

International Journal of Surrealism, vol. 4.1 (Fall 2026): Sapphic Surrealism

Deadline: Jan 10, 2026

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The International Journal of Surrealism is the journal of the International Society for the Study of Surrealism (ISSS) (founded 2018, launched 2022) (<https://surrealismstudies.org/>). The journal is published by the University of Minnesota Press (<https://www.upress.umn.edu/journal-division>). Co-Editors: Alyce Mahon (University of Cambridge) and Kate Conley (William & Mary)

The editors invite submissions for articles on the topic of sapphic surrealism.

Surrealism as a historical movement coincided with the rise of various lesbian and queer subcultures. Materializing before the crystallization of contemporary categories of sexual identity, these communities adopted and experimented with various monikers: amazon, neuter, friend, tribade, third sex, garçonne, and sapphic, a term that embraced the nineteenth-century coding of the Greek poet Sappho as a figure for lesbian desire. Today, the word sapphic continues to be used in queer communities as a gender and sexuality-expansive category that encompasses not only lesbians and bisexual women but also nonbinary, genderqueer, and transgender individuals who assert a love for femme and feminine genders. The surrealist movement that was centered around André Breton's circle at times had a troubled relationship with male homosexuality—Breton famously wrote in the pages of "La Révolution surréaliste" that homosexuals had a "mental and moral deficiency." This instance of homophobia, however, has long overshadowed and obscured the ways in which surrealism has fostered and nurtured sapphic desires. Numerous artists adopted queer, non-normative ways of living through a pursuit of surrealism, and they explored forms of sapphic longing throughout paintings, photography, fashion, film, writing, collages, and modes of assemblage. Surrealism cultivated intense female friendships and forms of polyamory, as well as a fascination by many artists with the image of the lesbian—the "heroine of modernity" according to Walter Benjamin. The dream of a non-persecuted, liberated desire espoused by surrealism would later be echoed by midcentury and contemporary LGBTQ+ movements across the world, whose artists engage and employ contemporary surrealist strategies.

For the Fall 2026 issue the editors invite submissions that explore the relationship between surrealism and sapphic subcultures—both historically and today, and in various global contexts. How did surrealism foster and support an otherwise outlawed queer desire, and how might it continue to do so within our current moment? In what ways have artists used surrealist techniques to explore and experiment with sapphic sexuality and themes? The editors encourage submissions that consider works in any media, and by visual artists and writers formally associated with surrealism, in broader surrealist circles, and inspired by its legacies. Attuned to the contemporary multivalent meanings of sapphic, this issue particularly welcomes readings that open onto gen-

derqueer, nonbinary, and transgender histories of surrealism.

Submissions for essays should be 5000–7000 words in length, including footnotes, and be accompanied by up to 6 images per article (with copyright secured). Shorter texts and artworks for the Récit and Portfolio sections of the journal are also welcome (please see past editions). All essays must conform to the Chicago Manual of Style. Manuscripts in languages other than English are accepted but must be accompanied by a detailed summary in English (generally of 500–1000 words) and must be translated into English if they are recommended for publication. Manuscripts should be submitted in Microsoft Word format. The International Journal of Surrealism does not accept manuscripts that have been previously published in any language. All content is double-blind peer-reviewed. Interested authors are encouraged to reach out to the editors of the special issue to discuss potential submissions.

Guest editors: Anne Marie Butler (Kalamazoo College) and Rachel Silveri (University of Florida)

Essays should be submitted to: IJSedit@umn.edu and abutler@kzoo.edu and rsilveri@ufl.edu

Queries and Correspondence should be addressed to: abutler@kzoo.edu and rsilveri@ufl.edu

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