

For Immediate Release

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Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University Announces New Temporary Public Art Installations for 2026–27

Sept. 10 Tent Series returns with new commissions by Keliy Anderson-Staley, Preston Gaines, and Dario Robleto; Oct. 22 Platform presents Sharmistha Ray's Entangled Portals at Fondren Library.



Keliy Anderson-Staley, Preston Gaines, Sharmistha Ray, and Dario Robleto. Images courtesy of the artists. Photos under photographers' copyright.

HOUSTON, TX (August 24, 2026)—The Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University announces new temporary public art installations opening this fall: the seventh round of commissions for its Tent Series, featuring new work by Houston-based artists Keliy Anderson-Staley, Preston Gaines, and Dario Robleto, and the latest chapter of its Platform Series, presenting *Entangled Portals* by Sharmistha Ray at the east entrance of Rice's Fondren Library. Both projects extend the Moody's ongoing commitment to activating the Rice campus with site-specific, publicly accessible art.

"For several years—through initiatives like the Tent and Platform Series—the Moody has brought site-specific works into the daily lives of the Rice community, creating, in turn, an invitation for guests to explore more of campus," said Joel Thompson, Interim Divisional Lead and Deputy Director of the Moody Center for the Arts. "The roster of artists we're presenting this academic year reflects our sustained investment in creative experimentation."

Guests are invited to the opening celebrations for Anderson-Staley, Gaines, and Robleto on September 10, 6 - 8 pm, at the Tents (across from Herring Hall) and for Sharmistha Ray on October 22, 6-8 p.m. at Fondren Library. See more details below.

Tent Series: Keliy Anderson-Staley, Preston Gaines, and Dario Robleto

Opening Reception September 10, 2026, 6-8 p.m.

On view through July 31, 2027 | Loop Road, across from Herring Hall



Keliy Anderson-Staley, *"Wilderness no longer at the edge of things,"* 2026. Printed vinyl, HD video with sound, 25:04 minutes. Daytime view. Photo courtesy of the Moody Center for the Arts.

This season's Tent Series engages with cultural memory, technology, and what we owe to those who inherit what we leave behind. Sited on the Provisional Campus Facility (PCF) Tents at the heart of campus, the three new large-scale murals invite viewers to consider archives as living, generative material rather than a fixed record.

Keliy Anderson-Staley's *"Wilderness no longer at the edge of things draws"* on decades of letters, drawings, and photographs documenting the off-grid Maine homestead where the artist was raised. The two-part installation pairs a collage of scanned archival materials—including her father's notes and a hand-drawn map of the property—with a projected video that comes on at night, tracing the cabin's history from its construction in the late 1970s to its destruction by fire in 2019.



Preston Gaines, *Floral Modulo*, 2026. Printed vinyl, three oxidized steel sculptures. Photo courtesy of the Moody Center for the Arts.

Preston Gaines's *Floral Modulo* unfolds across the tent façade as a triptych, with each field—*Invocation*, *Altar / Passage*, and *Witness*—connecting a rich collection of references from album covers to spiritual traditions to memories, relationships, and experiences from

the artist's life. On the surrounding lawn, three oxidized steel sculptures extend the work's floral pattern from the composition into three dimensions, connecting the façade and landscape in an installation that considers how images and their meanings are inherited, remembered, and reinterpreted over time.

Dario Robleto's *Ancient Beacons Long for Notice* (film still), is a film still from his video work, which examines the Golden Record, humanity's curated self-portrait for potential extraterrestrial contact, against a newly rediscovered document — the earliest known audio recording of warfare from 1918. Robleto's work raises questions about the ethical implications of preserving and omitting knowledge.

These commissions were organized by Moody Associate Curators Noor Alé and Claudia Mattos.

An opening reception will be held on Thursday, September 10, 2026, from 6:00–8:00 pm on Loop Road across from Herring Hall, with remarks from all three artists and light refreshments.



Dario Robleto, *Ancient Beacons Long for Notice* (film still), 2024. Original work: UHD video, 71:00 min. Commissioned by the Amon Carter Museum of American Art and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

Platform: Sharmistha Ray, *Entangled Portals*

Opening Reception with Dance + Vocal Performance, October 22, 2026
On view through January 29, 2027 | East Entrance, Fondren Library



Sharmistha Ray, *Entangled Portals* (detail, 2026)

For the Moody's Platform series, Pittsburgh-based artist Sharmistha Ray presents *Entangled Portals*, a vinyl installation spanning three windows of Rice University's Fondren Library that evokes the visual language of stained glass. The work emerged from Ray's research in Fondren's Archives of the Impossible (AOTI), a rare collection documenting UFO sightings, alien encounters, and unexplained aerial phenomena founded by religious studies scholar Jeffrey J. Kripal.

Drawing on recurring symbols, geometric forms, and diagrams found throughout the archive, *Entangled Portals* also reflects Ray's long-standing interest in alienness and belonging. As a queer, nonbinary immigrant artist, Ray reframes the figure of "the alien" as a metaphor for inhabiting multiple worlds and identities at once — proposing mathematics, geometry, and pattern as a universal language capable of connecting across difference rather than marking distance from it.

Entangled Portals is organized by Noor Alé, Associate Curator at the Moody Center for the Arts, in partnership with the Woodson Research Center at Fondren Library, and made possible by the Moody Center for the Arts Founders Circle.

An opening reception will be held Thursday, October 22, 2026, from 6:00–8:00 pm at the Fondren Library East Entrance, featuring a performance by New York-based dancer Jasmine Hearn and Houston-based vocalist jonh r. stronks, with remarks from the artist to follow. The performance is made possible through the support of Rice University's Department of Religion, Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, and Fondren Library.

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.

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(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.

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