

## TWO MAJOR ACQUISITIONS STRENGTHEN RICE PUBLIC ART

Permanent works by Sol LeWitt and Ursula von Rydingsvard will debut this year



Ursula von Rydingsvard, *Malutka II*, 2018, Bronze,  
70 3/8 x 53 3/16 x 37 inches (178.8 x 135.1 x 94 cm)

**HOUSTON, TX, [March 1, 2019]** — Two new acquisitions by Rice Public Art are poised to dramatically strengthen and diversify the university's collection of exceptional public artwork.

A new bronze sculpture by Ursula von Rydingsvard will be installed this spring. It represents the first outdoor sculpture by a woman to be permanently displayed on the Rice campus and will be the world-renowned artist's first public work in Houston.

The second major addition is a late-career wall drawing by celebrated American artist Sol LeWitt, widely viewed as one of the most influential artists of the 20th and 21st centuries. It is the first work of conceptual art to enter the Rice Public Art collection and will be installed at the Glasscock School of Continuing Studies this fall.

Von Rydingsvard's *Malutka II*, a 7-foot sculpture first carved from cedar and then cast in bronze, will occupy a grassy space near the entrance to the Cambridge Office Building, across a tree-lined courtyard from the Allen Center, the university's administrative headquarters. Best known for sculptures of massive scale, the artist selected an appropriate title for her smaller work at Rice. The feminine form of "little one" in Polish, *Malutka* is the most recent work in the artist's impressive four-decade career and her first small-scale bronze sculpture.

Born in 1942 to Polish parents who farmed in Germany before fleeing to a series of refugee camps after World War II, von Rydingsvard hails from a long line of “peasants” with an innate connection to the earth. This informs her work in manifold ways. She stacks cedar planks into unique forms, tracing curves and outlines onto each one as she goes, never pre-planning the sculpture’s ultimate form before it’s carved or cast.



Born in 1942 to Polish parents who toiled for years in German refugee camps, Ursula von Rydingsvard hails from a long line of “peasants” with an innate connection to the earth.

“That would take the life out of it,” the artist says.

The patina on the surface of the work is created by hand through chemicals and a blow torch, resulting in a variegated and visually dynamic surface.

“Ursula von Rydingsvard is one of the most important sculptors working today,” said Alison Weaver, executive director of the Moody Center for the Arts, who oversees Rice’s public art program. “We are delighted to be able to add Malutka II to Rice’s growing public art collection. Like the trees on campus, it will become a welcoming beacon for both students and visitors.”

The acquisition of von Rydingsvard’s work is made possible by the half-percent-for-art program, established by President David Leebron in 2008, which has led to the commission of important public artwork on campus by Leo Villareal, Dana Frankfort, Debra Barrera, Aurora Robson and James Surls, among others.

Across campus at the Glasscock School of Continuing Studies, "Wall Drawing #1115: Circle within a square, each with broken bands of color" (2004) by the late LeWitt will be installed this fall in the Dean’s Commons of the Anderson-Clarke Center.

A gift of Rice alumnus H. Russell Pitman '58, "Wall Drawing #1115" underscores the intellectual rigor and nature of collaboration that takes place at Rice. The work was first conceived and installed in 2004, shortly before the artist’s death in 2007.

In the Summer 1967 issue of Artforum, LeWitt published his pioneering “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art” in which he wrote: “In conceptual art, the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work. ... The idea becomes a machine that makes the art.” These foundational statements are reflected in LeWitt’s groundbreaking body of wall drawings, which have been executed by professionals other than the artist since the first works were drafted at Paula Cooper Gallery in New York in 1965.

Comprising more than 1,270 individual works, LeWitt’s collection of wall drawings is among the most significant and influential bodies of work ever produced by an American artist.

“This important work by Sol LeWitt will add an unprecedented level of energy and dynamism to the Dean’s Commons and be enjoyed by students and visitors alike,” said Robert Bruce, dean of the Glasscock School of Continuing Studies. “We couldn’t be more grateful for Russ Pitman’s generous gift, which will positively impact the life of the campus for years to come.”



Sol LeWitt, Wall Drawing #1115: Circle within a square, each with broken bands of color, 2014, Acrylic paint, dimensions variable. Gift of Russell H. Pitman. © Estate of Sol LeWitt / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

To celebrate this permanent addition to the Rice Public Art collection and its installation at the Anderson-Clarke Center, the Glasscock School of Continuing Studies will organize a series of dynamic public programs in conjunction with its public debut. LeWitt’s body of work, and the notions of conceptual and creative collaboration evident in it, will also be reflected in fall curriculum and activities taking place at the Glasscock School.

### **ABOUT THE MOODY CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

Inaugurated in February 2017, the Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University is a state-of-the-art, non-collecting institution dedicated to transdisciplinary collaboration among the arts, sciences and humanities. The 50,000-square foot facility, designed by acclaimed Los Angeles-based architect Michael Maltzan, serves as an experimental platform for creating and presenting works in all disciplines, a flexible teaching space to encourage new modes of making and a forum for creative partnerships with visiting national and international artists. The Moody is free and open to the public year-round.

**Website:** [moody.rice.edu](http://moody.rice.edu)  
**Social Media:** @theMoodyArts | #atTheMoody  
**Phone:** +1 713.348.ARTS  
**Address:** Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University  
6100 Main Street, MS-480, Houston, TX 77005  
(University Entrance 8, at University Boulevard and Stockton Street)

**Hours & Admission:**  
The exhibition spaces and café are open to the public and free of charge Tuesday through Saturday from 10am to 5pm, and closed Sundays, Mondays and holidays. Events and programs are open to the public through an advance reservation system. For schedule, tickets and prices, visit [moody.rice.edu](http://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](http://www.rice.edu/maps).

## ABOUT RICE UNIVERSITY

Located on a 300-acre forested campus in central Houston, Rice University is a comprehensive research university that is consistently ranked among the nation's top 20 universities by U.S. News & World Report. With 3,910 undergraduates and 2,809 graduate students, Rice is home to highly respected schools of Architecture, Business, Continuing Studies, Engineering, Humanities, Music, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences as well as the Baker Institute for Public Policy. The new Moody Center for the Arts celebrates Rice's commitment to creativity and the arts as a key part of its educational mission and establishes a new arts district on Rice's campus, joining the distinguished Shepherd School of Music and the permanent James Turrell *Twilight Epiphany* Skyspace. For more information, visit [www.rice.edu](http://www.rice.edu).

**Press Contact:**

Lisa Sursavage

+1 713-348-4115

[lisa.sursavage@rice.edu](mailto:lisa.sursavage@rice.edu)