

# DAVID BREUER-WEIL

A PRIVATE SALES EXHIBITION

CHRISTIE'S







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JUNE-JULY 2017

**The Economist Plaza**

courtesy of Tishman Speyer  
25 St James's Street, St James's  
London SW1A 1HG

**Cavendish Square**

Marylebone, London W1G

By appointment only

**Portman Square**

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# INTRODUCTION

The challenge for the Contemporary sculptor is to make strong and simple forms that sear into the viewer's imagination. Public, monumental sculpture is perhaps the best way to communicate with passers-by, with people who did not intend to encounter a work of art, a sudden unexpected vision. When I installed *Brothers* in Marble Arch it was seen by tens of thousands of people a week, multitudes more than when I exhibited a piece in a museum at the same time. Public sculpture breaks down the barriers and is democratic. In this sense it is the ultimate street art. With this exhibition my canvas is the city of London, and there are pieces inhabiting different parts of it, as a kind of sculptural trail, from the brutalist austerity of the Economist Plaza, to the leafy sanctuaries of Cavendish Square and Portman Square.

In my sculptures I seek to enter the consciousness of the viewer on a very deep level, to ask questions about who we are. For example, in my work *Brothers* I wanted to create a visual drama about the very idea of communication, of two minds merging. With *Alien* I wanted to capture the unexpected wonder of

seeing another soul from a different but related plain of existence. When I was working on *Visitor* I wanted to reveal that most of us are hidden from view. These sculptures are very real, three-dimensional presences in London. But they also inhabit private worlds and appear again and again as figures in my paintings. To me they are mythological beings from my imaginative universe of Nerac. The ideas start small, as scribbles in a notebook, as tiny maquettes or as life size bronzes. Sometimes I decide to leave caution behind and work on a massive scale. But the ideas and forms are not enough, the surfaces are alive with my fingerprints and markings, like the sculptures of other painter/sculptors. I believe that sculptors who are also painters use clay, plaster and bronze with an additional love for texture. For me the surface of every sculpture must be authentic and alive. Britain has always been a fertile ground for the creation of sculpture. There have been many great British sculptors over the last century, but the tradition goes back to Prehistory. It is in our blood, and both London and Christie's are crucial parts of that on-going story.

David Breuer-Weil





# DAVID BREUER-WEIL

INTERVIEW BY MONICA BOHM-DUCHEN

**MBD:** Although you first came to public attention as a painter, your interest in creating three-dimensional forms dates back to your student days in the mid-1980s – or did it perhaps begin even earlier? In any event, can you say more about your first experiments in sculpture?

DBW: I remember making a bird's nest out of clay with eggs and hatching chicks at the Camden Arts Centre when I was very young. It was a tremendous feeling to bring clay to life, and also the subject of the inception of life has remained with me in pieces such as *Emergence*. I am still obsessed with the idea that somehow clay and life forces are intimately connected, as they are in Adam, the first man, who was made out of the earth. Adam is the subject of several of my sculptures. Later, when I was at Central Saint Martin's I made sculptures in a paradoxically destructive and constructive manner. I cast large sheets of plaster on the floor, smashed them up, and reassembled them into figures. It is a technique that I still employ today in pieces such as *Philosopher* and *Emergence*. I have this idea that endurance is the greatest human quality, and endurance is a process of reassembling what is broken, hence the title *Philosopher*.

**MBD:** In the early 1990s, you produced another distinct body of work: namely, sculptures - mainly single male figures - created out of smashed rocks. Can you say something about how and why these came into being, and how these relate both to your earlier experiments in three dimensions and the work you were to produce later.

DBW: The 1990s smashed rocks pieces were based on a similar notion, the energy of smashing something very solid in order to create sculptural energy. When you break something you can also bring it to life. In paintings I sometimes construct them out of shattered sections of paint that I tear from palettes and then apply to the canvas, because colour can also be fractured and enlivened in this way.

**MBD:** In the early 2000s you produced a series of more than usually playful figures made from polystyrene cups. Could you please say more about these?

DBW: Alongside my more "solid" sculptures I have always made throwaway pieces, out of silver foil, paper, cardboard, MDF and polystyrene. The majority of these ephemeral pieces have not lasted or have been





*Alien*  
bronze  
h. 6 m.  
conceived in 2012  
edition of 3 plus 2  
artist's proofs

discarded. I have always had this very playful, childlike side to my art. Only recently have I started to fix some of these impermanent works into more lasting materials. For example, I recently used the idea of the cut out polystyrene works to make two large scale permanent polished stainless steel sculptures *Soul* and *Centre of the World* for the Jerusalem Foundation and I am now working on 3D printing techniques to fix some of my spontaneous studies in crunched silver foil into more solid media. I always like to have an experimental body of work developing alongside my other bodies of work. Often the experimental work is deliberately antithetical in feel or weight to my other work. It keeps the whole process alive.

**MBD: Humour is clearly an important element in all your work (you yourself have commented on “a Monty Python-like surreal sense of humour that is part of the way I view reality”) – would you like to say more about this? How does this aspect of your work co-exist, I wonder with your wish, as you put it in 2007, to “produce colossal, un-commercialized images of existential doubt”?**

DBW: There is both comedy and tragedy in my work, as these are key facts about the human condition, as

is clear from sculptures such as *Visitor 2*, a work that takes the form of two massive feet jutting out of the ground. There is also a sense of the absurdity of life. I think I got this duality partly from reading a great deal of Shakespeare whilst I was studying at Cambridge. Much of his work is divided into comedy and tragedy, and it is debatable which of these genres is more moving or disturbing.

**MBD: In recent years, you have become increasingly active in producing monumental bronze sculptures for public spaces. I have a number of questions relating to this development: What, firstly, would you say are the particular challenges of working on sculptures designed for public, open-air spaces?**

DBW: I learned quickly that a monumental outdoor piece of sculpture has to communicate instantly with the viewer and be readable as a simple form from a distance. This has led me to create images that condense emotions into simple but potent forms, and this is not always easy if you are accustomed to create complex compositions as in my paintings. There are of course also a great number of logistical concerns like creating a strong structure, weight and surface.

**MBD: Scale is clearly crucial in these works, which stand in marked contrast to the intimacy of both your earlier sculptures and the maquettes for these more recent works. Could you elaborate on this relationship between monumentality and intimacy?**

DBW: I have always felt that the very small and the very large share common attributes, because they are extremes of scale. I have painted or drawn many tiny works at the same time as painting vast canvases. I am not sure why that it is the case, perhaps because works of extreme scale challenge us to become something other than we are in physical fact. I have found that a quick sculptural sketch on a tiny scale can work extremely well when rendered on a much larger scale. The tiny writ large somehow enters the consciousness of the viewer very directly.

**MBD: Am I right in surmising that you derive considerable satisfaction from the way you’re able to translate the spatial game-playing so characteristic of your paintings into the “real” world, in which bronze figures can interact with grass and water?**

DBW: Yes, it is like bringing my deepest imagined figures to life in real space, so that the surrounding townscape or landscape (and people) become like the scenes in my paintings. In that sense, these works are

very conceptual, are re-enactments of imagined scenes brought to life. One example of this was when I saw real people dwarfed by my *Alien* when it was displayed in Grosvenor Gardens in London. It is a scene I had painted for years with imaginary people surrounding the imagined figure of a crash-landed alien. I then photographed this real sculpture surrounded by real people and the photographs became a third medium, from painting to sculptural installation to photograph.

**MBD: I imagine too that the creative tension between the conceptual elements in your work and its raw physicality is particularly strong in three dimensions?**

DBW: Although my paintings are very conceptual in the sense that they are filled with ideas, philosophical positions, thoughts, waking dreams, nightmares, visions of the unconscious, ruminations on time and mortality, I have nevertheless always been obsessed with paint and colour as media in their own terms; I have always felt that concepts are not enough on their own for a complete work of art but must be brought to life through the language of the medium. For this reason, my paintings are highly textured and layered so that the levels of meaning are matched in the language and structure of the paint itself, as this makes the concept

*Adam*  
bronze  
h. 80 cm.  
conceived in 2014  
edition of 6





into an emotional, not only an intellectual truth. It is the same with sculpture. My surfaces are highly emotive, textured, breathing with raw emotion. A new sculpture *Brothers 2* literally captures the tension that you mention in the most physical manner, as two figures are held together with taut bronze straps.

**MBD: In an essay for your 1997 exhibition at the Boundary Gallery, Mary Rose Beaumont wrote, in reference to the rock sculptures I’ve already mentioned (but by extension, also to your work in clay): “He actively dislikes the process of bronze casting. Not for him the assistance of a technician: the sculptures are very much a hands-on activity”. Are you, I wonder, regretful that this spontaneity and immediacy are necessarily lost in the more collaborative process of casting a work into bronze?**

DBW: Actually with the passage of time I have learned that bronze is the most beautiful of media, with an incredibly rich history going back thousands of years. I am deeply engaged with the whole bronze-making process, from making the originals, to the texturing, casting and patinating of the bronze, aspects I was less aware of during the 1990s, partly because of the technical aspects and expense of the process. I was very inspired by the Bronze exhibition at the Royal Academy in London in 2012, an exhibition that

demonstrated the immediacy and tactile qualities of this most eloquent medium. There are certain things that can only be achieved in bronze.

**MBD: And now some more general, but related questions... Would you care to talk about the links between your work in two and three dimensions? I note, for example, that you’ve written (in relation to *Brothers*, 2015), “I have personally textured the entire surface with thousands of marks and inscriptions, effectively painting in plaster.” Also, am I right in observing that the evident importance of texture in your sculptures parallels the increasing painterliness of your brushstrokes on a flat surface?**

DBW: Yes, that is definitely true. With time the richness of surface has become increasingly important to me because I believe that the surface of a work catches the light and light brings life into a work of art. Without texture there is little light in a work. That is why van Gogh’s works dance before the viewer’s eyes as the textured strokes catch the light. With both paintings and sculpture this is what I look for. Something with inner life and light. I often work in two and three dimensions simultaneously, developing works with similar motifs. I have found that my painting informs my sculptural work and vice-versa.



*Philosopher*  
bronze  
h. 80 cm.  
conceived in 2015  
edition of 6 plus 1 artist’s proof



*Philosopher 2*  
bronze  
h. 70 cm.  
conceived in 2016  
edition of 6 plus 1 artist’s proof



*Descendent*  
bronze  
86 x 56 x 24 cm.  
conceived in 2010  
edition of 6



*Flight 1*  
bronze  
h. 94 cm.  
conceived in 2015  
edition of 6 plus 1 artist’s proof

**MBD: Equally, it would be interesting to hear your thoughts about the essential differences between the various media in which you work...**

DBW: I do a great deal of drawing in pencil, highly worked up drawings, many of these done on aeroplane flights when I have the focus to spend many hours working over one small sheet of paper with a complex web of marks. Most of my ideas are developed in this way. Drawing is a quiet but perfect art form, but you cannot hide anything this way. Everything is on the sheet; it is the most intimate art form. Painting is like letting your lava boil out of your system, it is an emotional release, a catharsis, an untrammelled flow of energy. Real painting is like bleeding on a canvas. It can be conceptual, but without the sense of catharsis the painting often looks dead. Sculpture is an even more physical process, destructive and creative. The three media bring different aspects of the human mind and body into play, thought, emotion and body.

**MBD: What do you feel you can only achieve in sculpture, and in no other medium?**

DBW: The sense of walking around a form that changes in front of your eyes, the gradients and shapes change on a constant basis as you move to see

them. A sculpture also condenses an idea into a very simple monolith, something that is surprisingly difficult to achieve.

**MBD: Which artists would you cite as kindred spirits, or even direct influences, in your sculptural work?**

DBW: There is a very rich humanistic tradition in sculpture and a sense of sculptural continuity stretching back millennia. The greatest influence on my own sculptural work is ancient art, from Egypt, to Luristan, to Etruscan and Roman bronzes. I own examples of pieces from these cultures that influence me daily as they did the many 20th and 21st century artists with whom I share preoccupations based on archetypes. Modern and contemporary sculpture often combines ancient or timeless symbols with a contemporary zeitgeist. I also think I was inspired by Louise Bourgeois’s psychic audacity. However, one of my main aims is to bring the characters from my invented world of Nerac to life in the real world and for this reason I have started to explore film and virtual reality as media as well, but most of these pieces have not been shown yet, with the exception of the King of Nerac, a film that was premiered at the ICA (London, 25 January 2015) and Lincoln Centre (New York, 20 & 21 January 2015).





*Tunnel*  
 bronze  
 29 x 60 x 27.5 cm.  
 conceived in 2015  
 edition of 8 plus 1 artist's proof

For example, I have the idea of making a 3D video sculpture in which a human being is born, grows up, lives and dies in a minute. I am currently exploring if this can be achieved with new technology. This is a concept already present in bronze pieces such as *Emergence*, but I am open to new media as well for such concepts. But I still believe that pencil, paint, stone and bronze are the most eloquent and emotive human media for works of art.

**MBD: Last but not least, I am curious to know about your future plans, both in three dimensions and in two. In particular, I wonder if you have some sense of where you might go next in terms of sculptural projects.**

DBW: I have been working on four main bodies of works. *Project 5* is the continuation of a series of *Projects*, an ongoing cycle of large scale-canvases that chart a spiritual journey through time and my ultimate aim is to have the *Project* series installed in one location. I have I just completed a contemporary version of a Panorama painting, a large undertaking as it comprises twenty interrelated canvases, each two by four metres, and this may be shown in the coming year. It is a tragi-comic take on the genesis and completion of evolution rather than a topographical scene. A series of small paintings called

the King of Nerac Series is based on my imaginary world. I have also continued a series of landscapes inspired by my smashed sculptural works, but I have smashed colour instead of form. A new series of clay maquettes for new large-scale outdoor works will be sent to the foundry in a month for casting. It is all an on-going process of experimentation. But for now, this show with Christie's at The Economist Plaza, Portman Square and Cavendish Square, will be a challenging installation in the heart of London. I look forward to seeing my extra-terrestrials amongst the suits...

Monica Bohm-Duchen is a London-based independent writer, lecturer & exhibition organizer. The institutions for which she has worked include Tate, the Royal Academy of Arts, the Courtauld Institute, Sotheby's Institute of Art, Birkbeck College and New York University in London. Her many publications include *Understanding Modern Art* (1991), *Chagall* (1998), *The Private Life of a Masterpiece* (2001) and *The Art and Life of Josef Herman* (2009). Her book *Art and the Second World War* was published by Lund Humphries in association with Princeton University Press in late 2013, and was nominated for the William M. B. Berger Prize for Art History 2013/14 and the National Award for Arts Writing, USA.





‘Every artist, every writer,  
every musician is a fallen  
angel or alien, because  
their ideas and inspiration  
come from above.’

*Alien*  
bronze with brown patina  
h. 6 m.  
This bronze version cast in 2012  
in an edition of 3 plus 2 artist's proofs  
in bronze resin







# ***ALIEN***

*ALIEN*  
bronze with brown patina  
Height: 47 ¼ in. (120 cm.)  
Conceived in 2013 in an edition of four plus one artist's proof

**June-July 2017**  
**The Economist Plaza**  
courtesy of Tishman Speyer





*New York Falling Man 1*  
pencil on paper,  
77 x 57 cm., 2010.



*Study for Alien*  
2013, pencil on paper,  
42 x 29.5 cm.



*Maquette for Alien*  
bronze with dark brown patina  
h. 37.5 cm.  
conceived in 2012  
edition of 8

Balancing the humorous with the profound, Breuer-Weil's *Alien* proposes a surreal event – the arrival, or crash-landing, of an extra-terrestrial being, who has fallen to earth head-first, leaving their upper body firmly lodged in the ground. Through the slight animation of the figure's legs, Breuer-Weil lends the scene a distinctly amusing tone, creating the impression that the 'Alien' is flailing about as it tries to escape its predicament and free itself. The drama of this inverted pose, combined with the vast scale and raw physicality of the sculpture, creates a riveting sense of shock and wonder in the viewer, as the figure erupts unexpectedly into their environment.

Created in 2012, *Alien* was first conceived as an extension of Breuer-Weil's *Visitor* series. The motif itself is ubiquitous throughout the artist's oeuvre, appearing in a large number of his paintings. As the artist has explained: "My *Alien* can be found flying through my infinite, star clustered painted universes, orbiting around different suns and in different dimensions." The potent physicality of this work, richly textured and alive with undulating forms and marks,

reflects Breuer-Weil's intense working method, with each curve and indent in the alien's form retaining the raw energy of the artist's fingers, a record of the way he shaped and moulded the small scale maquette in the earliest stages of its realisation.

Despite its extra-terrestrial reading, *Alien* is also very much rooted in the personal experiences of the artist. "The title *Alien* also suggests something quite different," the artist has explained, "the difficulty of being an outsider. My father arrived in England from Vienna with his parents as refugees in 1938. My grandfather was interred as an enemy 'Alien,' a great paradox given the reasons he had to leave Austria, something that my family often spoke about. Sometimes immigrants hide their true identity beneath the surface, like this sculpture. Many of my works, both paintings and sculptures, explore the theme of belonging or alienation. But I wanted to use a vast, breathing human form to express the profound feelings associated with these themes. And I needed the massive scale to portray the intensity of these emotions."







*Brothers*  
h. 6 m.  
as installed in Marble Arch,  
London, 2016.





# ***BROTHERS***

*BROTHERS*  
signed 'Breuer-Weil' (on the back of each figure)  
bronze  
Height: 47 ¼ in. (120 cm.)  
Conceived in 2016 and cast in an edition of four plus one artist's proof

**June-July 2017**  
**The Economist Plaza**  
courtesy of Tishman Speyer





*Maquette for Brothers*  
bronze  
h. 21 cm. (24 cm. including base)  
conceived in 2014  
edition of 8



*Brothers*  
pencil on paper,  
42 x 30 cm., 2016.



*Brothers*  
bronze  
26 x 54 x 14 cm.  
conceived in 2012  
edition of 8 plus 1 artist's proof

The largest sculpture in Breuer-Weil's *oeuvre*, *Brothers* stands at over six metres tall, a monumental depiction of the binding connection of one figure to another. Featuring two colossal humanoids conjoined at the head, at once linked and yet autonomous, the sculpture takes the form of a human arch, as their bodies curve away from one another whilst still remaining connected at the crown. Exploring both the physical and mental connection between individuals – siblings, partners, friends, strangers – the artwork suggests a meeting of minds, a coming together of two individuals to share an idea, a thought, or a memory, an act which forms an inescapable bond between the two. Communicating in this highly intimate and personal way, the two figures become a striking symbol of connection, attachment and interdependence.

In its structure, *Brothers* echoes classical architectural forms, recalling monuments from prehistoric times through to post-Renaissance, both natural and man-made. Breuer-Weil was particularly influenced by the intense mysticism and sculptural simplicity of the stone circles of Avebury and Stonehenge, which he had visited with his mother during his teenage years. Explaining the influence of these experiences on his work, Breuer-Weil said: "For me Stonehenge is the

ultimate sculpture and it has always influenced my sculptural work since I made a small copy of it as a student. Part of Stonehenge is a similar image of an arch, of two interconnected forms, with the connection the lintel. For me this lintel is a thought, a shared mind."

One of the most striking aspects of *Brothers* lies in its highly textured, undulating surface, where the artist has deliberately allowed the spontaneous quirks of the maquette to be translated through to the full sized version without alteration. Enlivening the surface of the sculpture and enhancing the dynamic play of light and shadow across the piece, this technique retains the marks and indents of the artist's fingers, which he used to shape and mould the clay of the maquette. In addition, Breuer-Weil has inscribed the surface with a constellation of overlapping and intertwining marks, in which diagrams, words and ideas intermingle. Amongst this array, the artist has included the names of multiple pairings of brothers from across history, from Cain and Abel, to the artist and his own siblings, in a graffiti-like net of names. Rather than the intransient marks of vandalism, though, these marks and inscriptions become an inherent part of the sculpture itself, a record of the concepts that lay behind its creation.

**'This sculpture is a human arch, but the arch means something very potent: the joining of two minds.'**





# ***VISITOR***

signed 'Breuer-Weil' (at the back of the head)  
bronze with brown and black patina  
Height: 98 ½ in. (250 cm.)  
This version cast in 2012 in an edition of three  
plus one artist's proof

**June-July 2017**  
**Cavendish Square**





*Invisible Man 5*  
acrylic on canvas,  
122 x 122 cm.  
2012.



*Maquette for Visitor*  
bronze  
18.5 x 17.5 x 23 cm.  
conceived in 2010  
edition of 6



*Invisible Man*  
bronze  
82 x 64 x 41 cm.  
conceived in 2011  
edition of 6 plus 1 artist's proof

Depicting the face of an unknown figure as it dramatically emerges from the ground, *Visitor* focuses on an otherworldly being as it unexpectedly breaks into our realm from a mysterious, subterranean netherworld. Conceived in 2010, it is the first monumental bronze that Breuer-Weil embarked upon following his series of monumental paintings known as *The Project*, an epic cycle exploring the richly diverse cast of characters that filled his imaginary world of Nerac. A space where the rules of time and physics are suspended, Nerac was a conceptual world rooted in the artist's childhood dreaming, filled with hundreds of imaginary artists who remained free to explore all ideas that struck them, uninhibited by the constraints of real life. *Visitor* relates to a series of paintings titled *Invisible Man* which appear sporadically throughout *The Project*, where the figure of the submerged head is often deployed to question the illusory nature of life and reality.

In the present work, the artist uses the motif to portray a human head paradoxically both present and absent, simultaneously visible and invisible. Revealing only the upper sections of the face, with the

lower half remaining submerged, the figure retains an otherworldly mystery. Their face remains in a neutral, passive expression as they gradually break through the surface, their eyes closed and brow free from tension, lending the figure a serene quality that reveals nothing of their inner thoughts to the viewer. It was this striking sense of mystery, the enigma of the unseen element, which Breuer-Weil appears to have been searching for in *Visitor*. As the artist explained: "I wanted to give the impression of a figure with far greater potential than what you actually see... This work is a visual embodiment of thought. Every human being is largely hidden and secret."

*Visitor* was first exhibited at Chatsworth House in 2010, submerged in a small lake on the estate. Surrounded by the rippling reflections of its own form, it struck an ominous and unexpected presence in the landscape. A cast was acquired shortly afterwards by the Cafesjian Museum of Art, Yerevan, where it remains on permanent display, while a maquette of the work can also be found in the permanent collection of the Ben Uri Gallery and Museum, London.



**‘This work is a visual embodiment of thought. Every human being is largely hidden and secret.’**









## ***BROTHERS 2***

signed and with the artist's initials 'Breuer-Weil DBW'  
(on the base); numbered '1/4' and stamped with  
the foundry mark 'Morris Singer' (on the base)  
bronze with black patina  
Length: 137 ½ in. (350 cm.)  
This bronze version cast in 2017 in an edition of four  
plus one artist's proof

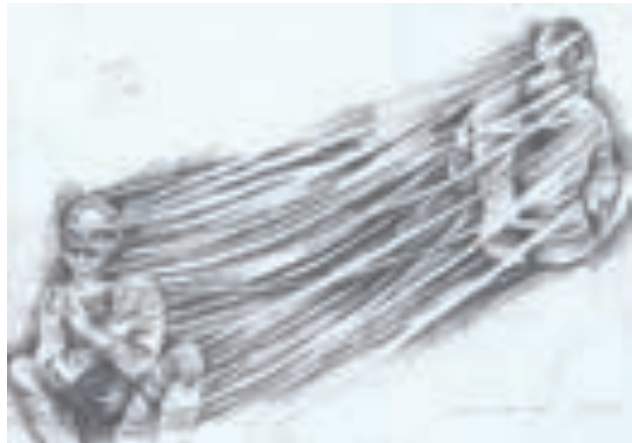
**June-July 2017**

**The Economist Plaza**  
courtesy of Tishman Speyer





*Brothers 2*  
bronze  
l. 63 cm.  
conceived in 2014  
edition of 8 plus 1 artist's proof



*Brothers (3rd Version)*  
2008, pencil on paper,  
29.5 x 42 cm.

Continuing the theme first explored in *Brothers*, Breuer-Weil spent several months creating a series of works focusing on different aspects of the psychological and sculptural relationship between two figures. Among the artist's most distinctive motifs, these sculptures examine the possibilities of the relationship between distinct but equivalent forms in a variety of poses, often facing inward, moving apart or placed one upon the other. With *Brothers 2* Breuer-Weil creates arguably one of the most dramatic iterations of the subject, depicting two figures as they desperately pull away in opposite directions, only to remain intrinsically bound to one another by the powerful strands that stretch between them. Leaning precariously forward, the figures pull forcefully against these ties, straining against the viscous, heavy bands even though they appear to spring directly from each of their bodies and connect directly to the other figure. However, these links are not easily broken and instead expand with the protagonists as they tug at them, stretching

to accommodate their movement, and thus ensuring the two remain bound to one another despite their growing distance.

Commenting on his use of the motif, Breuer-Weil explained: "Binding is the connection between the finite and the infinite. It contains and limits, but also delineates and gives something identity. It is both horrific and beautiful. The fathers and sons, sisters, mothers or brothers want to move apart but they are held together by a hundred different strands. Similarly, people may want to come together but are held back by unseen forces... Each person is bound to the other in different ways and they are each connected in complex ways despite being separate. These "binding works" are about the possibility or rather impossibility of independence from others, especially family members. I want to make visible the ropes that are usually invisible but are nevertheless palpably present" (*David Breuer-Weil: Radical Visionary*, Skira Milan, 2011, page 362).







# ***EMERGENCE***

signed, dated and inscribed 'Breuer-Weil Emergence 2011'

(on the left shoulder of the largest figure);

numbered '1/3' (on the base of the largest figure)

bronze with black and green patina

Figure 1: 74  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 63 x 43  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. (190 x 160 x 110 cm.)

Figure 2: 55  $\frac{1}{8}$  x 53  $\frac{1}{8}$  x 27  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (140 x 135 x 70 cm.)

Figure 3: 29  $\frac{1}{2}$  x 37  $\frac{3}{8}$  x 17  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. (75 x 95 x 45 cm.)

Figure 4: 9  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 15  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 19  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (25 x 40 x 50 cm.)

Overall: 74  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 63 x 191 in. (190 x 160 x 485 cm.)

This bronze version cast in 2011 in an edition of three  
plus one artist's proof

**June-July 2017**

**Portman Square**





*Study for Emergence*  
pencil on paper,  
30 x 42 cm.



*Maquette for Emergence*  
bronze  
23 x 60 x 13 cm.  
conceived in 2012  
edition of 6 plus 1 artist's proof

Conceived in 2012, *Emergence* creates the mesmerising illusion of a figure gradually emerging from the ground, their body slowly revealing itself as it climbs from the earth and enters our world. Depicting this movement in four distinct phases, the sculpture forms part of a distinctive group of highly expressive sculptures from Breuer-Weil that use shattered, complex forms to achieve a dramatic, dynamic composition filled with movement, progression and spectacle. Breuer-Weil traced the genesis of this series to his time as a student at Central Saint Martin's School of Art, explaining: "I was wrapped in this British and Central European tradition: the continuing potency of the human figure, and the idea of pathos and empathy with the viewer. But I was also shaken up by the American influence, the prominence of Charles Saatchi. I had to rethink my deep attachment to rendering the human figure in the most potent and symbolic way. I resolved this dilemma by destroying things. I would pour great buckets of plaster onto the floor of the studios of the Central School of Art in Southampton Row, let the

plaster dry, and then smash the plaster into pieces. Out of these pieces I started to assemble human or animal figures."

The resulting artworks have the energy of both destruction and creation. In *Emergence*, the surface of the bronze is deliberately sculpted in a rough, craggy manner, to resemble rock, grounding the figure in the earth from which it emerges. In this way, Breuer-Weil draws parallels between the sculpture and the origins of Adam, the first man, who was said to have been created from the dust of the earth. This sense of texture is key to the life force of the sculpture, catching the light as it travels across the surface and imbuing it with a new spirit. *Emergence* is also covered in scrawls of spontaneous lines of graffiti, featuring snippets of poetry, statements of philosophy, and Neracian drawings intersecting and overlapping with one another. The overall effect lends the sculpture a monumental, historical feeling, as if it has stood for generations, carrying the marks of the years that have passed it by.







***'Emergence*** is all about origins  
and the progression of humanity.  
It is a very physical symbol of the  
aspiring spirit.'





# ***BRAINBOX***

green Indian rainforest marble  
Height: 59 in. (150 cm.)  
Executed in 2012; this work is unique

**May-July 2017**  
**Portman Square**





*Visitors Horizon*  
2013, acrylic on canvas,  
205 x 210 cm.



*Visitor (Reflection)*  
2010, acrylic on canvas,  
102 x 152 cm.

Covered by an array of sinuous, rippling veins of colour, *Brainbox* explores a concept first proposed by Breuer-Weil in his large-scale bronze sculpture *Visitor*, transforming the motif of a half-submerged head rising from the ground through the powerful character of its material. Executed in Indian green rainforest marble, sourced from the quarries of Rajasthan, the sculpture uses the naturally variegated appearance of the material to imbue the human head with an aged, ancient quality, lending the monumental work the impression that it has been unearthed from the ground, a mysterious, prehistoric monument that has survived for millennia. These complex patterns and networks of colour within the stone also evoke the veins and wrinkles of human skin in a striking visual metaphor that brings the carving to life, and which lends *Brainbox* a uniquely physical presence.

Aligning himself with the rich historical traditions of British sculpture, Breuer-Weil adheres to the principles of direct carving, cutting straight into the notoriously hard stone to create his humanoid figure, exhibiting his acute technical skill as a sculptor in the process.

Finishing *Brainbox* to a smooth polish, Breuer-Weil accentuates the distinct colours and rich surface patterns of the material, generating an intriguing play of light and shadow across the figure's visage. The herculean feat of carving such resistant stones was pioneered in the early twentieth century by Sir Jacob Epstein, whose dedication to direct carving paved the way for generations of artists in Britain, including Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore and Eric Gill.

Like *Visitor*, *Brainbox* has the impact of a small mountain or island, imbued with great emotional intensity. Its portrayal hints at a human being who has endured many hardships, weathering the storms that have hit it, and surviving nonetheless. Its closed eyes and furrowed brow create an expression of intense concentration, while the veins of colour that run through the stone direct our eye around the sculpture as they traverse its surface. It is this intensity, this energy, that Breuer-Weil sought to capture in the present work, explaining: "I like the idea of making a work that compresses a huge amount of emotion into a simple form."

*'Brainbox is a large carving in green, streaked marble that is charged with the immense potential power of thought.'*







## ***VISITOR 2***

signed with the initials 'DBW'

bronze with black/brown patina in two parts

Figure 1: 137  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 78  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 59 in. (350 x 200 x 150 cm.)

Figure 2: 118 x 78  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 78  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. (300 x 200 x 200 cm.)

conceived in 2011 and cast in an edition of three plus one artist's proof

**Further details upon request**





*Maquette for Visitor 2*  
bronze  
h. 17.5 cm  
conceived in 2011  
edition of 6

*Visitor 2* continues the same visual and philosophical narrative as *Visitor*, imagining a greater physical form partially submerged in the earth, but one that seems to be falling below the surface rather than emerging from beneath. Again, this concept is rooted in Breuer-Weil’s imaginary world, Nerac, which he has cultivated in his own mind since childhood and which became the focus of Annie Sulzberger and Guy Natanel’s film *The King of Nerac*, screened at the Institute of Contemporary Art in 2015. On one level Nerac is a conceptual work of art without limits. On the other it is a method by which Breuer-Weil can let loose artistic ideas in the most experimental fashion. He has produced hundreds of tiny Neracian drawings made by the scores of imaginary artists who inhabit this realm, several of which portray a great visitor from another level of reality who lands on the earth. This subject informs the present sculpture, as the artist creates an impression of a giant humanoid form as they fall to earth, their presence detectable only through the appearance of their two massive feet, poking upwards from the ground.

As Breuer-Weil has explained, the idea for the present work was rooted in both the artist’s imaginary world and his knowledge of the prehistoric



*Study for Visitor's Feet*  
pencil on paper,  
42 x 30cm.

heritage of the English landscape: “With *Visitor 2* I wanted to create a piece with the timeless simplicity of the Avebury Stones or Stonehenge, but infused with humanity and dynamism, and with a sense of the mystical and primeval. There may exist an extra-terrestrial race of aliens identical to us in all ways but scale. I love the idea that one such being might suddenly and unexpectedly have landed on earth, a similar shock to seeing a large fish or a whale washed up on the shore.” Indeed, these floating feet elicit a certain shock in their unexpected arrival, disrupting the peace of their setting, whether natural or man made, with their sheer scale and the oddity of their placement. This unsettling atmosphere is offset by a distinct playfulness and Surreal sense of humour, with the choice of pose and focus on this pair of disembodied feet recalling the peculiarity of René Magritte’s famed painting *The Red Model* (1934). It appears as if the figure, this regal ‘King,’ has been tossed in the air, leaving his larger-than-life appendages just visible as he is pulled below the surface to another world, beyond our reach and understanding.





**‘You can achieve great monumentality by showing the viewer only the tip of the iceberg and allowing the viewer’s imagination to do most of the work.’**







# DAVID BREUER-WEIL

## BIOGRAPHY

David Breuer-Weil was born in London in 1965. He studied at Central Saint Martin's School of Art under Henry Moore's assistant Shelley Fausset, and at Clare College, Cambridge. Breuer-Weil has become famous for his *Projects*, monumental solo shows of vast painted canvases. 'The Project' was held in 2001 at the Roundhouse, Camden; 'Project 2' was held at the Bargehouse, OXO Tower in 2003; 'Project 3' was held in conjunction with the Ben Uri Gallery and Museum in 2007. In early 2013, 'Project 4' was staged in The Vaults, Waterloo. Alongside the *Projects*, Breuer-Weil continues to produce works on paper, paintings and sculpture on a smaller scale.

Breuer-Weil has emerged as one of the leading contemporary British sculptors, with iconic works such as *Brothers* and *Alien* displayed to great acclaim. These powerful works have been installed in major public spaces in London, including Hampstead Heath,

Hanover Square, Grosvenor Gardens, Marble Arch, and around the world. *Visitor*, *Visitor 2* and *Alien* were included in Sotheby's 2010, 2011 and 2013 *Beyond Limits* exhibitions at Chatsworth House. More recently, Breuer-Weil's sculptures and two-dimensional works have been exhibited with the National Trust. In 2016–17, Breuer-Weil exhibited alongside Edmund de Waal and Hans Coper at the Jewish Museum in London.

A film about the artist, Annie Sulzberger's *The King of Nerac*, was premiered in 2015 at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), London, and at Lincoln Center in New York. *Variety* describes the film as "a remarkably detailed study of one man's artistic process....his huge statues and canvases invites bigscreen play". The monograph *David Breuer-Weil: Radical Visionary*, was published in 2011. Breuer-Weil lives and works in London.



**Selected exhibitions, works in collections, public spaces and film**

*Animal Farm, Beastly Muses and Metaphors*, 2016, Sotheby's S | 2, London

*Out of Chaos*, Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle, UK, 2016–17

*Shaping Ceramics: From Lucie Rie to Edmund de Waal*, Jewish Museum, London, 2016–17

*Museo Berardo Collection*, Lisbon, Portugal, Permanent Collection, Monumental Sculpture, *Alien* (David Breuer-Weil)

*Brothers* (David Breuer-Weil), Monumental Sculpture, installed at Marble Arch, London, UK, 2016

*Alien* (David Breuer-Weil), Monumental Sculpture, installed at Mottisfont (National Trust House), Hampshire, UK, (September 2015 – November 2016)

Cafesjian Museum of Art, Armenia, Permanent Collection, Monumental Sculpture, *Visitor 1* (David Breuer-Weil)

*Emergence* (David Breuer-Weil), Monumental Sculpture, installed in Portman Square, London, UK, 2013 – present

*Alien* (David Breuer-Weil), Monumental Sculpture, installed in Grosvenor Gardens, London, UK, 2013–15

Centenary Exhibition: *Out of Chaos – Ben Uri: 100 Years in London*, Somerset House, London, UK, 2015

ICA (Institute of Contemporary Arts), London, UK, Screening of Breuer-Weil film, *The King of Nerac* (directed by Annie Sulzberger) and discussion, January 2015

The Film Society of the Lincoln Center in association with the New York Jewish Film Festival, at the Walter Reade Theater, Screening of Breuer-Weil Film, *The King of Nerac* (directed by Annie Sulzberger) and discussion, January 2015

*Emergence* (David Breuer-Weil), Monumental Sculpture, installed in Hanover Square, London, UK, 2012

*Visitor 1* (David Breuer-Weil), Monumental Sculpture, installed in Golders Hill Park Lily Pond, Hampstead Heath, London, UK, 2012

Teddy Kollek Park, Jerusalem, Israel, Monumental Public Sculpture, Permanent Installation, *Jerusalem, Centre of the World* (David Breuer-Weil)

Children's Wing of Shaare Zedek Hospital, Jerusalem, Israel, Monumental Public Sculpture, Permanent Installation, *Soul* (David Breuer-Weil)

David Breuer-Weil, *Project 3*, Solo Exhibition, Ben Uri Gallery and Museum, The London Jewish Museum of Art, Covent Garden, London, 2007

*Closing the Door? Immigrants to Britain 1905–2005*, The Jewish Museum, London (also featured Chris Ofili, Qu Lei Lei, Amal Ghosh and others), 2005

**Selected bibliography**

*Animal Farm, Beastly Muses and Metaphors*, 2016, exhibition catalogue, Sotheby's S | 2, London

*The Economist*, "Q & A with David Breuer-Weil," 2016

*David Breuer-Weil: Soul*, 2016, Shaare Zedek (ed. C. Craig, J. Bernstein), Jerusalem

*Highlights from the Ben Uri Collection*, 2015, The Ben Uri Gallery and Museum, London

*Out of Chaos, Ben Uri: 100 Years in London*, 2015, exhibition catalogue, The Ben Uri Gallery and Museum, London

*Review of The King of Nerac*, "Variety", London, 2015

*Beyond Limits*, Sotheby's at Chatsworth, 2013, exhibition catalogue, Sotheby's

*David Breuer-Weil: Jerusalem Centre of the World*, ed. C. Craig, 2013, commissioned by the Jerusalem Foundation

*David Breuer-Weil: Project 4*, 2013, exhibition catalogue (sponsored by Artnet), London

*David Breuer-Weil, Radical Visionary*, 2011, A Monograph on David Breuer-Weil, Published by Skira, Milan

*Beyond Limits*, Sotheby's at Chatsworth, 2011, exhibition catalogue, Sotheby's

*Beyond Limits*, Sotheby's at Chatsworth, 2010, exhibition catalogue, Sotheby's

*David Breuer-Weil: Project 3*, 2007, exhibition catalogue, Ben Uri Gallery and Museum, supported by European Association for Jewish Culture, Seven Dials WC2, NCP and Brado Group

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**‘Although the creative mind is in the stars,  
we have landed on earth like aliens.  
The artist feels the need to bring something  
transcendent into everyday experience.’**

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