

Nasher Sculpture Center Announces Offsite Nasher Public Project: Nic Nicosia, Presented in Partnership with Katy Trail Art

Two curious and playful figures by the Dallas artist will occupy the Katy Trail through November.

DALLAS, Texas (March 13, 2023) – The Nasher Sculpture Center announces Nasher Public: Nic Nicosia, its third offsite Nasher Public project on the Katy Trail. *The twins*, two stainless steel figures, can be found at the trail's Thomsen Overlook, on view from February 20 to November 21, 2023.

Best known for his work in photography and film, Nicosia initially came to international prominence as part of the Pictures Generation, artists who came of age in the 1970s and whose work was suffused with images from popular culture that also included figures such as Richard Prince, Laurie Simmons, and Cindy Sherman. Although he often built sets and props for his elaborately staged photographs, Nicosia only began to make sculptures around 2009–10. Early experiments in paper clay and hydrocal included a group of eccentric personages reminiscent of works by Max Ernst, whimsical wire portraits harkening back to the early work of Alexander Calder, and anonymous figures taking on various poses and personas. Many of these were made independently of his photography, but they soon began to populate the models for his staged photographs and, more recently, real domestic interiors, resulting in images that confound reality and artifice.

The twins marks the beginning of Nicosia's engagement with foundries and larger cast sculptures. A commission from The Austin Contemporary provided Nicosia with the opportunity to enlarge and cast in stainless steel two small, paper clay and hydrocal figures, on which *the twins* are based.

Like much of the artist's work in a variety of media, this sculpture is simultaneously familiar and surreal, whimsical and unsettling. The figures are generic, human-like, but with no overt indications of gender. Although they are roughly the same size, *the twins* exhibit a number of distinctions: slight differences in their facial features, stances, and poses distinguish one from the other. Each raises its left hand and, in the configuration the artist determined for the installation on the Katy Trail, points toward the other. The gesture is also ambiguous and can be interpreted in a variety of ways: a sign of recognition, accusatory, or merely indicative. Their expressions—either stoic or bemused, but equally inscrutable with eyes barely open—further complicate the reading of the gesture and the relationship between the two. Encountering the figures on the Katy Trail makes them seem like alien avatars in an alternate reality, suggesting opposite directions in a choose-your-own-adventure game.

Nasher Public: Nic Nicosia is presented in partnership with Katy Trail Art, an initiative begun in 2021 in order to bring art and creative dialogue to the 3.5 mile hike and bike trail. Previous collaborations with the Nasher Sculpture Center have displayed work by Sara Cardona and a collaboration between Jeff Gibbons and Gregory Ruppe.

About Nic Nicosia

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

About the Katy Trail

The Katy Trail, as most locals know it, began in 2000, but the history of the Katy Trail stretches back to the age of railroads. The Union Pacific Railroad built the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad and established the network in 1865. The route was also commonly called the K-T, and eventually the Katy. Following the heyday of the railroad, Union Pacific donated the abandoned lines to the City of Dallas in 1993. In the 1990s, a group of passionate neighbors and local businesses proposed that the line be converted into a public trail. Their idea resulted in the formation in 1997 of Friends of the Katy Trail, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in a private/public partnership with the City of Dallas. Friends of the Katy Trail is charged with maintaining, enhancing, and advocating for the Katy Trail as the premier trail for recreation, wellness, and alternative transportation in Dallas. The Friends is celebrating its 25th Anniversary in 2022.

Today, the Katy Trail is a treasured greenbelt destination for Dallas citizens and visitors and has over 1.5 million visits a year. The Trail is a key quality of life amenity in Dallas and has spurred more than \$1 billion in economic development.

About Katy Trail Art

Katy Trail Art partners with Dallas area museums, art collectors, and the community at large to expand the role of contemporary art in public spaces in Dallas. The Initiative borrows, commissions, and produces world-class art projects on and around the Katy Trail to inspire creativity, spark conversation, encourage self-

reflection, challenge assumptions, foster community building, and promote civic ownership of the Katy Trail.

Katy Trail Art Founding Donors

We recognize the Katy Trail Art Founding Donors, who have helped bring the work of Nic Nicosia to the Trail: Pat Baudendistel, J. Patrick Collins, Bela and Chase Cooley, Jennifer and John Eagle, Christina and Sal Jafar, Laura and Greg Koonsman, Kasey and Todd Lemkin, Ann and Chris Mahowald, Jessica and Dirk Nowitzki, Janelle and Alden Pinnell, Kelli and Allen Questrom, John S. Relton, Sewell Automotive Companies, Lindsay and Blake Shipp, Amanda and Charlie Shufeldt, and Amy and Les Ware.

About Nasher Public

Nasher Public is an ongoing, two-pronged public art initiative which aims to generate access to public art by North Texas artists at the Nasher and throughout the greater Dallas community. The project launched first at the Nasher in a newly formed gallery, presenting monthly exhibitions, followed by an ongoing series of offsite exhibitions in partnership with area businesses.

About the Nasher Sculpture Center:

Located in the heart of the Dallas Arts District, the Nasher Sculpture Center is home to the Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection, one of the finest collections of modern and contemporary sculpture in the world, featuring more than 300 masterpieces by Brancusi, Calder, de Kooning, di Suvero, Giacometti, Basquiat, Hepworth, LeWitt, Matisse, Miró, Moore, Picasso, Rodin, Serra, and Shapiro, among others. The Nasher Sculpture Center is open Wednesday through Sunday from 11 am to 5 pm. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$5 for students, and free for children 12 and under and members, and includes access to special exhibitions.

For more information, visit www.NasherSculptureCenter.org.

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