

PRESS RELEASE



The Nasher Sculpture Center Announces First Ever Public Conferral of the Nasher Prize

The prestigious award will be presented to the 9th Nasher Prize winner, Petrit Halilaj, at a public event at the Center this fall, in conjunction with a monumental sculpture on view in the sculpture garden.

DALLAS, Texas (July 27, 2026) – The Nasher Sculpture Center announces the first public conferral of the Nasher Prize, an award that has emerged as one of the art world's most prestigious honors.

The \$100,000 prize and award will be presented to Kosovar artist Petrit Halilaj at the Nasher on November 14, 2026. To mark the occasion and introduce Halilaj's sculpture to the local community and beyond, the Nasher will install a new version of the large house produced for the Metropolitan Museum of Art's 2024 Roof Garden Commission as part of Halilaj's *Abetare* series. The work will be on view in the Nasher Garden through the summer of 2027, thanks to a long-term loan.

The stainless steel and bronze forms in *Abetare* were generated by recording thousands of drawings from children's school desks, initially from Kosovo and later throughout the Balkans. The works magnify school day doodles and childhood wonder into markers of history and culture—a practice commonly found in Halilaj's work. For the Nasher, Halilaj has transformed a sculpture that features the elementary form of a house—a square topped with a triangle—with words and sculptural motifs.

Halilaj was announced as the 9th Nasher Prize Laureate in October 2025, joining a distinguished list of award winners recognized for their substantive contributions to the field of sculpture. At that time, Halilaj announced that the prize money will be donated to the Hajde! Foundation, a Kosovo-based nonprofit the artist and his sister, curator Hana Halilaj, founded in 2014. The foundation develops long-term artistic and cultural initiatives in Kosovo by supporting artists, producing new work, and building cultural communities through projects such as the House of Culture in Runik and Grand Hotel Prishtina.

Awarding the laureate through a free and public ceremony emphasizes the Nasher's strong commitment to the city of Dallas and its artists' community; it constitutes an opportunity to collectively share one of the Nasher's most important moments. Each conferral will include a public talk with the award recipient, followed by the award presentation and a celebratory party featuring food, music, and performances inspired by the laureate's practice.

"I am delighted to share the conferral of the Nasher prize with the public of the Nasher and the community of Dallas." says Nasher Director Carlos Basualdo. "This is especially significant in the case of Petrit Halilaj, an artist whose practice is deeply rooted in the redeeming possibilities of the shared experience of art.

The 9th Nasher Prize Celebration will follow a public conversation between Petrit Halilaj and Nasher Curator Dr. Leigh Arnold. The talk will be held on November 14, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. CST in Nasher Hall with the celebration taking place directly after in the Nasher Garden between 5 and 8 p.m. CST.

In the spring of 2027, the Nasher will announce the 10th Nasher Prize Laureate chosen by a new jury who will convene in the spring of that year. The jury will consist of Christophe Cherix, the David Rockefeller Director of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Laurent Le Bon, President of the Centre Pompidou, Paris; Courtney J. Martin, Executive Director of the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, New York; Jessica Morgan, Nathalie de Gunzburg Director, Dia Art Foundation, New York, incoming Director of Tate, UK; and Monica Narula, Artist, Curator, and Co-founder of the Raqs Media Collective, New Delhi.

To view a press kit that includes the 2025 announcement of Petrit Halilaj, please use the link below: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/kpktx2puvo3q6d4gzpxue/ALe0D94l30DPJSM6Pb2tll0?rlkey=w97sjs6mth2xk8s3331lj2qi9&st=cn959xam&dl=0>

About Petrit Halilaj

Petrit Halilaj (b. 1986, Kostërrc, Kosovo) develops bodies of work that explore how life is sustained through relationships—between people, other species, architecture, memory, and place. Working across sculpture, drawing, installation, text, and performance, he approaches exhibitions as living environments where forms of affection, imagination, and coexistence can emerge. He treats personal histories as dynamic ecologies that continually transform through encounters, acts of care, and collective imagination. Birds, flowers, schools, houses, gardens, and communities appear throughout his work as active participants in worlds where boundaries between human and non-human, private and public, memory and possibility remain porous.

Halilaj's practice speculates on broad themes like belonging, migration, hospitality, learning, and the ways living beings construct shared futures. His installations invite viewers into spaces where tenderness becomes a form of knowledge and imagination itself becomes a means of inhabiting the world differently.

Halilaj held solo exhibitions at Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; Institut Giacometti, Paris, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Tate St. Ives, UK; Palacio de Cristal, Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid; New Museum, New York; Fondazione Merz, Turin; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan; Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne; Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn; Kunsthalle Sankt Gallen, among others. His work will be featured in Counterpublic Triennial, St. Louis (Sept - Dec 2026) Halilaj studied at the Brera Academy of Fine Art in Milan. He received the Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship (SARF) in 2018 and completed the MAK-Schindler Scholarship Program at the Mackey Apartments, Los Angeles (2016), as well as residency at Villa Romana, Florence (2013). In 2013, Halilaj represented Kosovo for the country's first appearance at the Venice Biennale. In 2017, he was invited to participate in the 57th Venice Biennale by the curator Christine Macel, where he was awarded Special Mention by the Jury. From 2019 to 2025 he has been a professor at the Ecole National Supérieure des Beaux Arts de Paris,

France, together with his partner and frequent artistic collaborator, Álvaro Urbano. He lives and works between Germany, Kosovo, and Italy.

About the Nasher Prize

The Nasher Sculpture Center has awarded the Nasher Prize to Otobong Nkanga (2025), Senga Nengudi (2023), Nairy Baghramian (2022), Michael Rakowitz (2020-21), Isa Genzken (2019), Theaster Gates (2018), Pierre Huyghe (2017) and Doris Salcedo (2016). The jury for the 9th Nasher Prize that selected Petrit Halilaj was comprised of Nairy Baghramian, artist; Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Director Emeritus of Castello di Rivoli, Italy; Lynne Cooke, Senior Curator, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Briony Fer, Professor, History of Art, University College London; Hou Hanru, Independent art historian, curator, and former Artistic Director, MAXXI, Rome; Yuko Hasegawa, Professor in Curatorial Theory and Practice at Graduate School of Management, Kyoto University, and Program Director of Art and Design at the International House of Japan; Pablo León de la Barra, Curator at Large, Latin America, Guggenheim Museum; and Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair, Arts Council England.

About the Nasher Sculpture Center

Located in Dallas, Texas, the Nasher Sculpture Center serves as an international focal point for the study, conservation, and appreciation of modern and contemporary sculpture. Founded in 2003, and built upon the masterpieces of the Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection, the Center is home to one of the finest collections of modern and contemporary sculpture in the world, holding over 700 works. Situated in the heart of the Dallas Arts District, the Renzo Piano-designed building leads to a sculpture garden, featuring renowned sculptures from the permanent collection. Rotating displays from the permanent collection are accompanied by special exhibitions that in conjunction with public programming to deepen the understanding of sculpture. The Nasher Sculpture Center biennially awards the Nasher Prize, one of the most significant honors in contemporary sculpture, celebrating a living artist whose work has expanded and reshaped the possibilities of the medium.

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. For more information, visit www.NasherSculptureCenter.org.