

The Royal Society of Sculptors Summer Exhibition 2026



Abigail Norris, *Symbiont* (2020)

There's No Place Like It

Curated by Henry Holland

19 September – 28 November 2026

Royal Society of Sculptors
Dora House
London SW7 3RA

Curated by acclaimed British designer Henry Holland, *There's No Place Like It* explores the concept of home through the language of sculpture, featuring works by 52 esteemed members of the Royal Society of Sculptors. The theme echoes the Society's "Year of the Home" celebrations, marking 50 years at Dora House. This milestone commemorates Cecil Thomas OBE FRBS's generous gift of the building—a dedicated home and studio for the Society that has hosted more than 100 exhibitions since 1976.

Caroline Worthington, Director of the Royal Society of Sculptors, commented: "*We are delighted that Henry Holland is the latest in a series of special guest curators for the Society's summer show. He brings a great eye for design alongside a profound understanding of creating sculptural objects. Henry's theme, There's No Place Like It, beautifully echoes our Year of the Home celebrations as we mark 50 years at Dora House.*"

Featuring sculptures created across a wide range of media—including textiles, glass, ceramics, and bronze—*There's No Place Like It* surveys and celebrates the multifaceted meaning of home. It navigates the spectrum of domestic life, from a sanctuary of belonging, refuge, and comfort to a space confined by daily routine. Constructed from a myriad of personal associations and interpretations, the home, in our collective imagination, is never just one thing.

From childhood to the grave, the home serves as the ultimate repository of memories. In *Lost and Found* (2025) by Philippa Beveridge, cast glass purses containing personal items, family photographs, and small mementos become poignant metaphors for the identity and the sense of belonging we derive from our living spaces and the possessions within them.

The daily rituals of domestic life are explored by artists Annie Edwards and Poojan Gupta. In *A Clean House is a Happy House* (2026), Edwards uses the humour of an animated dustpan and brush to reveal the mundanity and futility of endless household chores. Conversely, Gupta's *When Ordinary Becomes Sacral* features sculptures crafted from stitched-together prescription blister packs, elevating the mundane by highlighting the vital role simple objects play during heightened human experiences like illness and recovery.

For many, modern domesticity is defined by the companions we share our spaces with, often expanding to position the family pet at the very heart of the home. This sentiment is reflected in works such as *Staffie* (2016) by Dido Crosby and *Dear Dashy Dash ii* (2020) by Nick Hornby. Ultimately, "home" is forged through the relationships lived among humans and other living beings—a process vividly brought to life in Abigail Norris's *Symbiont* (2020), where the wildly exuberant tufts of yak hair caught in a hairbrush evoke the intimate residues of cohabitation.

Many of the featured works echo the familiar objects we use to transform a physical structure into a personal sanctuary. These range from Michael Coombs's illusionary work *Chair* (2025), created from draped clothing moulded into the shape of a seat, to Victoria Ferrand Scott's surreal, distorted teapot, *Make Tea Not War* (2025). While a "house" is merely a physical dwelling, a "home" is a crucible for memory, imbued with deep cultural and emotional resonance—a uniquely rich source of inspiration beautifully realized throughout *There's No Place Like It*.

The Summer exhibition artists are; Madi Acharya-Baskerville, Helen Barff, Amanda Benson, Philippa Beveridge, Barbara Beyer, Suzanne Blank Redstone, Ben Branagan, Tere Chad, Alison Cooke, Michael Coombs, Dido Crosby, Ali Darke, Sally De Courcy, Ebru Döşekçi, Stephen Duncan, Annie Edwards, Victoria Ferrand Scott, Susan Francis, Nick Gordon Smith, Poojan Gupta, Kate Hammersley, Sharon Haward, Harriet Hellman, Joseph Hillier, Nick Hornby, Linda Hubbard, Steve Johnson, Maureen Jordan, David Kefford, Juliette Losq, Kate Maestri, Julie Major, Aaron McPeake, Seamus Moran, Nicolas Moreton, Jane Morgan, Nathan Murphy, Abigail Norris, Kim L Pace, Gary Power, Meitao Qu, Nik Ramage, Gabriele Risso, Marie-Thérèse Ross, Alexandra Searle, Alice Sheppard Fidler, Isobel Smith, Neus Torres Tamarit, Stephen Turner, Poppy Whatmore, Hamish Young and Isabel Young.

The exhibition is supported by Hallett Independent, with Apollo as media partner, and by the Marsh Charitable Trust, which supports the annual Summer Show Award.

The Royal Society of Sculptors

Dora House

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Free to visit, open Monday to Saturday 11am to 5pm

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The Royal Society of Sculptors was established in 1905 with the aim of championing contemporary sculpture and the artists who create it. We welcome everyone interested in exploring this art form and its many possibilities and enjoy leading the conversation about sculpture today through exhibitions and events for all. We are an artist-led, membership organisation, supporting and connecting sculptors throughout their careers.



Dora House and *Creating a Home For Sculptors*. Built in 1820 as a pair of semi-detached villas, Dora House has been a home, as well as a studio space for sculptors, photographers, painters, architects and designers. The architecture of Dora House is highly individual, built in red brick with a pair of steep curved gables and classical details in stone in the Flemish manner with tall leaded light windows on three floors. Originally built by William Blake, the ornate frontage dates from a remodelling in 1885-6 to provide a grand studio for Court photographers Elliot and Fry.

In 1919 the house was taken on by the sculptor Cecil Thomas (1885-1976) who worked here and adopted it as his family home with wife Dora and son Anthony. Cecil Thomas loved the house and carefully restored the front elevation, setting up the Dora Charitable Trust, named after his wife who died in 1967, to protect the long-term future of the house and to fulfill the family's generous intention to make the house and studio available to the Royal Society of British Sculptors, as it was then called.

Dora House was bequeathed to the Society in the 1970s by Thomas and it has been the home of The Royal Society of Sculptors ever since, creating an exciting and inspiring space to enjoy sculpture in all its forms. In 2026, we celebrate the reopening of Dora House to the public, including the transformation of an unusable basement into a beautiful, self-contained one-bedroom flat and studio space for visiting artists.

In 2026, Dora House will once again become a fitting home and working space for artists, beautifully echoing its early history as the home and studio of Cecil Thomas and his wife Dora, after whom the building was named.



Henry Holland is a prominent British designer, creative, and entrepreneur who transitioned from high fashion and his eponymous brand *House of Holland* to contemporary ceramics. In 2020, he established *Henry Holland Studio*, a London-based creative house specializing in hand-built ceramics, homewares and three-dimensional design and functional art.

The studio is globally renowned for its signature aesthetic, rooted in a modern interpretation of the traditional Japanese *nerikomi* pottery technique. By hand-building objects using meticulously layered, colored clays, the studio creates sculptural, highly tactile pieces that "embrace the wobble" and celebrate the beauty of individual craftsmanship.