

Moody Kicks Off 2022 With Incredible New Slate of Programs

Rice University's premier art institution has big plans for its 5th anniversary.

By Amarie Gipson January 5, 2022



2022 marks the fifth anniversary of the Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University. IMAGE: MOODY CENTER FOR THE ARTS

FOUNDED IN 2017 AS A SITE FOR ARTISTIC EXPERIMENTATION, the Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University is celebrating its fifth anniversary this year. From its emphasis on artistic explorations of the hard sciences to the humanities, the Moody Center has demonstrated a long-term commitment to transdisciplinary collaboration.

The Moody Center opened with the world premiere of a commission by Dušan Týnek Dance Theatre created in response to James Turrell's Twilight Epiphany Skyspace, a public installation that found its home in the Suzanne Deal Booth Centennial Pavilion five years before the Moody Center was established. The Skyspace, which is celebrating its 10 year anniversary, opened as a satellite of the Shepherd School of Music and was built to function as a locus for musical innovation and performance programs, to which the Moody Center often spearheads.

In 2018, the Moody Center founded its Dimensions Variable series which invites artists of all disciplines to be in dialogue and create work inspired by each other. Programming in this series and unique musical performances like a midnight performance of the New Orleans Hustlers Brass Band in 2019, 2020's Summer Music Series, and last year's performance by Houston native Lisa "Li" Harris, prove the Moody to be a dynamic site and coordinator for musical interaction with visual art. For its fifth anniversary year, the institution has planned another exciting array of programs in celebration of its young, but robust legacy, with music as a central theme for its spring calendar.

“Our schedule of 2022 programs underscores our mission to foster interdisciplinary conversation, and to connect the greater public and Rice communities through transformative encounters with the arts,” says Alison Weaver, Suzanne Deal Booth Executive Director of the Moody Center for the Arts.

The Moody’s first exhibition of the year, *Soundwaves: Experimental Strategies in Art + Music*, takes inspiration from Turrell’s *Skyspace*, which is celebrating its 10 year anniversary and has quickly become one of the city’s most popular public art installations. The exhibition will feature works by Jennie C. Jones, Christine Sun Kim, Jason Moran, Jamal Cyrus and many more. The Moody has also commissioned two offsite performances, one by composer Elainie Lillios, and a dance piece by choreographer Karole Armitage; in the first responses to the *Skyspace* by women artists.

The 2022 schedule also includes a solo presentation this summer, by New York-based artist Baseera Khan, and an exhibition that explores the making of modern cities, entitled *Urban Impressions*, set to open in the fall.

Several performance-based works will be presented in the Lois Chiles Studio Theatre, including a chamber opera, and a dance-theater work. The Moody Center will also welcome Leslie Hewitt and Robin Rhode who were selected for their 2022 Artists-in-Residence program.

Weaver tells *Houstonia*, “The pandemic has shown us the importance of creative adaptation and the irreplaceable value of shared cultural experiences. The artists and scholars that we partner with play critical roles in these conversations, and we’re honored to be able to contribute to the cultural life of Houston.”