

MOODY CENTER FOR THE ARTS ANNOUNCES ITS SUMMER 2021 EXHIBITION
FEATURING LARGE-SCALE CERAMICS BY BRIE RUAIS



Brie Ruais, *Uncontrollable Drifting Inward and Outward Together (130lbs times two)*, 2021, Glazed ceramic
© Brie Ruais, Courtesy albertz benda, New York

[HOUSTON, TX - April 29, 2021] - Alison Weaver, the Suzanne Deal Booth Executive Director, announced today that the Moody Center for the Arts' summer exhibition will be *Brie Ruais: Movement at the Edge of the Land*, opening on June 5. The Moody will take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of guests amidst COVID-19 concerns.

This is the first institutional solo exhibition featuring the artist Brie Ruais (b. 1982, Southern California) whose work challenges the static nature of sculpture. Ruais's large-scale ceramic works highlight the physical and psychological connections between the human body and the earth, inviting viewers to reflect on our evolving relationship to the natural world.

"Brie Ruais has a unique ability to create powerful ceramic sculptures that, despite their size and weight, seem almost delicate. They symbolize the force and solidity of nature, but also reflect the fragility of our global environment," says Associate Curator Frauke V. Josenhans. "Ruais approaches each work not only as sculpture,

but also as performance. The dynamism of the artist's movements can be seen in the clay: the traces of her palm, her knuckles, and her feet. She wrestles as well as embraces the medium, a metaphor for the earth. The unique and multifaceted aesthetic of her large-scale sculptures invigorates the medium of ceramic, and inscribes it in a fully contemporary approach, while connecting to larger topics."

Addressing urgent questions resulting from human consumption and the scarcity of natural resources in the Anthropocene, Ruais's work stresses our collective dependence on ecological preservation and the fragility of our ecosystem. Her sculptures point to the effect industrialized civilizations have had on landscapes, and the disregard for environmental, human and spiritual concerns. As we reconsider centuries of exploitation and the pollution of Earth's air, water and soil, Ruais's sculptures invite us to pause and reconnect with our natural environment and ourselves.

"My practice relies on the understanding that the land and the human body share similar vulnerabilities and ways of being affected, marked, and colonized," says Ruais. "Each piece is made out of the equivalent of my body's weight in clay and generated by physically intensive performance. The clay is pushed and spread out on the floor, rammed and compressed against a wall, torn and desiccated; I see the sculptures as bodies imprinted with the forces that have shaped them."

Movement at the Edge of the Land will feature monumental ceramic sculptures created specifically for the Moody's exhibition and mounted for the first time. Arranged on the floor and walls, the works will interact with both the galleries and the Rice campus, referencing the transformation of the American landscape in the wake of human development. One part of the installation conveys the expansive, arid landscapes of the desert and another part the shore. By provoking an encounter between these two spaces that appear to be opposites, the exhibition finds tension and beauty in their connection and highlights the generative and creative potential of the in-between.

Withdrawing Body, Emerging Earth, a large-scale floor installation that extends from the interior of the gallery to the outdoor grounds, combines ceramic sculptures, construction debris, and raw materials like dirt and rock. Ruais presents us with the extracted materials of the built environment and reorients us to our surroundings through a bodily lens. The artist's practice reflects the psychological and emotional resonances of the varying environments she inhabits: New York City, at the edge of an urban sea, and the deserts of the American West. A new video installation, *Tidal Movement*, presented in the Brown Foundation Gallery, poses timely concerns regarding the reorientation of human movement through the world, as we attempt to reconnect with nature and its cycles.

About the Artist

Brie Ruais is one of the foremost young sculptors working in clay today. Ruais received a BFA from New York University's Steinhardt's School in 2004, and an MFA from Columbia University's School of the Arts in 2011. Her ceramic sculptures have been shown in various exhibitions, such as *Formed and Fired: Contemporary American Ceramics* at the Anderson Collection, Stanford University (2020), *Afterimages* at Musée d'art de Joliette, Québec (2020), *America Will Be! Surveying the Contemporary Landscape* at the Dallas Museum of Art (2019), and *Crafted: Objects in Flux* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2015). She has received numerous awards and residencies including The Pollock Krasner Foundation Grant (2018), The Sharpe Walentas Studio Program (2018), the Dieu Donne Fellowship (2016), and The Shandaken Project Residency (2014). Her work is in the collections of the Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX; the Pennsylvania Academy of Art, Philadelphia; the Pizzuti Collection, OH; and the Burger Collection, Hong Kong. She lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Brie Ruais: Movement at the Edge of the Land will be activated by a dynamic series of performances and public events over the course of the exhibition. During the opening on June 5th, choreographer and Houston Ballet first soloist Oliver Halkowich will preview a new work in the galleries, featuring two dancers and a musician. The Moody's *Dimensions Variable* program on June 12 will feature the full performance, as well as a hands-on ceramic workshop offered in collaboration with ClayHouston. A series of free health and wellness classes will be available throughout the summer.

This exhibition is curated by Frauke V. Josenhans, Associate Curator, Moody Center for the Arts.

This exhibition is made possible by the Thomas D. and Pamela Riley Smith Endowment for the Moody Center for the Arts. Major support is provided by the Louis Sudler Endowment and the Brad and Leslie Bucher Artist Endowment. Additional support is provided by the Tamara de Kuffner Fund, the Robert Lehman Foundation, the Kilgore Endowment Fund, the Sewall Endowment and Albert Z. Benda, New York.

Brie Ruais: Movement at the Edge of the Land will open Saturday, June 5 and will be on view through August 28, 2021.

SPECIAL EVENTS

OPENING RECEPTION

Saturday, June 5, 2021, 6 – 8 pm, free and open to the public, reservations required.

Register at <https://moody.rice.edu>

The opening reception will feature a brief introduction by the artist Brie Ruais, and a preview of an original performance by choreographer Oliver Halkowich.

DIMENSIONS VARIABLE

June 12, 2021, 4:00 – 6:00

Creative workshops with ClayHouston

Original Dance performance by choreographer Oliver Halkowich

MIND & BODY PROGRAMS

The Barbara and David Gibbs Recreation Center at Rice will organize a series of mindful movement classes in the exhibition galleries, free and open to the Rice Community. These classes will allow the participants to connect with the artworks on view through the practice of Tai Chi, Walking Meditation, and Restorative Yoga.

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

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."](#)

Press Contact

Alison Weaver | +1 713-348-2332 | aweaver@rice.edu