

Review Art exhibit

10 for 10

The Nasher Sculpture Center's commemorative project is as much about its far-flung Dallas settings as it is about the works that will draw viewers to them

By Gaile Robinson
grobinson@star-telegram.com

DALLAS — The Nasher Sculpture Center is celebrating its 10th anniversary citywide.

The institution invited 10 artists to install pieces in sites throughout Dallas, from south of Interstate 30 to north of I-635. The intention was to spread the wealth around town, to place art in high-traffic areas or in unexpected places. The project is titled “Nasher XChange.”

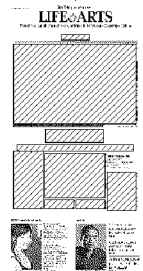
The international coterie was given free rein in choosing locations, and the results are wide-ranging in vision and success.

Los Angeles-based artist Ruben Ochoa was invited to create a public sculpture commission, and he hit a home run on his first at-bat.

His piece *Flock in Space* is perfect in placement and execution. He selected the Trinity River Audubon Center in far south Dallas. The reserve is located in the largest urban hardwood forest in the United States. It exists on the edge of a metropolitan area because it had been used as an illegal dumping ground for decades. Now that it has been cleaned and protected, it is a popular destination for hikers and cyclists, as well as a stopover for migratory birds.

Ochoa, who typically works with concrete, scrap metal, wood pallets and dirt, the detritus of urban landfills, felt an affinity for the site and its unsavory history. He salvaged chain-link fence posts still attached to their cone-shaped concrete footings, a common find

More on **REVIEW, 6E**



in the area, to create *Flock in Space*.

The pipe bodies with concrete heads look like birds ready to take flight. The weight of the heads causes the long pipes to sway in the wind and give additional animation to his flock of junk birds. Asked if there was any danger to children who might be tempted to try and hitch a ride, he responded, "These are solid materials used for playgrounds and prisons; they should be fine," without specifying if he meant his birds or the children.

A much less successful project was Lara Almarcegui's *Buried House*. Locat-

ed in Oak Cliff Gardens, originally a stop for stage-coaches heading to central Texas, it is now a neighborhood of modest frame homes. Habitat for Humanity is very active in the area, and has reconditioned many of the houses and is in the process of building new ones.

Almarcegui asked for one of the homes slated for demolition. She had it buried on its lot, and the resulting mound now marks the space. Under it is the former house — all of it, including walls, plumbing, foundation and roof. At the end of the exhibition, it will be unearthed and a new home built on the site. The artist wants people to "reflect on the memorial and consider the neighborhood's transition."

It's a difficult request

when you feel the eyes of the neighbors boring into your back. The visitor feels like an interloper, part of an unwelcome sightseeing invasion. Any attempts at contemplative musings are quickly overcome by guilt at the seeming rudeness of looking at a dirt pile in a neighborhood of family homes where people come out to their front steps to see who has stopped by.

If Almarcegui's intent was to scratch at the liberal veneer of the art-seeking crowds, well done. However, if it is, as she says, to initiate a reflective moment, that is difficult to do during a hasty, head-down retreat.

Still in gestation

Some of the projects are meant to gain momentum during the run of the exhibition and have yet to reach their full potential. Alfredo Jaar's *Music (Everything I know I learned the day my son was born)* is a brilliant, touching concept that had yet to launch on opening weekend. He wanted to do something that would reach out to the local audience that doesn't typically come to the museum.

He is extending a welcome to the very youngest residents of Dallas by recording their moments of birth and broadcasting the sounds of the delivery room. Each day for the duration of the exhibition, at the exact time those babies are born, their particular soundtrack will replay. The recording equipment is set up in three Dallas hospitals. Each family that participates will get a year's membership to the museum. Each new baby will get a lifetime membership, a level created just for this project. By the end of the run in February, it is estimated that 5,000-7,000 babies will have been born,



Moore to the Point, by Rachel Harrison, is a sculpture in service to a sculpture at City Hall. [Nasher Sculpture Center/Allison V. Smith](#)



West Dallas' Fish Trap Lake is the setting for *dear sunset*, by Ugo Rondinone.

Nasher Sculpture Center/Allison V. Smith



dear sunset, by Ugo Rondinone, 3200 Fish Trap Road, Dallas

Courtesy of [Nasher Sculpture Center](#)/Allison V. Smith

recorded and enrolled.

The sounds of all these entries into the world will emanate from Jarr's large green glass-paneled box in the Nasher's sculpture garden. By 2014 it should be rocking with the sounds of newborns and their parents. How many of the new members will avail themselves of their lifetime memberships will remain to be seen. The artist hopes they will "change the demographics of this museum."

Jaar's project is a heartwarming gesture, and celebratory of new life and its possibilities. "It epitomizes what we are trying to do

here," says Nasher director Jeremy Strick. Unfortunately, it is the single exhibit of "Nasher XChange" located inside the Nasher Sculpture Center, where admission is charged.

On Monday, the efforts of the Good/Bad Art Collective, with several Fort Worth-based members, will move from pupal to finished when the group's interactive performance piece, *Curtains*, which was filmed as an infomercial, is broadcast on local and national television stations in the least expensive time slots, meaning late-night or very early morning.

Portions of it were

filmed during opening weekend, and for the past two weeks, it has been in the editing process. What it is and what it looks like is still a mystery. *Curtains* is billed as dark and thought-provoking, if that helps identify it. The set used will be on view for the run of the exhibition on the 14th floor of Bryan Tower, 2001 Bryan St.

Education and interaction

Several of the other works are less high-concept. There is Liz Larner's large X-form sculpture, located on the campus of the University of Texas at Dallas in the new Arts and Technology building. *X* pleases the powers at the university, as the new building houses arts, humanities, science and engineering, and the artwork embodies the intersection of these disciplines. A stainless-steel version of the same shape is being created for an outdoor location.

Charles Long's *Foundationhead* in NorthPark Center is an animated wishing well that is active

More on NASHER, 7E

ated when someone runs a credit card through a card reader and donates \$1, \$3 or \$5 to the Dallas Public Library, the North Texas Food Bank or Dallas CASA. Simulated dollar bills are seen coursing down a rock obelisk, and when a donation is made, a virtual gold coin flips into the fountain and a splash is heard. While its greatest appeal will be for people too young to qualify for their own credit cards, their delight will no doubt prompt their parental attendants to pony up for the charities.

The project undertaken by Dallas artist Vicki Meek, *Black & Blue: Cultural Oa-*

sis in the Hills, records the contribution Bishop College (now the campus of Paul Quinn College) brought to the academic and cultural life of south Dallas. She has amassed significant moments in Bishop's history through news clippings and photographs for collages, and voice recordings and videos for a website (<http://bishopblackandblue.com>) that "reclaim the African American history. These colleges are the citadels of wisdom for the black community," she says. Fearing that the history was only in the memory of Bishop's staff and graduates, she wanted to collect what could be found and remembered before it was lost.

When scouting Dallas for a possible sculpture site, New York-based art-

ist Rachel Harrison came across Henry Moore's sculpture *Three Forms Vertebrae (The Dallas Piece)* on the grounds of Dallas City Hall. Typically it was surrounded by a low fence to deter anyone from getting too close.

Harrison was incensed. The Moore was meant to be accessible and to be walked through, not encaged like a goat. She asked that the fence be removed. To call attention to the interior of

the piece, Harrison created a 25-foot-tall pink arrow pointing to the pathway. It is a glaringly unsubtle attempt of way-finding to one of Dallas' best public art works.

Rick Lowe, an art activist from Houston, worked with the residents of the Vickery Meadow neighborhood. He chose the densely populated area for its cultural diversity for a work of social sculpture.

In a 3-square-mile area,

27 languages are spoken. He held a number of neighborhood meetings asking the residents what they wanted. The response was a desire to feel more connected to each another and to the city outside of Vickery Meadow.

With the help of community organizers, Lowe set up *Trans.lation*, an urban marketplace to highlight local creativity, collaboration and mentorship. A series of pop-up markets and entertainment venues will appear one Saturday a month for the next four months, Nov. 23, Dec. 21, Jan. 18 and Feb. 22, along Ridgcrest Road.

On opening day it was jumping, and the neighbors were out in force, but so were Dallas police. Whether it was an uneasy alliance or a need for traffic control, the sight of so many officers seemed a bit heavy-handed for the seemingly innocent gathering.

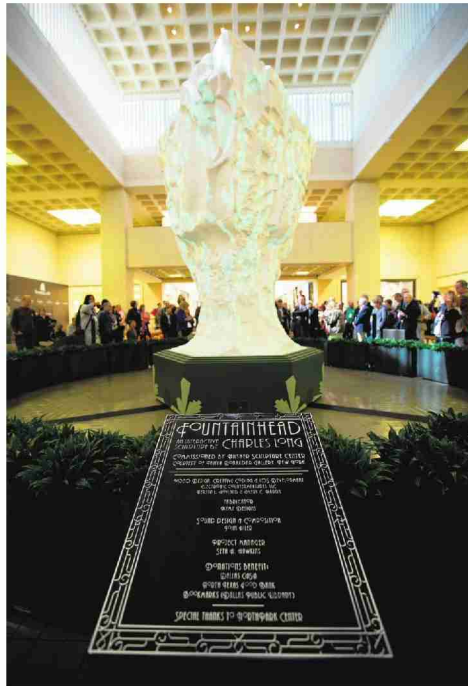
The recommended end of the tour-day piece is Ugo Rondinone's rainbow-painted pier, *dear sunset*, at Fish Trap Lake in west Dallas. It is best witnessed as the sun sets, when the colors of the pier and sky are their most intense.

It is a poetic end to a daylong field trip of art installations around Dallas.

While not everything is fabulous, the experience of getting out and finding them is. The trip affords sites never seen and new ways of looking at places you've seen before.



Artist Rick Lowe solicited ideas from the Vickery Meadow neighborhood to come up with *Trans.lation*, a series of pop-up markets.
 Nasher Sculpture Center/Allison V. Smith



Charles Long's *Fountainhead* should be a draw for young shoppers at NorthPark Center.
 Nasher Sculpture Center/Allison V. Smith



Alfredo Jaar's *Music (Everything I know I learned the day my son was born)* includes delivery-room recordings to be played in this sculpture at the [Nasher](#)

Nasher Sculpture Center/Allison V. Smith

to a sculpture at City Hall.

Nasher Sculpture Center/Allison V. Smith

babies will have been born



Buried House, by Lara Almarcegui, is exactly what it says it is, in Oak Cliff Gardens.

Nasher Sculpture Center/Allison V. Smit

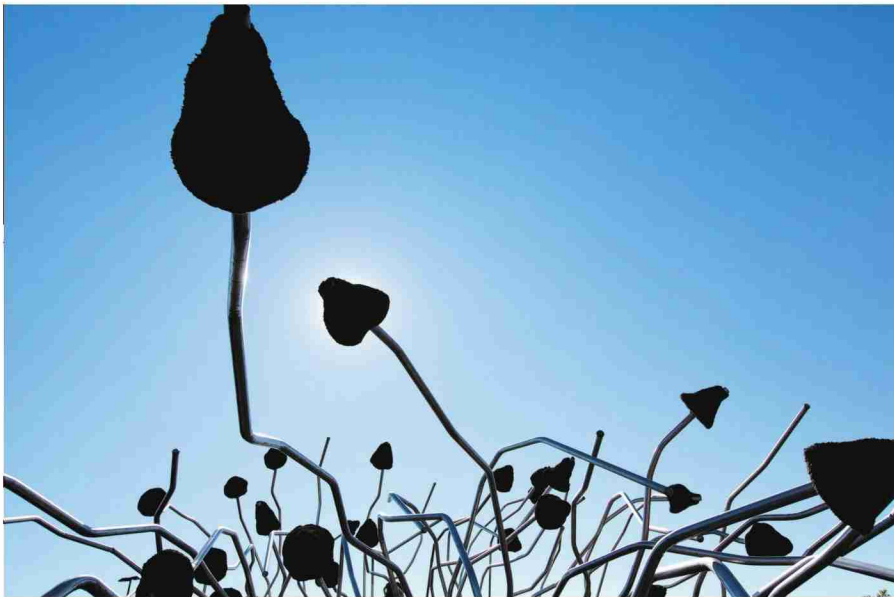


Artist Vicki Meek carries a collage about the history of Bishop College.

Nasher Sculpture Center/Allison V. S



Ruben Ochoa's *Flock in Space* repurposes urban junk into a sculpture that suits its natural setting at the Trinity River Audubon Center.



Flock in Space is Los Angeles-based artist Ruben Ochoa's first public sculpture commission
[Nasher Sculpture Center](#)/Allison V. Smith

The "Nasher XChange" works around Dallas

Information on the works and the artists is available on a free "Nasher XChange" iPhone app. To download a map of locations, visit **Star-Telegram.com/living**.

Black & Blue: Cultural Oasis in the Hills by Vicki Meek

Paul Quinn College, 3837 Simpson Stuart Road

Buried House by Lara Almarcegui

Oak Cliff Gardens, 2226 Exeter Ave.

Curtains by Good/Bad Art Collective

14th floor of Bryan Tower, 2001 Bryan St.

dear sunset by Ugo Rondinone

3200 Fish Trap Road

Flock in Space by Ruben Ochoa

Trinity River Audubon Center, 6500 Great Trinity Forest Way

Fountainhead by Charles Long

NorthPark Center, 8687 North Central Expressway

Moore to the point by Rachel Harrison

City Hall Plaza, 1500 Marilla St.

Music (Everything I know I learned the day my son was born) by Alfredo Jaar

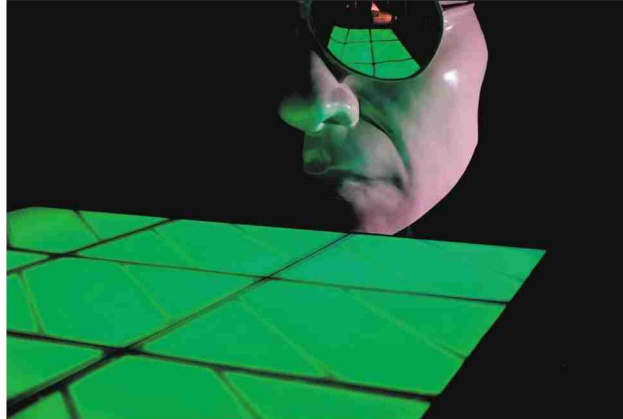
Nasher Sculpture Center, 2001 Flora St.

Trans.lation by Rick Lowe

Nov. 23, Dec. 21, Jan. 18 and Feb. 22 along Ridgcrest Road in Vickery Meadow

X by Liz Larner

University of Texas at Dallas, 800 W. Campbell Road



Curtains, by the Good/Bad Art Collective, will be broadcast on TV beginning Monday.

Nasher Sculpture Center/Allison V. Smith



Artist Rick Lowe solicited ideas from the Vickery Meadow neighborhood to come up with *Trans.lation*, a series of pop-up markets.
Nasher Sculpture Center/Allison V. Smith



Charles Long's *Fountainhead* should be a draw for young shoppers at NorthPark Center.
Nasher Sculpture Center/Allison V. Smith



A stainless-steel version of Liz Larner's X, at UT-Dallas, will be constructed for an outdoor spot.

[Nasher Sculpture Center](#)/Allison V. Smith