

Midbrow



Haas Brothers, *She's So Ducky*, 2018, Solid carved walnut, lush velvet, glass, and electrical lighting components.
Photo: Lee Thompson. Courtesy of Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen.

I NEVER WANT TO LEAVE HAAS BROTHERS' "UNCANNY VALLEY"

BY RYAN PATRICK HOOPER

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Haas Brothers: Uncanny Valley

Cranbrook Art Museum

Friday, Nov. 1

On display through Feb. 22, 2026

I'm making the safe bet that the highly Instagram-able "Haas Brothers: Uncanny Valley" will be one of the most popular Cranbrook Art Museum exhibitions of the past couple years.

The museum touts it as the first mid-career survey devoted to twin brothers Simon and Nikolai Haas, who create their whimsical creatures, artifacts and freaky-ass yet functional furniture out of a studio in Los Angeles.

That means that all of this work from the last 15 years is back together in one space, pulled from their personal collection and from private collectors over the years (a rep for the museum said the brothers were overwhelmed by seeing all of this work in the same space for the first time ever).

For the patron, the layout of "Uncanny Valley" is far from overwhelming. It's a joy walking through this show from start to finish. The presentation, the spacing, the displays – it's a lovely use of the Cranbrook Art Museum's main galleries. I wanted to spend hours here, living amongst these characters that blend a wide range of textures, materials, technology and old school fabrication.

Speaking of textures and materials, a lot of the wonder of these creations is the mixed use of materials that is unexpected. Take “She’s So Ducky” (pictured above) for example. It blends solid carved walnut legs with red velvet that’s been painstakingly hand-stitched.



*Haas Brothers, King Dong, 2016, Icelandic sheepskin, cast bronze, and hand-carved ebony.
Photo: Joe Kramm. Courtesy of R & Company. © Haas Brothers.*

Or how about “King Dong” (yes, all the names are cute and funny and puns), which isn’t quite as functional but blends Icelandic sheepskin with cast bronze and hand-carved ebony tusks? This is my idea of what should belong in a kid’s bedroom instead of a basic-ass teddy bear.



*Haas Brothers, Shelly Duvall, 2023, Hand carved Pele de Tigre and blown glass.
Photo: Colin Doyle. Courtesy of Lora Reynolds Gallery.*

On a smaller scale, “Shelly Duvall” is a gorgeous snail with breasts (you read that right) that blends hand-carved marble and blown glass.

I love how much this is for kids as much as it is for adults. I love the sense of scale in the Cranbrook Art Museum – from the mammoth “King Dong” to the gorgeous “Strawberry Tree” that allows you to get up close and actually walk underneath it.

On every level, “Uncanny Valley” is a psychedelic home run for Cranbrook.



Haas Brothers, The Strawberry Tree, 2024; Installation view of Haas Brothers: Moonlight, Nasher Sculpture Center, May 11-August 25, 2024. Patinated bronze, Pele de Tigre marble, glass beads, hand blown glass, electrical components. Photo: Kevin Todora. Courtesy of Nasher Sculpture Center.