

## The Aesthetics of Democratic Life-Forms (Frankfurt a.M., 21–23 Sep 23)

Goethe-University Frankfurt am Main, Sep 21–23, 2023

Deadline: Jun 15, 2023

Ästhetik der Demokratischen Lebensform

Call for Abstracts:

THE AESTHETICS OF DEMOCRATIC LIFE-FORMS,

International Graduate Conference Goethe-University Frankfurt September 21th-23th, 2023.

Since its birth at the end of the 18th century, modern democracy has proved to be more than a system of government: forms of governance and ways of living dovetail as to formulate its structural complexity. Already in classical antiquity, politicians and thinkers observed the profound influence of the self-governing collective in shaping individual sensibilities; the modern democratic mechanism of representation increases and foregrounds such structural complexity, seeing the self-actualization of the demos and selection of political representatives via aesthetic media and strategies. Indeed, the aesthetic dimensions reveal modern democracies to be life-forms. That is, democracies reach deep into the fabric of life, cultivating certain modes of conduct, forms of communication, artistic practices, individual as well as collective forms of experience – all of which intertwine and shape the lives of those involved.

This call for abstracts invites contributions engaging with the topic via:

- theoretical concepts leading double aesthetic-political lives (representation, form, style, theatricality, realism, affect, experience, criticism, and others)
- analyses of object-side phenomena (literary texts, artworks, public space, fashion trends, social media, pop culture, climate movements, hustle- and scam culture, and others)
- insights from individual theoretical discourses (post-colonialism, phenomenology, feminism, eco-criticism, legal theories, theories of judgment, theories of the Anthropocene, biopolitics, and others) as well as schools of thought (Wittgenstein and Cavell, Marxism, Critical Theory, Pragmatism, Radical Democracy, and others).

Selected participants will be invited to present their research in interdisciplinary panels, each being allotted 20 minutes for speaking and 10 minutes for questions from the audience.

The conference will take place from September 21th-23th, 2023 in person at Goethe-University Frankfurt. Thursday evening will open with a keynote from Martin Jay (UC Berkeley), followed by a podium discussion; full-day panels will ensue on Friday and Saturday. This event was organized by the university initiative The Aesthetics of the Democratic Life-Form in collaboration with the Institute for Social Research, the Cluster Initiative ConTrust at the Research Institute Normative Orders, and Netzwerk Paulskirche.

Submission:

The deadline for the submission of abstracts (500-1000 words) is June 15th 2023. Contributions from students in advanced stages of master programs and doctoral students are expressly welcomed. A portion of travel and accommodation costs for participants can potentially be covered; the publication of conference contributions is being considered. Submissions and inquiries to be sent to [aedl.grade@gmail.com](mailto:aedl.grade@gmail.com).

The conference will take place in English and German; abstracts may be submitted in both languages.

Reference:

CFP: The Aesthetics of Democratic Life-Forms (Frankfurt a.M., 21-23 Sep 23). In: ArtHist.net, Apr 24, 2023 (accessed Aug 7, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/39133>>.