

HEW LOCKE

Gareth Harris, Hot on the heels of Tate commission, Hew Locke chosen to transform Met museum façade, The Art Newspaper, 8 April 2022



Portrait of Hew Locke in front of *The Nameless*, 2010

The Guyanese-British artist Hew Locke is having a moment. Following the launch of his major installation *The Procession* at Tate Britain in London, Locke has been selected by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York to create a series of works for the institution's façade. The display, known as *Gilt*, will be on view from 16 September to 22 May 2023.

According to the *New York Times*, Locke will create four sculptures for the façade niches "shaped into whole and fragmented trophies". Max Hollein, the museum's director, says in a statement that the commission "will be informed by Locke's deep knowledge of the Met's collection and will reference the institution in ways both direct and indirect, recovering and connecting histories across continents, oceans, and time periods".

Previous artists commissioned to adorn the museum include Carol Bove, who unveiled four colossal sculptures last year made of sandblasted, crumpled stainless steel tubes with 5-ft-wide reflective aluminium disks.

The first commission, a series of bronze statues by the Kenyan-American artist Wangechi Mutu, was on view in the niches from September 2019 to November 2020. The niches had previously been empty, although the architect

Richard Morris Hunt, who completed his Met building in 1902, originally envisioned that they would be filled with traditional figurative sculptures.

Last month, Locke revealed *The Procession* in the Duveen Galleries at Tate Britain in London (until 22 January 2023). "Praise has been pretty much universal for Locke's immense installation, which unleashes a multifarious kaleidoscopic parade of around 150 life-sized figures along the central spine of Tate Britain," writes Louisa Buck.

Locke will also transform a sculpture of Queen Victoria in the centre of Birmingham, UK, realising a long-held ambition to work on an existing historic monument. The project, known as *Foreign Exchange*, is organised by Ikon Gallery in Birmingham and forms part of the Birmingham 2022 Festival culture programme linked to the Commonwealth Games. Locke says work begins on the statue on 14 June.