

THE NASHER

SPRING 2024



ANDREW BERARDINI ARTHUR PEÑA BETSY LEWIS BROOKE HODGE CALVIN & IRIS CHUCK & GEORGE DOUGLAS DAVIS
FAYE & MARLO GREGORY RUPPE GUADALUPE MARAVILLA THE HAAS BROTHERS HUGH HAYDEN JANA LA BRASCA
JEAN (HANS) ARP JEFF GIBBONS LEWIS KACHUR PHALLON WRIGHT SAMARA GOLDEN SUMMER E. AQUINO



The Haas Brothers, *Sir Hiss*, 2015.
Brass hex tile, blown glass bulb rattle,
and glass marble eyes. 30 x 20 x 26
inches (72.6 x 50.8 x 66 cm). Photo by
Joe Kramm, courtesy of the artists

Through the Looking-Glass

BY LEWIS CARROLL
(1832-1898)

Child of the pure unclouded brow
And dreaming eyes of wonder!
Though time be fleet, and I and thou
Are half a life asunder,
Thy loving smile will surely hail
The love-gift of a fairy-tale.

I have not seen thy sunny face,
Nor heard thy silver laughter;
No thought of me shall find a place
In thy young life's hereafter—
Enough that now thou wilt not fail
To listen to my fairy-tale.

A tale begun in other days,
When summer suns were glowing—
A simple chime, that served to time
The rhythm of our rowing—
Whose echoes live in memory yet,
Though envious years would say 'forget.'

Come, hearken then, ere voice of dread.
With bitter tidings laden,
Shall summon to unwelcome bed
A melancholy maiden!
We are but older children, dear,
Who fret to find our bedtime near.

Without, the frost, the blinding snow.
The storm-wind's moody madness—
Within, the firelight's ruddy glow,
And childhood's nest of gladness.
The magic words shall hold thee fast:
Thou shalt not heed the raving blast.

And though the shadow of a sigh
May tremble through the story,
For 'happy summer days' gone by,
And vanish'd summer glory—
It shall not touch with breath of bale
The pleasance of our fairy-tale.



Dear Friends,

This will be my final introductory letter to *The Nasher*, as on June 1 I retire as director of the Nasher Sculpture Center. In these pages, I've had the pleasure of sharing thoughts on a range of topics, while watching this publication grow and deepen in purview, in tandem with the Nasher's programs.

When I started my directorship here 15 years ago, I carried with me some worry as to how I would find the experience of working in a museum dedicated to a single art form. While over the course of my career I had worked a good bit with sculpture and sculptors, all of my prior experience had been in museums and curatorial departments with multiple areas of focus. Happily, it didn't take me long to understand that I had no cause for concern. Paradoxically, I found the singular focus more liberating than constrictive, easing some decisions, while offering reasons to pursue new and exciting directions.

Even more, I found myself hugely fortunate to be working in the field of sculpture, precisely at a moment that sculpture was demonstrating extraordinary vitality as an art form. Indeed, it has seemed to me that in recent years, sculpture has been the most vibrant of all the art forms, and the Nasher Sculpture Center has very much been in the catbird's seat.

Sculpture's current prominence no doubt results from many factors, but important among them, I believe, has been its ability to incorporate ideas, materials, and even methods from other art forms. As we've seen at the Nasher, many sculptors continue using the most ancient materials and techniques—stone and wood carving, metal casting, ceramic—to produce remarkable, innovative works, while others continue to bring new expression to the modernist techniques of welding and assemblage, while yet others are uniting sculpture to photography, to painting, to film and to video, to sound, to writing, to social space, and more. I think of it sometimes as sculpture swallowing up every other art form, generating new and compelling hybrid expressions.

One would be hard put to find a better example of this than the works in our current exhibition of Sarah Sze. Conceived as a meditation on different ways of apprehending and experiencing sculpture, these works not only include a diversity of common three-dimensional objects, but also painted and photographic images, ambient sound, and projected video. A range of art forms are brought together, creating sculptural works that offer experiences that are seamless, engaging, and thought-provoking.

Another concern I felt when I arrived at the Nasher in 2009 was about the staff. I suppose most anyone who walks into a new job wonders how they will find their new colleagues. The answer to that question is evident when you realize that several members of our senior team, as well as others across the museum, have been here since before I came. And many of our team who were hired after I arrived, have still been here for many years. Overall, our staff retention has been remarkable, and that's a good thing—our team has been unfailingly creative, innovative, diligent, responsible, collaborative, collegial, and cohesive. In short, a joy.

And finally, while I had slight familiarity with Dallas and its art community, I didn't know the friends and supporters of the Nasher. The interest and support, the thoughtful, critical engagement, the loyalty and enthusiasm that I've found here—whether from artists or art collectors, experienced art enthusiasts and interested novices—has been nothing short of extraordinary. Over the years, I've seen a true community grow around the Nasher, and the keen interest and warm embrace of that community has consistently inspired me to reach further and accomplish more.

The last exhibition to open during my tenure will be with the Haas Brothers, whose beautiful, often fanciful work often operates at the intersection of sculpture and functional design. Twin brothers who grew up in Texas and work now in California, it feels somehow appropriate to me that their trajectory mirrors mine, if in reverse.

In the fall, after I've departed, we'll open two exhibitions, one a survey of Hugh Hayden, a Dallas native now resident of New York, whose primary medium has been carved wood, with which he achieves things one might not have imagined possible. Our second show, with Los Angeles-based Samara Golden, will occupy the Lower Level Gallery, transforming that space in a way that seems to defy logic and profoundly challenge understanding. Though I'll no longer be working here, I'm excited to visit these shows, where I'll hope to see you as we share the experiences.

So for now, and from the bottom of my heart, thank you for the joy of a lifetime.

Very best,

Jeremy Strick
Director

Jeremy Strick, February 2024. Photo by Allison V. Smith



If you travel in the southeastern United States, pretty much any time of year, you'll find yourself gawking at thick masses of ivylike vines engulfing everything from trees to telephone poles. Kudzu, a rhizomatic plant native to Japan and southeast China, was imported to the South in the early 1900s for erosion control, touting its marvelous "mile-a-minute" growth. It has since become a permanent and invasive fixture in many American landscapes.

Despite its uncontrollable dominion, one can't help but stare in awe at this verdant phenomenon. Once foreign, now domestic, it smothers in towering heights, transforming forested monotony into strange creatures with lush arms unfurling from broad shoulders—an enchanting yet eerie hallucination seen through plain sobriety. Last fall, while traveling through South Carolina and ideating this issue, I was struck by the surprising parallels these crawling monsters share with the contents ahead.

Sometimes we need to be taken out of this world, which in turn has the unexpected quality of forcing a clearer picture of what's real. Painters sometimes cross their eyes to better grasp a composition through the blur or look through mirrors to reverse the image. Some writers read words backward to catch mistakes. In turning something on its head, a pattern of reflex familiarity is broken, allowing for spectacle and oddity to emerge from the humdrum.

In this issue of *The Nasher*, this fantastical quirk is hard at work. Guadalupe Maravilla transforms a school bus into a glinting vessel of symbolism and healing; young twin siblings wonder through the strange, dreamlike characters of the Haas Brothers; human-headed squirrels stand whimsically frozen in bronze. Read on as Samara Golden flips, refracts, and reflects domestic worlds; Hugh Hayden whittles branching outgrowth from the ordinary; and Chuck & George invite you into zany and bright domestic hilarity.

Here's to the dreamers who remind us, if you look the right way, nothing is boring.

Adrienne Lichliter-Hines

Editor in Chief

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Sabine Bungert and Stefan Dolfen, *Kudzu, Mississippi*, from the Kudzu Series, 2022. © Sabine Bungert, Stefan Dolfen. Image courtesy of the artists

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ON THE COVER:

The Haas Brothers, early digital rendering of *The Strawberry Tree*, 2023. Image courtesy of the artists

THIS PAGE:

The Haas Brothers, *Snailor Moon & Snail Earnhardt Jr.*, 2021. Hand-carved walnut, glass, Yeti Mongolian Mimosa Faux Fur and Pink Pearl Faux Fur. *Snailor Moon*: 117 x 24 x 24 inches (297 x 61 x 61 cm); *Snail Earnhardt Jr.*: 131 x 22 x 22 inches (332.7 x 55.8 x 55.8 cm). Photo by Tim Hans, courtesy of the artists

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Summer E. Aquino

Summer E. Aquino is an interdisciplinary artist from the Philippines, currently based in Alfred, New York. Their work has been published by the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth and exhibited at Kunsthaus Salzwedel in Germany, among others. They are the recipient of a 2023 Dallas Museum of Art Kimbrough Artist Award for *Moon Dust*—a glaze development using the chemical composition of the lunar surface with earthly compounds as simulant. Recent projects include *FOLK PHYSICS*, a poetry collection published in the form of a solo exhibition presented by Borgen Wolfe (virtual) in collaboration with Swim Club 수영 클럽 (located within The Power Station, Dallas); and *SOUP[ceramics]*, a functional ceramic collection made with Jeff Gibbons. Aquino's work encircles the reconciliation between the infinite and the subtleties of personal sensation.

Andrew Berardini

Reflecting on the book *Colors (Not a Cult, 2023)*, Chris Kraus wrote, "Andrew Berardini is an adept at seeing." As an editor and curator, Berardini has had past collaborations and exhibitions with MOCA, Los Angeles; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; and the Estonian Pavilion at the 2019 Venice Biennale. He has authored hundreds of essays for museums and art spaces including for the Whitney Biennial, the Hammer Museum, and SFMOMA. He is best known for his personal writing about art, backboned by analysis and embodied with levity, sensuality, and invention. A contributor to *Artforum* since 2006 and former critic for *LA Weekly*, he has been a contributing editor at *Art Agenda*, *Mousse*, and *Momus*. A recipient of the Andy Warhol/Creative Capital Arts Writers Grant, Andrew's past labors include being the public writer for Pierre Huyghe, an editorial assistant at Semiotext(e), and the writer-in-residence at the Institute for Art and Olfaction. He currently lives in California.



Jana La Brasca

Jana La Brasca is a doctoral candidate in art history at the University of Texas at Austin and was curatorial researcher for the Nasher's 2023 exhibition, *Groundswell: Women of Land Art*. Previously, she was a curatorial fellow at the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin, and catalogue raisonné research fellow at Judd Foundation in Marfa and New York. In 2003, she and her best friend made a *Blair Witch*-style "documentary" about squirrels in their neighborhood.



Douglas Davis

Douglas Davis is an entrepreneur, art collector, and writer. He has achieved modest success at each of these activities but has some great stories to tell. As a team member of several early-stage companies, Davis contributed to the creation of the nonstop toll collection technology used on the Dallas North Tollway and around the world, the publishing and downloading of applications on mobile devices, and advances in orthopedic implants and instrumentation.

He is the co-founder of Murray Street Coffee Shop and makes a mean cappuccino. As a freelance writer focused on music, he has befriended a great list of musicians. He lives in Dallas.



Lewis Kachur

Lewis Kachur authored *Displaying the Marvelous: Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dalí and Surrealist Exhibition Installations* (MIT Press, 2001). His museum catalogue essays include "'Der Arp ist da:' Exhibition Presence and Display Practice," in *The Nature of Arp*, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, and Peggy Guggenheim collection, Venice, 2018; "Picasso et les musiques – populaires et folklorique – du cubisme," in *Les Musiques de Picasso*, Musée de la musique, Paris, 2020; and "Austin, Barr, Cornell, l'abc du surréalisme à New York dans les années 1930" in *Éric de Chassey, le surréalisme dans l'art américain*, Musées de Marseille, France, 2021. An essay on Kenny Scharf and the Surrealist forest is in press (TOTAH, New York). He is professor of art history at Kean University in New Jersey.



Betsy Lewis

Betsy Lewis holds an MFA in arts and technology from UT Dallas. Before starting graduate school, she worked on Texas-shot film and television projects in art departments and production offices. As a visual artist, Lewis's videos and projections have been shown in Texas at CASPFEST, BYOB (Bring Your Own Beamer), Innerspace Gallery, and Texas Vignette, and online at Funny Or Die. With the Intersect Art Collective, her videos were shown at Paris' Centre Pompidou, the Dallas Museum of Art, and Dallas Contemporary. As a public media producer, Lewis contributed multimedia pieces to KERA, then freelanced as an art critic and culture writer for *Glasstire*, the *Dallas Observer* and *modernDallas*. Her pandemic project was the YouTube series *Cultural Carnivore*, which may or may not return in 2024. She currently teaches English at Terry Southern's alma mater, Sunset High, while pursuing a Ph.D. in learning technologies at the University of North Texas.

Arthur Peña

Arthur Peña is a New York City-based artist. His work has been shown in solo exhibitions at the Dallas Contemporary, Texas; NorthPark Center presented by Coach, Texas; Expo Chicago, Illinois; and Spring/Break Art Show, New York. Group exhibitions include the Dallas Museum of Art, Texas; Anton Kern Gallery, New York; Magenta Plains, New York; Selenas Mountain, New York, among others. As a contributing writer, Peña has interviewed multiple artists including Sterling Ruby, Ross Bleckner, Nina Chanel Abney, and Katherine Bradford. His acclaimed curatorial project One Night Only presented solo exhibitions of Nicole Eisenman, Carrie Moyer, and Ellen Berkenblit. This May, Peña will present a solo exhibition at Independent New York with Harlesden High Street, London.



Brooke Hodge

Brooke Hodge is an independent curator and writer based in Palm Springs, California. She served as director of architecture and design at Palm Springs Art Museum from 2016-2020. Prior to joining PSAM, Hodge was deputy director at Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum in New York City, and from 2010-2014 she was director of exhibitions management and publications at the Hammer Museum. She was curator of architecture and design at The Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles from 2001-2009. Her recent exhibitions include *Disturbances in the Field: Art in the High Desert from Andrea Zittel's A-Z West to High Desert Test Sites* at Nevada Museum of Art, Reno (2021/2022) and *Sheila Levrant de Bretteville: Community, Activism, and Design* at Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut (February 2024). For the Nasher Sculpture Center Hodge guest curated *Provocations: The Architecture and Design of Heatherwick Studio* in 2014 and in 2024 will guest curate *Haas Brothers: Moonlight*.



Phallon Wright

Phallon Wright is a Dallas-based photographer and mixed media artist. Wright attended The University of Texas at Dallas, majoring in interdisciplinary studies with a focus on behavioral sciences and visual and literary arts. While Wright found her calling in photography at a young age, she allows herself the constant exploration of other forms of creative and artistic expression. Wright views this as a right, not a privilege, and as a radical way to be, live, heal, and work.

Calvin and Iris

Calvin and Iris are six-year-old twins, star sign: Leo. Calvin, born first, loves animals, spaghetti and meatballs, and the color blue—a preference assigned by his sister years ago. Iris's favorite animal is a deer, loves lemon-pepper chicken wings, and is currently into light purple. Her brother Calvin appreciates her talent for painting and drawing, while she brags about Calvin's superior LEGO skills. Calvin wants to be an astronaut when he grows up. Iris wants to be an artist, a baker, a gymnast, and maybe a singer. They love being twins because there is always another kid at home to be silly with. Calvin claims Iris is nice most of the time. Iris would like to add to the record that Calvin has bangs.



Faye and Marlo

Five-year-old twins Faye and Marlo were born in the winter of 2018. Marlo describes her sister as LOUD, funny, kind, and smart. Faye describes Marlo as tough, silly, and equally smart. Their parents agree with this assessment. Despite being twins, their favorite foods vary: Marlo prefers chocolate, candy, and grapes, while Faye enjoys a solid plate of steak and eggs. In 2021 they exhibited a secret collection of drawings under the breakfast bar counter. In 2022 they graduated from their household culinary school with a concentration in carrot peeling and egg cracking, and recently, in 2023, they mastered the full *Gabby's Dollhouse* discography.



Hugh Hayden, *Real Tree* (detail), 2023.
Cherry bark on Zegna suit. Installed:
67 x 68 x 20 inches (170.2 x 172.7 x 50.8
cm). © Hugh Hayden. Photo by Dawn
Blackman, courtesy of Lisson Gallery

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Objects in mirror are closer than they appear: Reflections on Samara Golden

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Two sets of twin siblings receive a box of playful bits and baubles to explore the fantastical world of the Haas Brothers, followed by a DIY flip book with an intro written by guest curator Brooke Hodge.

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In light of a new acquisition, art historian Lewis Kachur describes Jean (Hans) Arp's efforts at automatism in sculpture.

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Betsy Lewis and Phallon Wright visit the quirky home of "the Brians," two longtime Dallas figures offering art, jokes, and rosy hues.

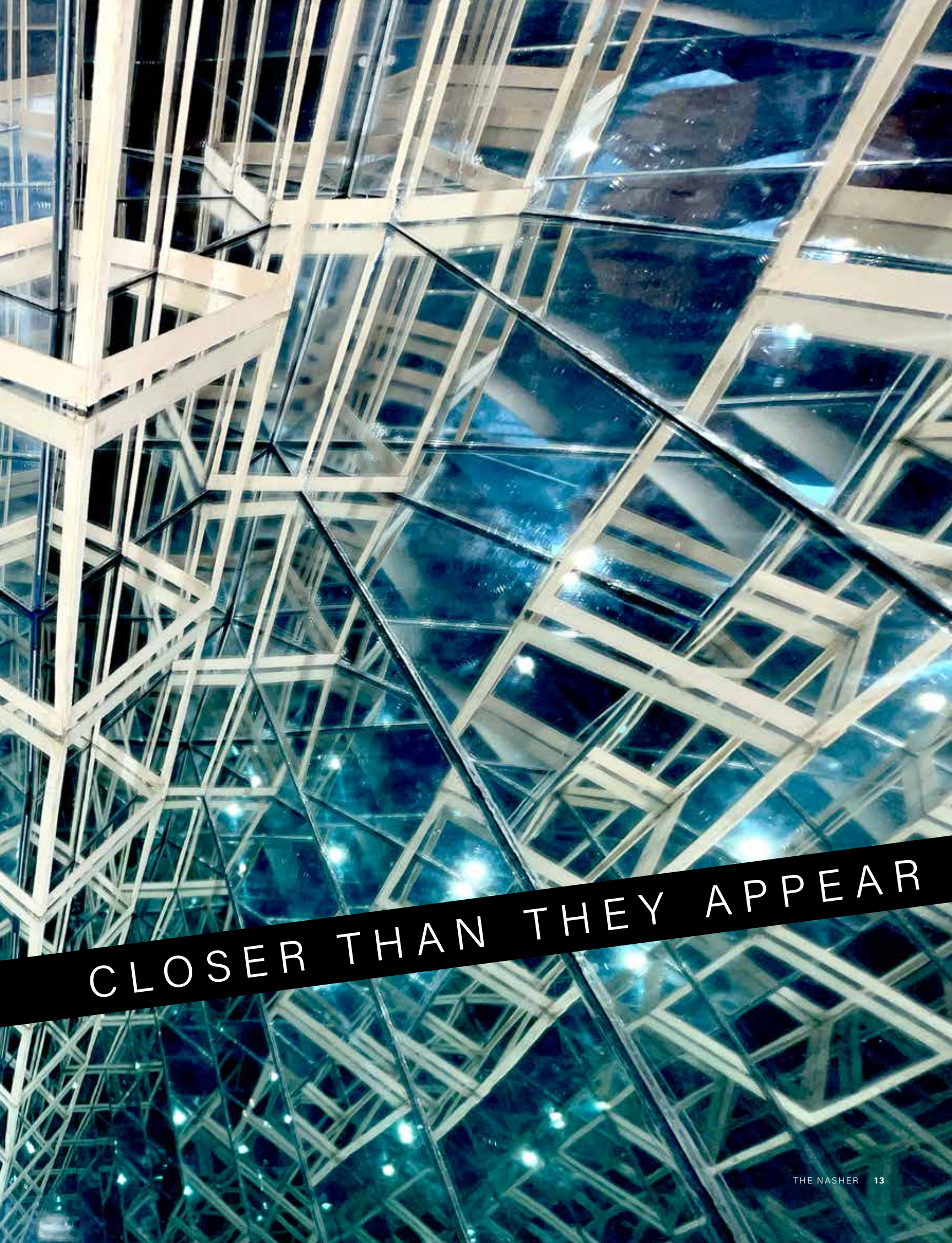
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Quantum Decoherence Described as an "I"

A poem by Summer E. Aquino



OBJECTS IN MIRROR ARE



CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR



Samara Golden, *Rape of the Mirror: Bedroom Installation*, 2011. Rmax foam insulation, mirror, monitors, carpet, projection, and various other media. Dimensions variable. Image courtesy of the artist and Night Gallery, Los Angeles

... In our two souls, those twin mirrors.

Some evening made of rose and of mystical blue

A single flash will pass between us

Like a long sob, charged with farewells;

And later an Angel, setting the doors ajar,

Faithful and joyous, will come to revive

The tarnished mirrors, the extinguished flames.

—Charles Baudelaire

Objects in mirror are closer than they appear. A delicate engraving found lightly etched onto some looking glasses, these words warn us that though mirrors often unflinchingly reflect the world with their hard bounce of light, they can just as easily distort our perception. But in this instance, the distortion doesn't alter the image with the warp and bend of a funhouse grotesque, but rather brings us closer. With these mirrors, the intimacy grows with the illusion, even if the distance is profound.

For over 13 years, I've been peering into the mirrors of the artist Samara Golden. In *Rape of the Mirror* in 2011, I saw the crash of emotion in the shattered promises of a mirrored bed shattered into tears beneath a creaming sunset. In *Guts* (2022), I saw the magic of her stacked world endlessly layered into the expansive problems and promise of our troubling times. In the shimmer and reflection of their glassy surfaces, I've discovered worlds upon worlds, feeling the emotional intimacy and illusionistic distance in each doubling. Here memory, psychology, history, architecture, and landscape layer like shimmering mirages into meditations on class and struggle, illness and isolation, love and loss. Through their ethereal silvers and iridescent turquoises, I have passed through memories and listened to ghosts, tiptoed through the rubble of disappointments, and peered into the phantasms of dreams. Throughout her many architectonic installations, Golden deploys mirrors and reflective materials into heartbreaking *mise en abymes*.

As clear as crystal and as gossamer as fantasy, holographically bent and dully gleaming, Golden's mirrors can turn the world upside down and pass us into



Above: Samara Golden in studio, Los Angeles, 2024. Image courtesy of the artist

Previous spread: Samara Golden, experiment model, research for Golden's 2024 exhibition at the Nasher Sculpture Center, 2023. Foamcore, wood, and mirror. Image courtesy of the artist



other dimensions. On the other side of the looking glass, as Lewis Carroll might tell you, the cruel absurdities and lush nonsense of the everyday can be betrayed for what they really are. Problems prism and puzzle, offering in their kaleidoscopic array the contrasts and tensions of poetry.

In Golden's work, memory and emotion summon spaces that no longer exist or that never really existed except in our wounded hearts or collapsed together in our recollections. Everyday spaces fold over each other: a luxurious den teetering off a cliff, a party of humans composed with gratitude from those who make labor possible, two grandmothers' houses fused into one, a smashed and windblown seaside resort as memorial, a scatter of isolated cells, a tableau of collective loneliness, an imaginary skyscraper writhing with fantasias and monsters stretching into infinity. All of these transcend through their cascaded reflections into a shattered grandeur. Golden's mirrors summon lost spirits and tease out the pockmarked scars we carry from the lives and experiences we've led, not all of them on our faces. The mirrors and mirrored surfaces tell us with their infinities that there is always more to see.

Crafted with humble materials and scavenged decor, these installations and their sculptures are held together with pathos, whether as grand as that infinite skyscraper peered at from a second story perch, or as modest as faces like shades of those lost, burned into the reflective surfaces of construction

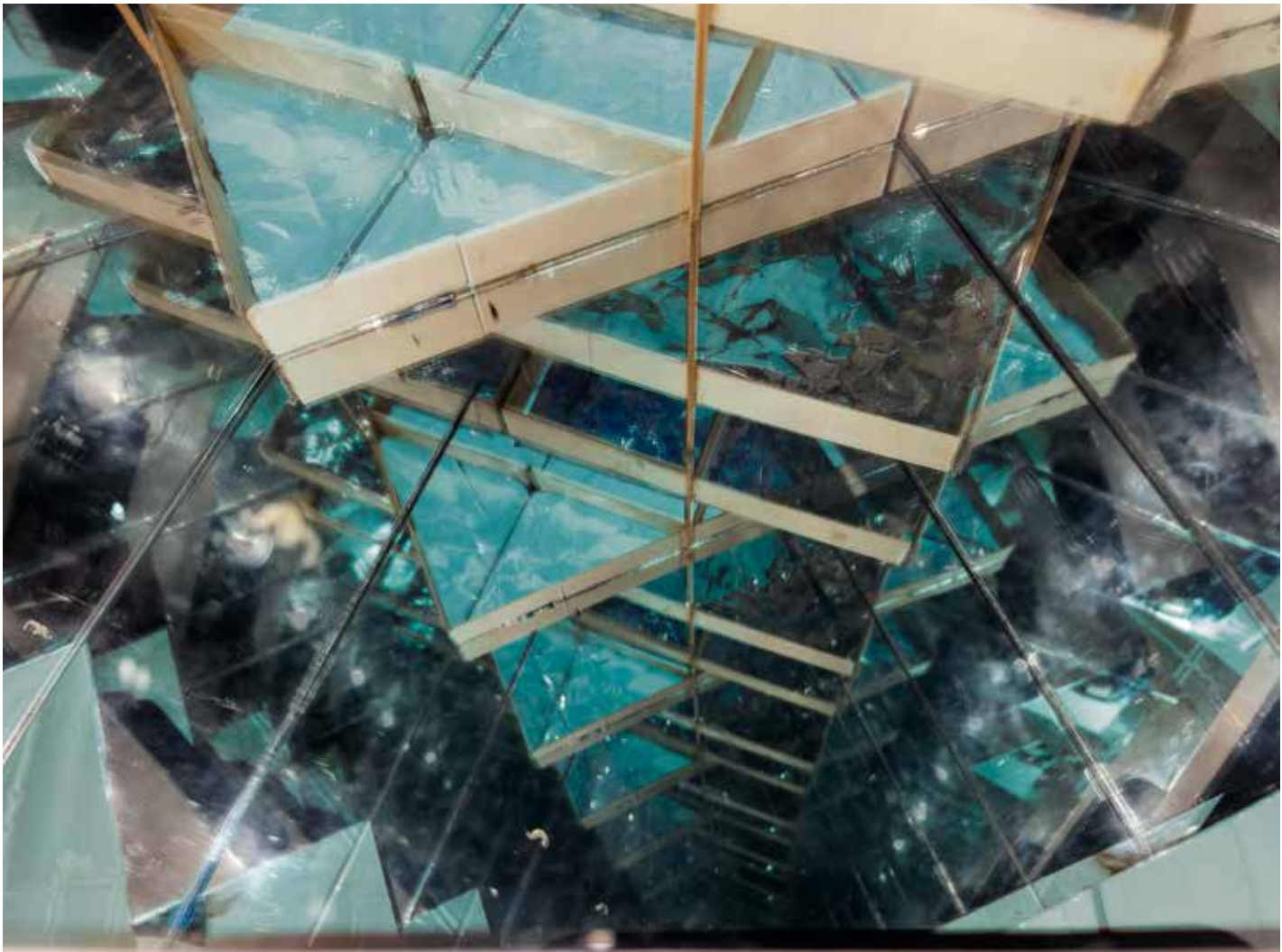
insulation. Real furniture and objects blend with scraggly constructed simulacra, real cigarettes in an ersatz ashtray, a woven afghan tossed over the fragile silver board of a forged sofa. In the combined textures of the real and constructed, I can't help but feel the solidity of some memories and the elusive wraiths of others, the palpability of certain dreams, and the thick mists obscuring the present from prying eyes.

These past years, wall works have emerged from her practice like potent shards shaved from larger installations. Melted figures like plastic Giacomettis in their contemplative leans and supine writhings find surprisingly complex emotional affect in the simple twist and turn of their bodies. Tables heave with half-eaten feasts like maximalist Daniel Spoerri's, the tablecloths folding over the edges in shrouded pools of fabric as in Golden's *Where is my thinking cap?* (2020). Or her dramatic *Guts* paintings (2022), emerging out of her Night Gallery exhibition of the same name but appearing in other exhibitions, where snaky spray foam tangles into a busy abattoir's harvest of intestines, all painted with vivid harlequin chroma. The messy knots of intuition and indecision, of bravery and the disappointment of being "gutted" along with the visceral material in a bellyful life. The colors have their allure, but the snarl of all those messy innards can be stomach-churning, but so are the contrasts and force of our attempts to be courageous, intuitive, and disappointed in a difficult world.

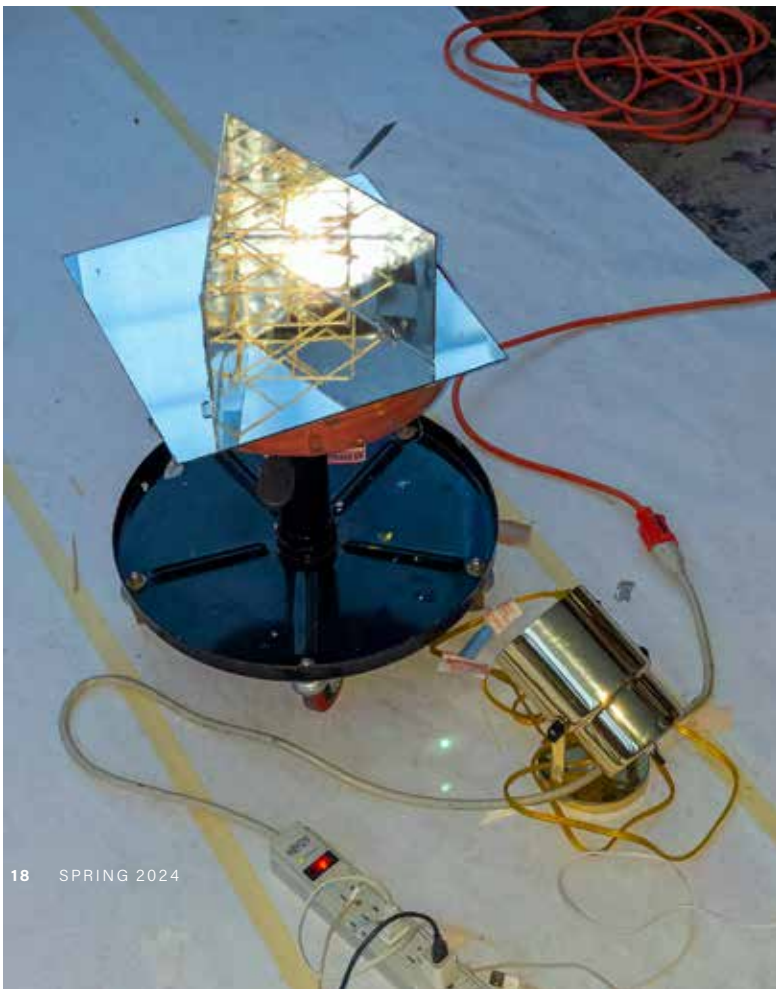


Above: Samara Golden, experiment model, early research for Golden's 2024 exhibition at the Nasher Sculpture Center, 2023. Wood, acrylic tubing, silver and brass paint, and mirror. Image courtesy of the artist

Opposite page: Samara Golden, *Where is my thinking cap?*, 2020. Extruded polystyrene foam board, epoxy, wood, fabric, polyurethane glue, caulk, acrylic paint, nail polish, aluminum foil, wrapping paper, plastic dishware, rubber bands, marbles, and found materials. 59 x 144 x 15 1/2 inches (149.9 x 365.8 x 39.4 cm). Photos by Nik Massey, courtesy of the artist and Night Gallery, Los Angeles



Samara Golden, experiment model, research for Golden's 2024 exhibition at the Nasher Sculpture Center, 2023. Foamcore, wood, and mirror. Image courtesy of the artist



I began this essay with Baudelaire's lovers, the twin mirrors of their souls, as his mystic melancholia feels so fitting in looking through the mirrors into those worlds Golden conjures, as does the flame's revival in their tarnished surfaces. I so often feel elegiac looking at her works and the world behind this that they envision: whether the ghosts of the past, the pain of the present, or the promises of the future, the dreams of what could have been or what will never be, and the hope that can be squeezed out of the beauty of her sixth-dimensional worlds swirl together just so, all wrought with a humble tenderness, gently sorrowful and just a little hopeful in their tremulous light.

Samara Golden's exhibition at the Nasher Sculpture Center opens September 28, 2024.

Left: Samara Golden, experiment model, research for Golden's 2024 exhibition at the Nasher Sculpture Center, 2023. Foamcore, wood, and mirror. Image courtesy of the artist

Opposite: Samara Golden, study of figure made of melted plastic dinner plates, early research for Golden's 2024 exhibition at the Nasher Sculpture Center, 2023. Image courtesy of the artist



IN THE COMBINED TEXTURES OF
THE REAL AND CONSTRUCTED,
I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL THE
SOLIDITY OF SOME MEMORIES
AND THE ELUSIVE WRAITHS OF
OTHERS, THE PALPABILITY OF
CERTAIN DREAMS, AND THE
THICK MISTS OBSCURING THE
PRESENT FROM PRYING EYES.

—Andrew Berardini

Samara Golden, *Where is my thinking cap?*, 2020. Extruded polystyrene foam board, epoxy, wood, fabric, polyurethane glue, caulk, acrylic paint, nail polish, aluminum foil, wrapping paper, plastic dishware, rubber bands, marbles, and found materials. 59 x 144 x 15 1/2 inches (149.9 x 365.8 x 39.4 cm). Photos by Nik Massey, courtesy of the artist and Night Gallery, Los Angeles



Samara Golden, *Mass Murder*, Night Gallery, 2014. Installation view of Blue Room. Faux abalone piano, guitar, lamp, vases, ash tray, candles and jewelry. Rmax foam insulation, paint, cellophane and glue. Image courtesy of Night Gallery, Los Angeles



Samara Golden, *Mass Murder*,
Night Gallery, 2014. Installation
view of Blue Room. Rmax
sofa, lamp, brain hat sculpture,
blanket. Rmax foam insulation,
painted epoxy putty, cellophane
and glue. Image courtesy of
Night Gallery, Los Angeles



Installation view of
*Guadalupe Maravilla:
Mariposa Relámpago*
at Ballroom Marfa.
Photo by Makenzie
Goodman, courtesy of
Ballroom Marfa



BUTTERFLY LIGHTNING

Artist Guadalupe Maravilla
entangles symbolism and sound therapy
into a shining school bus traveling
through Texas this spring.



Guadalupe Maravilla Sound Ceremony at Ballroom Marfa, November 4, 2023. Photo by Sarah Vasquez, courtesy of Ballroom Marfa



BY DOUGLAS DAVIS

Few topics are as current and divisive in this state and country than that of illegal immigration. However, for the migrants who attain entry to the United States, the catastrophic circumstances and journeys that led them to this country leave lasting scars on the psyche. Artist Guadalupe Maravilla understands these traumas. As an unaccompanied 8-year-old, he was smuggled from warring El Salvador through Central America and Mexico before crossing the Tijuana border into the United States. Decades later, his phantasmagorical sculpture *Mariposa Relámpago* pays tribute to the deceptive tradecraft of the coyote to deliver participants to a sound therapy session.

Top: Portrait of Guadalupe Maravilla, 2021. Photo by Steve Benisty
Right: Installation view of *Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago* at Ballroom Marfa. Photo by Makenzie Goodman, courtesy of Ballroom Marfa







TOP ROW: Installation views of *Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago* at Ballroom Marfa. Photo by Douglas Davis, shot on color film. ABOVE AND OPPOSITE: *Guadalupe Maravilla Sound Ceremony* at Ballroom Marfa, November 4, 2023. Photo by Sarah Vasquez, courtesy of Ballroom Marfa



Commissioned by the Institute of Contemporary Art/ Boston, *Mariposa Relámpago* is a former school bus, reconfigured and stripped to gleaming metal. It's an homage to the customized buses common in El Salvador and much of Latin America, bedecked with dazzling ornamentation that are loaded with symbolism for the artist. There are stone carvings suggestive of Mayan artifacts. Tree roots that have been carved into snake-like shapes and dipped in chrome adorn the roof surfaces—a reference to the symbol of medicine. A sculpture of a child represents those who, like himself, attempted to make the treacherous journey to a new life. Flatware affixed to the windshield frame of the bus represents communal dinners. A basket of white onyx eggs—onyx is believed to repel negative energy—hangs from the mouth of a dragon on the roof. Grasshopper legs are mounted on the aft sides of the vehicle, symbolizing the jump that migration represents. Spinning clothes dryers in place of the front wheels suggest the movement of the bus.

In all, more than 600 found and commissioned objects are incorporated into this kinetic work of art. In contrast to the many objects on the bus exterior, the metal interior of the bus has been stripped of all seating and windows; viewers can sit or lie on the floor. The back of the bus has been modified to fully open to the outside. Several large gongs hang in and on the bus, the largest boasting a 60-inch diameter. Each is tuned to specific therapeutic frequencies representing water, earth, and other sound characters, and when struck, they resonate throughout the bus surfaces and surrounding landscape, creating a meditative healing environment

for participants. “In some ways, the bus is like a Trojan Horse, sneaking unsuspecting observers into a therapy session,” says Maravilla.

The sculpture can be considered a third life for a former school bus originally from the United States. Buses that reach the end of their service life in the United States are often sold into service in Latin America and beyond. As conceived by Maravilla, such a bus sourced in El Salvador would endure a journey similar to his own. Blessed by shamans and anointed with volcanic ash, it was driven to Mexico City to be sculpturally transformed, but that bus would not complete the journey. As work progressed on the sculpture in Mexico City, Maravilla began preparing the paperwork to import it into the United States. To his chagrin, he discovered that the bus had been reported stolen from a church in El Salvador. A reflection of the migrant experience, no clean title for the bus meant an impossible bureaucratic hurdle for legal entry. There would be no coyote to smuggle a bus-sized sculpture across the border. An alternative bus with appropriate paperwork was purchased in Mexico City, and the work-in-progress bus was sold at a loss for spare parts. To retain the original mojo for the sculpture, the ceremony that blessed the original bus was repeated in El Salvador with symbolic proxies. These objects are included in the completed work.

The name for the work *Mariposa Relámpago* (“Lightning Butterfly”) is attributed to a conversation he overheard on the streets of Oaxaca. According to Maravilla, “I was in Oaxaca and had a dream about butterflies and lightning. The next day waiting at a crosswalk on the





Installation view of *Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago* at Ballroom Marfa. Photo by Makenzie Goodman, courtesy of Ballroom Marfa



street, I overheard two elderly women discussing an ancient Mexican healer. The healer's name was *Mariposa Relámpago*." He took the name as prophecy with the reference to the healing intention of the sculpture.

Maravilla firmly believes in the healing powers of sound and other natural medicines. He attributes sound therapy in part to his own recovery from colon cancer—a disease he is convinced is a manifestation of the traumas living in war-torn El Salvador, his dangerous escape to the United States, and subsequent undocumented life wrought on his body. Now Maravilla regularly invites the swelling migrant population of his Brooklyn neighborhood to sound therapy sessions at venues such as churches. His intention is to help them deal with the manifestations of trauma, hopefully avoiding the long-term effects he has had to endure.

At the Ballroom Marfa opening, participants were teased with the sound therapy aspects of the sculpture. Maravilla and an assistant each played a gong, accompanied by a tape of a more complete sound therapy session. Before the exhibit closes in March, Maravilla, accompanied by a full complement of sound therapists he works with in New York, will return to Ballroom Marfa to perform a sound bath. Several sound therapy sessions will be held, fully realizing the sculpture's therapeutic potential.

Prior to the opening, I had a chance to meet Maravilla and experience a personal therapy session. Using the 60-inch gong—the one tuned to the frequency of water—hanging in the rear of the bus, he had at hand several styles of mallets. By hitting or dragging the mallets, Maravilla coaxed deeply resonant sounds through the sculpture's surfaces. Lying on the floor of the bus, I was transported back to the psychedelic experience of listening to early Pink Floyd. With the warm Marfa sun streaming over me, drifting into a meditative state of mind was easy.

Maravilla's belief in the potential of *Mariposa Relámpago* as a vehicle for therapy rings true to me. Indeed, the sculpture is a metaphor for these times—a dizzying piece of eye candy, yielding a deeper meaning when the personal history of the artist is known; a reminder of lost homeland; and a space to heal the accumulated traumas of the life fled and the life now lived.

In recognition of the socioeconomic importance this work represents, *Mariposa Relámpago* will be presented at three institutions in Texas—a first in curatorial cooperation. After closing at Ballroom Marfa in March 2024, it will travel to Austin for an April installation at The Contemporary Austin's Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park at Laguna Gloria. Finally, the sculpture will be installed at the Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston in late 2024. I'm already planning on attending the closing sound bath this March and visiting *Mariposa Relámpago* as it migrates to the Texas museums.



Homecoming

A conversation with Hugh Hayden

Dallas natives and New York-based artists Arthur Peña and Hugh Hayden discuss plants, assimilation, deadlines, and Hayden's upcoming show at the Nasher.

Scene: Hugh Hayden's studio in Brooklyn, New York, December 2023.

Enter Arthur Peña, artist, writer, and such.

Hugh [to Riley, his studio assistant]: Could you water these, Riley? Could you give it two things in the yellow elephant?

Arthur: What are those plants?

Hugh: They're palm trees, but it's right by the heater, so now it needs more water.

Arthur: Have you used these plants in any installations?

Hugh: I haven't. They're just for ambiance, but they probably take up too much space, and they need care and maintenance. And I think this one was originally in my apartment, but it just grew too big.

Arthur: Whoa. This was?

Hugh: Yes, but right now it doesn't look its best. It is not growing. When it's not growing, it doesn't look so good.

Arthur: Would you ever harvest these for material for the work?

Hugh [while watering plants]: Not these, at least not yet. I do have an idea to do something with a houseplant, but I wouldn't actually use the real houseplant because they don't yield wood, and most of my things are more about using the wood. An idea I've gone back and forth with for the Nasher show is to sculpt a houseplant out of wood—some common plant with branches coming out of the form of the plant, playing with camouflage and

something that's foreign. Therefore, a tropical houseplant that's not native to the US trying to blend in into the settings by having tree branches.

Arthur: The houseplant is essentially a domestication symbol. I mean, obviously it's in the name: a houseplant. But that idea of domestication isn't necessarily something that I've seen explored in the work that you've made so far, is it? I mean, you explored different ideas very directly, but the idea of domestication ...

Hugh: I focus more on assimilation, so I'm talking about trying to make the houseplant look more American by giving it branches versus being just a foliage plant. Like, if I re-created a bird of paradise but re-created the leaves out of wood with branches, to me, it's not domestication but maybe a form of assimilation.

Arthur: There's force behind assimilation though, right?

Hugh: Domestication too.

Arthur: Yeah, exactly. Domestication too. How does that force, I mean, the idea of forcing something to assimilate or domesticate, come through? How you're forcing this thing into a new identity.

Hugh: Well, I think it's representative of people. I put the plant material through these anthropomorphic gestures to some degree, even though it might be very abstract in how it's anthropomorphic, but it's representative of people subscribing to a cultural assimilation or forced domestication, or being cultivated. I think that's reflective of people through different means. Whether it's an education system or wearing clothes, or ways of keeping our hair, we're in some form of domestication.

Arthur: Thinking about assimilation, we're both from Dallas. I'm born and raised in Oak Cliff.

Hugh: Oh! What streets?

Hugh Hayden, *Cable News*, 2018. Post cedar (*Juniperus ashei*) with mirror and hardware. 101 x 31 1/2 x 19 1/2 inches (256.5 x 80 x 49.5 cm). © Hugh Hayden. Photo by George Darrell, courtesy of Lisson Gallery



Above: Hugh Hayden, *America*, 2018. Mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*) for plywood. Overall dimensions: 43 1/8 x 80 7/8 x 80 7/8 inches (109.8 x 205.7 x 205.7 cm). © Hugh Hayden. Image courtesy of Lisson Gallery. Right: Chair detail of *America*

Arthur: I'm from the Cockrell Hill area, so Jefferson and Westmoreland in West Oak Cliff.

Hugh: I'm from near there too. I grew up off I-20 and Cedar Ridge, near Camp Wisdom and Duncanville.

Arthur: Thinking about where we're from ... I grew up in a predominantly Hispanic neighborhood and that was my comfort zone for 18 years. We were in these bubbles, and Texas is itself this bubble, and Duncanville even. This idea of assimilation coming from a Texan, I mean, it has to be something that we constantly think about or at least have had to think about in different ways growing up there and in different neighborhoods.

Hugh: Yeah, totally. Because the neighborhoods are built at different times, so they reflect different means of urban planning and the types of houses that were built at that time. They have a different aesthetic because of the limited amount of land, whereas in bigger, broader cities things might not get updated but rather are torn down to build, let's say, a whole new shopping center.

Arthur: To have a sense of history in Dallas is very tough because not many things last that long. They tear down stuff all the time. When you move to someplace like New

York where a building could be from 1920s, 1930s, it has more history. And, of course, in your work you bring in materials that have history already embedded in them. Are you reclaiming a history of the material? Are you changing that history of the material when you bring it into the studio, or when it transforms into something else? How much of the history do you want to stay in the material that you're using?

Hugh: I'd say I'm remixing things because as an artist, I'm not a scientist. I'm not an authoritative voice. I'm remixing things to my perspective, an alternative perspective, and I embrace that. I can mine associated cultural histories, material properties, and symbolisms that an object or material might have, but then I can manipulate them. It doesn't have to be factual because as an artist I'm just challenging ways of perceiving and looking at something. To me it's a positive if it questions your notion of what's real and what's not.

Arthur: But when you pack in all the ideas that you have—for instance wanting the work to tell the narrative—you want [the work] to communicate these bigger ideas of assimilation, or remixing a history of an object. You'll also allow it to tell its own story, and you leave enough room for us to really navigate it on our own terms. It's not pedantic.





Hugh: Well, in the beginning it was pedantic or didactic, and as I mature as an artist, or start to mature, I want to explain my decision-making less and less. I also want to make it more, not ambiguous, but more open-ended and adaptable to different perspectives. People on opposing ends of some ideology might come to a work of mine and love it or hate it for two totally different reasons. To me, that's successful. If I can manipulate someone's perspective on cultural issues, then the work is a vehicle for exploring. Hopefully it can cause you to rethink the way you interact with the world. That's part of why I use familiar materials, and forms, and concepts because you already have some sort of association with them, and I want to manipulate that.

Arthur: A lot of your work is described as not necessarily welcoming; it keeps you at a distance because of the branches and what not, yet because of the way the material is manipulated, you want to get close to it and examine, but it's really always pushing you away.

For me, I'm always trying to find the artist as a person in the work. Now that you have an oeuvre you can look back on, do you feel like there's any specific parts of yourself in your work? Do you look and think, "Oh, here's the mirror and this is what I'm seeing."

Hugh: Oh, I think definitely there's autobiographical qualities to the work. I think every artist's work is

somewhat autobiographical. Even if I was just some abstract artist drawing lines in the sand, another person would draw it completely differently or try to make it circle. And it's somewhat informed by your life experiences. I know a lot of people try to get away from identity in their work, but I think it's inevitable that someone's work is somewhat autobiographical.

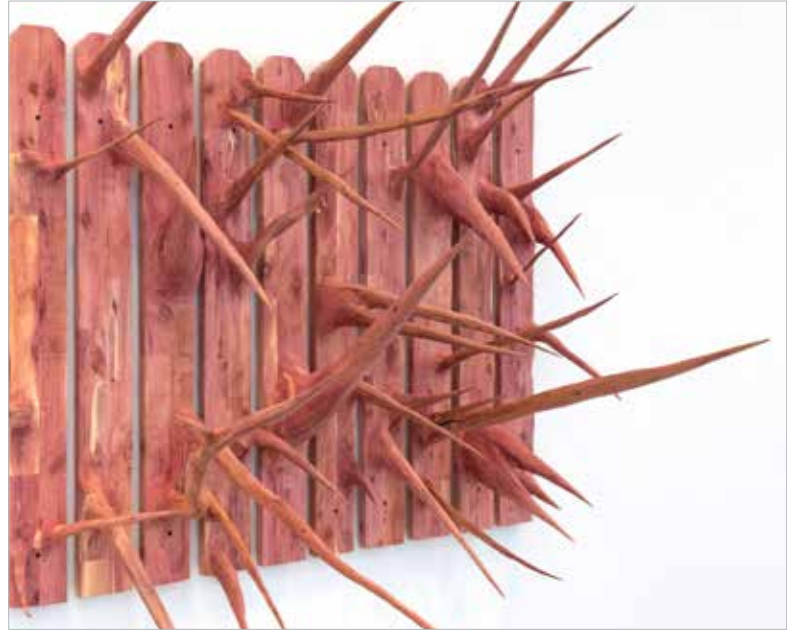
Arthur: You mentioned deadlines earlier, with them sort of forcing you to finish an idea. You don't just get to go on this tangent necessarily, and that maybe wasn't always the case. Do you have a sense of what that has done to your work and the way that you work? Having all the time in the world to work on something versus, "No, we have two deadlines. We have to get it out by next month."

Hugh: I should say, because I'm a sculptor, I can't take up space. I don't necessarily just make things to some degree. A lot of times there is awareness of where they can be shown or exhibited, and I gear the things that I've been thinking about making to fit within these exhibition opportunities and try to retool the exhibition opportunities to work with the ideas of things I want to make. But ultimately, yeah, there's a deadline involved in that, which unfortunately becomes a stressful element. That's always a little frustrating. I think the artistic process isn't something I can just turn on and turn off and compartmentalize, because it's a creative process thing. It's subjective. It's not like we're making



Above: Hugh Hayden, *Brier Patch*, 2022. Cedar and aluminum. One hundred objects, each approximately 8 x 8 x 8 feet (2.4 x 2.4 x 2.4 meters). © Hugh Hayden. Photo by Yasunori Matsui/Madison Square Park Conservancy, collection the artist, courtesy of Lisson Gallery. Exhibition organized by Madison Park Conservancy, New York

Opposite: Portrait of Hugh Hayden in his studio, Brooklyn, New York, 2023. Photo by Arthur Peña



machine parts and we know how long it takes to make each piece—subjective things are involved in everything.

Arthur: Do you have any feelings about this museum show at the Nasher? Being in Dallas and going back to Dallas?

Hugh: Oh, definitely. I hate to say homecoming, because it's not like I'm expecting some, well, I went to Jesuit for high school and homecoming is a big deal. I guess it is everywhere with Dallas football.

Arthur: Yeah, homecoming is a big deal in Texas.

Hugh: Maybe I should make a mum. I was thinking of a letter jacket.

Arthur: Those two things are very, very Texas. Yes.

Hugh: A main thing in this show that I've been thinking about making is this, well, you probably might've been aware of this place called Kidsville, which was like a park in Duncanville that had this big wooden playground castle.

Arthur: Yeah, of course. That kind of wooden playground was very '80s/'90s.

Hugh: I was in Dallas/Fort Worth last spring—I was in a show at the Amon Carter—and I stayed at my mom's house who just left Dallas for LA where my brother lives. I went and took a whole bunch of pictures there because I knew I wanted to re-create part of it for the Nasher show. Ironically, they tore it down sometime after I went and took those

photos. I had no idea it was getting torn down. So, I had been there twice within the past two years to look at it, but it really made a difference this last time.

Arthur: That's very personal. I think some of these other objects you make are ambiguous about what they are or even what they mean, but in this particular case, given the reference point—a place in your home base—it really imbues this specific work with a nostalgia that I don't necessarily gather from the other objects that you've made.

Hugh: There's a piece that I made out of mesquite trees. I made a re-creation of the kitchen table that we had at some point in my childhood, that at least a lot of people in the country identified with, because it has a certain look—this round kitchen table with these certain type of chairs. It was in this orangey oak color. It won't be in the show, but I've been thinking about making a different version of it, or a dining room table made a similar way that has this sort of nostalgia.

This is making me make all these notes for this show. Great.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity. Regrettably not included: The fact that Hugh worked as a full-time architect at Starbucks while getting his MFA at Columbia, using the NBA draft as a metaphor for gallery interest after his 2018 show at White Columns, and Arthur's affection for watermelon.

Hugh Hayden's exhibition at the Nasher Sculpture Center will open September 14, 2024.

Above: Hugh Hayden, *Untitled (Dog ear picket)*, 2018. Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) on plywood. 49 x 49 1/2 x 32 1/2 inches (124.5 x 125.7 x 82.6 cm). © Hugh Hayden. Image courtesy of Lisson Gallery

Opposite, from top: Hugh Hayden, *Good Hair 3 (Brainwash)*, 2021. White oak, wire drawn black boar hair (bristle), metal face mask. 10 x 11 1/2 x 9 1/2 inches (25.4 x 29.2 x 24.1 cm). © Hugh Hayden. Photo by Mark Waldhauser, courtesy of Lisson Gallery


Hugh Hayden, *Real Tree*, 2023. Cherry bark on Zegna suit. Installed: 67 x 68 x 20 inches (170.2 x 172.7 x 50.8 cm). © Hugh Hayden. Photo by Dawn Blackman, courtesy of Lisson Gallery

Hugh Hayden, *Crown of Thorns*, 2020. Steel, 8 x 13 3/8 x 10 5/8 inches (20.3 x 34 x 27 cm). © Hugh Hayden. Photo by Jenny Gorman, courtesy of Lisson Gallery





Hugh Hayden, *America* (detail), 2018.
Mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*) and plywood.
Overall dimensions: 43 1/8 x 80 7/8 x 80 7/8
inches (109.8 x 205.7 x 205.7 cm). © Hugh
Hayden. Image courtesy of Lisson Gallery



I’m not a scientist. I’m not an authoritative voice. I’m remixing things to my perspective or alternative perspective, and I embrace that. I can mine associated cultural histories, material properties, and symbolisms that an object or material might have, but then I can manipulate them. It doesn’t have to be factual because as an artist I’m just challenging ways of perceiving and looking at something. To me it’s a positive if it questions your notion of what’s real and what’s not.”

—Hugh Hayden

PARENT: Are they different from the squirrels in our backyard?

CHILD: No.

PARENT: Really?

CHILD: No ...

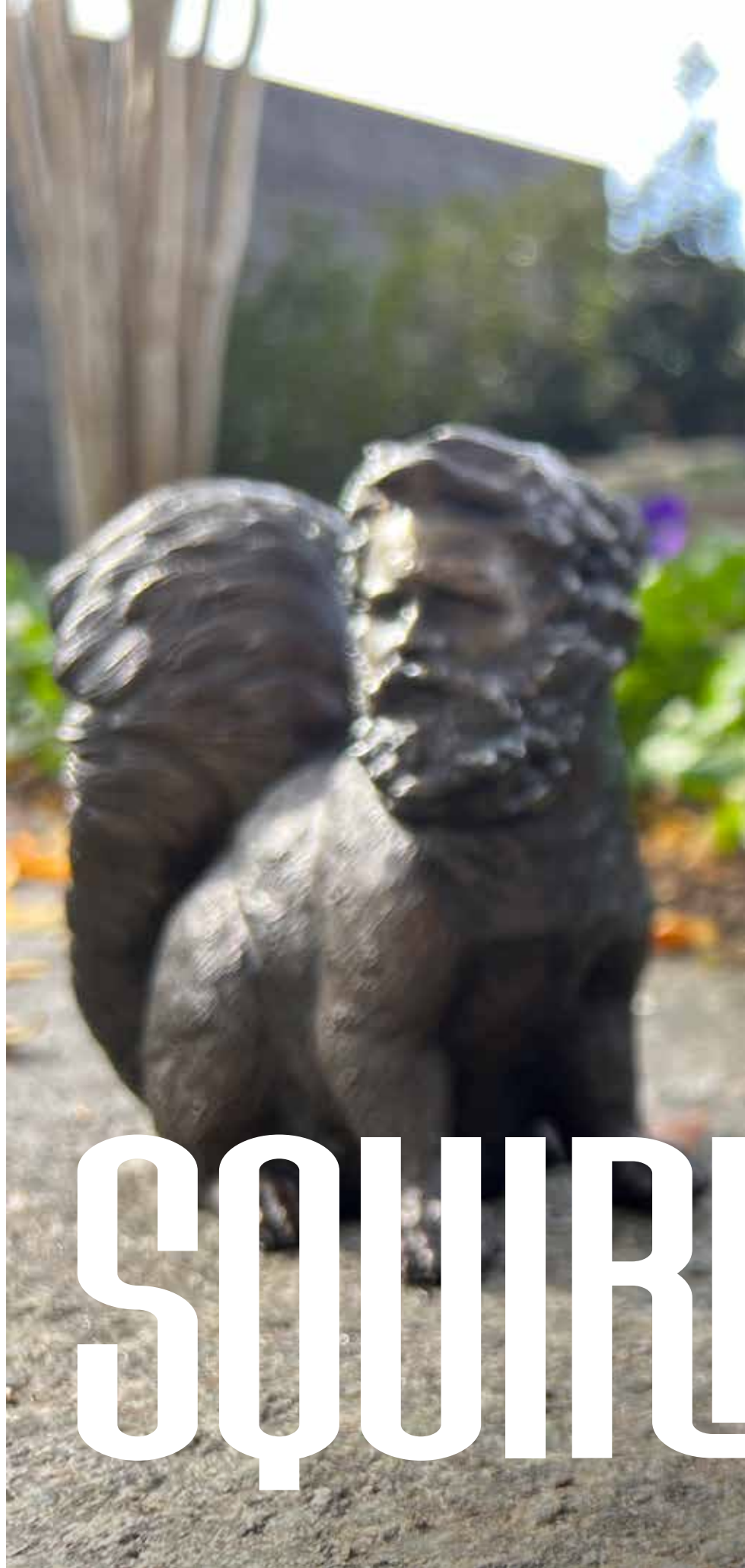
PARENT: *Really?*

CHILD: No ... yes.

This conversation unfolded in the presence of two of the six sculptures from Jeff Gibbons and Gregory Ruppe's *Borest Forest, Grunting Grasses*, created for Nasher Public in partnership with the Katy Trail, and installed along the trail from November 9, 2022 to April 23, 2023. As the child eventually admitted, the squirrels *are* different, in a couple of essential ways. For one, they hold still; they are cast in bronze. For another, they have miniature human heads: those of Gibbons and Ruppe.

The artists, both formerly Dallas-based, have developed a collaborative art and curatorial practice over the last decade. Together with artist Danny Skinner, they ran Culture Hole, a subterranean pop-up exhibition space from 2016 to 2020, and they have created three performance/installations at the Nasher since 2015. For the Soluna International Music and Arts Festival in 2018, they contributed *Grubnik + Suzanne*, an immersive outdoor installation involving a device that translated biofeedback from a live oak tree into English phonetics and a buried screen playing video of an improvisational vocal performance by musician Liz Tonne. With projects like these, Ruppe and Gibbons highlight the unusual in the everyday, grounding their collaboration—sometimes literally—in both authenticity and playful psychological subversion.

Jeffery Gibbons and Gregory Ruppe, *Borest Forest, Grunting Grasses*, 2023. Bronze, dimensions variable. Photos by Adrienne Lichliter-Hines





BY JANA LA BRASCA

*Borest Forest, Grunting
Grasses, Revisited*

RELFRIENDS





The artists are attuned to the uncanny interstices between human and nonhuman life, and they tossed around several ideas as they considered the invitation to create a work for the Katy Trail. A historic railroad line, manicured greenbelt, and urban park, the site struck them as a kind of simulation of nature, what Gibbons calls “the borest of forests.” During early scouting trips, the most prevalent form of wildlife Gibbons and Ruppe observed on the trail—apart from cyclists and joggers grunting with exertion—were squirrels.

Both feral and utterly banal, the squirrel is fast, agile, and can hide easily, but it usually chooses not to. Scurrying along power lines, robbing bird feeders, and begging for scraps on college campuses, the squirrel moves through the world in ways that are both parallel and perpendicular to human existence.

To create these chimerical critters, Gibbons and Ruppe digitally sutured scans of their heads to a lawn ornament squirrel body, using the 3D-printed result as a mold for the sculpture, which was then cast in bronze using the traditional process. The artists chose the material for its durability and its associations with ancient and modernist traditions of monumental outdoor sculpture, but they left signs of digital manipulation, such as raster lines on the figures’ noses and foreheads, visible. The original installation included six total figures—three “Jeffs” and three “Gregs”—installed in pairs at intervals from the south to the north end of the Katy Trail. Depending on which direction you were walking and how closely you looked, Ruppe explains, the successive pairs “would tell a story of coming together or moving apart.”

The squirrels themselves were small, the artists explained, but they became perceptually expansive through their installation; the scale of the work was relative to the experience it made possible. For Gibbons and Ruppe, *Borest Forest, Grunting Grasses* was not so much about totally reconstituting viewers’ relationship to reality, but rather intended to create little doorways for people to become aware of their environment in a new way. “Most of the time in moving through the world we miss a lot,” Gibbons said. With these works, the artists offered a subtle and humorous gesture designed to inspire a sense of bewilderment that, once it catches your attention, might make you see just a little bit more.

Are they different from the squirrels in our backyard?

No ... no ... no ... yes.

HAAS BROTHERS IMAGINARIUM

In anticipation for *Moonlight*, opening at the Nasher this May, two sets of young twins explore the world of the Haas Brothers.

BY ADRIENNE LICHLITER-HINES,
IRIS AND CALVIN, AND MARLO AND FAYE

It's hard to spend time with the work of Simon and Nikolai Haas and not walk away smiling. Once seeing their objects filled with sparkling fantasy and colorful play—and perhaps a dirty joke here and there—it's unsurprising to learn that the collaborators are twin brothers (born in Austin, for those whom such origin earns them bonus points). Their relationship bears the special kinship of having taken life on in step, born minutes apart and bound in simultaneous childhood. The Haas Brothers seem to embrace this unique facet, listing youthful inspirations such as the 1992 animated film *FernGully*; Kid Pix, a bitmap computer drawing program, also launched in the early '90s; and classic toys such as the Wooden Wiggly Snake.

With an arsenal of images shared by the Haas Brothers, I enlisted two sets of twins in the Nasher staff family—Iris and Calvin, age 6, and Marlo and Faye, age 5. These double-sided joys, brought to us by our equally delightful head registrar and curator of education, were given what I call “The Haas Brothers Imagination Kit”—hand-painted boxes filled with Haas Brothers’ cut-outs and backgrounds, markers, crayons, fancy tape, stickers, feathers, and other bits and baubles. We recorded their reactions and documented the fun in the pages ahead.

In short, it's all a lot of fun, but on a deeper level, we hope to impart to you a little wonder ahead of the the enchanting works Simon and Nikolai will show in *Haas Brothers: Moonlight*, opening May 11, 2024, at the Nasher Sculpture Center.





This is a palm tree growing tomatoes.

This is a swimming pool that Spider Bunny, the twin sisters, and the juggling cat are imagining. Inside it are gems and pink eyes. If you swim in the pool, you get pink eye. When all the friends got pink eye, there was nobody to take care of them.

These eyes all got pink eye. They make pink eye mud.

The friends didn't get along on account of pool toy competition. They all wanted the same smiley-faced ball, and would snatch it from one another. It wasn't until they were grown-up that they all got along.

These are twin sisters. They eat foxes.

This is Spider Bunny. He eats spiders.

This is the juggling cat. He only eats balls and might eat the balls that he is juggling.





This page: The Haas Brothers, *Caturday Night Fever*, 2020. Painted aluminum and glass bulbs. 108 x 24 x 84 inches (274.3 x 61 x 213.4 cm). Photo by Ian Byers-Gamber, courtesy of the artists

Opposite page, from top left: The Haas Brothers, *Accretion Vases and Zoidberg Lamp* series, 2014. *Accretion Vases*: ceramic. *Zoidberg Lamps*: cast bronze, electrical components, and blown glass. Photo by Joe Kramm, courtesy of the artists. The Haas Brothers, *Salt Whitman*, 2023. Featured in *Snails in Comparison*, Lora Reynolds Gallery solo show, 2023. Hand-carved *Pele de Tigre* marble, handblown glass. 26 x 18 2/3 x 19 5/8 inches (66 x 47.6 x 50 cm). Photo by Colin Doyle, courtesy of the artists. The Haas Brothers, *Collection of Zoidberg Lamps*, 2014. Cast bronze, blown glass, and electrical components. Photo by Joe Kramm, courtesy of the artists





Clouds

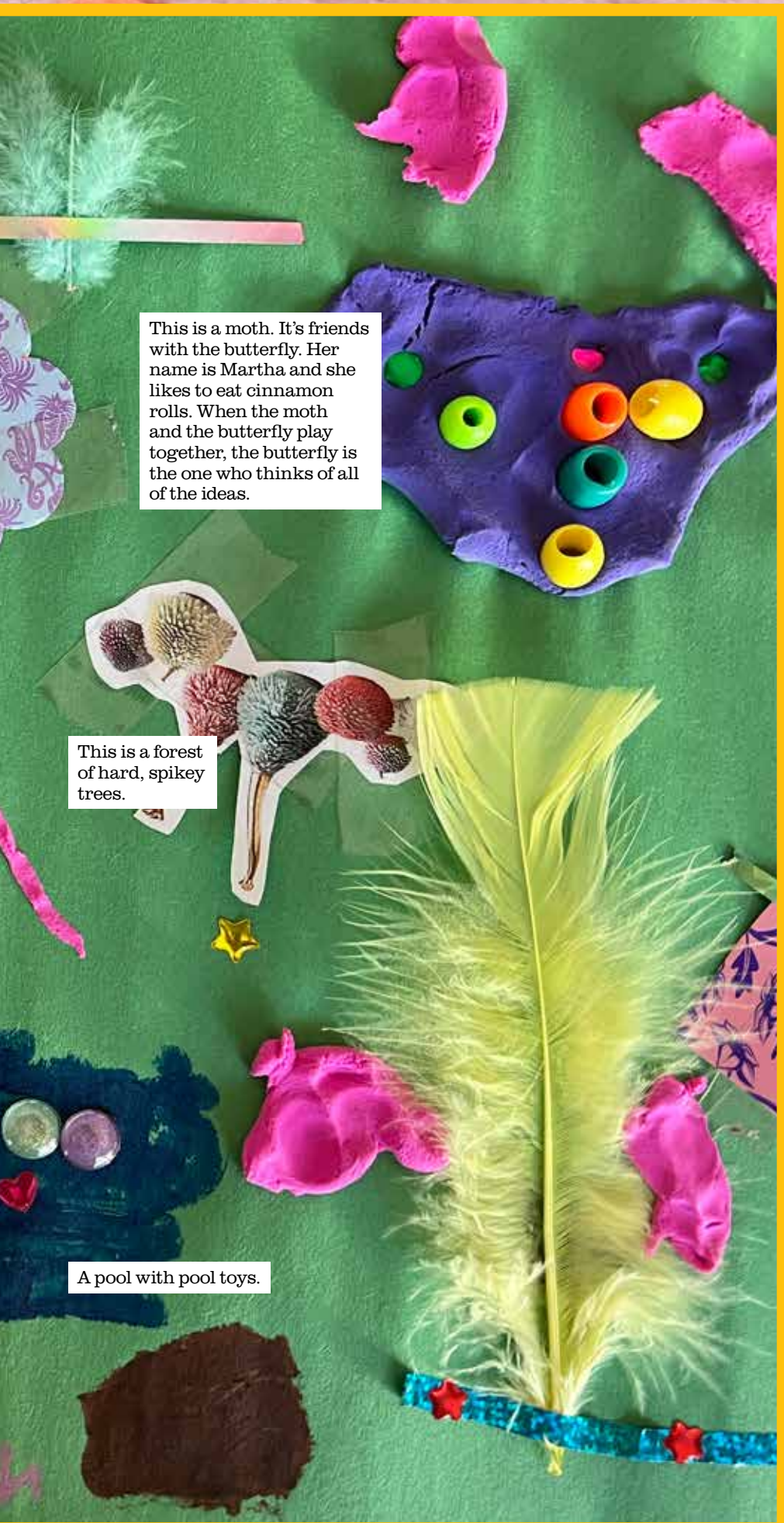
This is Big Red Jai. He lives inside of a cave. He typically plays alone.

Named Maye

Farlo and Maye like to play with the feathers and moths.

Named Farlo

This is Dot Guy. He likes to juggle gems because it makes him fancy. Dot Guy jumped through the clouds and into the swimming pool. He hopped across the gems, which are actually pool toys. Sometimes he fought with his friends Farlo and Maye about who could use the pool toys; they all wanted the pink one. Big Red Jai, the cave creature, chose the red heart, which nobody else wanted.



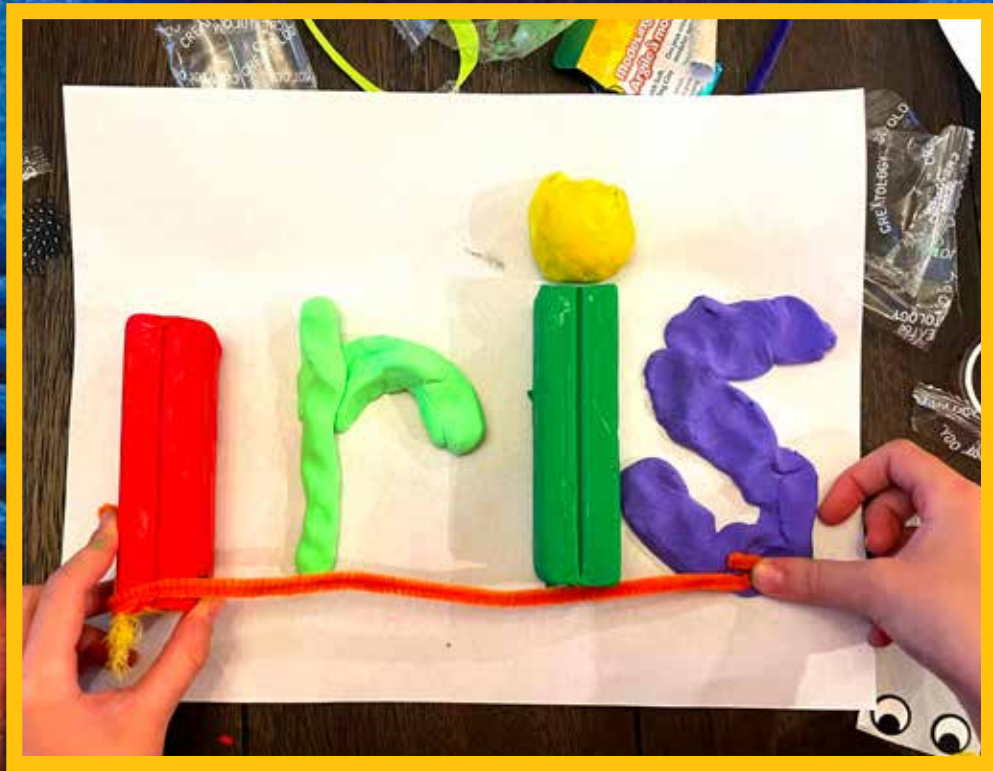
This is a moth. It's friends with the butterfly. Her name is Martha and she likes to eat cinnamon rolls. When the moth and the butterfly play together, the butterfly is the one who thinks of all of the ideas.

This is a forest of hard, spikey trees.

A pool with pool toys.







'Monstrous World'
These monsters, Feather Pink and Banana Fluff, eat poisonous plants and never sleep. They run, play and swing all day and night. They live in a huge, furry house. The pink one smells like bubblegum, but that doesn't mean we'd eat him. They have their own language.



Weird slime creatures called Kissy Face Bowl Snails.

Furry snakes that shake like maracas.

Jelly Fish Lamps

Magma Balls

'White Sky World'
These rabbits, from the Rabbids, have long legs made of stone. They eat flowers off the Magma Balls which taste like popcorn.





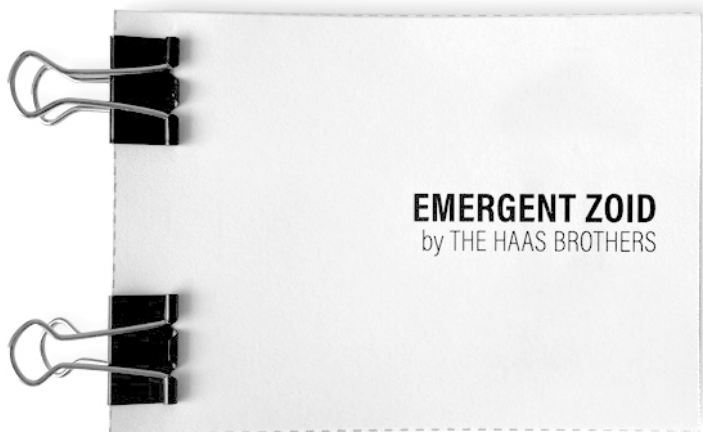
The Haas Brothers, Accretion Vases and Zoidberg Lamp series, 2014. Accretion Vases: ceramic. Zoidberg Lamps: cast bronze, electrical components, and blown glass. Photo by Joe Kramm, courtesy of the artists

EMERGENT ZOID FLIP BOOK

Cut out the following pages using the dotted lines and stack them in numerical order. Secure one side of the stack with binder clips and flip the pages to reveal an animation by the Haas Brothers.

BY BROOKE HODGE
Guest curator of *Haas Brothers: Moonlight*

Emergent Zoids, one of the Haas Brothers' newest bodies of work, is a series of curvaceous sculptures made through an ingenious combination of computation and craft. Using 3D computer graphics software, the Haas Brothers create simulated shapes reminiscent of one of their favorite childhood toys, the Wooden Wiggly Snake, and choreograph their movements digitally. The brothers call the shapes Zoids, in homage to Dr. Zoidberg, a central character in Matt Groening's animated television series *Futurama*. The following pages of illustrations, once cut and stacked in order, will animate the Zoids, showing the biomorphic shapes writhe, wriggle, undulate, and intertwine. This May, the artists will install an 8-foot Emergent Zoid in the Nasher's sculpture garden, showing the initial form before it takes on infinite permutations.



Nikolai Haas standing next to an unfinished Emergent Zoid in preparation for *Haas Brothers: Moonlight* at the Nasher Sculpture Center, Los Angeles, 2023. Image courtesy of the artists

EMERGENT ZOID
by THE HAAS BROTHERS

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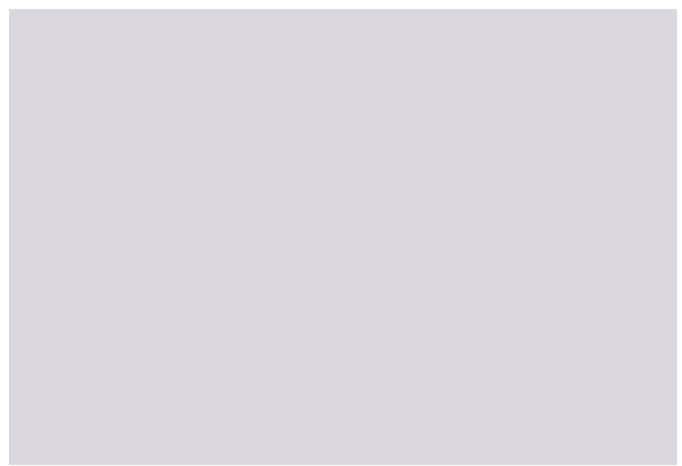
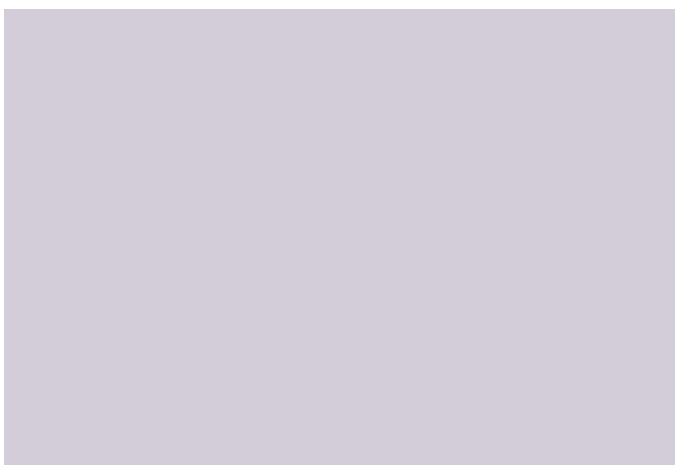
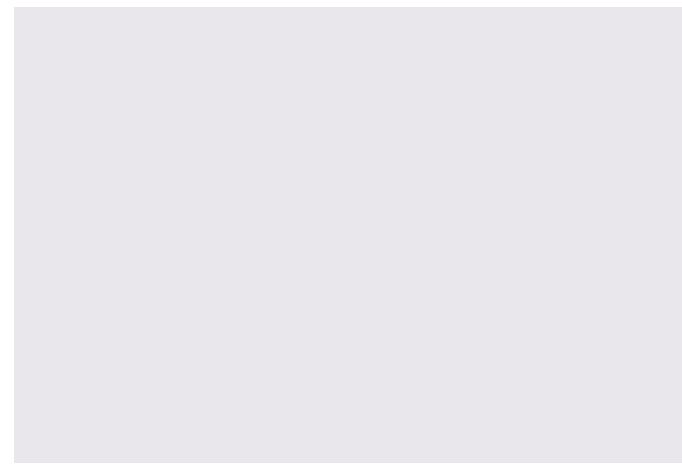
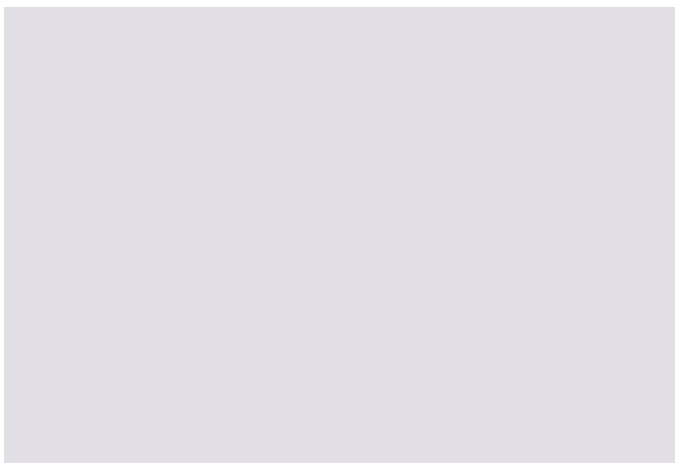
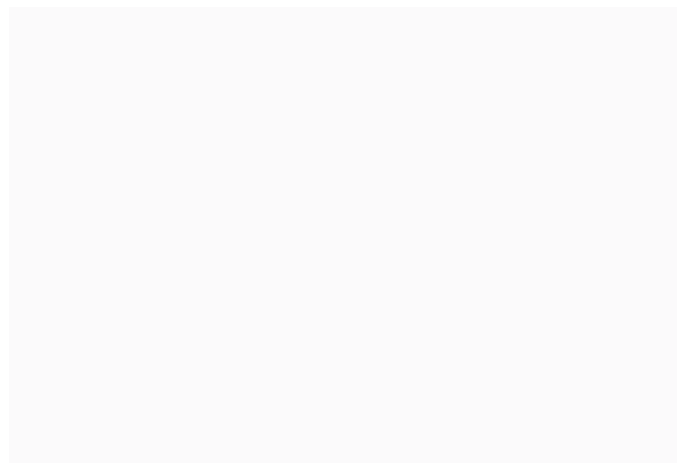
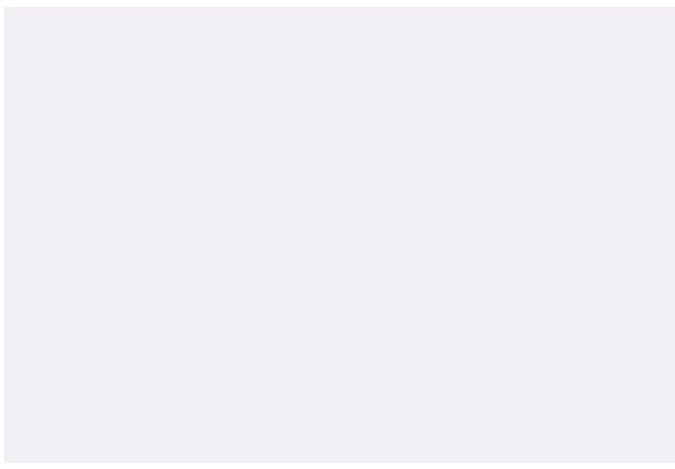


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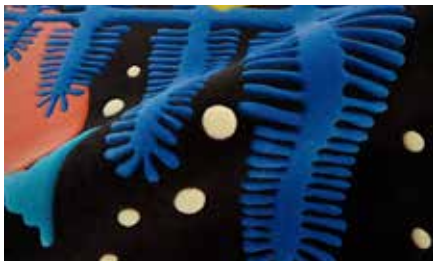
The Haas Brothers, *Whale Earnhardt Jr. In Greens*, 2022. Wool rug. Rendering via Gallery All. Image courtesy of the artists



The Haas Brothers, *Salt Whitman*, 2023. Featured in *Snails in Comparison*, Lora Reynolds Gallery solo show, 2023. Hand-carved Pele de Tigre marble, handblown glass. 26 x 18 2/3 x 19 5/8 inches (66 x 47.6 x 50 cm). Photo by Colin Doyle, courtesy of the artists



The Haas Brothers, *Shelly Azoff*, 2023. Featured in *Snails in Comparison*, Lora Reynolds Gallery solo show, 2023. Hand-carved Pele de Tigre marble and handblown glass. 27 x 32 x 45 inches (68.6 x 81.3 x 114.3 cm). Photo by Colin Doyle, courtesy of the artists



The Haas Brothers, *Mickey Mooney in Black*, 2022. Wool rug. Rendering via Gallery All. Image courtesy of the artists



The Haas Brothers, *Be Hare Now*, 2021. Unique, large-scale public art sculpture located in Los Angeles. Cast bronze with copper green patina, 114 x 75 x 70 1/4 inches (289.6 x 190.5 x 178.4 cm). Image courtesy of the artists



The Haas Brothers, *Uncle Simon*, 2023. Featured in *Snails in Comparison*, Lora Reynolds Gallery solo show, 2023. Patinated cast bronze. 74 x 29 x 32 inches (188 x 73.6 x 81.2 cm). Photo by Colin Doyle, courtesy of the artists



The Haas Brothers, *Tree Hemingway*, 2022. Wool rug. Rendering via Gallery All. Image courtesy of the artists



The Haas Brothers, *Accretion Vases and Zoidberg Lamp series*, 2014. Accretion Vases: ceramic. Zoidberg Lamps: cast bronze, electrical components, and blown glass. Photo by Joe Kramm, courtesy of the artists



The Haas Brothers, *Snailor Moon & Snail Earnhardt Jr.*, 2021. Hand-carved walnut, glass, Yeti Mongolian Mimosa Faux Fur and Pink Pearl Faux Fur. *Snailor Moon*: 117 x 24 x 24 inches (297 x 61 x 61 cm); *Snail Earnhardt Jr.*: 131 x 22 x 22 inches (332.7 x 55.8 x 55.8 cm). Photo by Tim Hans, courtesy of the artists




The Haas Brothers, *Croc Cousteau*. Wool rug. Rendering via Gallery All. Image courtesy of the artists



The Haas Brothers, early digital rendering of *The Strawberry Tree*, 2024. Image courtesy of the artists



Early digital rendering of *Moontowers*, 2023. Image courtesy of the artists



From left: Jean (Hans) Arp, *Aggressive Fruit / Fruit agressif / Angriffslustige Frucht* (detail), 1965. Plaster. 27 x 20 1/2 x 10 inches (68.5 x 52 x 25.5 cm); *Between Lily and Elephant Tusk / Entre lys et défense / Lilie oder Elefantenzahn* (detail), 1958. Plaster. 36 3/16 x 17 3/8 x 11 3/4 inches (92 x 44 x 30 cm); *Venus of Meudon / Venus von Meudon / Vénus de Meudon* (detail), 1956. Plaster, 62 1/8 x 15 3/4 x 15 3/4 inches (158 x 40 x 40 cm), base 13 3/4 x 15 3/4 inches (35 x 40 cm). All Nasher Sculpture Center: Gifts of the Stiftung Arp e. V., Berlin, 2023. © 2024 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn. Photos by Rüdiger Lubricht, courtesy of Stiftung Arp e. V.

Human Figures in Clouds

Arp, Surrealism, and Plaster

BY LEWIS KACHUR

The word “surrealism” was coined by the poet and critic Guillaume Apollinaire in response to the surprising juxtapositions of the ballet *Parade* at its premiere in 1917. Soon after, in the early 1920s, French writer André Breton adopted the term for the group of writers experimenting with free association. He gave a formal, dictionary definition of Surrealism in his manifesto of 1924: “Psychic automatism in its pure state. ... Dictation of thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern.”

Artists soon joined the poets in championing the creative and political potential of the unconscious, dreams, and the irrational, Jean (Hans) Arp one of the first among them. In Max Ernst’s nocturnal and stylized group portrait, *Rendez-vous of Friends* (1922), Arp joins Giorgio de Chirico and Ernst himself as the only three living artists among many more writers, led by Breton, Paul Éluard, and Louis Aragon.

“This is
the mystery:
my hands talk
to themselves.
The dialog is
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between the
plaster and
them as if I am
absent, as if I am
not necessary.”

—JEAN (HANS) ARP



Arp was a pioneer of a proto-automatism in the teens and early '20s, before Surrealism proper, with drawings such as the ink from the series *Terrestrial Forms* (1917), but how could such a free and intuitive approach be applied to molding plaster?

And what role does plaster play for the sculpture of Arp? Apart from some rudimentary, early instruction, it was not a medium of his iconoclastic Dada youth, which focused on collage, embroideries, and wood reliefs. Arp began using plaster, and plaster casts, when he turned to the three dimensional in the early 1930s, and it remained central until the end of his career in 1965.

Arp's description of modeling in plaster is curious, yet notable, as it seems to sidestep artistic volition:

"This is the mystery: my hands talk to themselves. The dialogue is established between the plaster and them as if I am absent, as if I am not necessary. There forms are born, amicable and strange, that order themselves without me. I notice them, as if one notices human figures in clouds."

In negating artistic will, Arp opens the door to tapping the subconscious mind, as the Surrealists emphasized.

Arp's exploring the possibility of a free automatism in three-dimensional form is unexpected, as Surrealist automatism generally is thought of in terms of two-dimensional media, but Arp's turn is part of a general Surrealist trend into sculpture in the 1930s. The Surrealist exhibition at the Galerie Pierre Colle in June 1933 was an early manifestation, and Arp exhibited two of his first plasters in proximity to a sculpture by his old friend Max Ernst, presented with sculptures by Alberto Giacometti, Salvador Dalí, and others. Arp later exhibited two plasters plus a relief and a

Jean (Hans) Arp, *Gnome Form / Gnomenform / Forme[s] de lutin*, 1949. Plaster. 15 3/8 x 7 3/4 x 6 inches (39 x 19.7 x 15.1 cm). Nasher Sculpture Center: Gift of the Stiftung Arp e. V., Berlin, 2023. © 2024 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG BildKunst, Bonn. Photo by Rüdiger Lubricht, courtesy of Stiftung Arp e. V.

mannequin in the landmark International Exhibition of Surrealism of 1938. While most Surrealist sculptors pursued the object, and readymade or found materials in the mid-1930s, Arp stayed on track with the possibilities of direct engagement with simple plaster.

The ease of casting in plaster enabled Arp to explore a multiplicity of options. He could preserve a cast of the current state of his forms, then continue to rework, add to, or cut from them, creating a new variant that itself could be cast again. Plasters thus multiply in geometric progression, as the crowded shelves of his later Meudon studio storage testify. Interestingly, he did not edition such casts, though he at times exhibited them or gave them to friends. Rather, plasters would be used as the basis for creating bronze or marble versions to be marketed. It is as if the plasters were Arp's research division, separate from the sales and marketing department.

Plaster surfaces could be easily built up additively, yet also easily cropped or cut. Early examples include sculptures literally in pieces, united by the visual similarity of their surfaces. *Sculpture to be Lost in the Forest* is an important three-part early experiment. The work comprises two smaller, similar-sized rounded forms, and one larger one placed horizontally. These are not fixed, but rather rearrangeable, usually with the two smaller placed on the larger. The title stems from walks in the Meudon forest with Arp's friend Camille Bryen, during which small sculptures were left behind. Here the title

becomes ambiguous, apparently a command to the viewer which, if followed, would mean that the piece is ultimately to be returned to nature. In this case, Arp did not follow the instruction, but rather kept the work—or a cast of it—in his studio.

Following on its 2018 exhibition *The Nature of Arp*, the Nasher Sculpture Center is one of several institutions selected by the Stiftung Arp e. V. to receive a group of works from the foundation's dispersal. This donation of 21 plasters and three bronzes by the artist constitutes the largest gift to the Nasher since its founding. It also includes an in-depth, chronological representation of Arp's sculptures from the 1930s to the 1960s. The sculptures spur many associations, among them:

Star's (1939) title directs us to one reading, emphasizing the three celestial points atop. Yet its irregularities, as well as the central void, open up suggestions of the physiognomic. The surface of this cast appears to be covered with small crosses—marks that suggest this plaster was pointed up for an enlarged cast.

Ptolemy (1958) is a series of three works, the latter two in the Nasher's collection being made after his return to Greece in 1955. They are among the most abstract, balanced, and symmetrical of Arp's sculptures. In *Ptolemy II* (1958), the linear volumes enclose the central space, forming an upright ovoid. From some views the forms open up; in others the overlapping of the lines flattens the whole.

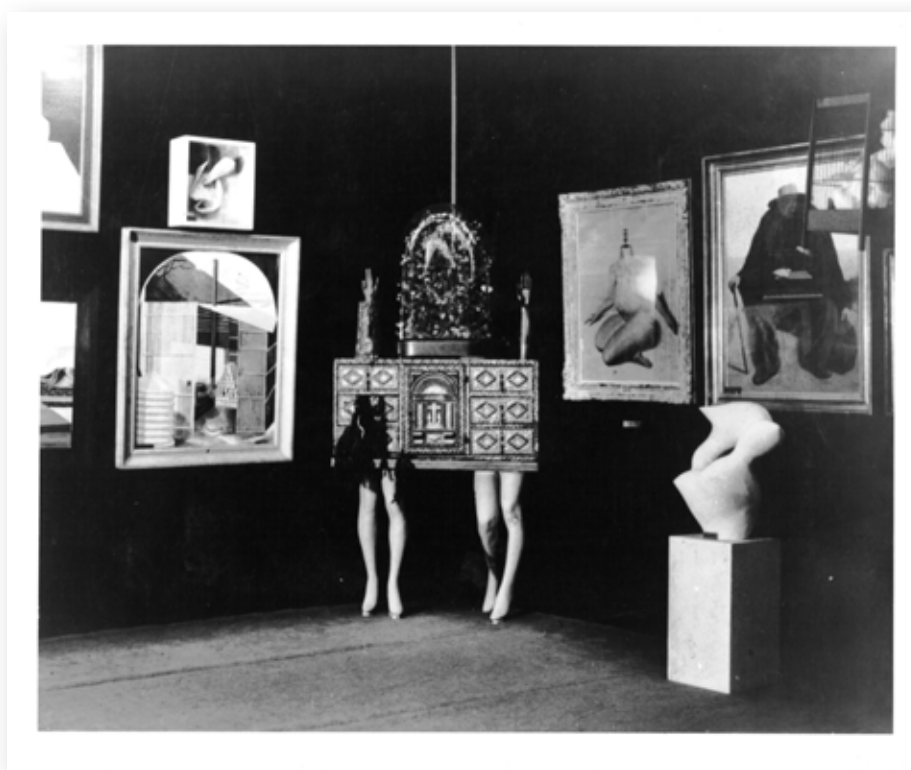


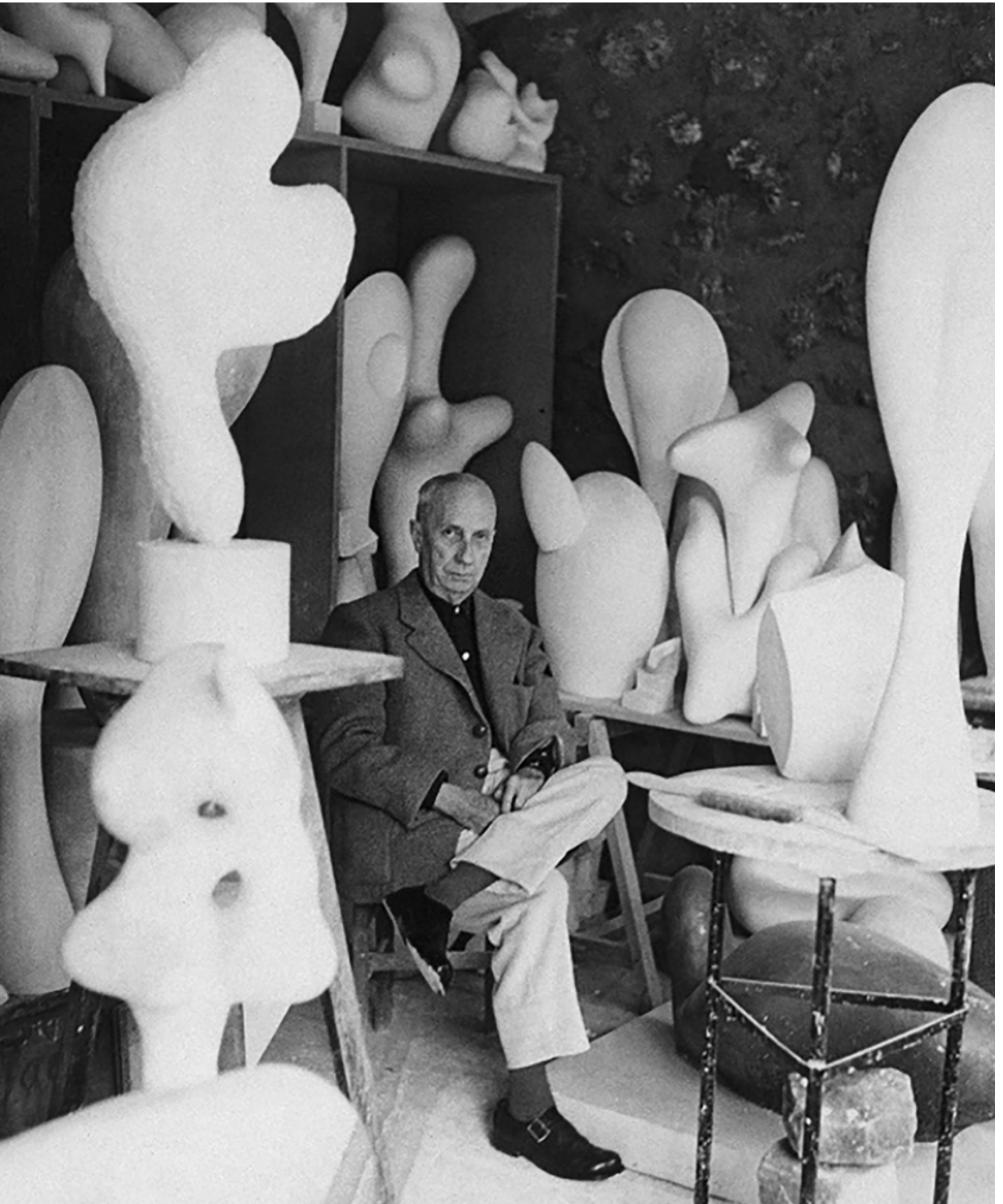
Right: Installation view of *Exposition internationale du surréalisme*, Galerie Beaux-Arts, Paris, 1938.

Photo by Man Ray.

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Far right: Arp in his studio in Meudon, 1957. Photo by André Villiers, courtesy of Stiftung Arp e. V., Berlin/Rolandswerth







Jean (Hans) Arp, *Star / Stern / Étoile*, 1939. Plaster, 13 3/8 x 6 1/2 x 1 1/2 inches (34 x 16.5 x 4 cm). Nasher Sculpture Center: Gift of the Stiftung Arp e. V., Berlin, 2023. © 2024 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn. Photo by Rüdiger Lubricht, courtesy of Stiftung Arp e. V.



Jean (Hans) Arp, *Venus of Meudon / Venus von Meudon*, 1956. Plaster, 62 1/8 x 15 3/4 x 15 3/4 inches (158 x 40 x 40 cm), base 13 3/4 x 15 3/4 inches (35 x 40 cm). Nasher Sculpture Center: Gift of the Stiftung Arp e. V., Berlin, 2023. © 2024 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn. Photo by Rüdiger Lubricht, courtesy of Stiftung Arp e. V.



Jean (Hans) Arp, *To be lost in the forest (Im Walde auszusetzen / Sculpture à être perdue dans la forêt)*, 1932. Plaster, dimensions: small, 2 3/8 x 3 3/4 x 2 inches (6 x 9.5 x 5 cm); medium: 2 3/4 x 5 x 4 inches (7 x 12.5 x 10 cm); large: 3 3/4 x 8 7/8 x 5 1/2 inches (9.5 x 22.5 x 14 cm). Nasher Sculpture Center: Gift of the Stiftung Arp e. V., Berlin, 2023. © 2024 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn. Photo by Rüdiger Lubricht, courtesy of Stiftung Arp e. V.




Max Ernst, *Rendez-vous of Friends (A Friends Reunion)*, 1922. Oil on canvas. 51.2 x 37.4 inches (130 x 95 cm). © 2024 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris. Arp is the third figure from the left, with his right hand extended.

Scale also becomes an element in play with casting. *Gnome Form* (1949) is small, a little over 15 inches high—a suggestion of an upright body and head, with the nub of a projecting arm. “Upon waking I found on my sculptor’s turntable a small mischievous shape, perky and rather obese, like the belly of a lute. It seemed to recall a goblin. And so that’s what I named it,” wrote Arp, again attributing volition to the residue of dream. This “goblin” was giganticized for a 10-foot public commission, retitled *Cloud Shepherd*.

Classical allusion continues in *Venus of Meudon* (1956), where Arp substitutes the location of his studio outside Paris for the classical “de Milo.” Thus prompted, we can read the swelling lower portions of this Venus as alluding to a feminine torso—a theme found in many of Arp’s later works.

Sculpture’s materials and processes pose inherent challenges to automatism; however, Arp devised alternatives working by intuition and inspiration. Instead of utilizing sketches as a means to tap into unconscious action, he proceeded by touch as much as vision. Arp consistently explored biomorphism and free form in his plasters above all, opening up the possibility of a sculptural automatism, and the persistence of Surrealism, into the 1960s.



Jean (Hans) Arp, *Ptolemy III / Ptolémée III / Ptolemäus III*, 1961.
Plaster. 79 3/4 x 44 7/8 x 30 11/16 inches (202.5 x 114 x 78 cm). Nasher Sculpture Center: Gift of the Stiftung Arp e. V., Berlin, 2023. © 2024 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn. Photo by Adrienne Lichliter-Hines

The Chuck & George FUN HOUSE

BY BETSY LEWIS
PHOTOS BY PHALLON WRIGHT

Reschedule your meetings. Cancel your plans. Lie to your family, if that's what it takes. Today, you are visiting the home of Chuck & George.

You look around and see pink, lots of pink.

"Somebody left us a gallon of pink paint and we've just color matched it since then," says Brian K. Jones, aka "Chuck."

Brian K. Jones and Brian K. Scott, often known artistically/professionally as Chuck & George, purchased the house in 1999, though it was built, they believe, in 1922.

They say it wasn't a great house when they got it. It had soulless, ugly furniture ("with a Southwestern flair!") left behind by the last inhabitant. The only discarded object that impressed the Brians was a *Six Million Dollar Man* trash can, later gifted to a friend.

Jones and Scott met as art students at the University of North Texas in Denton. After graduation in 1993, they lived first in East Dallas, then rented for a few years in the same Oak Cliff neighborhood where they now live. When they moved into what friends simply call "the Brians' house," all of its then-white walls were empty.

"From time to time we find pictures of it, and it makes you feel ill," says Scott, aka "George."

But since white walls made the house feel a little like a gallery, the Brians immediately began planning their first neighborhood studio tour. Now known as the Visual SpeedBump Art Tour, its maiden effort was called—misbehavior intentional—the Oak Cliff Drive By.



Portrait of Brian K. Jones and Brian K. Scott, Dallas, 2023. Photo by Phallon Wright
All photos: Documentation of Casa De La Chuck & George, 1999-present. Dallas, 2023.
Photos by Phallon Wright



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#catbuttparfait

Jak Niff





“Everything we do, even our careers, we start for subversive reasons,” says Chuck, “but the studio tour became real effort, something that we put our heart into.”

The Brians’ approach to nesting is an exhibition. Every wall of the house is covered in paintings hung salon-style. Most of the works are by Chuck & George; those that aren’t are by “guest artists.” Chuck points to a painting, saying, “That’s a dear old friend.” Does he mean the subject? No. “The friend, the paint. That’s my painting.”

There has been some remodeling. A small closet that encroached on the dining room was transformed into an art niche, blocked from sight by a small door with a single, curious peephole.

“We curate the peephole every year for SpeedBump,” says Chuck. “That’s part of our ‘lovable weirdo’ stigmata that we embrace to a certain extent. But you know, I’m more than a lovable weirdo. We do a lot for the community, as much as we can.”

When you notice knick-knacks everywhere, Chuck tells you that little toys can inspire you.

“We try to make things like furniture or stuff that is operational,” George explains. “We ran out of wall space.”

The living room preens like a theatrical stage set where John Waters, Marcel Duchamp, and Roger Rabbit could bond over cocktails while overstaying their welcome. A cartoonish electrical outlet the size of a fifth-grader leans against one wall. Above the arched entry into the dining room is an electric VELVETORIUM sign, custom built for that spot and dominating the room like a Hollywood sign banished to Oak Cliff. In the middle of the floor is a circular ... thing, made of pink cushions. Is it a tiny sofa? A dog bed?

“They’re functional pillows,” says Chuck, inspired by, well, the functional area under the base of a cat’s tail.

Is SpeedBump the only time the public is invited into the house? Mostly yes, but every once in a while, Chuck & George will throw a Christmas kind-of-thing where they make a little art that might sell. (For years, the Brians hosted a Halloween party here, but its legend grew too fabled to sustain, and the crowds too large, too unfamiliar, to control.)

As if to reassure you, Jones, also known as Chuck, promises, “This house is not haunted.”

As if to reassure you, Scott, also known as George, promises, “But it will be.”

This house, an extemporaneous mutation, paints mischief worlds away from rules and norms and minimalisms, signaling joy.







This page: The Haas Brothers, early digital rendering of a *Moontower*, 2022. Courtesy of the artists

Opposite: Summer E. Aquino, *Quantum Decoherence Described as an "I,"* 2022. From *FOLK PHYSICS*, first exhibited as site-specific installation at The Power Station's garden annex, Dallas, Texas. © Summer E. Aquino

