

Nasher Sculpture Center Announces Gift From Artist Melvin Edwards

Renowned sculptor makes gift of six works to the Nasher collection

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The Nasher Sculpture Center has announced a major gift to the collection from artist Melvin Edwards.

Edwards, whose 2015 retrospective "Melvin Edwards: Five Decades" was organized by the Nasher, has given the museum four sculptures and two drawings, the museum said.

According to the Nasher, the gifts are given in memory of the artist's mother, Thelma Felton Edwards, who passed away this year.

Edwards was born in Houston in 1937 and is a renowned sculptor and pioneer of contemporary Black art, the Nasher said.

The Nasher said Edwards is best known for Lynch Fragments, welded steel sculptures created from tools and scrap metal, but he has also made large-scale works, installations, and public sculptures as well.

"This substantial gift from Melvin Edwards is a tremendous addition to the Nasher collection," Director Jeremy Strick said. "These important works represent the full range of Edwards's mastery as a sculptor, effortlessly uniting the material and conceptual in ways that resonate over time. This gift is especially meaningful to the Nasher, as it stands as a testament to the artist's native ties to Texas, his friendship with the museum, and his spirit of generosity."

Curator Catherine Craft worked with Edwards to select a group of works representing a spectrum of the artist's concerns, methods of working, materials, and themes, the Nasher said.

Of the four welded sculptures, two are from the 1970s and two are from the 2000s. Two of the sculptures, called *Now We Know* (1979) and *Iraq* (2003), exemplify Edwards's Lynch Fragment series.

The gift also includes a piece called *Five to the Bar* which was made using a rocker and barbed wire, a material used by Edwards in sculptural installations of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Nasher said.

According to the museum, the most recent sculpture, *Beyond Cabo Verde*, reflects Edwards's ongoing engagement with Africa and presents a variation on the Lynch Fragment format.

Two works on paper are also included in the gift, with one sketch representing his interest in developing large-scale public sculptures and the other taken from a group of works from the 1970s that use barbed wire and chain as templates for sprayed compositions, the museum said.

"In honor of my parents, Melvin Edwards Sr. and Thelma Felton Edwards, and our family's heritage and history in Texas, it's meaningful to be able to commemorate their contributions to our better future," Edwards said.