

Nasher Sculpture Center



Press Release

Nasher Sculpture Center Presents Elliott Hundley: The Bacchae

On view January 28 – April 22, 2012

DALLAS, Texas (January 27, 2012) – The Nasher Sculpture Center is pleased to present *Elliott Hundley: The Bacchae*, January 28 – April 22, 2012, featuring 12 recent medium- to large-scale wall-mounted and free-standing constructions highlighting Elliott Hundley's investigations of the ancient Greek tragedy *The Bacchae* (ca. 406 BC) by Euripides. Encompassing a variety of media including assemblage, theatrical staging, and photography, this exhibition continues the Nasher's exploration of sculpture's rich and myriad possibilities.

"Elliott Hundley has garnered accolades for his dazzling, densely-layered reliefs and free-standing sculptures that bring together in novel fashion an extraordinary array of materials" notes Nasher Sculpture Center director Jeremy Strick. "His exhibition offers works that are at once remarkable technical achievements, and powerful meditations on topics both primal and contemporary."

Hundley conceives of his imposing mixed-media collages—or bulletin boards, as he sometimes calls them—as theatrical landscapes that restage and animate classical texts. First orchestrating elaborate photo shoots using sitters who play characters from Greek mythology, he interweaves the resulting photos with a vast array of organic and found materials, from wood to textiles, bamboo to spray paint, and a variety of found ephemera. The works become dense narratives that take the form of monumental wall-mounted collages complemented by free-standing, obliquely figural sculptures. Drawing on classical mythology, art history, philosophy, and drama – subjects of long-standing interest to Hundley - he uses his idiosyncratic visual language to collapse historical and narrative time and to examine current social and political conditions.

The Bacchae is a tale of revenge set in the ancient city of Thebes. The god Dionysus (Bacchus to the Romans) has decided to punish its citizens when they refuse to accept his claim that he is the son of Zeus. After bringing the women of Thebes under his influence, Dionysus leads them out of the city and into the wilderness where they join his followers, the Bacchae, in worshipping him in ecstatic rituals. The god then convinces the king of Thebes, Pentheus, to spy on the women, who, upon discovering him, mistake him for a wild beast. Led by Pentheus's own mother, Agave, the women rip the king limb from limb, killing him in the process. Agave then returns to Thebes, carrying her son's head as a trophy, still unaware of her delusion. When Dionysus's influence on her finally loosens, she is horrified to discover that she has murdered her own son.

Organized by the Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University, *Elliott Hundley: The Bacchae* will be accompanied by an ambitious book with new essays by Wexner Chief Curator Christopher Bedford, poet Anne Carson, noted art historian Richard Meyer, and Doug Harvey, artist, writer, critic, curator, and educator, addressing subjects including Hundley's development over the last decade, his engagement with filmic traditions, Greek tragedy as his most consistent inspiration,

and the intricacies of his working process. The catalogue will be lavishly illustrated with studio images, sketches, photographs, and process shots unpublished to date.

Elliott Hundley received his MFA in 2005 from UCLA and currently lives in Los Angeles. He graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design with a BFA in printmaking in 1997 and also attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2002. His drawings and collages have been shown in group exhibitions in New York at Daniel Reich Gallery and Andrea Rosen Gallery, and in Los Angeles at Cherry and Martin, Regen Projects, and Peres Projects. His work is found in several important collections, including those of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

Elliott Hundley: The Bacchae was organized by the Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University and made possible by a significant contribution from Battelle. Generous support for this exhibition is also provided by The Broad Art Foundation and Lonti Ebers, New York.

About the Nasher Sculpture Center:

Open since October 2003, the Nasher Sculpture Center is dedicated to the display and study of modern and contemporary sculpture. The Center is located on a 2.4-acre site in the heart of the Dallas Arts District. Renzo Piano, a world-renowned architect and winner of the prestigious Pritzker Prize in 1998, is the architect of the Center's 55,000-square-foot building. Piano worked in collaboration with landscape architect Peter Walker on the design of the two-acre sculpture garden.

The Nasher Sculpture Center was the longtime dream of the late Raymond and Patsy Nasher, who together formed one of the finest collections of modern and contemporary sculpture in the world. The Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection includes masterpieces by Calder, De Kooning, Di Suvero, Giacometti, Hepworth, Kelly, Matisse, Miró, Moore, Picasso, Rodin, and Serra, among others, and continues to grow and evolve.

The Nasher Sculpture Center presents rotating exhibitions of works from the Nasher Collection as well as special exhibitions drawn from other museums and private collections. In addition to 10,000 square feet of indoor gallery space, the Center contains an auditorium, education and research facilities, a cafe, and a store.

The Nasher Sculpture Center is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 am to 5 pm and until 11 pm for special events. General Admission to the Center is \$10 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$5 for students, and free for members and children 12 and under. For more information, visit www.NasherSculptureCenter.org.

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