

Nasher Sculpture Center



Nasher Sculpture Center Announces Final Project of its First Phase of *Nasher Public: Urban Historical Reclamation and Recognition*

After over a year of research and community collaboration, an artist cohort led by Vicki Meek will debut five monuments in Dallas's Tenth Street Historic District Freedman's Town, using augmented reality.

DALLAS, Texas (May 9, 2024) — The Nasher Sculpture Center announces the culminating project of its first iteration of the groundbreaking *Nasher Public: Urban Historical Reclamation and Recognition* (UHRR), honoring the rich history of one of the country's last standing Freedman's Towns: the Tenth Street Historic District Freedman's Town. Through a partnership with New York's Kinfolk Foundation, a team of artists and collaborators will unveil five monuments using augmented reality (AR), celebrating important sites to the once thriving post-emancipation Black neighborhood. The project will premiere on July 6th, 2024, in the Tenth Street neighborhood.

Nasher Public: Urban Historical Reclamation & Recognition was conceived by artist and inaugural UHRR fellow Vicki Meek to creatively capture the voices of communities of color whose neighborhoods are experiencing gentrification or erasure. This major project is designed to have three phases, each researching a Dallas neighborhood with a cohort of multi-disciplinary artists who works closely with the community to document and illustrate its historical importance, embarking on a yearlong research project with an undetermined final format.

For the initial project in Tenth Street, Meek was joined by artist Ángel Faz, filmmaker Christian Vasquez, playwright Jonathan Norton and African American History scholar Dr. Marvin Dulaney. The project involved numerous interviews with African American elders and collected archival materials from former and current residents, as well as from Kinkofa, a Dallas-based digital history platform designed to connect Black families to their ancestry. These collections enabled the creation of augmented reality experiences, accessed via a marker with a QR code. Each site showcases the vibrant business, educational, recreational, and spiritual life of Tenth Street residents, designed to bring life to the stories gathered from the community's elders.

One of the key collaborations for the project was with the Kinfolk Foundation, a nonprofit that produces interactive digital media experiences in public spaces to expand the visibility of the

underrepresented histories and figures. After reviewing a competitive pool of proposals, Kinfolk chose to work with the UHRR's Tenth Street project. "Vicki Meek's collaborative community-centered approach to memorializing and celebrating the Tenth Street Historic District Freedman's Town aligns perfectly with Kinfolk's approach to co-creating augmented reality monuments," says Executive Director Idris Brewster. "I hope that the augmented reality monuments we are creating will bring the history of Tenth Street to life and help combat the existing wave of development and erasure."

Additionally, the project received \$100,000 in funding from the National Endowment of the Arts's creative placemaking grant, Our Town, along with other significant contributions from local foundations, government agencies, and individuals.

Speaking about the project, Meek says, "The collaborative approach to crafting this project has been very rewarding, and the artist team I assembled--all young, Black and Brown native Dallasites--represents a future that resurrects history that has been devalued or erased. I hope the blueprint we've established in this project with the Nasher will guide more creative projects aimed at providing a voice for communities not often heard."

The second phase of UHRR will commence this fall, 2024, and focus on Dallas's Mexican American community, led by Ángel Faz, joined by Vicki Meek, Christian Vasquez, poet Mike Soto, and Chicano studies scholar Dr. Priscilla Ybarra.

The historic markers will be shared with the public for the first time on Saturday, July 6th along with a showing of *Remembering What Was: A Tenth Street Story*, a documentary short produced by Christian Vasquez as a part of the UHRR project. Details will be shared on the Nasher's website.

Nasher Public: Urban Historical Reclamation and Recognition is made possible by leading support from the National Endowment for the Arts, Sapphire Foundation, Hattie Mae Lesley Foundation, and the Embrey Family Foundation. Generous support is provided by Humanities Texas and Brenda L. Jackson. Additional support is provided by Dr. Donna J. Barefield, Jessica and William Barefield, Effie Booker, Grace Daniels, Dr. W. Marvin Dulaney, Winstona Chadwick, Helen Giddings / Multiplex Inc., Pamela E. Ice, Brenda Lauderback, Cynthia Nunn, Mary and Shadrach Sias, Wendy and Jeremy Strick, and Colette Vallot.

For the *Nasher Public: Urban Historical Reclamation & Recognition* press kit, including images, a documentary trailer, and the 2023 announcement of the project, please click this link: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/wqad0p8ztju2rijbqphw1/hrlkey=k0wizl26zga0vk7codf8uk54p&st=4a6oyo7w&dl=0>

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About Vicki Meek

Vicki Meek has exhibited widely and is in the permanent collections of the African American Museum Dallas, Fort Wayne Museum of Art, and Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. She was awarded three public arts commissions with Dallas Area Rapid Transit Art Program, was co-artist on the Dallas Convention Center Public Art Project (the largest public art project in Dallas), and was one of ten artists in *Nasher XChange*, the Nasher Sculpture Center's tenth anniversary public sculpture exhibition. In 2021, as a part of Nasher Public, Meek exhibited *Stony the Road We Trod*, a contemporary shrine dedicated to the Black community onsite in the Nasher Public Gallery. That same year she was awarded Texas Artist of the Year by Art League Houston. Meek resides in Dallas, where she is also an independent curator and writes cultural criticism.

About Kinfolk Foundation

Kinfolk is a non-profit digital and educational platform with a mission to bring Black and Brown narratives to the forefront. Through immersive AR experiences, users can leverage technology to experience history come to life anywhere. The platform was co-founded in 2017 by Idris Brewster (formerly at Google), as a means to bridge communities. Since inception (and with support from the Mellon Foundation), it has changed how we learn about our historical heroes. Recognizing that school curriculum, cultural institutions and monuments have systematically excluded BIPOC histories, Brewster debuted the Monuments Project, through Kinfolk, which inserts hundreds of digital monuments into public spaces.

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 500 masterpieces by Brancusi, Calder, de Kooning, di Suvero, Giacometti, Basquiat, Hepworth, LeWitt, Matisse, Miró, Moore, Picasso, Rodin, Serra, and Shapiro, among others. The Nasher Sculpture Center is open Wednesday through Sunday from 11 am to 5 pm. 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.