

Nasher Sculpture Center Announces Offsite Nasher Public Project: Jeff Gibbons and Gregory Ruppe, Presented in Partnership with Katy Trail Art

Gibbons and Ruppe place bronze, human-faced squirrels along the Katy Trail.

DALLAS, Texas (November 9, 2022) – The Nasher Sculpture Center announces *Borest Forest, Grunting Grasses*, an installation by Jeff Gibbons and Gregory Ruppe that runs the length of the Katy Trail, from the Thomsen Overlook to just south of where the trail intersects Knox Street. The work will be on view November 9, 2022 – March 26, 2023

Borest Forest, Grunting Grasses comprises a series of vignettes featuring sculptures of squirrels that appear at intervals along the trail—in trees and on arbors and fences. The works may blend naturally into the environment of the trail, distinguished from the real animals only by their fixity, as well as their uncanny human faces, which resemble those of the artists themselves. The various placements of the sculptures along the trail suggest a narrative, a slightly surrealist story, like a fairy tale, that reflects the vaguely otherworldly experience of the trail itself—a thin thread of nature strung along an industrial rail line that runs through the urban environs of Uptown.

This is the second time the Nasher has partnered with Katy Trail Art, an initiative that works with museums, art collectors, and the community to share contemporary art along the trail. The inaugural project with the Nasher, Sara Cardona's *Seeding the Path*, installed hanging sculptures reminiscent of Native American seed pods and Akari lanterns.

"Gibbons and Ruppe's Nasher Public installation on the Katy Trail provides a whimsical encounter for trailgoers while prompting deeper reflections about our complicated relationship with nature in the city," says Nasher Chief Curator Jed Morse. This whimsy is typical of the work of Gibbons and Ruppe, who often experiment with environmental psychology in their eccentric installations. *Borest Forest, Grunting Grasses*, with the artist's faces transposed on sculptures of squirrels, continues the artists' deep consideration of our proximity to nature, both beautiful and unsettling.

For the realization of the project, Gibbons and Ruppe worked with Nick Bontrager to digitally render and 3D-print their faces and Geoffrey Broderick at the Abilene Christian University Foundry for the final castings.

The artists will give a talk on Tuesday, November 15th at 5pm on the Katy Trail in the Cambrick Plaza where Cambrick Street meets the trail. Street parking can be found on the roads surrounding 4000 Cambrick Street. Please visit the Nasher's program calendar to register.

Gibbons and Ruppe are independent artists who periodically work together and in collaboration with others, and whose work incorporates sculpture, installation, video, sound, and performance. In addition to the collaborations at the Nasher Sculpture Center noted above, Gibbons and Ruppe have worked together for nearly ten years on a number of projects, at Centraltrak and Beefhaus in Dallas (2014); at Epitome Institute in San Antonio, gallery HOMELAND in Houston, Carillon Gallery, TCC South in Fort Worth, and The MAC in Dallas (2015); on the set for Dallas Neo-Classical Ballet's performance *Masque of Red Death* at the Majestic Theater in Dallas (2016); in *Le Sud Bébé*, Marseille, France (2018); and the ongoing Culture Hole project with Danny Skinner. Gibbons's independent work and solo exhibitions have been exhibited nationally, as well as in Germany, France, Japan, Mexico, Denmark, and Switzerland. Gibbons is represented by Conduit Gallery in Dallas, Texas. Ruppe has presented solo exhibitions and performances across Texas, as well as in Miami, San Francisco, France, Switzerland, Japan, and the United Kingdom. Ruppe also serves as Director of Exhibitions for The Power Station in Dallas.

The artists have exhibited and performed at the Nasher Sculpture Center on three occasions over the past seven years: in 2015 for the announcement of Nasher Prize, Gibbons, Ruppe, and Danny Skinner performed *Dry Again?* with their water tank instruments/sculptures; in 2017 for the Nasher Prize gala celebration of Laureate Pierre Huyghe, the trio performed *Jane Magnolia Jane*, which featured modular synthesis instruments invented by the artists and a Ficus whose biorhythms were translated into musical tones; and in 2018 for the Nancy A. Nasher and David J. Haemisegger Family SOLUNA International Music and Arts Festival, Gibbons and Ruppe created *Grubnik and Suzanne*, an immersive installation in the Nasher Garden which featured installation, video, and sound, including a duet with the buried digital head of Liz Tonne and the biofeedback of a live oak tree translated into English phonetics in an attempt to let the tree learn how to speak.

About the Katy Trail

The Katy Trail, as most locals know it, began in 2000, but the history of the Katy Trail stretches back to the age of railroads. The Union Pacific Railroad built the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad and established the network in 1865. The route was also commonly called the K-T, and eventually the Katy. Following the heyday of the railroad, Union Pacific donated the abandoned lines to the City of Dallas in 1993. In the 1990s, a group of passionate neighbors and local businesses proposed that the line be converted into a public trail. Their idea resulted in the formation in 1997 of Friends of the Katy Trail, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in a private/public partnership with the City of Dallas. Friends of the Katy Trail is charged with maintaining, enhancing, and advocating for the Katy Trail as the premier trail for recreation, wellness, and alternative transportation in Dallas. The Friends is celebrating its 25th Anniversary in 2022.

Today, the Katy Trail is a treasured greenbelt destination for Dallas citizens and visitors and has over 1.5 million visits a year. The Trail is a key quality of life amenity in Dallas and has spurred more than \$1 billion in economic development.

About Katy Trail Art

Katy Trail Art partners with Dallas area museums, art collectors, and the community at large to expand the role of contemporary art in public spaces in Dallas. The Initiative borrows, commissions, and produces world-class art projects on and around the Katy Trail to inspire creativity, spark conversation, encourage self-reflection, challenge assumptions, foster community building, and promote civic ownership of the Katy Trail.

Katy Trail Art Founding Donors

We recognize the Katy Trail Art Founding Donors, who have helped bring the work of Jeff Gibbons and Gregory Ruppe to the Trail: Pat Baudendistel, J. Patrick Collins, Bela and Chase Cooley, Jennifer and John Eagle, Christina and Sal Jafar, Laura and Greg Koonsman, Ann and Chris Mahowald, Jessica and Dirk Nowitzki, Janelle and Alden Pinnell, Kelli and Allen Questrom, John S. Relton, Sewell Automotive Companies, Lindsay and Blake Shipp, Amanda and Charlie Shufeldt, and Amy and Les Ware.

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 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 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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