

# Nasher XChange and Public Art

## Teaching Resource

October 19, 2013 - February 16, 2014

**Nasher Sculpture Center**

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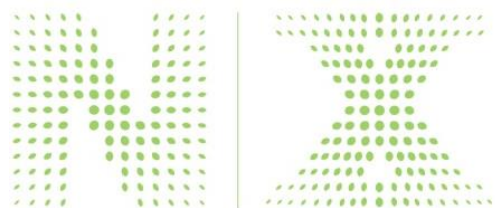


# Introduction

To commence a yearlong 10-year anniversary, the Nasher Sculpture Center presents *Nasher XChange*, a dynamic art exhibition consisting of 10 newly - commissioned public sculptures by contemporary artists at sites throughout the city of Dallas from October 19, 2013 to February 16, 2014. Covering a diverse range of sites and approaches to sculpture, *Nasher XChange* represents the first citywide, museum-organized public art exhibition in the United States. "As the only institution in the world exclusively dedicated to collecting, exhibiting, and researching modern and contemporary sculpture, the Nasher Sculpture Center is uniquely positioned to investigate this growing aspect of practice of sculpture in the public realm. *Nasher XChange* will extend the museum's core mission beyond its walls and into Dallas' diverse neighborhoods, alongside key community partners, to present key advances in the rapidly expanding field of sculpture, raise the level of discourse on the subject within the city, and contribute to broader national and international conversations on public sculpture," said Nasher Director Jeremy Strick.

The artists invited to participate in *Nasher XChange* — Lara Almarcegui, Good/Bad Art Collective, Rachel Harrison, Alfredo Jaar, Liz Larner, Charles Long, Rick Lowe, Vicki Meek, Ruben Ochoa, and Ugo Rondinone— represent a range of sculptural practices in contemporary sculpture locally, nationally, and internationally. For the *Nasher XChange* project, specifically, the artists have selected a variety of geographical, social, historical, environmental, and esthetic settings around the city of Dallas. These projects will be further enhanced through important collaborations with key community partners who will contribute to the artistic process, alongside the artists and the Nasher Sculpture Center.

"This year as the Nasher Sculpture Center celebrates its 10-year anniversary; it will boldly go outside its walls and inspire Dallas to see the best in itself. It will touch all corners of our city - North, South, East and West," said Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings. "It will challenge us to rediscover, reconsider and reclaim our city."



10 YEARS. 10 ARTISTS. 10 SITES.  
**NASHER XCHANGE**  
**Nasher Sculpture Center**

Access the PowerPoint that accompanies this resource at

[NasherSculptureCenter.org/Learn/Resources](http://NasherSculptureCenter.org/Learn/Resources)

Additional information on *Nasher XChange* and related events can be found at

[NasherSculptureCenter.org/Exhibitions/Nasher-Xchange](http://NasherSculptureCenter.org/Exhibitions/Nasher-Xchange)

*Nasher XChange* iPhone app available for download in the App Store.

## ARTISTS AND SITES

Artist	Title	Address and Hours
Lara Almarcegui	<i>Buried House</i>	Oak Cliff Gardens neighborhood 2226 Exeter Avenue, Dallas, TX 75216 (Open 9 am – 5 pm, daily)
Good/Bad Art Collective	<i>CURTAINS</i>	Bryan Tower, 14th floor 2001 Bryan Street, Dallas, TX 75201 (Open 7 am – 7 pm Monday – Friday; 8 am – 1 pm Saturday)
Rachel Harrison	<i>Moore to the point</i>	City Hall Plaza 1500 Marilla Street, Dallas, TX 75201
Alfredo Jaar	<i>Music (Everything I know I learned the day my son was born)</i>	Nasher Sculpture Center, garden 2001 Flora Street, Dallas, TX 75201 (Open 11 am – 5 pm, Tuesday – Sunday)
Liz Larner	<i>X</i>	The University of Texas at Dallas, O'Donnell Building 800 W Campbell Road, Richardson, TX 75080 (Open 8 am – 8 pm, daily)
Charles Long	<i>Fountainhead</i>	NorthPark Center, South Court 8687 N. Central Expressway, Dallas, TX 75225 (Open Monday – Saturday; 10 am – 9 pm, Sunday 12 – 6 pm)
Rick Lowe	<i>Trans.lation</i>	Vickery Meadow neighborhood, along Ridgecrest Road, Dallas, TX (Markets held Oct. 19, Nov. 23, Dec. 21, Jan. 18 & Feb. 22, see website for event details)
Vicki Meek	<i>Black &amp; Blue: Cultural Oasis in the Hills</i>	Paul Quinn College, main drive 3837 Simpson Stuart Road, Dallas, TX 75241 (Open 8:30 am – 5:30 pm, daily)
Ruben Ochoa	<i>Flock in Space</i>	Trinity River Audubon Center 6500 Great Trinity Forest Way, Dallas, Texas 75217 (Open Tuesday – Saturday, 9 am – 4 pm)
Ugo Rondinone	<i>dear sunset</i>	Fish Trap Lake, east shore 3131 Fish Trap Road, Dallas, TX 75212

For directions and more information, visit  
[NasherSculptureCenter.org/Exhibitions/Nasher-Xchange](http://NasherSculptureCenter.org/Exhibitions/Nasher-Xchange)

## TEACHING WITH PUBLIC ART

**“Public art can teach us about the diverse cultures inhabiting our community, and invite us to consider the role of art and artists in our society.”**

*Public Art: An Essential Component of Creating Communities* Jack Becker Monograph March 2004



Engaging with public art offers students the unique opportunity to experience the impact an artist can make on a community or an environment. The ten works in *Nasher XChange* offer a jumping-off point for a larger dialogue about the role of art in the places we visit every day.

Public art can contribute to a city by:

- Personalizing impersonal spaces
- Activating civic dialogue
- Providing a vehicle for a community to express its identity

What other benefits might public art offer?

## Reflections on Public Art

**“...a kind of art that cannot be fully realized through monologue. It can only come into its own in dialogue, in open conversation in which one is obliged to listen and include other voices.”**

Suzi Gablik (*Lacy, 1995, pp. 35-36*) *Beginners Guide to Public Art*

**“...a new behavioral and perceptual orientation to the site [that] demands a new critical adjustment to one’s experience of that place.”**

Richard Serra (*Melchionne, pp. 38-39*) *Beginners Guide to Public Art*

**“We can’t do works without talking to people in the site. We do a tremendous amount of talking to people in the communities we work in and it’s a transformative experience. It transforms the work and it transforms us.”**

Houston Conwill (*Lacy, 1995, p.35*) *Beginners Guide to Public Art*

## Key Questions for Viewing Public Art

### Context

- How can a work of public art be a symbol for a city?
- What is the relationship between the artwork and the site?
  - How might placing it in a different location change the work?
- Does the artwork compete with or complement the site? Why?
- Why do you think the artist selected the location for their work?
  - The history?
  - The people?
  - The environment?

### History

- Does the work celebrate a historical event or figure, or reflect the history of the community?
  - If so, how might the event(s) or historical figure(s) relate to the site?

### Interaction

- What is the size of the work? Is it human scale or larger?
- Does the artist mean for viewers to touch, move through or interact with the artwork?
  - How can you tell?
- How are other people interacting with the sculpture?

### Process

- What might have inspired the artist?
- Who would the artist need to work with to complete this artwork?
  - City officials?
  - People in the neighborhood?
  - Community organizations?
- What other skills, techniques or disciplines would the artist need to use to execute the project?

### Consider This

Look up examples of public art in your city, state and beyond! Share your favorite examples with your classmates.

If you were planning a trip to visit public art where would you go?

# Lara Almarcegui

## *Buried House*



### About the Artist

Lara Almarcegui is a Spanish artist currently living in Rotterdam whose work examines the transformation of urban areas brought on by political, social, and economic change. Almarcegui collects historical, geographic, ecological, and sociological data about vacant or abandoned city spaces that will inevitably change as a result of urban development and creates art that is intended to generate discussion. Her work has taken many forms, including written publications, sculptural installations, slide projections, documentary photography, mapmaking and tours.

### Oak Cliff Gardens Neighborhood

Oak Cliff Gardens has a history almost as old as Dallas itself. Originally the site of the first stop for stagecoaches headed out of Dallas for Central Texas, it later became the small town of Lisbon, which was in turn annexed by the city in 1929. When Lara Almarcegui visited Dallas to conduct preliminary research for her *XChange* project, she was intrigued by the relocation of the Trinity River and the effects of that change on the city over several years, especially in West Dallas and Oak Cliff. Almarcegui's project coincides with a recently announced Dallas Area Habitat for Humanity Blight Study on the Oak Cliff Gardens area, commissioned with the University of North Texas and designed to help build community support to engage, empower, and transform the lives of low-income families and long-neglected communities.

Lara Almarcegui / *Buried House*

## Experiencing the Artwork

As you view Lara Almarcegui's artwork, consider its title, *Buried House*. What evidence of a house is visible at the site of the sculpture? Traditionally, what is the purpose of burying something? In what ways does a buried structure encourage reflection that a standing house might not?

In partnership with Habitat for Humanity, Almarcegui selected a house that was already scheduled to be demolished and buried it on the site where it once stood, making what was once a private home public and allowing visitors a chance to reflect on its past and future. Take a moment to imagine what the history of this house may have been. How will the space change when a new house is built on the plot?

Almarcegui's work invites viewers to think about the effects of urban progress and expansion. What changes can you imagine for the Oak Cliff Gardens neighborhood? Think about something you have regarded as "progress." What were the positive and negative results of this change?

## In Her Own Words

"This project is a sculptural work that is about the construction that used to stand, the history of the house and how it was erected. However, it's not just about the house, but about the past of the terrain and the future of the terrain. It is a work about construction and urban development."

"Stripped of definite purpose, the empty lots have enormous potential. They are free spaces where anything could happen."

"I work a lot with urban transformations. I am very curious about how cities change and how they develop. I am always looking for places in a city that are going to change, that are going to be torn down, that are going to be constructed. So with my work I am always trying to find a way to talk about the past and the future of the constructions in the city."

### Consider This

What changes are occurring in your neighborhood? Are there new construction projects, repairs, or are people moving in or out?

Are there empty lots in your neighborhood? What could the space be used for to improve your community?



# Good/Bad Art Collective

## *CURTAINS*



### About the Artists

Good/Bad Art Collective was a Denton, Texas-based group of artists that created over 250 events in Texas and New York from 1993 to 2001. As many as 140 artists participated at various time during this period. Inspired by a conceptual art course at the University of North Texas offered by artist Vernon Fisher, the group created installations and events that were often humorous and thought-provoking. The Collective's *XChange* project will be their first in over 10 years, and coincides with the 20th anniversary of the group.

### Bryan Tower

Bryan Tower is a 40-story office building in downtown Dallas. Spire Realty, the owner of the building, has offered the 14th floor for Good/Bad Art Collective's *XChange* installation. An all-glass skyscraper, designed by acclaimed architects from the firm Neuhaus & Taylor, Bryan Tower features 40 stories and 1.1 million square feet of space.

## Experiencing the Artwork

*CURTAINS* is located on the 14th floor of Bryan Tower, in downtown Dallas. As you move through the space, what do you notice? What might have taken place here?

Consider the title of the artwork. Where do you see curtains in the space? What is the purpose of a curtain in a theater?

This installation displays the remnants of a television studio Good/Bad built to function during the months leading up to the opening of *CURTAINS*. At the artwork's opening event, members of the public were welcome to attend and perform in segments for an infomercial scheduled to air on local and national cable television during the run of *Nasher XChange*. Based upon what you see, what might the infomercial be "selling"?

Some aspects of *CURTAINS* refer to the death of British comedian Tommy Cooper, who took on the persona of a bumbling magician, botching his tricks to comic effect. In 1984 Cooper suffered a heart attack on stage, slumped down and fell backwards into the curtain, leaving his feet visible to the audience. Tragically, both audience and stage crew thought Cooper's collapse was part of the act and laughed as he lay on the stage rather than calling for medical assistance.

In what ways might *CURTAINS* comment on the fleeting nature of human life and experience?

## In Their Own Words

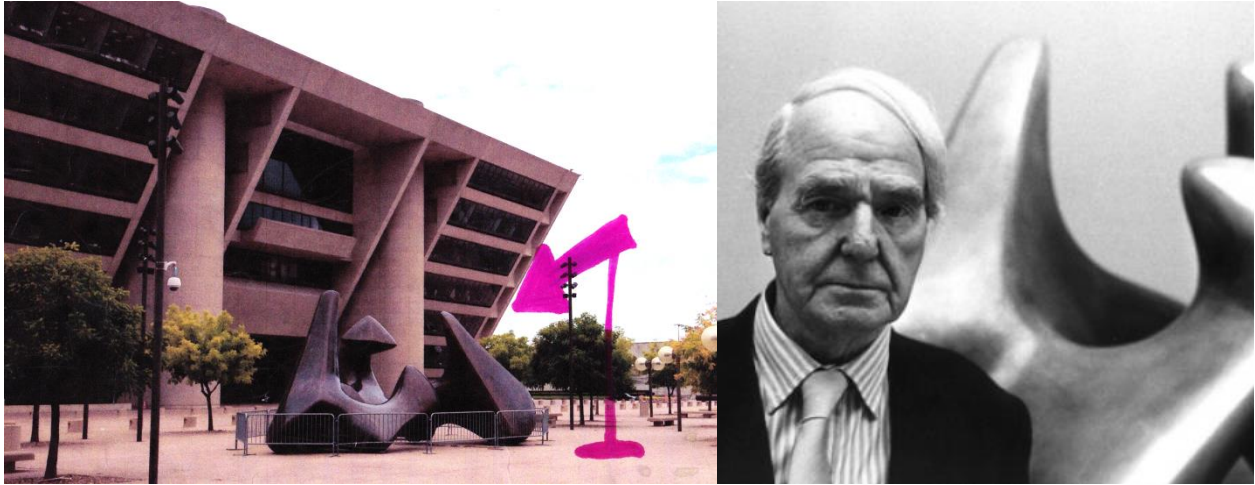
"For roughly ten years of our existence we used the dumpster as a symbol for our group. We've attempted to levitate one of the members in a lawn chair. We've even turned a museum into an apartment building where we [gave] every patron who entered the space [...] a surprise birthday party. But we take art seriously and we love art and we love its possibilities and what it can bring to people."

### Consider This

Have you ever worked on a school project with others? What were you able to accomplish by working together and sharing ideas?

# Rachel Harrison

## *Moore to the point*



### About the Artist

Rachel Harrison is a New York-based artist known for using a wide variety of materials including consumer products and found objects alongside abstract forms she makes by hand. The resulting sculptures cleverly combine references to both art history and pop culture. Harrison has described her work as a conversation between “the museum, the canons of art history, and the supermarket.”

### Dallas City Hall Plaza

Completed in 1978, Dallas City Hall was designed by architect I.M. Pei. In 1976, the City of Dallas commissioned artist Henry Moore to create a sculpture for the plaza in front of the inverted pyramid-style building. Moore felt that the sculpture, eventually called *Three Forms Vertebrae* (*The Dallas Piece*), would need to be massive to complement Dallas City Hall's structure and the wide horizontal plane of the plaza, and he designed it to be organic and curved to contrast with the geometric architecture of the building. According to Moore, understanding the work should come with experiencing it, so he positioned the pieces in a triangle to invite viewers to walk among them.

## Experiencing the Artwork

What effect does the large arrow have when viewed from the edges of the plaza? Where would you focus your attention if the arrow was not there?

Rachel Harrison has been reluctant to accept public art commissions in the past because she strongly believes that her studio work, often made of delicate materials, would not translate well outdoors. On a visit to Dallas City Hall, Harrison was surprised to see Henry Moore's *The Dallas Piece* surrounded by metal barricades (which were later removed). This experience triggered a preliminary idea for an installation that would activate the space and encourage viewers to interact with the sculpture as Moore intended.

Walk through and around the three components of Moore's sculpture. How does this experience compare with viewing the piece from a distance?

As suggested by its title, Harrison's *Moore to the point* is designed to draw attention to an existing work of art. Can you think of other examples of artists, writers, musicians or filmmakers referring to someone else's work?

You can view Moore's *Working Model for Three Piece No. 3: Vertebrae*, a smaller sculpture which served as the basis for *The Dallas Piece*, in the Nasher Sculpture Center garden.

## In Her Own Words

"People assume they know an artwork from looking at pictures, but what do they really get from that?"

"I want people to be real with art, to be conscious and present with the object in order to experience it."

### Consider This

When you are making a work of art do you consider how the viewer will interact with or experience the piece? How would you communicate your intention to the viewer?

How can we draw attention to issues, places, or objects that are overlooked by others?

# Alfredo Jaar

## *Music (Everything I know I learned the day my son was born)*



### About the Artist

Alfredo Jaar is a Chilean-born artist, architect, photographer, and filmmaker living in New York. Trained as an architect rather than as an artist, Jaar studies each new place “not only in physical but also in social, political, as well as cultural terms,” before deciding how he will respond to it. Through compiling first-hand accounts and detailed research, Jaar often brings attention to issues that are very real for some, but often ignored by others, such as homelessness, pollution and genocide.

### Nasher Sculpture Center

Open since 2003, the Nasher Sculpture Center is home to the Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection, featuring more than 300 works by Calder, Giacometti, Matisse, Picasso, Rodin, and more. The Nashers began collecting modern and contemporary sculpture in the mid-twentieth century, choosing pieces that they loved, or as they said, artworks that “gave them butterflies.” The museum was designed by world-renowned architect Renzo Piano in collaboration with landscape architect Peter Walker to be an ideal environment for sculpture.

## Experiencing the Artwork

Enter the pavilion at the back of the Nasher garden and sit quietly for a few minutes. What do you hear?

After carefully considering what his *XChange* commission could be, Alfredo Jaar decided to focus on what it means for a museum to celebrate an anniversary. Like a person, a museum can be “born,” grow, and reflect on the impact it has made over time. With this in mind, Jaar’s project celebrates the births of new babies in Dallas and the limitless possibilities of their futures. Over the course of the *Nasher XChange* exhibition, the cries of newborn babies will be recorded at Baylor, Methodist Dallas and Parkland hospitals. Each cry will play daily at the time of the baby’s birth with new cries added as more babies are born.

How does the environment Jaar has created affect the way you react to the babies’ cries? Consider the title of the artwork. What could a baby’s cry symbolize to Jaar and other parents?

Jaar’s work draws attention to the passage of time by referencing births and anniversaries but also by encouraging visitors to spend time listening in the pavilion. How might your experience be different if you came back at a different time of day or later in the year?

What are your family’s traditions for celebrating the passage of time?

## In His Own Words

“These babies will enter the museum at the earliest age possible, almost immediately out of their mothers’ wombs. They will not come as visitors, but as active participants – as artists and performers themselves.”

“As an architect that makes art, I use the methodology of the architect, and the architect before acting in the world must understand the world. The art world, what we call the art world, what we call the white space, the white cube, it is a very insular type of place, it is a very privileged space, and it does not reach too many people. In order for me to act in the world I must understand it, and this act is a creative act to respond to a place, to a community, to an issue.”

### Consider This

What celebrations have you been part of? What sounds do you associate with these celebrations?

# Liz Larner

X



## About the Artist

Liz Larner's work examines some of the most basic issues of sculpture itself, such as the relationship of line and mass, or of volume and density, in unexpected and thoughtful ways. For nearly three decades, Larner has made pieces—in materials ranging from false eyelashes to cast bronze—that attract the attention of viewers and challenge their visual perceptions. The complex forms she creates often require that her sculptures be approached, circled, and examined from every angle to determine what, exactly, is being seen. Larner lives and works in Los Angeles.

## Arts and Technology Education Center, University of Texas at Dallas

The new Edith O'Donnell Arts and Technology Building opening in fall 2013, serves as a symbol for the exchange of ideas between art and technology. The concept for the building is that of a portal, architecturally communicating the convergence of art and technology. It is the University's intent that the building's program "brings together the knowledge and expertise of computer science, engineering, creative arts, and the humanities to develop new dimensions and new opportunities in education, technology, training, communication and commerce."

## Experiencing the Artwork

Walk carefully around *X*. How does the form change as you move around the sculpture?

The innovative X-shape of the sculpture, described by the artist as continuing her “investigation into the open form and the use of line to create volume,” has been developed over several years and could not have been created without the use of digital drafting technology.

Larner has used the form of an X in previous works, referring both to the letter and to the intersection of two lines. Think for a moment about what an “X” can symbolize. How is it used in mathematics? In writing? On maps?

How might *X* be a symbol for the relationship between art and technology? How might it refer to the *Nasher XChange* exhibition?

## In Her Own Words

“What you look for is a place that you can connect to, that you think your art can build a bridge with. And so when you bring an artwork to that kind of setting you are kind of opening the space up to something else besides what it was intended for, or what the people initially going there intended it to be.”

### Consider This

How could you incorporate other influences or disciplines into your artwork?

What technologies do you use when you make art?



# Charles Long

## *Fountainhead*



### About the Artist

Charles Long is a New York-based artist interested in the intersection between art, sound, and viewer participation. In 1995, Long collaborated with the London rock band Stereolab, inviting them to create music to accompany a series of sculptures. This music was available via headphones plugged into each sculpture, prompting viewers to sit, listen and look. In 2012, Long's installation *Pet Sounds* in Madison Square Park encouraged visitors to run their hands over smooth, blob-like forms to produce a variety of sounds and vibrations, deepening the connection between viewer and sculpture.

### NorthPark Center

In the early 1960s, Dallas developer and Nasher Sculpture Center founder Raymond D. Nasher leased a 97-acre cotton field on the edge of town to build what would become the largest climate-controlled retail center in the world. While cows grazed across the street, NorthPark Center took shape as a work of art with clean, modern lines and open space to display the developer's fine art collection. Today NorthPark is consistently ranked among the top five shopping destinations in the country, attracting more than 26 million visitors annually.

## Experiencing the Artwork

As you approach *Fountainhead*, observe the sculpture's form and how others are interacting with it. How does it compare with other fountains in NorthPark?

*Fountainhead* is an interactive, waterless fountain using new technology to create an experience that recalls a traditional fountain. Approach one of the iPad kiosks (or observe someone else as they do). What happens when a donation is made?

The tradition of tossing coins into fountains to make a wish goes back centuries. Coins collected from many fountains, including the famous Trevi Fountain in Rome which nets up to €3,000 a day, are donated to charity. Proceeds from *Fountainhead* will go to one of three Dallas charities selected by the donor.

Fountains often create a natural gathering place for people. What qualities of *Fountainhead* might encourage people to linger in this space?

## In His Own Words

"When I do public work, I really want throngs of people coming to see the work. It's exciting for me to see people all over the sculpture and enjoying it. I really want to use the public as part of the sculpture."

"One of my interests as a sculptor has been to play with the image of value and art, like as a public spectacle. There is decadence, but there is this social act of giving. I chose charities proximally close to the lives of the participants so that their giving had more tangible meaning."

### Consider This

Think about your home or school. In which places are people most likely to gather together? What features of these spaces encourage togetherness?

How can artists create spaces for shared experiences in the community?

# Rick Lowe

## *Trans.lation*



### About the Artist

Rick Lowe is an artist, activist and designer best known for initiating one of the most successful community art projects in the world, Project Row Houses, which he founded in the Third Ward neighborhood of Houston, Texas in 1993. Lowe and his team saved a series of shotgun houses from being demolished and transformed them into galleries, classrooms, and community gathering spaces. Instead of allowing the history of an area to be erased, the project created a place that nurtures a sense of togetherness and exchange, resulting in what Lowe calls “social sculpture.”

### Vickery Meadow Neighborhood

Vickery Meadow is a three square-mile area located just east of North Central Expressway between East Northwest Highway and Royal Lane. Developed in the 1970s as an apartment community for single professionals, Vickery Meadow has since become a landing point for immigrants and refugees through organizations such as the International Rescue Committee and Catholic Charities of Dallas. The neighborhood is now home to almost 30,000 residents from a diverse array of cultural backgrounds – as many as 27 languages are spoken in Vickery Meadow.

## Experiencing the Artwork

What do you think the term “social sculpture” might mean? In what ways could an artist involve an entire community in a work of art?

Pop-up Markets held during the run of *Nasher XChange* on October 19, November 23, December 21, January 18 and February 22 will be the public face of Lowe’s *Trans.lation* project, but the artist began his work in Vickery Meadow long before the exhibition opened. Months in advance, Lowe held community meetings with residents and property owners in the neighborhood to identify ways to enable the Vickery Meadow community to share their artistic talents and cultural traditions with each other and the greater Dallas community.

Consider the title, *Trans.lation*. How might the idea of translation be important to a project in Vickery Meadow? The period in the title is placed to encourage visitors to associate the project with similar words such as “transformation” and “transaction.” What other positive words could be made using the first or second half of the title?

Lowe brought together a group of Dallas-area artists, educators and community members to hold workshops, dinners and classes for Vickery Meadow residents. In the spring and summer of 2013, this team began to plan ideas for neighborhood events and the foods and products that would make up the markets. Lowe hopes to continue and expand *Trans.lation* after *Nasher XChange* is complete.

## In His Own Words

“My interest in producing art is in building the relationships between a wide range of people for creative production that enhances the aesthetics and the creative potential of the community to elevate itself.”

“We can approach our lives as artists, every one of us. It’s a choice people have... if you choose to, you can make every action a creative act.”

“Diversity allows people to grow through each other.”

### Consider This

How can art bring people with different interests and perspectives together?

Imagine a “social sculpture” in your neighborhood. What would it look like? Who would be involved?

# Vicki Meek

## *Black & Blue: Cultural Oasis in the Hills*



### About the Artist

Vicki Meek is a nationally-recognized artist residing in Dallas. She describes the motivation behind her work as a desire, “to reclaim African American history, restore our collective memory and illuminate critical issues affecting the Black community through visual communication.” Trained as a sculptor, Meek has focused on installation art that asks for direct engagement from the viewer in an effort to create dialogue on difficult subject matter.

### Bishop College / Paul Quinn College

Bishop College, an important historically black college, was originally founded in Marshall, Texas in 1881 and later moved to what is now the Paul Quinn College campus in southern Oak Cliff. The school was once an essential focal point for the Dallas African American arts community, valued not only for the instruction that many artists received there, but also for its status as the birthplace and one-time home of important and ongoing institutions including the Dallas Black Dance Theatre and the African American Museum of Dallas.

Paul Quinn College, founded in Austin in 1872 and later moved to Waco, was founded by a small group of African Methodist Episcopal preachers to educate freed slaves and their offspring. During its time in Waco, the College was housed in a modest one-building trade school where newly freed slaves were taught the skills of blacksmithing, carpentry, tanning, and saddle work. In 1990, the College relocated to the former Bishop College campus. The first semester in its new home began that September with an enrollment of 1,020 students.

## Experiencing the Artwork

Walk along the main drive of the Paul Quinn campus and read the markers Vicki Meek has created. How does the experience of moving through a place where historical events happened differ from reading about them in a book?

Meek has chosen to celebrate the legacy left by Bishop College and its alumni. In what other ways do people commemorate their experiences in school? Why do many people consider their educational experiences to be so valuable?

Can you think of other examples of art that celebrates the history of a community?

## In Her Own Words

“I do public art projects that are interesting to me. For probably 20 some odd years now I have been doing work that is involved in looking at the reclamation of black history, and showing the black community as well as everybody else where we come from, and really hoping that in doing that, people understand where they are positioned in the world.”

Additional content from *Black & Blue: Cultural Oasis in the Hills* is available at [URL](#), and through an iPhone app available through the App Store.

You can read an interview with Vicki Meek in the *Careers in the Arts* teaching materials, available at [nashersculpturecenter.org/learn/resources](http://nashersculpturecenter.org/learn/resources).

### Consider This

What is the history of your campus?

Who is your school named after?

What contributions have past students made in the community?

Consider the history of your neighborhood and family. What could you create to share the stories from your school, neighborhood or family? Could you write a story or a song, take a photograph, or make a painting or sculpture?

# Ruben Ochoa

## *Flock in Space*



### About the Artist

A primary theme in Ruben Ochoa's work has been to explore notions of inclusion and exclusion throughout urban areas. Ochoa takes objects and materials such as galvanized fence poles, concrete retaining walls and wooden pallets out of their expected urban context, inviting viewers to consider their function and significance. By twisting, casting and reconstructing these objects, Ochoa removes their power to act as barriers.

### Trinity River Audubon Center

The Trinity River Audubon Center is managed by Audubon Texas, the state program of the National Audubon Society. Audubon's mission for more than 100 years has been to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity. Located just 8 miles from downtown Dallas, the Center runs along the Trinity River through North America's largest urban bottomland hardwood forest. The area had been consistently polluted and neglected by residents of Dallas until federally-mandated remediation was initiated in the 1990s. Over the next decade, the 120 acres of land that now comprise the Trinity River Audubon property were reclaimed, and in October 2008 the Center opened, complete with 5 miles of nature trails and an LEED Certified building, designed by AIA Gold Medalist Antoine Predock, in the shape of a soaring bird.

## Experiencing the Artwork

Look closely at the materials used in *Flock in Space*. Where would you normally see materials like this? How do you feel when you face barriers such as fences or walls?

Ruben Ochoa has taken galvanized steel fence posts usually found in chain-link fences and the concrete footings that typically anchor these fences to the ground and twisted them by hand to form this sculpture. Consider the sculpture's title. How does *Flock in Space* resemble a flock of birds in flight?

Ochoa was inspired in part by the history of the Trinity River Audubon Center. How might chain-link fence materials relate to the Center's history as an illegal dump site? What could it symbolize to have these materials rising from the ground like a flock of birds?

As he planned *Flock in Space*, Ochoa also considered the many associations his sculpture and its title could have for viewers. The title refers to Constantin Brancusi's well-known 1923 sculpture *Bird in Space*, but Ochoa also appreciated the humor of its similarity to the game *Angry Birds Space*. What associations does *Flock in Space* call to mind for you?

## In His Own Words

"I try to take objects of demarcation in urban spaces such as galvanized fence posts, concrete retaining walls and even wooden pallets and I try to extrapolate them from their original context and shift the meaning."

### Consider This

Where can you find examples of concrete and steel in your community, school and home?

What everyday materials could you use to create art?



# Ugo Rondinone

## *dear sunset*



### About the Artist

Ugo Rondinone is a New York-based artist from Switzerland. He has built an international reputation for a body of work that is both inventive and poetic, creating not only large-scale sculptures but also drawings, paintings, videos and audio recordings. One of Rondinone's greatest strengths is his ability to encourage viewers to slow down, contemplate the work and use their imaginations to search for meaning.

### Fish Trap Lake

Owned by the Dallas Housing Authority, Fish Trap Lake is a small body of water located on a 30-acre site in the heart of West Dallas. Once part of the La Reunion colony, a mid-1800s art community founded by French, Belgian and Swiss settlers, the lake is named after the fishing technique La Reunion's inhabitants used in the Trinity River. Today it is surrounded by five schools, a YMCA, a Girls Inc. of Metropolitan Dallas location, a Dallas Public Library branch, and a senior living community.

## Experiencing the Artwork

Ugo Rondinone's contribution to *Nasher XChange* is a pier that extends into Fish Trap Lake. As you approach the pier, consider how it affects the way you see the lake and its surrounding environment.

Rondinone grew up near a lake in Switzerland and became interested in the unique experiences someone can have as they walk along a pier, transitioning from land to water. Take your time and walk out onto the pier. How is this experience different from looking at the water while on the shore?

*dear sunset* is oriented so that visitors can view the setting sun from the pier. Many people consider sunsets to be symbolic or poetic and pause to watch as the sun goes down. What meaning do sunsets have to you? How is the experience of watching a sunset surrounded by water different from seeing it in other settings? How might it differ from viewing the sculpture at different times of day?

## In His Own Words

**"I believe in the spiritual and magical power of an artwork. It's an alchemy of transforming my and the viewer's emotional and physical reality."**

### Consider This

Find a place near your home or school that offers a view of the sunrise or sunset. What could you add to this space to enhance the experience of watching the sun?

# Connections and TEKS

## Additional Resources

### Public Art Walk Dallas

<http://publicartwalkdallas.org/en/index.shtml>

### Millennium Park

[http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp\\_info/millennium\\_park\\_artarchitecture.html](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/millennium_park_artarchitecture.html)

### Public Art Fund

<http://www.publicartfund.org/>

### National Endowment for the Arts

<http://www.nea.gov/>

### Artist Maya Lin on Public Art

[http://www.pbs.org/becomingamerican/ap\\_pjourneys\\_transcript5\\_print.html](http://www.pbs.org/becomingamerican/ap_pjourneys_transcript5_print.html)

### City of Dallas Public Art Collection

<http://www.dallasculture.org/publicArt.asp>

### Public Art from Artists in the Nasher Collection

Magdalena Abakanowicz, *Figure on a Trunk*, Bass Concert Hall Plaza University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX

Alexander Calder, *El Sol Rojo (The Red Sun)*, The Aztec Stadium, Mexico City

Claes Oldenburg, *Spoonbridge and Cherry*, Minneapolis Sculpture Garden Minneapolis, Minnesota

Jaume Plensa, *Crown Fountain*, Millennium Park, Chicago, Illinois

George Segal, *Depression Bread Line*, FDR Memorial Washington, D.C.

## Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

### §117.14. Art, Grade 4

(3) Historical/cultural heritage. The student demonstrates an understanding of art history and culture as records of human achievement. The student is expected to:

(A) identify simple main ideas expressed in art;

(B) compare and contrast selected artworks from a variety of cultural settings; and

(C) identify the roles of art in American society.

(4) Response/evaluation. The student makes informed judgments about personal artworks and the artworks of others. The student is expected to:

(B) interpret ideas and moods in original artworks, portfolios, and exhibitions by peers and others.

### §113.15. Social Studies, Grade 4

(2) To support the teaching of the essential knowledge and skills, the use of a variety of rich primary and secondary source material such as documents, biographies, novels, speeches, letters, poetry, songs, and artworks is encouraged. Where appropriate, local topics should be included. Motivating resources are available from museums, historical sites, presidential libraries, and local and state preservation societies.

(19) Culture. The student understands the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to Texas.

### §110.15. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 4

(10) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Culture and History. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to explain the difference between a stated and an implied purpose for an expository text.

(27) Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings. Students continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:

(A) listen attentively to speakers, ask relevant questions, and make pertinent comments; and

(28) Listening and Speaking/Speaking. Students speak clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language. Students continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to express an opinion supported by accurate information, employing eye contact, speaking rate, volume, and enunciation, and the conventions of language to communicate ideas effectively.

**§117.32. Art, Grade 6**

3) Historical/cultural heritage. The student demonstrates an understanding of art history and culture as records of human achievement. The student is expected to:

- (A) identify in artworks the influence of historical and political events;
- (B) compare specific artworks from a variety of cultures; and
- (C) compare career and vocational opportunities in art.

**§113.18. Social Studies, Grade 6**

(2) History. The student understands the influences of individuals and groups from various cultures on various historical and contemporary societies. The student is expected to:

- (B) evaluate the social, political, economic, and cultural contributions of individuals and groups from various societies, past and present.

(18) Culture. The student understands the relationship that exists between the arts and the societies in which they are produced. The student is expected to:

- (A) explain the relationships that exist between societies and their architecture, art, music, and literature;
- (B) relate ways in which contemporary expressions of culture have been influenced by the past;
- (C) describe ways in which contemporary issues influence creative expressions; and
- (D) identify examples of art, music, and literature that have transcended the boundaries of societies and convey universal themes such as religion, justice, and the passage of time.

**§110.18. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 6**

(9) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Culture and History. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to compare and contrast the stated or implied purposes of different authors writing on the same topic.

(26) Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students will use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:

- (A) listen to and interpret a speaker's messages (both verbal and nonverbal) and ask questions to clarify the speaker's purpose and perspective;
- (C) paraphrase the major ideas and supporting evidence in formal and informal presentations.

(27) Listening and Speaking/Speaking. Students speak clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to give an organized presentation with a specific point of view, employing eye contact, speaking rate, volume, enunciation, natural gestures, and conventions of language to communicate ideas effectively.

**§117.53. Art, Level I**

(3) Historical/cultural heritage. The student demonstrates an understanding of art history and culture as records of human achievement. The student is expected to:

- (A) compare and contrast historical and contemporary styles, identifying general themes and trends;
- (B) describe general characteristics in artworks from a variety of cultures; and
- (C) compare and contrast career and vocational opportunities in art.

**§113.41. United States History Studies Since 1877**

Culture. The student understands the relationship between the arts and the times during which they were created. The student is expected to:

- (A) describe how the characteristics and issues in U.S. history have been reflected in various genres of art, music, film, and literature;

**§110.31. English Language Arts and Reading, English I**

(8) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Culture and History. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to explain the controlling idea and specific purpose of an expository text and distinguish the most important from the less important details that support the author's purpose.

(24) Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students will use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:

- (A) listen responsively to a speaker by taking notes that summarize, synthesize, or highlight the speaker's ideas for critical reflection and by asking questions related to the content for clarification and elaboration;

(25) Listening and Speaking/Speaking. Students speak clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to give presentations using informal, formal, and technical language effectively to meet the needs of audience, purpose, and occasion, employing eye contact, speaking rate (e.g., pauses for effect), volume, enunciation, purposeful gestures, and conventions of language to communicate ideas effectively.