



Press Release

Nasher Sculpture Center Presents *Revelation: The Art of James Magee*

Exhibition on view September 4 – November 28, 2010

DALLAS, Texas (August 4, 2010) – Organized by the Nasher Sculpture Center, *Revelation: The Art of James Magee* will be the first major museum exhibition of the artist's work in 18 years. Featuring 15–20 medium- to large-scale relief sculptures, the exhibition and publication will introduce the art of James Magee to a broader audience and provide essential context for better understanding the artist's work, including his magnum opus, *The Hill*, a monumental installation project in the desert east of El Paso that has been under construction for over 25 years and is due to be completed c. 2025.

"Although James Magee has produced work for the past forty years, this exhibition will come to many as a wondrous surprise," says Nasher Sculpture Center Curator Jed Morse. "Despite receiving minimal exposure outside of El Paso, Magee has made a compelling body of work that combines aspects of painting, sculpture, and performance and engages esthetic and philosophical issues that have occupied artists for centuries in entirely new and moving ways."

Working with an array of found and castoff materials such as bits of iron, glass, concrete, wax, enamel, lead, wire mesh, linoleum, grease, brake fluid, shellac, car parts, ceramic tiles, roof panels, even hibiscus, honey, and paprika, Magee creates powerful, sensuous sculptural reliefs that are at once uncannily familiar and completely alien. Often framed in steel boxes with protective glazing and exhibiting a textural richness, the works have the feel of archeological relics and recall a wide range of sources from Christian altarpieces to the enigmatic boxes of Joseph Cornell and the engrossing sensorial experience of paintings by Mark Rothko. Magee occasionally extends the experience of the works in their elaborate "titles," prose poems that the artist intones only for the rare, fortunate visitor, recordings of which will be available in the exhibition.

"We are delighted to play a role in bringing public and scholarly attention to James Magee's remarkable work, noted Nasher Sculpture Center Director Jeremy Strick. "This exhibition also marks an important occasion for the Nasher Sculpture Center, as it is the first instance of a new engagement with art produced in this region."

Despite their broader cultural evocations, James Magee's sculptures are deeply personal explorations of a life difficult to imagine being lived by only one person. Magee would say he has lived many lives: middle-class Michigan boy; globetrotting vagabond; Ivy League law student; Parisian sculptors' apprentice; New York cab driver and Broadway stage hand; United Nations attorney; Texas roughneck; and for the last 40 years, artist. In order to encompass a larger portion of his experience, he has for years created work not only as James Magee, but also under the pseudonyms Horace Mayfield and Annabel Livermore, the last a quite successful painter of brilliantly

colored landscapes and genre scenes. Magee's relief sculptures can be understood partially within the context of the artist's exploration of his own vast and varied life experience.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a major new monograph on the artist co-published by the Nasher Sculpture Center and Prestel Publishing. *James Magee: The Hill* focuses largely on the artist's grand installation in the desert, featuring an extended treatise on the artist's life and an art historical analysis of *The Hill* by Richard R. Brettell, the Margaret M. McDermott Distinguished Chair in Aesthetic Studies at The University of Texas at Dallas, and a photographic tour of the site by noted photographer Tom Jenkins. The book also includes an essay by Nasher curator Jed Morse on Magee's studio work and its relation to *The Hill*.

About the Nasher Sculpture Center:

Open since October 2003, the Nasher Sculpture Center is dedicated to the display and study of modern and contemporary sculpture. The Center is located on a 2.4-acre site in the heart of the Dallas Arts District. Renzo Piano, a world-renowned architect and winner of the prestigious Pritzker Prize in 1998, is the architect of the Center's 55,000-square-foot building. Piano worked in collaboration with landscape architect Peter Walker on the design of the two-acre sculpture garden.

The Nasher Sculpture Center was the longtime dream of the late Raymond and Patsy Nasher, who together formed one of the finest collections of modern and contemporary sculpture in the world. The Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection includes masterpieces by Calder, de Kooning, di Suvero, Giacometti, Hepworth, Kelly, Matisse, Miró, Moore, Picasso, Rodin, and Serra, among others, and continues to grow and evolve.

The Nasher Sculpture Center presents rotating exhibitions of works from the Nasher Collection as well as special exhibitions drawn from other museums and private collections. In addition to indoor gallery space, the Center contains an auditorium, education and research facilities, a cafe, and a store.

The Nasher Sculpture Center is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 am to 5 pm and until 11 pm for special events. General Admission to the Center is \$10 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$5 for students, and free for members and children 12 and under. For more information, visit www.NasherSculptureCenter.org.