

PRESS RELEASE

Nasher Sculpture Center



***Nic Nicosia: Everyday Surreal* at the Nasher Sculpture Center, Opening May 2026**

A 25-year survey shines new light on the surprising second half of the noted artist's five-decade career, tracking an evolution towards sculpture

DALLAS, Texas (Feb 24, 2026) – This spring, the Nasher Sculpture Center will present *Nic Nicosia: Everyday Surreal*, a survey of the last 25 years of one of the city's most celebrated living artist, offering a fresh focus on his turn to sculpture in the 2010s in an installation that evokes the subtly surreal environments of his photographs. The exhibition will be on view May 16–August 16, 2026.

Nic Nicosia: Everyday Surreal highlights the shift in the artist's work over the past two decades, marked by a move away from elaborate sets, casts, and crews to a solitary studio practice focused on the production of a broad range of sculptures, drawings, and photographs. While maintaining a buoyant whimsy, Nicosia's work became more inquisitive and philosophical, exploring themes of time, memory, and the psychological edges of everyday reality. Featuring over 70 works in varied media, the exhibition is the largest showing of Nicosia's practice since his 1999/2000 museum survey.

Born in Dallas, Texas, in 1951, Nic Nicosia came to prominence in the 1980s as part of the Pictures Generation, an unofficial group of artists practicing in the 1970s and 80s who questioned the authenticity of images and their role in shaping perceptions. He is best known for his photographs and films depicting everyday life—moments quietly quirky or completely gone awry—with costumed actors in brightly-colored sets including real objects with artist-made simulacra and hand-drawn or painted images. These photographic works exemplified a unique vision conversant with broader Postmodern trends in contemporary art also represented in the work of peers such as Cindy Sherman, Laurie Simmons, and Jeff Wall, earning him notice in important exhibitions such as the Whitney Biennial in New York (1983 and 2000), *Image Fabrique* at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris (1983), and Documenta IX in Kassel, Germany (1992).

Nicosia's early photography relied on the production of elaborate hand-made objects and constructed sets, as well as numerous assistants and actors. In 2001, Nicosia, working largely on his own, turned to making the settings for his pictures on a smaller scale, constructing models of rooms,

collaging them with images taken elsewhere, and populating them with small, sculpted installations. In 2009, he began making sculptures consistently, experimenting with paper clay and hydrocal to produce eccentric personages and anonymous male figures taking on various poses and personas, such as those appearing in the photographic series, *in the absence of others*. Many of these works initially populated the models for his staged photographs and, more recently, real domestic interiors, resulting in hand-collaged and rephotographed images that confound reality and artifice. Sculpture making soon began to take on a life of its own, aside from any role in photography, evolving into imagined creatures and fantastical insects. By 2018, Nicosia had expanded this exploration to include cast metal sculptures, such as *bighands* (2010), enlarged in 2020 as an eight-foot-tall steel sculpture for the Nasher's permanent collection.

Nicosia's drawings similarly explore the personal experience of time and its limitations. A drawing from 2015 traces the roughly 650-mile route from Santa Fe to Dallas 77 times to create a simple meditation on distance, duration, repetition, and movement, while other drawings mark the seconds in a day, or the first 65 years of a life. Still others record the random flow of thoughts and ideas that pass through one's mind over time, appearing as doodles or blocks of words, sometimes recorded over spans of several months.

"It is incredible to consider that Nicosia has produced roughly four times the quantity of work after his mid-career survey in 1999/2000 as he did before it, taking on a greater variety of media," says Chief Curator Jed Morse. "*Everyday Surreal* underscores a tremendously prolific and experimental period that speaks deeply and warmly to the strangeness and ironies that populate our daily lives."

The major exhibition of a Dallas native holds special significance in the summer of 2026 during which the region will host nine games for the 2026 FIFA World Cup and serve as the location for the games' broadcast center, welcoming guests from around the world.

"The Nasher Sculpture Center is delighted to present this exhibition by one of the most cherished artists in Dallas," says Director Carlos Basualdo. "Nicosia's joyful artistic practice prompts us to reflect on the contradictory nature of reality, pointing to universal themes while pursuing highly personal subjects. This close look at his captivating work promises to stir curiosity and introspection in equal measure."

Nic Nicosia: Everyday Surreal is organized by Nasher Sculpture Center Chief Curator Jed Morse who will also serve as the editor of a lavishly illustrated catalogue, featuring new scholarly essays, that will be published to accompany the exhibition.

The exhibition is made possible by leading support from the Texas Commission on the Arts. Generous support is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts. Support is provided by the Dallas Art Fair Foundation and Dallas Tourism Public Improvement District (DTPID).

The Nasher Sculpture Center is supported, in part, by Nasher Members, the Christine P. Gancarz Fund at The Dallas Foundation, The City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture, Bonnie E. Cobb, and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

For images, please click the link below:

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About Nic Nicosia

Born in Dallas in 1951, Nic Nicosia is perhaps the most successful artist native to the city. His work has been included in numerous major national and international surveys including two Biennials at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, (in 1983 and 2000), Documenta IX in Kassel, Germany (1992), and the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (1983). He has also been the focus of a major survey exhibition (Real Pictures: 1979–1999) organized by the Contemporary Art Museum, Houston, that travelled from 1999–2001 to numerous national museums including the Dallas Museum of Art and the Cleveland Museum of Contemporary Art. Another retrospective was mounted by CASA Salamanca, Spain, in 2003. His work is now included in important museum collections worldwide, including The Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, and Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York; The Los Angeles County Museum of Art and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in California; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, The High Museum, Atlanta, and the Dallas Museum of Art; as well as the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, and SMAK (Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst), Gent, Belgium. Nicosia is represented by Erin Cluley Gallery, Dallas.

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.