German artist Isa Genzken has spent four decades reinventing the rules. She creates sculpture, paintings, photographs, collages, drawings, artist’s books, and films that explore personal themes, popular culture, and historical events. Genzken has described her use of unconventional materials as a way to create “totally crazy, impossible and also wrong things.”

“I enjoy connecting things that were previously isolated”
Many of Genzken’s best-known sculptures are made using a technique called “assemblage,” in which a work of art is made by grouping found or unrelated objects. She began making assemblages in the mid-1990s, and her first major group of sculptural assemblages were shown together in 2000. These lively sculptures, made from materials such as cardboard, foam core, caution tape, plastic mesh, and glue, were created as a way to critique the stark modernist architecture she grew up with in Germany. An art critic described this exhibition as “the starter’s gun for a movement,” and since then Genzken’s assemblages have grown to include materials as diverse as mannequins, suitcases, radios, flowers, and chairs.

“City Collage
Genzken loves New York City! She documented her trips with photos, receipts, invitations, and posters. Create a collage about a city that inspires you.

“Public Sculpture
When Genzken creates a public work of art she asks herself, “What is the site missing?” Choose a location and create a proposal for a public artwork.

“Playlist
Listen to these Genzken-inspired songs while you work.

“Don’t Stop ’Til You Get Enough” –Michael Jackson
“Rock with You” –Michael Jackson
“Material Girl” –Madonna
“New York, I Love You but You’re Bringing Me Down” –LCD Soundsystem
“Radio Ga Ga” –Queen

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Making It Big
Sterling Ruby at the Nasher

How do you take a gesture and make it giant? Artist Sterling Ruby draws from the visual language of punk, graffiti, and hip-hop culture to create larger-than-life sculptures in unexpected materials.

If you have ever worked with clay, you know how easily it records the impressions of your hands before it is fired. Sterling Ruby became interested in clay as a material that captures a “frozen gesture,” meaning that it starts out as something easily manipulated and changed, then holds a permanent shape after it comes out of the kiln. If you’ve ever fired something you made in clay, you may know that sometimes things break or explode when exposed to high heat. When this happens to Ruby’s ceramics, he takes the broken pieces and incorporates them into a new sculpture as part of his Basin Theology series, giving them a new life.

When Ruby wanted to make sculptures with frozen gestures that were larger than what he could create with ceramics, he began using urethane. This material is a two-part polymer that can be poured as a liquid but hardens quickly into a solid. Using urethane, Ruby has made monumental sculptures that still show evidence of the artist’s hand.

Ruby also creates soft sculptures that turn edgy or threatening subjects, like vampires, into puffy, pillow-like artworks. Ruby began sewing when he was 13 years old and wanted to make clothing that reflected his individuality and love of punk music and culture. As an adult, he not only makes small and large-scale soft sculptures, but also works with fashion designers on clothing inspired by his artworks and techniques.

STERLING RUBY: SCULPTURE
February 2 - April 21, 2019
Visit nashersculpturecenter.org/art

Scale in the Nasher Collection

Pictured below are the largest and smallest works in the Nasher Collection. Mark Di Suvero’s Eviva Amore is made of the I-beams used in skyscraper construction and weighs over 22,500 pounds. Alberto Giacometti’s Small Standing Man and Small Standing Woman were worked at by the artist until they were so small they would fit in a matchbox.

INVESTIGATE SCALE

Scale Reactions
Choose a very large object (like a building, a tree or something even bigger) and a very small object. Divide a sheet of paper in half. Use the left side to list three to five words to describe the large object and three to five ways you physically interact with it. On the right side of the paper, do the same for the small object. How does the scale of the object change how you respond emotionally or physically to it?

Scale Photos
Choose a small object as the subject of your photos. Using techniques like forced perspective, zoom or even smaller props, take a series of pictures that make your small object seem gigantic. How do these photos change the context of the object you used?
Many thanks to our advisory boards! **Student Advisory Board:** Naomi A., Hannah A., Maya B., Taya B., Chloe C., Cooper C., Dean, Madelyn D., Erin D., Jaclyn G., Isabella H., James H., Kate K., Leah K., Lauren K., Katherine K., Lucy L., Matthew M., Sun M., Isabella O., Drew R., Chloé S., Evan S., Sophie T.

**Teacher Advisory Board:** Stacy Cianciulli, Becky Becker Daniels, Suzuko Davis, Martin Delabano, Annie Foster, Paige Furr, Sherry Houpt, Jovenne Kybett, Kellie Lawson, Dee Mayes, Brad Ray, Karin Thomas, Sam Thomas. **Students entering 9th - 12th grades in fall 2019 are invited to apply for our Student Advisory Board. Applications accepted starting August 1 at nashersculpturecenter.org.**
Students Respond

We asked the Nasher Student Advisory Board to share their vision for the future of sculpture

I think it will move to digital platforms like VR.
Hannah A.

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 K.

I think sculpture will change with artists’ evolution in the modern world. As their way of thinking changes, their artwork will too.
Chloé S.

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

Sculpture has already expanded to digital and interactive media and will probably continue to do so.
Erin D.

Interactive sculptures? Maybe we’ll be able to manipulate/control light? Or maybe gravity…?
Maybe something like holograms…?
Sun M.

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

How do you imagine the future of sculpture?

Drawing by Lucy L.

Drawing by Erin D.

Drawing by Taya B.