

## **Nasher Sculpture Center Announces *Harry Bertoia: Sculpting Mid-Century Modern Life***

*First US museum retrospective of the pioneering artist to examine the full scope of his broad, interdisciplinary practice*

DALLAS, Texas (October 4, 2021)—The Nasher Sculpture Center announces *Harry Bertoia: Sculpting Mid-Century Modern Life*, the first US museum retrospective of the artist's career to examine the full scope of his broad, interdisciplinary practice, bringing together over 100 works from all facets of Bertoia's extensive and diverse body of work. *Harry Bertoia: Sculpting Mid-Century Modern Life* will be on view January 29, 2022 - April 23, 2022.

Italian-born, American artist Harry Bertoia (1915–1978) was one of the most prolific, innovative artists of the postwar period. Trained at the Cranbrook Academy of Art, where he met future colleagues and collaborators Charles and Ray Eames, Florence Knoll, and Eero Saarinen, he went on to make one-of-a-kind jewelry, design iconic chairs, create thousands of unique sculptures including large-scale commissions for significant buildings, and advance the use of sound as sculptural material. His work speaks to the confluence of numerous fields of endeavor but is united throughout by a sculptural approach to making and an experimental embrace of metal.

Drawn from public and private collections, the exhibition will feature important examples of his furniture, jewelry, unique works on paper, and varied sculptural production, as well as several large-scale commissions and a significant group of sounding sculptures from the Sonambient Barn at Bertoia's home.

"We have long anticipated this exhibition exploring the wide and fascinating talents of Harry Bertoia," says Director Jeremy Strick. "This presentation of objects and sculpture promises to expand the common appreciation of Bertoia into realms that are enriching to those participating in various disciplines, from art to music to craft to design. Bertoia reminds us that the artist has the unique ability to infuse all aspects of daily life with beauty, imagination, and ingenuity."

Writing in the pages of his influential magazine *Art & Architecture* in 1950, editor John Entenza declared, "We have come into a time in history in which there is no longer any real separateness in man's activities and nothing remains to him that does not exist in close association with the whole of his life." This sentiment of synthesis became a hallmark across vanguard sculpture, architecture, and design during the subsequent decade in which Bertoia established himself as one of its leading practitioners. Such interdisciplinary cross-pollination distinguishes Bertoia's work and has also largely contributed to his work being overlooked within the dominant narratives of Modernism at mid-century. Bertoia's sculptural output, however, reflected a moment when the possibilities wrought by scientific discovery and technological innovation seemed endless and pervasive across all fields of intellectual and cultural inquiry; when artists, designers, and architects created a shared visual language in response to these advancements by exploring new, often industrial, materials and corporate collaborations at a time when they were not met with the same cynicism they so often are today.

This exhibition questions how and why we distinguish between a chair, a necklace, a screen, and a freestanding sculpture—and what Bertoia’s sculptural things, when seen together, say about the fluidity of visual language across culture, both at mid-century and now.

*Harry Bertoia: Sculpting Mid-Century Modern Life* is organized by the Nasher Sculpture Center’s Chief Curator Jed Morse and independent art historian Dr. Marin R. Sullivan, who also serves as Director of the Harry Bertoia Catalogue Raisonné. A lavishly illustrated catalogue with new scholarly essays by the curators and prominent Bertoia experts Dr. Glenn Adamson and Dr. Sydney Skelton Simon, including a catalogue of the public commissions, will be published in collaboration with Verlag Scheidegger & Spiess AG, Switzerland, to accompany the exhibition.

In conjunction with *Harry Bertoia: Sculpting Mid-Century Modern Life* will be a presentation of concerts in which world-renowned musicians activate Bertoia’s sounding sculptures over the course of six nights, from February 22-27, 2022. ‘SCULPTING SOUND: Twelve Musicians Encounter Bertoia’ is programmed by writer and music producer David Breskin and sponsored by the Shifting Foundation. More information on the concerts to follow.

**For high resolution images of *Harry Bertoia: Sculpting Mid-Century modern Life*, please follow [this link](#).**

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**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 Calder, de Kooning, di Suvero, Giacometti, Gormley, Hepworth, Kelly, Matisse, Miró, Moore, Picasso, Rodin, Serra, and Shapiro, among others. The Nasher Sculpture Center is open Wednesday to Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. 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. Visitors must book a timed ticket in advance. For more information, visit [www.NasherSculptureCenter.org](http://www.NasherSculptureCenter.org).

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