



MOODY CENTER FOR THE ARTS TO OPEN TO THE PUBLIC WITH A CIVIC DEDICATION CEREMONY ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2017

Celebratory Weekend in Houston Will Include First Look at the Moody's Michael Maltzan-Designed Building and Inaugural Exhibitions, Premiere Performances, Conversations with World-Renowned Artists and Free Parties for the Public and the Rice Community



Photo by Nash Baker. The Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University, Houston, TX. Michael Maltzan Architecture. (December 2016, under construction)

HOUSTON, TX — January 26, 2017 — Alison Weaver, the Suzanne Deal Booth Executive Director of Rice University's Moody Center for the Arts, today announced the schedule of events that will celebrate the opening of this new, internationally focused arts institution, built as a free public platform for creating collaborative works of all kinds and for presenting innovative, transdisciplinary experiences to the public and the university community.

Rice University officials and faculty will welcome Houston's Mayor Sylvester Turner, civic officials, leaders of fellow cultural institutions throughout the city, donors, artists, students and the public to a

civic dedication ceremony of the new 50,000-square-foot, \$30 million Moody building, designed by Michael Maltzan Architecture, on Friday, February 24, 2017, at 4 pm. That evening, from 7-10 pm, the Moody will hold an opening party: a joyous public gathering featuring live music by The Tontons and food trucks and open to all.

Festivities continue on Saturday, February 25, when the Moody will open its doors to the public for its first full day. Gallery Guides will be available from 10 am to 5 pm. From 2 to 3 pm there will be a panel discussion with renowned photographer Thomas Struth, focusing on the works in his Moody exhibition *Nature & Politics*, in the Moody's Lois Chiles Studio Theater. At 6 pm, at the nearby James Turrell *Twilight Epiphany* Skyspace, the Moody will host the world premiere of *Vespertine Awakenings*, a commissioned dance work by Dušan Týnek Dance Theatre, conceived in response to the Turrell artwork and presented with an original musical score by the composer Kurt Stallmann of Rice's Shepherd School of Music. The Moody will then go into late-night mode with a student party (open only to Rice University students) from 10 pm to 2 am.

On Sunday, February 26, from 2 to 3 pm, the Moody will present a conversation between Dušan Týnek and composer Kurt Stallmann about their collaborative process. The weekend's special events will conclude with two performances in the James Turrell *Twilight Epiphany* Skyspace by Dušan Týnek Dance Theatre, on Sunday and Monday evenings at sunset. Tickets are available for all events at moody.rice.edu.

Alison Weaver said, "We hope the events of the opening weekend will introduce everyone to the extraordinary range of activity we've planned for the Moody, a place where new modes of making can flourish in flexible teaching spaces, and visitors can engage with artists from around the country and the world. We can't wait to see Michael Maltzan's magnificent building come to life, and for the Rice community, the Houston public and our visitors from around the world to be part of the excitement."

David Leebron, president of Rice University, said, "We are grateful to the Moody Foundation, to our other far-sighted donors, to Michael Maltzan, and to the remarkable team of brilliant artists and collaborators assembled for this inaugural season by Alison Weaver. This is an exciting moment for our university, in which the arts are receiving heightened emphasis and presence on our campus. The arts are an essential contributor to every education and intellectual endeavor at Rice as we seek to foster creativity and imagination in our faculty and students. The opening of the Moody also reflects our continuing commitment to Houston's flourishing artistic life, and to establishing Houston and Rice as an arts beacon to the world."

The Inaugural Season

The Central Gallery of the Moody will be the site for the first installation in the United States of Olafur Eliasson's *Green light — An artistic workshop* (through May 6, 2017). Initiated by the Danish-Icelandic artist in March 2016 in collaboration with Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (TBA21) in Vienna, *Green light* addresses the international refugee crisis by inviting asylum seekers, refugees and economic migrants to participate in constructing stackable, modular green lamps designed by Eliasson and made from recycled and sustainable materials. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the lamps will be donated to the Moody's partner organization in the workshop, Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston, to benefit refugees. University students and members of the public are invited to join in the workshop, which also includes language courses, seminars, artist's interventions, film screenings and other initiatives that respond to the needs of the participating refugees and migrants.

The Moody's Brown Foundation Gallery will present *Nature & Politics* (through May 29, 2017), featuring photographs by Thomas Struth of scientific research and manufactured landscapes. The photographs bear witness to very specialized imaginations: whether it is the technological developments that made space travel possible, experiments in plasma physics or industrial facilities such as offshore oil rigs or blast furnaces — all owe their existence to the ideas and designs of experts. The artist will be present for a panel discussion during the Moody's opening weekend, when the institution will inaugurate interdisciplinary conversations about technology and research — important and timely topics of global significance — and how our experience of them shapes our perceptions of the world. The presentation is based on an exhibition that was co-organized by the Museum Folkwang in Essen, Martin-Gropius-Bau in Berlin and the High Museum in Atlanta.

Visitors to the Moody will be greeted by an installation in the Reception Gallery of *The Starry Messenger* (2014), a nine-monitor video wall by artist Diana Thater through February 1, 2018. This spectacular and encompassing work presents a changing vista of the Milky Way filmed in the Griffith Observatory Planetarium in Los Angeles, shot from below the massive Zeiss star projector. While exhibited in Houston, the home of NASA's Johnson Space Center, the work will be at the center of a series of cross-disciplinary discussions featuring scientists, poets, artists and astronauts, in partnership with the Rice Space Institute. Diana Thater will participate in a discussion about the work on April 21, 2017.

In the Moody's Media Arts Gallery 1, visitors will encounter a large-scale installation by the Tokyo art collective teamLab, *Flowers and People, Cannot be Controlled but Live Together — A Whole Year per Hour* (2015) (through August 13, 2017). This immersive and hypnotic installation consists of computer graphic visuals that change in response to the visitor's presence, releasing constantly evolving images of natural forms. Through its interplay of digital imagery and the human body, the work raises questions about relationships between art, technology and nature, and the human capacity to mediate between them.

In the Moody's second Media Arts Gallery, visitors will be invited to experiment with a new 3-D paintbrush developed by Google. Using the gallery as a canvas, the Tilt Brush will allow visitors to paint in three dimensions using virtual reality, and to explore their own creative capacity in the spirit of accessible, hands-on learning that defines the Moody.

The Dušan Týnek Dance Theatre will conduct a weeklong residency, which will result in a performance of *Vespertine Awakenings*, a site-specific dance performance in response to James Turrell *Twilight Epiphany* Skyspace, accompanied by an original musical score composed by Kurt Stallmann of Rice's Shepherd School of Music (February 25 – 27, 2017).

Other presentations that will follow in the Moody's Lois Chiles Studio Theater include a production of *Proof* by David Auburn, in collaboration with Rice's departments of Visual and Dramatic Arts and Mathematics (March 1-4, 2017), and performances of Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare's *An Iliad*, with the lead role played by Leon Ingulsrud and original music composed and performed by students from the Shepherd School (March 30 – April 2, 2017).

The Moody is proud that its first artist-in-residence will be Mona Hatoum, the internationally acclaimed Beirut-born Palestinian artist whose work in sculpture, performance, video and installation was recently the subject of a major survey exhibition at Tate Modern in London. Underscoring the

Moody's collaborative goals within Houston's rich cultural scene, Hatoum will be housed during her residency on the campus of the Menil Collection, which will present a major exhibition of her works later in the year (Oct. 6, 2017 – Feb. 25, 2018). During her residency, Hatoum will appear at Rice, together with scholars from diverse fields, in a panel discussion about her work and will participate in a sculpture class at Rice's Department of Visual and Dramatic Arts.

Rounding out the schedule of activities housed in the Moody will be seven new interdisciplinary courses developed for Rice students. Information on these evolving courses, developed under the rubric of "art plus," is available at moody.rice.edu.

The Architecture of the Moody

Michael Maltzan's striking contemporary design, with its bold geometric shapes, inviting transparency and signature "lantern" structures, makes the Moody's building a beacon on Rice's campus while affirming the mission to foster connections across disciplines.

Maltzan, founder and principal of Michael Maltzan Architecture, Inc., says of the building, "The interior of the Moody is designed to foster a sense of openness and possibility. The double-height creative open studio at its heart can be imagined as an interior quad, echoing the other quads found throughout the Rice campus. This interior landscape brings the most diverse programmatic functions into contact with one another, while opening views out to the campus. This emphasis on transparency extends to the building's exterior, whose brick-clad upper story seems to float over an entry level encased in floor-to-ceiling glass. With pedestrian paths cutting across the site's open lawn and into the building, a set of stairs on the north façade turning back to form an interior amphitheater, and the cantilevered mass of the second story creating covered walkways below, the Moody will be one of the most active social spaces on the Rice campus and a welcoming facility for all."

Funding

Development of the Moody is made possible by a \$20 million grant from the Texas-based Moody Foundation, a charitable organization with an emphasis on education, social services, children's needs and community development, with additional generous support from the Brown Foundation and other donors.

Visitor Information

Website: moody.rice.edu

Phone: +1 713.348.ARTS

Address: The Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University
6100 Main Street, MS-480, Houston, TX 77005
(University Entrance 8, at the corner of University Boulevard and Stockton Street)

Hours & Admission:

Beginning February 25, 2017, the exhibition spaces and café at the Moody will be open to the public and free of charge Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm, and closed Sunday, Monday and holidays. Events and programs at the Moody are open to the public through a ticketed, advance-reservation system. For schedule, tickets and pricing, the public may 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. Campus maps are available at www.rice.edu/maps.

Media Preview

The Moody's opening media preview will be held on Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 10 am.

About Rice University

Located on a 300-acre forested campus in central Houston, Rice University is a comprehensive research university that is consistently ranked among the nation's top 20 universities by U.S. News & World Report. With 3,910 undergraduates and 2,809 graduate students, Rice is home to highly respected schools of Architecture, Business, Continuing Studies, Engineering, Humanities, Music, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences as well as the Baker Institute for Public Policy. The new Moody Center for the Arts, designed by Michael Maltzan and opening in February 2017, celebrates Rice's commitment to creativity and the arts as a key part of its educational mission and establishes a new arts district on Rice's campus, joining the distinguished Shepherd School of Music and the permanent James Turrell *Twilight Epiphany* Skyspace.

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