



Launch Gallery

Artist Of The Week: Nick Hornby's Polyvalent Sculptures

by: MICHAEL VALINSKY
SEPTEMBER 22, 2014

Who: [Nick Hornby](#)

Where he was born: London, UK

Where he lives now: London, UK

What he does: Artist



What are you currently working on?

Balancing a marble plinth on a tree stump – its almost upright on a point. It's from a series I've been working on. Having made a body of heavily computerised pieces, where single objects were produced from compound actions, I'm now working with single actions and less cooked signifiers. This particular piece is an unlimited series, but I am going to show three at a show in Anat Ebgi Gallery in LA in Fall 2015.



What is there too much of and too little of?

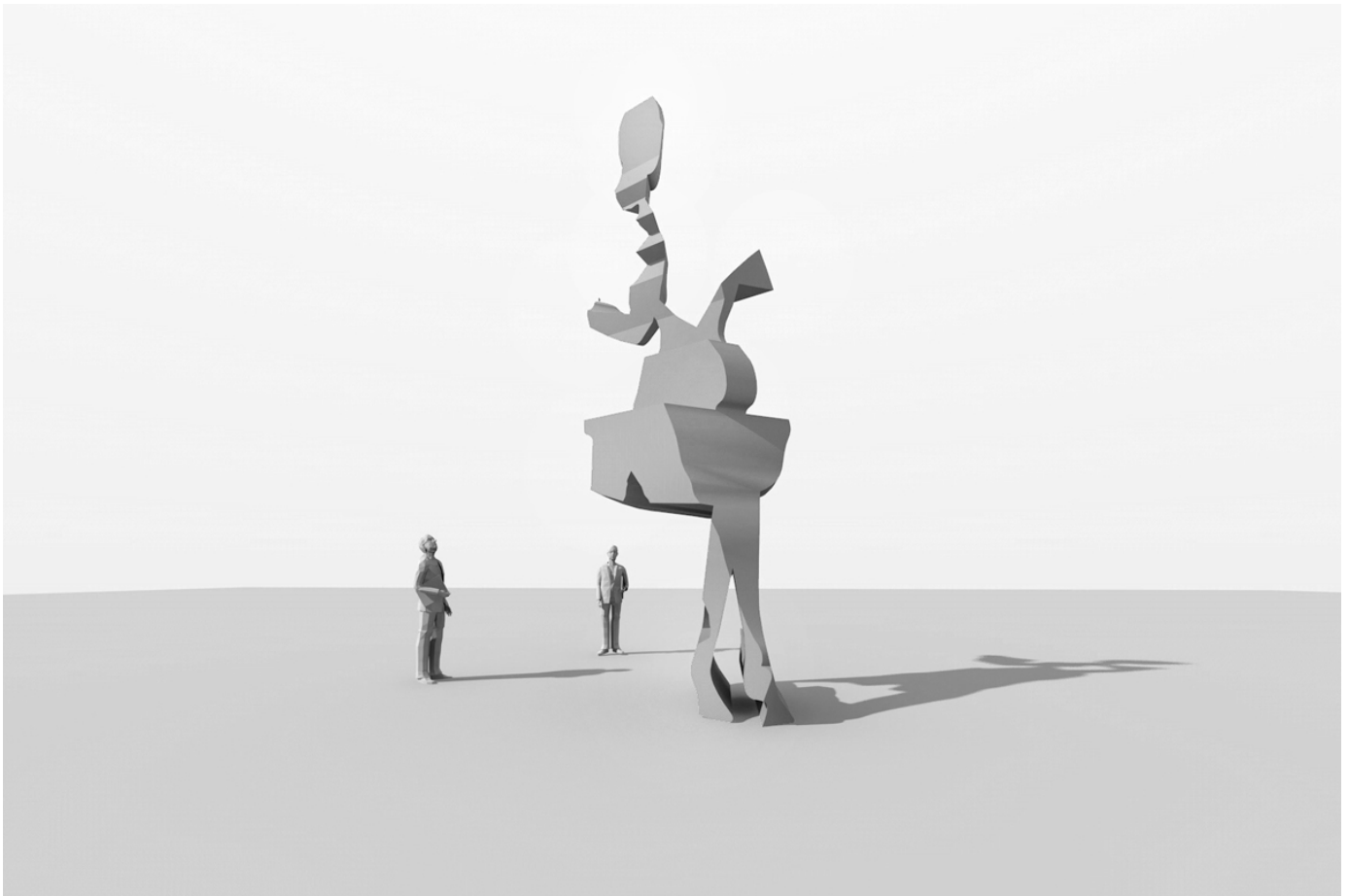
Too much plus89 talk and post internet branding, without enough substance. A lot of post internet work doesn't disrupt the status quo – it holds a mirror up and duplicates.

There is an elegance to your work, one that is particularly emphasized by the softness of the material you use. How do you go about choosing your medium?

That's an interesting question – the entire art ecosystem is the medium. The work doesn't finish in the studio, but when it's much further down the line after shipping, exhibition, review, and sale. The materials I work with are sometimes sourced from manufacturing industries. I often cast the pieces in a nautical resin mixed with ground marble – so it's half yacht, half classical figure.

Soft and elegant reminds me of the 1950s – it somehow sounds submissive. Curious you think they're soft and elegant – sometimes I picture the pieces falling over and splicing someone in to two.

The combination of both those words renders the work a little gendered, passive and subject, and makes my skin crawl.



How do you think your work collaborates with wide open spaces?

I have a piece "[God Bird Drone, 2013](#)" permanently on show in DUMBO, NY which was conceived as site specific art work for a wide open public space. It is designed to be viewed at different levels and vantage points – by a pedestrian at eye level, by office workers in the surrounding sky scrapers, and also by birds and drones. The piece points directly upwards and the birds eye view shows the outlines of Michelangelo's David sculpture.

What I find interesting about your question is that normally we place more emphasis on the meaning of the site – rather than its "wide openness" – its form. I like this because I think one characteristic of my work is also an emphasis on form. I am interested in gravity – that imperative, why we all fall down, why we are mortal. I think the phenomenological is so important – touch, gut. So in the piece I mentioned earlier (the blocks balancing on the tree stumps) the tree is a copy of the stump which supports Michelangelo's David. Figurative sculptures invariably have a support for the thin ankles. A figurative narrative for a structural imperative. This is what I'm really interested in – metaphorical meaning and physical imperative. How ideas need a medium.



What are your investments in geometry as an intelligible representational system?

My work grew out of a question: if all artworks are inspired by other artists and artworks, could I devise a system where I could calculate the percentage of influence each artist has over a work; for example, 33.3% Rodin, 33.3% Brancusi, and 33.3% Hepworth, or 6° of Michelangelo. The resultant objects intentionally reveal that ratio in their geometry.

Do you use the human body as a stepping stone for your sculpture work?

I don't use the human body as a stepping stone at all. I just use citations, which sometimes happen to be of human bodies. If I use Rodin's walking man its for a particular reason – it's part form, and part meaning.

If I want work to communicate then I want to have an access point. Sometimes figurative sculpture is a good way to start things off.

I recently imagined a continuation of Matisse's Back series. He made 4 larger than life bronze reliefs between 1910 and 1932 and I digitally imagined the next ones in the series. I want people to "get it" so that they can then dwell on what it means. That series posets that the end point of his female attraction is a Freudian phallus, or gash, or as a flat-nothing i.e. entropy.



What is you next challenge?

I don't know yet.

What is your WILD wish?

To lick Michelangelo's David's sweet cheeks.



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