


## TRYSTED SISTER

Known for her outsized sculptures that fill whatever space they inhabit, there was some question of how the British artist Phyllida Barlow would occupy the pristine Nasher Sculpture Center for her current show, tryst, which opened at the end of May.

Without fail, Barlow, 71 , finds a way to subjugate the architecture of an exhibition space to her work, swelling objects to such a tremendous size that it seems that the building was constructed around them, accommodating for their bulk, like privacy fences around trees.

Her show at the Nasher is no different. The exhibition is made up of six tremendous sculptures that challenge the pristine architecture of the Renzo Piano-designed building with cheeky, riotous force. Many of the works reach upward to the ceiling and are set in clusters so dense that a viewer must navigate through with focus and not without certain amount of strategy.

Barlow means for the work to direct you, get in your way, and make being within the museum an untidy and disorderly experience. There is no way to have a passive encounter with this work-its scale, color, and unwieldy nature strongarm a viewer into a powerful reckoning with the artful occupiers of the space.

Upon entering the museum, a viewer is met with untitled:stiltedcrates2015, a series of grey boxes perched on crudely painted stilts that tower above the entrance bay. Nearly scraping the glass ceiling, the cubes are staggered like a pack of enormous wild animals within the throughway. The effect is that of a massive takeover, calling to mind scenes from science fiction films or comic books while forcing visitors to navigate under and around the legs of the sculptures in order to get through the gallery.

In the adjacent gallery, the installation opens up a bit, though the sculptures there are even more massive; a bulwark of faux stone, untitled:holder 2015 , hugs the space,


while a techincolored house structure, untitled:stockade2015, teeters on a haphazard stack of black wooden pallets.

On the lower level of the museum, a throng of stilted, brightly colored banners fills the gallery and spills into the connecting space. Entering the installation feels like being part of crowd of protestors or in a festival parade. The piece, like all of the
work here, acrobatically walks a line between the contentious and the joyful, as only Phyllida Barlow can do.

PHYLLIDA BARLOW: trysts is on view through August 30 at Nasher Sculpture Center. nashersculpturecenter.org.

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