

Dallas museum unveils project for public art

❶ The Nasher Sculpture Center announces its 10th-anniversary program for 10 Dallas neighborhoods.

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DALLAS — For its 10th anniversary, the Nasher Sculpture Center has commissioned 10 artists to make public artwork for 10 city neighborhoods, the first city-wide museum-organized public art effort in the United States.

Nasher director Jeremy Strick introduced the Nasher XChange program Wednesday, noting that the Roman numeral X is 10.

On hand to announce the initiative were Mayor Mike Rawlings and the City Council. Although the council has a histo-



Pet Sounds, by Charles Long, graced Madison Square Park in New York City last year. He has joined the Dallas project. James Ewing

ry of infighting, the assembled throng was all smiles.

The success of the public art program in DART stations paved the way for the enthusiastic support of the Nasher program. Art that resonates with the history and demographics of Dallas neighborhoods has proved to be a positive and

one that politicians are happy to endorse.

Public art does not come without many committee meetings and negotiations. Of the 10 artists who have agreed to the challenge, those from North Texas are Vicki Meek of Dallas, who has three DART stations to her credit, and the Good/Bad Art Collective of Denton. Many of the 70 or so artists who participated in Good/Bad from 1994 to 2001, when the group was most active and well-known, have established successful art careers. Several, including Martin Iles and Erick Swenson, are reconvening for this opportunity.

New York City artists Rachel Harrison, Alfredo Jaar and Ugo Rondinone are signed on.

Another is Rick Lowe of Houston, who repurposed a series of derelict shotgun houses in Houston's Third Ward into galleries, classrooms and community gathering spaces for what he calls "social sculpture." Enthusiasts consider it one of the most successful community art projects ever.

Los Angeles-based sculptors include Liz Lerner and Charles Long who have extensive résumés of international solo shows, and Ruben Ochoa, who turns common construction materials, including chain link fencing, into sublime sculptures.

Coming to Dallas from the Netherlands is Lara

Almarcegui, a Spanish artist living in Rotterdam.

The artists' interests and art practices have drawn them to select specific locations in Dallas, but the sites have not been disclosed. Rawlings said they will not be confined to the Arts District.

Organizers hope the artworks will stimulate comment.

"Art can inspire exchanges, opportunities and innovative methods that produce meaningful conversations in communities," Strick said.

The conversations will not last long; the sculptures and installations are not destined to be permanent.

"They are meant to be ephemeral," Nasher curator Jed Morse said. "They are not meant to have a life after the exhibit."

The unveiling of the XChange works is scheduled to coincide with the Nasher anniversary date, Oct. 20. They will be on exhibit through Feb. 16.

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