

M+B



Artists Examine Digital Landscape With Quirky Sculptures in City Hall Park

By Irene Plagianos
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LOWER MANHATTAN — Amidst the well-manicured greenery of City Hall Park, artists are playfully examining a different landscape — the digital world.

Seven new, large-scale sculptures are now on display, as part of the Public Art Fund's latest exhibition, "Image Objects," a collection inspired by how rapidly changing digital culture "influences the relationship between images and objects," the nonprofit said in a statement.

The sculptures subtly play with the way an object quickly transforms into a digital image when we snap photos, manipulate them, and share them across social media platforms. The artists' twist: they've taken images, and turned them into sculptures, made, in part, with digital imagining technologies.

Los Angeles-based sculptor, Amanda Ross-Ho's massive "The Character and Shape of Illuminated Things [Facial Recognition]", for example, is a rethinking of an image from an 1980 photography handbook, before digital photographs were the norm.

The quirky piece features a huge mannequin's head outlined by a green neon square, mimicking the facial recognition software found in places like Facebook — "a nod to the idea that public art today is frequently experienced through the lens of a camera," the fund said in a statement.

The artists are also keenly aware that their objects will once again become images — something readily apparent when, on a recent afternoon, passersby snapped photos, and, of course selfies, with the pieces.

Some of the artworks also seem to have another use: a fun spot for kids to climb. Jon Rafman's two, large, marble sculptures were created by first distorting digital images of Greco-Roman busts, then carving the abstract form into marble. The twisty, grey pieces seemed to be a favorite for intrepid kids scaling the sculptures earlier this week.

