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## Fourth Plinth: A giant dollop of cream and a syrup can sculpture are latest Trafalgar Square artworks



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By **Anita Singh**, ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

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A giant ice cream sundae and a recreation of a protective deity destroyed by Isil in Iraq will go on display on Trafalgar Square's Fourth Plinth.

The two artworks have been chosen to reside at the landmark spot in London - currently home to a bronze, thumbs up sign - in 2018 and 2020.

The Lamassu, a winged bull which guarded the entrance to the Nergal Gate of Nineveh from 700BC, will be remade out of empty date syrup cans, from Iraq. The deity was destroyed, along with other artefacts in the Mosul Museum, by terror group IS in 2015.

The date syrup cans represent a once-thriving industry in Iraq decimated by war.

Since 2006, US artist Michael Rakowitz and his team have remade 600 of the 7,000 archaeological artefacts looted from Iraq or destroyed, in a project entitled *The Invisible Enemy Should Not Exist*.

**“Their works are wondrous, striking and deeply engaging”**

Ekow Eshun, chair of Fourth Plinth Commissioning Group

His grandparents left Iraq in the 1940s and his family now live in New York and London. Iraq is "a country that exists elsewhere in so many ways". He hopes the installation will become "part of a discussion about immigration".

The sacking of ancient sites by Isil is devastating, Rakowitz said. "The destruction of the past makes the present and the future that much more precarious."



A whirl of cream topped with parasites, by British artist Heather Phillipson, and a recreation of a protective deity destroyed by Isis in Iraq, by US artist Michael Rakowitz, have been chosen to reside at the landmark spot in London



Michael Rakowitz with his winning sculpture, which will occupy the Fourth Plinth from 2018 CREDIT: GEOFF PUGH FOR THE TELEGRAPH

The deity will go on display in 2018 and will be followed by *The End*, by British artist Heather Phillipson - a sculpture of a scoop of cream, topped with a cherry, a drone and a fly - in 2020.

The camera-equipped drone will remain static but equipped with wi-fi, and passers-by will be able to use their mobile phones to live-stream what the drone can see.

The work represents "exuberance and unease", Phillipson said, and is "a monument to hubris and impending collapse".

She said: "It's apparently very celebratory at first glance but when you spend more time with it other elements start to creep in.



Heather Phillipson's giant ice cream sundae will be installed on the Fourth Plinth in 2020 CREDIT: GEOFF PUGH FOR THE TELEGRAPH

"The cream is this hyper-luxury product, something we associate with celebration, with the cliché of the cherry on top. But at the same time, the cream is on the verge of collapse and these other life forms are coming to inhabit it - flies are attracted to stuff that is rotting or dying, and the drone connects to surveillance and warfare."

The cherry stalk will reach high into the sky "as something that can speak back to the height of Nelson's Column".

The plinth is currently home to *Really Good*, a 23ft (7m) high hand, cast in bronze and giving a thumbs-up sign, which has divided opinion and has been dubbed phallic by some onlookers.



The new sculptures will replace the Really Good, which was dubbed phallic by some onlookers CREDIT: PHILIP TOSCANO/PA

Some of the most memorable Fourth Plinth sculptures over the years have included Marc Quinn's sculpture of Alison Lapper, who was born with no arms, Yinka Shonibare's scaled-down replica of HMS Victory, contained in a glass bottle, and Katharina Fritsch's blue fibreglass sculpture of a cockerel.

Antony Gormley created One & Other in which people - including a man who posed naked - took it in turns to spend an hour on the plinth.

Rakowitz and Phillipson were selected from a five-strong shortlist by the Fourth Plinth Commissioning Group.



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Justine Simons, deputy mayor for culture and creative industries, said: "It's clear that these two hugely contrasting artworks stand out for their visual impact as well as their unique ability to make the viewer stop and think."

"The Fourth Plinth is the world's most loved and talked-about public art platform - it is pioneering, inventive and surprising, and above all, shows that London is open to creativity and ideas from around the world."

Ekow Eshun, chair of the Fourth Plinth Commissioning Group, said of the winning works: "Their works are wondrous, striking and deeply engaging. The new commissions will proudly continue the legacy of the Fourth Plinth in putting world-class contemporary sculpture at the heart of London."

The Fourth Plinth is funded by the Mayor of London, with support from Arts Council England.

## Fourth Plinth artwork over the years



Katharina Fritsch's blue rooster in 2013 CREDIT: GEOFF PUGH FOR THE TELEGRAPH



The unveiling of Yinka Shonibare's 'Nelson's - Ship in a Bottle' in May 2010 CREDIT: GEOFF PUGH FOR THE TELEGRAPH



A bronze sculpture of a boy on a rocking horse, by Danish artist Michael Elmgreen and Norwegian artist Ingar Dragset, in February 2012 CREDIT: OLI SCARFF/GETTY



Marc Quinn's Sculpture 'Alison Lapper Pregnant' in September 2005 CREDIT: IAN JONES