

# *Phantasmagoria*

## Audio guide

Jürgen Baumann

HENRY MOORE  
INSTITUTE

### Stop 10.

Hi, my name is Jürgen Baumann. I work mostly with casting and a rudimentary form of deep drawing, which in English, vacuum forming. And I use different resins and polystyrene or a clear polystyrene glazing as sheets. It's the same stuff that a lot of packaging is made of. So most of the objects that I create are castings that point back to a lost form or to shapes that have been destroyed or, and discarded. Most of them are eager to overcome their planar existence.

This exhibition, I'm showing two works, the triptych called *Piggod or the Lernaean Serpent*, and a scraped emergency exit sign. *Pig God or the Lernaean serpent*, it's a three-piece deep drawing in a clear polystyrene glazing, reminiscent of a cathedral window set. It is like the ghostly hull of a shape that doesn't exist anymore. The polystyrene glazing reflects the light and, via its compound curves, distorts the view of what lies behind it. And while forming the polystyrene with heat, it keeps a very high transparency and it is almost impossible to see how the curves develop. So the best indicator is usually the reflections of the light on the surface and their curvatures and bends they move slowly. And I use kind of a formwork underneath that I then use the clear polystyrene glazing on top.

The process is somewhat contradictory because if you want a certain part of the surface to move, that's not necessarily where

you apply the heat. You need to heat the material where it needs to bend, rather than where you want it to bend.

And the relief work, like with the figurative elements, is actually what makes it visible at all. There are parts that show sort of a house. There is a dragon-like figure sticking its many heads through the windows. There's grinning faces on top and a skewed wall, and distorted animals and probably monsters.

By hanging the three parts next to each other, the space in between becomes formal feature. I quite like that as it leaves out the columns that you would have to imagine.

I've long been fascinated by the idea of cathedrals, as the builders have managed to reduce material and thus open up the walls, letting the light in. A certain openness has developed. And I find this quite intriguing to me. As with this heavy stone masonry and the fragile stained glass, somehow they managed to create a space that contains and encompasses and like claim space, and yet is able to be open and let through or let the light in. I wanted them to be massive, like a wall that that you could see through that would distort the whole background.

Digital technologies do not directly play a part in the production of my works, I would say. But many hours of video game playing have informed it. And the flatness of the screen, which, by the movement of the character within the game, starts to convey depth and space, or at least the illusion of it. That has always fascinated me. My father used to have a TV shop where he would sell and repair the old monitors, and I used to spend time there as a kid, and that was just pure magic to me. It somehow still is, at least the old monitors.

And on one hand, I have a love for this immersive storytelling and being an active participant of the game. But still, you never cease to be a slave to the game structure and its respective orders. I mean, you're always following a given path. And so you could say that I'm attracted to the smooth surfaces of the

digital world, but at the same time, I'm repelled by them. I think there is not enough dirt.

This is the end of Stop 10.

This is a transcript of an audio guide produced by Henry Moore Institute for the exhibition *Phantasmagoria*, on display from 15 May to 30 August 2026. For more information visit [henry-moore.org/phantasmagoria](https://henry-moore.org/phantasmagoria)