7th International Art and the City Conference (Nice, 5-8 Jun 25)

Villa Arson School of Fine Arts, Nice, France, Jun 5–08, 2025
Deadline: Jan 31, 2025

Tijen Tunali

The conference seeks to foster an interdisciplinary platform where scholars can engage in dialogues and collaborations that examine the intersections of art, aesthetics, and urban politics. The aim is to illuminate critical aspects of urban art practices, such as street-level artistic rebellion, the aesthetics of social movements, and art activism in urban spaces. This diverse focus allows for a rich examination of the ideologies, relationships, meanings, and practices that emerge from the interaction between art and the urban landscape, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of urban life, art, and social transformation.

Since its inception in 2019 by art historian Tijen Tunali, the Art and the City conference has traveled across several cities, including Tours, Berlin, Aarhus, Amman, and Göttingen, facilitating an ongoing exploration of art's role within the urban environment. In 2025, the 7th conference will take place in Nice, France, at the Villa Arson School of Fine Arts.

The role of art within urban spaces involves complex spatial and temporal dynamics that give rise to aesthetic, dialogical, and political interactions. On one side, art is a catalyst for urban development, tourism, public health, race relations, and general well-being. Conversely, it plays an instrumental role in urban activism, advocating for social change through movements such as the "right to the city," anti-gentrification efforts, and urban social movements with their spatial, ideological, and ecological agendas. Such movements have been extensively analyzed from politico-aesthetic perspectives, encompassing plural forms of resistance against authoritarian regimes, contests over public space, and issues of social and structural inequalities and human rights. Yet, there remains a need for a more specialized framework within contemporary art practices—one that places urban spaces and their social urgencies at the core of artistic production.

This year's conference theme, "Art, Urbanocene, and the City," centers on the emerging paradigm of the Urbanocene and its implications for urban artscapes. We invite scholars, artists, and practitioners to reflect on the following interdisciplinary points of inquiry:
• Artistic strategies that foster ecological consciousness and mobilize urban communities
• The role of ecocriticism and ecopoetics in urban artistic practices
• The strengths and limitations of art in catalyzing collective action toward sustainability and ecological justice
• Exploration of the potential and challenges posed by eco-art's interaction with urban ecologies
• Architectural approaches to equitable sustainability and ecological consciousness in urban settings

• Artistic gestures or practices pushing reflection on the politics of common
• How art redefines and confronts public space, fostering novel interpretations and forms of engagement
• The potential of art to create innovative, transformative spaces for citizen participation in urban environments
• Art's potential to reflect on the notions of capability and citizen empowerment
• Art's capacity to activate, capture, and subvert urban experiences, challenging traditional perspectives on urban space
• The role of art in empowering marginalized voices and subjects within the city to assert their presence and agency
• Artistic narratives that emerge around social organization within gentrified urban spaces
• Art's ability to reshape sensory and perceptual engagements with the city
• The aesthetic dimensions of urban social movements and their commitment to participatory democracy
• How urban art addresses intersecting issues of race, gender, class, and identity within evolving urban landscapes.
• How art preserves and reinvents historical narratives and cultural heritage within urban contexts.
• The impact of digital and interactive technologies in shaping new forms of artistic engagement with urban spaces.
• The role of transient artistic practices, such as installations and performances, in urban transformation and dialogue.
• How art preserves and reinvents historical narratives and cultural heritage within urban contexts.
We welcome contributions from diverse academic fields, including but not limited to urban studies, art history, political science, sociology, architecture, and environmental studies.
The conference is organized in partnership with the LIA-Asme (Laboratoire International Associé "Arts, société, mieux-être", Côte d'Azur University Nice (France), Villa Arson Nice (France), Laval University in Québec (Canada).
Keynotes
PD Dr Sacha Kagan, Center for World Music, University of Hildesheim
Assoc. Prof. Leah Modigliani, Visual Studies, Tyler School of Art and Architecture
Interdisciplinary Scientific Committee 2025
Sabina Andron, Architectural History, University of Melbourne
Constantinos Diamantis, Culture, Creative Media and Industries, the University of Thessaly
Juan Carlos Guerrero-Hernández, Art History, University of Nevada – Reno
Andrew Hewitt, Art and Design, University of Northampton
Mel Jordan, Center for Post-digital Cultures, Coventry University
Panos Leventis, Architecture, Drury University
Leah Modigliani, Visual Studies, Tyler School of Art and Architecture
Sacha Kagan, Sociology of Art, Leuphana University
Vittorio Parisi, Aesthetics, Villa Arson Nice, Université Côte d'Azur
Tijen Tunali, Art History, University of Rennes 2

Contributors are invited to submit abstracts that should be 500 words maximum. Please also include a brief bio and send it to the conference convener, Marie Sklodowska Curie Bienvenue Fellow, Tijen Tunali, at tijen.tunali@univ-rennes2.fr by January 31, 2025.

On the third day of the conference in the afternoon, there will be a free city tour to see the urban art activities in Nice.
On the fourth day of the conference, there will be an optional trip to Monte Carlo and Monaco.
Selected papers will be invited to contribute to an edited volume contracted by Routledge and a special issue in the Urban Studies Journal.

Reference:
CFP: 7th International Art and the City Conference (Nice, 5-8 Jun 25). In: ArtHist.net, Dec 17, 2024 (accessed Nov 2, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/43578>.