

## New Growth. Dialogues on the Tree (Toronto, 31 Mar 12)

York University, Toronto, Canada, Mar 31, 2012

Deadline: Dec 20, 2011

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New Growth: Dialogues on the Tree

11th Annual Art History Graduate Student Symposium

As an essential life source, the tree has taken on manifold significations throughout history and across cultures within mythology, religion, art, political and state propaganda, and scientific study—to name only a few such categories. Within current environmental debates, the cultural significance of the tree is juxtaposed by the threat of its extinction that massive deforestation, overexploitation, and urban sprawl pose. This broad import renders the tree as both a natural and conceptual object and cultural artifact that is ideologically shaped and constructed. Caught in this tension, the tree can thus be theorized as a physical and symbolic locus of the Nature/Culture paradigm.

Taking this idea as a point of departure, this symposium centres the tree as a site for cultural inquiry that defies inclusion in either one (Nature) or the other (Culture) category. Specifically, it aims to highlight pertinent issues surrounding the tree as a site of competing forces and ideologies. This symposium will run alongside the exhibition “The Tree: From the Sublime to the Social” at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. We, therefore, invite papers addressing the tree within visual art and culture. However, we aim to enable an interdisciplinary dialogue that will reflect on the tree as a rich realm for inquiry and invite papers from diverse fields and perspectives. Papers on historical or contemporary subjects are welcome. Topics for discussion may include but are not limited to:

- the iconography of the tree
- the tree, landscape, and ideology
- the tree, landscape, and language
- eco-poetics and the tree as metaphor
- the tree and wilderness myths
- the tree within nationalist and postnationalist narratives

- the tree as a site of cultural memory
- the tree, power, and the possession/dispossession of the landscape
- postcolonial perspectives on the tree
- the tree and landscape as frontier and prospect
- the tree considered within disaster narratives, environmental destruction, and violence
- the tree, art, and activism
- ecofeminist perspectives on the tree
- the tree, affect, and the environment
- the tree in garden design
- topography, landscape architecture, and the tree
- the tree within natural, built, and virtual environments
- the tree in intersections of art and science

Please send a 250-word abstract of your paper along with a working title, curriculum vitae, and contact information to:

ahgsay@gmail.com

or

AHGSA Symposium Committee

c/o Dawn Burns

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CANADA

The deadline for submissions is December 20, 2011. Successful participants will be notified by January 9, 2012. The symposium will take place March 31, 2012, at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg, Ontario, Canada, north of Toronto, Canada.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact symposium co-chairs Emma Conner and Kristen Daigle at ahgsay@gmail.com.

Thank you.

Reference:

CFP: New Growth. Dialogues on the Tree (Toronto, 31 Mar 12). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 30, 2011 (accessed Apr 4, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/2346>>.