

## The Royal Society of Sculptors Summer Programme

28 June –  
19 September 2021

Private View: 3rd July 2021



Spike King by Cheryl Gould, My Life as a Bird by Madi Acharya-Baskerville, Cybele by Nicola Farhi

The Royal Society of Sculptors set to launch a dynamic summer programme to take place at Dora House including:

- The 2021 Summer Exhibition, curated by Sigrid Kirk.
- 'More Than You Might Expect', a new site specific work by Sophie Kemp installed in the sculpture terrace.
- '10gram Challenge' a display of the works by artists challenged to produce a small scale sculpture from a 10 gram piece of wax during the first UK lockdown.
- The summer programme is free entry and open to the public.

### 2021 Summer Exhibition

The Royal Society of Sculptors annual Summer Exhibition returns featuring a curated selection of works from members and fellows.

The 2021 Summer Exhibition has been curated by Sigrid Kirk inspired by the possibility of a new exuberant era for the arts. Drawing a parallel between the 1920s and 2020s, Sigrid Kirk looks to the years following World War I and the 1918 flu pandemic as inspiration for a manic flight into sociability.

The Roaring Twenties, also known as the 'Années folles' (crazy years), were marked by social, artistic and cultural dynamism. There was a sense of novelty and a break with tradition where everything seemed possible. Artists, poets and writers adopted an increasingly experimental and innovative approach to their work leading to significant

movements such as Dada, Surrealism, Expressionism and Art Deco. For 2021 members have been invited to showcase something of this 'joie de vivre' in their work and see what possibilities arise.

On display in the gallery spaces at Dora House, a beautiful listed building in South Kensington where the Society is based, the collection includes sculptures in a variety of mediums and techniques, available to buy. From a ladyfinger cake assembled with porcelain human fingers, to a dress knitted from shredded diary pages, the works are peculiar, clever and quirky.

*The curator Sigrid Kirk says: "I had no idea what to expect when I invited the artist members of the Royal Society of Sculptors to let loose and create works based on their joy for life. The range of work, materiality and themes show a 'singularity' in both manner, practise and behaviour. When something happens on a global stage like a pandemic, it is only a matter of time before it happens again. What struck me was the capacity for artists to explore and push in so many directions and while much of the sculpture deals with serious issues there is also a wonderful and palpable sense of mad play. These are objects that are going to be fun to look at and live with."*

### More Than You Might Expect

A new temporary site specific work by Sophie Kemp has been commissioned to coincide with the Summer Exhibition. 'More Than You Might Expect' (2021) will be on display in the sculpture terrace at Dora House.

A recent graduate of the Royal College of Art, Sophie Kemp's practice employs bright, hand-made materials and the architectural concept of the 'Folly' to create large scale sculptures that embrace the absurd. Keenly interested in the sociology of fun, she explores how objects of celebration and joy invoke a sense of shared playfulness with the viewer.

Inspired by iced gem biscuits, Kemp's new work 'More Than You Might Expect' is a playful response to Dora House as a jewel-like and architecturally embellished form.

### 10gram Challenge

More than 200 miniature sculptures will be on display at Dora House as part of the 10gram Challenge. The Royal Society of Sculptors in partnership with Milwyn, a specialist bronze casting art foundry based in the heart of Surrey, invited its members and additional artists to take part in the 10gram Challenge as a lockdown activity.

The brief was to produce a small scale sculpture from a 10 gram piece of wax. The kit was supplied by post and participants sculpted their piece which was sent to the Milwyn foundry to be cast in bronze. The subject and style of the sculpture was open to interpretation and could be anything the artist was inspired to create during this period of isolation. There is a huge variety in creative responses from a goat's head and a beaked figure to industrial abstract forms.

The idea transpired when Alex Davies, founder of Milwyn and member of the Royal Society of Sculptors, challenged himself to make a small sculpture when he was isolated at home during lockdown, unable to access his studio space. Realising the plight of other members faced with the same restrictions, the challenge grew organically as a way to create something on a smaller scale from the kitchen table.

Alex Davies says: *"Like most people during lockdown, I was looking for ways to keep myself busy and occupied. After finding myself unable to visit my studio for the foreseeable, I created a project to ensure I kept making sculptures throughout the pandemic. I spoke to other members of the Royal Society of Sculptors who let me know that they were struggling to find ways to keep themselves busy. I mentioned the 10gram challenge project and they sounded really interested in it and so I decided to roll it out as an idea."*

**-ENDS-**

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**NOTES FOR EDITORS:**

**About The Royal Society of Sculptors**

The Royal Society of Sculptors is an artist-led, membership organisation created more than 100 years ago to champion contemporary sculpture and the artists who create it. They provide a supportive membership community to sculptors throughout their careers, offering access to expert advice, training, bursaries, residencies and awards. The Society leads the conversation about sculpture today through exhibitions and events for all. Today it welcomes everyone interested in exploring this art form and its many possibilities.

The Royal Society of Sculptors is based in London's South Kensington, in a beautiful listed building, Dora House, that hosts an array of exhibitions, artists' talks and creative workshops.

[Sculptors.org.uk](http://Sculptors.org.uk) | [@royal\\_sculptors](https://www.instagram.com/royal_sculptors)

**About Sigrid Kirk**

Sigrid Kirk is co-founder of the Association of Women in the Arts and an independent curator, cultural strategist and art adviser. With broad ranging interests and knowledge across the sector she is widely recognised as an industry connector. She is a Trustee of the Drawing Room, on the Eye of the Collector Advisory Board, Glasgow International Advisory Board and the IKON Gallery London Advisory Board. Sigrid and her husband

fund an annual Artist in Residence at Yorkshire Sculpture Park for Maori and Pacific Island artists with Te Tuhi Gallery, Auckland. Sigrid is a patron of arts organisations including Dundee Contemporary Arts, Fruitmarket Gallery, Gasworks, INIVA, The Photographers Gallery, SLG and Studio Voltaire. She is currently studying for an Executive Masters in Cultural Leadership at the University of Maastricht / Royal Academy.

[@sigridakirk](#)

#### **About Sophie Kemp**

Sophie Kemp (b.1986 UK) is a graduate of Chelsea College of Arts (2018) and the Royal College of Art (2020) and is a sculptor and educator working in East London. She has taught at Chelsea and UCA Farnham and recent exhibitions have included TOUCH ME! (2020) curated by Veronika Neukirch, SupaStore Academy at Nida Art Colony in Vilnius, Lithuania (2020), a project by Sarah Staton, and Space Lapse: RCA Sculpture 2020 (2021) at the Royal Society of Sculptors. Sophie Kemp's practice employs bright, shonky, hand-made materials and the architectural concept of the 'Folly' to create large-scale sculptures intended to be enjoyed collectively through humour and absurdity. Keenly interested in the sociology of fun, she explores how objects associated with temporary celebration and joy can act as means to engage shared playfulness and unruly-ness in the viewer.

[@sophiegracekemp](#) | [2020.rca.ac.uk/students/sophie-kemp](https://2020.rca.ac.uk/students/sophie-kemp)

#### **About Alex Milwyn**

Alex Milwyn is the founder of Milwyn Fine Art Casting Foundry. Milwyn's work is founded on Alex's advanced technical skills with over 25 years of experience as a sculptor, foundryman and blacksmith. Alex studied at Farnham Art School, Plymouth Art School and The Frink School.

[milwyn.co.uk](https://milwyn.co.uk) | [@milwyn](#) | [@10gramchallenge](#)