

## **Nasher Sculpture Center Announces *Sightings:* *Michael Dean***

Exhibition will be the first US museum show for the Turner Prize shortlisted artist

DALLAS, Texas (August 9, 2016) – The Nasher Sculpture Center announces *Sightings: Michael Dean*, on view from October 22, 2016 to February 5, 2017. Michael Dean's work explores themes of language, the act of writing, and the struggle to communicate in a variety of forms, including sculpture, photography, poetry, plays, publications and performance.

Often made of concrete forms cast in flexible plastic bags, his sculptures sometimes vaguely resemble letters of the alphabet, human figures, or parts of the body, and are occasionally installed on top of Dean's self-published books filled with gibberish, nonsensical phrases, or hand-drawn pictogram lettering.

"It is a thrill to be able to present this exhibition of Michael Dean's work here at the Nasher. His enquiry into how we communicate through our bodies and through language is especially relevant at this moment when expressions of identity—personal, national, global—are so much a part of cultural conversation," says Director Jeremy Strick. "Dean's sculptures engage with the murky space between expression and understanding; as referential forms teeter toward abstraction and vice versa, he brilliantly considers what it means to have real access to ideas, things, and each other."

Dean was recently selected as a finalist for the vaunted Turner Prize in the UK, largely on the impact of his exhibition, titled *Sic Glyphs*, mounted at the South London Gallery in March 2016. There, in keeping with his interest in engaging the body in an overt way within an exhibition space, Dean blocked the main entrance to the gallery, forcing viewers to take a circuitous route through the café and outdoor courtyard, before entering the show through the back door. Human-scaled, concrete sculptures in a variety of hues crowded the gallery. Some had been cast in plastic bags, others in corrugated metal siding, bent sheets of which also occupied the floor. Many of the works were bound up or tied together in pairs or groups with rubber straps or plastic zip ties. Others incorporated bits of chain link fencing. Dried weeds and grasses were strewn on the floor or caught up in the sculptures, as were small plastic specimen baggies, stickers imprinted with cannabis leaves, and random bits of paper with letters spelled out in tiny cannabis leaves. The exhibition arose largely from Dean's response to the refugee crisis facing Europe and the United Kingdom, and his abstract, industrial objects projected an extraordinary humanity: often slightly hunched, slumped, or leaning on one another, the sculptures took on human qualities that elicited sympathy.

Similarly, for his 2012 exhibition at the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds, UK, called *Government*, Dean partially obscured the entrance to the gallery with large slabs of propped cast concrete, compromising a visitor's arrival with a certain sense of peril. Once inside, viewers were welcomed to touch the forms that Dean had likewise propped, set, and scattered around the space, some round and set on the floor, others monolithic and leaning against walls. The touched works, all titled in reference to political arenas—Education, Health, Home—challenged the normally pristine arena of the gallery through engagement with the body.

For his exhibition, Dean will create new works for the unique environs of the Nasher. *Sightings: Michael Dean* will be the artist's first solo museum exhibition in the United States.

# Nasher Sculpture Center

## PRESS RELEASE

### About Michael Dean

Born in Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK in 1977, Michael Dean received his degree in art from Goldsmiths College in 2001. Major solo exhibitions include *Sic Glyphs*, South London Gallery, London, UK (2016); *Qualities of Violence*, de Appel arts Centre, Amsterdam, NL (2015); *Jumping Bones*, Extra City Kunsthal Antwerp, Antwerp, BE (2015); “*Look at them fucking laughing*,” Supportico Lopez, Berlin, DE and Mendes Wood, São Paulo, BR (2015); *HA HA HA HA HA HA*, Kunst Forum Ludwig, Aachen, DE (2014); *Government*, Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK (2012); *Architecture of a mother’s arms*, Supportico Lopez, Berlin, DE (2012); and *Acts of Grass*, Serpentine Gallery Pavilion, London, UK (2011).

The *Sightings* series is generously sponsored by Lara and Stephen Harrison. *Sightings: Michael Dean* is supported by FABA Fundación Almine y Bernard Ruiz-Picasso para el Arte and The Henry Moore Foundation.

**High resolution images are available upon request.**

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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. On view in the light-filled galleries of the Renzo Piano-designed building and amid the garden grounds are a rotating selection of works from the Collection, as well as important exhibitions of modern and contemporary sculpture. Conceived for the exhibition, study, and conservation of modern and contemporary sculpture, the Nasher Sculpture Center also presents a diverse array of educational and cultural programs in dialogue with the Collection and special exhibitions. It is also the home of the Nasher Prize, an annual, international award that is presented to a living artist in recognition of a significant body of work that has had an extraordinary impact on the understanding of sculpture. In addition to the indoor and outdoor gallery spaces, the Center contains an auditorium, education and research facilities, a cafe, and a store.

**Location:** 2001 Flora Street, Dallas TX 75201

**Hours:** The Nasher Sculpture Center is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 am to 5 pm and until 11 pm for special events, and from 10 am to 5 pm on the first Saturday of each month.

**Admission:** \$10 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$5 for students, and free for members, children 12 and under, and all members of police and fire departments with proper ID. Admission includes access to special exhibitions. For more information, visit [www.NasherSculptureCenter.org](http://www.NasherSculptureCenter.org).

*Aston Martin is the official car of the Nasher Sculpture Center.*