



RICE

# Imaging after Photography Symposium

March 6, 2026, 9 am–1 pm  
Moody Center for the Arts

Made Possible by Nancy Dunlap

Inspired by the Moody's Spring 2026 exhibition, this symposium will explore how artists and scholars are navigating the rapidly evolving world of artificial intelligence with a focus on creativity and ethics.

## Schedule

**Friday, March 6, 2026**

*8:30 - 9:00 am | Registration and Coffee*

9:00 - 9:15 am | **Opening Remarks, Alison Weaver**, Suzanne Deal Booth Executive Director, Moody Center for the Arts

9:15 - 10:15 am | **Keynote Address, "Image Zone," by K Allado-McDowell**, writer, artist, musician and founder of the Artists + Machine Intelligence program at Google

*10:15 - 10:30 am | Coffee Break*

10:30 - 11:30 am | **Panel One, "Computational Creativity: AI as an Artistic Medium,"** moderated by **Rashed Haq**, artist, technologist, and writer. Panelists: **Sofia Crespo**, exhibiting artist; **Barry Threw**, Executive and Artistic Director of Gray Area; and **Nora N. Khan**, independent critic, author and curator

*11:30 - 11:45 am | Coffee Break*

11:45 - 12:45 pm | **Panel Two, "AI: Art, Autonomy, and Automation"** moderated by **Rodrigo Ferreira**, Assistant Teaching Professor, Computer Science, Rice University. Panelists: **Nouf Aljowaysir**, exhibiting artist; **Kai-Luen Liang**, interdisciplinary artist, Faculty, Integrated Media / Music Technology, California Institute of the Arts; **Fred Ritchin**, Dean Emeritus, School at the International Center of Photography

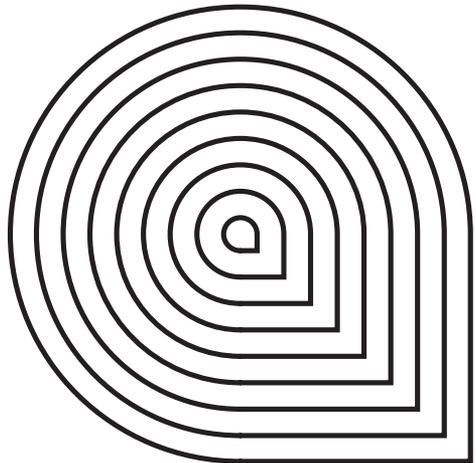
*12:45 - 1:45 | Lunch*

## 9:15 am | Keynote Address, "Image Zone"

Images before AI were generally sources of stable meaning. Today, every image we encounter demands effortful scrutiny. Is this real or generated? What's beneath that redaction bar? The photographic image, which once constituted evidence, now threatens to destabilize history, politics, even cosmology. This presentation, "Image Zone," explores how contemporary images radiate and perturb meaning, mapping several image "zones" from generative AI to geospatial and medical imaging to UFOs and psychedelic visions. Each of these zones reshapes our reality and requires our active participation. The wildly contradictory nature of images today cannot be parsed through a single framing. Rather than forcing us into passivity, this newly revealed complex image space is an invitation to critical thought. What will our sources of stability be in a post-AI media landscape?



Keynote speaker K Allado-McDowell is an artist, writer, and pioneering figure in the field of AI literature. Since 2020, they have authored several books with GPT-3, co-edited and contributed to multiple anthologies, and regularly publish essays on art, AI, and ecology. K established the Artists + Machine Intelligence program at Google in 2015. They created the neuro-opera *Song of the Ambassadors*, which previewed at Lincoln Center in 2022. Their first solo exhibition, *The Known Lost*, was presented at Swiss Institute in NYC in 2025.



## 10:30 am | Panel One, "Computational Creativity: AI as an Artistic Medium"

One of the biggest creative shifts since photography, the use of generative AI and software as artistic media prompts questions about what happens when artists can sketch with language, remix with code, and build worlds with algorithms. This conversation explores how generative tools are changing the very act of making—unlocking rapid experimentation, new forms of collaboration, and hybrid workflows that blend traditional craft with computational creativity. In addition to how artists are expanding what's possible across image, text, sound, and performance, panelists will also address concerns about authorship and originality, ethics and consent, cultural influence, labor and value, and the responsibility of shaping creative technology with intention.



Moderator **Rashed Haq** is a Bangladeshi-American artist, technologist and writer. He uses a combination of AI and photography in his artistic practice. With more than 50 solo and group exhibitions across North America, Haq is the recipient of the Art+Science award from Lenscratch and the COMPAS Photography award from Oxford University. His works are included in the permanent collection

of The Museum of Fine Arts Houston, among other collections. His 2020 book *Enterprise AI Transformation* was named one of the "100 Best Technology eBooks of All Time" and one of the "Best AI Audiobooks of All Time" by Book Authority. In addition to his artistic practice, Rashed's career includes serving in his current position as Vice President of Autonomous Vehicles at General Motors, and previously Chief Technology Officer at Diligent Robotics, and as Vice President of AI and Robotics at Cruise. He and his team were the first to deploy commercial self-driving cars in a major US city, and was recognized in the 2025 Guinness Book of World Records. Haq was awarded the Robotics Innovation Award by Robotics Business Review in 2022, and was short-listed for the AI Innovator of the Year Award by AI Business in 2019.



Panelist **Barry Threw** is the Executive and Artistic Director of Gray Area, a San Francisco nonprofit that uses culture and technology to inspire social transformation. His previous leadership positions include Director of Software at Obscura Digital, a San Francisco-based creative technology studio specializing in the design and execution of immersive and interactive experiences, which was acquired by Madison

Square Gardens in 2017 to design the Las Vegas Sphere. Threw organized the #NEWPALMYRA project, an online community platform focused on the virtual reconstruction and creative reuse of an endangered cultural heritage site, and played a key role in developing and operating the Vatican Arts and Technology Council, a nondenominational advisory body that advanced goals of environ-

mental stewardship, humanitarian compassion, and spreading experiences of spirituality through an experimental art and technology lab.



Panelist **Nora N. Khan**, independent critic, essayist, curator, and educator, serves as faculty in Creative Technologies at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Khan's frequently cited writing about the philosophy of AI and emerging technologies attempts to theorize the limits of algorithmic knowledge and locate computation's influence on critical language. Prior to her current appointment, she was the Arts

Council Professor at UCLA in Design Media Arts; History and Theory faculty at SCI-Arc; and professor in Digital + Media at Rhode Island School of Design, where she was nominated for the John R. Frazier Award for Excellence in Teaching. Her books include *AI Art and the Stakes for Art Criticism*, *Seeing, Naming, Knowing*, and *Fear Indexing the X-Files* with Steven Warwick. A member of the Curatorial Ensemble of the 2026 edition of Counterpublic, one of the nation's largest public civic exhibitions, focused next on 'Near Futures,' Khan was also Co-Curator with Andrea Bellini of the Biennale de L'Image en Mouvement 2024; A Cosmic Movie Camera, hosted by Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève; and curated Manual Override at The Shed in 2026.



Panelist **Sofia Crespo** is an Argentine artist based in Lisbon, Portugal, whose work, *Temporally Uncaptured*, is on view at the Moody in the current exhibition. Her work examines humanity's evolving relationship with technology across time, drawing connections between historical innovations like microscopes and cameras that transformed our understanding of reality, to contemporary neural networks that reshape how we process and interpret complex patterns. This technological lineage informs projects like *Neural Zoo* (2018-2020) and *Structures of Being* (2024), which position machine learning as an extension of natural processes, drawing parallels between AI image formation and biological pattern recognition. Crespo works with artist Feileacan Kirkbride McCormick, as the artistic duo Entangled Others with Norwegia. Her work has been exhibited globally at institutions including the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, and Times Square, New York City. In 2022, Entangled Others' piece *Swim* was acquired by the Buffalo AKG Art Museum for its permanent collection. Crespo's contributions to the field have been recognized with the AI Newcomer Award by the German Informatics Society, and she frequently shares her insights through lectures at institutions like MIT and the Oxford Artificial Intelligence Society.

## 11:45 am | Panel Two, "AI: Art, Autonomy, and Automation"

In a media landscape that is today increasingly filled by AI images, disinformation, hallucinations, and mass-generated 'slop,' this panel will explore how AI challenges traditional definitions of human agency and open the doors to new ethical, aesthetic, and political possibilities for artistic creativity and perception. This panel will be moderated by Rodrigo Ferreira, Assistant Teaching Professor in Computer Science, and includes Nouf Aljowaysir, exhibiting artist, Kai-Luen Liang, Integrated Media Faculty at CalArts, and Fred Ritchin, Dean Emeritus of the School at the International Center of Photography, New York.



Moderator **Rodrigo Ferreira** is an Assistant Teaching Professor in Computer Science at Rice University, where he is responsible for the ethics in computer science and AI curricula. Rodrigo also holds a courtesy appointment in the Department of Philosophy and is a Faculty Scholar at the Baker Institute for Public Policy, where he leads a line of research on AI Policy and Governance. Rodrigo is also a member of the Science and Technology Studies Program's

Steering Committee and is a member of Rice University's Responsible AI Advisory Committee. His research has been published by academic journals in philosophy and computer science and his opinions have been featured in local and national news media, including *The Houston Chronicle*, Telemundo, and NPR.



Panelist **Nouf Aljowaysir** is a visual artist whose practice critically examines the role of algorithmic "intelligence" in shaping personal and collective constructions of selfhood and historical knowledge. Working across photography, performance, and moving image, she creates narratives that move between archival materials and digital speculation, questioning how technologies shape and reduce the understanding of identity, memory, and particularly non-Western histories. Her work has been exhibited internationally at institutions such as Jeu de Paume, Photo

Elysée, Centre Pompidou, M+ Museum, and the Tribeca Film Festival, among others. Aljowaysir has also been featured in major media outlets such as *Le Monde*, *BBC Culture*, *Le Quotidien de l'Art*, and the *British Journal of Photography*. Her film *Ana Min Wein? (Where Am I From?)* won the 2023 Lumen Prize for Moving Image and was released by *The New York Times Op-Docs* series in June 2024.



Panelist **Kai-Luen Liang** is an interdisciplinary artist based in Los Angeles. Working with code, generative sound, and digital media, his work explores themes of memory, erasure, migration, and machine perception. He creates hybrid instruments and glitch-based software systems that embrace failure and miscommunication as a mode of resistance and poetic possibility. He has exhibited internationally at ARS Electronica, SXSW, Boiler Room Beijing, Clockenflap, Redcat, and more, with music released on labels including SVBKVLT, Ran Music, and Robox Neo-

tech. He is faculty at CalArts' Center for Integrated Media and a visiting artist at Occidental College, where he teaches courses on creative coding, AI, and sound installation.



Panelist **Fred Ritchin** is a writer, editor, educator, curator, and software developer. He is the Dean Emeritus of the School at the International Center of Photography, where he also founded the Photojournalism and Documentary Photography Program in 1983, and was professor of Photography & Imaging as well as Interactive Telecommunications at New York University (1991-2014) where he co-founded the Photography and Human Rights program with Susan Meiselas and the Magnum Foundation. His career also includes picture editor of *The New York Times Magazine* and executive editor of *Camera Arts* magazine. He has written four books on the future of

imaging, including *In Our Own Image: The Coming Revolution in Photography*; *After Photography*; *Bending the Frame: Photojournalism, Documentary, and the Citizen*, and *The Synthetic Eye: Photography Transformed in the Age of AI*, as well as essays in dozens of other books.

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Mark your calendars for upcoming programs that expand upon the exhibition's focus  
on AI and photography:

April 7, Artists-in-Dialogue with Joan Fontcuberta and Richard Howell

April 10 and 11, Dimensions Variable: Open Machine, dance + AI choreography directed  
by Rashaun Mitchell and Silas Riener.

April 17, 3 pm | New Art / New Music, Shepherd School of Music students present  
original compositions inspired by the exhibition.

Photo credits: K Allado-McDowell (photo: Ian Byers-Gamber), Nora N. Khan (photo: Alexa Viscius), Kai-Luen  
Liang, Rashed Haq, Rodrigo Ferreira, Sofia Crespo (photo: Filipa Aurélio), Nouf Aljowaysir (photo: Frank  
Hernandez), Barry Threw, Fred Ritchin (photo: Joshua Irwandi).