

Nonhuman Artists. Challenging Anthropocentrism (online/Toronto, 18 Mar 22)

online/Toronto, Mar 18, 2022

Deadline: Feb 4, 2022

Wenyi Qian

Nonhuman Artists: Challenging Anthropocentrism in Art History

Ninth Annual Wollesen Memorial Graduate Symposium

Organized by the Graduate Union of the Students of Arts

Online and In Person, University of Toronto

Keynote Address:

Rebecca Zorach, Northwestern University

The Graduate Union of the Students of Art (GUSTa) at the University of Toronto is pleased to present the Ninth Annual Wollesen Memorial Graduate Symposium in cooperation with the Department of Art History.

In art history, notions of artistic creation, identity, and agency are often underpinned by an anthropocentric framework that hampers critical reflection on non-human actors in the making and circulation of images and artefacts. This symposium seeks to explore non-anthropocentric perspectives to artistic practice by confronting the 'animal', 'inorganic', or even 'divine' limits of art-making, and examining the degree to which the works of art both past and present continue to be shaped by agencies and currents of power that resist or exceed human control. We encourage submissions from students and scholars working on visual and material culture in any period or region, as well as those engaging with theoretical insights in eco-criticism, history of science and technology, media theory, archaeology and anthropology.

Examples of research area include, but are not limited to:

- anthropocentrism in art history
- political agency of animals in art
- the limit between art and nature, organic and inorganic in art-making (nature as painter/artist/artisan, *lusus naturae*, nature print, photography)
- indigenous place-thought and land-based consciousness
- the limits of notions such as agency, intentionality, and consciousness and meaningful ways to articulate agency, consciousness or thought proper to images and artefacts
- material agency; artists 'listening' to what their work/material/tool 'wants'
- analogies between the artist and their tools (retina/lens, finger/brush, etc.)
- diverse strategies used to circumvent or relinquish human agency, intention, or willpower in art-making (*Acheiropoieta*, role of accident and chance, automatism and the unconscious)

- art generated by new digital technologies (e.g. Google Lens, Deep Dream Generator)
- the dehumanization of artists in political, ideological and colonial contexts

The Ninth Annual Wollesen Memorial Graduate Symposium takes place on March 18, 2022. To allow for flexibility amid ongoing pandemic, the symposium will be arranged in a hybrid format, with in-person meeting held at Hart House, St. George Campus. Speakers participating online have the option of presenting live or submitting a pre-recorded presentation. Presentations are 20 minutes in length, followed by a live discussion period. We will be requesting submissions of completed manuscripts for publication in the symposium proceedings.

Please submit 250-word paper abstracts accompanied by a 100-word bio (.doc/.docx/.pdf) to the Graduate Union of the Students of Art at gustasymposium@utoronto.ca by February 4, 2022, at 5 PM ET. If you would like to submit a request for an organized panel session consisting of three papers, please ask all authors in the session to submit individual abstracts and send us a separate email containing the names and email addresses of all session speakers. Applicants will receive email notification no later than Friday, February 25, 2022, at 5PM ET.

For more information, please visit <https://gustasymposium.wordpress.com>.

Queries regarding submissions should be directed to gustasymposium@utoronto.ca

Reference:

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