

digitalrendition

Joseph Hillier FRBS

09 March – 5 May 2017 (Salon Gallery) | 09 March – 19 May 2017 (Forecourt)

ROYAL
BRITISH
SOCIETY
OF
SCULPTORS



Joseph Hillier from left to right, *Breathe*, 2016; *Binary Biped* 2016; *Breathe*, 2016

The Royal British Society of Sculptors is delighted to announce Joseph Hillier FRBS' solo exhibition **digitalrendition** in which he harnesses the awesome possibilities of digital technologies to create a new body of work that 'questions the digital revolution we are living through' using the primal power of the human form as his means of expression.

On the forecourt, we are met with *Breathe*, a monumental standing figure whose geometric molecular make up dissipates as it reaches further towards the sky, its form gradually dematerialising before our eyes. Moving away from previous work where he used polyhedral or geodesic structures in opposition to the more solid human form, Hillier's new work internalises the geometric into the fabric of the figure. He is analysing, reducing and interpreting the human form and its movement using 3D motion sensing, printing and animation, positioning sculpture as the vital interface between the digital and the real world. The works in this exhibition are a poignant analysis of humanity's relationship to our new world of ephemeral data structures and their reconfiguration of time and space. It is Hillier's way of holding onto and making physical some of the visual information around us which is continually slipping away.

The unique aspect of Hillier's approach is that he manages to master digital techniques whilst avoiding the traps involved, namely the making of somehow soulless forms. He avoids 'thinking like a programmer' to produce works that are vital, in movement and expressive of the human condition, often mimicking the process of machines while painstakingly hand welding laser cut parts.

Hillier masters not only techniques but scale: from the epic *In Our Image*, 2009 standing at over sixteen metres high to many figures at eighty per cent. of life size, down to the diminutive maquettes of around 15cms high, they are forceful presences. The hand sized works in particular have a condensed power, invested with an intense consideration of man's place in and reaction to the new world around him. Hillier enjoys 'playing with our animal responses to objects', especially unfamiliar objects, responses which are betrayed most directly and honestly through the body.

In the artist's words, "humanity grows when we admit we are part of the natural world. Despite our intellect and technology we are still apes. By depicting man as primal, through the most recent and sophisticated bits of technology, the result of our common global culture of things, I hope I can point to something fundamental and unifying about our condition".

In the adjoining gallery, the five finalists of **First@108**, a highly successful and challenging award giving an artist an opportunity to create their first public art work and taking them through the rigorous process, will be showing their maquettes and proposals. This year, Graham Guy-Robinson MRBS, Beatrice Haines MRBS, Evy Jokhova (2016 Bursary), Rupert Norfolk and Ana Catarina Pereira MRBS are responding to the theme 'The Poetics of Structure', a theme which resonates with the work of Joseph Hillier FRBS and his experience as a successful public art practitioner.

EXHIBITION

The Royal British Society of Sculptors, 108 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3RA

PRIVATE VIEW: Wed 8 March 2017 | 6.30 – 8.30 pm

ARTIST'S TALK: Wed 26 April 2017 | 6.30 – 8.30 pm | Talk starts promptly at 7.00 pm

OPEN: from Thur 9 March – Fri 5 May 2017 (Salon Gallery) and until 19 May 2017 (Forecourt)

HOURS: Wed – Fri 12.30 – 5.30 pm (or by appointment)

Free Admission, groups of all ages welcome. Please check our website to book activities around the exhibition.

About Joseph Hillier

Joseph Hillier (b.1974) studied at Falmouth College of Art, Newcastle University where he took his BA(Hons) Fine Art in 1997, where he subsequently held a research post. He took his MFA from Tulane University, New Orleans, USA in 2003 and also taught there. He has 17 large scale permanent installations nationally and internationally including the renowned 16.7 metre high *In Our Image*, 2009. He has exhibited widely alongside his public art commissions and was selected by the Contemporary Art Society to show at the Economist Plaza in 2007 and as finalist for the Broomhill Sculpture Award in 2013. He is a Fellow of the Royal British Society of Sculptors and lives and works near Newcastle.



From left to right, Joseph Hillier, *Monument (To Whoever) Series*, 2014; *In Our Image*, 2009; *Monument (To Whoever) Series*, 2014

RBS thanks the Mirisch & Lebenheim Charitable Foundation for their continued and generous support of First@108 Award and this exhibition.

About The Royal British Society of Sculptors



The Royal British Society of Sculptors is an independent artist led organisation which is the oldest and largest organisation dedicated to sculpture in the UK. It is committed to engaging, inspiring and informing all about contemporary three dimensional art through its exciting and varied programme of awards, residencies, exhibitions and its educational programme. Established in 1905 as a not-for-profit company (83239), we are a membership society of 600 + professional sculptors and are a registered charity (212513), with our HQ at 108 Old Brompton Road, London. www.rbs.org.uk

For more information images or to interview the artist, please contact info@rbs.org.uk or visit rbs.org.uk or telephone Claire Mander, Deputy Director and Curator on 020 7373 8615.