

Summer Show 2026

There's No Place Like It...

In the words of Henry Holland
guest curator, Summer Show 2026

What makes a home?

It sounds like a simple question, but the more you consider it, the less straightforward it becomes. A home can be a building, a room, a collection of objects or a place we return to. But it can also be a memory, a ritual, a person, a smell, a landscape or a feeling. It can be somewhere we have lived for decades or somewhere we have only briefly belonged.

'There's No Place Like It' explores this idea of home through the language of sculpture, bringing together works that consider the spaces we create around ourselves and the objects, habits and memories that quietly shape our everyday lives.

The title borrows from the familiar phrase "there's no place like home", but leaves the final word unresolved. That absence is deliberate, inviting entrants to complete the phrase with their own interpretation. There is no single definition of home within this exhibition. Instead, home becomes something fluid: constructed, remembered, inherited, performed and continually remade.

Throughout the exhibition, familiar domestic objects recur: chairs, curtains, cups, plates, lampshades, clothing, tools, furniture, toys and fragments of architectural detail. They are things we live alongside and quite often stop noticing. Removed from their expected context and translated through sculpture, however, they begin to reveal the emotional weight they have the ability to carry.

A chair covered in clothes can describe the presence of a person without showing them at all. **Michael Coombs'** *Chair*, constructed entirely from clothing moulded into the form of furniture, initially presents something instantly recognisable before revealing an absence at its centre. The chair itself does not exist; only the accumulated traces of domestic behaviour remain.

This tension between presence and absence runs throughout the exhibition. Homes are like physical and emotional storage boxes. They keep our things, our history, and our memories safe over time. They hold the evidence of lives being lived: the worn object, the inherited possession, the photograph kept in a drawer, the marks on a wall, the objects we cannot quite bring ourselves to throw away.

Philippa Beveridge's *Lost and Found*, for example, imagines small glass purses as portable homes containing photographs, poems and mementos. Created following the artist's experience of living abroad for more than two decades, the works connect belonging with something simultaneously precious and precarious: something small enough to carry with us, but also something capable of being lost or stolen.

Memory is one of the exhibition's most persistent themes. Sometimes it appears through objects directly connected to childhood: an old jelly mould becomes a "fossilised relic of a childhood kitchen"; a broken toy bed survives as a fragment of a more complicated domestic history. Elsewhere in **Seamus Moran's** *Bluenotes*, an old family piano is transformed into sculpture through the memory of a young child waking the house each morning with what he proudly called his "scary music." These works suggest that our understanding of home is deeply personal and often constructed through memories.

The exhibition acknowledges that the domestic interior can provide comfort and protection, whilst also containing histories we may prefer not to confront. The architectural and decorative codes of home like furniture, plasterwork, ornaments or curtains can carry wider social and political histories often passed down through generations. The home therefore becomes both personal and political. What appears decorative can contain history. What appears comforting can contain contradiction.

Curtains separate public from private. Screens divide one space from another. Walls protect but can also contain. Windows allow us to look out while controlling what others can see within.

At the same time, *There's No Place Like It* celebrates the wonderfully ordinary business of living, making tea, reading in bed, arranging flowers, cleaning or making things while watching television. These repeated gestures might appear insignificant in the moment, but collectively they become the choreography of domestic life.



Tere Chad's *Reading at Home* begins with the artist's favourite ritual: lying in bed reading, listening to classical music and looking into the garden, waiting for the return of a troublesome squirrel. **David Kefford's** *Small Companions*, a triptych of pocket-sized sculptures, grows out of absent-minded acts of making at home and fidgeting, improvising and assembling ordinary household materials, often in front of the television. Both locate home not in physical structures but rather in behaviours.

Domestic life is repetitive and often a place to explore humour, mundanity and the absurd. **Annie Edwards'** *A Clean House is a Happy House* turns cleaning into an endlessly futile mechanical performance, transforming household maintenance into something between ritual and slapstick. **Victoria Ferrand Scott's** *Make Tea Not War* takes the culturally loaded British ritual of making a cup of tea, exploring its ability to settle disputes and expanding that concept to a wider scale thanks to the works menacing form drawing comparisons to objects of warfare.

These works remind us that home is not simply a sanctuary or place to escape. It is something constantly maintained and occasionally endured.

Ideas of belonging extend beyond the individual household too. Home can be a neighbourhood, a city, a landscape or a cultural language. **Meitao Qu's** *Food for Thought* uses Chinese plates decorated with fake food associated with the 1980s and 1990s to connect everyday rituals of eating with rapid urbanisation, consumer aspiration and memories of belonging. The plate operates simultaneously as a functional domestic object and an image of an imagined "good life".

Throughout the exhibition, home repeatedly emerges as something we construct rather than a place to simply live. We build it through objects. Through repetition. Through relationships. Through decoration and accumulation. Through the things we choose to display and the things we hide away.

And sometimes home is uncertain. **Neus Torres Tamarit's** *Uncertainty* depicts one house being stitched together while another unravels. Neither is complete, with the needle left exactly where the work stops. The work holds 'home' between construction and unravelling, asking what we inherit, what we preserve and what inevitably comes undone.

Home is not necessarily a fixed geographical location or a perfect physical space. It is an accumulation of experiences. It is the relationship between a person and their surroundings, between memory and material, between the private world and the world outside. It can be comforting, complicated, funny, fragile, protective, oppressive, beautiful or absurd and sometimes all of this at once.

The works in the exhibition do not attempt to resolve the question of what home actually means. Instead, they demonstrate just how personal that definition can be. Home can be something we inherit and something we have the power to create and invent. A place we sometimes leave behind or a place we can carry with us. Something we build, dismantle and build again.

And ultimately, perhaps home is less about where we are than about the things that make us feel like we belong.



Year of the Home

This year is an exciting one for the Society as we mark 50 years since Cecil Thomas OBE FRBS generously bequeathed his home and studio, Dora House, to us. To honour this milestone, we're calling 2026 'Year of the Home' and are excited to bring you a packed season of events, exhibitions and activities on that theme, including the grand completion of our project, *Creating a Home for Sculptors*.

“

Home is a feeling.

A place I feel safe, comfortable and at peace.
That can be anywhere in the world and usually
is connected to the people I am with rather
than a geographical location or house.

”

Henry Holland

Curator, *There's No Place Like It*, 2026

About the Curator

Henry first shot to fame in 2008 with his label House of Holland and its now-synonymous cult slogan tees. He went on to spend a further 15 years in the world of fashion, establishing a signature approach to bold design before shifting his focus to interiors.

In 2021, Henry stepped away from fashion after discovering a love of clay while taking classes locally in Hackney. Drawn to the slower, meditative process of hand-building ceramics, he developed a signature aesthetic using nerikomi: a technique that involves stacking, folding, and rolling brightly coloured clays into slabs, which are then hand-moulded into functional art for his latest endeavour, **Henry Holland Studio**.

The Royal Society of Sculptors

We champion contemporary sculpture and the artists who create it. We are leading the conversation about sculpture today through exhibitions and events for all, welcoming everyone interested in exploring this art form and its many possibilities. An artist-led, membership organisation, the Society supports and connects sculptors throughout their careers.



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