

***Anastasia Pelias: mama* NOW ON VIEW AT MCNAY ART MUSEUM**
New Outdoor Installation Activates Museum Grounds with Sculpture and Painted Landscape

San Antonio, TX (January 2, 2019) – Commissioned by the McNay Art Museum from New Orleans-native Anastasia Pelias, *mama* is comprised of a monumental sculpture immersed within a painted landscape, and is now on view at the Museum. Located on a small hill just inside the North New Braunfels gate, the installation activates the landscape of the museum grounds by creating a space the artist intends to be “a place for people to be, to think, and to meditate.”

“We are thrilled to feature *mama* this winter on the grounds of the first modern art museum in Texas,” said Richard Aste, Director of the McNay. “It is a paragon of artistic excellence--which we have defined in San Antonio for almost 65 years--and a thoughtful, meditative addition to our growing outdoor museum experience.”

Pelias’s artworks span the areas of painting, drawing, video, sculpture, and installation, united through a cultural identity combining her native Louisiana birthplace and her ancestral roots in Greece. The sculpture’s shape is informed by the ancient iconic shapes associated with the Minoan civilization on the island of Crete. *mama* is at once a temporal artwork, an homage to Pelias’s family history, and a site for quiet contemplation.

“*mama* is a work that pays homage to the essence of the female, to all *mamas*,” said Pelias. “My color choice of velvety violet for the stained painting of the landscape was a response both to the sculpture and to the site.”

mama is courtesy of the artist and JONATHAN FERRARA GALLERY, New Orleans, Louisiana. This exhibition is organized by René Paul Barilleaux, Head of Curatorial Affairs, for the McNay Art Museum. Lead funding is most generously provided by the Elizabeth Huth Coates Exhibition Endowment and the Arthur and Jane Stieren Fund for Exhibitions.

“Anastasia’s unique ability to transform the natural landscape in the same way an artist transforms a blank canvas makes her the ideal choice to further activate the McNay’s campus,” said Barilleaux. “Her outdoor abstract composition anticipates the many modern and contemporary abstract paintings seen inside on the Museum’s walls. In addition, the artwork’s location facing the original McNay residence pays homage to the legacy of modernism on which the McNay is built.”

About the artist

Anastasia Pelias received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Newcomb College of Tulane University in 1981, and a Master of Fine Arts from The University of New Orleans in 1996. She has exhibited her work in numerous solo and group exhibitions nationwide, and is found in the New Orleans Museum of Art, Mobile Museum of Art, and Ogden Museum of Southern Art, as well as in private collections throughout the United States, Belgium, China, England, Greece, and Saudi Arabia.

Video of Installation & Interview with Artist: <https://vimeo.com/304850394/5153a57d19>



Suggested Tweet: #AnastasiaPelias: *mama* activates #McNayArtMuseum grounds with combination of sculpture and painted landscape. Now on view! <https://vimeo.com/304850394/5153a57d19>

About the McNay Art Museum

The McNay Art Museum engages a diverse community in the discovery and enjoyment of the visual arts. Built in the 1920s by artist and educator Marion Koogler McNay, the Spanish Colonial Revival residence became the site of Texas's first museum of modern art when it opened in 1954. Today, more than 140,000 visitors a year enjoy works by modern masters including Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh, Edward Hopper, Joan Mitchell, Alice Neel, Georgia O'Keeffe, Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock, and Pierre-Auguste Renoir. The 23 acres of beautifully landscaped grounds include sculptures by Robert Indiana, Luis A. Jiménez Jr., George Rickey, Joel Shapiro, and Kiki Smith. The 45,000-square-foot Jane & Arthur Stieren Center for Exhibitions, designed by internationally renowned French architect Jean-Paul Viguier, features three significant exhibitions annually.

For almost 65 years, the McNay has enchanted visitors with its art, architecture, and ambiance. The museum offers rich and varied exhibitions as well as rotating displays in the Main Collection Galleries from the 20,000 works in the collection; more than 45,000 adults, teachers, students, and families take advantage of a variety of education programs and innovative educational resources.

