MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ ARCHIVES; © MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ ARTS COUNCIL COLLECTION; SOUTHBANK CENTRE; LONDON © CLAUDETTE JOHNSON



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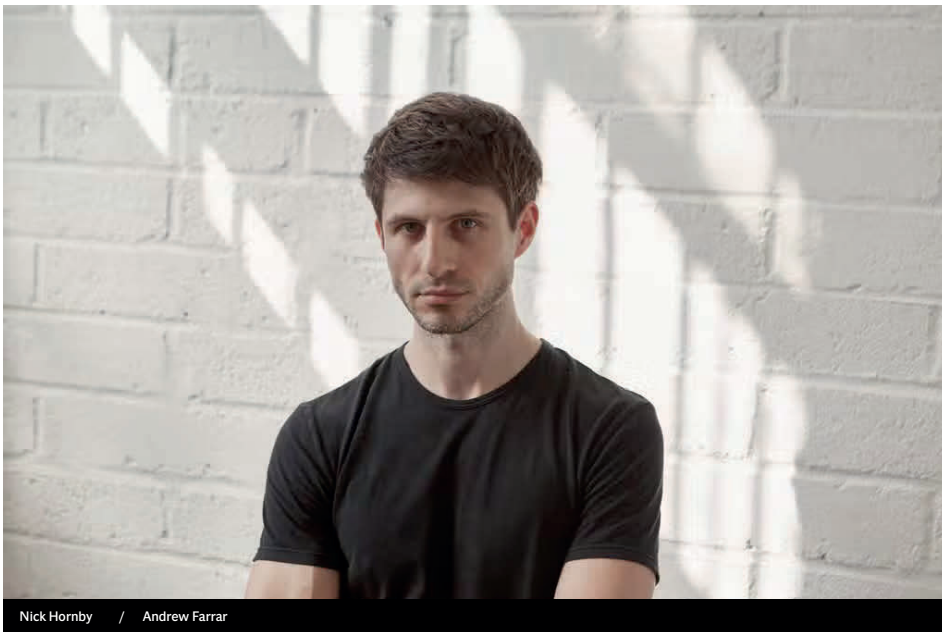
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***INSIDER***

# Nick Hornby: ‘Tearing down problematic sculptures is not the answer’

The British artist is in the midst of unveiling three public commissions in London this summer. He tells Joe Bromley why we need new sculptures in the streets, and his radical plan for dealing with the controversial pieces already in existence



Nick Hornby / Andrew Farrar

BY JOE BROMLEY | 19 Jul 2023



**“I** ve been quite vocal about public statues,” says Nick Hornby, the 43-year-old British artist (no, not the writer. Yes, he gets the question daily).

“I think it’s really exciting that the activists pulled down the [Edward Colston statue in Bristol](#) because it triggered a really important conversation,” he continues. “But I think it’s better to leave things in place, and shine a light on why they are problematic.”



# Artlyst

## Interview of the Month

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### Nick Hornby: Interview of the Month, August 2023 – Paul Carey-Kent



1 August 2023 • Share — [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [LinkedIn](#)

**You will soon be able to follow a London trail of three major public sculptures made by Nick Hornby. As he explains, 'they have the guise of tradition but are, in fact, far from traditional: they unravel tropes of the monument, but in a way which is accessible and, I hope, not too didactic. I want the viewer to be in conversation with these forms, to feel they are in on the question.' It seemed a good time to talk to Hornby in his London studio.**

*You'll shortly have three permanent public sculptures in London as well as one in Harlow. How did that come about?*

In the 2010's I was shortlisted for several commissions, but lost out to more established artists. In 2019 I won my first public commission. My somewhat cheeky pitch was to say: you've just had proposals typical of the main options for a public sculpture – a man on a chair and a shiny blob. The first, a memorial, may be accessible to the public but is deeply problematic, stumbling on critical questions about who is being represented and by whom. The second, an abstraction, avoids those pitfalls, but at the cost of being 'just another of those' kinds of nonspecific abstract sculpture. So I suggested we present that dilemma as a question – by taking Michelangelo's 'David', the apotheosis of human perfectibility, and intersecting that with an abstract line from Kandinsky, one of the first artists to set out



## THE ART NEWSPAPER

Diary  
Blog

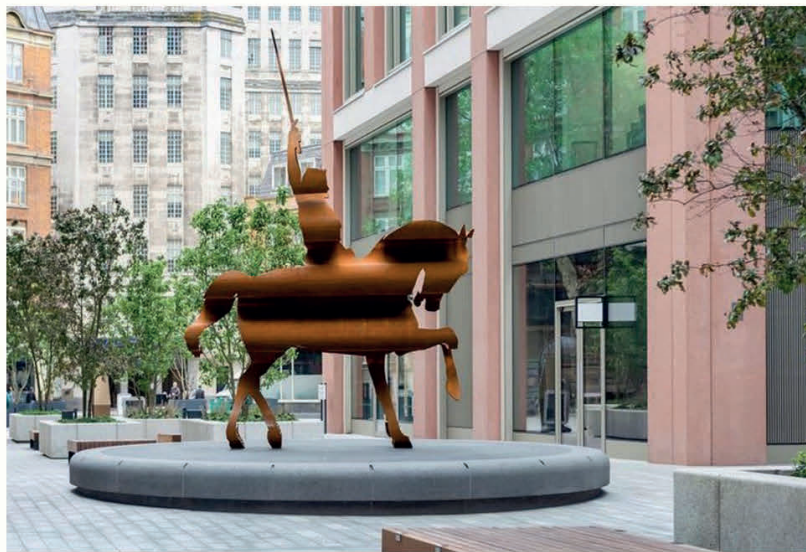
### Richard I or a big squiggle? Nick Hornby unveils equine sculpture in the heart of Westminster

The commission is the first of three works by the artist to be unveiled in the capital this year

The Art Newspaper

23 June 2023

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*Power over others is Weakness disguised as strength (2023)*, Nick Hornby  
courtesy Northacre

The UK sculptor Nick Hornby is making his presence felt in London with three significant public commissions due to be unveiled in the capital this year. Friends and admirers gathered yesterday to mark the launch of the first work, a six-tonne, five-metre-tall equestrian-esque corten work sited just opposite St James's Park Tube station. The work—which has the rather fetching title *Power over others is Weakness disguised as strength (2023)*—can be interpreted in different ways (depending on where you're standing), evoking a man on horseback and/or an ambiguous curling line. Erudite Hornby draws on history, looking to the infamous monarch Richard I (Richard the Lionheart). The piece, commissioned by the property developer Northacre, stands meanwhile on an auspicious spot—the orchards of Westminster Abbey until the 1600s and, more recently, the Metropolitan Police Headquarters. At an enjoyable post-launch dinner, when guests feasted on duck and chocolate mousse (not at the same time), self-deprecating Hornby said he's been working non-stop for two years on the new commissions with the next work—*Here and There* at David Chipperfield's building at One Kensington Gardens—due to be unveiled in July... watch this space.

# BBC RADIO London

The screenshot shows the BBC Radio London website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the BBC logo, a user profile for 'Nick Hornby', and links to Home, News, Sport, Weather, iPlayer, Sounds, and Bitesize. The main header features the 'RADIO LONDON' logo and the program name 'LionHeart'. Below this, a large banner image shows a smiling man with a large afro hairstyle. A 'Listen now' button with a speaker icon is overlaid on the image. To the right of the banner, there is a 'Last on' section showing 'Yesterday 22:00 BBC RADIO LONDON' and a 'More episodes' section with 'PREVIOUS 17/06/2023' and 'NEXT 24/06/2023'. Below the banner, the date '23/06/2023' is displayed, along with the text 'The best way to start the weekend with LionHeart.' and '29 days left to listen 3 hours'. At the bottom, a 'Music Played' section lists three tracks: 'Zedd, Maren Morris & Grey - The Middle (CD SINGLE), INTERSCOPE. 01.', 'McFadden & Whitehead - Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now (FUNK MASTER, POLYGRAM TV. 01.', and 'Pink - All I Know So Far (RCA.'.

# THE SPACES

## How I work: sculptor Nick Hornby

### Inside the London studio is where big ideas take root before outgrowing their space

Art, News by ELLEN HIMELFARB

'I had a dream a few years ago that I'd find a derelict space with great light, huge ceiling height, a concrete slab floor and large sliding doors,' says Nick Hornby, the London artist whose monumental sculptures have found permanent homes across the capital. 'Then I saw this place.'

Is he claiming an affinity for the supernatural? He does talk about his 'slight obsession' with ghosts – both the spectres from British history who inform his work and the buried dead in Kensal Green Cemetery, just outside his studio's sliding metal door, where he delights in walking and reading tombstones.

But Hornby's work seems too cerebral for ghost stories. Politically charged trompe l'oeils, they reframe old histories and stereotypes, recast Victorian busts and Rodin bronzes, and juxtapose ancient kings and abolitionists. His first unveiling this summer, outside St James's Park in London, critiques the 'great man on horseback' statue in six tonnes of Cor-ten steel, bent into a waving gesture described in Laurence Sterne's 18th-century novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*. Viewed from various angles, the installation can resemble a warrior in battle or a shrivelled abstract.

'If there were a vinaigrette recipe for my sculpture, it would contain the asymmetry of Barbara Hepworth and a renaissance contrapposto,' he says.

As for this vast studio in northwest London, blessed with dappled sunlight from clerestory windows: it was a lucky escape from the atelier he occupied for a decade, a sometime film set fashioned as an ersatz Gothic church.

'That space had so much character and colour, everything in it needed to be monochrome,' he says. (See his busts of Rilke, Jane Austen and Kurt Cobain.) 'My recent work is a reaction against that.'

The 'dream' studio won awards years ago for a postindustrial intervention by the engineering conglomerate Arup, which topped a brick box with hefty steel factory roof and banks of glass that provide an even coating of light. The door rolls to the side, in the manner of a barn, opening into a whitewashed office and showroom. Beyond those are workshops for digital imaging and fabrication, plus a fully functioning kitchen. Hornby employs a studio manager, head of technology and two fabrication artists to help with his schedule of exhibitions. One pandemic-era solo show at Mostyn in Llandudno, Wales, required the rapid production of 30 'meta-cubist' marble and resin sculptures applied with liquified images.



This is a step up from the relatively simple, small-scale 'making' of Hornby's early career. Commissions for more complicated work ensued – one requiring a maquette the artist knocked up with a lump of cheddar and some wire. In the manner of a postmodern Richard Serra, the artist taught himself coding and 3D printing to deal with them. The results are no longer drawn by hand but 'scripted' in code to yield a formal 3D object.

Of course, no atelier could physically accommodate a five-metre soldier on a six-tonne horse. For those instances, Hornby moves his work to an expansive CNC laser-cutting facility in Guildford, a mould-maker in Birmingham, a bronze foundry in Stroud or the Benson-Sedgwick metal fabricators in Dagenham.

'If I were to make it myself, I'd be interfering with the curiosity,' he says. 'The difference between caricature and beauty is subtle nuance, delicacy of line. Unlike carving wood by hand, a water or laser jet uses pinpoint precision. There's no fighting against the grain. That precision is the subtle nuance.'

Precision is key because Hornby doesn't want viewers to be distracted by the technology. 'My first job is to make an object phenomenological, to invite questions about material, form and formal perspective. Yet my priority is always what things mean and not how they're made.'

Hornby will reveal two more large-scale sculptures this summer – one in front of David Chipperfield's One Kensington Gardens, the other on Warwick Road in Earl's Court. But he says his 'traditional period' is behind him now. His next show will feature ideas about his late mother. That's not to say he'll be thinking smaller. The limitations of this giant space are never far from mind.

'If you give a sculptor space,' he says, 'they'll always ask for more.'

**Nick Hornby's sculpture, 'Power over others is weakness disguised as strength' is unveiled on 22 June 2023 at Orchard Place in Westminster, London SW1H 0BF**

# The Daily Telegraph

BRITAIN'S BEST QUALITY NEWSPAPER

8

Monday 10 April 2023 *The Daily Telegraph*

## News

### Anti-wrinkle cream raises eyebrows as treatment for burns

**Dermatologists hope No 7 cream's cosmetic advance 'triggers self-repair'**

By Sarah Knapton  
SCIENCE EDITOR

A COSMETIC breakthrough by scientists developing a new Boots No 7 skin cream is so powerful that dermatologists hope it could be used to heal scars and burns.

Researchers found they were able to send signals to the skin to trigger regeneration and No 7 says it is the biggest development since the company produced its "Protect & Perfect Serum", which was so advanced in anti-ageing technology it was featured on the BBC's *Horizon* programme in 2007.

Last month, scientists at the Boots brand presented their findings at the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) annual meeting after discovering two protein fragments that boost skin repair.

The fragments, or peptides, are produced naturally in the body when important skin proteins, such as collagen, break down.

However, the repair sig-

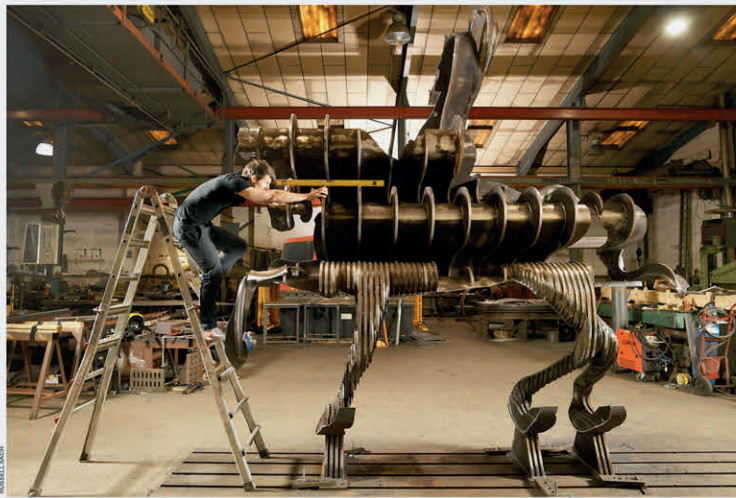
gists at the AAD. "The new peptide blend effectively tricks the skin into thinking that it has been damaged to signal renewal of key proteins such as collagen and fibrillin to boost skin's natural self-repair mechanisms, targeting signs of cumulative damage both on and under the surface," he said.

"Certainly they will help skin revert to a younger state. Collagen is in lots of tissue around the body, so it's not inconceivable to think that these peptides could exist elsewhere in the body, and have repair damage reversal type effects (in scarring or burns). We don't know, we haven't tested them and we won't be doing that for No 7. But yeah, there's interest from elsewhere."

Mark Winter, managing director at No 7, added: "At

'We were inundated by dermatologists trying to find out more about blend'

the American Academy of Dermatology we were inundated by dermatologists trying to find out more. We're going to start investigating.



**Artistic mettle**  
Nick Hornby inspects his latest work, constructed using 165 specially designed and cut pieces of Corten steel crafted into an illusionary sculpture weighing six tons. It aims to replicate the equestrian-esque look of Richard the Lionheart and will go on display at St James's Tube station next month.



# Public Statues and Sculpture Association



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## Nick Hornby

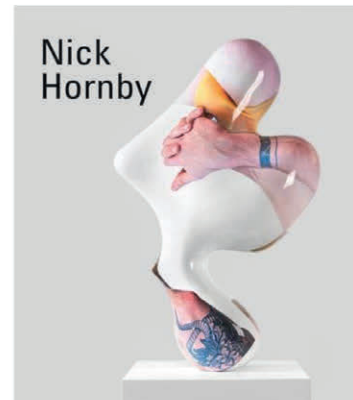
Reviewed by Holly (Marjorie) Trusted, Co-chair PSSA

NOVEMBER 27, 2022

This publication illustrates a handsome selection of Nick Hornby's sculptural work, produced in a wide variety of media, including marble, epoxy resin, steel, aluminium, lacquer and resin. Hornby has also made use of photography in conjunction with these materials, collaborating with the photographer Louie Banks. Hornby (b. 1980) trained at the Slade and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, completing an MA at the Chelsea College of Art. He has exhibited widely, holding his first institutional solo show at MOSTYN, the centre for contemporary arts in Llandudno in 2020-21. He has also exhibited elsewhere in the UK and internationally, as well as a permanent installation at Harlow in Essex. Hornby's sculptures are generally figurative, playing with the idea of imitation and representation. From around 2015 onwards he produced a series of enigmatic heads inspired by some of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century marble busts in the Victoria and Albert Museum. This monograph on Hornby's life and work comprises a biographical essay by the editor Matt Price, with essays by Luke Syson and Hannah Higham, as well as an interview between Hornby and Helen Pheby. The illustrations and design are of high quality, giving valuable insights into the artist's work and practice.

[Back to reviews](#)

**Matt Price (ed.) with contributions by Luke Syson, Matt Price, Hannah Higham, Nick Hornby and Helen Pheby, *Nick Hornby*, Anomie Publishing, London, 2022. 232 pp. with over 200 colour illus. £35. ISBN 978-1-910221-24-2.**



## Public Statues and Sculpture Association

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## Art Is Central To The NYC Experience At Andaz 5th Avenue



The building that houses Andaz 5th Avenue wasn't always a hotel. It started out as a big department store in 1916 before it became Tommy Hilfiger's global headquarters. Then, in 2013, Tony Chi transformed the space into Andaz 5th Avenue. Today, the rooms and suites at Andaz 5th Avenue ground guests comfortably in New York City, and that's no accident. Chi designed them to invoke the open, spacious style of the city's popular loft-style apartments.

Since its initial conception, art has always been a part of the hotel. With its proximity to the New York Public Library and the famous 5th Avenue shopping district, a variety of the arts inspired the hotel. Chi's own artwork is in each guest room, and a sculpture by Nick Hornby captivates guests in the lobby. You'll also find that every elevator bank is decorated with a unique mural by students from the New York City High School for Art & Design.

Andaz 5th Avenue really took the merging of hotel and art to another level with its artist-in-residence program that's now considered integral to the hotel's identity. It empowers guests to enjoy the artwork of a local artist, and the artist gets to showcase their work in the 5th Avenue Gallery space. [...]

# VOGUE



*Duchesse-satin dress, \$1,495. Duchesse-satin gloves, to order. Both Emilia Wickstead. Leather and strass sandals, £790, René Caovilla. Earrings and tights, as before.*

*"Yeah, of course I go to therapy... it's a beautiful thing. You know, there's nothing wrong with working on yourself"*



# WALES ARTS **review**

## NICK HORNBY: ZYGOTES AND CONFESSIONS | EXHIBITION

Nick Hornby has brought his Wonderland to the MOSTYN Gallery in Llandudno with *Zygotes and Confessions*. Here, Amy Briscoe reviews the dream-like exhibition, which is currently attracting an international audience online.

Nick Hornby is known for exploring cultural objects, and his monochromatic and site-specific sculptures have been exhibited globally at Tate Britain and the Museum of Art and Design in New York. Alfredo Cramerotti invited Hornby to exhibit at MOSTYN, a hidden gem in the North Wales art culture scene, after he won the gallery's Audience Choice Award in the Open 21. The result is *Zygotes and Confessions*.

And MOSTYN is the perfect venue for Nick Hornby's first solo UK exhibition; it has retained its striking original Victorian terracotta façade, whilst the modern gallery interior provides a sublime backdrop for Hornby's work to come to life in the minds of viewers.

Multifaceted and illusive sculptures appear as if they are floating with their vibrant presence. The sculptures are colourful and glossy and the subject matter is highly personal. Hornby has alluded to the fact that he has an "intimate" relationship with each piece, hinting that there are people and stories behind every sculpture in the exhibition. You can see many perspectives and glimmers of images in his work and the eyes of his sculptures are visually arresting. Like a magpie, he plunders the cultural world whilst transporting us into his own. Hornby drew inspiration from portrait busts at the Victoria and Albert Museum, whilst the mantelpiece dogs had their origins in early Parisian abstract art.

Nick Hornby has a reputation for using technology to invoke new worlds, and *Zygotes and Confessions* is no exception. The photo sculptural works are brought to life by an innovative liquefied photography technique. He uses the way we see the world through distorted and highly-glossy filters on our phones and devices and transferring that into the artistic space. Due to the coronavirus, many people have accessed the exhibition through a screen, adding to the idea that what we are seeing is highly-stylised fragments of his personal world. The exhibition is without doubt autobiographical.

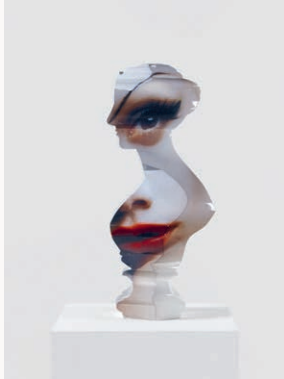


Photography and sculpture are presented as one, adding to the vulnerability of each piece. Every part of each sculpture tells a story as fragments of human life; a life I want to know more about. They appear hallucinatory from a distance, pulling the observer to look closer. If this was a real-life viewing, I could. There is no doubt that these sculptures are highly interactive, with every angle revealing little by little; Nick Hornby is a master of perspective, after all. These pieces are indeed sculptures that come alive at sight. The glossiness and high-octane colours make the busts appear otherworldly. Indeed, we as the spectators are watching this from the outside looking in, like Alice through the looking glass.

*Nick Hornby's Zygotes and Confessions can be enjoyed online and is being held at the MOSTYN until May 9th 2021. Amy Briscoe is a journalist based in North Wales.*

# VOGUE

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE



Scan the QR code to see the making of the sculpture.

Nick Hornby's sculpture, created just for *Vogue Singapore*, started life as an image by photographer Louie Banks. Then, he reimagined it in a new form, liquifying it and throwing it up on multiple sides of a marble bust. Now, it's been transposed back to the glossy page, within the bounds of our magazine, once more. For this issue of *Vogue*, Hornby brings his unique perspective to combusting preconceived notions of stone, paper and the idea of the artist himself in a work that, when viewed from different angles, takes on various forms.

Photography Ben Westoby

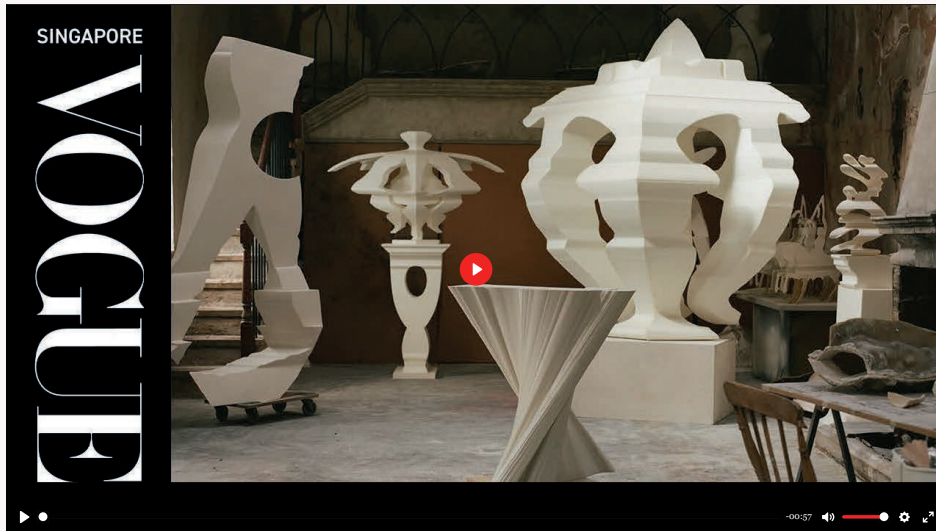
# VOGUE

VOGUE



# VOGUE

FASHION BEAUTY LIFESTYLE WATCHES & JEWELLERY VIDEO SHOP EN VOGUE

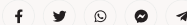


INTERIORS

## “Images... can be explosive”: Vogue artist-in-residence Nick Hornby sculpts a new perspective

BY AMANDA MCDUGALL  
4 MAY 2021

Nick Hornby, a British artist who uses digital technology to create his dynamic sculptures, has always been fascinated by how art and history intersect. Recently, he's also gained a fresh appreciation for intimacy and collaboration. He sat down with *Vogue* Singapore to talk about his inspiration and process, and how they've changed in the last year



Nick Hornby's sculpture, created just for *Vogue* Singapore, started life as a picture of the model [Jazelle Zanaughiti](#), taken by photographer Louie Banks. Together, the team “liquified” the image. Hornby took a sculpture he'd carved out of marble, a bust silhouette that transforms itself as you walk around it and take it in from different angles, and “dipped” it into this image. The resultant work of art is something entirely different, something that wouldn't have materialised at the end without each step—and collaborator—in the process.

Hornby has exhibited all over the world, in the United Kingdom, the United States, Switzerland, Greece, and India. He's known primarily as a sculptor who works with marble, resin, and bronze—and incorporates computer programmes into his process. He channels ideas that come from the history of art into his work. It's only recently that he's delved into his own personal history for inspiration, plumbing the depths of his autobiography for inspiration. The photo-sculptures he's created this year have been a direct product of that, whether they be abstract shapes or mantelpiece busts.

In his Notting Hill studio in London, which is a breeze-block warehouse that has the quiet, reverent air of a church, he worked with a team to create an image from an idea, and an object from an image. His is a breathless, whirlwind artistic process. Here, he pauses for just a moment or two to speak with *Vogue* Singapore about history, the pandemic, and the power of opening yourself up to multiple viewpoints.

### Vogue Recommends

INTERIORS  
Vogue artist-in-residence Eduardo Enrique asks: “What is a fashion painting?”  
BY AMANDA MCDUGALL

ENTERTAINMENT  
What is the sound of touch? Composer and musician Weish tells us how she grew a garden of sound  
BY AMANDA MCDUGALL

RUNWAY  
“Couture is changing and my brand is proof of that”. Meet Charles de Vilmorin, the gen Z breakout star of couture season  
BY ALEX KESSLER

LIFESTYLE  
3 Singaporean illustrators on putting their anxieties and hopes on social media—through strange, existential, deeply human cartoons  
BY AMANDA MCDUGALL

# whitewall

ART

## Sculptural Distance: Nick Hornby in Conversation with Alfredo Cramerotti

By Whitewall

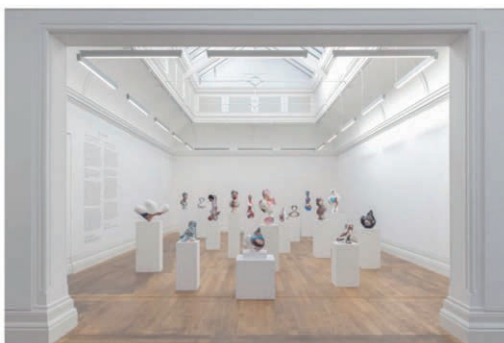
March 11, 2021

Nick Hornby's "Zygotes and Confessions" is currently on view at Wales's contemporary art space MOSTYN through April 21. Curated by the gallery's Director Alfredo Cramerotti, the exhibition features a series of photo-sculptural works exploring gender and sexual identity, through the lens of our relationship with the world of screens.

Existing on the brink of the two- and three-dimensional planes, the works on view were made by a unique hybrid of digital and manual processes, where sculptural forms are submerged in liquid crystal displays to cover them in photographic images. Coined by the artist as "meta-cubism," the entrancing pieces present themselves as abstracted suggestions of classical sculpture where the viewer might take a second (or even third) look before adjusting to the chameleonic nature of the figures. Nine works were created in collaboration with the photographer Louie Banks, whose images feature drag queens and transgender models.

Taking into consideration a zygote, which does not yet possess a sexual identity, Hornby has delved into a level of personal intimacy new to his work by linking suggestions of autobiography back to our ample use of screens. Through the presentation, the artist underscores how fickle boundaries between personal and formal can be today, offering a physical representation of the intangible world that exists beneath our fingertips.

To learn more about Hornby's show and his practice as a whole, Whitewall is sharing a discussion between the artist and the curator.



Installation view of Nick Hornby's "Zygotes and Confessions," courtesy of the artist and MOSTYN.

**ALFREDO CRAMEROTTI:** Let's start with the main ideas behind your work—I realize this is a big question, and of course I have my own reading, but it may not be the same as yours. How do you 'read' your work? Can you step outside Nick Hornby for a moment and let me know what you see?

**NICK HORNBY:** A painter is often said to step back from a canvas to see it more clearly. I like imagining that back and forth: from the brush hairs touching the bumpy surface of a canvas to the view of the whole painting, in a room, in a house, in a universe. It seems counterintuitive to step away to perceive more clearly, but I think it works. And that's probably why shifting perspective has been at the centre of my practice for such a long time.

I'm conflicted about the idea of intention. I think being very self-conscious can complicate intention, and that it's a slightly prescriptive notion anyway: I want my sculptures to be open, multivalent objects rather than articulations of a particular idea or intention. To put it another way: in art there are narratives around taking a critical position, having critical distance, setting everything in a matrix of judgement and value. My intersection sculptures (robotically cut, art-historical hybrids) in some ways speak to those anxieties—they remove my subjectivity from the mode of production—by using citations, calculating the design by a Boolean operation, and then cutting out the results using digital fabrication. From nose to tail, when these began I was trying to eliminate myself, trying to stand outside the work (as you describe) and see it as if I were a critic rather than a maker. For all the distancing, though, I still choose the quotes, the process, and select the successes. Those decisions reflect taste, and I don't know where that comes from: could a balance of curves and angles I like be defined by my mother's face, or my grandmother or her ancestor, for instance? If I 'read' my work, I see all these questions in it too. The recent sculptures are much more clearly intimate and personal, complicating those ideas even more. Some of the new works have titles like Harry, Giovanni, Francesco, Joe.... when I see those works I see those people.

[More]



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## ***Zygotes and Confessions: Nick Hornby's Structuralist Contradictions***

***Provocative, irreverent and subversive, British sculptor Nick Hornby lays himself bare with his first UK solo exhibition, "Zygotes and Confessions", at MOSTYN. Through a pluralistic approach in which sculpture and photography merge into a hybrid form, he surpasses the conventional academic canons of space and media, creating a fluid world in which there are no preconceptions and determinations.***

***In conversation with MADE IN BED's Feature Editor, Federico Raffa, the artist reveals himself in a contradictory confession through eros, structuralism, fluidity and utopia.***



*Zygotes and Confessions at MOSTYN.*

*"I don't love Bernini; I find him too melodramatic."*

It is said that the sculptor and architect Gian Lorenzo Bernini could make marble as malleable and pliable as wax. The history of art has praised him as a multifaceted and multidisciplinary master of Baroque figurative art and a cornerstone of Italian art. Every year, tens of thousands of tourists visit Italy to admire and photograph his sculptures, posting pictures of them on social media like trophy hunters. Yet, despite Bernini's undeniable technical mastery, a layer of doubt inevitably persists: are people really fascinated by the drama and lightness of the Neapolitan sculptures' touch, or do they love him because art history imposes this admiration? Are we free to follow our tastes, or does society ultimately condition us?

Provocative, irreverent and contradictory, British sculptor Nick Hornby follows the roots of French structuralism by questioning the necessity and reliability of social canons of beauty, gender, and thought, through fluid, sensual and figurative sculptures, a selection of which is now on display in his autobiographical exhibition *Zygotes and Confessions* at MOSTYN. Here, Hornby presents three groups of sculptures with a patinated photographic skin using a technique appropriated from industry. In this way, he manages to create a hybrid, dichotomous, hermaphrodite form that surpasses the academic canons and breaks into a new space, offering a three-dimensionality to the photographic images and a double personality to the sculptural form. Everything merges into forms that he defines as "meta-cubist". The image acquires a corporality that simultaneously cancels the sculpture's rigid structure, the latter of which disappears on being perceived as an image. The coexistence of the two figurative forms, photography and sculpture, gives the eye a distorted incapacity to clearly define what is being observed. That is the intended effect: it is not essential to define, to channel thought structures of thought, but to observe what is given and take it as it is. Hornby rebels against social structures and creates a fluid world where there are no preconceptions and determinations, ultimately giving life to a zygote born from the fusion of two art forms, shapes, images, colours and sensations.

[more...]

# sculpture

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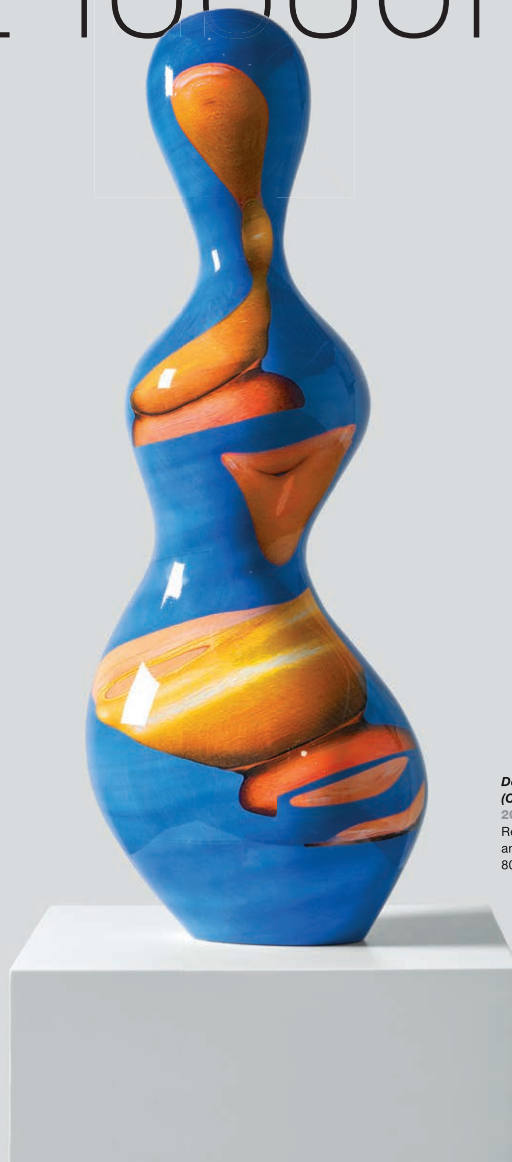
## object lessons

### Nick Hornby

▶ *Demeter's Doll (Cindy)* joins Modernism with digital screen culture. The object was carved from the memory of a Hans Arp sculpture, before being dipped into a liquefied image of Cindy Crawford that I took from a 1997 swimwear calendar. The combination invites parallels between a swimsuit on a supermodel and a surface on a sculpture—each form is idealized, and in each case, there is a mediating layer which both is and is not there. Like the watery form, swimwear points toward liquidity, something that fascinates me, both in concept and process.

Marble sculptures carved from a solid block are made by striking the surface with a chisel—my sculptures are physical creations, but they are also made in a digital realm, with the stroke of my fingers on a trackpad or the manipulation of images on liquid crystal displays. It is a different kind of touch, and liquidity lurks in every part of the process. These dipped sculptures bring that full circle: the form and surface meet again when I immerse them through a suspended liquid surface.

Cindy Crawford epitomizes a particular type of 1990s female empowerment. I had these images on my wall as a boy—a queer boy. Demeter was a fertility goddess, so bringing her and Cindy together, 1960s sculpture with 1990s supermodel, joined behind a glossy reflective surface, speaks to a history of things that have fascinated and resisted me too. ■



*Demeter's Doll (Cindy)*, 2020.  
Resin, ink, and lacquer,  
80 x 30 x 20 cm.

COURTESY THE ARTIST

# CITIZENS of HUMANITY

*British Sculptor Nick Hornby lets us into his London-based studio and discusses his greatest influences, art in the age of social media, and how the pandemic has impacted his work*

**Art often reflects society and the times, how is what's going on now impacting or influencing your work?**

"This is actually a really pertinent question.... Until this year, my work had actively avoided the present day – assuming an ahistorical position and criss-crossing art histories. But this year has been different: Covid-19 reduced my world to the smallness of my apartment. For the first time, I became profoundly lonely and craved touch. Just before lockdown, I discovered a method of dipping objects into liquifying images – where the image wraps around the object covering every detail. The process is intimate, tactile, fragile and almost magical – and it seemed to almost mirror the touching and swiping our iPhones – the facetimes, zooms and tinder encounters. What unfolded from this has been a huge body of work – 32 sculptural portraits born from iPhone encounters (basically when things slipped into DMs)."

**In the age of social media and the way content is taken in does that present challenges for you in sharing your work?**

"Sculpture is a physical experience. Size and weight are important. It is the opposite of cinema, in whose dark space you forget about your body. With sculpture the opposite happens – you connect with your materiality – your feet planted on the floor, the pores of your skin, your dry lips. Its challenging to relay that physical experiences – but a mixture of images and video and text captions can get you some of the way there."

**Do you think its [social media is] positive for the arts in general?**

"Instagram is an extraordinary phenomenon. I have met so many artists, curators and writers, I've made friends and even lovers via Instagram. Whilst it might favour bright and colourful poppy images or frothy selfies over more contemplative ideas... despite this I love it. A prime example is the Artist Support Pledge (#artistsupportpledge), an initiative set up by Matthew Burrows – to encouraged artists to sell their work via Instagram. I read has now generated over £70m in sales... a fascinating democratising of an otherwise too closed system – and a lifeline to so many artists. And I believe its how you [Citizens of Humanity] found me? And we embarked on this wonderful dialogue. You've introduced me to fellow artists, poets - who have in turn triggered other new conversations."



**Who are some of your greatest influences? Mentors?**

"I really like to mix-it-up.... my influences are broad ranging, from luxury yacht design, 16th Century Choral music, Victorian industry – to wetsuits, spacesuits, ballet, artists, curators, poets, flowers, pebbles, Michelangelo, Hepworth and Moore, Matisse, Rodin, Picasso, Arthur Fleischmann, Video Art, New Media Art, Isidore (unclassifiable) Simon (ex-boyfriend), Felipe (ex-boyfriend), Indie Choudhury (the curator I worked with at Tate), Brooke Lynn McGowan (writer), Alex Massouras (Artist), Oliver beer (Artist), Barthes, Derrida, David Roberts (collector), Mervyn Davies (collector), the public."

**Historically art has movements, abstract expressionists, pop, neo pop etc... what do you think your generation of artists mark will be on art history?**

"I think my generation's mark on history will actually be to question the movements themselves! I think they tend to reduce complicated ideas into simplified stories – and mainly stories of white men. I hope my generation will be remembered for opening things up – the grand narratives of modernism are over, but so too are the equally dogmatic narratives of post-modernism. Rather than manifestos that dictate art as one thing or another, we are happy to include anything. Paint on canvas or digital coding - figuration or abstraction, live action art or commodifiable art objects – all can be equally relevant. Authorship is fine and re-mixing is fine. I feel all the dogmas no longer matter. I feel very optimistic."

**What has been your greatest lesson to date?**

That meaning isn't fixed. That its contingent. To give a simple example, in sculpture, placing one thing next to another changes its potential reading. But more widely - this notion has vast impact on a much broader approach – it means that my belief, or my position might be wrong and however informed I might be, I will never know the whole truth (outside of my own limitations). This is both terrifying but also extremely exciting as it opens up extraordinary creative potential.

**Any sound advice you've received that has shaped your career?**

Yes – in 2016, a friend (Iris) visited my studio and pointed out that whilst I'd done a great job of setting out the intellectual concepts and philosophical enquiry of my practice – she didn't know anything about me. And she wanted to know my story. It took several years and a global pandemic – but this advice was the seed that grew into this recent very personal and autobiographical series and my current solo exhibition at Mostyn "Zygotes and Confessions."

– Zygotes and Confessions Mostyn, Llandudno, 14 November to 18 April



## Nick Hornby: Zygotes and Confessions

Mostyn, Llandudno, 14 November to 18 April

In 2008, the artist Nick Hornby hosted an event with the writer Nick Hornby. The apparent humour of turning the Hornby pair into human homonyms, however, concealed deeper connections with the artist's sculptural practice. Bringing together two Nick Hornbys, who in turn of en discussed other Nick Hornbys, was a gesture which pluralised and destabilised ideas of authorship and subjectivity. The fixity of those notions is something persistently challenged by Hornby's sculptures, which of en accentuate distance

from the artist's hand through an emphasis on the quotation of other artists' work and which also manifest a clear relationship with digital design. Hornby unifies these ideas in his work by applying an immaculate finish so that his sculptures can appear almost machine made. Mediation, for instance through processes such as mould making and complicated fabrication, is not alien to sculpture but that distance tends to be offset by the conspicuously direct traces of marks in sculpture the strike of the chisel or residual finger marks left in shaped wax or clay and the physical presence of sculpture itself.

The exhibition *Zygotes and Confessions* at Mostyn announces these themes of Hornby's practice in its title. Here, the *zygote* a bundle of cells resulting from fertilisation signals Hornby's preoccupation with hybridity, while *confessions* is concerned with how subjectivity is perceived and the notion of artists' presences in their work. Such ideas play out through the exhibition over three broad categories of sculpture: portrait busts, mantelpiece dogs and abstract modernist forms borrowed from artists like Hans Arp. Each group wears a skin of glossy photographic imagery. Over Hornby's busts are images by photographer and drag queen Louie Banks, over the dogs appears BDSM imagery and on the abstract forms are found images of en startlingly cropped of swimwear. This reference to sex is Hornby's concession to subjectivity, revealing the personal desires of the artist, playfully relocated onto a pompous bust, a twee mantelpiece ornament or a canonic piece of abstraction.

The sculptures all share photographic surfaces, an unfamiliar incursion of photography onto three dimensional forms, and adopt its reflective sheen, too. A dance between flatness and three dimensions has previously informed Hornby's method of pairing recognisable sculptures so that they only become recognisable from one viewing aspect, making them behave as two dimensional images as well as three dimensional forms. Whereas cubists captured the shifting encounter of the eye with the material world, Hornby inverts the unity of the sculptural form so that it breaks when it is experienced as an image.

The introduction of photography at the gallery extends Hornby's back and forth between two and three dimensions, but where before this aspect was camouflaged, here it is conspicuous. And this time, the splicing of flat images onto material volume is fundamentally distorting, a quality which gives Hornby's recent sculptures a different subject from his previous works: the screen.



Nick Hornby, *Tear (Simon)*, 2020

Hornby has superimposed the photography on the sculptures by a process of dipping, submerging the sculpture through a liquid image which melts around the volume of the sculpture. There is something inescapably digital about this, both in the sense that it serves as a physical, real life filter or Photoshop like manipulation, and in the fluidity of the image it generates. The screens of phones and computers on which images circulate are liquid the *Li* in LCD. The pandemic has therefore only heightened the relevance of this quality: looping the space between online experience and that of the physical world so that it becomes one of equivalence.

The arrangement of the sculptures here, occupying the gallery evenly on plinths of various heights, is reminiscent of the tiered audience in a theatre, which again lends them a sense of being viewed from a specific vantage point. Interestingly, Hornby had originally planned to invite the audience to touch the sculptures. Although this was ultimately not possible (fear of fomites in a pandemic), the idea serves the series well, allowing the works to take on a tactility closer to that of fingers swiping a screen, where touch is built into the form but also configured as something imaginary. Similarly, Hornby's sculptures bring photographic image and sculptural volume together: part tactile, part at a remove, the imperfections of actual human skin sealed beneath an impeccable reflective glossy surface.

**Alexander Massouras** is an artist and writer based in Cambridge

*Art Monthly* no. 443, February 2021



studio international

Published 26/01/2021

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## Nick Hornby – interview: ‘Liquefied photography is magical and mysterious’

Nick Hornby talks about his shift from art history to personal histories, and combining analogue and digital processes to create photo-sculptural objects

by ANNA McNAY

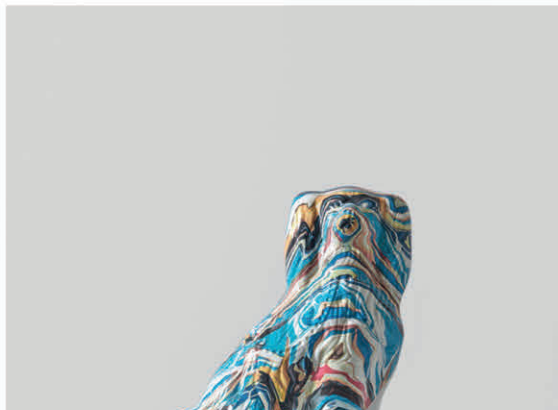


**Nick Hornby (b1980, London) is known for making monochrome sculpture in marble or bronze, often combining art history with digital processes. For his first solo institutional exhibition, he has turned his gaze inward and made a new series of autobiographical sculptures. The gallery is filled with a large array of objects set on plinths that include portrait busts, modernist abstractions and “mantelpiece dogs.”**

**In conversation with Studio International, via Zoom, Hornby explains why this combination is not as strange as it might, at first, sound, before going on to elucidate his process and talk about what makes his new work so personal.**

Anna McNay: Your exhibition at MOSTYN – currently shut due to Covid 19 – comprises three different series of photo-sculptural objects: meta-cubist busts derived from the 19th-century marble busts in the V&A’s Hintze Galleries; Victorian dogs, otherwise known as “mantelpiece dogs”; and globular objects inspired by Parisian modernism. Could you explain a little about the ideas behind each of these series?

Nick Hornby: It’s funny that you should start here - setting out these three categories, because although they clearly do divide like that, one of the original drives behind this show was actually to try to homogenise all those objects: I had the idea that on first inspection they could seem quite similar in some ways, or at least that they could look like there were all born of the same moment. All of the objects have been re-skinned with a highly glossy photographic surface. I was interested in the idea of levelling different value systems. The dogs speak through their history to a number of different socio-economic values, the globular objects reference modernism and therefore their value is critical (as well as economic), and the busts are works of mine from ten years ago – so they bring the baggage of personal value.



# sculpture

A PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE CENTER

## A Conversation with Nick Hornby

January 19, 2021 by sculpturemag



Nick Hornby, "Zygotes and Confessions," 2020. Video: Courtesy MOSTYN

SM: What was the impetus for the new series?

NH: My practice over the last decade has been a very slow and systematic inquiry into authorship—the critique of authorship, methods of eliminating the personal subjective, and questions of digital reproduction. It led me to cool, calculated Boolean operations and slick high-production sculptures. This year—in the middle of lockdown, with the tenth anniversary of my mother's death, and when I watched my father's Alzheimer's reach a point he forgot his name and who I was—I split up with my life-partner and turned 40. I decided that I didn't need to critique authorship or eliminate the personal subjective anymore. In fact, I wanted touch, contact, and altogether more earnest connections with my work.

SM: Was the new technique of liquified photography a solution to a technical problem or just something you came up with?

It's an incredible process – we print onto a water-soluble film, that when placed on water dissolves leaving only the ink floating. I didn't invent this process—I simply appropriated and augmented an industrial technique, upscaling it for larger objects and subverting its imagery. It is extraordinary for me to suddenly be able to work with images so directly. Although my sculptures are referential, and in fact composed from images, the results often appear to be quite abstract. Images on the other hand are so legible—so laden, so impregnated and drenched in meaning. For me, directly using images felt like bringing a nuclear bomb to a knife fight.

SM: What is the substrate?

NH: The objects are simple resin fibreglass casts. They need to be light enough to handle during the application process, where a lot can go wrong. Some of the forms are digitally cut, others carved free hand and others (the dogs) are found.

SM: Why these three types of objects: dogs, portrait busts, and abstract objects?

NH: I'm interested in category errors—how you compare things which are seeming immiscible. It's easy to compare 23% with 73%, but how do you compare a meteorite with a vintage Porsche? The processes of digital manufacture, hand-made and ready-made, stand in for different and arguably contradictory sculptural propositions. Equally, the show is about figuration—each object type is in a different state of abstraction: the dogs are clearly dogs but abstracted through caricature, the busts are quasi cubist—legible from certain angles—and the abstract objects are abstract (if at times very bodily, like torsos etc). The show is about looking and being looked at. The heads have angular Picasso-like eyes staring out, the abstract objects have erotic body parts, and the dogs are a traditional Victorian ornament typically displayed at home on a mantelpiece above a fire looking out into the room. I was fascinated by the homogenising effect of the glossy images. Could I tie these disparate forms together to give the appearance of design, coherence, intentionality, and a single author?

SM: Do you think differently at all when making figurative works, as opposed to your earlier work?

NH: As far as I'm concerned, I have always made figurative work (or referential work). The figure maybe the outline of an abstract sculpture—but the work still points towards something that exists. I tend to think figuration / abstraction is a false binary—nothing can ever be completely one or the other. Which I suppose means that in both the older work and this new work I treat my materials very similarly, trying to triangulate meaning and open new ideas.

SM: Can you say something about the relationship between the photographic images and the shapes of the objects to which they are melded?

NH: There is a different rationale for each group: the heads, the abstractions and the dogs. The heads are derived from 19th Century portrait busts that are on display at the V&A in London. Those forms are overlaid with portraits by a photographer Louie Banks including models, queer and trans people. The abstract bodily shapes have images of boys in lycra and speedos and the dogs have images of "pup play", a queer BDSM subculture that dresses up as dogs.

SM: Did you take the photographs? (I think you said they were taken by a well-known photographer, but perhaps you can elaborate a bit.)

NH: Apart from the collaboration with Louie Banks, yes, I took all the photographs.



Head (Milly was found), 2020. Resin, ink, and lacquer. 60 x 30 x 30 cm. Photo: Courtney the artist



Pig (Milly was found), 2020. Resin, ink, and lacquer. 60 x 30 x 30 cm. Photo: Courtney the artist

SM: Do you draw? And did you draw out the shapes before working on them in CAD?

NH: My "drawing" stage (the moment of experimentation) is pre-image, normally at the point of words and ideas. I then draw in CAD, but by this point I'm modelling what I have designed in my head. Once the concept is set, the making is very pleasurable. Yes, I draw everything in CAD – because that's the tool I'm most adept with. It allows me to try different iterations, to explore juxtapositions very quickly and to shift scale.

SM: Thoughts about the relationship between images and objects today, in a time of image overabundance?

NH: Images are overabundant, but luckily galleries and museums still provide some space to edit out and let images speak. As I mentioned earlier—for a sculptor whose explicit references are buried beneath abstraction—introducing an image, so clear and so knowable, is like dropping a nuclear bomb.

SM: You mentioned you wanted people to be able to touch the works: do you feel that the tactile, the physical, is especially important at a time when images are so dematerialized.

NH: yes – I've made objects that are strokable but underneath the glossy lacquer might be the image of semi naked person, and I love the slight awkwardness that might yield at the moment you realize what your touching. Yes, touch is very important—but it also doesn't have to be literal: we say a kind gesture might be "touching."

– Daniel Kunitz, Editor in Chief, Sculpture magazine. January 19, 2021

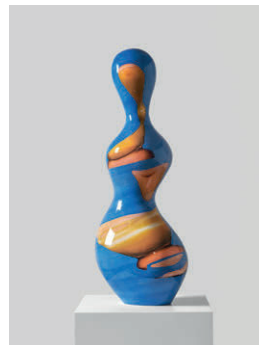


SOHO HOUSE &amp; CO

## Artist Nick Hornby on the right time for a confession

The London member and sculptor opens up about the deeply personal works that make up his first major institutional exhibition currently on show at MOSTYN in Wales.

By Osman Can Yerebakan Images courtesy of Nick Hornby Wednesday 28 December, 2020



In a year marked by turbulence, May was particularly formative for the artist Nick Hornby. Ending a seven-year relationship, witnessing his ailing father no longer remember who he is, and the 10th anniversary of his mother's death crammed into 31 days – all while he turned 40. Compounded by lockdown with its mantras of distancing and hand-washing, Hornby decided to let his guard down – and the result is a show that documents a need for human touch and intimacy. In the weeks and months that followed – Hornby developed glossy sculptures covered in images of iPhone encounters. Autobiography had never been his subject until this year and his first major institutional exhibition, *Zygotes and Confessions*, at MOSTYN in Llandudno, Wales. The new work on display — seventeen marble and resin sculptures wrapped in distorted images of bodies — is deeply personal, a testimony of grief, break-up and leaving behind another decade as the artist turned forty. The confluence of life events and their anniversaries during the pandemic, turned the artist's attention to the tactility of sculpture and its conflicting relationship to touch, as he tells me from his Notting Hill studio.

'Titillating' is how Hornby describes injecting other protagonists into art history's canonised silhouettes. Think of the bulbousness of a Henry Moore, dipped into the sensuality of a nude selfie. The sculptures possess a 'hermetically sealed' mystery about their fruition, but Hornby is as open about his process as he is with his journey of conceiving them. Rigorous stages of the 'magical process' include transferring the image onto water in the form of dissolvable ink before pressing the blank sculpture into that floating image. 'I'm taking an industrial technique used in commercial reliefs and adapting it into sculpture's three dimensionality,' he says, citing a memory of curiosity about the faux-mahogany dashboard in his dad's car.

Hornby's toying with the canon and means of production spills into his questioning of his past as well. 'I was raised as a Catholic, which affected how I expressed my identity,' he says. He was the closeted boy having his rugby-player classmates pose for clay sculptures at his all-boys' school. 'I had to use their athletic physiques to create both male and female figures,' he remembers. And each week, he was required to attend confession - to atone for his moral sins. It has taken him until now to develop a subversive response to this education. The result is a new series of voluptuously abstract sculptures that include men who have entered his life over the past few months. Look for the liquid crystal intimacy of an iPhone encounter, with its pixelated physicality, across the surfaces of his lacquered sculptures.

'I don't know what you see in them,' says Hornby mischievously. Among them are sleek marble blobs, frozen with fluid possibilities – crisply round, and both weightless and hefty. Their bulging and protruding surfaces host different men, each fragmented by the sculptures' poetic fluctuations, a la Futurist Boccioni or Modernist Brâncuși. A blue speedo is seen covering a man's buttocks and crotch. Interlocking hands at the end of tattooed arms. Unlike their 2D originals, the images appear wavy and solvent, almost yearning for a touch. 'First their shine, then their shape,' says Hornby, when referring to the order his sculptures expose themselves to the viewer. In the end, it depends on where you're standing - literally and figuratively.

If it wasn't for the pandemic, Hornby's intention was to invite visitors to touch the works. You might be compelled to touch the smooth shiny surface – but in doing so – you would also be touching the man's buttock or arm.

Soho House is a spot where he can be seen working on his computer. 'I may be inspired by someone curiously approaching me to see what I am working on,' he says. Hornby is somewhat against the romantic presumption of the artist working isolated at his studio, which, in his case, is a massive space converted from a former set for the pilot episode of MTV's *The Real World*. 'I cannot think of a better environment than a site where they produced the zygote of something,' he laughs. He finds his visitors intrigued by the faux fire escape or crusty walls that he inherited from the studio's former life. 'That moment before something fluid is complete and sealed... there isn't a better metaphor for my work.'

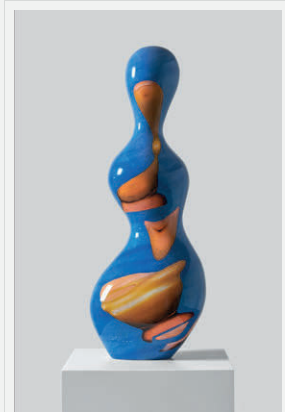
## IN HIS FIRST MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL EXHIBITION, NICK HORNBY TAKES ON QUEER IDENTITY AND SCREEN-BASED INTIMACY WITH A SERIES OF RADICAL PHOTO-SCULPTURAL FORMS.

By Mark Westall • 10 November 2020

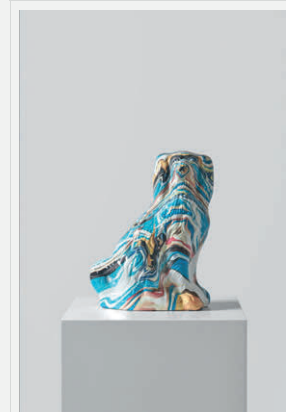
Share   



*Resting Leaf (Close) 2020 Resin, ink, lacquer 77.5 x 48 x 27 cm Unique  
©Nick Hornby Courtesy the artists Photo: Ben Westoby*



*Torso Fruit (Cindy) or Demeter's Doll (Cindy) 2020 Resin, ink, lacquer  
80 x 29 x 20 cm Unique ©Nick Hornby Courtesy the artists Photo: Ben Westoby*



*Dear Dorothy Dash 2020 Resin, ink, lacquer 36 x 28 x 15 cm Unique  
©Nick Hornby Courtesy the artists Photo: Ben Westoby*

The artist [Nick Hornby](#) has been tackling the notion of the hybrid for over a decade. He brings high-tech processes to figuration, pulling historical, material forms into the era of screen culture. His inventions defy conventional distinctions: they are neither two-dimensional nor three-dimensional and exhibit instead what Hornby terms 'meta-cubism', a pluralistic approach to perception where neither image nor form is king.

The introduction of gender in these works mirrors Hornby's use of form—the nucleus of life referenced in the title, the zygote, is something which has not yet taken on a distinct sexual identity. With that new subject comes a personal intimacy which Hornby's work has previously resisted: as 'confessions' in the exhibition title reveals, these forms carry allusions to autobiography. In turn this links back to screens and our complicated relationship with them: 'The transition from formal to very personal comes quickly, at the click of a button', Hornby says of cyber interactions, 'suddenly, the boundaries shift completely'. This flickering between and blurring of identities is exactly what Hornby expresses through his sculpture, in forms that ebb and flow as we watch, bringing another dimension to the genre of portraiture.

The screen offers a carefully manipulated version of the world around us but it is also something controlled by touch. These sculptures, similarly, are set apart from the artist's hand through a sequence of digital and industrial processes, but retain touch through their final, dipping process. There, the sculpture is submerged in a tank of colour-streaked, liquefied image; then lifted out, resplendent in its new skin. As Hornby says, 'I've taken these images from my liquid crystal displays (LCDs) and literally dipped sculptures through them, using an industrial hydrographic method to create an analogue version of Photoshop'.

For all the logic of the connections between the form of his sculptures and their new subject, Hornby's work is also playfully evasive. This amplifies their fluidity: ideas of autobiography are complicated by collaboration, and nine of these new sculptures were made with the photographer Louie Banks, celebrated for his fashion shoots with transgender models and drag queens. From a distance, the high gloss finish of his creations—morphing portrait busts and 'mantelpiece dogs'—have a compelling tactility. Close-up, explicit details provide an unexpected twist. These are shimmering, chameleon-like hybrids, shifting from sculpture to photograph and back again, all the while seductive and elusive.

*The exhibition, curated by MOSTYN Director, Alfredo Cramerotti, is Hornby's first solo exhibition in a public institution in the UK. A monograph on Nick Hornby, edited by Matt Price, will be published by Anomie in 2021.*

**Zygotes and Confessions** MOSTYN, Wales UK 14th November 2020—18th April 2021 [mostyn.org/nick-hornby-zygotes-and-confessions](http://mostyn.org/nick-hornby-zygotes-and-confessions)

### About the artist

Nick Hornby (b. 1980) is a British artist living and working in London. Hornby studied at Slade School of Art and Chelsea College of Art. His work has been exhibited at Tate Britain, Southbank Centre London, Leighton House London, CASS Sculpture Foundation, Glyndebourne, Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge, Museum of Arts and Design New York and Poznan Biennale, Poland. Residencies include Outset (Israel), Eyebeam (New York), and awards include the UAL Sculpture Prize. His work has been reviewed in the New York Times, Frieze, Artforum, The Art Newspaper, The FT, and featured in Architectural Digest and Sculpture Magazine.

# COUNTRY & TOWN HOUSE



ARTIST'S STUDIO

## NICK HORNBY

*Caiti Grove* talks crises and collaborations with the structuralist sculptor

‘When I was 20 I had a crisis,’ Nick Hornby tells me, sitting on the fire escape to his Notting Hill studio. ‘I was taking portraits in Morocco. But I found myself wrestling with the politics of representation. What does it really mean for me – a white, middle-class gay man – to photograph a person of colour?’ This question became the core driver of his practice: how does our own identity determine how we perceive things?

After he graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art, his first two major commissions were to collaborate with young people at Tate Britain and then at the Southbank Centre. In the latter, he collaborated with six young people, hybridising one drawing from each participant into a single 14 foot sculpture. The work revealed each of their designs, depending on where the viewer was standing. This led him to ask: what if the same exercise was repeated using iconic works from the canon of art history?

Fast-forward ten years to Hornby’s first public commission, *Twofold*. From one angle it embodies a Kandinsky abstract, from another Michelangelo’s *David*. Five metres tall, it stands like a curling steel ribbon outside a new university science department in the town of Harlow, Essex. It was commissioned as the town’s 100th sculpture, joining the likes of Rodin, Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth.

So why all the collaboration and citation of other works? ‘I’m obsessed with structuralism,’ he explains. ‘The idea that the author is not the final purveyor of truth. It fits my own

crisis of the personal subjective.’ Hornby decided a constructive way to approach subjectivity in sculpture was by exploring both his and others’ identities through collaboration.

Opening this November, *Zygotes and Confessions* is his solo exhibition at Mostyn gallery in Wales, and includes his first autobiographical series. In his Notting Hill studio – ‘a little idyll akin to a 17th-century chapel,’ as Hornby describes it – the works stand on plinths under a double-height ceiling. They are three-foot high globules of viscous-looking resin, lacquered with images of men in Speedos and women’s swimming costumes. The exhibition explores gender, sexuality, identity and body politics, taking on sculptural traditions in art history, whether through busts, 19th-century ornaments or 20th-century abstraction.

‘From my first show at the Southbank until lockdown this year,’ he says, ‘my work was quite academic, austere, calculated, theoretical.’ I disagree – I think it is timeless and elegant, and poses questions about art and history, authorship and legacy. This new work feels unmistakably now: rooted in a curious and non-binary moment of history, little represented in modern art. ‘It’s been quite a weird year and I just started to feel that now was the time to do something different, to explore ideas I hadn’t quite dared to before,’ Hornby explains. And hooray for that.

*Zygotes and Confessions*, at Mostyn, Llandudno, Wales.  
14 November to 18 April 2021. ■

November/December 2020 | COUNTRYANDTOWNHOUSE.CO.UK | 103

# BBC RADIO London

The screenshot shows the BBC Radio London website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the BBC logo, a search bar, and links for News, Sport, Weather, iPlayer, Sounds, and More. Below this, the main header features the BBC Radio London logo and the show title 'Salma El-Wardany and LionHeart' in large white text. A speaker icon and a 'Schedule' link are also present. A secondary navigation bar includes links for Home, Episodes, Clips, Daily poem, and Contact. The main content area is divided into two sections: a large image of the hosts, Salma El-Wardany and LionHeart, with a 'Listen now' button and speaker icon overlaid, and a 'Last on' section. The 'Last on' section displays a small BBC Radio London logo, the day 'Thursday', the time '22:00', and 'BBC RADIO LONDON'. Below this is a 'More episodes' section with a link to 'See all episodes from Salma El-Wardany and LionHeart'. The background of the page features a dark purple color with a subtle pattern of concentric circles.



# INDEPENDENT

THURSDAY 13 AUGUST 2020

**Business/** The Start-Up



## The company bringing art to walls around the world

Andy Martin speaks to Artiq founder Patrick McCrae about jazzing up offices and helping creatives make a living





Culture

## The best art to enjoy outdoors, from David Shrigley in Folkestone to Barbara Hepworth in Salisbury

Traditional galleries are unlikely to welcome visitors for some time yet, but there is plenty of interesting and challenging art to be seen in the open around the UK

### Art comes alive in the great outdoors

Traditional galleries are unlikely to welcome visitors for some while yet, but there is plenty of interesting and challenging art to be seen in the open around the UK, writes **Hettie Judah**

**W**hat art will we be able to see as lockdown eases, and what art will we see in the newly distant world, the galleries are so present in our lives, and some are so close to home – eye for eye in the back of your head with a bang.

In London, this week, a few commercial galleries are opening in commercial spaces in designated areas that should see those self-isolating visitors down to almost zero. Commercial galleries in Folkestone will have to wait. For public museums and art centres, whatever happens, they are open. In August, possibly the end of September, it depends on the region, but in London, Folkestone, and other places, they are open to the public. Don't hold your breath.

But if you're still here, about having a roof over your head, there will still art to be seen around you. In London, you can see art in the parks and squares. Not every outdoor site is welcoming to those who are self-isolating. Folkestone, Folkestone, Folkestone. There are a few public art centres, but they are open only to local members. Exercise grace and sensitivity, people who are self-isolating. There are a few public art centres, but they are open only to local members.

**New Geographies**  
Commissioning 10 artists to make work responding to specific sites in the East of England, the three-year New Geographies project aimed to celebrate this summer. But, that there are three projects that you can still (more or less) experience with your own eyes. The 'New Geographies' project is a series of three projects that you can still (more or less) experience with your own eyes. The 'New Geographies' project is a series of three projects that you can still (more or less) experience with your own eyes.

**Folkestone, Kent**  
**Sufian Briggemann and Folkestone Artworks**  
The Kent town's art is a series of three projects that you can still (more or less) experience with your own eyes. The 'New Geographies' project is a series of three projects that you can still (more or less) experience with your own eyes.

**Walter and Zornel: A Simple Act of Wonder**  
In January and February artists Walter and Zornel got to know residents in the Brighton suburb of Moulcombe and Brevedon, and with their input designed a series of murals, brightly coloured graphic interventions that would see these painting houses, public space and even streets of green. Work started early in June, and the day-by-day work is now complete. [www.walterandzornel.com](http://www.walterandzornel.com)

**Harlow, Essex**  
**Harlow Sculpture Town**  
The Harlow Sculpture Town has been acquiring and installing contemporary works of sculpture since 1953.



**Arts**

**What I'm... listening to**

**Dear Joan and Jericha**

Julia Derrill and Vicki...  
The album is a collection of songs...  
It's a really warm and...  
The album is a collection of songs...  
It's a really warm and...  
The album is a collection of songs...  
It's a really warm and...

NEWS 9:27 | VOICES 12:20 | TV 12:27 | BUSINESS 15:22 | SPORT 15:22 | THURSDAY 14 JUNE 2020 | 37

#### Last night's television

**BARBARA SPEED**

True crime series is a window into three decades of policing

► **Harder in the Car Park** Channel 4, 9pm

► **Murder in the Car Park**, which potentially involves the...  
► **Harder in the Car Park** Channel 4, 9pm

► **Murder in the Car Park**, which potentially involves the...  
► **Harder in the Car Park** Channel 4, 9pm

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► **Harder in the Car Park** Channel 4, 9pm



# The Telegraph

🏠 > Culture > Art > Architecture

## Roundabouts and concrete cows: how Britain's new towns embraced public art



**As Harlow unveils its 100th work, Christopher Howse surveys our new towns' public art**

### Arts

As I stood by Lynn Chadwick's 10ft three-legged bronze sculpture *Trigon*, in the Broad Walk of Harlow's shopping precinct, a cheery woman said: "What do you think of that, then?" I threw the question back at her, and she replied: "I'm no expert. It's unusual. That's the closest I'm going to come to saying I like it."

Since its transformation under the New Towns Act of 1946, Harlow, in Essex, has bought sculpture through its idealistic and widely admired Art Trust. I had come to see its 100th commission,

*TwoFold*, which is curious. From one angle it shows part of the outline of Michelangelo's *David* (1504), and from another it exemplifies a curve drawn by Wassily Kandinsky in his *Diagram 17* (1923). I wouldn't have got the - Kandinsky reference without -prompting, but then it is obvious.

*TwoFold* is made of steel, with the even rust-coloured surface of corten (corrosive-resistant steel with tensile strength) and 17ft tall, the same as *David*. The sculptor Nick Hornby (an admirer of the better-known novelist of the same name) was momentarily annoyed that the work's surroundings were still a bit of a building site, but he soon enthused about his materials, saying that the work is sheared from a 36ft sheet of corten by a laser cut less than a millimetre wide, "like a stiletto".

Another of Hornby's works, *Muse Offcut #1* (2017), stands on the grass at Glyndebourne. In Harlow the - juxtapositions are rather different: "Rodin's *Eve* is near TK Maxx," Hornby laughed. His own piece stands at Maypole Boulevard, in an open-sided courtyard of the new science park, which the council hopes will improve Harlow's employment profile.

# Wallpaper\*

ART | 2 HOURS AGO

BY [JESSICA KLINGELFUSS](#)

## The outdoor art installations defining public spaces

**Harlow Science Park**  
Essex, UK

One's perception of Nick Hornby's sculpture literally depends on perspective: using computer algorithms, he cross-pollinates distinctive, often contrasting forms to mesmerising effect. His largest work to date, a 5m tall, Corten steel piece, resembles Michelangelo's *David* from one angle, and a line from a 1925 Kandinsky drawing when seen from another. The combination of the most recognisable of Renaissance artworks with an excerpt from one of the past century's greatest abstract artists is visually arresting as well as thought-provoking – speaking to the entwinement of figuration and abstraction, old and (somewhat) new. It also takes an impressive feat of engineering to steady the gravity-defying form. Titled *Twofold*, the sculpture was commissioned for the city of Harlow, a new town in Essex with a robust public art collection that has often flown under the radar. Joining the work of Rodin, Hepworth and Chadwick among others, *Twofold* is a testament to the imagination and finesse of one of contemporary Britain's most thrilling sculptural talents.

[nickhornby.com](#). Image courtesy of Nick Hornby Studio. Writer: TF Chan



# sculpture

A PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE CENTER

## Nick Hornby in Harlow, U.K.

November 4, 2025 by Alexander Mousouris



Nick Hornby's largest sculpture to date is unveiled this month in Harlow, U.K. The town's historical collection includes works by Auguste Rodin, Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore, and Elizabeth Frink, among many others, so is a fitting environment for an artist whose subject is frequently the canon and its construction. For this commission, Hornby has crossed one of the most canonic of figurative sculptures, Michelangelo's David, with a curving line from a 1925 Kandinsky drawing. In one rotation, David is visible; in another, it is Kandinsky's flamboyantly abstract squiggle.

When installed, the sculpture will stand five meters tall. Being three-dimensional and viewable in the round, the form that results from this meeting of Renaissance sculpture with high Modernist abstraction is more often than not unrecognizable. The experience of looking at it is strangely reminiscent of early analytic Cubist paintings. There, a still life or portrait is built up from fragmentary shards, which hint at the composite nature of perception—memory stitching together smaller segments of focus, often from slightly different angles. Hornby's sculptures reverse this to the extent that their moment of recognition is singular rather than composite. But like Cubism, they emphasize the role of memory in perception, and like Cubism they have an innate hybridity—in a Cubist collage the newspaper is both the object and its representation, and Hornby's sculptures similarly play with status as both image and object. Hornby's work is also a reminder that figuration haunts abstraction, and that all figuration is abstract.

Games with perception have recently assumed new relevance; in an era of alternative facts and deep fake videos, artists are recapturing this method of calling attention to the paradoxes and contrivances of representation. Lydia Okumura has been doing this since the 1970s, arranging lines and blocks of tone on walls and floors so that from a particular place they appear three-dimensional, activating the fictions of lines which represent space, like contours on maps, or architectural plans. Darren Harvey-Regan approaches the idea differently, intricately linking sculpture with photography in work like "The Erratics," by presenting a point where the camera's singular view explains otherwise abstruse forms. These experiments are fundamentally pictorial to the extent that they use a two-dimensional picture plane to elucidate three dimensions.

Nick Hornby uses technology to push this conversation around perception entirely into a sculptural space; where Harvey-Regan and Okumura have at one end flatness and at the other end three dimensions, Hornby's concerns seem always three-dimensional. His variables are instead the tension between abstraction and figuration, or between the old and the new. That contest plays out both in the work he responds to and in the technologies he uses, which combine canonic materials like marble or bronze with contemporary tools. His approach draws from the Boolean framework that underpins digital systems: commands like "and," "or," and "not" serve as the architecture of programming and data-searching, but are used by Hornby to intersect known forms.

The Harlow sculpture started as an imaginary comparison between art at two poles of representation, whose forms Hornby digitally crossed and modeled as a solid, five-meter-tall object. The tension between their two idioms is neatly repeated in the sculpture's process, which combined laser-cutting and rolling. The sharp cutting of a beam of light, and manipulation by vast weight, have a distance between them as significant as the distance between Michelangelo and Kandinsky. Hornby has joined these historical artists via a digital process and the material qualities of Cor-ten steel to create a nuanced monument to the pliability and reproducibility of sculpture.

*The new sculpture will be on view at Harlow Science Park starting November 9, 2019.*

# HOUSE & GARDEN

## *art scene*

| by EMILY TOBIN

*Artists in their studio*

### NICK HORNBY

*Continuing her series, Emily Tobin visits the sculptor in his Notting Hill studio, where he works with marble, resin and bronze*

PHOTOGRAPH JOSHUA MONAGHAN



Nick Hornby's studio has all the trappings of a deconsecrated chapel or, perhaps, a neo-gothic house. Ogee arches adorn the balustrades of the two mezzanine levels, there is a fireplace in the centre with a vast stone lintel and the plaster walls reveal sections of exposed brickwork. 'I think it's rather pertinent,' says Nick – because, in fact, the entire space is artificial, created at the whim of one of his predecessors. 'It is a breeze-block warehouse, clad in a theatrical stage and performing as a gothic, church-like space,' he explains.

The studio is hidden behind large wooden doors in Notting Hill, the area of west London in which Nick has spent almost all of his 39 years. 'It's a really cosmopolitan neighbourhood. We have the community that runs the carnival, the oldest Sikh place of worship in London, David Hockney used to live nearby and Bridget Riley isn't far away.' The borough also exhibits a huge range of architectural vernaculars: 'They tried many styles for social housing, so there's low-rise, mid-rise and high-rise, some mock Georgian terraces and some Egyptian-looking façades.'

Nick grew up in a neo-gothic Victorian house. 'There was antique furniture, heavy old doors and all the ornamentation was made up of incredible S-shaped scrolls and geometry,' he recalls. 'The piano legs were dodecagons – 12-sided structures that held this large weight and seemed to defy gravity.' These early decorative motifs now reoccur in Nick's work: he creates sculptures that tread the line between figuration and abstraction, sourcing silhouettes from art history to produce forms that shift and distort as the viewer moves around them. While Nick uses cutting-edge technology to design his three-dimensional works, they are handcrafted in bronze, marble or resin.

When I visit, he is working on a piece that took its starting point from the 19th-century German Romantic artist Caspar David Friedrich's painting *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog*. He has reworked the figure of the wanderer and intersected it with a line from a Wassily Kandinsky drawing, combining these two seemingly polarised elements to create something entirely new.

Nick's studio is populated by these sleek, rippling forms, which change identity depending on the angle they are viewed from. They are mercurial by nature. 'My sculptures perform as modernist pieces,' he explains. 'They're designed using 21st-century technology disguised as 20th-century objects.'

From this month (July 13-October 27), one of Nick's works will be on show as part of the annual *Open 21* exhibition at Mostyn, Llandudno, the largest publicly funded contemporary art gallery in Wales. [nickhornby.com](http://nickhornby.com) | [mostyn.org](http://mostyn.org) ▷

HOUSEANDGARDEN.CO.UK AUGUST 2019 000



## THE ART NEWSPAPER

# Sculptor Nick Hornby is on the right side of the law at Pinsent Masons

THE ART NEWSPAPER

21st January 2019 17:42 GMT



A selection of work from Hornby's show at Pinsent Masons including Zuza Mengham's Soma (2018)

The London-based sculptor Nick Hornby is the latest artist-in-residence at an unlikely location—the London headquarters of the esteemed law firm Pinsent Masons. Hornby began his residency in February last year, bringing lawyers to his studio and organising displays in and around the office. His latest venture at the company involves curating a show entitled *Abstract vs Figure 1952-2019*, featuring works by artists including Oliver Beer and Henry Moore (until 22 February). David Isaac, partner and Head of Pinsent Masons' art committee says: "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 Nick's work as well as sculpture in general." Hornby also ingeniously draws analogies between law and art, saying: "A skilful cross-examination spirals around concentric nodes before reaching a precise end... this is perhaps quite similar to how a sculptor triangulates his ideas across a material, a subject and a concept."

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# THE TIMES

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  
 February 1, 2019, 12:01 am,  
 The Times  
 Books  
 Art



A  
 of  
 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.

# THE TIMES

LAW DIARY

JANUARY 31 2019, 12:01AM, THE TIMES

## Handy work



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**T**he foyer of **Pinsent Masons** will be taken over tonight by a private view of an exhibition that would sit comfortably in a mid-scale gallery in Mayfair. The show, *Abstract vs Figure 1952-2019*, has been put together by the firm's artist-in-residence, the sculptor Nick Hornby, and the consultant Maggie O'Regan. Artists on display include Henry Moore, Arthur Fleischmann, Eduardo Paolozzi, Oliver Beer, Alex Massouras, Zuza Mengham and Hornby himself. The driving force behind this is David Isaac, CBE, the Pinsent partner who also holds roles at the University of the Arts London,

Stonewall, and the Equality and Human Rights Commission. His responsibilities as chairman of the firm's art committee remain key. "The clients love what we exhibit – it provides talking points and shows that we think a bit differently about things," he says. "While not everyone likes what we show it stimulates dialogue." So at least staff have something to discuss beyond Brexit.

Books Art Brexit UK politics

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L'OFFICIEL

## Nick Hornby



Ha esposto le sue sculture di marmo, resina e bronzo alla Tate Modern di Londra, all'Eyebeam e al Museum of Art and Design di New York. 38 anni, inglese, è riconosciuto internazionalmente per l'utilizzo delle tecnologie più all'avanguardia combinate con tecniche tradizionali d'artigianato nel creare opere tridimensionali: software in grado di dar vita a figure che sembrano prendere le sembianze di capolavori del passato nel momento in cui lo spettatore ci gira intorno. Un modo per investigare modi alternativi di osservare la storia dell'arte. «L'eleganza, nel vestire, come nella scultura, ha a che fare con un'immagine di equilibrio; mi fa pensare all'opera di Brancusi "Bird in Space", o a un pattinatore sul ghiaccio. O ancora al "Cappello a cilindro" ("Top Hat"), il film in cui Ginger Rogers danza vestita di piume bianche assieme a Fred Astaire». Quando è all'opera indossa guanti, scarponi - in sottofondo musica a palla -. «Ma il mio lavoro è fatto di diverse fasi; meeting, test fotografici con modelli, rendering al computer, presentazioni e feste. E vesto diversi "costumi" per ogni occasione». La camicia diventa il simbolo della fine della giornata, «del termine dell'impegno fisico», come lo definisce Nick Hornby. «Mi ricorda quando cantavo nel coro, da bambino, e tutti indossavamo le camicie con i colletti inamidati».



Camicia di cotone armaturato Xacus

A sinistra e nella pagina accanto. Giacca camicia in heavy Cavalry Twill di cotone con tasche Xacus.

Assistente fotografo: Louis Hudson. Grooming: Jessica Mejia - Stella Creative Artists. Casting: Jessica Martinelli



# ELEPHANT

9 Apr  
2018

5 QUESTIONS

## Nick Hornby on Magic and Method

“I’m not a digital native—I started my undergraduate at the exact point that analogue was transitioning to digital.” Nick Hornby discusses synthetic works, objectivity and truth. Words by Robert Shore



Nick Hornby, *Vanity Working on a Weak Head Produces Every Sort of Mischief (Jane Austen) Version VII*, 2016 © James Gifford-Mead

# whitewall

## SCULPTOR NICK HORNBY IN CONVERSATION WITH COMPOSER NICO MUHLY

Nick Hornby and Nico Muhly met in 1999, in the Garden of Cosmic Speculation at Portrack House in Scotland. The garden was conceived by Maggie Keswick and Charles Jencks (who are also rumored to have coined the term “postmodern”). Almost twenty years on, Hornby and Muhly have a conversation about performativity and the landscape. Hornby currently has an exhibition of sculpture in the gardens of Glyndebourne Opera House in Lewes, and Muhly’s *Marnie* operan, based on the famous Hitchcock film of the same name, gets its world premiere at the English National Opera in London in November.

**NICO MUHLY:** Unlike many world-famous opera houses, Glyndebourne is equally well known for its position in the natural world that surrounds it. There is also a codified sense of ritual around attending a show there.

**NICK HORNBY:** Nico, I agree. But first I’m distracted by the word “natural.” Glyndebourne isn’t “natural”—picnicking in black-tie isn’t an everyday affair (I normally picnic in jeans and spill mustard down my shirt). Glyndebourne is leisure that’s hard work. But this is no bad

thing. I’m a sculptor and I love hard work . . . these objects take months and months of design, and cutting and sanding.

My first time to the opera at Glyndebourne was the opening night of this year’s festival. In the run-up I was pretty resistant to dressing up (I was worried about the mustard), but when it came down to it I was extremely pleased—I became a participant in the ritual and as a result embraced the unrealness of the opera more. Do you like music when it’s aloft on a plinth, separate from reality, or in the landscape? I feel your work has moments of familiarity mixed with things more out-of-this-world.

**NM:** It’s something I’m constantly aware of inasmuch as I write music that’s designed for concert halls and opera houses and “traditional” things of this nature, but then also have recently been doing these sort of site-specific installation things (such as a piece designed to exist in a darkened room in which the only object is the *Wilton Diptych*). Then, also, I write a lot of church music, which, of course, has its own rituals (and is, itself, a form of ritual). Your work there is public in one sense but private in another—the demographics of the place are specific, and the way to get there is not as simple as the fourth plinth in Central London.



Portrait by Ana Cuba.



Portrait by Nick Ballon.

# CULTURED

## HISTORY LESSONS

Young artist Nick Hornby reconsiders master works to create contemporary sculptures on a grand scale.

**BY MAXWELL WILLIAMS PORTRAIT BY NICK BALLON  
PRODUCED BY MICHAEL REYNOLDS**

**“I have an ambivalent and** ambiguous relationship to David,” says London-based artist Nick Hornby. “I think most people do. It’s completely amazing, but it’s also quite cheesy.”

Given the amount of art history infused in the sculptor’s work, it’s surprising to hear him talk about the venerated Renaissance work in these terms. His solo exhibition on the grounds of the Glyndebourne opera house is rife with interpretations of Rodin and Brancusi, and, of course, nods to Michelangelo’s heroic *David*. In fact, the show, which runs until next spring, is called “Sculpture (1504 – 2017)” —1504 being the year *David* was completed.

The works, which are placed inside and out of the opera house, are grand in scale and scope. One outdoor piece, for instance, is a totemic bronze that reveals Rodin’s *The Age of Bronze* (1875) figure from one angle and a Brancusian abstraction from another. Another, *God Bird Drone*, reveals the silhouette of *David* from a single point if you were to fly above it.

And then there’s the work that recently appeared in a group show called “The Curators’ Eggs” at Paul Kasmin Gallery this summer, which is part of a series derived from Matisse’s cutouts, which Hornby hopes will materialize into a stand-alone show.

Still, Hornby maintains a healthy skepticism about the historical narrative of the works he’s drawing from. And that suspicion comes from firsthand experience. When he was a younger artist, Hornby spent long hours drawing in the Victoria & Albert Museum’s Cast Courts—a room filled with plaster versions of historical sculptures. He was eventually shortlisted for a commission at the V&A because of his reputation for taking various sculptures and putting them together. Though he didn’t get the commission, it nevertheless solidified his line of inquiry into historical coalescence. But it didn’t save his frustration with the entire historical through-line.

In fact, seeing famous moments boiled down to one or two people and artworks, such as Picasso with Cubism or Pollock with Abstract Expressionism, has reinforced Hornby’s uneasiness about art history.

“A lot of this is about my struggle with grand narratives,” he says. “Of course, it’s a fairy tale... The grand narratives single out individuals who are hailed as geniuses. I question the author. I think meaning is contingent on context. But, on the other hand, Picasso was a fantastic artist. So was Rodin and Michelangelo and Barbara Hepworth and Louise Bourgeois.”

# ART SY

## 12 Artists in Summer Group Shows Who Deserve Solo Shows

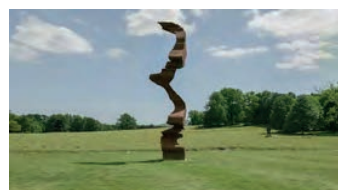
By Alexander Forbes, Alexxa Gotthardt and Scott Indrisek Aug 2nd, 2017 8:00 am

### SELECTED BY ALEXANDER FORBES

Nick Hornby

#### B. 1980. LIVES AND WORKS IN LONDON.

SEEN AT: "THE CURATORS' EGGS," PAUL KASMIN GALLERY, 293 10TH AVENUE, NEW YORK, JUL. 12–AUG. 18, 2017.



Installation view of Nick Hornby, *Untitled Mask*, 2017, in "The Curators' Eggs" at Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York. Image courtesy of the artist.

Hornby's untitled sculpture, a highlight of this 13-artist show, might remind you of a fragment of an ornately carved walnut table, albeit one that's scaled for a giant. Look closer, and a mask may begin to appear amid the negative space at the piece's front. Walk around to the sculpture's side and, suddenly, the silhouette of a woman in a deep backbend emerges.

This visual puzzle is a multi-layered art-historical reference. The woman is a three-dimensional rendering of Henri Matisse's cut-out *Acrobat* (1952). When Hornby doubled the rendering and arranged the two figures to meet at their respective midpoints, he found that the result looked, from the front, surprisingly similar to the mask in Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)* (1907).

"The concept comes from a story about the beginning of Modernism 100 years ago, when Picasso visited Matisse for tea," he's said, noting that the retelling isn't *entirely* historically accurate. "Matisse had been collecting African masks and antiquity when Picasso found a Fang mask hanging on a wall and instantly fell in love with it. He was transfixed. Matisse let him take it home and two weeks later—inspired by this mask—Picasso painted *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)* (1907), thus inventing Cubism and changing the course of visual art forever."

Another version of this untitled work is installed through August 27 in "Sculpture (1504-2017)," part of the Glyndebourne Festival in East Sussex, England. It's joined by nine companions that also pull extensively from the work of major sculptors. One riffs on Michelangelo's *David*; others use stone that was quarried from the same Italian hills as that iconic masterpiece. But equal to his reverence for art history and interest in reconfiguring it—whether in marble or via code—is Hornby's desire to counter what he calls its "fairy tale—a reductive narrative from a Eurocentric male perspective."

# DOCUMENT

## Nick Hornby: Grand Narratives and Little Anecdotes

BY THOMAS ROM



**B**ritish sculptor Nick Hornby returns to New York with “The Curators’ Eggs” at Paul Kasmin’s summer exhibition. Having recently installed the prestigious commission of the Glyndebourne Opera House in the U.K., the artist speaks with art adviser Thomas Rom for *Document* about his new work and art history.

**THOMAS ROM**— We met in Miami in 2011. I remember being struck by how mature your sculptural language was for a recent graduate: pristine white abstract forms cast in synthetic marble.

## News

## Farmers face poor harvests after record dry spell

Ben Webster Environment Editor

The past ten months were the driest July to April for southern England since records began more than a century ago.

April was "exceptionally dry" with some parts of southern England and eastern Scotland receiving less than a fifth of average rainfall, according to the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH), which has records dating back to 1910. Farmers could face poor harvests and aquatic wildlife will suffer because of low river flows and dry soils this summer, it added.

Water companies said that the

ground was so hard that much of the rain in recent days and downpours forecast for today might not reach aquifers and reservoirs, some of which were much lower than normal.

The CEH said that "extensive water restrictions are unlikely this year", although there could be problems in some areas depending on rainfall in the coming months.

The report comes after the Environment Agency downplayed concerns of drought, saying that the country was not experiencing critically low supplies. Nevertheless, Affinity Water, based in southeast England, has issued advice to

customers about conserving water before the summer.

A spokesman for the industry body Water UK said: "Water companies are working with the Environment Agency, businesses and farmers to minimise any potential impacts to people and the environment should the dry weather continue."

The National Farmers' Union (NFU) is advising members how to use water wisely to prevent crops from being damaged by the dry weather. Paul Hammett, NFU water resources specialist, said: "Farmers can and do act early to improve their prospects of cop-

ing with prolonged dry periods by using water-saving devices like effective use of irrigation equipment, science-based soil and water management, and irrigation best practice."

Surface water flooding could affect some roads in London and East Anglia in the rush hour this evening, after the Met Office forecast up to 30mm of rain in a three-hour period.

A Met Office spokeswoman added: "Showery conditions are expected to continue into the start of next week for many before becoming more settled with fewer showers from mid-week." **Weather, page 57**

## Gene-defect mother wins right to sue

Frances Gibb Legal Editor

A woman has won the right to sue doctors who failed to tell her that her father had a hereditary brain disease before she gave birth to her own child.

She discovered afterwards that she also had the gene for Huntington's disease. Her daughter, now seven, has a 50 per cent chance of having inherited the incurable degenerative disease.

The woman, in her 40s, maintains that she would never have given birth had she known about her father's condition. He did not want to tell her because he feared that she would kill herself or have an abortion.

In a landmark challenge, she will seek to sue her father's clinicians at three NHS trusts for negligence in failing to inform her. A judge in the lower courts had previously struck out her case, saying that the clinicians owed her no "reasonably arguable duty of care".

The case will involve judges redefining the confidential relationship between doctors and patients, after the Court of Appeal judgment.

The woman, who is protected by an anonymity order, has said previously: "I live every day knowing I'm gene positive. My young child also has a 50-50 chance of inheriting the disease and will have to live with this legacy. It will be her decision at 18 whether she wants to be tested but given the choice, I would never have inflicted this on her."

The woman's father displayed signs of aggression and, several years ago, shot and killed her mother. He had Huntington's disease diagnosed two years after being convicted of manslaughter. When doctors asked permission to tell his daughter, who was pregnant, about his diagnosis, he refused.

## Social media spreads fear, says Charles

The Prince of Wales emphasised the need for "cultural connectivity" as he described how fears of difference were being "stoked and spread through social media".

The prince was speaking at the opening of the new building of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (Ocis), of which he has been patron since 1993. He called for calm reflection and open dialogue across faiths.

"There has perhaps never been a greater need for cultural connectivity," he said. "In the world in which we now live, with fears about 'the other' — whether that be Sunni, Shia, Jew, Christian, Yazidi, Hindu or Buddhist — stoked and spread through social media, and amplified by those who would seek to suppress understanding, rather than promote it, there is an urgent need for calm reflection and a genuinely sustained, empathetic and open dialogue across boundaries of faith, ethnicity and culture."

He added: "We need to rediscover and explore what unites rather than what divides us. And that involves a recognition that we have all learnt from each other and should continue to do so. No one culture contains the complete truth."

The Ocis, a recognised independent centre of Oxford University, promotes the academic study of Islam.



Looking sharp The Present is Just a Point will be among the works by the sculptor Nick Hornby at the Glyndebourne Festival, which features several art exhibitions

## Police accused of perjury over 'machete and bomb' terror case

Fiona Hamilton Crime and Security Editor Duncan Gardham

A police worker in charge of an undercover terrorism investigation was accused yesterday of perjuring himself after it emerged that he met his team in secret while they were giving evidence in the case.

Simon Hussey, who ran the undercover team, was accused of holding meetings at a hotel in central London after the start of the Old Bailey trial of four men accused of plotting a machete and pipe-bomb attack.

The suspects, who called themselves the Three Musketeers, are accused of having a meat cleaver with the word "kafir" (infidel) etched into the blade. Weapons were found in their car by undercover police officers, the court has been told.

Mr Hussey's evidence was halted three weeks ago while forensic examiners went through his phone and that of three other members of his team. He

had told the court that he had not met or communicated with one of the officers, called "Vincent", while he was giving evidence.

The defence yesterday accused him of perjuring himself because Mr Hussey and his team had driven to London together from Birmingham, exchanged texts and had breakfast at their hotel.

The team of undercover officers had already held meetings to prepare for the trial at the Hilton motorway service station on the M6, the jury was told.

Mr Hussey told the court yesterday that they never spoke about the case while Vincent was giving evidence. He said: "I don't characterise [staying in the] same hotel as [a] meeting. We would have seen and acknowledged each other."

"I answered it at the time in total honesty on the basis I have not contacted Vincent in relation to this case. There's no hiding that we travelled together and stayed in the same hotel. We did not discuss the case."

Defence lawyers claim that the group



Khobaib Hussain, top left, Mohibur Rahman and Naweed Ali, left, claim undercover officers planted weapons found in their car

was framed by undercover officers who they say planted the weapons during a covert operation in Birmingham on August 26 last year.

The court heard yesterday that Vincent told Mr Hussey that he would put on an "Oscar performance" in the witness box. He wrote in a text message that other members of his team

thought that he was an "old school dinosaur" but said that he was not too old to "twirl" the suspects and "put them away for a long time".

In the deleted message from March 24, two days after the trial opened, Vincent wrote: "That was useful today... but once again it made me realise again... I wouldn't have wanted anyone else on the end of the phone. The situation we find ourselves in with [the British security service] is not ideal (understatement) either way I'm even more determined to put in an Oscar performance when I get in that box."

Steve Kamlisch QC, for the defence, said that "twirling" meant "making it something that it isn't".

"That's what your boys did in this case; they spun these boys, these defendants," he said. Mr Hussey denied it.

Naweed Ali, 29, Khobaib Hussain, 25, and Mohibur Rahman, 32, are accused of plotting with Tahir Aziz, 38. All four deny preparing acts of terrorism.

The trial continues.

IN THE FRAME

# Hornby's art historical smorgasbord at Glyndebourne

by THE ART NEWSPAPER | 20 July 2017



TOPICS

In the frame

Nick Hornby, Age of Bronze folded to Bird in Space #1 (2017)

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MORE

Visitors to the Glyndebourne Festival in Lewes, East Sussex, will find a raft of sculptures that draw on works by Old and Modern masters. UK artist Nick Hornby's new and recent works, on show in the verdant grounds of the opera house, include "fragments inspired by historic art, including works by Michelangelo and Matisse", a press statement says (Sculpture 1504-2017, until 27 August). A steel silhouette of a standing man—Age of Bronze folded to Bird in Space #1 (2017)—looks to Rodin and Brancusi while Hornby puts his own spin on Michelangelo's David with the work The Present is Just a Point (2013), on view in Glyndebourne's Organ Room (David has never been so elongated). Hornby says: "The pieces are about art history and narratives, but also, form and engineering." The artist is also making a splash in the US with his most intricate creation yet, a piece carved in walnut—Untitled Mask (2017)—which is on show at Paul Kasmin gallery (The Curators' Eggs, until 18 August). "It points to a fabled meeting in 1907 between Matisse and Picasso in which a collection of African masks inspired the invention of Cubism only weeks later," Hornby tells us.

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# NICK HORNBY

SCULPTURE IN 2017



INTERVIEW Kat Koch

PHOTOGRAPHY Filipe Phitzgerard  
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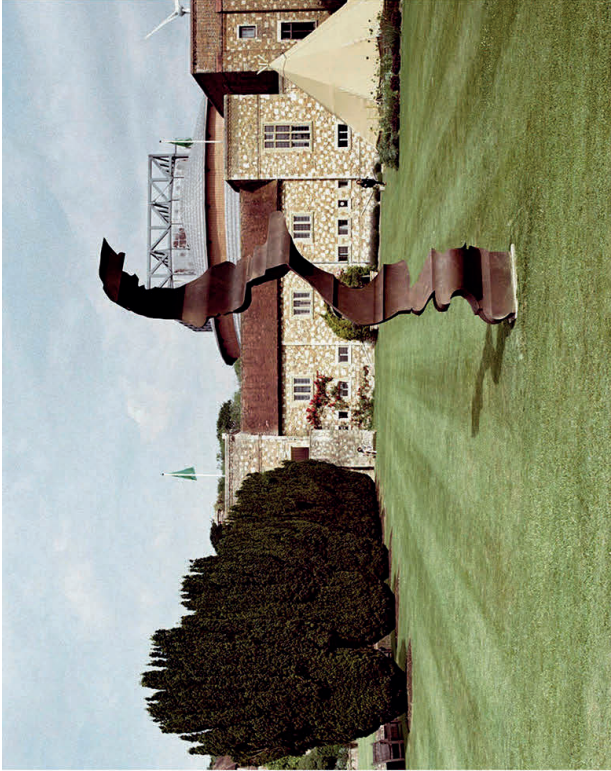
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**Nick Hornby Sculpture (1504-2017)**

Sculptures: Nick Hornby Words: Joe Hewitt

ART FEATURE



A wonderland of bourgeois play, Glyndebourne opera house offers a modern mecca for the traditional art form. Here, vaulted, sonic architecture extends from Jacobean brick and a riddle of ornate gardens is pulled into soft focus by heat and champagne. It's a pleasure to wander, like stepping beyond the penthouse of Ballard's *Hightrise*. Past suited fawners, and lawns of merry-makers, black ties, Finn's, seed hampers, and ruffled, sunburnt men hitching at tartan trousers.

It is the opening night of *La traviata* and the start of Glyndebourne Festival 2017. I am here to meet Nick Hornby, a British sculptor whose works, collectively titled *Sculpture (1504-2017)*, are exhibited throughout the house and gardens as part of the festival. Having spent time working and presenting in LA and New York, this is his first solo exhibition in the UK since 2010.

I find Nick in the tepee. Before we get started, he's waylaid by two women asking about pricing on behalf of concerned parties. He's courteous, socially astute, efficient. He seems familiar with this environment, although asks if I'm any good at tying bow ties. Later in the day, one of the staff asks me, "Who were you with earlier?"

"Nick Hornby, the artist", I replied.

"Ah! I thought so," he said. "I wish I'd known. I would have liked to ask him a question."

I saved myself from playing surrogate. As Nick and I toured his works, I'd become increasingly doubtful of my own certainty of phrase, and unsure whether to blame the tricks of Glyndebourne, the heat, or Hornby himself. His works ask for precision description, and yet resist a single frame.

"My interest is in decoding things, deconstructing things," he began, "and trying to understand the construction of meaning." Created from bronze, marble, or resin, each sculpture can be seen as a meeting point of digital technology, art history, abstraction and figuration. For each piece, a subject, or fragment of historic art – works by Michelangelo, Rodin, Brancusi and Matisse – has been digitally modelled to produce perspectives both recognisable and abstract. In these surroundings, the work could be seen as games for those educated in the canon: spot the Rodin, find the Brancusi. Perhaps a reflection of the stereotypes of opera, to be penetrated only by the elite?

**Is your art only for those familiar with art history? Does it require an understanding of previous works?**

*In short, no. In fact, quite the opposite. I don't want to be elitist. I'm not choosing Bird in Space and Rodin for the audience to then spot their particular meaning within the canon, but more because anyone, without any art historical knowledge would see the difference between something which is figurative and something that is abstract.*

*I think I could sit someone down who knows nothing about any of the art historical references, and just ask them some questions. If I'm making a hybrid that juxtaposes two extreme different modes of representation and abstraction and figuration, I think people can get them.*



After Nyne

## *Exclusively for After Nyne, the Artist Talks About the Work In This Stunning Exhibition*

The bust in the Rose Garden is the re purposing of a leaf from a Matisse cut-out. His cutouts have this double poignancy - the incredibly joyous colour and bright pictures all made in his last couple of years when he was often very sick - working from his bedroom. He said he could "bring the outside in" - filling his room with cuttings of extraordinary leaves and pomegranates:

Hunting for a face amongst Matisse's leaves makes me think of Wittgenstein's duck-rabbit. My gesture of this simple extrusion and intersection seems to have done so many things to Matisse's leaf; from one angle a Pinocchio-esque huge nose, but also a a baroque extravagance with countless folds, and a Fleur-de-lis-eque feeling. I think the resultant object is one of my most open and ambiguous yet.

"God Bird Drone" was first commissioned for a site in New York - a busy intersection. This re-make for Glyndebourne feels very different - the "google" pointer is somehow more sinister in this old English garden and Jacobean house.

My two reference points for sculpture in the landscape are Versailles and the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. With the former, sculptures are situated with precision at the intersection of geometric rationales and plans. With the latter, the undulating modern figures and hills are almost indistinguishable. Glyndebourne is a curious mix - with the avenues and head rows seamlessly blending into the field of sheep.

—  
NICK HORNBY'S SCULPTURE  
(1504–2017) WILL BE OPEN TO ALL 2017  
GLYNDEBOURNE FESTIVAL TICKET HOLDERS  
THROUGHOUT THE FESTIVAL.  
NICKHORNBY.COM  
—



# frieze

## Nick Hornby

### Churner and Churner

As the five-century arc of its title would suggest, Nick Hornby's exhibition at Churner and Churner, 'Sculpture, 1504–2013,' made no bones about its ambition, even by means of a few, discreet works. Cast in marble resin composite and rippling like taut, cream-coloured muscle, its central sculpture, *The Present Is Just a Point* (2013), swelled to fill the gallery space with a prodigious V-shaped vector, unfurling upward from the eponymous point of its title. Seemingly precarious in its perch upon that sharp roost, the sculpture drew support from both a large supporting rock and an internal aluminium rod. If the work's marmoreal solemnity and prodigious scale call to mind some ancient monument, its form – by turns geometric and undulating, calcified and biomorphic – conjures up a decidedly modern presence. Soaring, sleek and aerodynamic, it resonates with some of Luca Buvoli's sculptural vectors in resin, which play upon the early 20th century futurist obsession with flight.

*The Present Is Just a Point*, however, conceals at its top the decidedly un-futurist form of Michelangelo's *David* (1501–04), whose profile is traced by the lines issuing from the piece's pointed base, sanded and polished to subtle gradations. The likeness appears only gradually, overshadowed upon first glance by the sculpture's brash, outsized abstraction. The lumpy, unformed slab supporting the sculpture likewise recalls the rough-hewn texture of Michelangelo's *Slave* sculptures – though, in light of the title's '1504' book-end, it is *David* whose precedent looms most urgently. Hornby's initial idea for the work was sparked by a visit to London's Victoria and Albert Museum, with its extensive collection of plaster casts, ranging from Trajan's column to Renaissance and Baroque masterpieces. Anything but a further cast, the work invokes the tradition of plaster modelling only to warp its expectations.

The exhibition was completed by a few other notable pieces, including the bronze sculpture, *My Nose Grows Now* (2013) suspended in the centre of a box-like steel frame. A human profile appears here flattened, distended and grooved into an almost anamorphic vision; from certain angles it resembles an architectural entablature, while from others it seems like something glimpsed streaking by in a blur. Both the cage and the figure's prodigious nose stir up Alberto Giacometti's precedent, though not to the extent of snuffing out Hornby's originality. The contrast between the frame's static propriety and a human likeness warped (by speed? by lyrical license?) into near-abstract form is arresting in its own right.

Striking, too, were the series of large, digital photographic prints, *Back Towards Flat* (2013), which take as their raw material Henri Matisse's suite of bronze reliefs called *The Back* (1909–30). The original bronze series depicts a woman as seen from behind, and simplifies an expressive contrapposto to an increasingly squat trunk of a body, cleaved by a plunging braid. Hornby's images have further pared back Matisse's figure to near-abstract form, shorn even of a head, and reduced – in the final frame – to a bisected torso, perched still upon its shallow ledge. The similarity to Matisse's original bronzes provides an alibi for Hornby's posthumous intervention, one that takes the master's example seriously. Several of Hornby's sculptural works from recent years bring literary allusion into three dimensions, whether the bronze *The Horizon Comes* (Ted Hughes) (2011) or *Vanity working on a weak head produces every sort of mischief* (Jane Austen) (2011). This recent body of work seems more predominantly concerned with a rigorous approach to subtractive form, and a play between corporeal figuration and genoetric abstraction. The results so far have been outstanding.

Ara H. Merjian

### About this review

Published on 17/03/14  
By Ara H. Merjian



Nick Hornby, *The Present Is Just a Point*, 2013, marble resin, composite and aluminium, 2.6 × 2 × 1.2 m

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ART IN REVIEW

### Nick Hornby: 'Sculpture (1504-2013)'

By KAREN ROSENBERG  
Published: October 17, 2013

*Churner and Churner*

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205 10th Avenue, between 22nd and 23rd Streets,

Chelsea

Through Nov. 2

Nick Hornby's small solo show in Chelsea — just four new works, three sculptures and a set of photographs — is a concise look at a sweeping trend in contemporary sculpture. Mr. Hornby, who also has a piece in the Museum of Art and Design's new survey "Out of Hand: Materializing the Postdigital," is among the many young artists who take advantage of computer modeling.

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In the show's centerpiece, "The Present Is Just a Point," he uses digital imaging to extrude the profile of Michelangelo's David, as if he were squeezing the sculpture through a mold.

He then casts this obviously computer-generated form in marble resin composite and stands it on its pointy end next to a more traditionally modeled boulder, as if it were a giant ice cream cone missing its scoop.

A set of digitally manipulated photographs titled "Back Towards Flat," meanwhile, continues the gradual flattening of sculptural volume in Matisse's serial bronze reliefs "The Backs." Picking up where Matisse left off, with a squarish female nude bisected by a long ponytail that trails past her buttocks, Mr. Hornby teases the two halves of the figure apart and further dehumanizes them so that we're left with two abstract pillars. Lovers of Matisse know that he struggled to decide when a work was finished, so there's a kind of impertinence behind Mr. Hornby's tribute.

These works are quietly stimulating, unlike many other examples of digitally reworked masterpieces. Then again, maybe that is a function of their modest setting, in one of Chelsea's smaller galleries; you have to wonder what would happen if Mr. Hornby had the budget and space of, say, Matthew Day Jackson at Hauser & Wirth.

A version of this review appears in print on October 18, 2013, on page C25 of the New York edition with the headline: Nick Hornby: 'Sculpture (1504-2013)'.

# Wall Street International

Monday, 28 October 2013

PRADA

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AGENDA - United States, Arts

## Nick Hornby. Sculpture (1504-2013)

19 September - 2 November 2013 at Churner and Churner Gallery, New York.



Nick Hornby, *Sculpture (1504-2013)*, Installation view

Churner and Churner is pleased to present the first solo U.S. exhibition of British sculptor Nick Hornby. "Sculpture (1504-2013)" brings together three new works by the artist, each of which circumnavigate his enquiry into citation and abstraction.

In *The Present Is Just a Point*, Michelangelo's David has been extruded to a single point. Standing 9-ft tall and made from half a ton of 150-micron marble dust, the apotheosis of human perfection is reduced to zero, the impeccable curves and relaxed contrapposto of David stretched to their endpoint. The horizontal extrusion is stood erect balancing on its tip, supported by a boulder in the same way historic figures are braced by adjacent rocks or conveniently placed tree trunks. In an inversion of the process of carving (removing) to a gesture of modeling (adding), Hornby commissioned a traditional stone carver from Carrara, Italy, to come to London and model a rock in terracotta at his studio.

David's face appears in a second work, this time mirrored upon itself at a degree angle to make a new compound face. The result is an anamorphosis, the face skewed so severely that it is recognizable only from an acute angle. This Pinocchioesque head is suspended in a bronze cage, much like that of Giacometti's *Nose*. In both the resin and bronze versions, the profile becomes an unsettling moment of aggression, not quite the gun-shaped sculpture of Giacometti, but a startling disfiguration of beauty.

Finally, Hornby departs from his more typical gleaming white curves with nine photographs. Hornby has digitally manipulated Matisse's *The Backs* (1909-31) in order to extrapolate hypothetical future iterations beyond Matisse's works, themselves a progression further and further into abstraction as the modeling of flesh gave way to geometric forms. In Hornby's simplification, the relationship between figure and ground, already at stake in Matisse's production, falls away, and the compromised forms collapse not into difference but repetition. Unlike the exclamation point of *The Present Is Just a Point*, the grammatical comparison here would be the ellipses, a subtle fade to black. The trickster makes this world.

Nick Hornby is a British artist living and working in London, England. He has exhibited in the UK, the US, Switzerland, Greece, and India, including Tate Britain, Southbank Centre, Fitzwilliam Museum, United Kingdom; Eyebeam, New York; and The Hub, Athens Greece. His most recent exhibition, with Sinta Tantra, was at One Canary Wharf in 2013. Hornby was a 2011 artist in residence at Eyebeam, New York. Other residencies include the ICIA (Mumbai), and the Fleischmann Foundation (Slovakia). He has been awarded several Prizes including the Clifford Chance Sculpture Prize, RBKC Artists' Professional Development Bursary, the Deidre Hubbard Sculpture Award, and the BlindArt Prize; and he was shortlisted for the inaugural Spitalfields Sculpture Prize and the Mark Tanner Sculpture Prize. His work has been featured on Artforum.com, Wired, Conde Nast Traveler, and Out, among others. He has a special commission permanently sited at the Andaz 5th Avenue, New York, and the Poznan-Lawica Airport, Poland, as part of the 2012 Third Mediations Biennale. Hornby's work will be on view at the Museum of Art and Design, New York, in the exhibition "Out of Hand: Materializing the Post-Digital," from October 14, 2013 through July 6, 2014.

**Churner and Churner Gallery**  
 205 10th Ave at 22nd Street  
 New York (NY) 10011 United States  
 Tel. +1 (212) 6752750  
[info@churnerandchurner.com](mailto:info@churnerandchurner.com)  
[www.churnerandchurner.com](http://www.churnerandchurner.com)

# ARTnews

TRENDS OCTOBER 2013



## Brancusi & Brain Waves: 3-D Printing Goes to the Museum

BY Stephanie Strasnick POSTED 10/07/13

An exhibition at the Museum of Arts & Design showcases how 3-D printing is growing up--and getting personal

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“How comfortable is the term ‘comfort?’” asks [Ron Labaco](#), a curator at the [Museum of Arts and Design in New York](#). His question is in reference to the 2010 creation *Brain Wave Sofa* by [Lucas Maassen](#) and [Dries Verbruggen](#) from the Belgian design team [Unfold](#). For the piece, Maassen used an electroencephalogram (EEG) to monitor his brain waves while he closed his eyes and thought of the word “comfort.” Software translated the data into a three-dimensional image, and the designers programmed a computerized milling machine, called a CNC mill, to carve a foam replica of that image to use as the foundation for the couch.

*Brain Wave Sofa* is one of more than 100 pieces featured in “[Out of Hand: Materializing the Postdigital](#).” Opening at MAD on October 16, the exhibition showcases works of art, fashion, furniture, and architecture that have been constructed with 3-D printing and CNC milling devices.

Some of the most dynamic pieces allow visitors to experience firsthand how these technologies work. For [François Brument](#)’s *Vase #44* (2009), museumgoers are encouraged to speak into a microphone that uses a special algorithm to translate a voice into an image of a vase. The height, width, and texture of the vase are determined by the speaker’s volume and the duration of speech. [Tim Knapen](#) collaborated with Unfold to create a virtual pottery wheel for the interactive piece *l’Artisan Électronique* (2010). Sensors enable participants to manipulate a simulated mound of clay on the spinning wheel, and then a ceramic 3-D printer will generate their creations.

Richard Dupont’s *Untitled (5)*, 2008, pigmented polyurethane resin.

COURTESY CHERYL GOLD.

Even though these high-tech artworks are incredibly contemporary, several pieces derive from 19th- and 20th-century art history. For [Nick Hornby](#)’s 2010 *I never wanted to weigh more heavily on a man than a bird* ([Coco Chanel](#)), the British artist used a computer-controlled hotwire to combine [Brancusi](#)’s *Bird in Space* and [Rodin](#)’s *The Walking Man* into one sculptural mash-up. And for the sculpture *Perfect Forms*—begun in 2010 and exhibited for the first time in this show—[Barry X Ball](#) employed 3-D scanning and sculpting techniques to create a highly refined mirror image of [Umberto Boccioni](#)’s *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*.

By including such a wide range of objects, Labaco hopes to demonstrate that 3-D scanners, 3-D printers, and CNC mills have become more accessible to the general public. “This technology, which seems so futuristic, has actually been in use in the last decade,” he says. “It’s all around.”



< 1 / 5 > FULLSCREEN

**THE HORIZON COMES IN CHINESE BLUE, HAGUE BLUE, ARCHIVE, RAILINGS, CORNFORTH, BUBBLICIOUS AND FIREFLY RED  
2013**

Marble resin composite, paint  
300 x 240.9 x 75.1 cm

© Nick Hornby & Sinta Tantra

## NICK HORNBY AND SINTA TANTRA ACTIVATE ONE CANADA SQUARE IN LONDON

British sculptor **Nick Hornby** (not to be confused with the author) and Indonesian colorist **Sinta Tantra**'s collaborative exhibition, "Sculpture At Work," is currently on view through **March 15** at **One Canada Square** in Canary Wharf – a major business district and public space in Tower Hamlets, London. No stranger to contemporary art, Canary Wharf has a decade-long history of commissioning award-winning art programs and installation, including a 300-meter bridge designed by Tantra in 2012. Hornby and Tantra, who met at the Slade School of Art over ten years ago, were already considering a collaboration when they were approached by Ann Elliott, chief curator at Canary Wharf. Despite the differences in how they make art – Hornby with monochromatic sculptures and Tantra with vibrantly colored murals and installations – One Canada Square became the ideal setting for a series of collaborative sculptures that activate an otherwise muted, utilitarian building.

*Whitewall* recently spoke with Hornby to learn more about his collaborative process with Tantra and upcoming projects.

**WHITEWALL: When you met Tantra at Slade School of Art, did you ever imagine a future collaboration?**

**NICK HORNBY:** Sinta did painting and I sat on the fence between sculpture and fine-art media. In school, we didn't often cross paths and I've tended to be a little suspicious of collaborative practices and never for a second thought I would become one.

**WW: Your use of color and form is very different from Tantra's, but you both are attentive to symmetry, pattern, and geometry.**

**NH:** I agree, but it's hard to pin down. From an art historical perspective our mediums, subject matters, and references are wildly different. Sinta explores her identity as an Indonesian woman through color, pattern, and pop culture references, whereas I reference modernist sculpture, classical architecture, and platonic solids. But peculiarly, I think we do share an aesthetic sensibility.

**WW: What was the collaborative process like between the two of you?**

**NH:** It was fantastic. I trust and respect Sinta enormously, but to begin with, we spoke different languages—and often smiled at each other in blank confusion. Then in an almost Neanderthal way, we developed a vocabulary of crude words and art references: doing a "Matisse Snail," or a "Malevich Floater."

**WW: The objects in "Sculpture At Work" are very vibrant. How did you two decide on color choices and designs to complement Canary Wharf's monochromatic environment?**

**NH:** Since we were working on top of pre-existing sculptures, we decided to work with Sinta's pre-existing palette. Our goal, in terms of color and design balances, was not to present a solution per se, but to make objects that pose some of the various questions that have arisen throughout studio research—surface, illusionistic space, and pattern. In the future, we hope to start from zero and co-author both object and image with shared rationale.

**WW: You and Tantra have both made public art installations. Did this enhance the process?**

**NH:** I think very much so. Artists who make work in the public domain have to be organized about everything from producing swaths of documents and scale drawings, to guaranteeing artworks against decay. We started in our usual manner – emailing each other designs – but as our vocabulary was limiting, we needed to work directly

## Nick Hornby: Uniquely Referential (VIDEO)

Posted: 04/ 4/2012 7:26 am

Nick Hornby is intelligent. When interviewing the young British artist one gets the sense that his words are not only considered, but important, picking up on everything, and resulting in our interview resembling more of a linguistic dance than a simple exchange. He is unmistakably informed about the world and his craft, having attended both Slade and Chelsea College of Art. His knowledge of theory and art history are specifically what currently define his work -- stark white futuristic sculptures that, upon closer inspection, are actually hybrids of various existing artistic references. Crane.tv visited Nick's monastic studio to find out more about this most modern artwork.



Upon first inspection of Nick Hornby's sculptures they appear to be entirely abstract. But take a turn around the figure and, as if by magic, images or as Nick puts it, "quotations", will reveal themselves. In the pure blankness of his unusual white material -- something that gives the impression of marble but is in fact as light as a feather -- one can find Rodin, Brancusi, Frink or any other image he has decided to capture. The result is uncanny -- an object that conveys nothing and everything simultaneously.



The creative process is in itself complex and specifically tailored to add to the final effect. Hornby traces and scans the works that he has chosen to reference in the piece. These are then translated into 3D. He explains, "there's no deterioration from the objective quotation that happens when I take the initial image ... Once the algorithm is

made it is a 3D file which is then cut out by a rather amazing company that carves the hulls of super yachts".



The point of all this, he tells us, is to "remove the personal subjective" as much as possible. The further removed the sculpture is from the artist himself, the purer the experience of the viewer. This idea is not new. It is echoed in art and literary criticism, depending on which theoretical school of thought you belong to. In his 1967 essay, *The Death of the Author*, Roland Barthes said that,

"to give a text an author is to impose a limit on that text". By applying such stringent methods of separation in the creation of his work, Hornby is attempting to remove its limitations.



In many ways he is giving more to his audience. His pieces, though they may seem at first to be cold and alien, are actually highly linked to humanity. Though he would never want to identify a specific artistic intention he did comment briefly on the purpose of the work saying that viewers may see a link between themselves

and the sculpture. When they question the ideas and references behind the sculpture, then perhaps see that it is "an ad mixture of multiple ideas", they then might think to themselves that maybe they themselves "are an ad mixture of multiple ideas."

The application of superior technology and use of material in an artistic field; the display of years of art history on a seemingly blank figure; the artist's destruction of self and emphasis on wonder and curiosity within the viewer; the fact that this is just one phase of work in a career! These prolific factors make it clear that the artist Nick Hornby is much more than just intelligent, he is a true innovator and an exciting talent to watch grow.

Text by Angelica Pursley



## Fashion: men at work

A new London showcase for men's fashion is on now – so what better way to celebrate than by seeing the UK's cool creatives modelling British-based labels?

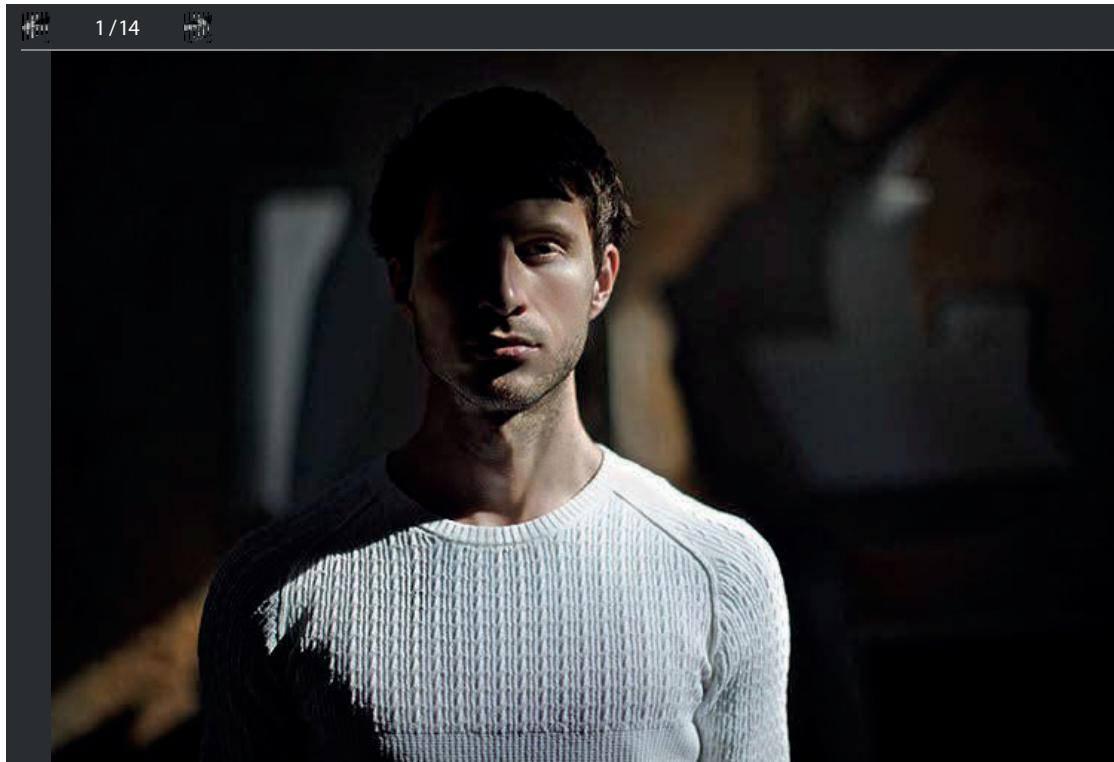
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Photographs by [Paul Gore](#). Styling and words by [Simon Chilvers](#)  
[guardian.co.uk](#), Friday 15 June 2012 11.00 EDT



Nick Hornby, sculptor  
How much does your job dictate what you wear?  
In my studio I can get covered in dust and mess. In theory I have work clothes and non-work clothes. In practice, everything gets a bit messy.  
Jumper, £495, by Pringle

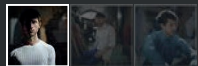
Paul Gore

Fashion  
Men's fashion

Life and style

More galleries

London Collections: Men (1)  
To celebrate London Collections: Men, Guardian fashion asked designers to supply us with one image which summed up their collection, and tell us what makes London so great right now



## // aaj press

ART &amp; PUBLIC SPACE, COMMISSIONS, COMMISSIONS &amp; PROJECTS, SCULPTURE

## Nick Hornby: Old Shapes, New Brutality. Poznań-Lawica Airport, Poland

POSTED BY BROOKELYNMCG · NOVEMBER 22, 2012 · [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)

FILED UNDER NICK HORNBY, OLD SHAPES NEW BRUTALITY, POZNAN, POZNAŃ-LAWICA AIRPORT



British artist Nick Hornby's *Old Shapes, New Brutality* is a new monumental sculpture commissioned for the *Mediations Biennale 2012* in Poznań, Poland. Sited at the new Poznań-Lawica Airport, it is inspired by the architecture of Poznań – in particular, three buildings from the city – the renaissance town hall, a neo-classical church and a modernist circular tower.

Brutality and beauty, hunger and hybridity: in British artist Nick Hornby's recent commission for the Mediations Biennale in Poznań, Poland, the forgiving forms of a renaissance town hall, a neo-classical church, and a modernist circular tower collide in an irreverence and an abstraction of architecture. An overwhelmingly circular structure, augmented by vestigial porticos and by the interstitial scarring of a process of mapping form upon form, *Old Shapes, New Brutality* (2012), composed in brilliant white and adorned with a self-referential blue stripe, stands auspiciously sited at the entrance to the Poznań Airport, itself the vision of architect and project co-commissioner Peter Barelkowski. Hornby's work, conceived during a research residency at the Eyebeam Center in New York City, explores a candid drive on the part of the artist to utilize form as hypothesis, employing a three dimensional manifestation of the Boolean operation (the convergence of data sets, often represented in a binary, whose initial propositional logic is meant to result in a yes or a no—an outcropping of decision theory). Yet architecture does not respond to true or false. A façade, though it may predict power or culture, the very manifestation of the icon, provides no parlance to right or wrong, save in Alberti's postulations or DaVinci's proportional demands. What is produced, even proposed, by this monumental sculptural challenge to perception and horizon is a dissolving, in the pursuit of process, of any presumed necessity of a pre-thought image. What results is at once accidental and intended, citational and authored, meta-modernist and the very act of deconstruction—the formal darling of iteration and chance.

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*Walking in our mind*  
Southbank Center, London © Nick Hornby 2009. Image courtesy of the artist.

featuring  
Nick Hornby

Nick Hornby is a British artist living and working in London. He is most known for his large white sculptures which have been exhibited in Tate Britain, Southbank Centre, Fitzwilliam Museum, and internationally in New York, Greece and India. You can see work permanently sited in the main reception of Andaz 5th Avenue, New York, and Sony BMG HQ in London.

Nick's work straddles hi-tech and traditional carving techniques. He makes multifaceted works by hybridising references and carving out their overlapping shapes. He has just completed a research post at

Eyebeam centre for Art and Technology in New York to stretch his investigations into the realm of Architecture. If previously he had been mixing Rodin, Brancusi, and Moore, imagine now carving out the White House with the cross-section of the Guggenheim, the floor plan of Downing Street, Falling Water, the Villa Savoye, or McDonalds Golden Arches; nothing sacred or out of bounds. Look forward to seeing these architectonic sculptures in the Polish Biennale 2012, and later at One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London in 2013.



Nick Hornby, *Atom v. Super Subject*, 2010, at Alexia Goethe Gallery, London



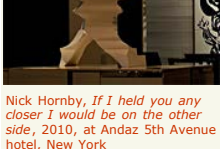
Nick Hornby, *Transition from Thinking to Dreaming*, 2009, at Alexia Goethe Gallery, London



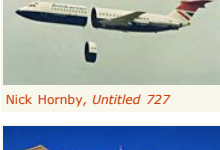
Nick Hornby, *If I held you any closer I would be on the other side*, 2010, at Andaz 5th Avenue hotel, New York



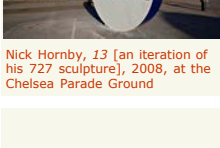
Nick Hornby, *If I held you any closer I would be on the other side*, 2010, at Andaz 5th Avenue hotel, New York



Nick Hornby, *If I held you any closer I would be on the other side*, 2010, at Andaz 5th Avenue hotel, New York



Nick Hornby, *Untitled 727*



Nick Hornby, *13* [an iteration of his 727 sculpture], 2008, at the Chelsea Parade Ground

## SCULPTURE AS NARRATIVE by Simon Todd

The young British artist **Nick Hornby** (b. 1980) was recently touted as "one to watch" by the *Evening Standard*, and so naturally I hastened along to take a look. He's definitely on the go, having enjoyed a sellout solo show at **Alexia Goethe Gallery** in London, and landed a large commission for the deluxe **Andaz 5th Avenue** hotel in New York City that has just opened to the public. He was also recently nominated for the inaugural **£45,000 Spitalfields Sculpture Prize**, and has three large works in a sculpture survey that the British Council opens in Athens on Oct. 1, 2010.

New Yorkers can also visit "Patrons, Muses and Professionals," a series of sculptures on view at **Eyebeam** in Chelsea, Sept. 23-Oct. 16, 2010. At our meeting, Hornby looks serious, is dressed in black and is carrying a large coffee with his laptop.

**Simon Todd:** You've exhibited in Tate Britain, at the Fitzwilliam Museum, and a Dover Street gallery. Why not a boutique hotel in Manhattan?

**Nick Hornby:** The Andaz 5th Avenue is quite a magical hotel -- slightly Wizard of Oz. For example, in the lobby they've eliminated the front desk and instead you're greeted by two guys carrying iPads to seamlessly check you in. The space is very open and dissected by vertical shutters and pathways. To some extent my sculpture mirrors the interior -- it's a seemingly complicated shape, a 12-sided dodecahedron. As you walk around it you start to see glimpses of things you recognize. Faces, outlines, shapes snap into view.

**ST:** What is it that you see?

**NH:** The sculpture is multifaceted. It contains the outline of six iconic silhouettes taken from the surrounding area -- for example, it includes the bowed head of the Gertrude Stein statue in Bryant Park, Barnett Newman's *Broken Obelisk* from MoMA, the huge urns from the steps of the New York Public Library across the street, and a star from the American flag.

I love the idea of single objects filling in for an array of other objects -- Swiss Army knives, computers, department stores, filing systems, catalogues, poems. I like to read digests and summaries. When I was at school I was taught to read a book and condense it to notes, condense those notes to a handful of sentences, and then to just words, and finally just the book's title.

**ST:** What's the sculpture's title?

**NH:** *If I held you any closer I would be on the other side*

**ST:** Do you want the viewer to be able to recognize your source material?

**NH:** I'm trying to find that place between the raw and the cooked -- to make each object appear to have its own rationale, but also be unstable enough to unfold and reveal its origins.

**ST:** For your MA show you built a life-sized lateral section of a 727 airplane, a kind of circular sculptural object, which blew over in the wind two hours before the opening. (Since then, it's been refabricated and installed at Sony HQ in London.) But was the original event part of a plan to implicate the viewer in the role of "gossip-monger"?

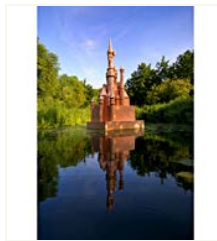
**NH:** I'm interested in sculptures as devices to tell stories. It is important to draw people in and capture their imagination. The 727 was standing in the morning, and gone by the time the exhibition opened to the public. Only a photograph taken at dusk remained, and the rumor. We do have a tendency to fill in gaps and create meaning. The sculpture of the 727 in its absence is more powerful than as an object alone. As a composite of six different things, the Andaz sculpture becomes a puzzle to be solved. At the core of my practice is an interest in interpretation and how artworks are read.



Nick Hornby carrying *Tell Tale Heart* through the canals, 2008, for the London Festival of Architecture



Nick Hornby carrying *Tell Tale Heart* through the canals, 2008, for the London Festival of Architecture



Nick Hornby, *Tell Tale Heart*, 2008, at the London Festival of Architecture



Nick Hornby, *Walking in Our Mind*, 2009, at Southbank Centre, London



Nick Hornby, 2010

**ST:** Another work of yours that no longer exists is an enormous sculpture of a castle that was part of the 2008 London Festival of Architecture. It was bought by David Roberts Foundation but rotted and is now gone forever. Isn't that problematic?

**NH:** It was designed to decompose -- that was part of the narrative! For six months it floated in a pond in a mini-nature reserve in the heart of an urban development. That nature reserve was created by water from the canals that were instrumental in industrializing Britain and creating the manmade landscape that now entraps the park. The castle wasn't a monument, but a way to tell stories.

My works are about entrenched narrative. The newer works are cast in a synthetic marble so they don't rot. It is literally marble frozen in time, as in the classical material from Italy ground to a dust and suspended in resin.

**ST:** You've described the works themselves as "synthetic" and also as "genetic-hybrids." In September's *Frieze* magazine, Jörg Heiser talks of "super-hybridity." Is that an accurate description of your work?

**NH:** Not necessarily. Maybe this work is the result of new technologies, the internet, "facebooking," digital consumption, but I think in my case it's more autobiographical. My questioning of authorship is more to do with trying to pinpoint what I inherit, what I accumulate, and what I can create. I mix and unmix, trying to isolate raw ideas, atoms, ingredients, and cook up new things.

**ST:** Your works are handmade, and their surfaces scratched and dusty, but the objects are almost sci-fi. You employ computers and robots to generate the pieces. This seems to be a surreal contradiction.

**NH:** Absolutely. I'm interested in the legibility of traditional labor versus the opacity of mechanical or electronic labor. We can understand the blows of a chisel on a Michelangelo sculpture, but can't quite imagine what happens behind the Google logo.

**ST:** What follows this trip to New York?

**NH:** I'm engaged in designing a sculpture for a space that doesn't yet exist -- only knowing the space via conversations and abstract ideas. I'm working on another future architecture project still under development. First I'm headed to Athens for a group exhibition, "Props, Events & Encounters" at the Hub.

**ST:** It seems apt for you to visit Greece, the authentic origin of your synthetic marble.

**NH:** Yes, the classical figure on a stone plinth, rather than my meta-sculpture on a computer cube.

**SIMON TODD** is Artnet's UK representative.

# It's a Brancusi... and a Frink

See multiple works of art in one with Nick Hornby's contemporary sculpture mashups

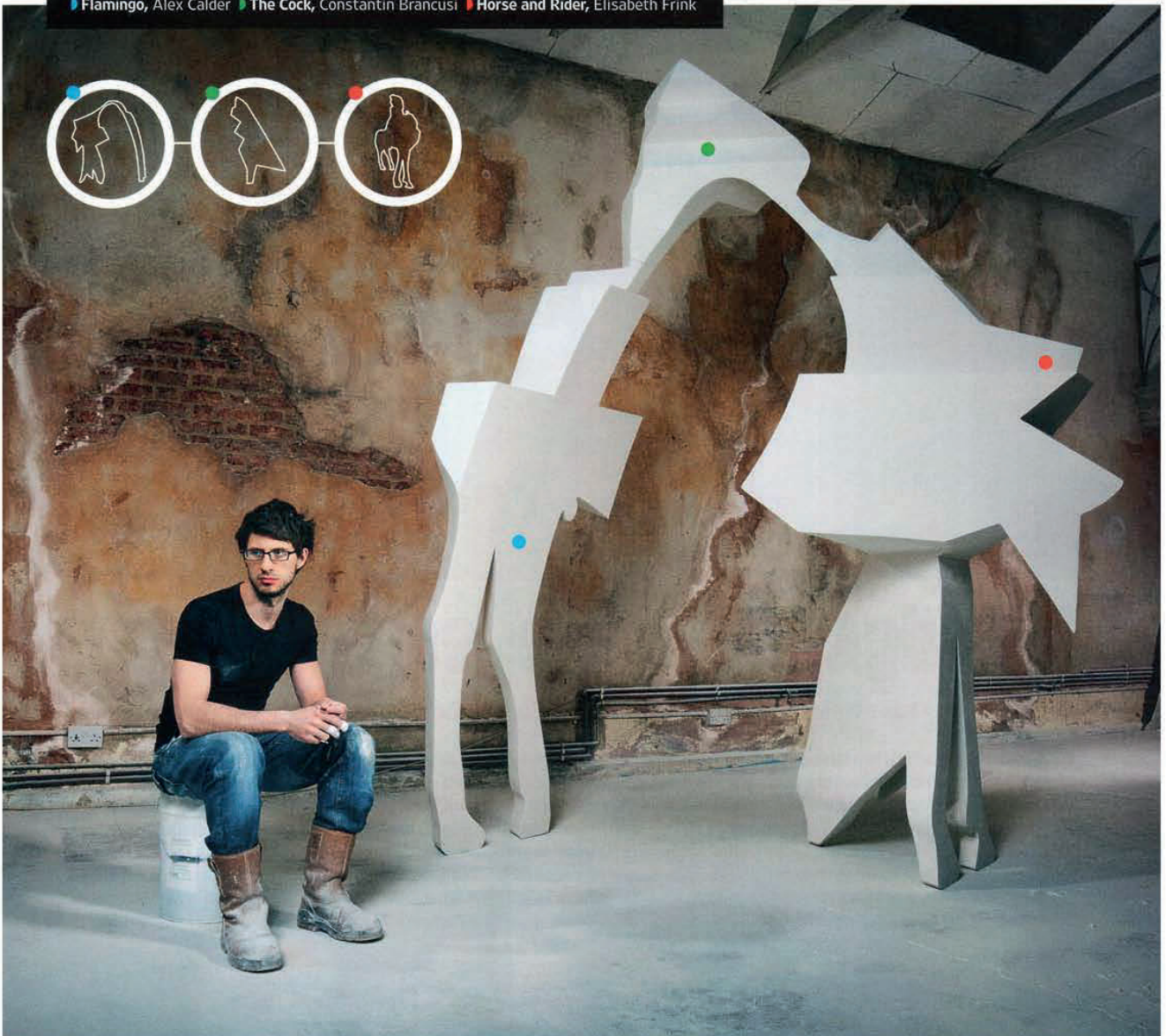
Nick Hornby's work might look familiar. But that's very much the point. Each segment of his casts reveals an iconic piece of modern sculpture – “a quotation”, says Hornby (pictured below alongside *The Horizon Comes*). As the viewer circles the works, the recognisable fragments dissolve and create a new form. “All that matters is what the viewer gets from it,” says Hornby. “The dream is someone recognises and says it looks like a Rodin. But yesterday someone said one piece looked like an elephant.”

Hornby, 30, starts each piece with a very specific reference, either photographs he takes at the V&A's cast gallery or a page from Herbert Read's 1964 opus, *Modern Sculpture*. He traces

these images on a computer and creates a CAD render – “a very long process of forcing things together which don't necessarily fit”. The composite of three cut-outs produces a six-sided shape; each source reveals two perspectives. The components are carved from an expanded rectilinear polystyrene block with a hot wire, “almost like an instant classical sculpture”, explains Hornby. He then rebuilds the pieces with an internal structure, before casting the final, assembled sculpture in traditional plaster.

Expect more perspectives when he exhibits at Leighton House Museum in west London from July 24, exploring the history of artists' studios in the area. **TC**

Flamingo, Alex Calder   The Cock, Constantin Brancusi   Horse and Rider, Elisabeth Frink



CRITICS' PICKS

CURRENT    PAST

New York

- David-Goldblatt
- "A-Relative-Expanse"
- Tamar-Halpern
- Liz-Magic-Laser
- Scott-Teplin
- "Resurrectine"
- Thomas-Struth
- "SolidState"
- Dirk-Braeckman-and-Bill-Henson
- Eirik-Johnson
- Risham-Syed

Los Angeles

- "Las-Vegas-Studio: Images-from-the-Archives-of-Robert-Venturi-and-Denise-Scott-Brown"
- Alice-Neel

San Francisco

- Ewan-Gibbs

Chicago

- Jessica-Labatte

Houston

- Emilie-Halpern-and-Eric-Zimmerman
- "An-Exhibition-of-Proposals-for-a-Socialist-Colony"

Portland

- Natascha-Snellman

San Diego

- Ruben-Ochoa

London

- "Unto-This-Last"
- Nick-Hornby

Paris

- Polixeni-Papapetrou
- Will-Cotton

Berlin

- Elizabeth-Peyton
- Florian-Pumhösl
- "Rethinking-Location"
- Arturo-Herrera

Zurich

- Luis-Camnitzer

Brussels

- Angel-Vergara-Santiago

Copenhagen

- Kasper-Akhej

Helsinki

- "New-British-Painting"

Madrid

- Pierre-Huyghe

Stockholm

- Tony-Matelli

Beijing

- "Rem(a)inders"

Tokyo

- "Roppongi-Crossing-2010: Can-There-Be-Art?"

## London

### "Unto This Last"

RAVENSWOR  
56 Artillery Lane, S  
May 20–July 25

This exhibition takes its title from an impassioned essay by the great nineteenth-century art critic John Ruskin that considered the social effects of capitalism. Ruskin's seminal text helped to spawn the Arts and Crafts movement in Britain, which advocated the primacy and democratization of design and craft.

"Unto This Last" does not illustrate Ruskin's or the Arts and Crafts movement's philosophy so much as point to the increasing prevalence of contemporary artists who ally craft-related techniques and disciplines to Conceptual and post-Modern Minimal orthodoxies. The eight participating artists are of different generations, operate in varied contexts, and have achieved disparate levels of exposure, and the highlights are many.

Alice Channer has a particular interest in abstracting fashion prints or clothing—here, elastic waistbands are cast in aluminum to suggest smoke rings. Meanwhile, Isabelle Cornaro creates sculptural still lifes that are made with a technique used by French Renaissance ceramist Bernard Palissy for his brightly-hued plates with animal reliefs. Though unglazed and uncolored, Cornaro's gray-plaster tableaux share the strange, even macabre qualities of Palissy's work. For her ongoing series "Common Knowledge," 2007–, Sarah Browne subverts a widespread hobby of wealthy nineteenth-century women by pressing flowers in philosophical or sociological books and including each book's title at the foot of each image. One of the show's chief delights is the way the artworks correspond with flourishes in the cornices, fireplaces, and decorative moldings of this gallery's whitewashed eighteenth-century spaces.



Alice Channer, *Shale*, 2010, two-powder U coated cast-aluminum waistbands, each 12-x-8".

—Ben Luke

PERMALINK | TALKBACK (0 COMMENTS) | E-MAIL | PRINT

### Nick Hornby

ALEXIA GOETHE GALLERY  
7 Dover Street  
May 21–July 9

The young British artist Nick Hornby produces alchemical structures—lanky, white, marble-tinted sculptures. He blends familiar art historical echoes from Rodin, Calder, Newman, Hepworth, and Moore. "Atom vs. Super-Subject," the title of his latest exhibition, reveals a battle wherein individual fragments seem to both succumb to monumentality and resist absorption into the whole.

Plundering the canon, Hornby's formal amalgamations reflect on modernism. He deploys the metaphor of food, as if following a recipe passed down through generations, but approaches it like modern fusion, altering expectations. Beginning with an assemblage of familiar forms, he arrives at a new, seemingly futuristic articulation.

To create the works seen here, Hornby used a fabrication method typically used to construct luxury yachts: a precision cutting technique that achieves curves and distinctive, bold forms. Crisp yet organic, and vibrating at the edges, these tactile surfaces shimmer. The sculptures are in a state of flux: Circumnavigate one and different angles reveal emergent references. The spectator is drawn into a web of sensual and alluring visual play, resulting in visceral pleasure or giddiness in this phenomenological experience. Here, Hornby affirms that it is the viewer who completes the work by approaching and encircling it, perhaps while recalling a memory. It is thus a game of art history but also an unraveling of our inner balance. Hornby's confluence of perspectives defines him, as do his education and the art history he has learned. The show is to be unfolded like a sexy centerfold, but the revelation of cognitive dissonance is disquieting.



Nick Hornby, *The Broken Man*, 2010, marble resin composite, 118-x-68-x-25".

—Kathleen Madden

PERMALINK | TALKBACK (0 COMMENTS) | E-MAIL | PRINT

## NICK HORNBY

Talented sculptor Nick Hornby talks to Dazed Digital about his new Alexia Goethe exhibition, site-specificity and autobiography.

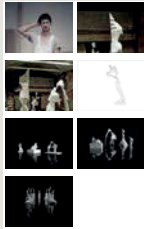
Text by [Becky Hunter](#) | Published 28 May 2010



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In 2009, [Nick Hornby](#) produced a bold series of interventions at Tate Britain in response to the 'Altermodern' triennial, then worked with the SE1 United community group to contribute the sculpture 'Walking in Our Mind' to the Royal Festival Hall, complementing the Hayward's major summer show, 'Walking in my Mind'. Nick has recently worked in New York, Bratislava and Mumbai, and is the recipient of the RBKC Artists' Professional Development Bursary. His latest solo show, 'Atom Vs Super Subject' opened last week at [Alexia Goethe Gallery](#)....

### Image Gallery



#### Dazed Digital: Talk us through the concept for 'Atom Vs Super Subject'.

**Nick Hornby:** 'We are the hollow men/We are the stuffed men/Leaning together' (T. S. Elliot, *The Hollow Men*). If previous shows were about convoluted narrative-processes (using a car to carve Victorian table legs, or a castle floating along the canal past the zoo), then this one is about cooking: finding a place between the raw and the cooked. Initially, I'd say the show is about origins and reproductions, quotations and recapitulations... But it's not really about text or ideas; it's about form, that insanely old-fashioned idea of how we feel when next to a sculpture.

#### DD: What else are you doing?

**Nick Hornby:** I'm working with fantastic people: Leighton House, initiated by Liane Lang, and curated by Brooke Lynn McGowan, and [Eyebeam](#) in New York curated by a polyglot of an artist [Joe Winter](#).

#### DD: Working in multiple media, are you restless at heart or a 'medium is the message' artist?

**Nick Hornby:** I'm uncomfortably self-aware of the interplay between my-self and my practice. Am I restless at heart? Yes. But I'd like to be thorough and rigorous, setting questions, following them through. In terms of 'medium that fits the message', yes, but I'm also a little suspicious of artists hopping onto media without spending time with them. I hugely respect traditional skills but I don't want to allow specialization to threaten new ideas. I like (while being aware of its cliché status) the mode of working: research / hunter-gatherer / formulate question / determine frame / test question / make / test-make / generate further questions, etc.

#### DD: You've worked with the Arthur Fleischmann Museum (Bratislava) and the Institute of Contemporary Indian Art (Mumbai). How do travel, language and location figure in your practice?

**Nick Hornby:** Ah funny - in this context your word 'travel' echoes of Altermodern. I don't think I'm that. My work is deeply autobiographical. The period in Bratislava came about because of a close personal friendship with Joy Fleischmann who for the last 15 years has been an inspiration in her passion her late husband's work. My trip to India was short but profound - my great grandfather was a civil engineer in India, and then my mother's father was a tea-planter in south India and my mother grew up in the Anamalai Hills. So I have a complex relationship to colonial Britain, intellectually at odds with my autobiography.

#### DD: What's your new studio like?

**Nick Hornby:** I hate to use these words - but it's a "pop-up" studio. I've worked as an events porter - we would set up huge meals and parties, for film premieres, in a matter of hours, then take everything away that same night, leaving little trace. Likewise, I find the temporary studio really liberating.

#### DD: Site-Specificity: you've developed works for a New York hotel; Tate Britain's permanent galleries; Spitalfields sculpture shortlist; Salford Quays shortlist...

**Nick Hornby:** Hmm. You've made it sound like a coherent list! I am very interested in Site, particularly in terms of the work's reception context, whether institution, public domain or luxury hotel. All spheres open up very different questions - and provide different opportunities. Public Art is very dangerous territory, subject to so many limitations, bad reputations and brief requirements. I'd like to have a go at it myself. I imagine I will fall into the same traps that other artists do, but I'd like to try to get my head around it. Bump.

'Atom Vs Super Subject', Alexia Goethe Gallery, 21 May – 9 July, 2010.

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### MOST VIEWED ARTICLES

DIRECTIONS LONDON

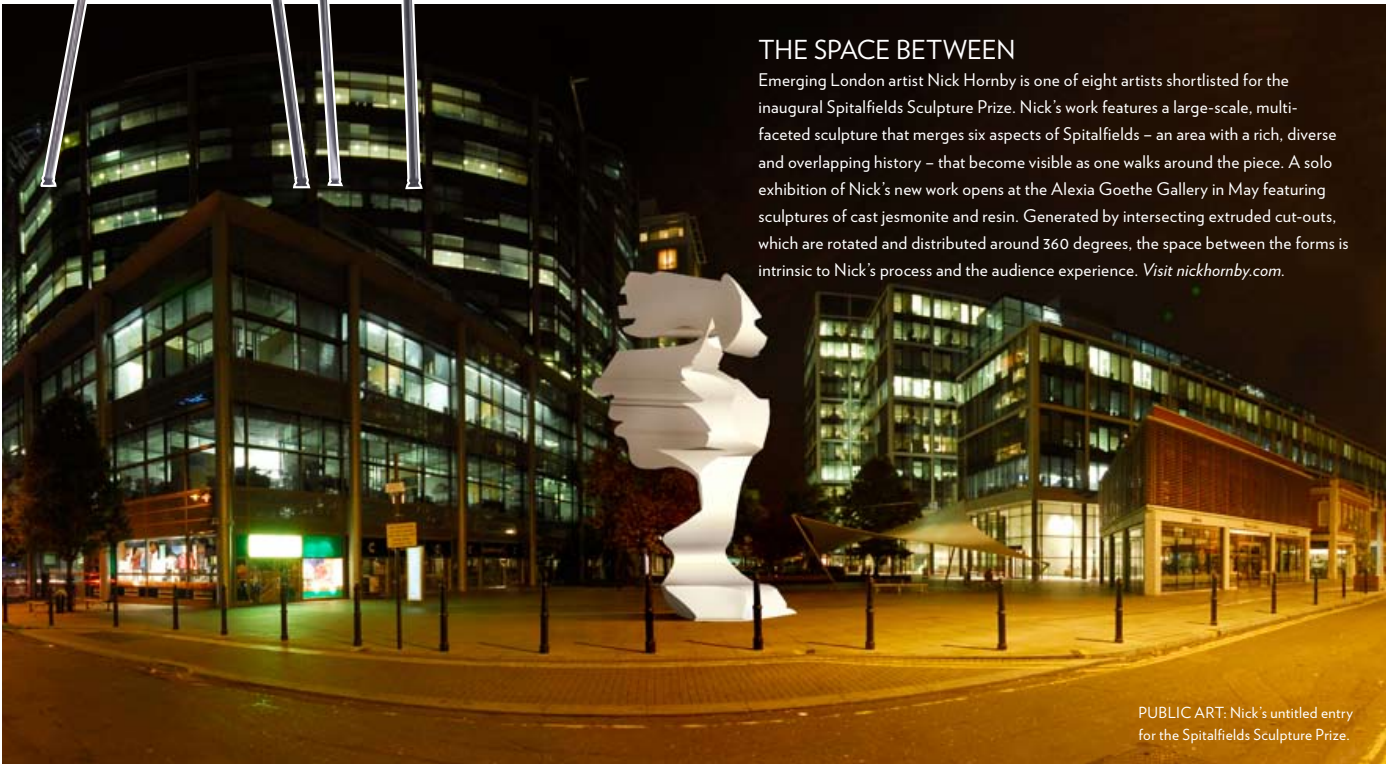
MAVERICK UNMASKED

The first major survey in the UK of internationally acclaimed design maverick Ron Arad is now on show at Barbican Art Gallery. *Ron Arad: Restless* explores three decades of Arad's designs from his early post-punk approach of assembling products from ready-made parts to his exclusive and highly polished sculptural furnishings. Familiar, mass-produced pieces, such as the now classic Tom Vac chair, feature alongside bold architectural designs in a dramatic exhibition that utilises cutting-edge LED display technology on show until May 16. Visit [barbican.org.uk](http://barbican.org.uk).



Photos courtesy Ron Arad Architects

DESIGN LEGEND: Ron Arad and (left) his Tom Vac chair.



THE SPACE BETWEEN

Emerging London artist Nick Hornby is one of eight artists shortlisted for the inaugural Spitalfields Sculpture Prize. Nick's work features a large-scale, multi-faceted sculpture that merges six aspects of Spitalfields – an area with a rich, diverse and overlapping history – that become visible as one walks around the piece. A solo exhibition of Nick's new work opens at the Alexia Goethe Gallery in May featuring sculptures of cast jesmonite and resin. Generated by intersecting extruded cut-outs, which are rotated and distributed around 360 degrees, the space between the forms is intrinsic to Nick's process and the audience experience. Visit [nickhornby.com](http://nickhornby.com).

PUBLIC ART: Nick's untitled entry for the Spitalfields Sculpture Prize.



# Introducing A new Gormley



Left: Nick Hornby in his studio in Holland Park. Below: drawing of his award-winning *Helix Sculpture* (2007)

## About a sculptor: Nick Hornby's career hits fever pitch

The 29-year-old sculptor's first inspirations were Lego blocks and a Hornby (no relation) train set that 'nearly electrocuted' him. Nick grew up in Shepherd's Bush with a mother who was a model and actress, and a circuit judge father. In 2008, he won the Clifford Chance Sculpture Award.

**How did you start out?**

After my MA show I won the sculpture award and £3,000 cash. Then a fat lawyer sat on one of my sculptures and broke it so I got another £3,000, which paid for my first six months of projects. Now I actually sell stuff.

**Who to?** I recently sold my pink castle sculpture to David Roberts, a major contemporary art collector. I'll be having my first solo show in 2010 at the Alexa Goethe gallery in Dover Street.

**What inspires you?** Jacob Epstein's *Rush of Green* sculpture in Knightsbridge was inspiring until they removed it to build a tower block. At the moment I love Tony Cragg, Rodin and Brancusi.

**How much do your pieces cost?** I sell at different levels. Recently one sold for £8,000.

**Charles Saatchi or Nicholas Serota?** Serota. The Tate is the most monumental thing and I really believe in it as an institution.

**Four things you'd never exhibit?** My paintings, my drawings and things that look sloppy (unless they're supposed to) and my big nose (that's why I wear my glasses half way down my face).

**What would you do for your art?** I've already made a life-size slice of a Boeing 727, and transported my pink castle on a barge from the Trellick Tower to Camley Street Natural Park in King's Cross. Basically, I'd do anything.

**Any relation to Nick Hornby the novelist?** No, but he gets rung up by friends who are surprised that he is doing a 'performance with a cello and a car' in a gallery in Deptford, and equally I get invited to dinner at The Ivy and to speak at book festivals in Zurich.

**What's next?** A sculpture at the South Bank this summer inspired by the Hayward Gallery's *Walking in my Mind* Exhibition. Expect something big.

Deborah Feldman

A bromance at The Wolseley: Damian Lewis and Dominic West drinking tea together before being hugged by Richard E Grant

Sam Piny, Nick Hornby 2007, after Arthur Fleischmann (0836 1990)

# London's got... talent

Our capital is the most vibrant and fertile cultural kindergarten on earth, and there's a new generation gagging to prove it. **Simone Baird** asks three talented judges – Lauren Laverne, Noel Clarke and Jonny Woo – to introduce their brightest young sparks, while **Time Out critics** unearth the best of the new breed, many of whom you can check out at this weekend's On The Up Festival at the Vortex (see page 30). Portraits **Phil Fisk** and **Andy Fallon**



## Art



In New York and Paris it's begrudgingly conceded that London has one of the best young art scenes anywhere, thanks mainly to our strong college system. And as the market for art seems to outstrip every hedge fund going, the possibilities for prodigies to have their work shown (first at end-of-degree shows and then in commercial galleries) as a prelude to building a decent career seem better than ever. *Ossian Ward*

### Nick Hornby, 28, sculptor

Nick Hornby sculpts the impossible, from a life-size slice of a 727 shown at Selfridges to his pink Disney castle currently floating in King's Cross. 'Anticipation' is at the Ultralounge of Selfridges until Sunday and 'Tell Tale Heart' is in Camley Street Natural Park.

### Tom Price, 35, conceptual designer

A Brixton boy who graduated from the Royal College of Art's product-design course, he now creates chairs from plumbing pipes, and lampshades from 3D scans of a lightbulb's emissions. His designs can be seen in 'Personal Freedom Centre' at Hales Gallery in October.

### Bettina Buck, 34, recycler of raw objects

A German sculptor of everyday materials such as latex and carpet, which become uncanny figures and otherworldly objects. Bettina Buck's first London show, 'Flexing Brown', is at Rokeby until August 31.

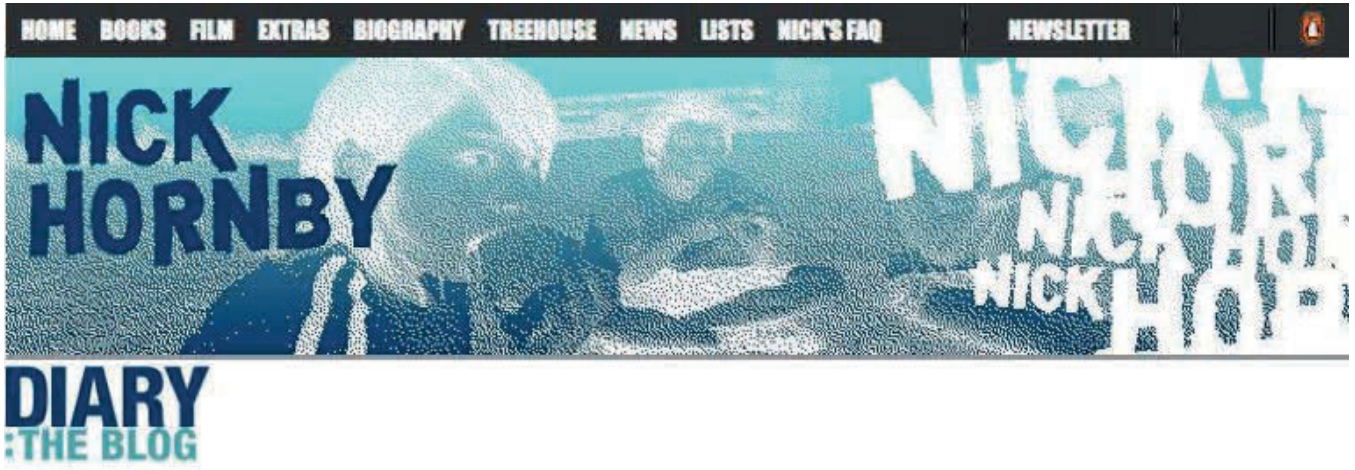
Art Nick Hornby



Nick Hornby, sculptor

*'Ever since my MA at Chelsea College of Art things have been great but exhausting. I've explored skyscrapers and Selfridges basement as well as mini nature reserves. I've been asking friends to lug things about and I even persuaded Nick Hornby (the author) to do an artist's talk with me. We'd been emailing since his publicist rather angrily rang up a gallery I was performing in to ask what they were playing at, and I've been invited and uninvited to various glamorous meals at The Ivy ever since.'*

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I grew up...

...with the impression that Hornby was not a common surname. There were no Hornbys at my school, nor at college. Twiggy's real name is Leslie Hornby, but not a lot of people know that, and there were no other famous Hornbys. Later, when I became a teacher, and met hundreds of kids, there was not a Hornby amongst them.

And then, for some baffling reason, a few years ago it seemed to change. I met a student from, I think, Edinburgh University, who told me that she was at college with a Hornby – a Nick Hornby. I chuckled merrily and signed a book for him, but this Nick Hornby has since gone on to be a documentary film-maker, and even this profession, wildly dissimilar from my own, has caused confusion. This Nick Hornby made a film about something terrifyingly serious – possibly Serbian war-crimes – which was broadcast on TV, and the London Evening Standard previewed the programme by noting that “Nick Hornby (About A Boy) directs.” I am sure that this sudden leap in tone and subject-matter intrigued a great many people.

And then it started to get really confusing. A friend emailed me to say that he wouldn't be able to come to my reading in Deptford, South-East London – a reading I knew nothing about. He directed me to a website advertising the event, which did indeed say that I would be appearing at a venue there, and reading from new work. I contacted the people responsible, and told them that I knew nothing about the event; they told me that it was Nick Hornby the artist who would be reading. (I still haven't found out what he was reading, this artist, or why.)

Since then, Nick Hornby the artist and I have been in touch via email, partly because Carey Mulligan, the star of ‘An Education’, is one of his best friends. And in June we are going to appear together, in conversation, at an event hosted by the law firm Clifford Chance. Nick Hornby the artist, it turns out, is talented, as well as young, and Clifford Chance have invested in his work. Sooner or later he will become more famous than me, and people will ask me in shops whether I'm him, and it will kill me. But I'm looking forward to meeting him properly. I shall tell you how it goes.

Nick Hornby told me, incidentally, that at a wedding recently he met another Nick Hornby. “Ah,” I said. “The director.” “No,” said Nick Hornby the artist. “He's an architect.” Nick Hornby the architect is married, apparently, to Amanda – the name of my wife.

But why is all this happening, after all these years? Can I at least claim to have started something? I don't suppose I can.

This entry was posted on Friday, May 16th, 2008 at 1:54 pm

# NICK HORNBY STUDIO