

Sightings: Alex Israel

Oct 14, 2015 — Jan 31, 2016 | Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas

For his *Sightings* exhibition at the Nasher, Israel presented new sculptures and paintings, some related to his first feature length film, *SPF-18*. The work explored the genre of the teen surfing movie, using visual and narrative conventions common to the after-school special, a series of made-for-TV movies for adolescents. Israel's installation combined sculptural objects derived from Hollywood movies, his own and others', with self-portraits incorporating classic images of Southern California to create a quasi-narrative installation within the gallery. Israel also made an intervention in the Nasher Collection Gallery upstairs, placing sky and decorative backdrops among the works.

The work of Alex Israel (American, born 1982) deals in the images and cultural eccentricities of his native Los Angeles. From his sunglass company Freeway Eyewear to his YouTube talk show *As It Lays*, wherein he interviews famous and not-so-famous Hollywood personalities, Israel delves beneath the surface of the iconic pop culture of L.A. to better understand its persistent impact on contemporary culture. Working with the scenic arts department at Warner Brothers studio, he creates paintings that recall movie sunsets and television studio backdrops, as well as self-portraits in the distinctive shape of the artist's profile. Encompassing painting, sculpture, video, and aspects of performance, Israel's work recalls elements of Pop, Duchampian readymades, as well as Southern California Light and Space, or Finish Fetish, art of the 1960s and 1970s.