

For Immediate Release

Contact: Erin Rolfs
Director of Marketing
and Communications

erin.rolfs@rice.edu
713-348-4115
moody.rice.edu

Moody Center for the Arts Commissions Five New Public Artworks for Rice University

Large-scale, temporary installations showcase the work of Houstonians Tay Butler, Loc Huynh, and Virginia L. Montgomery; MFA Houston's Core Residency Program alumna Yifan Jiang; and New Orleans-based artist/activist jackie sumell



Virginia L. Montgomery, *Moon Moth Transcends Black Hole*, 2025 rendering by the artist. Original photography by Allyson Huntsman.

[Houston, TX-- August 13, 2025]--Alison Weaver, the Suzanne Deal Booth Executive Director of the Moody Center for the Arts, has announced that five large-scale works will be installed throughout Rice University's campus this fall, showcasing a vibrant group of artists whose work explores critical issues of our time. Each site-specific work is a reflection of the Moody's ongoing commitment to dynamic public art and working with innovative living artists.

"These five installations offer students, faculty, staff, and visitors the opportunity to directly engage with artists through projects designed specifically for the campus," Weaver said. "In keeping with the aim of public art at Rice, we hope these works will foster conversation and inspire a sense of community throughout the academic year."

Moody-commissioned installations debuting this fall continue several multi-year public art initiatives spearheaded by the organization: Houston artists Tay Butler, Loc Huynh, and Virginia L. Montgomery (VLM) will open new works for the **Tent Series** on September 10; MFA Houston's Core Residency Program alumna Yifan Jiang will be featured in **Off the Wall at Brochstein Pavilion**, providing remarks at the September 19 reception; and New Orleans-based Jackie Sumell will contribute to the **Platform** series, opening on October 22.

To learn more about the focus and history of each series—[Tent Series](#), [Off the Wall](#), and [Platform](#)—visit our website. Specific details of the 2025 – 2026 artists and installations can be found below. Contact Erin Rolfs, erin.rolfs@rice.edu, for promotional images and interview requests.

Tent Series: Butler, Huynh, VLM

Opening reception September 10, 6 - 8 pm

On view September 10, 2025 – May 15, 2026

On Loop Road across from Herring Hall at Rice University



Loc Huynh, Tay Butler, and Virginia L. Montgomery (VLM). Photos courtesy of the artists.

For the Moody's Tent Series, artists are invited to respond to the current moment and the campus environment with interventions that inspire connection. These artworks, which change at the start of the fall semester, are installed in the heart of campus on the front of the Provisional Campus Facilities, found on Loop Road.



Tay Butler, *Garrison*, 2025. Rendering.

Tay Butler, *Garrison*, 2025

Vinyl. Original work, digital collage of scanned archival images

Tay Butler creates original collages from found images extracted from cultural objects such as magazines, newspapers, posters, and album covers. The resulting compositions reanimate historical narratives, scrutinize present perceptions, and imagine alternative futures. *Garrison* is a digital collage comprised of images from Butler's extensive personal archive. Three Afro-futuristic liberators appear before a background of jungle-like foliage. Excerpted images of famous Black men from the fields of athletics, entertainment, and academics, including Michael Jordan, Travis Scott, and Cornel West, reference Black notions of excellence from the recent past. These fantastical androids stand in quantum entanglement with the nearby figures, highlighting the dangers and limitations of categorization. A call to community engagement and sociopolitical participation, *Garrison* imagines a more equitable future made possible through individual and collective action. This installation is organized by Alison Weaver, Suzanne Deal Booth Executive Director of the Moody Center for the Arts.



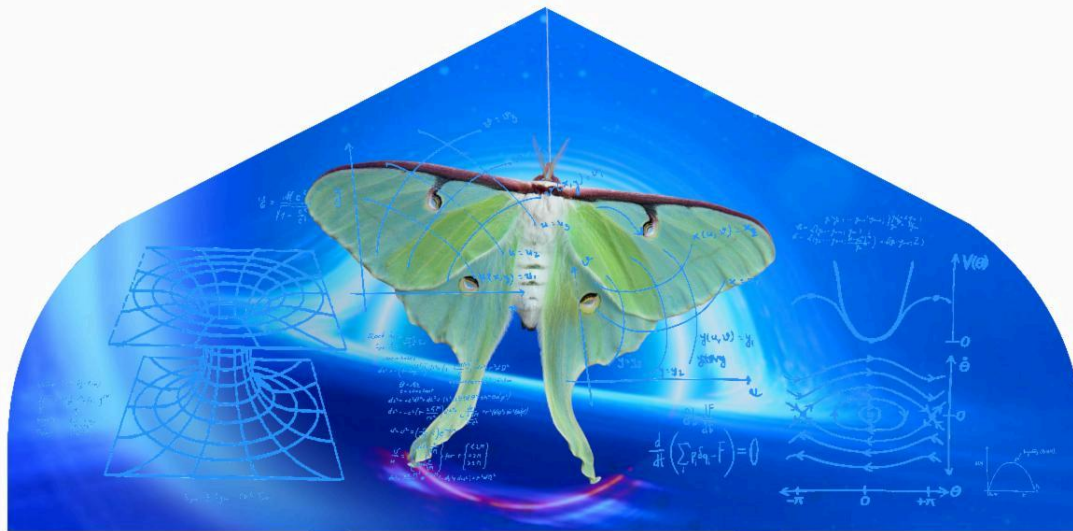
Loc Huynh, *The Duel*, 2025. Rendering.

Loc Huynh, *The Duel*, 2025

Vinyl, original work: Acrylic, enamel, and oil on wood

Artist Loc Huynh creates vibrant, figurative paintings that blend Vietnamese, Chinese, and Texan cultural imagery, while conveying a distinct visual language emblematic of his

identity as a second-generation Asian American. Drawing on the history of painting and the graphic arts, Huynh combines stylistic cues from Pop Art with the design sensibilities of comics and cartoons, while incorporating autobiographical anecdotes. Set in Houston's Hong Kong City Mall, *The Duel* depicts two Vietnamese men playing cò tướng (Chinese chess) against the lively backdrop of a local Vietnamese food stall, Quan Binh Minh. This playful, everyday scene speaks to notions of placemaking and belonging, capturing a fleeting moment where communities from the Asian diasporas convene. Pointing to his interest in art history, *The Duel* was inspired by French Impressionist painter Paul Cézanne's (1839-1906) *The Card Players* (1890-92), an oil painting that pays homage to the Provençal countryside through a contemplative scene of farm workers playing cards. Huynh's *The Duel* is rooted in the Western art historical canon, yet reappropriates the card-playing genre to construct a scene that incorporates Eastern and Western traditions while remaining grounded in the present day. This installation is organized by Noor Alé, Associate Curator for the Moody Center for the Arts.



Virginia L. Montgomery, *Moon Moth Transcends Black Hole*, 2025. Rendering.

Virginia L. Montgomery, *Moon Moth Transcends Black Hole*, 2025
HD video and vinyl

The artist Virginia L. Montgomery (VLM) explores in her work the idea that consciousness is not unique to humans, and that all creatures and objects are sentient beings. Drawing from surrealism, mysticism, neuroscience, and physics, she combines aspects of these different fields in whimsical and introspective projects that encompass video installations, photography, sculpture, and performance. For the Tent series, she created a live-action dreamscape of Luna moths (*Aticus Luna*), a species native to Houston. The video illustrates themes of metamorphosis and cosmology through the juxtaposition of two theories, the “Butterfly Effect”—a concept within chaos theory that highlights how small actions can have large consequences—and Emmy Noether’s Theorem, which highlights a connection between symmetries in physical systems and conservation laws. The animated images are projected over vinyl decals that represent mathematical calculations depicting Albert Einstein’s Field Equations and Emmy Noether’s Theorem. Through the eerie layering of close-up shots of the moths and mathematical diagrams, Montgomery combines abstract concepts and *macrocosm*, the close study of moths, to create a bridge between scientific research and life forms, big and small. This installation is organized by Frauke Josenhans, guest curator.

The works in the Tent Series were made possible by the Moody Center for the Arts Founders Circle. Previous commissions in this series include work from Karin Broker, GONZO247, Robert Hodge, Allison Hunter, Hedwige Jacobs, Delita Martin, Lorena Molina, Preetika Rajgariah, Royal Sumikat, Kenneth Tam, Sindhu Thirumalaisamy, Sarah Welch, Charisse Pearlina Weston, and Jasmine Zelaya.



Yifan Jiang, *Cafeteria* (detail), 2025.

Off the Wall: Yifan Jiang, *Cafeteria*

Opening reception September 19, 5 - 7 pm

On view September 19, 2025 – August 23, 2026

Brochstein Pavilion at Rice University

Yifan Jiang is a Chinese Canadian artist based in New York whose project-driven practice encompasses painting, sculpture, animation, and performance. As a diasporic artist, Jiang's work examines shared similarities and differences across cultures and belief systems. Her work invokes magical realism to create everyday scenes interlaced with references to philosophy, history, and science, frequently pointing to the limits of language in expressing fragments of our imagination. The work for this series, *Cafeteria*, was inspired by Jiang's frequent visits to the Brochstein Pavilion while she audited philosophy classes at Rice University during her two-year Core Residency Program at the Glassell School of Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. To create this work, Jiang drew from Houston's culinary histories, illustrating pastries—including those sold in the café here—through an expressive, freehand approach. Overlaid with acrylic paint, the mural depicts the silhouettes of windswept oak trees, birds in flight, and passing students, their shadows mirroring the world outside. In this space where contemplation and leisure intersect, Jiang's *Cafeteria* raises questions about what we know, what reality is, and where it begins to slip into a dream.

Off the Wall: Yifan Jiang is organized by Noor Alé, Associate Curator, Moody Center for the Arts. It is made possible by Leslie & Brad Bucher and by the Brochstein family in memory of Raymond Brochstein. Previous commissions for this series include work by William Cordova, Danielle Dean, Harold Mendez, Karyn Olivier, Sondra Perry, and Clarissa Tossin.



Promotional image provided by jackie sumell.

Platform: jackie sumell, *Endangered Feces*

Opening reception October 22, 6 - 7 pm

On view October 22, 2025 - May 15, 2026

The Harris Gully Natural Area at Rice University

Building on a body of work where plants become storytellers, healers, and guides, *Endangered Feces* features two large-scale, durational sculptures created through a collective building process called Revolutionary Mortar. Inspired by the shapes of the excrement of two endangered species, the Houston toad and the Attwater prairie-chicken, each decomposable sculpture holds a mixture of nonhydraulic lime, dirt, and organic materials that highlights the connection between the highest-volume crops historically cultivated in the South during the time of slavery and plant matter from the diet of endangered animals. The artworks decompose over time, revitalizing the landscape through intervention, intention, and education.

Platform: jackie sumell is organized by Alison Weaver, Suzanne Deal Booth Executive Director, in partnership with Rice University Art Department Associate Professor Natasha Bowdoin. It is made possible by the Moody Center for the Arts Founders Circle.

Since launching in 2017, the artists commissioned for the Platform series include Jarrod Beck, Rana Begum, Julia Gartrell, Eva LeWitt, Nina Katchadourian, Devin Kenny, Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Edra Soto, Martha Tuttle, and We Make Carpets.

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

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

Exhibition spaces are open to the public and free of charge Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and closed Sundays, Mondays, and holidays. Events and programs are open to the public. For schedule, registration links, 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.

Press Contact

Erin Rolfs | +1 713-348-4115 | erin.rolfs@rice.edu



Moody Center for the Arts

Rice University

6100 Main Street, MS-480

Houston, TX 77005-1827

moody.rice.edu

713-348-ARTS



Copyright © 2018. All Rights Reserved.

Moody Center for the Arts | 6100 Main Street, MS-480 | Houston, TX 77005 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)