

Nasher Sculpture Center Announces *Barry X Ball: Remaking Sculpture*

First major US museum survey exhibition of the American artist explores the intersection of technology and traditional handiwork in sculptures

DALLAS, Texas (October 22, 2019)—The Nasher Sculpture Center announces *Barry X Ball: Remaking Sculpture* on view from January 25, through April 19, 2020. The exhibition will be the first in the United States to survey more than twenty years of the highly technical but classically-inspired work of the New York artist.

Since 1997, Barry X Ball has adapted innovative technologies and traditional techniques to make work that pushes the physical and conceptual boundaries of sculpture. The artist reinvents traditional sculptural formats and existing art historical landmarks using state-of-the-art, 3-D digital scanning technology, computer-aided design software and CNC milling machines, in combination with centuries-old craft techniques requiring thousands of hours of detailed handwork. Rendered in semi-precious materials such as Belgian Black marble, Golden Honeycomb calcite, and Mexican and Iranian onyx, Ball takes advantage of the unique properties of each, allowing irregularities and flaws in the stones to complicate the surfaces and suggest natural deterioration or destructive intervention. *Barry X Ball: Remaking Sculpture* will feature a selection of works from the two main series that have occupied him the past two decades, *Portraits* and *Masterpieces*, to be installed in the light-filled upstairs gallery at the Nasher.

“Meditations upon human form and expression, the history of sculpture, and the nature of materials, these sculptures will present a complex interplay between technological prowess, manual skill, and exceptional artistic imagination,” says Director Jeremy Strick. “The exhibition will astonish and delight. It is not to be missed.”

Ball’s *Portraits* series transforms precise digital scans of carefully tooled plaster casts of his subjects—friends, artists, and art world figures—into strange, evocative sculptures that seem at once ancient and of the digital age. Additions and distortions made to the digital files result in illusionistic and theatrical effects, the stone in some appearing soft and supple, like stretched skin, or in others retaining the linear marks of the milling process to underscore its digital origins. More recently, Ball has begun to push the digital technology to its limits, creating fine, open-work, silver-and-gold portraits, the likeness of which is composed of elements associated with the life of the subject. The newest of these, a portrait of Pope John Paul II, is composed of numerous elements from the life of the pontiff, including the symbols of the papacy as well as smaller sculptures of the Pope at different stages of life; the heads of Hitler, Stalin, and Lenin representing the evil forces he fought against; crossed skis recalling his favorite sport; and a bullet symbolizing his attempted assassination. The motifs define the exterior surface of the portrait, and well as details on the interior of the head, requiring both 3-D printing technology to produce the model and the expert collaboration of the goldsmiths at Damiani jewelers in Italy to produce the final product.

The *Masterworks* series takes as its subject works of art history, from the ancient Greek and Roman Sleeping Hermaphrodite (with 17th century marble mattress by Gian Lorenzo Bernini) in the collection of the Louvre to modernist works by Umberto Boccioni and Medardo Rosso. For these, Ball works with the institutions responsible for each work, making high-resolution 3-D scans of the original works, donating the raw scans for documentation and conservation purposes, and using them as points of departure for his reinterpretations of the works. The artist digitally flips the

composition, so that his work mirrors the original; accentuates, reduces, eliminates, or adds details; and produces the result in exotic stones whose pitting, veining, and translucency suggest a host of new interpretive possibilities.

Organized by the Nasher Sculpture Center, *Barry X Ball: Remaking Sculpture* will be accompanied by a handsomely illustrated catalogue featuring an essay on Ball's work by Nasher Chief Curator, and curator of the exhibition, Jed Morse, and additional contributions by noted scholars, Glenn Adamson and David C. Hunt.

About Barry X Ball

American artist Barry X Ball (b. 1955, Pasadena, CA) is a devotee of art history, modern architecture and design, and car culture. From his student days at Pomona College in California, he has devoured treatises, catalogues, and magazines on the subjects. Initially associated with the group of Post-Minimalism artists around Marcia Hafif and Joseph Marioni in New York in the 1980s, Ball has produced wall-mounted and free-standing works with fetishized surfaces that update key art historical precedents.

His work has been featured in solo exhibitions at Ca' Rezzonico in conjunction with la Biennale di Venezia; MoMA PS 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York; SITE Santa Fe; Magasin 3 Stockholm Konsthall; Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon; Villa Panza, Varese; and Castello Sforzesco, Milan. It has also been included in important group exhibitions at museums including the Museum of Arts and Design, New York; Bass Museum of Art, Miami; Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris; Beijing Today Art Museum; Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MART); Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon.

His work is in the collections of numerous institutions including the Hammer Museum, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Norton Museum of Art, Le Fonds régional d'art contemporain Bretagne, Magasin 3 Stockholm Konsthall, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MART), and The Panza Collection.

Barry X Ball lives and works in New York.

Barry X Ball: *Remaking Sculpture* is made possible with leading support by *Elizabeth Redleaf*.

For high resolution images, please follow this link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/4vwadm4ve2h5lj3/AADhseQNxQhQAAjTq7QhW1H7a?dl=0>

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About the Nasher Sculpture Center:

Located in the heart of the Dallas Arts District, the Nasher Sculpture Center is home to the Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection, one of the finest collections of modern and contemporary sculpture in the world, featuring more than 300 masterpieces by Calder, de Kooning, di Suvero, Giacometti, Gormley, Hepworth, Kelly, Matisse, Miró, Moore, Picasso, Rodin, Serra, and Shapiro, among others. The Nasher Sculpture Center is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 am to 5 pm, and from 10 am to 5 pm on the first Saturday of each month. Admission is \$10 for

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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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