

Nasher Sculpture Center



The Nasher Sculpture Center Announces *Rauschenberg Sculpture*

The exhibition will be the first museum presentation of the artist's three-dimensional works in 30 years.

DALLAS, Texas (October 30, 2025) – The Nasher Sculpture Center announces *Rauschenberg Sculpture*, a presentation of highlights from the three-dimensional practice of Robert Rauschenberg—an artist whose experimental and innovative approach to art making has affected virtually every aspect of contemporary art. The exhibition, organized by Senior Curator Dr. Catherine Craft, will be on view from January 31 to April 26, 2026, and held during the celebration of the centennial of his birth.

Rauschenberg Sculpture will highlight numerous themes the artist pursued, across a wide range of materials, throughout his career, including his use of found materials, his interest in the relation between art and science, the multivalent role of movement and performance in relation to his work, and references to other cultures and artistic traditions, past and present. The exhibition is part of the celebration of what would have been the artist's 100th birthday—he was born in 1925 in Port Arthur, Texas, and passed away in 2008—orchestrated with support from the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation.

From the beginning of his career in the late 1940s until his death, Robert Rauschenberg sought to let as much of the world as possible into his art. In his groundbreaking series *Combines* (1954–64) he merged painting and sculpture, challenging the conventions of both, and his later three-dimensional objects emerged from a similar disregard for established boundaries between media. His involvement with sculpture flourished amidst his work in a staggering array of other areas: painting, photography, printmaking, technological experiments, performance, set and costume design, ceramics, and fresco, all of which freely fed into one another. While he rarely made pieces that could be considered sculpture in the traditional sense—he neither carved, nor modeled, nor welded—he regularly turned to three-dimensional objects to engage viewers and bring his art more fully into its surroundings. Central to Rauschenberg's sculpture was his use of discarded objects, from scrap metal and tires to rags and cardboard boxes, accompanied by his insistence that such items were as

legitimate as any traditional artistic material. As he put it, his art began not in junk but in “things”: “I like the history of objects. I like humanitarian reportage.”

In Rauschenberg’s most experimental works, he included elements that solicit or suggest movement by placing sculptures on wheels, adding cranks and motors so individual elements could move, and evoking, through additions of color and fabric, a sense of breath and life. Often, his sculptures were also surfaces for photographic imagery, yielding multiple possibilities of meaning. Likewise, his desire to actively involve the viewer in his art led Rauschenberg to explore the possibilities of technology—sound transmitters, sonar-activated motors, and other innovations contributed to sculptures that could change their appearance at the touch of a button or begin to move when approached by a viewer.

“It’s a great privilege to share these outstanding works from Rauschenberg’s amazingly inventive and varied approaches to sculpture with visitors to the Nasher,” says Senior Curator Catherine Craft. “I’m thrilled that they will be able to encounter classic Combines alongside examples of later series, such as the Japanese Clayworks and the Kabal American Zephyrs, and to experience the imaginative spirit and creative resourcefulness that Rauschenberg brought to his exploration of art in three dimensions.”

Rauschenberg’s approach to sculpture was closely connected to his passion for music, dance and performance, as he aimed to bring what he called theater’s “sense of urgency” to his own works. The exhibition will be accompanied by a suite of programming that highlights the collaborative relationship between Rauschenberg and his close friends and collaborators musician John Cage and choreographer Merce Cunningham. To mark the opening of the exhibition, Verdigris Ensemble, a Dallas-based vocal ensemble, will perform John Cage’s *Hymns and Variations*, a musical composition for 12 voices. Throughout the run of *Rauschenberg Sculpture*, the Nasher will partner with the Merce Cunningham Trust to present a series of performances, master classes, films, and public workshops forefronting Rauschenberg’s deep connections to dance and movement.

In February the museum will hold a Study Day, inviting scholars to explore Rauschenberg’s approach to technology, the relation of his sculpture to traditions of the vernacular, and the impact of various forms of popular culture on his work.

“The Nasher Sculpture Center is delighted to join the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation in celebrating one of the most innovative artists of the past century,” says Director Carlos Basualdo. “Rauschenberg’s work exudes a sense of adventure and experimentation that continues to inspire artists throughout the world. Each of his sculptures is both a miracle of ingenuity and the promise of unending discovery.”

Rauschenberg Sculpture is made possible by leading support from the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. The Nasher Sculpture Center joins an international roster of institutions commemorating the artist’s 100th birthday. Generous support is provided by Frost Bank. Support is also provided by Gianfranco D’Amato, Leo Katz, Katherine Sachs, and the 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, Dorothy M. Rickey, TACA, the Von Rydingsvard and Greengard Foundation, and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

For high-resolution images, please use this link:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/qvadethc5v08bnqmo3f55/ABn-UHxktSZUgl6Sj_6B6FY?rlkey=wt87jmi40v35brc8ppirwiok6&st=boqr2sz6&dl=0

Press Contacts:

National & International:

Julia Debski

Sutton Communications

Julia@suttoncomms.com

+1 212 202 3402

Local:

Adrienne Lichliter-Hines

Nasher Sculpture Center

Alichliter@nashersculpturecenter.org

+1 214.802.5297 (c)

+1 214.242.5177 (p)

About Rauschenberg100

Robert Rauschenberg's strong conviction that engagement with art can nurture people's sensibilities as individuals, community members, and citizens was key to his ethos. The Centennial celebrations seek to allow audiences familiar with him and those encountering the artist for the first time to form fresh perspectives about his artwork.

A year of global activities and exhibitions in honor of Rauschenberg's Centennial reexamines the artist through a contemporary lens, highlighting his enduring influence on generations of artists and advocates for social progress. The Centennial's activation of the artist's legacy promotes cross-disciplinary explorations and creates opportunities for critical dialogue.

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 renown sculptures from the permanent collection. Rotating displays from the permanent collection are accompanied by special exhibitions, frequently commissioning new works from contemporary artists, that are presented 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 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.