

The Body, Anatomy, and Aesthetics

Deadline: Nov 30, 2025

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Art & the Public Sphere Special Issue: The Body, Anatomy, and Aesthetics.

In a 2022 article, one of a number of related works, and drawing on the work of Didier Deleule and François Guéry (2014) – the late art theorist Marina Vishmidt critiqued the manner in which an analysis of ‘bodies’ seemed to be overly focused on the register of vulnerability, or the post-structuralist, discursive, or psychoanalytic dimensions, thus relegating bodies excessively to the realm of the abstract, to the exclusion of the concrete. Anatomy, with regards to both its aesthetic and scientific purposes, also has abstract and concrete dimensions – as innovative recent works analyzing anatomy within its broader social and historical contexts demonstrate. See, for example, the recent special issue of *The Anatomical Record* (Laitman and Smith, 2022), or the work of Michael Sappol (2004; 2024).

This CFP is specifically interested in the body, inclusive of anatomy, and will seek to not only situate and read the body and anatomy within specific political economic contexts (which are not solely confined to capitalism, although this is a proposed focus) – but also, how those contexts produce the body (see, for example, Blayney et al., 2022) and anatomy themselves, and how this may be reflected back or interpreted through specific aesthetic works. This therefore additionally entails looking at the relationship between the abstract and the concrete – and therefore, for example, how the abstract of aesthetics, amongst other things, may relate back in a dialectical, mutually interlinked relationship with the concrete of the economy. In addition, this CFP wishes to concretize the body and anatomy, in both their individual and collective registers, and how the abstract and the concrete dialectically shape and produce each other in relation to the body and anatomy. In so doing, the interplay and distinction between the private body and the body that appears in the public sphere (see, for example, Butler, 2011), how this might be reflected in aesthetic works, and what this tells us about said public sphere – will also be considered.

This CFP is therefore interested in articles that explore, but are not limited to:

The body in aesthetic works and its relation to the public sphere

Anatomy, aesthetics, and the public sphere

The history of anatomy

Queer, intersex, and trans anatomies

Race, gender, class, and anatomy and the body in relation to the public sphere

The evolution of the representation and understanding of queer, intersex, and trans bodies

The production and mediation of the body within specific political economic contexts, including capitalism

Urban design and the production and mediation of the body

Deadline for the submission of abstracts: 30 June 2025

Deadline for the submission of manuscripts: 30 November 2025

Email abstracts to: lindarolandd@gmail.com

References

Blayney, S., Hornsby, J., and Whaley, S. (2022) *The Body Productive: Rethinking Capitalism, Work and the Body*, London: Bloomsbury.

Butler, J. (2011) *Bodies in Alliance and the Politics of the Street*, transversal texts, Available at: <https://transversal.at/transversal/1011/butler/en> (Accessed 6 March 2025)

Deleule, D. and Guéry, F. (2014) *The Productive Body*, London: Zero Books.

Sappol, M. (2004) *A Traffic of Dead Bodies: Anatomy and Embodied Social Identity in Nineteenth-Century America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Sappol, M. (2024) *Queer Anatomies: Aesthetics and Desire in the Anatomical Image, 1700 – 1900*. London: Bloomsbury.

Laitman, JT and Smith, Heather F. (2022) The Anatomical Record explores the soul of the anatomical sciences in a groundbreaking special issue: “Evolution of a discipline, the changing face of anatomy”, *The Anatomical Record*, 305(4): 762 – 765.

Vishmidt, M. (2022) ‘Corporeal and abstract: Is there a ‘left biopolitics’ of bodies? In: Steffan Blayney, Joey Hornsby, and Savannah Whaley (eds.) *The Body Productive: Rethinking Capitalism, Work and the Body*, London: Bloomsbury: 59 – 80.

Reference:

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