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Laure Prouvost Solo Exhibition at the Moody Center for the Arts Opens September 15

Above Front Tears Nest in South presents an immersive experience by award-winning visual artist, on view through December 14



Laure Prouvost, "Above Front Tears Oui Float" installation view, 2022. The National Museum Oslo, Norway. (c) Laure Prouvost. Photo by Najonalmuseet/Annar Bjørgli.

June 28, 2023 [Houston, Texas] --The Moody Center for the Arts is delighted to present the first solo exhibition in Texas of the celebrated French artist Laure Prouvost, opening

September 15 and on view through December 14, 2023. The exhibition *Above Front Tears Nest in South* invites visitors on an intriguing journey, engaging both the body and the mind through multisensorial installations, combining video, sculpture, and textiles in a mind-bending setting that creates a humorous, idiosyncratic experience.

Prouvost, an award-winning visual artist who overturns traditional modes of perception, transforms the Moody galleries into a liminal space between reality and imagination. The exhibition features large-scale, multimedia installations, found objects, sculptures, tapestries, architectural assemblages, and videos that interact with the building's architecture through a whimsical mode of display. Exploring themes of eco-feminism and environmentalism, Prouvost uses objects in surprising and provocative ways, combining them with personal and imagined memories. This unconventional approach extends to language, made tangible by the exhibition title's play on words.

"We are honored to present the work of Laure Prouvost, whose thought-provoking practice reflects the Moody's mission of fostering interdisciplinary conversation through the arts," says Executive Director Alison Weaver. "Touching on themes relating to feminism, consumerism, environmental degradation, and the history of surrealism, Moody visitors will have the opportunity to experience Prouvost's unique vision through a layered landscape that is both personal and universal."



Laure Prouvost, "Above Front Tears Oui Float" installation view, 2022. The National Museum Oslo, Norway. (c) Laure Prouvost. Photo by Najonalmuseet/Annar Bjørgli.

About the Exhibition

“Through Laure Prouvost’s surrealist work, the visitor embarks on a mesmerizing journey, flying South and then nesting at the Moody, referencing Houston’s unique location on the North American migratory paths for birds. The disruptive presence of reality is introduced through an installation that evokes oil spills and their catastrophic consequences for the environment,” explains curator Frauke V. Josenhans. “Prouvost’s vision highlights some of the critical issues of our time, as seen through the lens of eco-feminism, and at the same time asks the visitor to forego set expectations and let the mind levitate in a space of boundless freedom.”

Glass-blown birds nesting in the exhibition galleries, hybrid creatures floating between earth and sky, tapestries that evoke matriarchal figures, grotto-like tunnels leading from the dark into light, and other surprises, are part of the fantastical universe created by Laure Prouvost for the Moody Center for the Arts. With its distinctive design by Diogo Passarinho Studio, the exhibition juxtaposes an ethereal world with a grim, industrial landscape.

Welcomed by a sprinkling indoor water fountain, visitors enter Prouvost’s strange world to immediately experience the evocative power of nature, bodies, and language, guided by a large tapestry. The first encounter includes the video *Every Sunday, Grand Ma*, projected in the Media Art Gallery. A recurrent protagonist in Prouvost’s artistic universe, Grand Ma transforms into a human bird in this video work, leaving the dark grounds behind her to fly over the clouds, unbound and weightless like a celestial creature, looking at the world from a bird’s eye view.

As the visitor proceeds through the Brown Foundation Gallery, a bleak image of the Anthropocene unfolds, with its gloomy environment occupied by pipes, detritus of our consumerist society, and oil leaks. Virtual reality elements and videos introduce aspects of our digital age, and yet traces of nature are present, creating subtle points of connection as visitors find their way through oil puddles, dunes, and soil.

The Nest, a monumental structure between the two main exhibition galleries, evokes a natural bird habitat while functioning as a transitional space that visitors enter and cross before arriving at a utopian landscape that occupies the Central Gallery, filled with fog, a soft mountain to climb and rest upon, and levitating objects.

Overall, the exhibition conjures a compassionate, hopeful future where humans live as part of nature, rather than working against it. Every element, be it large or small, natural or manufactured, plays a role in helping us imagine a more productive and positive way to inhabit this world.

Laure Prouvost: Above Front Tears Nest in South will coincide with the conference of the International Society for the Study of Surrealism (ISSS) taking place in Houston, November 9–11, 2023.

The exhibition *Laure Prouvost: Above Front Tears Nest in South* is curated by Frauke V. Josenhans, Curator, Moody Center for the Arts. The exhibition design is by Diogo Passarinho Studio. A selection of works and exhibition elements were originally produced for the exhibition *The Fredriksen Commission: Laure Prouvost. Above Front Tears Oui Float*, at the National Museum in Oslo, Norway, 2022.

The exhibition is made possible by the Moody Center for the Arts Founders Circle and the Elizabeth Lee Moody Excellence Fund for the Arts. *Above Front Tears Nest in South* is supported by Etant donnés Contemporary Art, a program of Villa Albertine.

About the Artist



Laure Prouvost, portrait by David Levene, copyright David Levene.

Laure Prouvost (b. 1978, Lille, France) received her BFA from Central Saint Martins, London in 2002 and completed studies towards her MFA at Goldsmiths College, London. Prouvost was awarded the Turner Prize in 2013 and the Max Mara Prize for Women in 2011, among other awards. In 2016 she was distinguished as Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Mérite, and in 2019 was made Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. The artist created her first public commission in the United Kingdom through Transport for London's Art on the Underground in 2019, and represented France at the Venice Biennale that same year. Prouvost lives and works in Brussels, Belgium.

Artist Statement

I love your smell
you spoke my taste
from nose to toes
leaked it all
by my side, we can levitate
dusting our past we fly
I blow the same air as you
high er holding tighter

--Lyrics from "Transbird song" in the video *Every Sunday, Grand Ma*

[Download the press kit for Laure Prouvost: Above Front Tears Nest South](#)

Special Events



Laure Prouvost, "Above Front Tears Oui Float" installation view, 2022. The National Museum Oslo, Norway. (c) Laure Prouvost. Photo by Najonalmuseet/Annar Bjørgli.

Friday, September 15, 2023, 6–8 pm
Opening Reception with the artist

Saturday, September 16, 2–3 pm
Artists-in-Dialogue: Laure Prouvost + Jacqueline Couti

A multi-voice conversation between the artist, Jacqueline Couti, chair of the Department of Modern and Classical Literatures and Cultures (MCLC) at Rice University, and other faculty members.

Thursday, October 26, 6 - 8 pm
Dimensions Variable: Oliver Halkowich

An original dance performance inspired by the exhibition choreographed by Oliver Halkowich, former Houston Ballet Soloist, and now choreographer at the New Orleans Ballet Theatre.

Saturday, November 4, 3–5 pm
New Art/New Music

A presentation of original scores composed in response to the Laure Prouvost installation created by Rice University's Shepherd School of Music students.

About the Moody Center for the Arts and Rice University

Since its opening in 2017, the Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University has dedicated its resources to encouraging creative thinking and original expression, enriching curricular innovation, and promoting cross-campus and community collaboration through transformative encounters with the arts. A public-facing institution, the Moody serves as a connection between the arts at Rice and the greater Houston community.

The Moody mounts three exhibitions a year in its award-winning building, curates numerous temporary and permanent public art installations throughout Rice's campus, and hosts performances, conversations, classes, and hands-on workshops. By centering these public and open initiatives on generative partnerships with artists, scholars, and students from various disciplines, the Moody presents unexpected and everchanging entry points into the arts which bridge communities and areas of interest.

Website: moody.rice.edu

Social Media: @theMoodyArts | #MoodyHTX

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(University Entrance 8, at University Boulevard and Stockton Street)

General Hours & Admission:

Exhibition spaces are open to the public and free of charge Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and are closed Sundays, Mondays, and holidays. Events and programs are open to the public. For schedule, tickets, and prices as applicable, visit moody.rice.edu.

Directions & Parking:

The Moody Center for the Arts is located on the campus of Rice University and is best reached by using Campus Entrance 8 at the intersection of University Boulevard and Stockton Street. As you enter campus, the building is on the right, just past the Media Center. There is a dedicated parking lot adjacent to the building. Payment for the Moody Lot is by credit card only. For campus maps, visit www.rice.edu/maps.

About Rice University

Located on a 300-acre forested campus in Houston, Rice University is consistently ranked among the nation's top 20 universities by U.S. News & World Report. Rice has highly respected schools of Architecture, Business, Continuing Studies, Engineering, Humanities, Music, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences and is home to the Baker Institute for Public Policy. With 3,879 undergraduates and 2,861 graduate students, Rice's undergraduate student-to-faculty ratio is 6-to-1. Its residential college system builds close-knit communities and lifelong friendships, just one reason why Rice is ranked No. 1 for quality of life and for lots of race/class interaction and No. 2 for happiest students by the Princeton Review. Rice is also rated as the best value among private universities by Kiplinger's Personal Finance.

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