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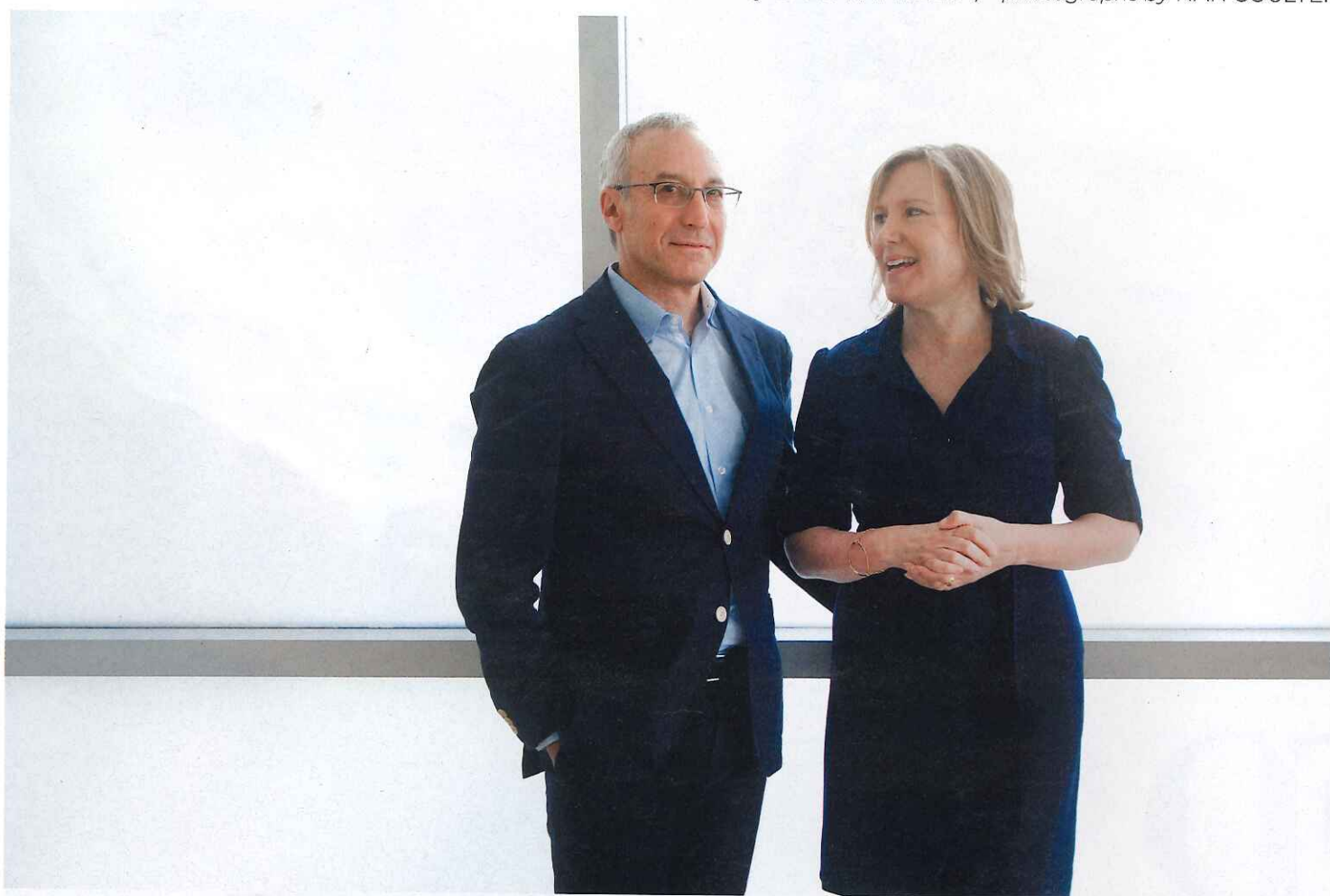
UPENDED

*DECORATION + DESIGN + DALLAS*

# Where change lives

THE NASHER SCULPTURE CENTER'S TRANSFORMATIVE DIRECTOR  
LIVES LIKE HE WORKS: QUIETLY, YET SPEAKING VOLUMES.  
ONE INTELLECTUAL MAKES HER CASE.

by CHRISTINA REES / photographs by NAN COULTER

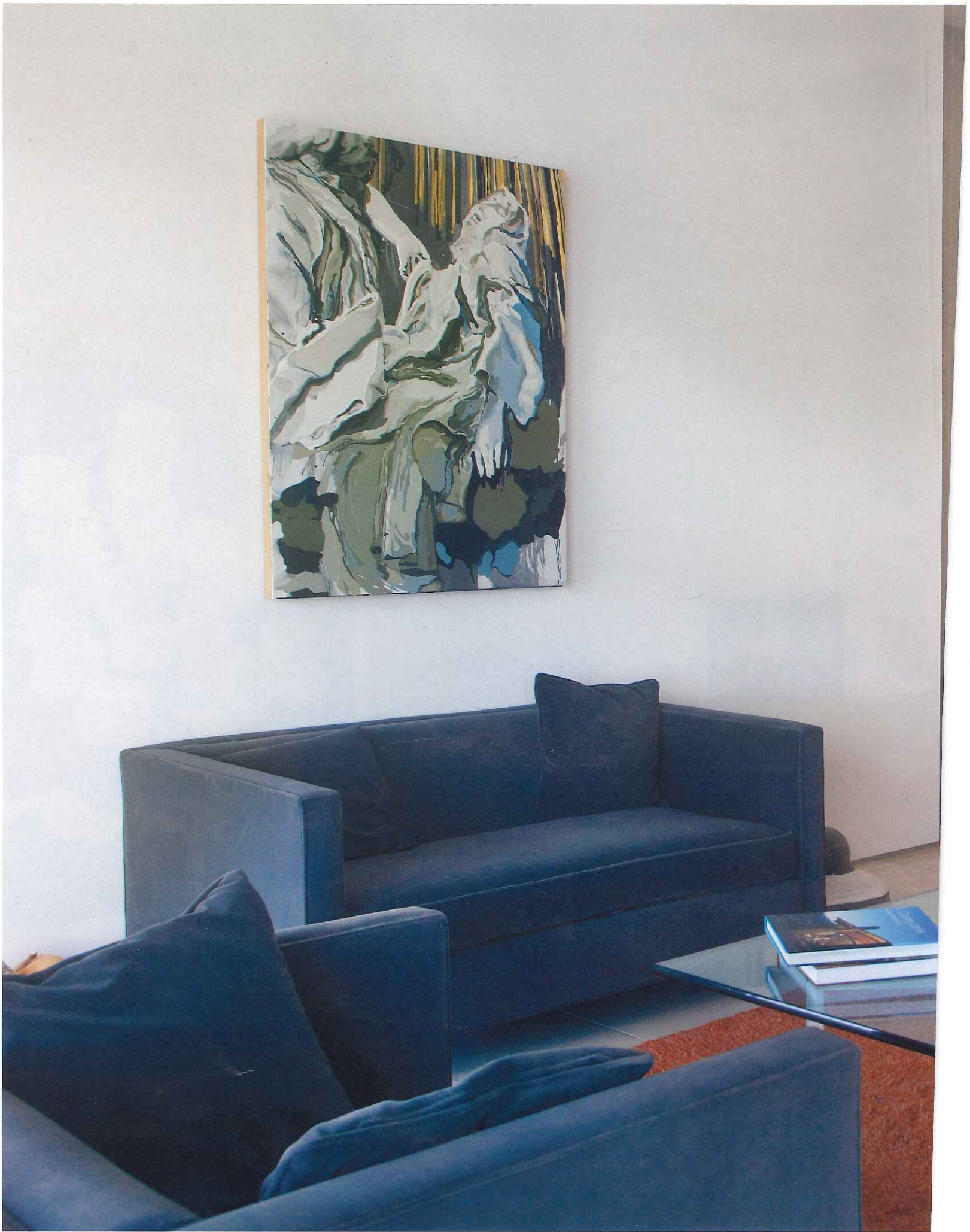


ABOVE: Jeremy and Wendy Strick, at home. OPPOSITE: In the Stricks' entry, a circa 1820 painting, artist unknown, and *Rollo de Papel*, 2001, watercolor on paper, by Los Carpinteros.

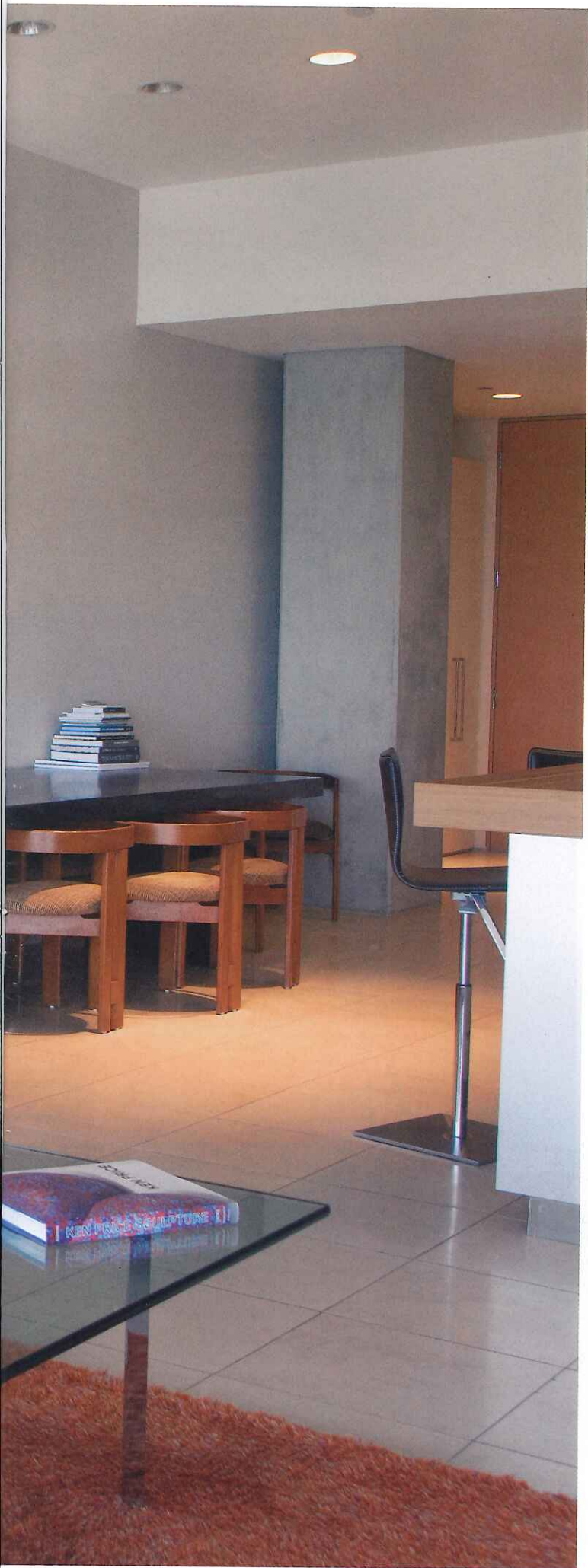












This month, the Nasher Sculpture Center launches the Nasher XChange, the biggest multi-artist, cross-city installation of its kind, ever. Given its scope, nearly any Dallasite with open eyes will come across some part of it without even trying. The XChange, which marks the 10-year anniversary of the Nasher, is a commissioned mix of local, national and international artists creating major works to be installed at various — and some surprising — locations throughout the city. Rachel Harrison, Alfredo Jaar, Rick Lowe and the storied Good/Bad Art Collective are just some of the marquee names, and the project will likely draw global attention.

The powerhouse behind this feat is one of the quietest, most restrained leaders one could meet: Jeremy Strick. The California transplant has, since his 2009 appointment as director of the Nasher, been turning the Dallas institution into one of the most satisfying venues for living artists — not just in the region, but throughout the entire cynical and cash-flooded art world. While many art institutions have followed a trend of appointing specialist fundraisers to their director spot, the Nasher has, in Strick, a director who cut his teeth as a bona-fide curator. He puts the art and artists first — and his instincts are leading Dallas into the healthiest relationship it has ever had with contemporary art.

Strick came to Dallas from a nine-year stint directing the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA) during its most critically acclaimed and influential



ABOVE: In the kitchen, a numbered Jeff Koons plate, *Balloon Dog (MOCA Edition)*, 1995. LEFT: In the living space, a Ludwig Mies van der Rohe coffee table and *St. Teresa*, oil and enamel on canvas, 2005, by Los Angeles artist Kirsten Everberg.

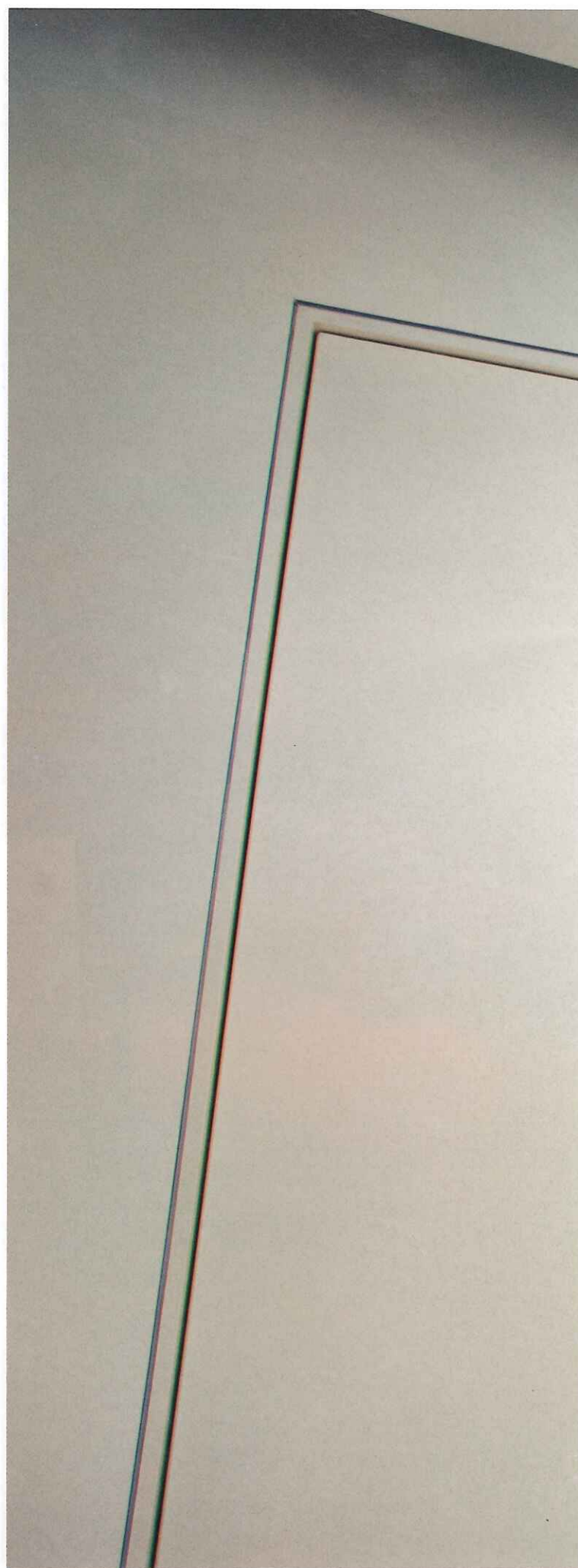


years. There, he ushered in still-resonant landmark exhibitions by the likes of Marlene Dumas, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Martin Kippenberger and Lucian Freud, and he oversaw the sizable expansion of MOCA's space, membership and permanent collection. Prior to that, Strick was senior curator at the Art Institute of Chicago and also served curatorial time at the Saint Louis Art Museum and the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. He knew and admired the late Ray and Patsy Nasher and was familiar with the Nasher Sculpture Center's excellent permanent collection — Calder, de Kooning, Giacometti, Picasso, et al. — and its stellar Renzo Piano-designed building.

So how have Strick and his wife Wendy settled into the rhythms of Dallas? Rather well. Both native Los Angelenos (Strick's father, Joseph Strick, was an Oscar-winning film director), the Stricks have brought with them a mix of relaxed charm and intellectual curiosity, which endears them to most everyone they meet. They are fully engaged. If Dallas' young artists are staging an event anywhere in the city and the Stricks are in town, you can count on seeing their black Prius glide up. If a movie about them were being cast, Wendy would be played by Meryl Streep — inquisitive, witty and psychologically, almost unnervingly, astute — and Jeremy would be played by the late great Peter Sellers: ever observant, quietly precise in speech and in movement, and an aficionado of both abstract thought and absurdity. With their two grown children, Adam and Amanda, pursuing their studies in other states, the Stricks

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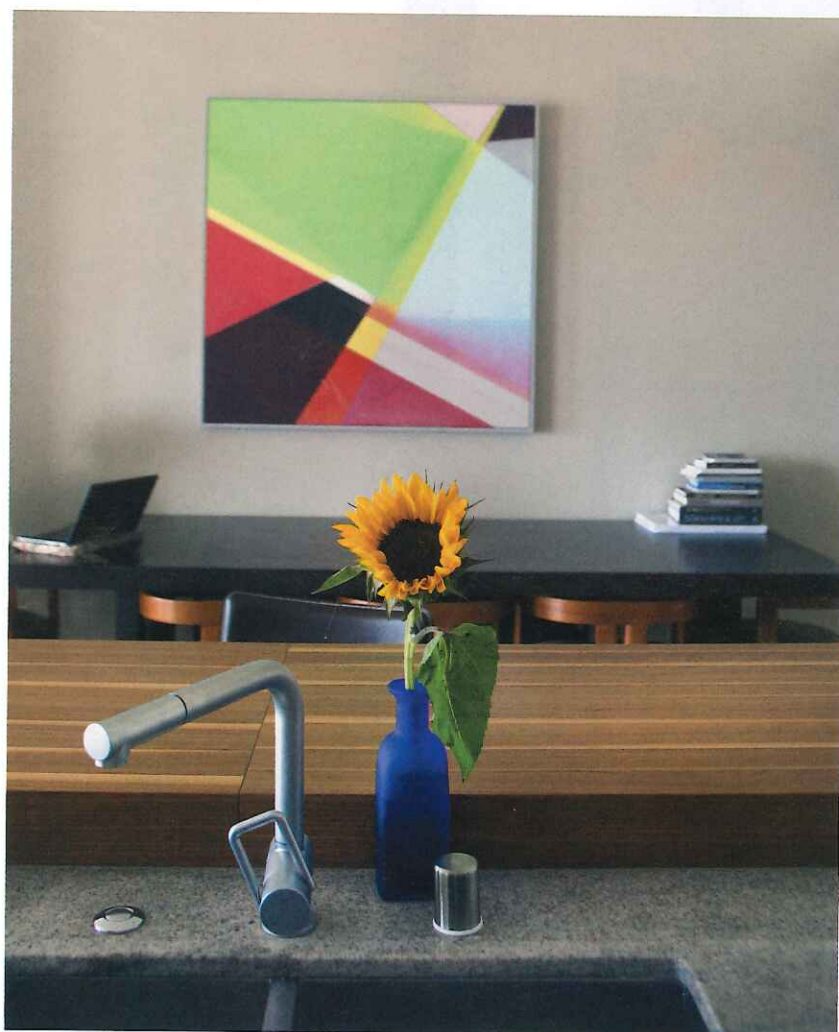
In a hall, *Raised Eyebrows/Furrowed Foreheads: Woman (with Semaphore Flags)*, 2009, by California conceptual artist John Baldessari. In 1970, Baldessari famously burned all the paintings he made between 1953 and 1966 in a crematorium and baked the ashes into cookies.







This same sensibility informs the Nasher Sculpture Center's excellent opening parties, which make terrific use of the Nasher's peaceful, sculpture-filled garden designed by architect Peter Walker. These gatherings are awash in the most interesting — and genuinely interested — culture lovers in Dallas. Top collectors and board members mingle with artists, curators with students, academics with journalists and gallerists. In a city of institutions still learning that contemporary-art fans come in all stripes, only the Nasher has managed to resolutely bring these different tiers together on a regular, matter-of-fact basis. In fact, the whole outfit pulses with intelligence and inclusiveness. Since Strick's arrival, exhibitions have reflected a steady stream of worldly energy not found often enough in Dallas-Fort Worth's art scene. Alongside Nasher curator and Dallas native Jed Morse, Strick has brought in Martin Creed's overwhelming room of balloons, Katharina Grosse's trippy and engulfing moonscapes, Ernesto Neto's massive and

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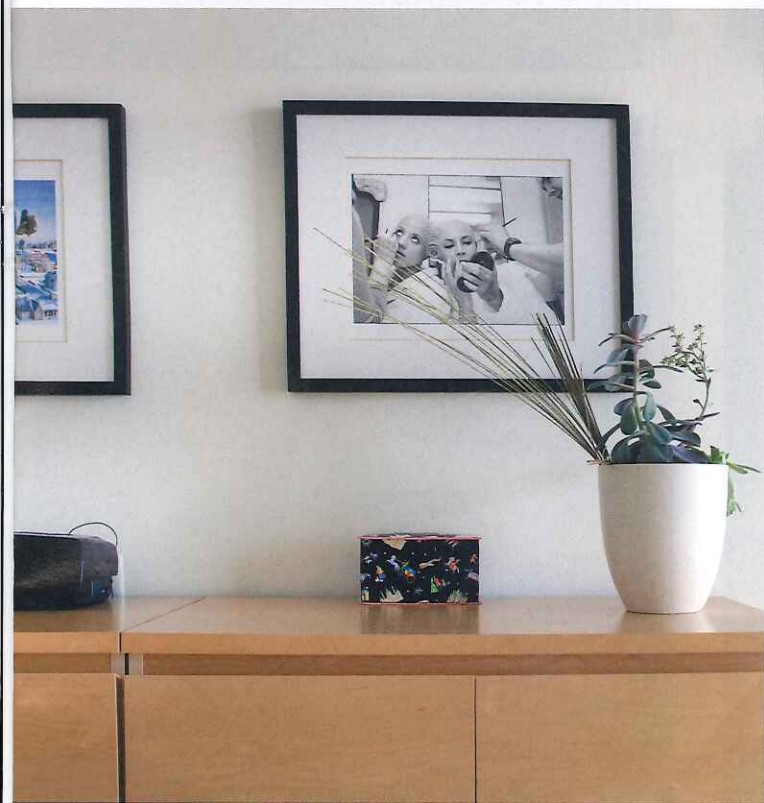




The Stricks  
have settled into  
One Arts Plaza, which  
makes for an easy walk  
to work for Jeremy and a  
Woody Allen-esque style of  
living for them both.

traversable woven marvel, a retrospective of Ken Price's weirdly disarming, character-filled ceramics and Dallas-based Erick Swenson's snail-encrusted, bottomless beer stein. (You read that correctly.) The shows are crowd-pleasers, but with scholarship credibility intact. Under Strick, the Nasher's regular programming has also evolved dramatically. "Sightings" is a series of smaller exhibitions showcasing emerging artists. "Soundings" is the acclaimed music-performance series curated by Seth Knopp, a founding member of the Peabody Trio. The ongoing 360 visiting-lecturer series has welcomed such luminaries as Tony Cragg, Lawrence Weiner and Richard Wentworth. The events are well-attended, though they still feel intimate. They reflect a true salon culture that is rare in Dallas and often lost to larger institutions. At 10 years old, the Nasher is still very young in museum years, but its current momentum is so reassuring that it feels like it is becoming the beating heart of the growing Arts District.

*CHRISTINA REES is a writer and curator based in Dallas, a former curator at Fort Worth Contemporary Arts: The Art Galleries at Texas Christian University and the former owner-director of Road Agent gallery.*



OPPOSITE PAGE: In the bedroom, a painting by artist Eduard Biedermann, Jeremy Strick's great-uncle; the armchair is a laminated-maple Cross Check Chair from Knoll, by architect Frank Gehry, who was inspired by the apple crates he played with as a boy. THIS PAGE, above: Belle, the 8-year-old Havanese, and her people. LEFT: Also in the bedroom, photographs by David Strick, Jeremy Strick's brother, who shoots Hollywood sets and streets; at left, a set dresser at work on *Deck the Halls*; at right, getting special-effects makeup for *Not Another Teen Movie*.



# THE STRICK EFFECT

Artists, a critic,  
a curator

**1** JED MORSE, promoted to chief curator under Jeremy Strick. Photographed at the Nasher, September 3.

**2** Houston artists THE ART GUYS, Michael Galbreth (left) and Jack Massing, brought to the Nasher for its 360 lecture series. Photographed at the Nasher, July 14, 2012.

**3** ERICK SWENSON, subject of the first exhibition of a Dallas-based artist at the Nasher. Photographed at the Nasher, August 29.

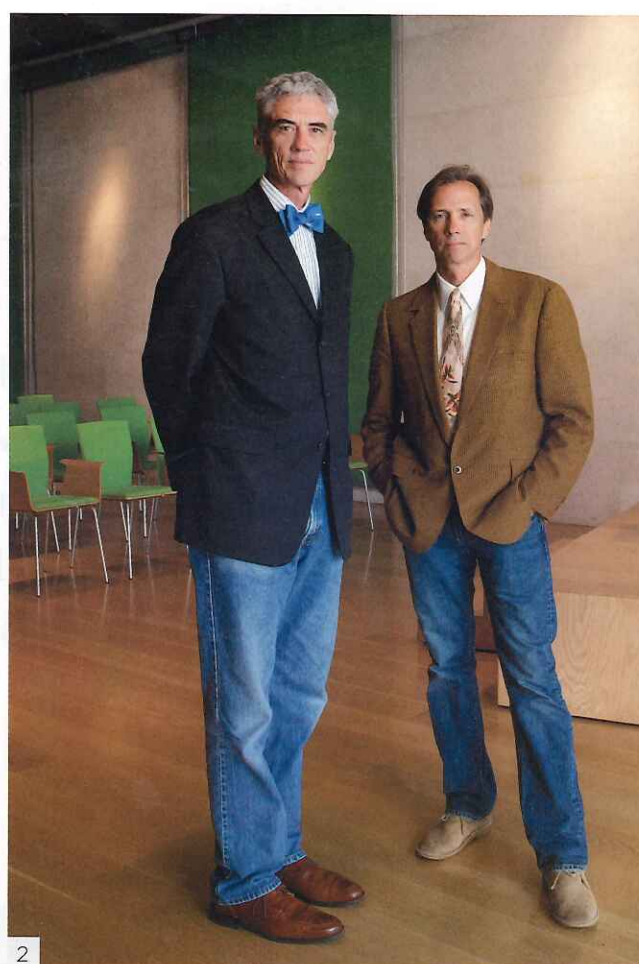
**4** Dallas-based artist RICHARD PATTERSON, one of the Young British Artists (YBAs), member of the Nasher's Program Advisory Committee and speaker at the Nasher's Gallery Lab. Photographed at the Nasher, September 4.

**5** MICHAEL KIMMELMAN, chief architecture critic of *The New York Times*, brought in for the 2013 Dallas Design Symposium. Photographed at the Nasher, May 5.

**6** Berlin artist KATHARINA GROSSE, featured in the major exhibition "Wunderblock" and one of the working contemporary artists Strick has brought to the Nasher. Photographed at the Nasher, June 2.

**7** Houston artist RICK LOWE, whose social sculpture for the Vickery Meadow neighborhood will be part of the Nasher XChange. Photographed at Vickery Meadow, September 5.

**8** London artist RICHARD WENTWORTH, brought to the Nasher for its 360 lecture series. Photographed at the Nasher, November 17, 2012.







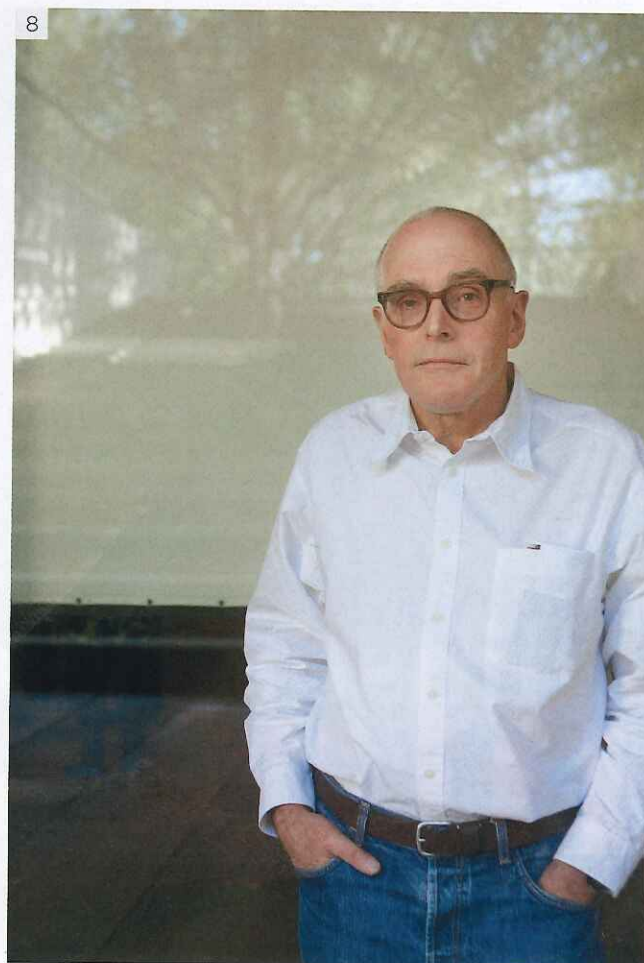
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