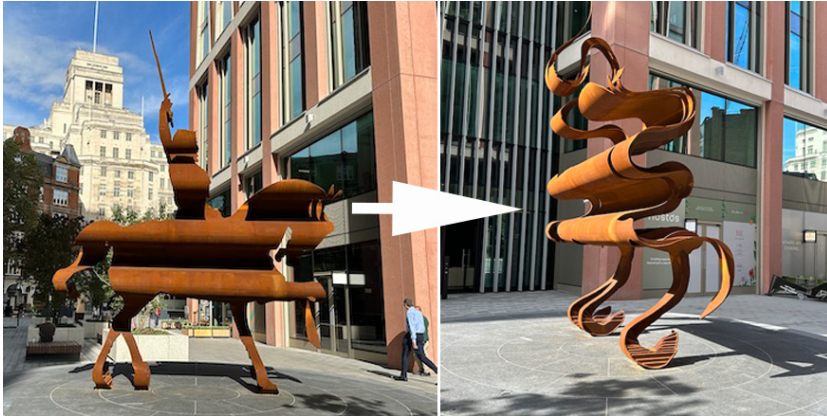


# LONDONIST

## See Three New Morphing Sculptures By Nick Hornby



Does this sculpture in Victoria look familiar? It's a dead ringer for the equestrian statue of Richard the Lionheart, which stands before the Houses of Parliament. But there's a bit more to this version. Walk around to the side and a strange transformation occurs...

This must be the only sculpture on the planet to resemble both a medieval king and an endoplasmic reticulum.

Called "Power over others is Weakness disguised as Strength," the mighty-morphing monument is the work of artist Nick Hornby. (Not that Nick Hornby, as he's keen to point out.) It was recently unveiled in Orchard Place, the new development on the site of the former Scotland Yard. It's made up of 165 pieces of Corten steel, though at a glance the effect is of one continuous surface.

"The man on horseback references a historic military king, Richard I, who was once adored for his bravery," says Hornby. "In this new context, material and form, the sculpture shines a light on how out-of-place these omnipresent images are." The squiggle, incidentally, is inspired by a pen flourish in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, but I still say it's an endoplasmic reticulum.

The sinusoidal warlord is not the only new work by Hornby in London. He has three. My favourite is over near Olympia in another new development, Royal Warwick Square. It's called *Do it All...*

Here, the transformation is even more astonishing. A profile view of Egyptian queen Nefertiti gradually shifts into a miniature version of the Albert Memorial. The pictures don't do it justice. Walk around on location and the effect is astonishing. The Albert memorial is there because, well, it's one of the most famous landmarks in the borough. Nefertiti's presence is a humorous nod to the site's former history, as a Homebase with Egyptian stylings. It's at that point that we have to acknowledge Hornby as some kind of psychogeographic genius. But he doesn't stop there. A third and smaller-scale sculpture was recently installed about a mile to the east, just off Kensington High Street.

This time we see the silhouette of a man with a walking stick who slowly turns to Sterne's squiggle as you scuttle around the base. It's inspired by the *Wanderer* from Caspar David Friedrich's famous 1818 painting. I'm not sure it's the artist's intention, but we're quite close to the Royal Geographical Society here, so the image of a mountain climber is apt. (We could go one stage further and suggest that Imperial College's physics department, a few blocks over, gives us a link to wave-particle duality, which the sculptures also suggest... but that's getting a bit too Pseuds Corner.) You'll find this one on the pretty little junction of Canning Passage and Victoria Road. Called *Here and There*, it is a public commission by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

The sculptures are all within about three miles of one another and a trek across the well-heeled streets of Kensington and Westminster to see the trio makes for a very pleasant weekend walk.  
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