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**Moody Center for the Arts Announces
Spring 2026 Exhibition
*Imaging After Photography***

On view January 23 to May 9, 2026, this innovative exhibition explores the impact of artificial intelligence on the medium of photography through the work of global contemporary artists



Trevor Paglen, *The Standard Head*, bronze, lacquer. 2020. Courtesy Pace Gallery.

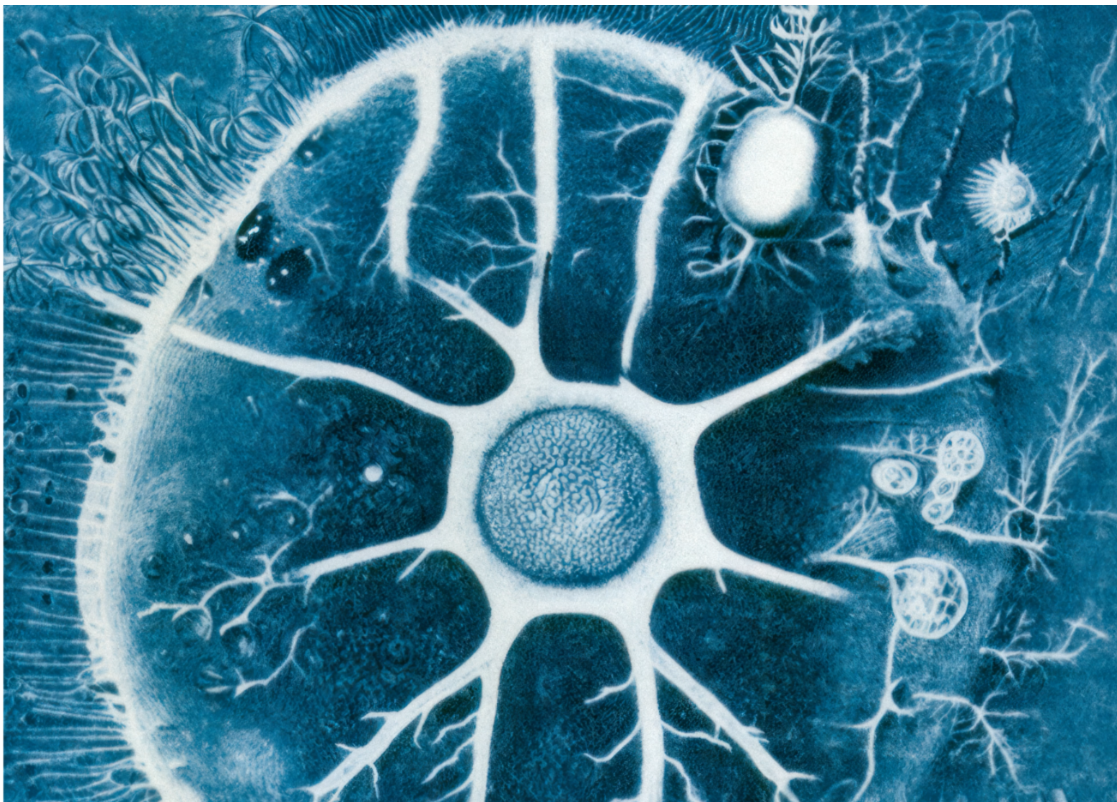
October 15 , 2025 (Houston, TX) – The Moody Center for the Arts is pleased to announce *Imaging After Photography*, a timely exhibition responding to the transformative influence of artificial intelligence (AI) on the medium of photography. Opening January 23, 2026, and on view through May 9, 2026, this presentation coincides with the fortieth anniversary of FotoFest, the international photography biennial hosted in Houston, Texas. This innovative presentation includes works by Nouf Aljowaysir, Refik Anadol, Grégory Chatonsky, Sofia Crespo, Joan Fontcuberta, Lisa Oppenheim, and Trevor Paglen.

“There are few topics as urgent as artificial intelligence and its impact on all facets of society,” said Alison Weaver, cocurator and Suzanne Deal Booth Executive Director, Moody Center for the Arts. “Through this presentation of works by some of today’s most thoughtful and visionary artists, we hope to inspire dialogue about the influence of new technologies on the images that populate our daily lives and shape our visual culture.”

Offering a diverse range of works made since 2016, *Imaging After Photography* highlights artists who incorporate contemporary technologies into their practice in order to reflect on the history and future of photography. With a specific concern for the rise of generative AI, the artworks prompt questions about unchecked biases in datasets and encoded in algorithms; the power of digital extraction and distillation to both reveal truth and corrupt it; and the impact of visualizing recovered histories, concurrent realities, and speculative futures.

The exhibition is curated by Alison Weaver, Suzanne Deal Booth Executive Director, and Noor Alé, Associate Curator. The exhibition design is by world: Alejandro Stein and Frank J. Mondragón.

More About the Exhibition



Through seven contemporary artists, *Imaging After Photography* applies an accessible frame around the mercurial nature of our visual world, enabling a concentrated exploration of how photography, and by extension our lived experience, is shaped by AI.

The exhibition is anchored by works from pioneering artist **Trevor Paglen** (b. 1974, Camp Springs, Maryland; lives in New York). Visitors will have the opportunity to explore important examples from his series *Eigenface* (2016) and *Bloom* (2020), as well as the monumental sculpture *The Standard Head* (2020) and the interactive video *Faces of ImageNet* (2022), each shown in Texas for the first time. Viewed together, these works illuminate themes central to Paglen's practice, including the politics of images, artificial intelligence, and the often unseen technologies that shape our society.

The obfuscating effects of AI technology are further explored by **Nouf Aljowaysir** (b.1993, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; lives in Brooklyn). Her works, *Machine Vision Research in Archival Images* (2020), *Salaf (Ancestors)* (2021), and *Ancestral Seeds* (2025), are based on photographs of famed British writer and archaeologist Gertrude Bell (1868–1926), who documented her travels across the Middle East. By subjecting Bell's photographs to computer vision models, Aljowaysir reveals mislabeling and stereotypes informed by Western notions of the "Other." The resulting images, devoid of their original subjects, highlight the biases embedded in AI tools and the ways computer systems can perpetuate prejudice.

Demonstrating a more optimistic view of the creative possibilities powered by AI, **Refik Anadol** (b. 1985, Istanbul, Turkey; lives in Los Angeles), drew from more than two hundred million publicly available digital images of the natural world for his work *Quantum Memories Nature Studies* (2021). Anadol used AI to extract defining features from the original images and then deployed that information to create new, speculative images, transforming visual data into a form of immersive video-based art. The project is inspired by the many-worlds interpretation of quantum physics—a theory that posits that many worlds exist in parallel, in the same space and time as our own.



Lisa Oppenheim, *Mlle Steichen, Version XXII*, 2024, dye transfer print. Courtesy the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York

Completion 1.0 (2021) by **Grégory Chatonsky** (b. 1971, Paris, France; lives in Paris), engages AI to generate an alternative, counterfactual history of photography. A floor-based screen broadcasts ImageNet, a large-scale image database created to train and evaluate AI models. A second screen displays AI-generated images made by cross-referencing heterogeneous categories such as plants, animals, and techniques. A synthetic voice describes each image, drawing on the history of photography. The resulting installation reflects our unstable, mutating world, questioning our cognitive and perceptive abilities in the face of rapidly evolving technologies.

Inspired by a historical image dataset, **Sofia Crespo** (b. 1991, Buenos Aires, Argentina; lives in Lisbon, Portugal) roots her work *Temporally Uncaptured* (2023–2024) in the cyanotypes of English botanist and photographer Anna Atkins (1799–1871). After creating a digital distillation of Atkins’s 1843 book *Photographs of British Algae*, the first publication illustrated with photographs, Crespo used a system of neural networks to produce generative images. The resultant series of prints and videos focuses on the often-imperceptible temporal transitions in the life cycles of organisms, as mediated by both the human eye and technological processes.



Joan Fontcuberta, *What Darwin Missed* (Detail), 2024, print from the series. Funded by the Alfred Ehrhardt Stiftung, Berlin. Courtesy the artist and àngels barcelona.

Also embedded in the natural world, *What Darwin Missed* (2024) by **Joan Fontcuberta** (b. 1955, Barcelona, Spain; lives in Barcelona) explores the legacy of *The Structure and Distribution of Coral Reefs* (1842), the work in which Charles Darwin (1809–1882) first began to outline the interpretive framework of the theory of evolution. Further inspired by twentieth-century German photographer Alfred Ehrhardt (1901–1984), who photographed the coral collection of Hamburg’s Natural History Museum, Fontcuberta combines both his own analog photographs of naturally occurring corals with AI-generated versions, inviting doubts about our ability to discern what is naturally occurring and what is synthetically generated.

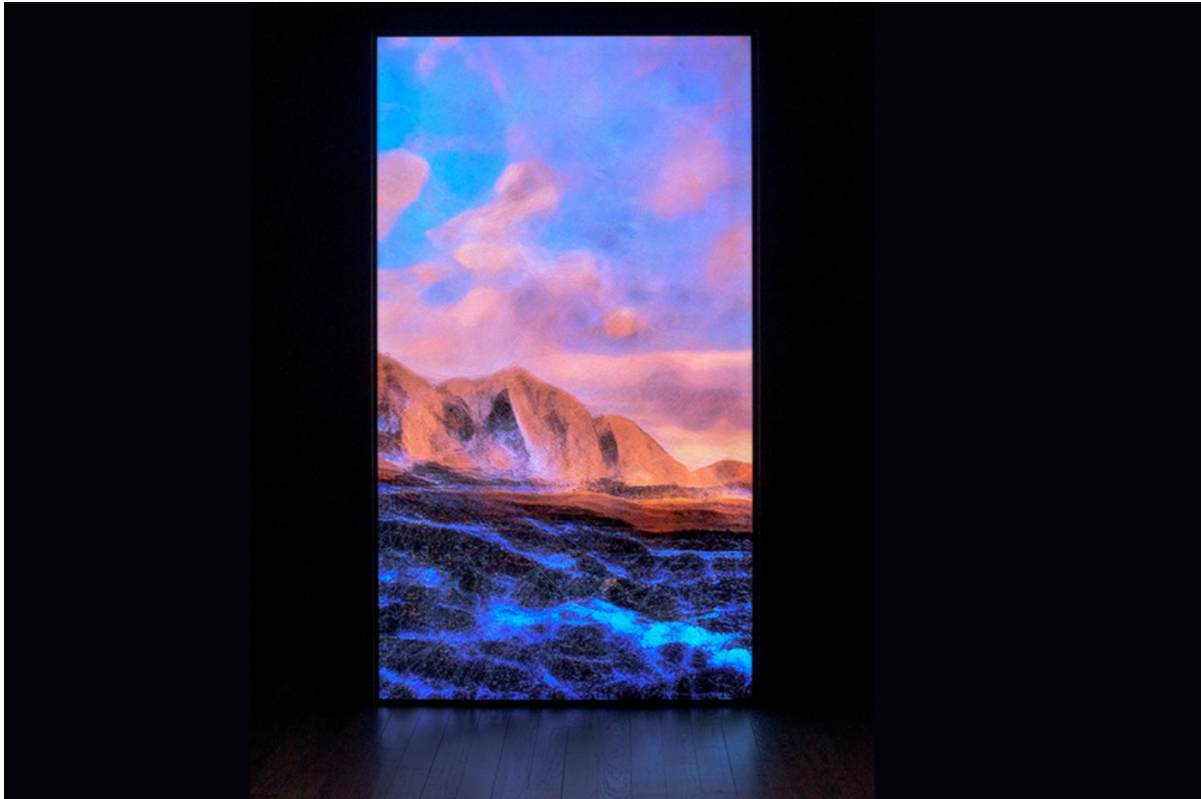
Lisa Oppenheim’s (b. 1975, New York, New York; lives in New York) newest body of work depicts a now-extinct variety of Iris flower named *Monsieur Steichen*. The varietal was created in 1910 by an amateur botanist as a tribute to photographer Edward Steichen (1879–1973), who maintained a lifelong practice of flower cultivation. Since there are no extant photographs of the varietal, Oppenheim used AI to create speculative images, informing the algorithm with images of the known parent plants. Oppenheim then produced physical prints through a traditional dye-transfer process used by Steichen in the 1930s and 1940s, incorporating her own “incorrect” color combinations. The resulting series explores concepts of genetic and photographic manipulation, combining historic and contemporary techniques to reconstruct the past and to invite speculation about the future.

Through these visually engaging and conceptually layered works, *Imaging After Photography* mines the collaborative power of AI and photography to reveal,

reconstruct, and reimagine within worlds, both real and synthetic.

Imaging After Photography is made possible by the Libbie Rice Shearn Moody Fund for the Arts and the Texas Commission on the Arts. Major support is provided by the Elizabeth Lee Moody Excellence Fund and the Thomas D. and Pamela Riley Smith Endowment. Additional support is provided by the Moody Center for the Arts Founders Circle.

Special Programming



Refik Anadol, *Quantum Memories Nature Studies* (2021), digital video (with sound), 16 minutes, 34 seconds (loop). Carl & Marilyn Thoma Foundation

All events are free and open to the public

***Imaging After Photography* Opening Reception**

Friday, January 23, 2026 | 6 – 8 pm

Be the first to experience the exhibition, enjoy beverages, and hear from the curators and some of the exhibiting artists during the free public opening.

***Imaging After Photography* Symposium**

Friday, March 6, 2026 | 9 am – 1 pm

Join us for a multivoice conversation featuring leading artists, technologists, and scholars. This half-day symposium will present a keynote speaker and two dedicated panels that will explore AI and its impact on creativity, ethics, and the history of photography.

New Art / New Music: Spring 2026

Saturday, March 28, 2026 | 3 – 5 pm

Hear original scores inspired by works featured in *Imaging after Photography*.

Composed and performed live in the galleries by students from Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, the series combines visual and aural innovation, offering new perspectives on the exhibition. Please join us after the concert for a reception including light bites and beverages.

Dimensions Variable: Mitchell + Riener, *Open Machine*

Friday, April 10, and Saturday, April 11, 2026 | 6 – 7:30 pm

Experience New York-based choreographers Rashaun Mitchell and Silas Riener's *Open Machine*, a cutting-edge project that imagines artificial intelligence through the lens of experimental dance. Technically precise dancers wearing sensory devices follow algorithmic rules that are simultaneously reflected on large LED screens in the Moody's Lois Chiles Studio Theater. The performance is set to a score by electronic-music composer Mas Ysa and vocalist Charmaine Lee.

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

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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

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