

Nasher Sculpture Center Announces Recent New Gifts and Acquisitions to the Collection

Now on view: Gifts from the Barrett Family Collection and other private donors, plus new acquisitions

DALLAS, Texas (June 1, 2022) – The Nasher Sculpture Center announces several major gifts and acquisitions to its collection, including a group of 17 works from the Barrett Family Collection, as well as works from the Collection of Marguerite Steed Hoffman; the Green Family Art Foundation; the Giambrone Family; and Bret and Lester Levy, Jr.

The large gift of 17 sculptures from the Barrett Family Collection grows the Nasher's holdings of work by Texan artists substantially and is part of an exceptional and eclectic collection of art that, since Richard Barrett and his late wife, Nona, married in 1987, gravitated around two loci: Switzerland and Texas. Their collection of Swiss art is promised to the University of Texas at Dallas and will take up residence in the new Atheneum, built to house the university's art collections. Of their Texas collection, the Barretts made two enormous gifts of works before Nona's passing in 2014, to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston in 2003 and the Dallas Museum of Art in 2011. The recent gifts to the Nasher Sculpture Center include 6 works by artist Joseph Havel; 5 sculptures by Linda Ridgway; 2 by Harry Geffert; and 1 sculpture each by Frances Bagley, David Bates, Ann Hamilton, and James Magee. Works by Frances Bagley, Joseph Havel, and James Magee are currently on view in the Nasher galleries.

Also on view in the galleries are recent gifts from several Dallas collections, including a sculpture by previous Nasher exhibition artist, Michael Dean, a gift from Marguerite Steed Hoffman; a work by Chinese artist Liu Wei donated by the Giambrone Family; as well as a gifted relief sculpture from Bret and Lester Levy, Jr. by Piero Golia, who hosted the participatory artwork *Chalet Dallas* at the Nasher in 2015. A ceramic by Simone Leigh, who is currently the artist represented in the American Pavilion for the 59th Venice Biennale, is also on view, gifted from the Green Family Art Foundation, as is a series of works by American artist, Catalina Ouyang, recently purchased by the museum. These are joined by previously announced recent acquisitions of works by Melvin Edwards, Jeff Gibbons, Beverly Semmes, and Arlene Shechet. In all, 12 recent acquisitions are being shown for the first time in the current installations.

NOW ON VIEW

Frances Bagley
American, born 1946
***Centrifugal Torso*, 1990**
Bronze
Nasher Sculpture Center, Gift of the
Barrett Collection, Dallas, TX, 2020

Centrifugal Torso dates from a crucial period in Bagley's career when she was transitioning from collaborative work with the influential women's art collaborative Toxic Shock to her own artistic vocabulary, experimenting with cast and welded metal forms that approximate female figures. Here, the figure is reduced to a series

of roughly concentric lines joined to a simple, crude armature. Each element of the dynamic composition was formed in wood and cast in bronze, with the help of Harry Geffert and Green Mountain Foundry, through a burnout process in which the original forms are destroyed. The resulting sculpture suggests a crude vessel, each strap and post retaining the wood grain of the original structure. The sculpture recalls a remnant from an ancient civilization, while questioning traditional notions of femininity and womanhood as a vessel to carry life.

Michael Dean

British, born 1977

***FUCKSAKE (WORKING TITLE),
2017***

Reinforced concrete, drinks cans, pages, bagging, padlocks Nasher Sculpture Center, Gift from Collection of Marguerite Steed Hoffman, 2021

Dean's work explores themes of language, the act of writing, and the complexities of communication in a variety of forms, including sculpture, photography, poetry, plays, publications, and performance. His process has been described as a series of translations: writing, creating diagrammatic typographies of his text, then embodying those texts in physical form. Made of concrete reinforced with steel rebar, his sculpture vaguely resembles letters of the alphabet and carries pages of Dean's self-published books, which are in turn filled with opaque, almost nonsensical phrases printed in pictogram lettering designed by the artist. The work is studded with heart shapes, as well as fists cast from his and his family members' hands, aluminum cans, and clusters of small locks. These commonplace objects and materials project an extraordinary humanity: slightly hunched, slumped, and leaning on one another, their concrete "skin" resembling wrinkled flesh, the sculptures take on human qualities that elicit sympathy.

Piero Golia

Italian, born 1974

Intermission Painting #26 red to purple, 2015

EPS foam, hard coat and pigment

77 x 48 x 9.5 in. (195.6 x 121.9 x 24.1 cm)

Gift of Bret and Lester Levy, Jr, Dallas

Piero Golia's series of wall-based sculptures titled Intermission Paintings (2014–15) are made from foam offcuts of a one-to-one foam replica of George Washington's nose on Mount Rushmore which have been embedded in a hard layer of polymer. Golia then painted the polymer with the kind of iridescent nano-pigments used in security ink for printing bank notes—an added reference to Washington, who appears on the US dollar bill. These incidental scraps are transformed into dynamic artifacts and luscious wall sculptures that at different turns evoke fractured, striated fossils, or sleek, if crushed, auto bodies with colors and surfaces that oscillate as the viewer moves around them. The Intermission Paintings represent a return to the studio for the artist, and a new approach to painting and sculpture, while referencing art historical movements and moments like Finish Fetish, Light and Space, and Pop art.

Joseph Havel

American, born 1954

Curator, 1996

Shirt collar, steel, thread, and buttons

Nasher Sculpture Center,

Gift of the Barrett Collection, Dallas, TX, 2020

In the mid-1990s, Havel created a series of works from deconstructed men's dress shirts, removing the collar and buttons and extending them to just above the floor on a needle and thread. Set at the height of Havel's body, these works were often titled *Aura* and served as stand-ins for the artist at several exhibitions, highlighting the physical absence but conceptual presence of the artist. *Curator* was made not from one of Havel's shirts, but from that of Peter Doroshenko, curator of a 1996 exhibition of Havel's work at the Soros Center for Contemporary Art in Kiev, Ukraine, where this work debuted. The delicate sculpture underlines the curator's often unseen role in the presentation of an artist's work. Havel was also interested in the white dress shirt as a medium through which he could address complex biological, historical, economic, and sociological issues. Using just the collar and buttons on a long thread, the work both suggests and undermines the presence of a human figure, as well as the societal associations of the object: authority, substance, enterprise, and moral rectitude.

Simone Leigh
American, born 1967
***Kasama*, 2020**

Glazed stoneware Nasher Sculpture Center, Acquired with the support of the Green Family Art Foundation, courtesy Adam Green Art Advisory, 2020

Leigh makes sculptural objects in a variety of materials, including clay, bronze, and raffia, often in combination with elements of video, installation, and performance, to assert and explore Black female subjectivity. Her practice draws upon ongoing research in African art, vernacular architecture, traditional practices of healing and protest, and the histories of Black lives in the US. Named for a city in northern Zambia, *Kasama* presents the head and torso of a female figure with smoothed-over indentations where her eyes should be, suggesting inner vision. The thick, glossy white glaze, pocked with the recesses of small air bubbles, recalls both the frothing waterfalls around Kasama, as well as the surface of a seashell, such as the cowries that play a significant role in African art and culture and are also a motif in Leigh's work.

James Magee
American, born 1946
***Airport Road*, 1984**
Steel, paint, wood, burlap, flower petals, paper, glass, and wax Nasher Sculpture Center, Gift of the Barrett Collection, Dallas, TX, 2020

Working with an array of found and castoff materials, Magee creates powerful, sensuous assemblages and sculptural reliefs. The resulting works of art are at once uncannily familiar and completely alien. Often framed in steel boxes and covered with protective glazing, they are containers of enigmatic symbols, like reliquaries of an industrial civilization. Densely layered, these abstract collages transcend their materiality and call to mind a panoply of associations—personal, art historical, and religious. *Airport Road* is a significant work in Magee's development; it is his first free-standing relief panel.

Catalina Ouyang
American, born 1993
***pronoun of love (THEN LIE SO STILL, AS THIS CLOUDY DAY)*, 2021**
Epoxy clay, polymer clay, paper pulp, pigment, beeswax, copper, resin, engraved plastic,
text from *Wide Sargasso Sea*

pronoun of love (SHE HAD LEFT ME THIRSTY AND ALL MY LIFE WOULD BE THIRST AND LONGING FOR WHAT I HAD LOST BEFORE I FOUND IT), 2021

**Soapstone, paper pulp, epoxy clay, copper, resin, engraved plastic,
text from *Wide Sargasso Sea***

pronoun of love (I SAW THE HATE GO OUT OF HER EYES), 2021

**Soapstone, paper pulp, copper, resin, engraved plastic,
text from *Wide Sargasso Sea***

Nasher Sculpture Center, Purchase, 2022

These three works from Catalina Ouyang's *pronoun of love* suggest bodies in a state of becoming. Their suspended, hybrid forms, whose heads suggest the profile of a puppy, turn from our gaze to confront themselves in framed black mirrors cast in resin. The panels below present excerpts from Jean Rhys's 1966 revisionist novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*, which takes up the subject of the first Mrs. Rochester, the so-called "madwoman in the attic" in Charlotte Brontë's nineteenth-century novel *Jane Eyre*. In Rhys's prequel, the Creole protagonist Antoinette Cosway marries Rochester, an English gentleman, who renames her "Bertha," takes her back to England from her Caribbean birthplace, confines her, and soon declares her mad. Ouyang has drawn the excerpts accompanying each work from *pronoun of love* from a section of Rhys's book presenting an inner monologue from Rochester, who denounces his wife and her birthplace in a fevered rush of vitriol and panic. By pairing these excerpts with the puppies' gaze into their respective mirrors, Ouyang suggests correspondences between Rochester's experience of falling out of love with Antoinette and the "mirror stage"—a psychoanalytic term identifying the self-alienating moment infants recognize themselves in a mirror. Ouyang's sculptures invite viewers to consider how the ways in which colonialist historical narratives nonconsensually write colonized lands and people into existence and how such discourse has conflated land with the feminine body as a way to assert control over both.

Liu Wei

Chinese, born 1972

Library V–V, 2017–2018

Iron, steel, wood, and books

Nasher Sculpture Center, Gift of the Giambrone Family, 2021

Since 2006, Liu Wei has used compressed print materials and books as a medium for sculpture. These works demonstrate Liu's interest in the relationship between materiality and subject matter. In *Library V–V*, Liu conflates the activities of reading and looking with the rhetoric of civilization through the representation of a cityscape. Comprising massive piles of books sourced from second-hand markets in Beijing that the artist carved into forms resembling eroded cityscapes, *Library V–V* evokes a sprawling metropolis caught in a state of flux due to development and demolition that has rendered the city and its characteristic landmarks unrecognizable. In carving books into cityscapes the artist questions the nature of knowledge as a foundation of society and summons images of censorship. "Books are the carriers of knowledge, but also a reliable source for people to collectively make sense of the past, present, and future realities of a city," notes Liu. "Using 'cut' [i.e., the act of cutting] to destroy books is a symbolic way to interrupt knowledge systems."

Nasher Sculpture Center

PRESS RELEASE

About the Nasher Sculpture Center:

Open since 2003 and located in the heart of the Dallas Arts District, the Nasher Sculpture Center is home to one of the finest collections of modern and contemporary sculptures in the world, the Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection, featuring more than 300 masterpieces by Calder, de Kooning, di Suvero, Giacometti, Hepworth, Kelly, Matisse, Miró, Moore, Picasso, Rodin, Serra and more. The longtime dream of the late Raymond and Patsy Nasher, the museum was designed by world-renowned architect Renzo Piano in collaboration with landscape architect Peter Walker. The Nasher Sculpture Center presents rotating exhibitions of works from the Nasher family collection as well as rigorous contemporary exhibitions. The Nasher is also home to the Nasher Prize, an annual award dedicated exclusively to excellence in contemporary sculpture. In addition to indoor gallery space, the Center contains an auditorium, education and research facilities, and a cafe. The Nasher is open Wednesday – Sunday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$5 for students, and free for children 12 and under and members, and includes access to special exhibitions. For more information, visit www.NasherSculptureCenter.org

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