

Sculpture Journal, Special Issue: The Digital Era of Sculpture

Deadline: Sep 1, 2025

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As creative tools for visualisation and production, digital resources have inspired artists and art historians to look afresh at three-dimensional media. Digital imaging techniques such as 3D rendering, scanning and printing have become widely accessible and increasingly sophisticated, effectively impacting different stages in the design, development and production of sculptures and sculptural research. Likewise, augmented and virtual reality inspire new ways to display and experience objects in space, as well as project three-dimensionality. Yet by their very fabrication in predominantly Anglo-centric spaces, such digital tools and methodologies may inadvertently reinforce socio-political dynamics and cultural mores rooted in "western" artistic and art-historical perspectives. As constructs of human engagement, digital resources are just as capable of fomenting biases.

This call aims to interrogate the extent to which digital tools heighten, or possibly obscure, the very three-dimensionality, materiality and scale of sculptural design. Furthermore, we hope to encourage active engagement with questions of cultural perspectives, political aims and preconceived bias embedded in modern technological advances. In and of themselves, digital visualisations of sculptures have become important resources in object research; they foster remote access to digitised objects, space, and documentary collections, while opening avenues for new scholarly inquiry. Digital methods of analysis—for example, through precise measurement and spatial construction—allow for the detailed assessment of extant sculptures in space, as well as lost contexts. Digital surrogates of artefacts can play a vital role in the preservation of cultural heritage, supporting documentation, conservation and reconstruction efforts. But which histories are preserved, what questions are asked, and why?

For a special issue of the Sculpture Journal, the Editors welcome abstracts that critically examine how digital technologies influence our perception, experience and engagement with sculptural forms. We invite proposals addressing, but not limited to, the following topics:

- Artists working with digital imaging and production techniques in sculpture
- Computational methods in the research and analysis of sculpture
- Digital reconstruction and cultural heritage preservation
- Virtual and augmented reality in sculptural displays and curatorial strategies
- Critical reflections on digital mediation of three-dimensional forms
- Eurocentrism and other potentially unacknowledged biases inherent to digital design
- Politicisation of the digital mediascape
- The dematerialisation of sculptural and spatial forms through metadata abstraction

- The ephemerality of the digital space
- Potential new directions in three-dimensional visualisation and the limits of virtual reality

The issue seeks to explore these themes transhistorically and globally, across a wide range of sculptural practices and materials. We particularly encourage interdisciplinary approaches that bring together perspectives from art history, studio art, digital humanities and material and media studies.

Abstracts of up to 250 words should be submitted to Erin Giffin (ecgiffin@gmail.com) and Daniel Berndt (daniel.berndt@uzh.ch) by 1 September 2025. Final submission of full-length articles of 6000-8000 words including endnotes will be requested by 1 March 2026.

Sculpture Journal is the foremost scholarly journal devoted to sculpture in all its aspects across the globe. It provides an international forum for writers and scholars in the wider field of sculpture, including all three-dimensional art and monuments. Published by Liverpool University Press, the journal offers a keen critical overview and a sound historical base, encouraging contributions of fresh research from new and established names in the field.

<https://www.liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk/journal/sj>

Reference:

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