

## Landmark Exhibition *Robert Therrien: This is a Story* Will Be the Largest Museum Presentation of the Artist’s Monumental Work to Date

The Show Offers a Close and Immersive Look at a Visitor Favorite from the Broad Collection and Celebrates His Influence on Contemporary Sculpture



**LOS ANGELES, CA**—This fall, The Broad presents *Robert Therrien: This is a Story*, the largest museum exhibition of the late artist’s widely-adored work to date, on view November 22, 2025 to April 5, 2026. Therrien’s meditations on scale and material are a deeply influential and well-known approach within the field of contemporary sculpture, significant to The Broad’s own identity as a museum, and long admired by visitors of all ages. The installation will showcase Therrien’s personal vocabulary of images and symbols—from enormous tables, chairs, and dishes, to intimate drawings of snowmen, birds, and chapels—as they become a language of continuous creation and transformation for the artist over time. Featuring more than 120 works spanning five decades, the exhibition offers unprecedented access to the artist’s exploration of scale, memory, and perception, just miles from the downtown Los Angeles home and studio space he operated out of for close to thirty years beginning in 1990. Many of the works on view, including those created just before Therrien’s untimely death in 2019, have never been featured in museum exhibitions and will offer new avenues of understanding his practice.

“Robert Therrien has longstanding ties to The Broad and was one of the very first L.A.-based artists to enter the Broad collection decades ago, in its first, formative years. His massive sculpture *Under the Table* has captivated visitors to our museum’s galleries since the day The Broad opened in 2015, as a surreally enlarged wooden table offering layers of the artist’s intellectual and art historical inquiry within an aura of domestic familiarity,” said Joanne Heyler, Founding Director and President of The Broad. She added, “For our visitors who know and love *Under the Table*, this ambitious show will reveal a deeper and wide-lens look into the completely unique world Therrien created—a Los-Angeles-based body of work that reshaped contemporary sculpture.”

Therrien (1947–2019) was born in Chicago and relocated to Los Angeles in the 1970s to complete an MFA at the University of Southern California. Despite the prominence of conceptual and minimalist practices at the time, he developed his own adjacent artistic vernacular that saw the infinite potential of ordinary objects across basic forms and their three-dimensional counterparts, varying in size, color, and detail. A single Therrien gesture can expand, contract, change materially, or seamlessly transform into other images entirely. A chapel will become an oil can; the oil can will become a pitcher; the pitcher, a cone, then morphing into a witch hat. At the heart of Therrien’s practice is a sense of artistic animation, by turns fun, playful, and serious.



(L) *No title (bent cone relief)*, 1983. Lacquer and wax on wood. Courtesy of The Broad Art Foundation.  
(R) *No title (black witch hat)*, 2018 Carved Delrin plastic. Courtesy of Robert Therrien Estate.  
Photo by Joshua White/JWPictures.com

“Los Angeles has been and remains a historically important place to make sculpture and Robert Therrien is vital to that story” said Ed Schad, Curator and Publications Manager at The Broad. “From his handmade and intimate responses to Minimalism in the 1970s, to his early involvement in what would become a golden age of L.A. fabrication, Therrien made important contributions to many of sculpture’s central conversations for over forty years. However, the most important thing to know about Therrien is that he can evoke a sense of wonder. What starts in Therrien’s personal and closely guarded memories and passions, becomes a mysterious place in which a viewer can think about and dwell in one’s own.”

Visitors will be able to walk under and around large tables and chairs, approach enormous hanging beards, and navigate around large, stacked dishes designed to appear to be in motion and alter one’s sense of balance. In addition, a special collaboration with the artist’s estate will expose visitors to partial reconstructions of Therrien’s studio environment, including his project tables, drawings, and tools, to full-sized rooms full of surprises and encounters that are a hallmark of the artist’s practice. Therrien’s living and working space in Downtown L.A. remains pivotal to his understanding of space and size.

In addition to being the largest solo museum presentation of his work to date, *Robert Therrien: This is a Story* places his legacy within the broader arc of contemporary sculpture in Los Angeles and beyond. An exhibition catalog published by DelMonico Books will develop these connections further, edited by curator Ed Schad and featuring texts by Kathryn Scanlon, Richard Armstrong, and Darby English, as well as reflections from Vija Celmins, Vicky Arnold, Jacob Samuel, Christina Forrer and more.

Tickets to *Robert Therrien: This is a Story* will become available in Summer 2025 at [thebroad.org](https://thebroad.org). A full slate of associated programming with additional details will be announced in the coming months.

Image credits: Robert Therrien, *No title (folding table and chairs, dark brown)*, 2007. Painted steel and aluminum, fabric, and plastic. Courtesy of Glenstone Museum. Photo by Joshua White/JWPictures.com

### About The Broad

The Broad’s mission is to make contemporary art accessible to the widest possible audience. Founded in 2015 on Grand Avenue in downtown Los Angeles by philanthropists Eli and Edythe Broad, the museum offers free general admission and presents an active program of special exhibitions and innovative live events, all within a landmark building designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro. The Broad is home to the Broad collection, one of the world’s leading collections of postwar and contemporary art, which continues to grow as new artists and artworks are added. The museum is the headquarters of The Broad Art Foundation’s worldwide lending library, which has been loaning collection works to museums around the world since 1984. An expansion of the museum will open before the 2028 summer Olympics in Los Angeles, creating even greater public access.

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