

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Haas Brothers: Haaston Paradise

December 2, 2017 – February 3, 2017

Opening reception: Saturday, December 2, 6–8 pm

Lora Reynolds is pleased to announce *Haaston Paradise*, an exhibition of new sculpture and rugs by the Haas Brothers—the artists' second presentation at the gallery.

Fairy Berries, Micro Beasts, and wool rugs that look like cartoon pelts of extinct animals are the Haas Brothers' newest creations.

Fairy Berries are small ceramic sculptures—no bigger than about three inches in diameter—mounted on (and almost floating above) thin, elegant, brass stands. They look like psychedelic strawberries, leafy green swirls of sugary frosting, or pine cones covered in vibrantly colored scales.

Like their larger counterparts, Accretions, the shapes and patterns in each Fairy Berry are determined by the principles of self-organization. (Shoaling fish, murmurations, crystallization, the formation of sand dunes, and the growth of stalactites and stalagmites are all examples of self-organization in nature, a process by which chaos spontaneously approaches order in physical, chemical, or biological systems.) Slip-trailing is the technique the Haas Brothers use to create the eye-popping textures on their new miniature ceramics. Slip is a creamy mixture of clay and water; the artists squeeze it out of a syringe in a precisely defined (if sometimes simple) mathematical formula. One minuscule action, repeated—like layering a dot or a line of slip on top of itself again and again—will eventually generate a complex shape on its own. Our bodies are formed in a similar way: atoms bond with each other to form molecules, molecules combine to form cells, tissue, organs, organ systems, and finally a conscious organism.

In addition to flora, the Haas Brothers also fill their colorful universe with magical, goofy fauna. Their furry Micro Beasts stand on two bronze legs and have all manner of bronze horns, ears, tongues, and hyper-distended members. They never have faces, and yet somehow they are remarkably expressive. The first Beasts were functional furniture—full-sized couches, daybeds, armchairs—and as they have become smaller and smaller, their personalities have reached outsized proportions. The Micro Beasts are studies in cuteness, absurdity, and joyous, cartoonish sexuality.

Similar explorations of absurdity—but flat and made of sheep's wool—are the Haas Brothers' five new animal rugs. Each is a silly, technicolor depiction of an extinct creature—a woolly mammoth, dodo bird, thylacine (more commonly known as a Tasmanian tiger), quagga (a lost subspecies of zebra), and giant cheetah (a former cousin of the familiar big cat)—eyes bulging, tongues wiggling, and splayed out like Wile E. Coyote after being run over by a steamroller. Handmade by expert craftspeople in a tiny Indian village, the rugs are both luxurious and, as Simon has said, "totally wacko."

The unobtainability of *real* animal hides from creatures that are borderline mythological—and who would make a rug out of a *bird* even if they could?—is a reminder of the Haas Brothers' relentless belief that a world that prizes exclusivity and pretension is a ridiculous, soul-crushing place to live. Imagination, hilarity, inclusivity, connection, conversation, acceptance—and most of all, magic—these are the values anchoring the utopia that spills out of the Haas Brothers' studio.

Born in Austin in 1984, twins Niki and Simon Haas live and work in Los Angeles. In 2018 they will mount a solo exhibition at the Bass Museum of Art (Miami). In 2016 their work was included in *Beauty—Cooper Hewitt Design Triennial* (New York). The brothers have lectured about their work at the Anderson Ranch Arts Center (Aspen) and NeueHouse (New York). Publications including *Interview Magazine*, *Modern Painters*, *New York Magazine*, *Vanity Fair*, *W Magazine*, and *Wall Street Journal* have featured articles about their work. Niki and Simon have also been commissioned to produce work for the Ace Hotel (Los Angeles), Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival (California), Gianni Versace S.p.A. (Milan), Lady Gaga, Maison Guerlain (Paris), and Rosewood Hotel (London). Their work is in the permanent collections of Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum (New York), Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), and RISD Museum (Rhode Island).