

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.

