

Venezia Arti, issue 2/29 (2020): Art and Science

Deadline: May 31, 2020

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CALL FOR ARTICLES 2020 | Art and Science

Venezia Arti invites scholars to send article proposals on the topic "Art and Science" for the s. 2, 2/29 issue (2020). Below is a description of the topic, which should help scholars who wish to submit a proposal.

DEADLINE for the complete articles: 31 May 2020

THE JOURNAL | Venezia Arti, Ca' Foscari University of Venice

Venezia Arti is a journal of Ca' Foscari's Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage on the history of the arts. VA was founded in 1987 by Wladimiro Dorigo and Giuseppe Mazzariol, a new series directed by Silvia Burini and Giovanni Maria Fara began in 2019. The journal welcomes scholars of all disciplines focusing on the arts and encourages an interdisciplinary approach. It aims to become a sound reference point for medieval, modern and contemporary art, the visual and performing arts, and all the main themes of the international methodological debate.

The journal is annual and undergoes a double-blind peer review, which is carried out both for paper and digital (open access) editions by Edizioni Ca' Foscari. It is characterised by thematic calls and a miscellaneous section.

TOPIC OF THIS ISSUE | Art and Science

The problem of the relationship between science and art has accompanied human civilisation since its beginning, starting from the first skills achieved by homo habilis and, subsequently, by homo faber. It is also crucial in the development of Western philosophy and appears in the treatises on the various artistic practices, starting from Vitruvius. Therefore, the famous expression of the Parisian architect Jean Mignot, "ars sine scientia nihil", pronounced in the building site of the Duomo of Milan in 1398, summarises a century-old debate. Moreover, it opens up to the subsequent and almost infinite reflections by Cennino, Alberti, Piero della Francesca, Leonardo, fra Giocondo, etc., and offers a significant key to understand the terminology of artistic literature. The latter may reveal the absence of any dualism between art and science, like in the Greek term *techne* (the equivalent of the Latin *ars*), which holds together art and technique, or in Vasari's word *artefice*. Over the last centuries, this relationship has been enriched by the contributions of other human sciences, the development of research in the cognitive field and the tumultuous increase of technological resources, since a part of what is commonly called science is now above all the consequence of technological applications, in which the same homo faber intervenes in art, engaging his intelligence and his imagination.

The 2020 issue of Venezia Arti will be dedicated to the multiplicity and diachronic development of

these relationships, with the aim of answering a crucial question: what is the relationship between art and science? Only with Descartes, with the so-called scientific revolution of the seventeenth century, this extraordinary relationship started to be seen in terms of a clear break between the two worlds. Yet, are we really dealing with two “opposite” factors, i.e. the positive and confirmed structure of scientific knowledge, on the one hand, and the intuitiveness of art, the product of human irrationality, on the other? When asked what art and science, two worlds apparently so distant from each other, had in common, Albert Einstein replied that “the greatest scientists are also artists”. In a speech delivered in 1923 he also declared that “having reached a high level of technical competence, science and art tend to merge in aesthetics, plasticity and form”.

2020 is also the year of the 30th anniversary of the publication of *The Science of Art. Optical Themes in Western Art from Brunelleschi to Seurat* by Martin Kemp, a book that has certainly influenced academic studies in this field, albeit in a wide furrow in which it is almost useless to add, among many others, the names of Quatremère de Quincy, Morelli, Hourticq, Saxl, Gombrich, Kubler, Baxandall, Alpers, several dedicated journals and even more numerous academies.

As for the medieval and early modern area, Venezia Arti 2020 invites scholars to send their contributions on the theoretical, historical and critical debate upon the relationships between art and science from the 11th to the 19th century. The papers can focus on specific figures or concrete episodes, such as the application of optics to pictorial representations to military architecture, or the relationships between anatomical research and graphic and plastic practices, just to give some examples.

As for the modern and contemporary area, today’s cultural horizon bans any dichotomy between humanistic and scientific knowledge: these are two distinct forms of knowledge among which, however, there are links of correlation and overlapping. Distinct cognitive acts, based respectively on intuition and reason, although corresponding to different perspectives and different ways of experiencing reality, no longer contemplate an ideal succession or a hierarchical order.

The new generations of artists, scholars, critics and curators are living in an atmosphere of technoculture and no longer ask themselves the question of a conventional separation between science and art. Nor can we consider the issue only within a ‘Western culture’, given that today both art and science are universal values, recognised in every part of the world: they are objectives pursued by artists and scientists from all nations, and characteristics of the global and simultaneous knowledge of the 21st century, which is conveyed through digital networks. It is therefore not a matter of “opposites” in a dialectical vision, but of complementary sides.

The attention of contemporary art has focused on particular aspects of technoculture, such as the manipulation of nature and the control of natural forces. The tendencies of the artists to use and modify their body as if it were a form of sculpture, of sculpture on the living, arise from this (see e.g. Orlan and Stelarc, but also piercings and tattoos or other forms of body modification). One of the cruces is certainly the frontier of bioethics: while science attempts to set limits on biological experimentation (for example cloning), contemporary art attempts to violate these limits, or to interpret them in their most surrealistic aspects. The cyborg has become an emblem of contemporary art.

There are many possible variations of the theme in the contemporary context. Without wanting to set a limit, we shall indicate a few:

- New Media Art in an interdisciplinary context that involves the world of independent self-productions, institutions, laboratories and industries, and investigates the relationship between hybrid

markets and between art, design, architecture, sound, fashion, performance, scientific research and technological innovation;

- the appearance of cyborgs, androids, replicants and robots, which can be considered as the symbol of contamination, fusion and gradual dematerialization taking place, and of a body that seems to have chosen to contaminate itself with technology to create a new essence;
- the need for the "Other" in the definition of otherness and in the repositioning of the boundaries between what is internal and external to the idea of culture and, consequently, of humanity. The discourse on the 'transhuman' is characterised by the overcoming of limitations previously considered fundamental, which leads to the concept of hyperbody, capable of absorbing and containing parts of other humans, animals, plants, minerals and new technologies. On the edge of a mutant morphology, the passage from the fixity of the images to their mental persistence takes place;
- the development of digital aesthetics and new trends in digital art;
- the impact of technologies and sciences on art, design and contemporary culture;
- the different ways in which the visual arts of the twentieth century and the aesthetic theories related to them have arisen in relation to technological developments in communication and the affirmation of the mass media;
- the relationship between Art net and Art market.

SUBMISSION | Guidelines and information

To submit a contribution, please send the article with a brief biographical note. The materials must be sent within 31 May 2020 to venezia.arti@unive.it.

The text of the contribution must not exceed 40,000 characters (footnotes and spaces included) and will undergo a double-blind peer review. The accepted languages are English, Italian and French. Regardless of the text's language, all articles must include an English abstract and at least five English keywords, and must comply with Edizioni Ca' Foscari's editorial guidelines:

<https://edizionicafoscari.unive.it/en/edizioni4/riviste/venezia-arti/info#call> (for English)

<https://edizionicafoscari.unive.it/it/edizioni4/riviste/venezia-arti/info> (for Italian)

Non-complying texts will not be accepted. Authors must provide by themselves for costs and reproduction rights of any images, which shall be provided in high definition.

For more details and information, please contact the editorial board at venezia.arti@unive.it.

Reference:

CFP: Venezia Arti, issue 2/29 (2020): Art and Science. In: ArtHist.net, Mar 4, 2020 (accessed Apr 6, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/22771>>.