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Life in the Faust lane

PHILIPP HUMM: FAUST

The Saatchi Gallery / 13-17 October 2021

What will you do after your career in the City? Philipp Humm, former CEO of Vodafone and T-Mobile, decided his skills were better employed as an artist.

Humm was leading a dual life – a tech revolutionary chief, who painted in his spare time under a pseudonym, quietly sketching colleagues in meetings until 2015, when he was ‘outed’ on the front page of the *Wall Street Journal*.

He made the leap from the boardroom to the studio and moved through the gears allowing his true ambitions to show through, painting, sculpting, photography and even filmmaking. Humm’s insight into the make-up and moral dysfunction of some of the world’s powerful elite informed his latest show: *Faust*. The mythology of Faust is so powerful that

when Christopher Marlowe’s Elizabethan play *Doctor Faustus* was performed in an early production, legend has it that actual devils appeared on stage. The story has inspired countless writers, artists, dramatists, and musicians ever since.

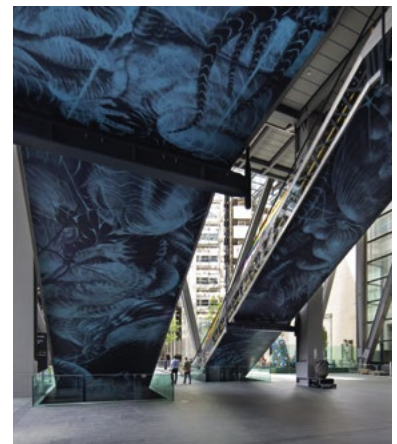
Humm felt that it was time to free Faust from his medieval shackles and make him a person of our world.

In transposing the story to the 21st Century, in the context of modern technology, Humm has created a cautionary tale: “We have not changed in 500 years”, he acknowledges. “Except that science and technology is far more advanced and dangerous. If you create a self-learning computer system more intelligent than yourself, it might attempt to save the planet by eliminating humans altogether.” Gulp. ■

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Sculpture in the City at The Cheesegrater



THIS YEAR, *Sculpture in the City*, an annual event hosted by the City of London, sees unique artworks by 18 talented artists placed among the iconic buildings and public spaces to celebrate the revival of the City.

In a first for the event, Laura Arminda Kingsley has designed large-scale vinyl to be displayed on the underside of the escalators leading up to The Leadenhall Building, aka the Cheesegrater. Titled ‘Murmurs of the Deep’, the vinyl art works invite viewers to immerse themselves in a freer, wilder world.

Elsewhere across the City are works by artists Laure Prouvost, Alice Channer, Eva Rothschild, Mark Handforth, Laura Arminda Kingsley, and Rosanne Robertson, among others.

Adam Goldin, Head of C C Land UK commented: “The Leadenhall Building’s public space is an ideal canvas for art and we’re pleased to be able to participate in an initiative which both welcomes workers and visitors back to the City of London and which supports artists”. ■



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