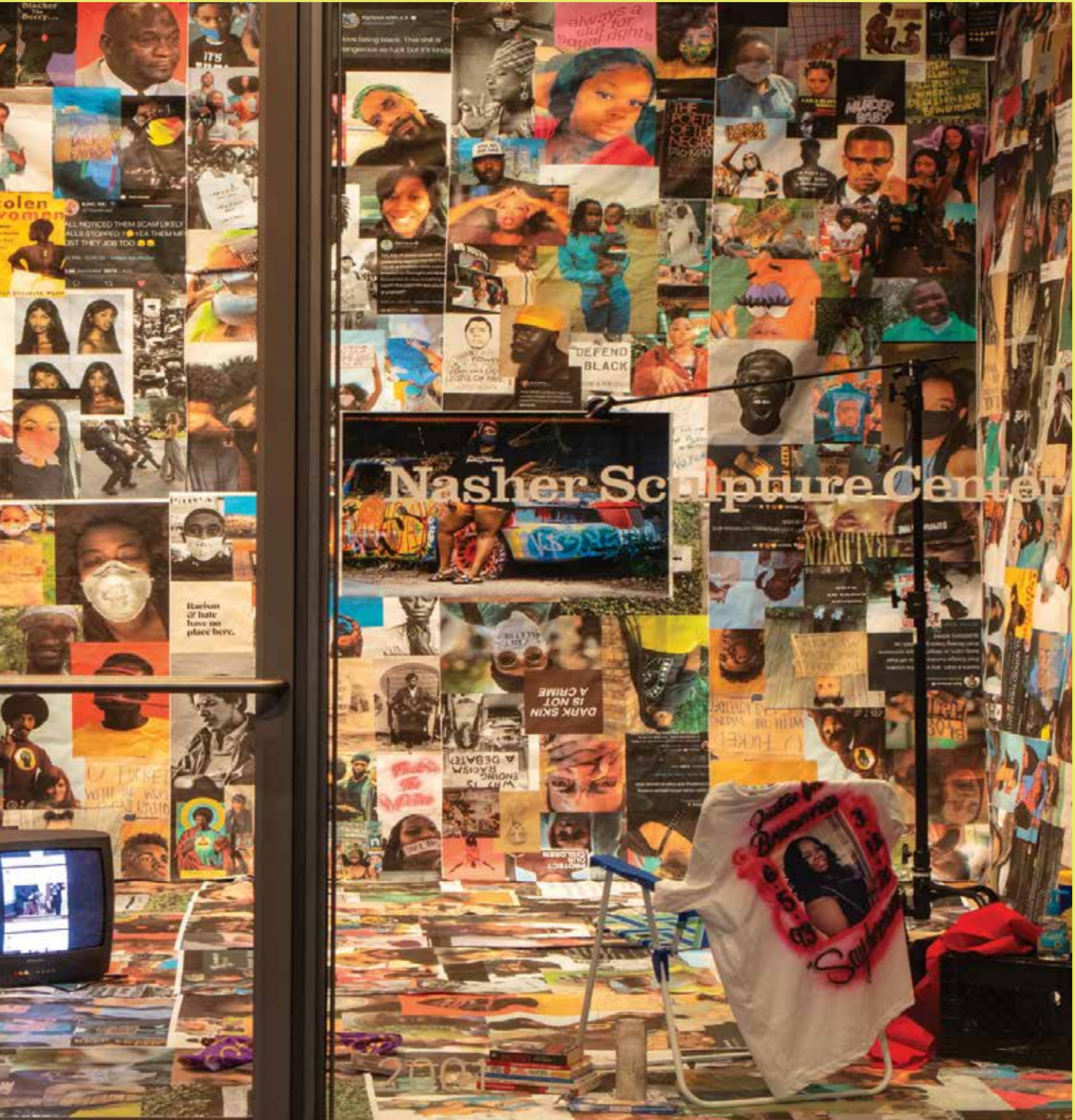


THE NASHER



JULIE AND BRUCE WEBB JUSTINE LUDWIG CECILIA ALEMANI JACOLBY SATTERWHITE
EMMANUEL VAN DER AUWERA ALICE RAWSTHORN SU WU ALYSIA HARRIS



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Nasher Sculpture Center

FRONT COVER:
Ciara Elle Bryant, *Server: A Streamed Revolution*, mixed media, 2020,
Nasher Windows, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, Texas.
Photography by Kevin Todora.

INSIDE:
Ho Baron, *On the Upside Down*, bronze, El Paso, Texas.
Photography by Julie and Bruce Webb.

BACK COVER:
Photography by Sam Youkilis.

PUBLIC GOOD

Last year, facing a nationwide shutdown, conjoined public health and economic crises, and rising awareness of pervasive racial injustice, we at the Nasher began to ask ourselves how best we could most effectively act in this fraught and rapidly changing environment; how, even while closed, might a museum of modern and contemporary sculpture make a difference?

We determined to focus on two of the vital constituencies closest to home: the public in Dallas that normally comprises the bulk of our audience, and the artists in this community, bereft of opportunities to exhibit their work.

Though museums would be closed for an indeterminate length of time, art presented in publicly accessible spaces, we reasoned, could still be experienced. By commissioning such works, we could help artists through a difficult time, all while providing the public with opportunities to see art in person—cultural sustenance that so many were sorely missing.

Public commissions on a large scale, however, can take a long time to realize, and we wanted to move quickly. And so in May 2020 we inaugurated Nasher Windows, a series of exhibitions held throughout the months of our closure in the entry foyer of the Nasher Sculpture Center, which is flanked by a bank of windows. We invited artists to submit proposals for the space and, once commissioned, each Nasher Windows show was safely installed by the artist. The shows lasted one week and were accompanied by a robust digital program accessible through our website and on social media.

We were gratified by the fact that during the run of these shows, visitors regularly stopped in front of our entry window, examined the works, discussed them with friends and family, and shared responses to them on social media. Equally gratifying was that the museum could provide a platform for these North Texas artists, offering greater exposure to their compelling work and allowing us to become more intimately involved in their progress and creative fulfillment. It was a great experience, and we are deeply proud that the Nasher Windows exhibitions reflected the great diversity of our community, and that the work presented was equally varied in its approaches to sculpture.

As we moved toward reopening, we decided to extend the lessons learned through Nasher Windows and launched a new program, *Nasher Public*. Since the foyer was to serve once again as entry to the museum, we decided to transform the space normally occupied by our store into a gallery, feeling the great need to continue the conversation with the city and its artists. Visitors to the new gallery enter free of charge, artists are paid for their work and, if they choose, the public can continue to view the exhibitions through the windows at the front of the building. We have presented nine shows to date, and the artists for *Nasher Public*, as diverse as those for Nasher Windows, also represent a striking generational cross-section.

Also, keen to engage with the city outside of the Nasher walls, another ambitious element of *Nasher Public* takes place off-site. We have launched a series of commissions in public spaces, and publicly accessible private spaces, throughout Dallas. While work on these projects has been proceeding for many months, the first tangible results are beginning to emerge: an important collaboration with the oral history performance group Artstillery in South Oak Cliff, and a declarative but still enigmatic text sculpture by Alicia Eggert on a lot to be developed by Stream Realty on the corner of Ross Avenue and Olive Street in downtown Dallas. Announcements of other projects in various parts of the city will be made in the weeks and months to come.

Almost eight years ago, the Nasher celebrated its 10th anniversary with a citywide exhibition of public sculpture we called *Nasher XChange*. We were enormously pleased by that experience, and grateful for the relationships with artists and community groups it allowed us to develop. Now, with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic still ominously present, but awake to its lessons, we feel an urgency to return to the public realm. We are so grateful to the many artists who are choosing to work with us, and the partners with whom we are engaging to bring significant works of sculptures—and their promise of moments of joy and contemplation—directly to our community.

Jeremy Strick
Director

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Cecilia Alemani is an Italian curator based in New York. Currently, she is the artistic director of the upcoming 59th International Art Exhibition (2022) in Venice. Since 2011, she has been the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. director and chief curator of High Line Art, the public art program presented by the High Line in New York. In 2018, Alemani served as artistic director of the inaugural edition of Art Basel Cities: Buenos Aires. In 2017, she curated the Italian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

PHOTO: LIZ LIGON, COURTESY OF THE HIGH LINE



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Carol S. Eliel is senior curator of modern art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. During her time at the museum since 1984, she has organized numerous exhibitions and authored award-winning catalogues on topics ranging from classic modern to cutting-edge contemporary art.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF LACMA

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Melissa Gonzales is a gallery educator at the Nasher, where she leads tours and workshops for students and visitors of all ages, develops resources for teachers, and helps with a variety of educational programs.



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Alysia Nicole Harris is a poet, linguist, teaching-artist, and currently director of public programs at Corsicana Artist & Writer Residency. She received her Ph.D. in linguistics from Yale University and her MFA in poetry from NYU. Alysia has spent over a decade performing nationally and internationally, including at the UN, the US embassies in Jordan and Ukraine, and the National Theatre. Since 2016, Alysia has worked with an array of nonprofit organizations in program development and mission-based consulting. She also serves as arts and soul editor for *Scalawag Magazine* and theology editor at *EcoTheo Review*.

PHOTO: MELLY WIRTES

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PHOTO: MATTHEW LEIFHEIT



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Justine Ludwig is the executive director of Creative Time. She has previously held positions at Dallas Contemporary and the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati. Ludwig has curated projects with many artists including Shilpa Gupta, Jill Magid, Pedro Reyes, Laercio Redondo, Paola Pivi, and Pia Camil. Her research interests include the intersections of aesthetics and architecture, violence, and globalization. Ludwig has an MA in global arts from Goldsmiths University of London and a BA in art with a concentration in art history from Colby College.

PHOTO: NICK GLOVER



GAVIN MORRISON

Gavin Morrison is a freelance curator and writer. He is currently working on a book concerning Donald Judd's relationship with Iceland. Morrison was previously the director of Skaftfell Centre for Visual Art, Seyðisfjörður, Iceland.

JULIE AND BRUCE WEBB

Julie and Bruce Webb met in 1984, and it was love at first sight. They have spent a lifetime together researching Southern culture through every creative outlet. Road trips have been the fuel for a life where the search for the miraculous is always in blossom. Their love for outsider art is the cornerstone of Webb Gallery in downtown Waxahachie, Texas where strong original vocabulary of form and good times have kept Webb Gallery shining bright since 1987.

PHOTO: JULIE AND BRUCE WEBB



SU WU

Su Wu is a writer and curator based in Mexico City, and an art editor for *n+1*. She is curating an exhibition of handmade objects by Mexican artists for Dries Van Noten's "Little House" in Los Angeles, opening in 2022. In October 2021, with the nomadic gallery MASA, Wu is also curating an exhibition in Oaxaca of Ana Mendieta's "Siluetas"—five film works shown for the first time in the place where they were made—alongside a selection of physical and conceptual resting places.

PHOTO: NASTASSIA BRÜCKIN

SAM YOUKILIS

Sam Youkilis is a photographer and filmmaker from New York City. His projects show intimate, quotidian scenes in public spaces around the world. He currently is living and working in Mexico.

PHOTO: ALEXANDRA SHEEHAN





After more than a year of protracted isolation, vaccinations are finally rolling out across the world, and we find culture mimicking nature, slowly reopening like some frond cautiously uncurling from the winter ground to meet the sun. Friends and families are reuniting, hugging, and the long loneliness that many experienced is being met with the bright prospect of community and the buzz of sharing real-life social spaces again. Alongside this new growth, after a pause of nearly three years, we are thrilled to launch a new print issue of *The Nasher*. Fresh with a reimagined format, content structure, and design, the magazine holds fast to the Nasher Sculpture Center's mission to dynamically advance the study and appreciation of modern and contemporary sculpture.

True to this moment's energy and taking to heart both our pandemic-induced need for community and our pent-up collective wanderlust, this first new issue of *The Nasher* is dedicated to public art. We cast an expansive light on public art and consider the myriad ways of viewing sculpture, both formal and informal, outside of the museum walls. We take a waltz to extravagant yard art environments across Texas with beloved folk art chroniclers Julie and Bruce Webb, get a tour of MIT's Percent-for-Art Program with art historian Grant Johnson, and writer Alysia Harris defines an art residency's social-sculpture quest to build a more diverse and deeply rooted artistic presence in a small town. We're also delighted to listen in on a roundtable discussion with the High Line's Cecilia Alemani and Creative Time's Justine Ludwig to learn how COVID-19 has refined their institutions' work with New York's public. And in a beautiful spread of images and words, two American ex-pats describe their daily encounters with objects and their makers on the streets of Mexico—poet and curator Su Wu finds compelling hidden treasures within the city's secret pockets, and photographer Sam Youkilis catalogues fruit and meat becoming sculpture at the deft and tender hands of market stall vendors. Together, they remind us of the meaningful joy one receives by simply being curious within a public place.

Also in this issue, and all those forthcoming, you'll find a section dedicated to columns which unpack some of the histories of works in the Nasher collection, highlight exhibition artists, recast digital content, or cull from the rich talents of the museum's staff to lend new insight into the objects that grace our galleries, garden, and Dallas.

Lastly, we close out each book with excerpts from some of the programs we've hosted with artists, curators, and thinkers, offering a focused look at sculptural themes from some of its notable practitioners. Here, 2020/21 Nasher Prize Laureate Michael Rakowitz and artist Jin-Ya Huang chat about their mutual commitment to the social benefit of a shared meal—expanding dialogue through generous relationships with others—which has a greater meaning to us now than perhaps ever before. “The work we are doing is hopefully enzymatic work,” Rakowitz astutely notes. With this issue of *The Nasher*, we join him in that hope and trust that these words and images might be catalysts for each reader's enrichment, encouraging a greater participation in whatever community you call your own.

Lucia Simek
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COLUMNS

COLLECTION HIGHLIGHT
NOTES FROM THE LAB
ORIGIN STORY
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A GALLERY LESSON
LOOKING FORWARD
SITE VISIT

ABOUT-FACE: NANCY GROSSMAN'S UNTITLED, HEAD SCULPTURE

A childhood memory leads to the transformation of a beloved sculpture in the Nasher collection.

DR. CATHERINE CRAFT



**“THE WORK HAS TO
DO WITH THE CLOSED-IN
STATE ... WITH THE
REAL LIFE OF THE MIND
AND THE HEAD.”**



Last fall, during a presentation on our then-upcoming permanent collection installation, *Nasher Mixtape*, I showed an image of Untitled, Head Sculpture (1968), by Nancy Grossman, to Nancy

Nasher, the daughter of Raymond and Patsy Nasher. She said that she remembered seeing this head in her parents' house when she was about 14 years old. Her mother, Patsy, had purchased the sculpture in 1969 at Cordier & Ekstrom, a gallery in New York. Nancy Nasher commented that she remembered the head having the leather straps—currently under the chin—instead going across the mouth or nose.

I thought this recollection was intriguing and tried to look into it. I couldn't find anything in our files or archives, but I had the opportunity to ask the artist herself about it. She admitted that although the sculpture was clearly a work she had made, initially she didn't specifically recall it when she saw photos of it on our website.

Grossman didn't own a camera when she started making these leather head sculptures more than five decades ago. Instead, she would make drawings of sculptures whenever she sold

or gave one away. Looking through her archive of such drawings, she found one that matched our head. She recognized it because of the little bundle of leather on the back of the head.

This led to several fascinating discoveries. First, she confirmed that the head had originally belonged to the artist Richard Lindner, who had been her teacher at Pratt Institute and had, in fact, recommended her to Cordier & Ekstrom. Lindner seems to have left the sculpture at the gallery when he went to Paris and, unbeknownst to everyone, the gallery apparently sold it to Patsy Nasher. In addition to providing this fascinating provenance, Grossman's very detailed drawing also revealed that not only the leather straps under the chin but also the chain needed to be repositioned, and the leather harness on top of the head also needed to be pushed back.

I think one of the fascinating things about making this adjustment, which our conservator Claire Taggart carried out, is that the elements seemed to fit right back into position, as if the piece remembered how it was supposed to be configured. In fact, making these relatively small changes really made a critical difference in the work's impact. Putting the straps and chains back into position across the bridge of

the nose and just under the mouth, respectively, made me realize how naked and vulnerable the head appeared in its prior state. It really drives home the fact that Grossman's heads are both constrained and restrained: they're prevented from much movement but are also protected. I think that kind of dual, almost conflicting, meaning, is essential to these heads' character and also essential to what Grossman described as the state of her life at the time—that, in her words, “the work has to do with the closed-in state ... with the real life of the mind and the head.”¹ Our conversation demonstrated the extent to which these works can be regarded as self-portraits. As Grossman said, her head sculptures “incorporated my male self, my otherness, the more complicated self, which is male and female at all times.”¹

¹ Nancy Grossman, “Tough Life Diary,” The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College video, 14:20, February 18, 2012, <https://tang.skidmore.edu/exhibitions/73-nancy-grossman-tough-life-diary>.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Nancy Grossman, Untitled, Head Sculpture (1968). Leather over wood, height 18 in. (45.7 cm). Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection. Photography by Kevin Todora.
Nancy Grossman sketch of Untitled, Head Sculpture (1968) from original, studio, inventory book. Photography courtesy of the artist.

MATERIAL MEMORY

The Nasher conservator considers the fragile side of a tough sculptural outlier in Nancy Grossman's *Untitled, Head Sculpture* (1968).

CLAIRE TAGGART

When Dr. Catherine Craft shared her findings on the intended location of the leather straps on Nancy Grossman's *Untitled, Head Sculpture* (1968), I began the internal preparation process intrinsic to conservation work. With the hope of restoring the original orientation of the straps across the nose came the responsibility to work thoughtfully through a seemingly straightforward treatment. In the end, the strap movement took mere minutes; however, I am trained to consider many factors about a treatment before even touching an artwork.

OBJECT SUBJECTIVITY

Perhaps a lesser-known challenge of conserving an artwork comprised of found materials—in this case leather straps and hardware—is an inherent subjectivity in handling familiar objects. As a conservator, it is imperative that I am aware of this and remain impartial when handling these elements. I consider this a common obstacle for anyone working with modern and contemporary art. In this instance, I need to avoid the assumption that the repurposed leather straps have remained supple after many decades. While I have experience treating leather in artworks, historic furniture, and even aviation artifacts, it is important to acknowledge that every object presents unique challenges, especially when a material has lived a previous life.

LEATHER

The presence of leather within cultural heritage collections can range from bookbinding to upholstery, ethnographic materials to found objects; in each example, the care of the leather is dependent upon its purpose, history, and even how it was first processed. As with other organic materials (composed of carbon compounds), including paper and plastic, leather will have been processed through a multistep procedure to become usable and long-lasting. With leather, this process is called tanning. The two most common tanning methods are vegetable tanning and chrome tanning; both alter the collagen (protein) bonds within the hide to provide durability and prevent putrefaction of the material.

WHEN TO TEST

In the end, the repositioning of the straps took only gentle coaxing: once the straps were back where they were meant to be, the material memory seemed to encourage them to remain in place. Had additional treatment or repair been necessary, testing the leather to determine how it was originally tanned and processed may have dictated a treatment path. For example, vegetable-tanned leather can be vulnerable to red rot, a deterioration mechanism partially caused by inherent acids present in the leather that can eventually cause material failure. If past handling or movement of the straps had resulted in cracking or tearing of the leather, stabilization may have been required. The selection of conservation materials for leather is influenced by many factors, including the acidity of the substrate. Spot testing can detect weak acids present in vegetable-tanned leather, while elemental analysis like x-ray fluorescence (XRF) can detect heavier elements like metallic chromium in chrome-tanned leather. In some cases, testing leather—either through minimally invasive spot testing or noninvasive XRF—can inform the handling of an artwork in an invaluable way.



Reference: AIC, Book and Paper Group. 2021. Animal Skin and Leather Wiki. Accessed March 26, 2021.

LEFT: Nancy Grossman, *Untitled, Head Sculpture* (1968). Leather over wood, height 18 in. (45.7 cm). Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection.



GAVIN MORRISON

SOFT LAUNCH: JOHN CHAMBERLAIN'S FOAM SCULPTURES

In the first installment of this ongoing series about the little-known histories of works in the Nasher collection, we see how an exhibition in West Texas helped reemerge an important body of work by John Chamberlain, of which a recent gift from the estate of former Nasher Sculpture Center Board Member William B. Jordan and Robert Brownlee was a part.

American artist John Chamberlain (1927–2011) is most readily associated with those contorted, crumpled, and folded metal sculptures that were once automobiles. Their monumentality and silenced aggression can appear as eulogies to the excesses of American consumerism, as well as both the romanticism and the disaster of the highway. The work is evocative of the car accident—the wreckage by the side of the road—and suggests an accidental sculptural method, the readymade of the breakers yard. Contrary to their appearance, of course, these works are entirely intentional objects of a determined sculptural approach.

Chamberlain began a very different series of works in 1966 that provides a sculptural counterpoint to the metal ones. Using urethane foam, Chamberlain would bind with cord, slit and carve with a knife, and the resultant sculptures torque, bloom, and splay from the processes enacted upon the material. They have a playfulness and immediacy, and seem necessarily related to the human body, and somewhat sexual. The artist perhaps alluded to this latter attribute in his claim that “everybody wants one but nobody wants to buy one. I tried even to sell one to Plato’s Retreat [a swingers club in NYC].”¹

The art market’s reticence for the foam sculptures was at least, in part, due to the perceived ephemerality of urethane foam; through exposure to light and oxygen, the works would discolor and deteriorate. Chamberlain felt that this concern was somewhat overcautious, noting that the sculptures would “probably last longer than the guys complaining about it.”²

Even though Chamberlain made at least 84 foam works during 1966–67 (and other smaller groups at various times up until 1981), the caution of the market and exhibitors rendered

them nearly forgotten within Chamberlain’s oeuvre. But in 2005, Marianne Stockebrand, the then director of the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, Texas—the museum founded by artist Donald Judd to showcase his work and that of artists he admired—sought to correct this oversight with the exhibition *John Chamberlain - Foam Sculptures 1966–1981* (the cover of the exhibition catalogue donned art historian Bill Jordan’s foam sculpture, *Untitled*, 1970, which was gifted to the Nasher in 2018). Stockebrand notes about the exhibition:

*I had seen a few examples of Chamberlain’s photography when I was still living in Cologne, and I knew at that time of his foam pieces, and I knew that the Dia Foundation had a group of them. An exhibition of them seemed exactly the right thing for us to do. At Chinati, we never planned to have big temporary exhibitions. [But] Donald Judd felt that Chamberlain was not recognized to the degree he deserved, and as steward of the Judd legacy through the Chinati Foundation, I had to pursue those impulses. [With] this largely unknown group of work by Chamberlain, it was natural to be interested in the ability to focus and fully consider an overlooked body of work as a totality. When I talked to Chamberlain, he was thrilled. He didn’t get involved with the process, but he came to see the exhibition. It took quite a while, at first, to get the show together and understand where all the pieces were. We dug around and put together a nice selection of works, something like 30. I loved doing the research, and seeing the larger pieces was thrilling. At the time, almost nobody knew of them, or had seen any considerable number of them. That was a definite effect of the exhibition, to bring them to greater awareness.*³

The works range in size from a few inches up to over five feet across. When diminutive, they can feel like sketches or maquettes, and when larger, the foam works also relate to another series of Chamberlain’s: the barges, or couches. These were large functional seating structures, “something terrific,” says Stockebrand. “There is a film in which you see John cutting into those big blocks of foam. He in his shorts crawling over the foam, cutting at them.”⁴ This physicality of the barge’s creation and their hybridity, being both functional seating and art object, extends the bodily relationship present in the smaller foam sculptures. Additionally, the sight of the barges in use—covered with a sprawl of bodies clambering and lounging—makes them appear as a precursor to relational aesthetics written through the louche social idealism of the 1960s.

THE RESULTANT SCULPTURES TORQUE, BLOOM, AND SPLAY FROM THE PROCESSES ENACTED UPON THE MATERIAL.

The diversity in Chamberlain’s work—which additionally includes photography, filmmaking, and sculptures made from paper, plastics, and resin—accumulates to form a complex sum embracing formal sculptural concerns alongside the social happening, with its attendant reliance on the body. Between all this, the foam works—back from obscurity due to Chinati’s 2005 exhibition—are a connective tissue.



¹ ‘Statements on John Chamberlain’s Foam Sculptures,’ in Stockebrand, M. (ed.) *John Chamberlain: The Foam Sculptures*. Marfa: The Chinati Foundation, p. 182.

² Winkelmeier, I. ‘Perfection is Good for an Instant,’ in Stockebrand, M. (ed.) *John Chamberlain: The Foam Sculptures*. Marfa: The Chinati Foundation, p. 25.

³ Stockebrand, M. (2021) Zoom conversation with Gavin Morrison, April.

⁴ *Ibid.*

ABOVE: John Chamberlain, *Barge Marfa*, 1983. Permanent collection, the Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas. Photography by Florian Holzherr, courtesy of the Chinati Foundation. © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York 2021.

LEFT: John Chamberlain, *Foam Sculptures (1966–1981)*, 2005. Special exhibition, the Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas. Photography by Florian Holzherr, courtesy of the Chinati Foundation. © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York 2021.

**FAVORITES
FROM
OUR ARCHIVE
OF NONPERISHABLE
CULTURAL
SUSTENANCE.**

In the spring of 2020, as a way of documenting the joys that could be found among the hardships during the pandemic, we asked artists, curators, writers, editors, and friends to send us lists of things—books, movies, recipes, art, articles, even exercises—that were enriching and sustaining their now-isolated daily lives. We compiled these contributions as a digital archive on the Nasher website in a space called Shelf Life, of which excerpts are republished here.

MATTHEW RONAY, ARTIST / Dagobert Peche

A young and vibrant member of the Wiener Werkstätte and, according to Josef Hoffmann, “the greatest ornamental genius Austria has produced since the Baroque.” The Wiener Werkstätte happened to be an enigmatic moment in the early 20th century when the meshing of artist, artisan, and client was at its pinnacle. I’ve tried to absorb all its artists and the ones that came before it in the Vienna Secession. Peche was the most eccentric and died fairly young. He disavowed his work for the Werkstätte in the end, and really just wanted to be a painter. Sadly, we never got a chance to see these works as he was mowed down by tuberculosis complications.

VICKI MEEK, ARTIST / Ida B. Wells

As a 70-year-old African American, I have lived through some tumultuous times in this country but none quite like this. I grew up with parents who were deeply involved in Black liberation activities, so the notion of activism as your life’s work is nothing new to me. A person I read and reread is Ida B. Wells because she embodies the warrior woman I always strive to be. Her devotion to African American people was unshakeable, and I like to think mine is also. I am continually studying ancient African spiritual practices, mining them for ways to reconnect African Americans to their African ancestors, since I believe the way to thrive in inhospitable surroundings is by grounding oneself in your culture. My personal library is full of books that allow me to touch base with my deepest roots whenever I need to.

JULIE BAUMGARDNER, WRITER / Modern Witches of Art

Over this quarantine, I’ve been called witchy by quite a few folks, so naturally I reflected over the artworks I’ve gravitated to the most over the last year or so. Well, well, well, what do we have here? A small coven of witches, if I do say so myself: Carol Rama, Gertrude Abercrombie, Leonor Fini, Genieve Figgis, Margot Berman, of course famous Frida. Do I mean cauldron-stirring, broom-riding, pointy-hat ladies? No! (And don’t worry, I mean no insult to Brujas). These women all had a mystical, magical means to them that unsettled and dismantled the confines of expectations for women, women artists and women’s aesthetic concerns—and all the while produced beautiful, alluring, meaningful, expressive work that tapped into something beyond human logic and rationality can quantify. We could all serve to learn something from women who see through social constructs and deep into the ineffable.

EVAN MOFFITT, WRITER / *Life: A User's Manual* by Georges Perec, 1978

If you're wondering what your neighbors are up to, this French classic takes a single moment in time and space—a Paris apartment block at 8 p.m. on June 23, 1975—and unfolds it, room by corridor by stairwell, into a constellation of lives. Family squabbles, romance, murder, and competitive cycling all coincide in a dizzying literary dissection.

ARLENE SHECHET, ARTIST

***You Must Change Your Life: The Story of Rainer Maria Rilke and Auguste Rodin* by Rachel Corbett, 2016**

Fascinating entwined lives. I'm interested in both of these artists, but the misogyny is bottomless. What were we all thinking when we used Rilke's words in our marriage ceremonies?

WILL ARBERY, WRITER / The Criterion Channel

This pandemic has given me the feeling of being a boy again, when I would watch as many movies as I could, often staying up till 4 a.m., skipping my homework, worrying my parents. The fact is I was falling in love. Nothing does me in like a great film. I'll clutch my heart and sigh on my fainting couch. I'll look up the filmmakers and mistake them for the Thing. Lately, I've fallen in love with: *La Ciénaga* by Lucrecia Martel, *Memories of Underdevelopment* by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, *An Angel at My Table* by Jane Campion, *Losing Ground* by Kathleen Collins. And returning to the *Three Colors Trilogy* by Krzysztof Kieslowski.

KATHRYN ANDREWS, ARTIST / Alvin Baltrop

Alvin Baltrop was a wonderfully gifted photographer from the Bronx who documented gay life during the 60s, 70s, and 80s during his time in the military and later as a frequent visitor to the Hudson River Piers. I keep thinking about Baltrop. I saw the recent retrospective at the Bronx Museum weeks before the shutdown and was extremely moved by the development of his vision over time and his curiosity about seeing all things, including the forbidden—many of his photographs are voyeuristic. Baltrop struggled financially throughout his life, undoubtedly as a result of growing up in a post-war system that remained highly racist and homophobic. Despite all odds, he produced a very powerful body of work. Sadly, he passed away in 2004, prior to its coming to light.

TOM BURR, ARTIST / 'Learning from the Virus' by Paul B. Preciado

Paul B. Preciado has become one of the most important voices in the last several years, and this recent piece published in *Artforum* only reinforces that. As a Foucauldian, I was thankful to see the philosopher's thinking and biographical position figured in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing the clear trajectory of the relationship of power to the body. Immunity status is presented as intertwined with isolation, and with privilege. Disconnection and distance, with domination. The new telecommunications-as-community, as forms of incarceration. But a choice is proposed of, on the one hand, allowing the forms of control being perfected through the confluence of crisis and capital to render us utterly submissive, or, of opening up the possibility of some form of emancipatory "mutation" of those conditions. Preciado concludes, "Governments are calling for confinement and telecommuting. We know they are calling for de-collectivization and telecontrol. Let us use the time and strength of confinement to study the tradition of struggle and resistance among racial and sexual minority cultures that have helped us survive until now. Let us turn off our cell phones, let us disconnect from the internet. Let us stage a big blackout against the satellites observing us, and let us consider the coming revolution together."

RANDY KENNEDY, WRITER / *The Walk* by Robert Walser, posthumously published, 1957

Walser, the Swiss novelist who ended his days in a mental hospital, was one of the most extraordinary voices of the 20th century. In a review of another of his books for *The New York Times*, I once described him as "stranger than Kafka, more elusive than Walter Benjamin" and I stand by that. This slim book follows Walser on a solitary walk through town and countryside. "From every direction and distance, all things great and good emerged brightly with marvelous, uplifting gestures. In the midst of this beautiful place, I thought of nothing but this place itself: all other thoughts sank away." (Walser was found lying dead in the snow in 1956, after he left his asylum for a long stroll and didn't return.)

EMPATHETIC EYE

A Nasher gallery educator suggests ways that viewers both young and old might approach Isamu Noguchi's *Gregory* with special focus on the power of empathy.

MELISSA GONZALES

I love looking at works of art with young people. Rather than acting as a teacher or expert, I imagine that we are on a trip together. This trip is never a straight line. Instead, there are twists and turns, like when one person points something out that the other person hadn't seen or when someone has a question and we try and figure out the answer together. It is also fun when we have different opinions about the artwork, and we take turns explaining why we feel that way and try to understand the other person's point of view. These activities are great for children and parents, teachers, grandparents, siblings, aunts and uncles, friends, and neighbors—anyone who might want to explore with you.



* Noguchi titled this sculpture *Effigy* when it was first exhibited.

Isamu Noguchi, *Gregory (Effigy)*, 1945 (cast 1969). Bronze, 69 1/4 x 16 1/8 x 16 3/8 in. (175.9 x 41 x 41.6 cm). Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection. Photography by David Heald. © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York 2021.

LOOK

- Begin by letting your eyes roam all over the artwork. What do you notice?
- Share some words that describe the color, texture, and shapes you see in the sculpture.
- What does this sculpture remind you of?
- Make a simple drawing of the sculpture.

The artist Isamu Noguchi created this sculpture and named it *Gregory*.^{*} He was inspired by a story called *The Metamorphosis* by author Franz Kafka. In this story, a man named Gregor woke one morning to find that he had turned into a giant brown bug with lots of little legs. At first, Gregor tried to carry on with his normal daily activities. However, he soon discovered that people felt afraid or upset when they saw him, including his family. Gregor also thought this change would only last a short time. When he didn't change back into a human after a few days, Gregor began to find ways to live with his new body.

- Look at the sculpture again. How does its form relate to the story of Gregor?
- Imagine that you woke up one morning and discovered you were now a giant bug. How would you feel?
- What would you like about being a bug?
- What would you dislike?

DRAW

Now, return to your drawing. Use your imagination to add details and features that make it look more like a bug.

- Does it have antennae? How many eyes does it have? What else can you add?
- Draw some things around your bug to show where it lives. Does it live in a house? The forest? Your backyard?
- Add a friend to your drawing. Is the friend also a bug? Or is it a person, animal, or something else?

WRITE

People were suddenly afraid of Gregor because of the way he looked, even though he was the same hard worker and caring brother and son he always had been. Sometimes the first thing we notice when we see someone new is the differences between them and ourselves. But once we get to know someone, we often find we have more in common than we might have thought.

- Has anyone believed something about you based on how you look before they got to know you? How did that make you feel?
- Imagine you are friends with Gregor. What could you say to comfort him? Write a letter to help him feel welcomed.

Artist Isamu Noguchi was born in 1904 in Los Angeles, California, to a mother that was an Irish-American writer and educator and a father that was a well-known Japanese poet. Throughout his life, Noguchi moved back and forth between Japan and the United States. There were times in his life, both in Japan and the US, when Noguchi did not feel like he fit in. He once said, "It's only in the art world that you can be free." This feeling of being free in one, but not every, part of their lives is one that many people share.

Over the last year, our country experienced pain, hardship, and deep concern, from the pandemic to racial injustice to political unrest. Looking at art can be a tool to help broach conversations about some of these difficult topics, not just with children, but with anyone who might have a different perspective than your own.

Spending time with Noguchi's *Gregory* can help open an important conversation about the unique experience of others and the opportunities we all have in our daily lives to make people—friends and strangers both—feel more welcome and appreciated.

**FORCE AND SOFTNESS:
THE COLLAGE SCULPTURES OF CAROL BOVE**
AT THE NASHER, OPENING OCTOBER 16



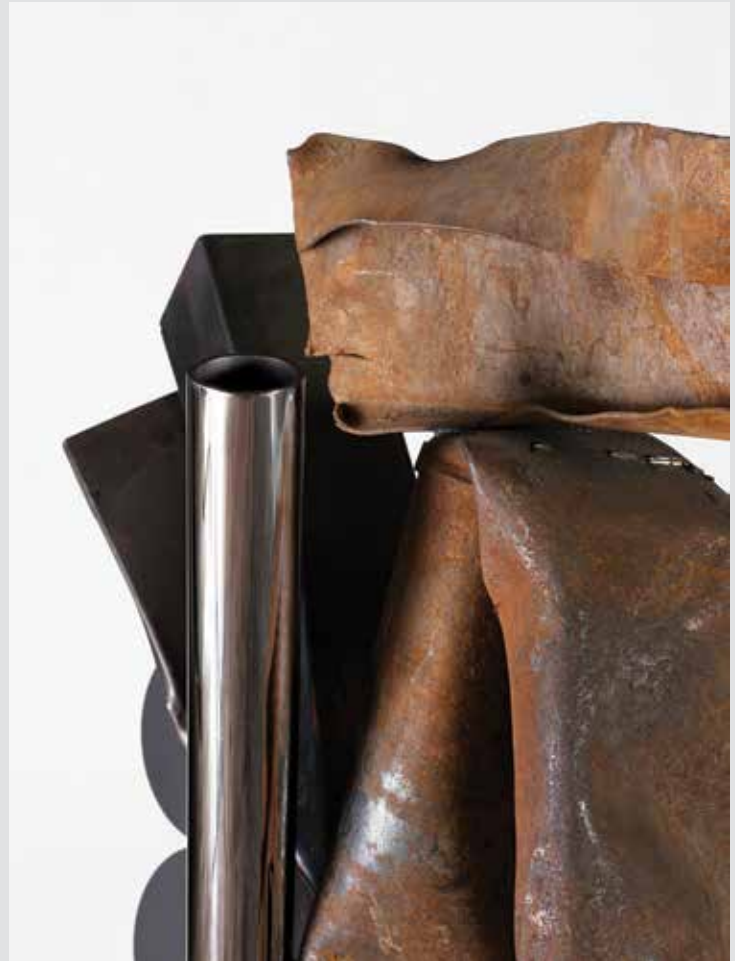
DR. CATHERINE CRAFT

In September 2015, Carol Bove visited the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas; two months later, I reciprocated at her studio in Red Hook, Brooklyn, to discuss the possibility of an exhibition at the Nasher. Bove had first become known about a decade earlier for precise aggregations of materials—books carefully arrayed on modernist shelves and tables, seashells precariously alight on wire armatures, and other intimately scaled objects—that engaged with the period just before her birth in 1971: the 1960s, with its utopian promises and failures, abundant creativity, and violent upheavals. At the time of our mutual visits, her sculptures and installations had moved away from these types of assemblages; extending into new kinds of spaces, including the outdoors, they featured such elements as petrified wood, I-beams, and a looping white form Bove called a glyph, which succinctly and uncannily encapsulated the signature gesture of a certain type of public art.

Walking through the Nasher and its garden with Bove that day in September, I didn't know that she was already at the edge of opening her work to more changes. But in Red Hook, I saw works in progress of a very different sort. They were welded and bolted combinations of large flourishes of scrap metal, square tubes bent and crushed into angles, bends, and curves (some of which were painted in confoundingly matte registers of red and other hues), and shiny lacquered cylinders made from the cut-off ends of the white glyphs. We talked that day about a certain mode of sculpture, made in the middle decades of the 20th century: dynamic, vigorous, often colorful, and produced in spontaneous forays, using means and materials associated with industrial production yet often described in the language of individual subjectivity—a type of sculpture overtaken in the 1960s by the conceptual rigor of Minimalism even as it persisted in plazas and other public spaces. The materials, processes, and syntax of Bove's nascent sculptures seemed profoundly familiar to me, but there were, thrillingly, elements of the unknown, as if this long-familiar approach to sculpture could lead into places not yet imagined.

Her subsequent work has borne that out: Bove has created a stunning range of sculptures in these past few years, from small tabletop knots of steel cloaked in mind-bending hues to the massive yet somehow intimate sculptures of her recent Chimes at Midnight series. While some suggest figures by way of sculptures of the past, such as the winged *Nike of Samothrace* or Rodin's *The Thinker*, most remain abstract, although they often carry allusive and evocative titles. All involve exploring the physical properties of steel through manipulations with an array of tools—many custom-made for this very purpose—that apply pressure to dent, crease, buckle, and crush the metal into such malleability that the results can resemble billowing folds of drapery. The resulting process has become, as Bove has put it, “a story of movement and pressure, force and softness.”

The Nasher's *Carol Bove: Collage Sculptures* will be the first major museum presentation focused solely on Bove's sculptures assembled from scrap and painted steel. Encompassing a range of works in different sizes and formats, all made over the last five years, the exhibition will explore Bove's work in relation to traditions of 20th-century sculpture, using the context of the Nasher collection to consider questions of scale, the artist's investigations of spontaneity and discontinuity in relation to her materials, and the ways that changing contexts of display can shift our understandings of individual artworks or constellations of objects.



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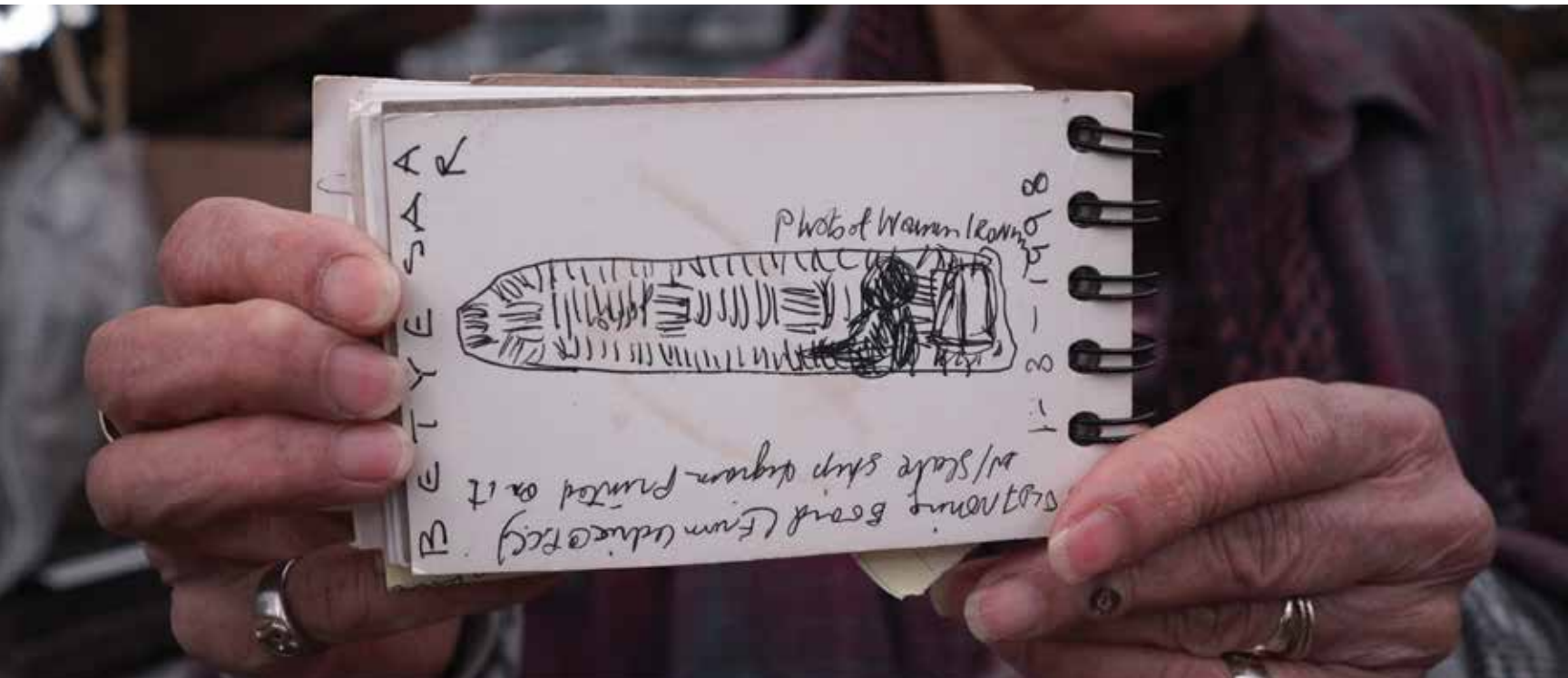


3.

1. Carol Bove, *Hylomorph* (detail), 2016. © Carol Bove. Courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner.
2. Carol Bove, *Luxembourg* (detail), 2016. © Carol Bove. Courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner.
3. Carol Bove, *Offenbach Barcarolle*, 2019. © Carol Bove. Courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner.
4. Carol Bove, *Mazagan* (detail), 2019. © Carol Bove. Courtesy of the artist and David Zwirner.



Carol Bove: Collage Sculptures will be on view at the Nasher Sculpture Center October 16, 2021–January 9, 2022.



BETYE SAAR: CALL AND RESPONSE

AT THE NASHER,
OPENING SEPTEMBER 25

CAROL S. ELIEL

Early in 2016, I reached out to Betye Saar, as I was interested in organizing an exhibition of her work for LACMA. During a fascinating studio visit that spring, I asked her, “If you could do anything you wanted at LACMA in terms of an exhibition, what would it be?” Then almost 90 years old, Saar replied that she wanted to spend as much time as possible in her studio, making art, and that she’d like to do a small show that included some new work. We began considering various possibilities for the sort of show that Saar had described. It just so happened that her gallery had recently created a beautifully designed foam-core storage box for some dozen of her sketchbooks. Saar proudly showed me the box and its contents, she and I began talking about how we might envision a show around her sketchbooks, and the core idea for *Betye Saar: Call and Response* was born.

In 2018, LACMA was able to acquire Saar’s large and powerful installation, *I’ll Bend But I Will Not Break*. As seen in the related sketches, Saar based the image on top of the ironing board on a well-known 18th-century English abolitionist print depicting how scores of Africans were packed into the lower deck of the slave ship *Brookes* during its journey through the Middle Passage. She has a blowup of the image in her studio and refers to it as part of her visual language.

Saar also began work on an installation revolving around a used metal army cot, which she had envisioned in sketches as early as 2001; but because she never had an opportunity to exhibit such a work, she never realized it. *Woke Up This Morning, the Blues was in My Bed* is the new work Saar created for *Call and Response*. She had used the cot in two earlier installations, dismantling each of them afterward, retaining the cot for future use. As Saar has acknowledged, she loves not only using recycled objects but also recycling them herself.

Not only does *Betye Saar: Call and Response* cover the arc of her career from 1968 to 2019, but it is also the public’s first opportunity ever to see Saar’s extraordinary sketchbooks along with related finished works and thus to gain insights into her creative process. Just like the artist herself, the exhibition is small but mighty.

A version of this text first appeared in *Insider*, Fall 2019, published by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Text © Museum Associates/LACMA.

ABOVE: Betye Saar with a sketch of the ironing board in *I’ll Bend But I Will Not Break*, 1998. Courtesy of LACMA.

OPPOSITE, FROM LEFT: Betye Saar, Page from *Aix-en-Provence/Los Angeles Sketchbook*, September 8, 2004, Collection of Betye Saar, courtesy of the artist and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles, CA, © Betye Saar, photo © Museum Associates/LACMA; Betye Saar, Page from *2000–2001 Sketchbook*, August 14, 2001, Collection of Betye Saar, courtesy of the artist and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles, © Betye Saar, photo © Museum Associates/LACMA.



Aug 14, 2001
4 metal cot
tie blue bottles
to bed springs
also other
Blue & brass
shiny



Blue
Men
under cot

"woke up this morning
the blues was on my mind"
- OLD Blues Song.

PORTAL PARK (SLICE)

Robert Irwin’s iconic downtown Dallas sculpture begins a second life.

LUCIA SIMEK



In 1981, the City of Dallas installed a work of art in a liminal space between downtown and historic Deep Ellum that would serve as the ‘eastern gateway’ to the central business district over the next three decades: Robert Irwin’s *Portal Piece (Slice)*. Located in Carpenter Plaza, named for the family that donated the land and commissioned Irwin, the sculpture was comprised of sheets of steel that cut through four mounds of earth. The work was a spare and clever intervention within the urban space, demarcating two important sectors of the growing city and illustrating its hopeful suturing of architecture and nature.

Over the years though, as the city changed, expanded, and roads were diverted, the boundary that the artwork was charged with describing changed, too, and Irwin’s work no longer served its original purpose. But as urbanist Jane Jacobs once noted: “Vital cities have marvelous innate abilities for understanding, communicating, contriving, and inventing what is required to combat their difficulties. ... Lively, diverse, intense cities contain the seeds of their own regeneration.” Just so with Dallas’ Carpenter Plaza: what looked like the unfortunate death of an artwork by one of the giants of contemporary art instead became an occasion for its reinvention.

The sculpture was removed from its longtime north-south position in the plaza in 2016 and, steered by the nonprofit group Parks for Downtown Dallas, Irwin, now in his 90s, cut the original piece into more segments, as well as added new segments of filigreed steel, bringing new energy to the sculpture. He then worked with the landscape architecture firm Hargreaves Jones to reconfigure the assembly of forms to sit on an east-west axis. Irwin renamed the work *Portal Park (Slice)*.

The resurrected sculpture was installed in April of this year in a whole new greenspace near the original site, now called Carpenter Park, that is being built up around it and is slated to open early next year.

At 5.6 acres, the park is soon to be the largest in downtown Dallas. And in its new life, the sculpture will have—as Irwin indicates in its new title of *Portal Park* instead of *Portal Piece*—much more space to stretch out, truly connect with the city and its public, and be enjoyed for decades more.

Carpenter Park / 2201 Pacific Avenue / Dallas
Opens spring 2022

Photo: Christian Vasquez

FEATURES

A WALTZ ACROSS TEXAS ART ENVIRONMENTS
PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION
WHO IS THE PUBLIC?
WHAT MAKES ART PUBLIC?
TOUR DE FORCE
BLOOM WHERE YOU'RE PLANTED



ANNUALTY ACROSS ART ENVIRON



TEXAS

EVENTS

JULIE WEBB (WITH BRUCE WEBB)

A folk art environment is like turning the soul of an artist inside out and putting it in the front yard for the entire world to see. Most of us like to let the world know how we feel about things to a certain degree, but rarely do we place our thoughts in our yard like this and open ourselves up for critiques from our neighbors and passersby.

Bruce and I set out 35 years back to seek and collect things that are hard to find: books, records, people, places, and the marvel of handmade objects. For many years we have conducted a gallery dedicated to art that's often narrative, naïve, and obsessive or bold in design, form, or color. Our business cards say, "We sell soul."

Through our searches in the mid 1980s, we were first introduced to Rev. JL Hunter in South Dallas. Rev. Hunter had a tree in his backyard that had been cut down due to a lightning strike. When the tree was being chopped, Rev. Hunter stopped the cut at his height and carved and painted out what he saw as a human figure in the remnant. Rev. Hunter's

tree was the first yard show we identified. His work was everything we were looking for in the handmade, and we were then catapulted into knowing the maker and the vision of the creative process.

In the 1970s and 80s in the Dallas area, there was also Willard Watson—The Texas Kid's yard over by Love Field airport. Willard's yard looked like an old Wild West graveyard crossed with a pimp's office plus a dose of the love of nature. It was filled with Willard's creations using found elements that transformed into figures and forms, giving it the air of a voodoo scene. Willard's yard and house were used as a set in David Byrne's film *True Stories*, as Pop Staples played the spell caster of true love.

Art environments are created mostly from a handful of core reasons: they can be a silent but bold welcome sign from the lonely; a testament from the religious; a megaphone of a social message; or born from tragedy and used by the artist to cope and recover. And because Texas welcomes the absurd in our culture and the outlandish in our characters, it is no wonder it is home to incredible art environments, some that should encourage a dedicated road trip.



We recently set out on a short trip to see a few vibrant Texas environments. Our first stop was El Paso.

El Paso is as west as you get in Texas, and this isolated big city is ripe with art environments. The art scene of El Paso is rich and multicultural but has little outside influence, and local opportunities to exhibit work are limited. Artist Ho Baron lives on a corner lot of one of El Paso's major streets and chose the yard of his craftsman era home for his own sculpture park. His concrete and bronze sculptures create a natural environment among the landscaping, beckoning the viewer to engage with Ho Baron. Born in Chicago in 1941, Ho was raised in El Paso where his father ran the famed Dave's Pawn Shop, known for its extreme taxidermy and circus gaff collection.

While living in Philadelphia, Ho took a modeling/mold-making class, then later returned to El Paso and purchased his current home in the early 1980s to start work on his environment. He refers to his work through Carl Jung's theories of universal creative unconscious, and his pieces evoke the feeling of idols to another world. The work reminded us of art environments we had visited in France years ago such as Les Rochers Sculptés in Saint-Malo or Robert Tatin's work at Cossé-le-Vivien. Each piece of Ho's bears the strong image of a figure created in armature, then molded for bronze or cement casting. Every piece is a joyful and haunting totem with a powerful hint of the surreal.

1. HO BARON EL PASO, TX



2.

CASA DE
AZUCAR
EL PASO, TX

Not far from Ho Baron's environment of sculptures is Rufino Loya Rivas's yard, years ago dubbed *Casa de Azucar* by neighbors. The Sugar House started as a very simple house, once abandoned and unkempt until Mr. Rivas purchased it in 1971. He promised his wife he would turn the house into something beautiful that she would be proud of. After the first couple of years of work on the inside, Mr. Rivas started building the first shrine of Virgin de Guadalupe in the front yard. He used the economical route of cement and taught himself to build molds from all sorts of household items, then cast and stacked them to build columns and forms that create each niche. Mr. Rivas, born in 1933, is a fifth generation El Paso-Juárez denizen and worked all his life as an operator for Levi Strauss. He would come home from work each day to catch the last couple hours of light and relax by working on his yard show, which he dedicated to the City of El Paso. After the first niche, he started on the front fence of columns and structures, all the while using light blue and white to portray a clean contrast to the sandy terrain. The colors and shapes are a perfect blend to represent a place of reverence and devotion. Over the past 25 years, Mr. Rivas has added fences on all sides of his huge lot, several other shrines, and the addition of pink tones. Now in his 80s, Mr. Rivas still works most days maintaining, painting, and cleaning the environment, ensuring its place as a beautiful glowing cake-top in the desert landscape of El Paso.

“Art environments are always compelling, like flower gardens. When the creator is no longer around, the garden is either done or can be maintained by others, yet they are always a privilege to visit.”

3.

CATHEDRAL OF JUNK AUSTIN, TX

From El Paso we took the lovely drive of I-10 heading back southeast toward Austin. Sometimes we travel across the world to see something amazing, yet we can miss what is similarly impressive in our own backyards—the Cathedral of Junk by Vince Hannemann in Austin is a place we’d known of for years.

True to the title, it’s made from just about any interesting junk you can imagine—discarded electronics, all kinds of household detritus, and enough crutches to form a giant futuristic sanctuary to the healed. Vince is an artist who relocated from Santa Fe to Austin in the early 1980s for income and not the music scene, which beckoned so many during that period. He started his structure in the backyard of his rental house, only later purchasing the home as he continued to build. But as his structure grew, so did his problems with the City of Austin. They enforced a height limit of 35 ft., easement borders, and attempted to regulate visitors, but Vince stayed true to the path of his voracious intent. He has a bit of a surly disposition and outcast personality, but he welcomes visitors in droves to see his personal paradise and to awe at its engineering, scale, and artistic attributes.





4. THE BEER CAN HOUSE + THE ORANGE SHOW HOUSTON, TX

Other Texas environments we dearly love and have visited many times are The Orange Show and The Beer Can House, both in Houston. Postman Jeff McKissack worked in isolation on his ingenious, colorful theme park to the health benefits of oranges from 1956 until his passing in 1980. He used common building materials and found objects to make a wonder of mazes, mosaics, walkways, and an amphitheater, all with the colors orange and white.

The Beer Can House is another art site maintained by the Orange Show Foundation and well worthy of a visit—a diamond between modern, towering condos. It was started in 1968 by John Milkovich to keep busy after retirement. He covered his home in flattened beer cans, creating his own form of aluminum siding and made garlands with the cans for decorations that twinkle in the wind.

RESOURCES FOR THE PRESERVATION OF ART ENVIRONMENTS IN THE US

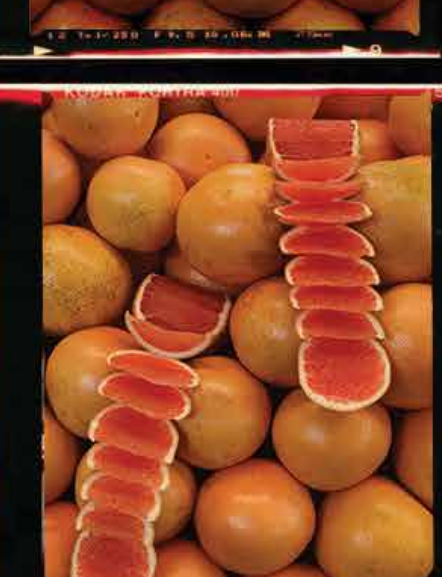
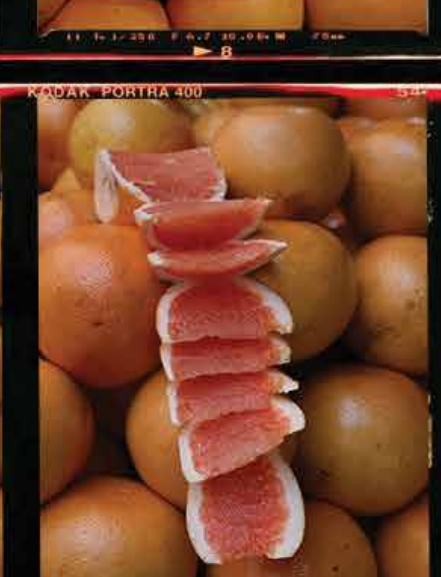
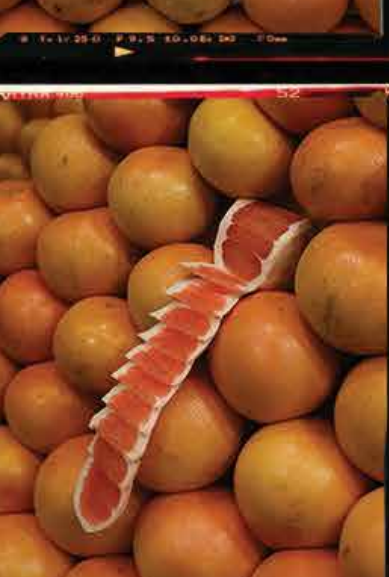
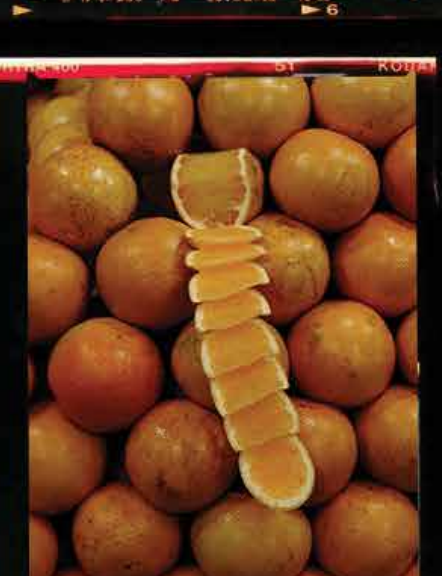
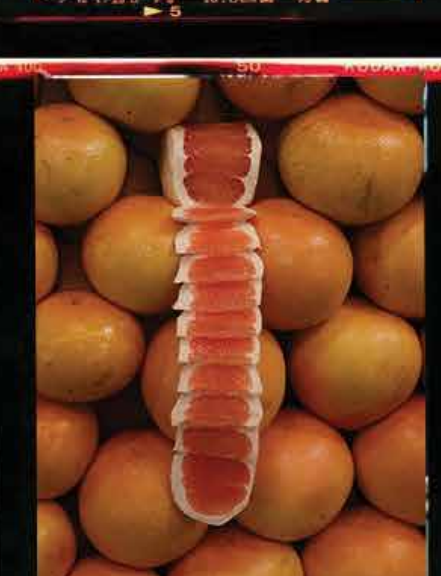
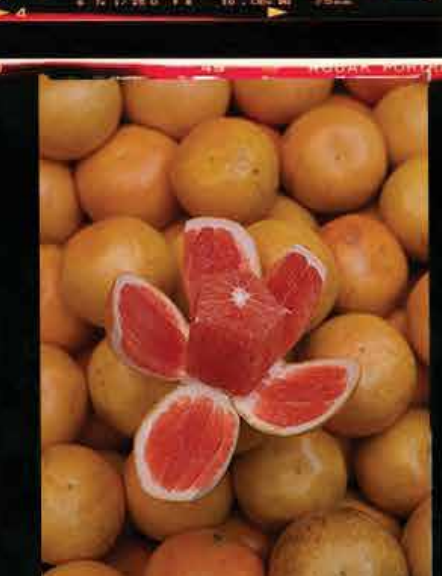
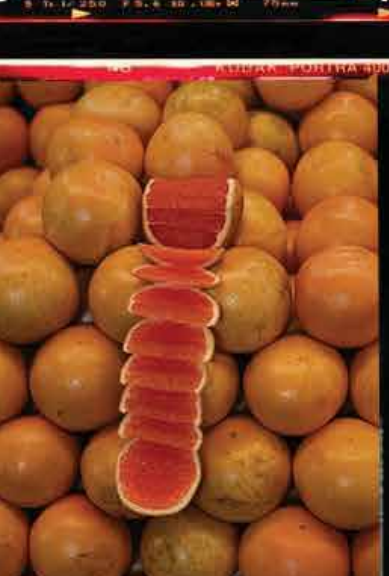
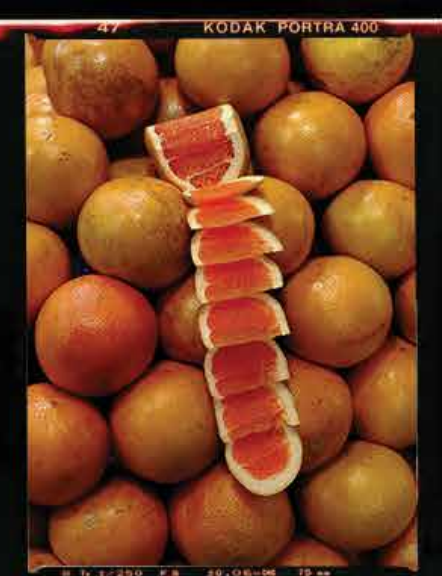
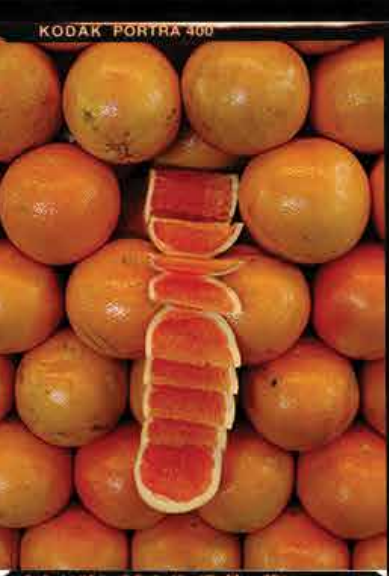
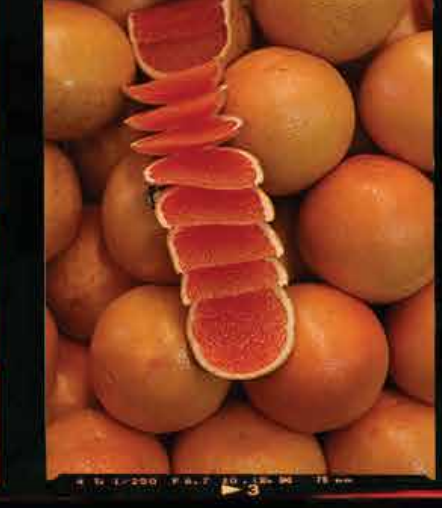
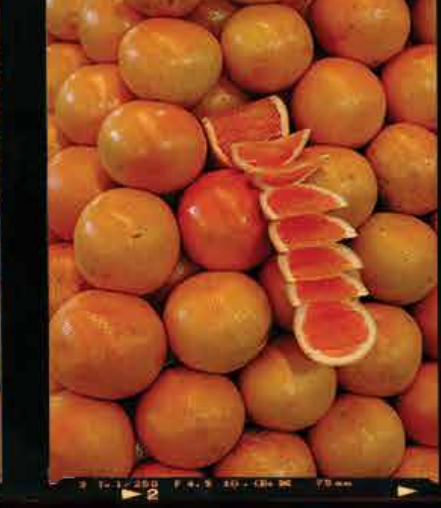
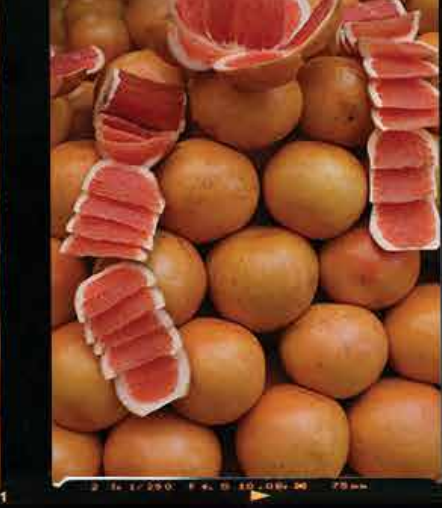
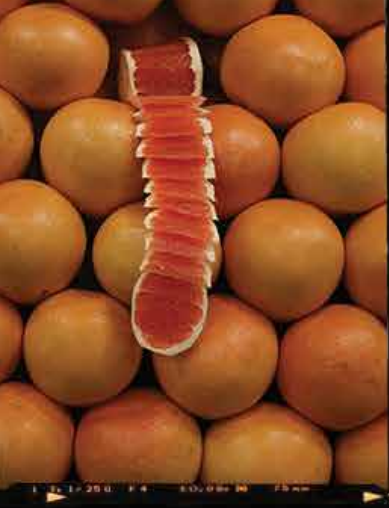
- In Texas, there is The Orange Show Center for Visionary Art which preserves, promotes, and documents visionary art environments. orangeshow.org
- Architect Narrow Larry keeps a well-documented website of art shows across the country. narrowlarry.com
- SPACES was a group started in 1978 as an organization for saving, preserving, and documenting art environments worldwide. SPACES archives will be housed, and its work continued, at Art Preserve, the world's first museum dedicated to art environments at the Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, which opened in June 2021. spaces-art-environments.org | jmkac.org/art-preserve

1. Ho Baron, *Chac Mo!*, El Paso, Texas. Photography by Fred Scruton.

2. Rufino Loya Rivas, *Casa de Azucar*, El Paso, Texas. Photography by Fred Scruton.

3. Vince Hannemann, *Cathedral of Junk*, Austin, Texas. Photography courtesy of Julie and Bruce Webb.

4. John Milkovich, *The Beer Can House*, Houston, Texas. Photography courtesy of Julie and Bruce Webb.





PUBLIC DISPLAYS C

In an essay with words and an essay with images, the poet is intimate and strange on the streets of Mexico.

I am often asked why I moved to Mexico. The tale about running away from debts and loneliness. Belgian-born artist Francis Alÿs, who has lived here, is not who you'd like to be, but adjacent, and that the declamation might then become true. Alÿs, once said in an interview that Mexico is not to call themselves poets, without self-consciousness. I myself, to allow desire to masquerade as manifestation, all puffed-up without any substance to fill it, as I have described as a lie. A shaman once told me that I am not who we actually are, but anyway, I ignored him. I am a poet—so I moved to Mexico City.

Or maybe—and I am not self-aware enough to be such an actual crappy poet and unable to just get on with my shop. This I am great at. Not even shopping but curating anything. Shopping and curation are tasks unique to how my own lives out. It is a consolation: To sort out of my life gives an arrangement a certain poignancy, and I have hopes of another meaning. Sifting is particularly interesting but the space between function and expression,

WORDS
SU WU

PHOTOGRAPHY
SAM YOUKILIS

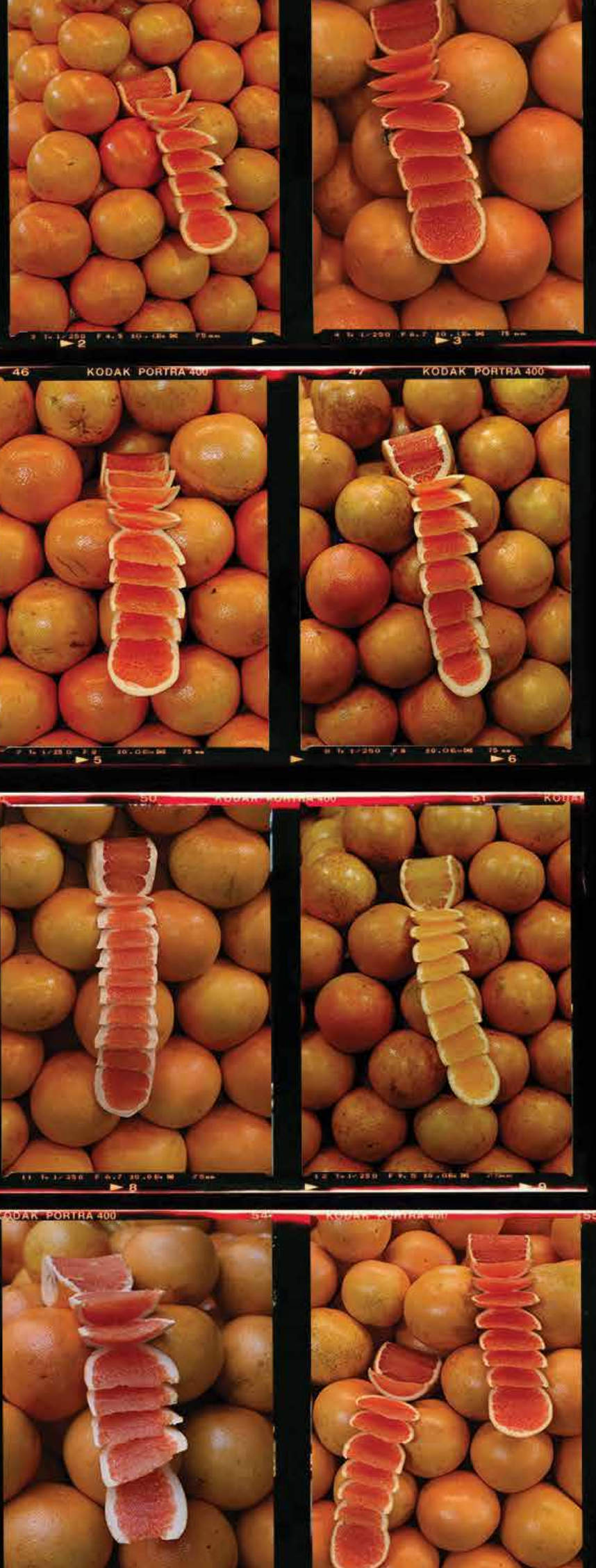
performance of the everyday—of daily life, especially where the remarkable. Sometimes, in front of me is a man on a stationary bike wedged between two booths selling yellow goods. Rodriguez in Tepito, and there is a fallen-in ceiling by cut-up garbages and furniture in front of it. At the market in Zazmora, there are candle holders

because it is anonymous does not mean that someone with effort. And past the shop selling dog collars, Francis Alÿs himself allegedly ever made. It hangs above the shop like maybe it covers a hole in the wall, and it is a happiness is that it might be temporary, but it has already been describing how I've felt in the markets of Mexico.

Of course, I consider none of this in the home. I am looking, with sheer entitlement, to arrive unannounced. I ask for the blind man, and a *tuk tuk*. Sometimes I believed advice that did not bear consideration. I knew I was preparing for anything, before the moment. This is why I always wanted to write poetry—there is already done. The accumulation of skill is a response to what we change the things we encounter as we are changed. I met who is the potter José García Antonio, and on the street with a head with a mole between the eyes, and I thought of a woman who has a mole between her eyes, and a face that Diego

Don José's studio now makes nearly 50 of these candle holders. Documentary crews that have recently thronged the streets of Oaxaca City, and so I asked him instead if he would put me in bronze into a candle holder and bookends. I found it more readily available, what was becoming mainly a habit of stretching and meditating in the nude. Don José

The ordinary is, as the poet Mark Strand says, "a description of itself." What expectations attend the ordinary, be absurd as it is to be boring, and as likely to cease to feel like something until it ceases to feel like anything. The ordinary everyday is lost by our finessing of it, too—the ordinary is lost it more closely, and becomes extraordinary instantly.



OF AFFECTION

Two Americans fall for objects both

City from LA, and instead of a long cautionary
ness, I tell, again, a circumspect story involving the
in Mexico since 1986, and what it means perhaps
d to hope if you insist on an identity hard enough
Allys, who made a practice of running headlong into
to City was the last place people were still willing
ness or qualification. I wanted this delusion for
estation, to let my life be as fragile as an inflatable,
though the not-yet-true is not more accurately
sometimes our romantic notions of ourselves are not
I. I wanted to be a poet, I wanted to say out loud, I

h to know if this is more embarrassing than being
t over it already—I moved to Mexico City to
r walking around without the urgency of needing
uely suited to those of us too distractible to see our
the material of the existing world whatever it is that
to move the frames and groupings over and over in
y relevant to what I curate, which is not quite art
or perhaps better described as things aiding the
-objects suffused with some of the use and repetition
hese rituals become no longer distinct from the
nt of the market by my house in Roma Norte there
ho sharpens knives. Or go upstairs, squeezing
low-skinned raw chickens at the Mercado Abelardo
e is a mural by Isamu Noguchi protected from a
age bags, and someone has stacked unwanted office
hardware store in Centro, about a block south of La
olders made out of scrap metal (pie tins?), and just
neone did not make it, whom I cannot track down
rs, in the alley by the church, is the first painting
re the door of an air conditioner repair shop; it looks
not for sale. Jorge Luis Borges said the thing about
also happens frequently, and he might as well have
Mexico.

ours I spend wandering, or driving to villages
nounced and expect welcome. Go to where the
k tuk driver will take you to the artist's home.
out and it did not kill me. I did this even before
e exhibitions were scheduled or imagined, but maybe
at you couldn't know what it was for until it was
onsive thing, as ordinary as the world itself, where
hanged. The tuk tuk driver led me to the blind man
the ground was a planter in the form of the woman's
ght, what a strange detail until I met his wife who
on José has touched.

hese head planters a month, for visitors and
his studio in San Antonino, about an hour outside
e might make some self-portraits that I could cast
thought I might like to sidestep what was becoming
nstream, but then he sent me clay figures of a man
é had taken up yoga.

aid about nothingness, a subject that "doesn't allow
nd our sense of the everyday, which is as likely to
hange as not? Nothing, of course, feels too acutely
ng forever, and perhaps the essential idea of the
everyday is no longer everyday as soon as we look at
ead of ordinary.



Who

is

the

Public?



1.



In a roundtable discussion, **Justine Ludwig**, executive director of Creative Time; **Cecilia Alemani**, Donald R. Mullen, Jr. director and chief curator of High Line Art; and Nasher Chief Curator **Jed Morse** consider public art during a pandemic and time of social and political change.

JED MORSE

There has been a lot going on, obviously, over the past year, and a lot of institutions have turned to public art to pursue their missions while things have been shut down. I think it might be a good place to start for us to talk about before the pandemic, and before the political and social turmoil over the past year, and to think about how public art functioned. Because public art is this very special animal within the ecosystem of visual art—there’s something different about encountering art in the public realm rather than in a museum or gallery space, and both of your organizations—the High Line and Creative Time—really work within that very specialized area. Could you both talk about what you were doing before the pandemic, and then we’ll consider how things have changed?

JUSTINE LUDWIG

Creative Time has a unique relationship with public art—we really are focused on public interaction and socially engaged work. That critical mass mediating the relationship with the art that we’re creating and supporting is central to our practice, and so a challenge that we faced when the pandemic hit, specifically, was that we had this great roster of programming that really demanded critical mass in order to be activated appropriately. We found ourselves having to radically rethink everything that we were doing to support projects that still spoke to that mission of centering the public within the work while also challenging the structure of what public art can be in a time when we couldn’t convene en masse. And so that was a big challenge for us, because, to your point, it’s a great moment for public art as people are wanting to be outdoors, interacting with things while they’re mindful of the pandemic. But work we’re often creating—what we still identify as public art—often happens inside. And so, we’ve had to do some radical rethinking of the kinds of things that we’ve taken on, and last year forced some really innovative and strange formats in terms of what we commissioned and supported.

MORSE

The context that you work in, Cecilia, with the High Line—since it is outside—does provide an ideal environment during the pandemic, and I’m curious about what you were thinking of before the pandemic, and then how things have changed?

CECILIA ALEMANI

The High Line has a physical space, and that’s what we use as a big stage for public art, or as we like to say, a museum without walls and without ceilings. So, in a way, our core mission, which is to support artists and in commissioning and producing new thought-provoking artworks, hasn’t changed with the pandemic simply because the space is still there. It is a space where people are even more eager to go now, because they’re looking for outdoor spaces. What has changed dramatically, of course, is the critical mass of the visitorship on the High Line. We are far from the 8,000,000 visitors that would visit the High Line in a year who, even if they didn’t come to see art, would still have an encounter with art, since the way we install our art projects is often intertwined with the gardens. Now, the visitorship has dropped tremendously, which in a way is like a new beginning, because you finally can come have a walk without the crowds. It is really, really pleasant, and I think it allows visitors to have a 360 experience, which is what we care about—it’s not just the art, but it’s the architecture, the gardens, and the cityscape around this multifaceted experience.

2.



***“The High Line
has a physical space,
and that’s what
we use as a big stage
for public art ...
a museum without walls
and without ceilings.”***

-Cecilia Alemani

MORSE

I'm curious about how each of you have adjusted in terms of programming. Justine, you were talking about shifting the model a little bit. How have you done that?

LUDWIG

We worked on a project with Jill Magid, which was in direct response to the pandemic. She created an intervention on 120,000 2020 pennies, which was the amount of the initial stimulus check that went out [\$1,200], and on the edges [of each penny], she had engraved the text, "The body was already so fragile." Those pennies were then dispersed through the economy, originating in New York, but I've been informed that there are some across the country. I know there are quite a few in Dallas, since I'm getting messages about it, so we're thinking about what it means to create a public artwork that exists primarily as rumor, frankly, or a serendipitous encounter.

We wanted to challenge what it means to have public art exist within the quotidian rhythms of one's life in a truly atypical and unanticipated way. So, even interrogating currency as a national political art commission and challenging what it means when you start thinking of currency as public art commissioned by the government. We were also questioning what it means to create a memorial or monument to a form of suffering that went primarily unseen over the course of the past year—people were unable to mourn loved ones collectively, as they normally do when experiencing tragedy. And so, the project was really intended to speak directly to the conditions of the time. We really want to support the art of the Now that's responding to the sociopolitical in real time, so it was exciting working with an artist that proposed such a radical format for creating a monumental work.

3.



4.



ALEMANI

A project I think has the potential of continuing, besides of course, thinking about the local New York communities, is a group we created called the High Line Network, a network of public projects across North America that have similarity with the High Line, meaning that they either are or will be public spaces of sorts—parks or other kind of public spaces that are built on linear, industrial infrastructure or natural infrastructure repurposed for public use. What we created is a network of organizations that are similar to the High Line and with whom we can share knowledge and best practices on how to build a sustainable public space. It's less about programming, it's more about policies. Many of these institutions are not necessarily on the scale of the High Line, but in a way we all face the same challenges when it comes to creating a brand-new organization that is often a collaboration between the public and private sectors, and it has been very productive to share experiences.

MORSE

One of the most heartening things about the past year is how colleagues have stayed connected and created support groups. A group similar to the one that you've put together around the High Line, Cecilia, is the Public Art Consortium. The Collaboration Committee of the Public Art Consortium has been getting together monthly to talk about what's going on outside of the pandemic with the incredibly important political and social issues that are begging for some kind of response—the Black Lives Matter movement and broader questions of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion. I wonder if, Justine, you can talk about how that imperative has had an impact on what you've been doing over the past year.

LUDWIG

These issues are very much built within all the work that we do, but this year we have three major projects, one of them dealing with how we engender community and safe space in light of the past year. Another directly speaks to the need for empathy among different species and the climate crisis, and the need to think beyond our own lifespan when we're trying to envision a better future. And then another project speaks directly to the legacy of slavery and labor in this country, and to the fraught nature of the American dream. And so, our work is really rooted in addressing the most pressing issues of our time. That is a particularly challenging charge in a moment like this, but it makes the work feel vital.

I think there is an important need here—to talk about how art fits into these larger ecosystems, to acknowledge the multifaceted roles of the arts. It is quite complex because the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion within our fields, and the conversations that we're having about them today, are just so long overdue. And these are not solely questions of the projects that we're producing, but how we're producing them, and: Who art is for? There is so much work to be done addressing that question.

MORSE

I'm also curious, in particular, about the potential for healing at the High Line, Cecilia. Just to be able to get outside and walk is one of the really glorious things about the High Line, and the fact that it's elevated in the middle of the city makes for a slightly out-of-body experience. I wonder if the High Line has been a space that offers healing from everything going on in the world?

ALEMANI

I think so. Anecdotally, in the months immediately after we reopened I saw two people on two separate occasions praying on the High Line—it's literally been a spiritual moment. So, hopefully people will also understand that they can use space in another way that is not just walking to or from one point to the other, but that it's also a space of breathing.

LUDWIG

I have to say, as a New Yorker now, who has been in the city for the majority of the past year, which is a very disorienting reality in many ways, the High Line and spaces like it have been such a gift, and I don't know what I would have done this past year without them. As a visitor, thank you for that space. Our physical world became so small, and going places where you see the sky, you see these expansive vistas, plants, and you get to really contemplate art in a safe environment, has just been such a gift.

1. Simone Leigh, *Brick House*, 2019. A High Line Plinth Commission. On view June 2019 – Spring 2021. Photography by Timothy Schenck, courtesy of the High Line.
2. The High Line. Photography by Timothy Schenck, courtesy of the High Line.
3. Jill Magid, *Tender Rolls*. Photography by Paul McGeiver, courtesy of Creative Time.
4. Jill Magid, *Tender*. Photography by Leandro Justen, courtesy of Creative Time.
5. The High Line, 2020. Photography by Liz Ligon, courtesy of the High Line.
6. Kambui Olujimi, panel 3/9; the removal of the Robert E. Lee statue in *Kilfer*, 2020, as part of the *Creative Time Comics 2020*, courtesy of Creative Time.
7. Victoria Lomasko, panel 4/9 in *Life Long Race*, 2020, as part of the *Creative Time Comics 2020*, courtesy of Creative Time.
8. Ciara Elle Bryant, *Server: A Streamed Revolution*, mixed media, 2020, Nasher Windows. Photography by Kevin Todora.
9. Xavier Edward Carter, *Start Livin in the New World*, mixed media, 2020, Nasher Windows. Photography by Kevin Todora.
10. Vicki Meek, *Stony the Road We Trod: A Shrine to Black America*, mixed media, 2021, *Nasher Public*. Photography by Kevin Todora.
11. Kristen Cochran, *Iare well*, neon, 2020, Nasher Windows. Photography by Kevin Todora.

8.



9.

10.



11.



WHAT MAKES ART PUBLIC?

A handy family guide for intrepid urban (suburban and rural, too) explorers.

COLLEEN BORSH



It can become a landmark or special meeting place.
Nasher collection artist Anish Kapoor created *Cloud Gate* in Chicago’s Millennium Park. The artwork’s nickname is “The Bean.” Have you visited this sculpture or seen pictures of it?



It can be large or small.
Pioneer Plaza celebrates the history of Dallas. It features an artwork by artist Robert Summers made up of three bronze cowboys and 40 bronze longhorn cattle.



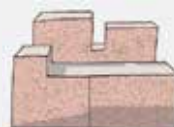
It can be inspired by the city or the history of its location. It can help people remember a moment or person.
The John F. Kennedy Memorial Plaza was created by architect Philip Johnson to honor President Kennedy’s memory and create a space for reflection.



It can be permanent or temporary.
Nasher collection artist Jean (Hans) Arp created an artwork called *Sculpture To Be Lost in the Forest*. He placed it outdoors near his home in France for others to discover.



It can be interpreted in different ways.
People might disagree or have different ideas about the artwork. There is always a chance that people will not like the work or think it should be taken down. Nasher collection artist Richard Serra created *Tilted Arc*, which was a curved steel sculpture for Federal Plaza in New York City. People sent letters and held a public hearing, and a jury voted to remove the sculpture.



It can be unexpected.
Look carefully you might miss it. Public art can be found in unexpected places: knitted around a parking meter, on the roof of a building, or floating in a pond. Nasher collection artist Scott Burton created stone benches, stools, and chairs that can be found in many North American cities.

WHEN YOU SEE PUBLIC ART

Look. Look closely. Move around the artwork. What do you see?

Learn. Can you find the name of the artist or the title of the artwork?

Ask. What questions do you have about this artwork?

Imagine. What do you think the artist was trying to communicate? What visual

Create. You might want to take pictures or sketch the artwork.



clues support your idea?



OUTDOOR
SCULPTURAL
GIANTS
FROM
MIT'S
PERCENT-FOR-ART
PROGRAM

GRANT JOHNSON

TOUR DE FOURCE

This is to show how the folded GG poster will fit into the book.
The overall size of the poster is 22x17, folder in half and then
folded again. OVERALL folded size is 11 x 8.5. Poster will be
printed on newsprint stock (60/70 lb white paper)

**YOU'RE
SEEING
LESS
THAN
WHAT**



OUTDOOR
SCULPTURAL
GIANTS
FROM
MIT'S
PERCENT-FOR-ART
PROGRAM

GRANT JOHNSON

TERRACE FOR TOUR



2.



3.

Shall we begin with Henry Moore? Moore's work was foundational to the Nasher's collection and is also one of the more historic names in MIT's public art collection, centrally sited at the heart of campus between the river and the campus's iconic dome. Noting their shared titular and figurative allusions, it's fun to see Moore's investigation evolve between the Nasher's *Three Piece No. 3: Vertebrae* (1968) and *Three-Piece Reclining Figure, Draped* (1976) eight years later. Moore was inspired by pre-Columbian Chacmool sculptures of rain deities from the Yucatán region of Mexico, an apt reference in rainy Boston, and mere steps from the always animate Charles River.

Head east along Memorial Drive (passing Nasher collection artist Jacques Lipchitz's *Birth of the Muses* (1944-50) until you see Alexander Calder's gigantic *La Grande Voile (The Big Sail)* (1965) on your left, the monumental centerpiece of a courtyard in the distance. Once you're close enough to walk between its curvy legs, look back on a sunny day and you'll likely spy much smaller, white sails darting around the river in the distance as well as the syncopated flickerings

of cars and runners, all framed by the odd silhouettes cut by Calder's static behemoth—what he called a 'stable.' Head one courtyard further east to set it into dialogue with Louise Nevelson's *Transparent Horizon* (1975). Although it is another black, welded metal monolith, these two are strikingly different. Whereas Calder's *Sail* makes as much sense from any angle, Nevelson's *Horizon* has two distinct sides like a quizzical fence, echoing the frontality and plays of relief typical of her well-known wooden assemblages.

Nevelson's *Horizon* was the first of many works supported by MIT's Percent-for-Art Program, administered by the nearby List Visual Arts Center, located just across Ames Street (in a building designed by I.M. Pei). The List curates the public art collection, the campus gallery, and its temporary exhibitions, as well as off-site projects such as MIT Professor Emerita Joan Jonas's *They Come to Us Without a Word* for the Venice Biennale 2015. The Percent-for-Art Program currently dedicates up to \$500,000 to the creation of commissioned artworks for every major renovation or new campus construction project at MIT. The program originated in 1968, arguably formalizing the spirit of collaboration

demonstrated by earlier initiatives such as the MIT Chapel (1954) designed by architect Eero Saarinen with an exoskeletal bell tower by sculptor Theodore Roszak and hovering altar screen by sculptor Harry Bertioia.

Rounding the list, you'll see another, more orthopedic Henry Moore (*Reclining Figure*, 1963), and Alicja Kwade's *Against the Run* (2019), a clock whose numbers move as much as its hands. Look closely and you'll see that despite its anxious rotation, this clock still keeps perfect time. Find Amherst Street and follow it northeast until you arrive at the MIT Sloan School of Management, and Cai Guo-Qiang's *Ring Stone* (2010). Well known for his firework performances and paintings, Guo-Qiang cut the 12 rings (one for each zodiac animal and month of the lunar calendar) from a single, 14 metric ton block of white granite from the caves of Zhangbanzhen near the artist's hometown of Quanzhou. Japanese black pine trees planted within the rings allude to classical Chinese landscape painting, and add a natural, ever-changing element.

Maybe after a spell in one of the Adirondack chairs popular in this courtyard, find Main Street and head west, until you arrive at Ursula



4.

von Rydingsvard's *SCIENTIA* (2016), a tall tawny form dabbled with shades of brown, moss green, and rust. Well known for her often chainsaw-carved wooden forms, it's fascinating to see von Rydingsvard's abstract, gestural language (also on view outside Brooklyn's Barclays Center) translated here into towering metal. The threat of a tornado is tempered by its simultaneous testament to the still permanence of a rocky cave, or even lace and honeycomb toward its uppermost edge.

Circle around the Frank Gehry-designed Stata Center, and see if you can find Beverly Pepper's *Trinity* (formerly *Dunes I*) (1971) tucked into a niche behind the Compton Laboratories like seals in a cove. Apprehend it with her *Black Angel* (1967) and *Venezia Blu* (1968)—both in the Nasher collection—in mind, and it's clear that Pepper made a quick transition from polished to rusted Cor-Ten steel, anticipating the texture and earthbound profile of her *Dallas Land Canal: Canal and Hillside* (1971-75), a land artwork commissioned by Raymond and Patsy Nasher for NorthPark.

Now head west, finding your way between Vassar Street to the south and Albany Street to the north until you reach Pacific Street.

Follow it north to our last stop, Sarah Sze's *Blue Poles* (2004-06), a series of fire escapes built to the scale of a cat. Commissioned to decorate the exterior of a graduate student dorm, Sze's sculpture captures the sometimes frantic, anxious feeling of student (or any) life. Arriving at it, hopefully you feel a sense of relief with no urge to flee.

1. Sarah Sze, *Blue Poles*, 2004-06. Installation. Painted steel and aluminum 600 in. Commissioned with MIT Percent-for-Art Funds. Photography by George Bouret.
2. Alicia Kwade, *Against the Run*, 2019. MIT Collection. Commissioned with MIT Percent-for-Art Funds with gifts from Robert D. ('64) and Sara-Ann Sanders. Photography courtesy of MIT List Visual Arts Center. Institute of Technology.
3. Ursula von Rydingsvard, *SCIENTIA*, 2016. Bronze 300 x 150 x 120 in. (762 x 381 x 304.8 cm). A gift commissioned by Lore Harp McGovern for the McGovern Institute for Brain Research and the Public Art Collection of the Massachusetts. Photography by Jerry L. Thompson.
4. Cai Guo-Qiang, *Ring Stone*, 2010. Granite, seven Japanese black pine trees. 95 x 422.5 x 95 in. (241.3 x 1073.15 x 241.3 cm). Commissioned with MIT Percent-for-Art Funds and made possible by generous donations from the Annie Wong Art Foundation and the Robert D. ('64) and Sara-Ann Sanders family. Photography courtesy of MIT List Visual Arts Center.
5. Alicia Kwade, *Against the Run*, 2019. MIT Collection. Commissioned with MIT Percent-for-Art Funds with gifts from Robert D. ('64) and Sara-Ann Sanders. Photography courtesy of MIT List Visual Arts Center.



5.

BLOOM





WHERE YOU'RE PLANTED

ALYSIA HARRIS

In a small Texas town, a local community and an international art and literary residency work together to foster a place for sustainable creative growth.



Artist Rachel Mica Weiss

The woods are a favorite destination for creative inspiration: flowing rivers, Edenic seclusion—the perfect pre reqs for an artist residency. But what about a small town in a dry county with a checkered history, decades past its prime? Is that a place where the arts can—must—flourish?

In January of this year, I packed a third of my winter wardrobe, a hand-painted tea set, and as many books as I could into three suitcases bound for Corsicana, Texas. It's a town that many have left behind, but I keep coming back to—first as a poet-in-residence and now as an official transplant to take a job as the first director of public programs for Corsicana Artist & Writer Residency.

The word residency comes from the Latin verb *residere*, which means sit down, settle; remain behind, rest, linger; be left. Its etymology is especially interesting to consider in the context of Corsicana: a town of now only 26,000 people but that once rivaled the population of Dallas. Economic decline and the ongoing exodus of young people has landed many small towns like Corsicana in a decades-long crisis. Once-prosperous municipalities are starved of vital business and tax revenue and drained of the youthful energy needed to lubricate the gears of change.

So when artist and furniture maker Kyle Hobratschk started an artist residency in the heart of downtown Corsicana nearly 10 years ago, it was an intervention. Small town populations keep dwindling, but residencies like this one attract people from all over the world, insisting that major cities aren't the only fertile ground for creative communities.

The slower pace of life in Corsicana instructs our residency's approach to the arts on a human scale. In the 100 West building, the founding site of the residency, there is ample room for three residents, and we prize the generosity of space that both the building and the town provide. Our two-month stays allow residents to bring forth work from patience and experimentation rather than from the knife edge of incessant production. Painter and recent resident Theodora Allen remarked that her residency was the first time since finishing graduate school that she had the luxury to make work without deadline or the pressure of gallery deliverables.

Longer stays also allow residents to form bonds beyond the walls of their studios. Photographer Noel Camardo came to the residency intending to tell the story of American life by taking photographs and talking with people in different towns across the country, but that changed during his stay. Camardo realized "I was telling the story [of America] better through Corsicana. I had the opportunity to be there for 45 days. Being in one place for an extended amount of time allowed me to have access to people I never would have had [if passing through]. Corsicana is a fairly diverse town economically and racially. I could use Corsicana to talk about issues in America that are interesting."

Since the end of his initial residency five years ago, Camardo has spent over 210 days in Corsicana talking with local people from every neighborhood. He remarked that this project would have never been possible without the residency, the founding artists' hospitality, and a consistent place to stay.



The work of Aymeric Ebrard from Paris, France, is installed in the third floor studio.

Many lifelong Corsicanans have become involved in the creative output of residents. A number of those folks—Joe Brooks, founder of the Warehouse Living Arts Center, former high school principal, and philanthropist, and city council woman and community advocate Ruby Williams—also serve on our board, helping maintain the close dialogue between the town and the vision of the residency within it. These relationships that connect the residency and the town are what kept me coming back year after year.

Like a natural stream, residents flow through the doors of 100 West and deposit remnants of ideological, cultural, or artistic alluvia as they open their studios to visitors, teach workshops at the high school, and chat with local fixtures on our Rope Walker podcast series. As the residents dwell in this place of thoughtful architecture and charged histories, their work in turn picks up some of Corsicana’s unique sediment and carries it back to geographies as diverse as Miami and Korea. It’s an organic process of gestation and random encounter that leads to cross-pollination. The work is profoundly ecological.

Founded on the principles of architectural preservation, Corsicana Artist & Writer Residency is now considering what preservation looks like through this broader kind of ecological lens. My mind rings with a recent question from board member and visual artist Sally Warren, “Is it enough to present the veneer of history, or do we go deeper?”



The entrance to the Corsicana Artist & Writer Residency on Beaton Street.



Artist Max Kuhn



A public reading in artist Bruce Lee Webb's studio.

After nearly a decade of committed work—first in painstakingly preserving the 130-year-old Neoclassical-Italianate former Odd Fellows Lodge, and then in hosting over 100 artists and writers in its light-limned studios—the residency is wading deeper into communal waters. A main component of that work involves the opening of the residency's bookshop and public art space. The bookshop will give community members a place to probe the literature and art created in the studios even after residents leave.

Opening a bookshop—the only one in Corsicana—both responds to a tangible community need and deepens our participation in Corsicana's literary and economic ecosystem. COVID-19 and the atrophy of many public spaces left Corsicana without venues to gather and exchange divergent ideas. Like fetid water, communities can become stagnant when ideas and inspiration cease to flow. The bookshop is another intervention.

In our new public space, we are not just making resident work visible, we are making the residency permeable. People can come in and out, and the way that they relate to the space and our work will inherently impact and refine it. We have always led with relationships; our larger emphasis on public programs like film screenings, book circles, readings, and art workshops only deepens those relationships. When visitors come to Corsicana, they'll have a chance to connect with residency staff, engage with the artists' materials, and read the 35 titles our residents have launched into the world—many of them written just down the street at 100 West.

The expansion of our program is exciting, and yet most ecosystems are incredibly fragile. Creating a sustainable environment for literature and the arts in a small town requires both bringing in outside artists to make work and building arts capacity within our public institutions to foster emerging local talent. Our artist and writer public school visits, made possible through a local grant from the Navarro Council of the Arts, are one

important way we do this. In March, writer and former resident Marian Bull walked students through several memoir writing exercises. In April, painter Kemar Wynter invited students into his studio practice, challenging them to use oil pastels to translate favorite dishes into visually abstracted memories.

Support for art in public places means carving out channels for sustained artistic engagement within our public institutions like schools, libraries, and community centers—creating a world where ideas about the arts and interest in literature pass from one space to another and eventually permeate the whole community. In such a world, Corsicana's most skilled emerging artists would be able to sustain lucrative careers without having to leave their hometown behind.

During a 2013 speech at Vanderbilt University, writer Toni Morrison encapsulated the deeply interdependent nature of art that an ecological perspective attests to: "Art reminds us that we belong here. And if we serve, we last." Last, linger, *residere*. We leave something behind. Sediment in the stream. Pebbles in the creek. In any case, I hope our residency does what Morrison says: reminds people questioning whether their ideas, culture, or body belong in a place like Corsicana that they, in fact, do.

Taking up the dual responsibility and privilege of belonging to this place, former residents of 100 West are becoming permanent residents of Corsicana—painter Nancy Rebal, essayist David Searcy, and now me. We left behind our urban digs to make full-time commitments to one of America's small towns because we know something worthwhile exists here, and we want it to last.

TOP: Photography by Skyler Fike.
ALL ABOVE: Photography by Kyle Hobratschk.



VOICES

NASHER PRIZE DIALOGUES: DISEMBODIED INTIMACY
NASHER PRIZE DIALOGUES: THE FAMILY TABLE
NASHER MIXTAPE: LOVE AND DELIGHT
STUDENTS RESPOND: THE FUTURE OF SCULPTURE

DISEMBODIED INTIMACY: DIGITALLY COMMUNICATING ART, CAREGIVING, AND SEX



*In this excerpt from a Nasher Prize Dialogues panel discussion, which took place in October 2020 during a time of isolation around the world, Hauser & Wirth's Director of Special Projects **Randy Kennedy** moderates presentations by artists **Emmanuel Van Der Auwera**, **Mika Rottenberg**, and **Jacolby Satterwhite**, as well as design critic **Alice Rawsthorn**. The group considers the ways digital technology can meet our perennial needs for human connection, as well as pose a threat.*

RANDY KENNEDY

Art's relation to technology ... going back to Leonardo and earlier, has been a pairing of kindred inquiries into the natural world, and those inquiries began to diverge as technology progressed by the 19th century. I remember reading that Coleridge wrote that he attended the lectures of the great chemist Humphry Davy in London "to enlarge my stock of metaphors," and so science and technology had become, in other words, a kind of a tool and a subject of art. There were times up through the 20th century—flowering in the late 60s in collaborations like Experiments in Art and Technology, with artists like Rauschenberg and Yvonne Rainer in collaboration with Bell Labs—when artists and engineers tried to return to a more common ground, but technology still seemed to be mostly a supplier of metaphors, still a subject. But now, 20 years into the 21st century, I think it's safe to say that it's less of a subject and more of a basic substrate that's closer to human consciousness itself, for artists and for writers. Now, ironically, the biological—specifically the viral—world has catapulted us at great

speed, without our consent, much further into a digital existence. Even five years ago, technology wouldn't have allowed us to work and live as effectively virtually as we all are right now, and COVID-19 hasn't only put us there, but it's shown us how rapidly the capability for us all to live almost fully in such a world is progressing. This talk, and all the others that we've been part of, shows us that we're all swimming in Zoom tanks or, more accurately, we're individual fish swimming in individual Zoom tanks that grid up on our screens. So, today we'll be talking about how these individual tanks can be made into more human, empathetic, sympathetic, and even erotic spaces with these four great speakers who are artists, filmmakers, thinkers, and writers.

MIKA ROTTENBERG

For a long time, I've connected with people online, and this idea of extending one's physicality into the web is something that's really interesting to me—creating intimate relationships in that way. Filming [the work *Spaghetti Blockchain*] in Tuva [with] the Daughters of Tuva—a band of throat singers—

and connecting with them, and creating a lot of intimacy and magic through filming remotely, was an experiment. ... I do believe in that space of being able to connect in that way and because of reducing my footprint in the world. For me, the motivation of working remotely was because I wanted to focus as much of my physical world locally and then my mental world globally, so the remote channels seem to be appropriate for that.

JACOLBY SATTERWHITE

The video *Country Ball*, 1989-2012 ... was the first successful execution of the ongoing collaboration between my mother's archive [of drawings], my performance practice, and the archive that I generate from collecting green screen performances from my own body and others and, also, outsourcing found footage from the internet and for my own private archival VHS tapes. *Country Ball* was my way of making an Impressionist painting of a landscape that was captured on VHS camera. Then, the way that I would paint that landscape was through 'Maya,' a CGI-rendering program. It was my way of thinking about *en plein air*, like sitting down with the

canvas in life and re-performing, repainting, and recapturing a moment in live action.

I was obsessed with the home footage [featured in the film] at first because of the post-structuralist ideas in them where you see a lot of gender performance. You can see my early gender performance as a three-year-old—me wanting to navigate and perform like my female cousins ... and then my blue-collar family trying to reorient me to my male cousins and make me more macho. ... But I thought it would be more elegant to explore something more foundational in the video, which was what my family were dancing and performing around. What are the objects that kept this event afloat? The pots, the pans, the KFC buckets, the picnic tables, the Mercedes-Benz, the trampolines, all the things that my mother would feverishly draw throughout the night ... were basically relics from these cherished memories.

I thought, okay, if I'm working conceptually from observation, I should take these very intimate objects that my mother drew, trace them, build them architecturally in Maya ... and reanimate this VHS tape using my body ... and basically did a modernist move dance piece that echoed the dance, rhythms, and styles of my family to try to reclaim that memory, to try to have agency over that time. That was a breakthrough moment for me conceptually as an artist.

Moving forward, *We Are in Hell When We Hurt Each Other*, echoes the sentiments of *Country Ball*, an even more dystopian pastoral concert that inverts Manet's *Luncheon on the Grass*, which was controversial for painting the middle class on a large scale instead of reserving it for the divine. I wanted to invert that concept and make my version of *Luncheon on the Grass* in a post-pandemic, post-apocalyptic, post-post-post-post-modern era where Black female figures are autonomous and immune to biological threats. [...]

Anytime there is a pandemic, like when the AIDS crisis began in the 80s, artworks that employed erotic imagery had a much more charged impact for audiences. Naturally, my erotic imagery has that kind of extreme signifier. My piece *Blessed Avenue*, which shows matrix figures in erotic deployment and controlling each other—and a Pegasus flying over burning forest fires, ice glaciers melting, and bombs in Syria—definitely has

an enhanced meaning because now we are really becoming conscious of our body as a bioterrorist threat. The body is loaded, and touch has become such a kinetic force now.

ALICE RAWSTHORN

I want to discuss an example of a phenomenon that's accelerated during the pandemic: the use of robotics and other forms of artificial intelligence in our care of one another. Now, of course, the extreme demands of the medical treatment of COVID-19 have accelerated the use of robotics and frontline



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health and social care, but I want to focus on a domestic example of neuromorphic care, one that's proving highly contentious by seeming enriching to some, but stymieing to others, and it is this seemingly uncontroversial baby's cot or crib, the SNOO.

If you look at it, it looks like a rather swish, but an auspicious baby's crib is actually a robotic crib. The SNOO predated the pandemic—it was launched in 2016—but sales have soared during it. As a smart crib, it combines sensors, robotics, and other forms of AI to soothe babies to sleep, or so it claims, by monitoring their behavior and swaddling, shushing, or rocking them as required. It's also intended to reduce the risk of cot death

by holding infants in safe sleeping positions to prevent them from rolling over and suffocating.

The theory is that the babies will benefit from higher quality sleep and so will their [caretakers] who, otherwise, risk sleep deprivation if they're awoken by the crying of a grouchy infant or the stress of worrying about cot death. ... But not everyone believes it's in a child's best interest for their sleeping patterns to be dictated by AI. ... Some doubted that technology could care for infants as well as humans [could] and were outraged by the implicit suggestion that it might. Others recalled happy memories of soothing their own babies to sleep and felt that fellow parents and [caretakers] would be foolish to deny that pleasure to themselves and their kids. Many of the SNOO detractors also voiced concerns that robotic cribs could encourage sloppy parenting, whereas its admirers claim the opposite. They say the opposite could happen by reducing sleep deprivation among caretakers and protecting babies even if their caretakers are exhausted, ill, looking after lots of other kids at the same time, maybe even drunk, by introducing artificial intelligence to childcare and the intensely intimate experience of rocking a child to sleep, which obviously is a field where passions run understandably high.

The SNOO has proved deeply divisive, enriching to some and stymieing or worse to others and, like so many design applications of AI, now it's increasingly ubiquitous in our life. The SNOO challenges us by prompting us to reassess our beliefs by presenting us with a moral quandary about the way we wish to live and the degree to which we want to cede control of our most intimate experiences to technology.

EMMANUEL VAN DER AUWERA

[I have a series of works] called *Video Sculpture*, which are sculptures that I make by removing and peeling the filter from the IDC screen [of a television monitor] with a knife which tears the image apart and reveals a kind of white light that is the primal state

of every image in a smartphone or on a computer. So, it's a gesture of symbolic violence to the screen, tearing apart the window and deconstructing the illusion that it creates.

[This process] can be tracked down to a work of mine called *A Certain Amount of Clarity* ... a film from 2014 that was



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about an online ritual where people were looking at a real murder video and recording their emotional response to it and posting it online. It was a trend in 2014 and is really what opened up the full body of work that I'm engaged in right now, and all the questions of it—the ethical dilemma that happens when we look from the safe distance of the screen through the mediation of the image, unaware of the technological process or magic that is taking place, but also, the strong illusion.

So, this technology ... will get much more mainstream. Through this example, I tried to describe my relation to the image, to the empathy, the experience of the viewer, to the act of responsibility, the act of seeing, and with the necessity of growing a new consciousness of being a global spectator, specifically now in the age of the pandemic and the necessity to engage critically with the technology that mediates this new world.

The whole model of the technology—the communication revolution—is to make the artist and the viewer become a participant, and a willful participant. Everybody is a kind of a tiny star and every experience is something worth sharing, to ultimately market. So, I think that that's a dangerous loop. It's fascinating, of course, because it grows all this information and becomes instantaneous. We react to people reacting, who are reacting to something. And, in the end, it's becoming more the effect on something rather than the actual thing itself that is the real story. This, I guess, is what is giving all this challenge to all notions such as democracy, facts, or common cultural grounds. So, it's interesting to see that this is also a product of the channels themselves. The way the machine is being built is encouraging us [to behave a certain way].

KENNEDY

For each of you: Has the last six months, as we've become more fully immersed in a digital world, given you optimism or the opposite? A sort of dread of where we're headed, or a mix of both?

RAWSTHORN

I think this, as in so many aspects of our lives—COVID-19, the pandemic, lockdown, and the ensuing economic crisis—hasn't necessarily suddenly invented new developments, but it's accelerated the development of lots of changes that were simmering away in our lives for a long time but that have really roared ahead during the crisis. What it has also done is show both the benefits and the extraordinary dangers of so many aspects of digital technology, particularly, artificial intelligence, neuromorphic computing, and deep learning software. These are extraordinarily powerful technologies that are increasingly ubiquitous in

our world, particularly in the public domain, and will undoubtedly control more and more aspects of our lives and future. Now, like any technology, if their applications are designed sensitively, intelligently, and in a generous and open-minded, public-spirited way, they can be hugely beneficial. If they're not, they can be catastrophic.

It's fascinating to see how in Southeast Asian countries, who obviously experienced the brunt of the SARS pandemic a decade ago, introduced a lot more digital surveillance and tracking and tracing systems, knowing that should another pandemic come along, they would be better equipped to cope with them. They have tended to be more efficient at managing the pandemic, so it is a very positive argument for allowing more and more of these technologies to exercise increasing power in our lives. There's also the chilling realization that many of the countries that have been most efficient in deploying them have been repressive dictatorships, so there's clearly a link between the two. In countries like my own, [the UK], and the US, where the management of the crisis has generally been deplorable, we have seen what happens when these systems are badly designed, poorly implemented, and shoddily orchestrated. They cause chaos, confusion, and even worse, destruction and death. I think it raises the imperative for design to be deployed as intelligently and as sensitively as possible and that's only going to happen if people become more aware of it, better informed about it, better able to make judgments, and to argue for and against them. So, in other words, to take their design destiny into their own hands.

ROTTENBERG

I feel both [optimism and dread]. It's like dystopia/utopia. A couple observations ... one is how, because I am upstate and the real routine becomes so much of the same and without that many happenings and the richness of life, I live through the screen. The real becomes less real and the virtual becomes a lot more alive and noisier. ... Online and through the screen is where everything happens. So, there's like a craving for that and the multiple sounds and information. It's like, what happens to the real? Well, the virtual is going to get bigger and how do we separate what happens there from the real? I guess that's a certain kind of direction that could be, in how [the real and virtual] work together in a physical space.

SATTERWHITE

The past months have made me hyper-aware of how I am being controlled by the algorithm. Theoretically, when you think about Cambridge Analytica or Big Tech and how they kind of collect our data and control our

POV via our phone, I am super skeptical of my own consciousness because I am so attached to technology that I constantly feel like I don't trust myself anymore. It's not necessarily optimism, but I'm trying to get by and balance my level of haptic, visceral, and real experiences versus my screen time because I don't want to get lost in that matrix. Especially when the civil unrest happened and that crazy moment in May and June when everyone went into this monolithic mode of protest [on social media]. I never saw the human voice collapse into one form as much in my entire life and it made me incredibly cynical.

VAN DER AUWERA

I think this is a bit of a moment like in a naked lunch where everybody sees what is at the end of the fork. That is a moment where we see the technology that was already there, but some taboo has been lifted under the guise and the specialty of enthusiasm. We needed to implement fast things and try things as we just roll into this new place, but we were actually there already. [...]

In my work, I'm questioning this moment where the shifting relation between reality and the virtual world tend to tip in the direction of the virtual world. I like to picture it as a wonderful glass tower where you can elevate yourself in all the different stairs and discover this different world, while the ground floor is becoming this gritty and monolithic place that ended up being the metro station, airport, or other workspace. I was using that as a kind of rhetoric and not believing it myself but, actually, it has been the moment where I truly believe that we've tipped on the other side and went into it fully. It is a very defining and important moment. We've just opened a door to a new world, and there's no turning back. I agree with Alice that it is all about the ethics of how they are implemented, because we will not come back. ... I am between fear and excitement about it, and there's a sense of awfulness in the situation. It's a tragedy, but I also think we have entered a new era like we haven't seen before.

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1. SNOO Smart Sleeper robotic (AI) crib. Image courtesy of Happiest Baby.
 2. Emmanuel Van Der Auwera, *VideoSculpture XX (The World's 6th Sense)*, 2019. 6 LCD screens, polarization filter, plexiglass, 10 tripods, cables, HD video 13 mins 34 secs, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and Harlan Levey Projects.
 3. Jacobly Satterwhite, Installation view of *We Are In Hell When We Hurt Each Other* at Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York, 2020. © Jacobly Satterwhite. Courtesy of the artist and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York.
 4. Jacobly Satterwhite, Installation view of *We Are In Hell When We Hurt Each Other* at Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York, 2020. © Jacobly Satterwhite. Courtesy of the artist and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York.
 5. Emmanuel Van Der Auwera, *VideoSculpture XX (The World's 6th Sense)* (detail), 2019. 6 LCD screens, polarization filter, plexiglass, 10 tripods, cables, HD video 13 mins 34 secs, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and Harlan Levey Projects.



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THE FAMILY TABLE

Nasher Prize Laureate Michael Rakowitz and Jin-Ya Huang, founder of Break Bread, Break Borders, share thoughts on the importance of food and community.



In February 2020, just before anyone knew the pandemic would force the better part of the world into lockdown for the remainder of the year, the Nasher worked with Nasher Prize Laureate Michael Rakowitz to create a public gathering in Dallas that would bring together people from all walks of life to share food and community. For it, Rakowitz joined forces with Jin-Ya Huang, the artist behind the catering company Break Bread, Break Borders, which employs and empowers refugee women in its kitchen as chefs, and the two partnered with F.A.R.M., a group dedicated to helping veterans through therapeutic agricultural training. For many, this was the last social, truly public event before a year spent in isolation.

The Nasher caught up with Rakowitz and Huang in a Nasher Prize Dialogues conversation to hear how their respective art practices—so dedicated to serving others through food and hospitality—had grown or changed since they’d last shared each other’s good company in Dallas.

MICHAEL RAKOWITZ

Jin-Ya, it’s such a pleasure to be with you again in conversation. I look back on that day in February with having this meaning that we didn’t know it was going to have. It was about what it means to host and that intersection between hospitality and hostility. I didn’t know that it was going to be the last moment when I was able to be with people normally.

JIN-YA HUANG

It was such an honor to be able to come to that intersection. What an incredible time to break bread with the communities and breakdown borders at the same time. It was a magical moment, for sure.

RAKOWITZ

I felt very honored to encounter you and the incredible cooks with Break Bread, Break Borders. It was a way of being site-specific, not just dropping in. Michael Pollan writes about the history of cooking in *The Omnivore’s Dilemma* and he makes it very clear that cities formed when humans decided to cook together. It really felt like that day we made a city.

Our mothers are also very present in our practices. I’d love to hear how you came to this.

HUANG

Today is actually the five-year anniversary of my mother passing. Being here and talking

about her, so her spirit lives on, not only with me, but with all our community cooks, with us talking about art, and food—it’s such an incredible universal language. We must learn how to speak it and to speak it better.

My mom was the chef of the kitchen, and she would hire immigrants and refugees to come and cook for our restaurant. I saw these opportunities that she provided for people and how transformative that was. I’m a descendant of refugees who escaped China to take refuge in Taiwan, so this subject matter is very deep and close to my heart. For me, making art was always about that. When I started making art, it was always about my immigrant experience, that diaspora experience.

When I lost my mom to cancer, I really struggled with grief and wanted to heal. I realized that in this process, I didn’t have to be selfish about it. I could do this with the community and share food and art, and together we could heal as a community.

RAKOWITZ

It means a lot to me to hear the way you speak about how, even in our grief, we can find moments of togetherness and of renewal and continuation. The recipe becomes like a language, and the way that you speak it, the actual dialect. So if I can have *koba*, an Iraqi dumpling, in a restaurant, it won’t quite be my mom’s, because the alchemy is very particular.

HUANG

You remember when we were joking about how our moms cooked? It's always a dash of this and a spread of that. You just do it until it tastes right. The [BBBB cooks] always laugh because that's how they're teaching their children.

When our community cooks were escaping war, they weren't able to take whatever identification, what schooling they finished, or what stores they might have owned, but the ability to cook and the skill to love people unconditionally—that they took everywhere. So, we love how portable this love is.

RAKOWITZ

I really love that you're bringing up portability because it is so much in the language of diaspora. We carry our archive in our bodies, so as you move across borders, this is what you can bring with you. The tradition of Iraqi cooking and Syrian cooking is about plenty and bringing people together. It's never about scarcity.

HUANG

That's what I think has been so amazing in working with the ladies. We work with this notion of abundance—not only abundance that we never run out of food, but the abundance of love and generosity. It's such an inspiration to be surrounded with the ladies and how they use food as this language and art to really connect with, not just with the community near here, but also far away.

RAKOWITZ

I think that creation of space and the platform where stories can be told, where the food is doing the talking, but also the people who make it are the hosts, is an important part of what you're bringing up. There's a tendency to completely take away that sense of agency, and I think that is one of the things you are talking about with Break Bread, Break Borders that is so significant. It interrupts that power dynamic and actually redirects it in a way that yes, you're engaging with love, you're engaging with generosity, but it actually is a real transformation of relationships.

HUANG

The ladies are in a place where they're driving their lives and they take pride in being able to provide for their families. They are the first ones to invest in the community that way and to empower them to step into that role is really thrusting them into the limelight. To have those courageous conversations, we're not just talking about food and culture. We're really impacting a lot of different things about the racial injustices that are happening in this world with gender inequalities and the pay

gaps. And what are we doing really speaks out against xenophobia.

RAKOWITZ

You're creating these moments of intimacy in proximity, which is actually a very special thing. I see it as being about body work. I see it in relationship to sculpture. You have a history of working with all different kinds of materials and I know when our hands are working on something, it allows for our minds to do something else. Creating moments like that is completely rare now in this world we've been living in since March [2020].

What I've found was in the first months of the lockdown, I was so exhausted to the point of being close to tears with the constant engagement that the one thing that I've asked from my family was that I would be allowed to do the cooking every night for my wife and my two kids because it's an act of care, but it was also an act that was speechless. I was communicating to them through what I was putting into the food.

HUANG

It's your therapy.

RAKOWITZ

It's incredibly therapeutic. How did that work for you and your son?

HUANG

The funny thing is not being able to find a lot of stuff in grocery stores and that the laziness in me had to kick into super mom



drive and roll my own dumpling dough, like how my mom would've made it. It made the world so much better because it tastes better, and it's handmade.

RAKOWITZ

It's really made me think about the function of time and waiting, in relationship to food and this idea that the work we are doing right now is hopefully enzymatic work. We're these enzymes that over time are slowly



changing a protein. In this moment, maybe it's like we're spoiled milk, but eventually we're going to be cheese.

I think about these communities that are also waiting in triplicate. There's the waiting that happens as the result of the pandemic, but also waiting through the civil war, and waiting for justice. What seems like this luxury of time for us in the US, has been burdened on people elsewhere for many, many years.

HUANG

For the ladies, there's a different sense of that time. The thing is, the cruelty of waiting is almost a testament of the resilience of their grit. When the pandemic hit, our catering was shut down and we had to shift very fast to get funding to the cooks so they didn't have any issues. Then we were also making sure that they still have the opportunity to safely speak to people. They never stopped educating people from Zoom. No one was cooking in a commercial kitchen, but they were still talking about their food and educating people about their culture.

RAKOWITZ

I think about what you said about the safe space of the kitchen. Thinking about the way it is a confessional space, but also that it is where people do feel the warmth and a lot of the care. That was where our songs were being sung. That was where the gossip was happening. It was where jokes were being told. It was where the secrets were being told. I feel it's like you are extending that space of the kitchen in a way. Recognizing the fact that a lot of what you're doing is about hosting, but I just wanted to make room to think about what it means to have that space where the hosts are making the food, and the kind of social station that becomes.

HUANG

Yeah, one meal at a time.

Photography by Daniel Driensky.

Love and Delight | In an excerpt from her narration of a video tour of the current permanent collection exhibition, Nasher Mixtape, Curator Dr. Catherine Craft shares connections and unexpected links between artworks in the Nasher collection.

FEB 6 - SEPT 26, 2021

MIXTAPE

Writer Nick Hornby compared making a mixtape to writing a letter: “[There’s] a lot of erasing and rethinking and starting again.” A labor of love and a versatile creative activity, the mixtape has survived into the digital era in many different forms. The permanent exhibition *Nasher Mixtape* has been like a laboratory for me to think about what kind of stories we tell about history. What kind of stories we tell about objects and the way objects are made and pass from one person to another. And the way objects, artworks become the carriers of meaning and of stories. And I think I wondered what would happen if you made this gallery space a kind of laboratory. A place where you made an experiment, where you made all of these connections and you put all these things together. And you ask yourself the question: do these connections matter?

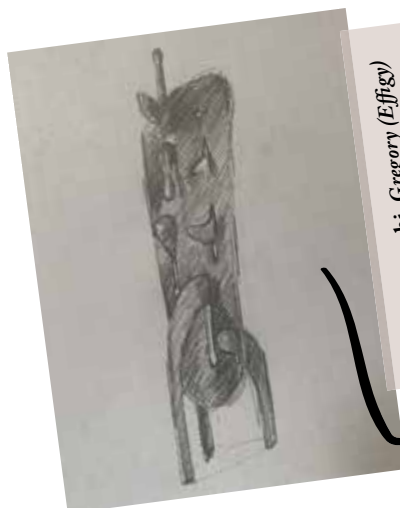
The micro-exhibition *Love and Delight*, in the lower-level gallery, is really the heart and soul of *Nasher Mixtape*. When you do research—I think this is true of anybody—you end up with these weird connections and facts, and you don’t really know what to do with them. But, of course, all those little connections between things are also what make up our daily lives. So, in this installation I tried to bring a group of those connections together and see how I could link them up into a chain that doubles back on itself, so that you have a kind of unbroken circle.

I started with the founding work of the Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection, our *Torso with Buds* by Jean (Hans) Arp, which Patsy bought for her husband Ray in 1967 for his birthday from the Sidney Janis Gallery in



Jean (Hans) Arp, *Torso with Buds*

New York. She had it waiting for him in the foyer of their home in Dallas, and that’s where it stayed for many years. What I had also come across in the Nasher’s files was information on a sculpture by Isamu Noguchi, which is called *Gregory*, also known as *Effigy*. That sculpture, like the Arp, was a birthday present, except, in this case, it was from Ray to Patsy. And one of the interesting things that I discovered while I was doing research on the Nancy Grossman piece in *Love and Delight* is that it came from the same gallery—Cordier & Ekstrom—and, in fact, was purchased the same year as the Noguchi. That was really striking to me



Isamu Noguchi, *Gregory (Effigy)*

because, as far as I know, those are the only two works that the Nashers ever purchased at that gallery.

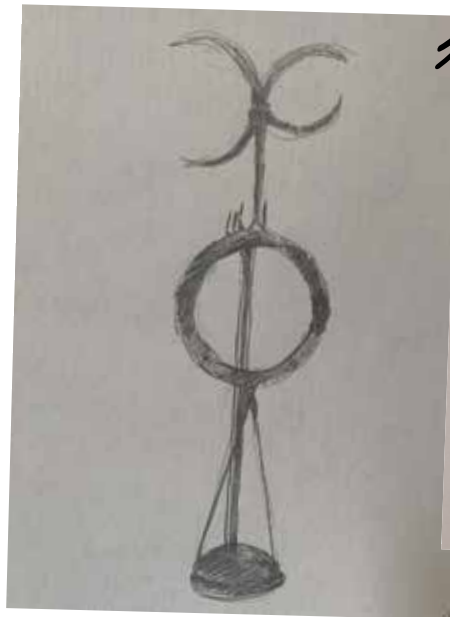
Even though the Noguchi and the Grossman don’t really have anything directly in common, they both have connections to Surrealism. Noguchi’s piece is drawing from a biomorphic, organic formal vocabulary that was developed by artists like Arp and Miró, but his sculpture is also literary. Its title refers to the main character of Franz Kafka’s book *The Metamorphosis*, Gregor Samsa, and, certainly, Nancy Grossman’s sculpture, even though it doesn’t have literary associations in the same way, does have this disturbing and strange, almost dreamlike appearance. She was very close to David Smith in the early 1960s. They, in fact, had a relationship, but David Smith was also a mentor to her.



Nancy Grossman, *Untitled, Head Sculpture*

Because he would incorporate tools into his welded sculptures, he had bought a lot from the auction of a farm that also included a group of leather horse harnesses. He gave these to Grossman and challenged her to do something with them. A few years later, she moved from making reliefs into making these freestanding heads like the one in the Nashers' collection.

The work by Smith that we have on view is a good example of how he would incorporate tools and such materials into, in this case, an impression of a standing figure. Smith made this work when he was in Italy in 1962. He gave it to Gian Carlo Menotti, a composer who had organized the Spoleto Festival. He was instrumental in inviting David Smith to Italy to participate in this festival by creating works of art on-site. Smith used an abandoned factory for his work and made the Voltri series, a group of more than two dozen welded sculptures in just 30 days.

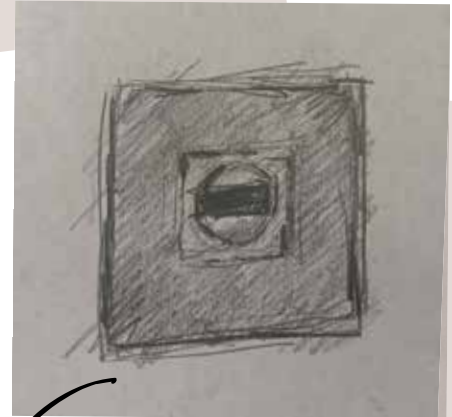


David Smith, *Untitled (Voltri)* [For Gian Carlo]

Smith was one of three artists from the United States invited to participate in Spoleto; another was Beverly Pepper whose print we've included in the exhibition. When Pepper gave this print to the Nashers for their 25th anniversary, she wrote a dedication on it that became the title of this exhibition, saying that she and her husband were filled with "love and delight" for Ray and Patsy. It's so characteristic of the many connections between artists and collectors, and lovers and friends, and married couples in this exhibition that I thought it would be a nice title. What else is having an art collection about, if not love and delight?

There were also connections in which I had to find a link. I was trying to join things up into a circle, and I would have two works or two artists and think, "Hmm ... Is there a connection between these two?" That was the case with the next pair, Beverly Pepper

and Raymond Duchamp-Villon, a Modernist sculptor who Ray Nasher truly loved (Patsy, maybe not so much, but she supported Ray's enthusiasm).



Beverly Pepper, *Untitled*

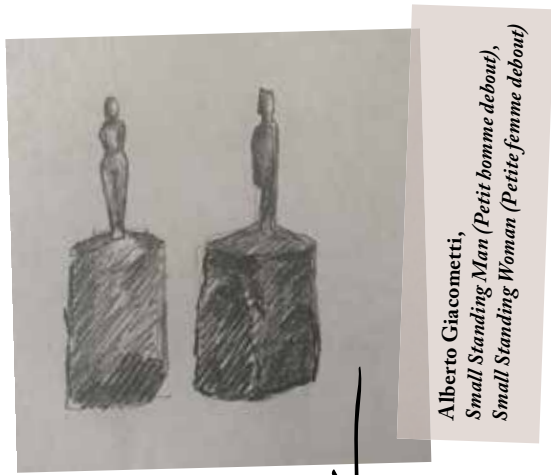
Pepper shared with Duchamp-Villon an interest in the works of a French philosopher named Henri Bergson. Bergson wrote about the importance of intuition as against that of pure rational intellect. He viewed the nature of reality as an ever-changing flux and wrote about creative evolution as a model for change. This was very popular among artists in Duchamp-Villon's circle, but Bergson was not much read by the time Beverly Pepper came along. She was interested in nature and how her creative work paralleled natural processes, and I think she found in Bergson a writer who could help her think through these parallels and analogies. In that, she shared much in common with Raymond Duchamp-Villon, who was, in fact, the older brother of Marcel Duchamp. The facial features of the figure in Duchamp-Villon's *Torso of a Young Man* was based, Marcel Duchamp said, on him. Duchamp, in fact, owned this sculpture and, in that, it shares a link through provenance with the two small Giacomettis. The Giacomettis were originally owned, I had noticed, by Maria Martins, with whom Duchamp, in the 1940s in New York, had a passionate love affair.



Raymond Duchamp-Villon, *Torso of a Young Man*

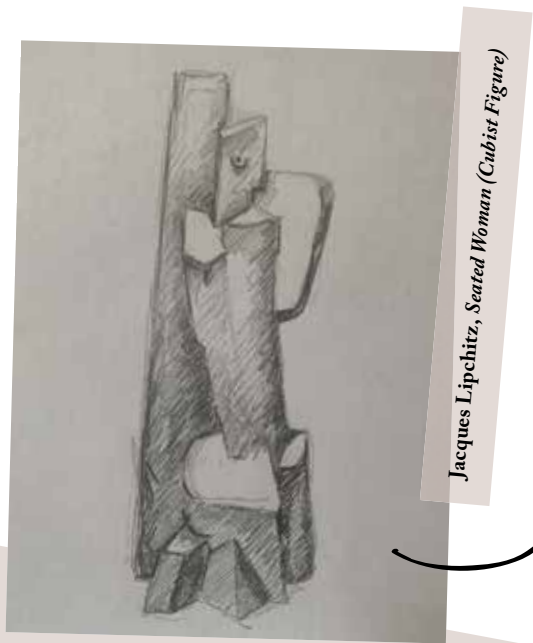


So, the next set of connections involve provenance—the lives objects lead before they come to rest in the present. In the case of the Giacomettis, Martins seems to have met Alberto Giacometti in Paris in the late 1940s. She and Giacometti became friendly, and she seems to have acquired these two works around this time. The works passed to her daughter and her daughter put them into auction. Moving from Giacometti to Lipchitz is another connection via Maria Martins. She studied with the artist Jacques Lipchitz, who had fled Nazi persecution to end up in New York City. He taught her the lost wax method of bronze casting.



Alberto Giacometti,
Small Standing Man (Petit homme debout),
Small Standing Woman (Petite femme debout)

Lipchitz had been born in Lithuania, and he came to Paris in 1909. He studied first at the École des Beaux-Arts and the Académie Julian but, in 1912, he moved to a studio next door to Constantin Brancusi in Montparnasse. The following year, he met Pablo Picasso. This move, and having proximity to some of the most advanced artists working in Paris at that time, was decisive for Lipchitz and really led him into Cubism and to make works like this 1916 figure that we have in the collection.

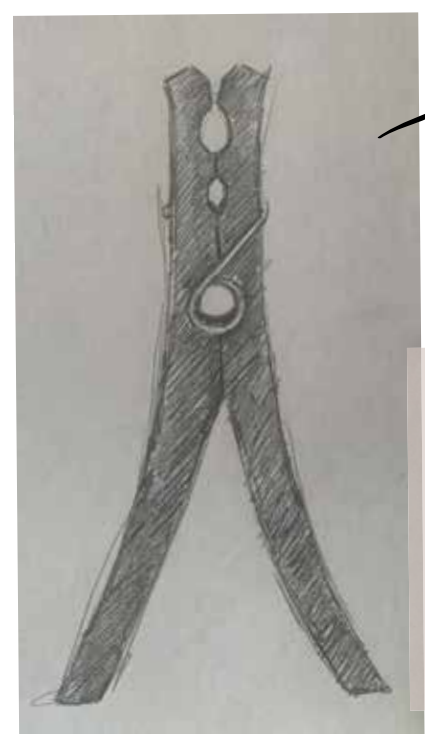


Jacques Lipchitz, *Seated Woman (Cubist Figure)*

The Brancusi-Oldenburg connection is one that's really a lot of fun. Claes Oldenburg is very well-represented in the Nasher collection, and I started really focusing on his *Clothespin* when we did the *Nature of Arp* show in 2018. I learned, at that time, that Brancusi's *Kiss* was an inspiration for the *Clothespin* sculpture. In fact, if you look at the *Clothespin*, the way that Oldenburg has upended it, the metal clamp that holds the two parts together becomes like arms that hold these two figures together as they touch and embrace. Oldenburg made this connection quite concrete when he designed a poster for an exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum in 1972, in which he put an image of one of his *Clothespins* with a photo of the Philadelphia Museum's version of Brancusi's *Kiss*. He even wrote at the bottom: "C pin = Kiss."



Constantin Brancusi, *The Kiss*



Claes Oldenburg, *Clothespin*

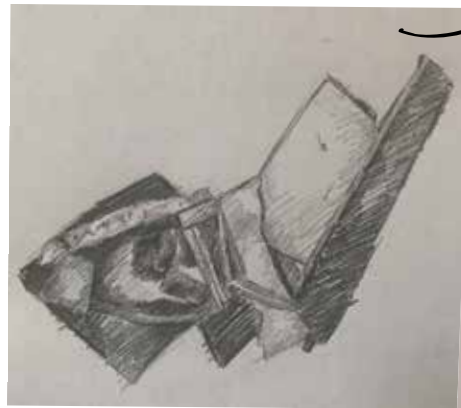
I think it's hard to imagine three artists contemporary to each other who are more different than Claes Oldenburg, John Chamberlain, and Donald Judd, but the connection between Oldenburg and Chamberlain comes from the fact that Judd really liked and respected both of them and championed their work in his art criticism. At the Chinati Foundation and at Judd's home and studio in New York, you can find works by both artists.

The connection between Chamberlain and Jean-Michel Basquiat is one of the most obscure ones in this circle: the Chamberlain entered the collection because of Patsy Nasher's love of Basquiat. Basquiat had a show in Dallas in the 1980s. Patsy Nasher, as it turns out, was an early collector of his work, and a really enthusiastic one at that. She ended up with this incredible box but also several paintings. In fact, the way that the Nashers acquired this Chamberlain is that they traded one of their Basquiat paintings to the gallerist Larry Gagosian as a part-trade/part-purchase to acquire Chamberlain's *Zaar*.



Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Untitled*

is, sure enough, an Arp sculpture; it's not a very Arp-like sculpture, but it is definitely a sculpture by Arp. Warhol purchased one of these sculptures, the one that was on the mantelpiece, in fact, from the Sidney Janis Gallery, which was, of course, also the place where Patsy Nasher bought *Torso with Buds* as her birthday gift for Ray.



John Chamberlain, *Zaar*

To move from Basquiat to Andy Warhol is an expected connection. They were known to be friends and to have collaborated on works together. Warhol was something of a mentor to Basquiat, and this box by Basquiat makes a kind of pun on Warhol's *Brillo Boxes*. These images are drawings and paintings from his sketchbook that he then made color photocopies of. (That's actually a fascinating tangent: when color photocopy machines became available in the early to mid-80s, a lot of artists got them or at least found a place where they could access them. It was really a revolutionary thing—contemporary with the flourishing of the mixtape, I might add—that allowed artists to reproduce their works rapidly and be able to play with these color copies and use them in all different kinds of ways.)

This brings us to the last work in *Love and Delight*, Warhol's *Portrait of Patsy Nasher*. I remembered that in 1987, Sotheby's had a gigantic auction of Warhol's collection after his death, so I was taking a look at the auction catalogues and I spotted a photograph of what I would guess is Warhol's living room or sitting room. On the mantelpiece above the fireplace

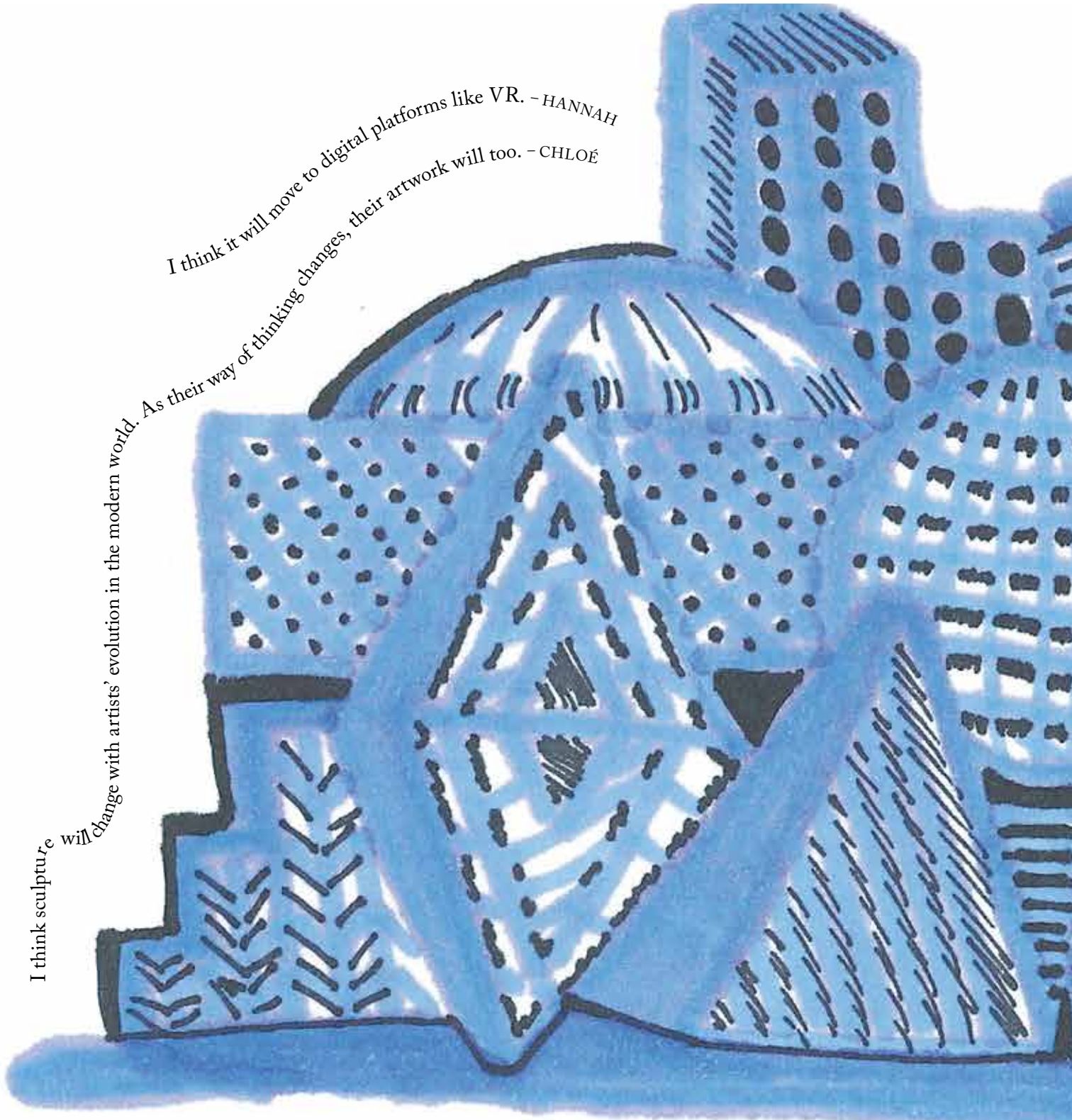


Andy Warhol, *Portrait of Patsy Nasher*

And there's the full circle. One person loves another, you buy them a gift, they buy you a gift. You keep those things; you live with them. Someone comes into your home, looks at the gift, they don't know the story unless you tell them, and somehow that story is still there to be discovered by somebody else, and I have to think, somehow, that those stories accrue in some way. During this past year, I kept asking myself, whose stories are being told and whose histories are being remembered? Those are the questions that I think we have to keep asking. What stories are worth telling? What stories are worth remembering? *Love and Delight* focuses on the first two decades or so of Ray and Patsy's collection, and the foundation of love and delight they established sustains us still, but in other parts of *Mixtape*, and in our permanent collection overall, there are other histories to tell and new connections to be made.

HOW DO YOU IMAGINE THE FUTURE OF SCULPTURE?

Nasher Student Advisory Board shares their vision for the future of sculpture.



I think sculpture will change with artists' evolution in the modern world. As their way of thinking changes, their artwork will too. - CHLOÉ

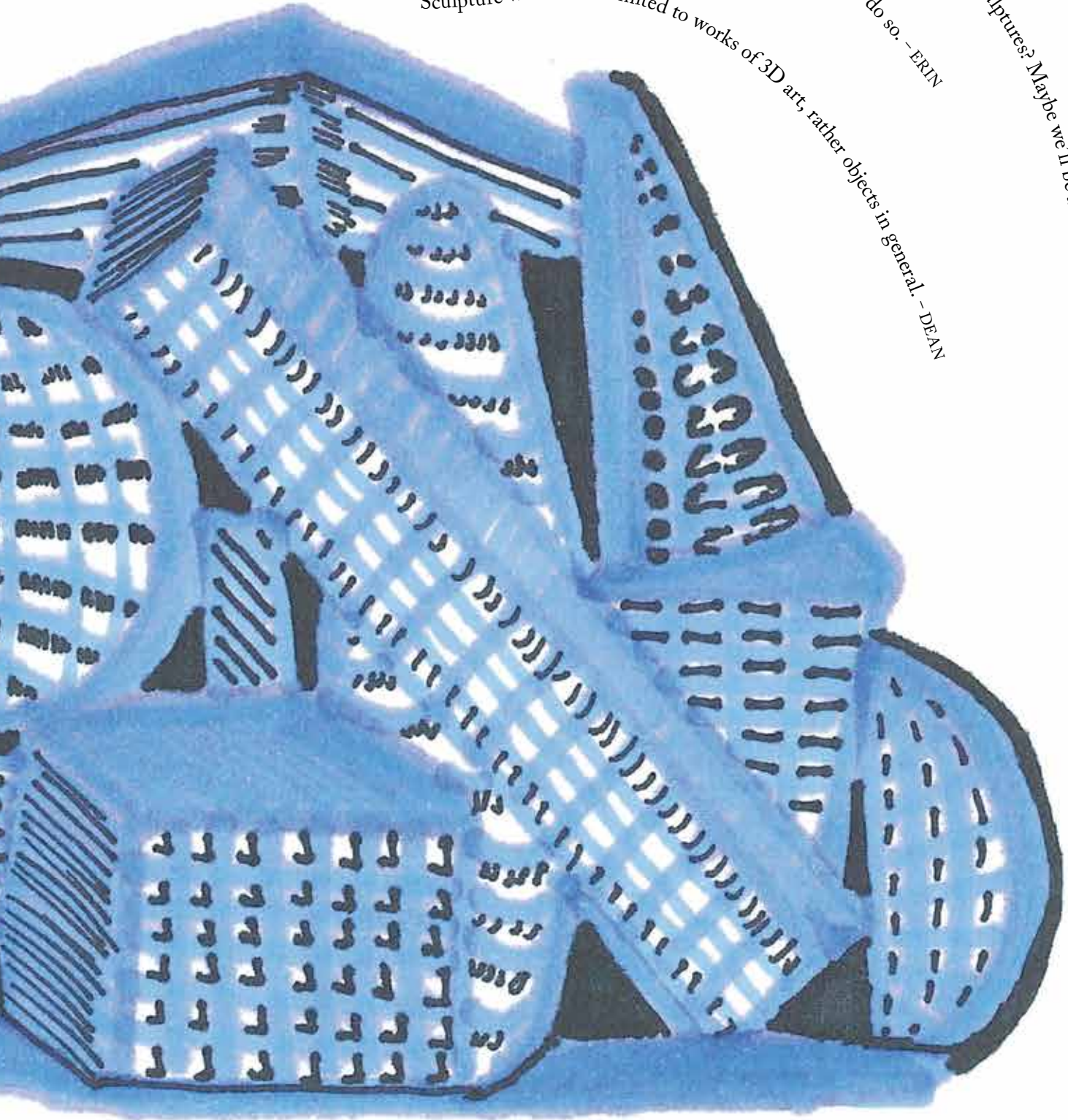
I think it will move to digital platforms like VR. - HANNAH

Sculpture continues to manipulate space. In the future, I think sculpture will continue to broaden both conceptually and physically. - LUCY

Maybe sculpture will become more intricate in the sense that pieces of a sculpture will be suspended from the ceiling to create an art form. - LAUREN

Sculpture has already expanded to digital and interactive media and will probably continue to do so. - ERIN

Sculpture will not be limited to works of 3D art, rather objects in general. - DEAN



Interactive sculptures? Maybe we'll be able to manipulate/control light? Or maybe gravity...? Maybe something like holograms...? - SUN

STRAND POEM

By Lisa Huffaker

try
this
write
about
anything
string
the words
one
or two
at a
time
down
the page
like Giacometti
stretched
human
shapes
into long
vertical
forms
allow
your
own
voice
to melt
like icicles
drop
like wax
write
about
anything
your day
your dog
your loves
your doubts
and watch
how the
stalactite
grows
taste
your own
precious
words
one drop
at a
time

