

Nasher Sculpture Center Announces Nasher Public: Christian Cruz

Nasher Public Gallery installation will champion unseen, unacknowledged domestic labor and the struggles of working mothers

DALLAS, Texas (December 1, 2021)—The Nasher Sculpture Center announces Nasher Public: Christian Cruz on view in the Nasher Public Gallery at the corner of Flora and Harwood Streets. The exhibition, called *Pink Collar // Children's Linen*, will be on view December 4, 2021 – January 30, 2022. Performances in the space will take place every Wednesday and Sunday during museum hours. The first performance will be Sunday, December 5, 2021, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

For her Nasher Public installation, Christian Cruz returns to two works from her 2020 solo exhibition at the Dallas-based gallery, *ex ovo*, and expands them in scale and concept. Comprising a suspended cloth sculpture and a column of stacked plastic laundry baskets, Cruz's Nasher Public installation, titled *Pink Collar // Children's Linen*, focuses on the unseen and undervalued labor performed by domestic workers. The artist utilizes materials like baskets or pieces of clothing worn by her daughter as signifiers of the spaces where this labor is performed without pay and often without acknowledgement, but also to highlight how everyday household objects can inspire creativity. Cruz conceived the installation while living in quarantine at the height of the pandemic, when parents—more often, mothers—were overburdened by the increase in caregiving and management of the home at the expense of maintaining their careers. Since 2020, several studies have shown that a vast number of women were pushed out of the workforce during the pandemic due to a lack of resources or support in the form of affordable childcare and paid sick leave. This installation, and Cruz's practice in general, highlights "pink collar" work, or low-wage domestic labor, such as laundering, folding, sewing, and repairing clothes, or caring for children or elders, and dignifies it by placing it in the prominent space of the art museum.

During the run of the exhibition, Cruz will activate the two sculptures with durational performances intended to highlight the labor of pink collar work. During museum hours on Wednesdays and Sundays, Cruz will perform *Basket Performance* by stacking laundry baskets on her head in a careful balancing act that requires concentration and solitude. Facing the corner, the artist's back is to the viewer—a vulnerable position that underscores her isolation and sense of confinement. Over time, the baskets take on greater weight as fatigue sets in and the tedium takes over the performer. Regarding this aspect of *Basket Performance*, Cruz explains:

The duration is a key aspect to the medium and the meaning of the piece. As the task is very simple, and the baskets are lightweight, the burden of this performance will begin to show on the body, the face, and the performer's essence. While most performers are seen as perfect rigid models of human form, durational performances are intended to change over time. This change is apparent in my energy, my passion for the task, and possibly in my inability to accomplish the task. Perhaps instead of standing, I will sit or lay down while balancing the baskets. Or perhaps the baskets will fall to the ground more often than they once did at the beginning of the exhibition. This is part of the performance.

At different times, Cruz will activate the cloth sculpture in a durational performance titled *My Children's Clothing is My Medium* by dressing herself in the excess linen that drapes from the ceiling while balancing the baskets on her head. In both performances, the artist asks the viewer to consider the value of pink collar work and acknowledge the strength and fortitude required to perform it.

About Christian Cruz

Christian Cruz (born 1989) is an educator, independent writer, and award-winning multi-media artist. Her work takes the form of performance, installation, video, and photography within a visual arts context. She attended Columbia College Chicago for Visual Arts Management and held the only poetry residency at The National Museum of Mexican Art in Chicago. In 2013, Cruz hosted and produced *Foraño* at Centro de Cultura Digital in Mexico City. She has performed nationally and internationally in galleries, museums, universities, festivals, and public spaces. In 2020, Cruz created [Artist Mama Fund](#) for single mothers who are artists; and [Dallas Performance Art Index](#), an online archive of performance artists in Dallas, Texas. This year, Cruz has been awarded the Bridge Grant from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, a childcare grant from Parent Artist Advocacy League for Performance Arts, the PNC Artist Grant from Aurora Dallas, and the Artist Grant from Nasher Sculpture Center among others. Cruz was an [EmergeNYC](#) fellow and is currently in virtual residence with INVERSE at The Momentary in Bentonville, Arkansas. She is a mother and a survivor.

About Nasher Public | Nasher Public is an ongoing, two-pronged public art initiative which aims to generate access to public art by North Texas artists at the Nasher and throughout the greater Dallas community. The project launched first at the Nasher in a newly formed gallery, presenting monthly exhibitions, followed by an ongoing series of offsite exhibitions in partnership with area businesses.

About 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 Wednesday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$5 for students, and free for children 12 and under and Members, and includes access to special exhibitions. Visitors must book a timed ticket in advance. For more information, visit www.NasherSculptureCenter.org.

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