

Maybe they should have done it in chrome!  
Bronze of internet pioneer Sir Tim  
Berners-Lee goes on show at National  
Portrait Gallery to mark his 60th birthday

- Statue made by sculptor Sean Henry who spent two days observing Sir Tim
- Artwork shows Sir Tim carrying the rucksack in which he keeps his laptop
- Physicist said he wanted it to 'start conversations' about future of internet
- Also said he wanted to get away from portraits showing him sat behind his computer

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A painted bronze sculpture of internet pioneer Sir Tim Berners-Lee carrying the rucksack in which he keeps his laptop has gone on display to mark his 60th birthday.

The two-thirds life-size statue was made by British sculptor Sean Henry who spent two days observing and photographing the computer scientist.

It came about after Sir Tim and his wife said they wanted to get away from standard portraits which showed him sitting behind his computer.

The physicist also said he wanted the artwork to 'start conversations' about the future of the internet.

Apart from photographs, it is the first commissioned portrait of the inventor of the world wide web.

Sir Tim said: 'The web connects people, not just computers. It belongs to all of us and its future will be shaped by the energy and creativity of all who use it.'

'So, I hope that this sculpture will start conversations - our work is not done. What kind of web do we want and how best can we build that together?'

Before starting the work, Mr Henry spent time with Berners-Lee in Boston and in the UK.

Mr Henry said Sir Tim was 'a very dynamic person to sculpt', adding: 'Above all what came through was his strong sense of purpose and it felt important to try to capture this in the work.'

The sculpture, which goes on display today, was commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery to celebrate Berners-Lee's 60th birthday and is the gallery's first commissioned portrait sculpture for seven years.

Rosie Broadley, associate curator at the gallery, said: 'Henry was interested in the paradox inherent in the impact of Berners-Lee's invention and his self-effacing demeanour.'

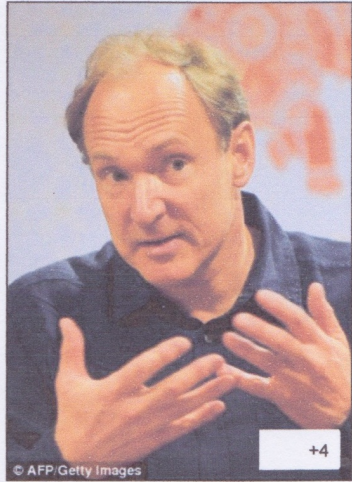
'Henry's sculpted figures are usually anonymous and in this portrait he has retained the idea of his subject as everyman, through the casual pose and clothing.'



A bronze sculpture of internet pioneer Sir Tim Berners-Lee has gone on display at the National Portrait Gallery to mark his 60th birthday



The statue (left) came about after Sir Tim and his wife said they wanted to get away from standard portraits showing him behind his computer



In 1980, while working as an independent contractor at CERN, Sir Berners-Lee described the concept of a global system based on using hypertext to share information between researchers.

He then built a prototype system called ENQUIRE, which formed the conceptual basis for the World Wide Web.

In 1989 he published his landmark paper, built the first server as well as the web browser 'WorldWideWeb.app.' The first website, based on these fundamental practices, then went live in August 1991.

Among his many accolades, Berners-Lee was awarded a Knighthood and the Order of Merit, and was the first recipient of Finland's Millennium Technology Prize.

He was also awarded the Charles Stark Draper Prize and the Mikhail Gorbachev award for 'The Man Who Changed the World' and has been named among Time Magazine's 100 most important people of the 20th century.

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'The depiction of his sitter is resolutely contemporary, but the use of bronze has a timeless and permanent quality appropriate for a sitter with such a significant legacy.'

London-born Berners-Lee studied physics at Queen's College Oxford before graduating in 1976. He then started as an engineer in the telecommunications and microprocessor software industry.



The two-thirds life-size statue was made by British sculptor Sean Henry (pictured right with the statue) who spent two days observing and photographing the computer scientist