

MOODY CENTER FOR THE ARTS ANNOUNCES SPRING 2021 SEASON
CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROTHKO CHAPEL
AND THE HISTORY OF THE ARTS AT RICE



David Novros, *Untitled*, 1973-75, Oil on canvas. Left wall: 120 × 188 in. (304.8 × 477.5 cm); Center wall: 120 × 216 in. (304.8 × 548.6 cm); Right wall: 120 × 177 3/4 in. (304.8 × 451.5 cm). Photographer: Hickey-Robertson, Houston. The Menil Collection, Houston, Partial gift of David Novros with funds provided by the Pinewood Foundation, 1989-01 DJ. Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery.

(HOUSTON, TX – October 27, 2020] Alison Weaver, the Suzanne Deal Booth Executive Director, announced today that the Moody Center for the Arts' spring program will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Rothko Chapel by presenting a unique group exhibition and original programs in recognition of this important milestone in the history of Houston and the arts at Rice. The season will honor the legacy of John and Dominique de Menil by highlighting the influence the Rothko Chapel has had on both artists and the public since opening in 1971, with special acknowledgement of the exhibition *Marden, Novros, Rothko: Painting in the Age of Actuality* mounted at Rice University in 1975.

"Dominique and John de Menil had a vision for Houston, as symbolized by the Rothko Chapel, that has resonated with generations of artists. After 50 years, the Chapel remains a powerful source of inspiration for creators around

the globe, not only from an aesthetic point of view but also from a humanistic one," explains Associate Curator Frauke V. Josenhans.

Titled *Artists and the Rothko Chapel: 50 Years of Inspiration*, the exhibition will be on view from January 22 – May 15, 2021, in the Moody's Brown Foundation, Central and Media Galleries, as well as outdoors under the Pitman Oculus. Organized in two sections, the first section will restage the historic exhibition *Marden, Novros, Rothko: Painting in the Age of Actuality* organized at the Institute for the Arts at Rice University by Harris Rosenstein with the support of Dominique de Menil in 1975. The original works by Marden and Novros will be reunited for the first time since 1975, recreating the immersive experience that viewers had upon first seeing them installed at Rice.

The second section of the exhibition will highlight recent works by contemporary artists of different ages, nationalities and backgrounds as a means of exploring the wide-reaching influence of the non-denominational Chapel and the enduring nature of its legacy through various media and aesthetics. The featured artists are Sam Gilliam, Sheila Hicks, Shirazeh Houshiary, and Byron Kim.

Connecting the past with the present, *Artists and the Rothko Chapel* will not solely place the Rothko Chapel in its historic context, but will also offer new perspectives by including contemporary artists for whom the Chapel has been a generative source of inspiration that deeply nourishes their own practice. By presenting these artists together for the first time, and in the context of the Chapel's 50th anniversary, visitors will have the opportunity to see these artists, as well the Chapel, in a new light.

Artists and the Rothko Chapel: 50 Years of Inspiration will be accompanied by a full-color catalogue to be published in the spring of 2021.

The Moody Center for the Arts will organize a series of interdisciplinary programs responding to the exhibition, which will take place in tandem with the Rothko Chapel's 50th Anniversary celebrations in the spring of 2021. For more information on the Chapel's program, please visit: <http://rothkochapel.org>

Artists and the Rothko Chapel: 50 Years of Inspiration is curated by Moody Center for the Arts Associate Curator Frauke V. Josenhans.

This exhibition is made possible through the Moody Center for the Arts Founders Circle, the Texas Commission on the Arts and the Elizabeth Lee Moody Excellence Fund for the Arts with additional support from the John R. Eckel, Jr. Foundation.

EXHIBITION, FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Artists and the Rothko Chapel: 50 Years of Inspiration

January 22–May 15, 2021

Brown Foundation, Central and Media Galleries, Outdoors under the Pitman Oculus

The exhibition will feature work responding to the Rothko Chapel by the following six artists:

Brice Marden (b. 1938, Bronxville, NY) is known for his subtle chromatic compositions that combine Minimalism, the immediacy of Abstract Expressionism, and the intuitive gesture of calligraphy. His first visit to the Rothko Chapel in 1972 triggered a life-long engagement with the chromatic and material aspects of the Rothko panels. The small version of *The Seasons* was included in the 1975 exhibition *Marden, Novros, Rothko: Painting in the Age of Actuality* at Rice University, and will be shown in dialogue with more recent works by Marden, exhibited here for the first time.

David Novros (b. 1941, Los Angeles, CA) has created monumental, chromatic and abstract paintings since the 1960s. His works create a spatial cohesiveness, emphasizing that painting and architecture are part of the same

viewing experience. Following the invitation to respond to the Chapel, he created three *Rooms* that were included in the 1975 exhibition *Marden, Novros, Rothko: Painting in the Age of Actuality* that will be reunited at the Moody for the first time since their inaugural display.

Sam Gilliam (b. 1933, Tupelo, MS) has pushed the boundaries of Color Field painting since the 1960s with his canonical Drape paintings, which engage with both the material and the surrounding space in unique ways. He has exhibited his large-scale works around the globe, notably at the 2017 Venice Biennale and currently at DIA: Beacon. His recent large-scale watercolor paintings evoke the style of lyrical abstraction while engaging with deeper topics such as civil rights and equality, which have been central to the Rothko Chapel's mission since its inception.

Sheila Hicks (b. 1934, Hastings, NE) is a pioneering fiber artist who blurs the boundary between painting and sculpture with her vibrant, polychromatic textile works, which she creates in many shapes and sizes. Travels to investigate the artisanal fabrics of Colombia, Chile, Peru, and Bolivia have deeply informed her art and her creative process. Hicks' work has been shown in various international exhibitions, notably the 2017 Venice Biennale and the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, in 2018. Her large-scale textile sculpture *The Questioning Column* will be displayed outside the Moody, in dialogue with the building's architecture and the surrounding landscape.

Since rising to prominence as a sculptor in the 1980s, **Shirazeh Houshiary's** (b. 1955, Shiraz, Iran) practice has expanded to encompass painting, installation, architectural projects and film. Her monochromatic painting *Flare-Up* is composed of delicate patterns, combining influences from diverse cultures including Islamic architecture and calligraphy, Western modern art, as well as nature and science. Her video work *Breath* addresses questions of spirituality and perception, and its immersive viewing experience echoes that of the Chapel.

Byron Kim (b. 1961, La Jolla, CA) creates paintings that are situated between abstraction and representation, hovering between conceptualism and pure painting. Works like his *Night Sky* and *Black Wave* paintings appear to be abstract fields, but upon closer inspection they reveal an engagement with color and vision, as well as with questions of human identity and existence. Kim is creating new work for the Moody exhibition that further engages with socio-cultural questions of abstraction.

Byron Kim will also be the spring 2021 **Leslie and Brad Bucher Artist-in-Residence**, participating in the cultural life of Houston and Rice University either in person or remotely, as pandemic protocols permit.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

ALL FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Opening Reception

Friday, January 22, 2021, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Central, Brown Foundation and Media Galleries

Original music with DACAMERA

April 10, 2021, 7:00–8:00 p.m.

Through a partnership with Houston's DACAMERA, composers in the DACAMERA Young Artist Program will create original musical responses to the exhibition, inspired by the artworks on display. The performance will be ambulatory, allowing the audience to walk through the galleries while experiencing multiple performances, staged both internally and externally. Both original compositions and historic works by composers such as John Cage and Morton Feldman will be performed.

Leslie and Brad Bucher Artist-in-Residence

The spring 2021 Leslie and Brad Bucher Artist-in-Residence will be Byron Kim (b. 1961, La Jolla, CA) a painter and Senior Critic at the Yale School of Art who uses abstraction to investigate matters of identity and the environment,

be it social or cultural. The residency will take place either in person or virtually, depending on restrictions related to COVID-19.

Catalogue

The exhibition will be accompanied by a full-color catalogue, which will include new installation images, interviews and contributions by the artists featured in the exhibition, as well as testimonies by cultural figures, reflecting on the Rothko Chapel and the arts at Rice.

Published by the Moody Center for the Arts, distributed by Yale University Press.

Edited by Frauke V. Josenhans, with a foreword by Christopher Rothko and contributions by Sam Gilliam, Sheila Hicks, Shirazeh Houshiary, Byron Kim, Brice Marden, David Novros, as well as by Virginia and William Camfield, Reto Geiser, Ian Glennie, Fredericka Hunter, David Leslie, Matthew L. Levy, Francois de Menil, Adrienne Rooney, Sarah Rothenberg, Mary Jane Victor, Alison Weaver, Helen Winkler Fosdick, Geoff Winningham and Yuri Yoshida.

The catalogue is supported by the Rice University Art Gallery Catalogue Endowment, Gagosian and the Dedalus Foundation.

The Moody's COVID-19 Response

In response to COVID-19, the Moody will follow CDC guidelines and the directions of Rice University. Visitors will be required to wear face coverings and maintain social distancing of six feet or more. Entry to the galleries will be limited to support social distancing. All events will require RSVPs, which will be available through the Moody website. In addition to increased cleaning protocols, visitors can expect low-touch entry and exit points and a limited number of people in all public areas.

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

Social Media: @theMoodyArts | #MoodyHTX | #StatesOfMindMoody

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 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.

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 a best value among private universities by Kiplinger's Personal Finance. Read "[What they're saying about Rice.](#)"

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