

What is Contemporary Painting?

Journal of Contemporary Painting

Deadline: Oct 3, 2025

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Special Issue: 'What is Contemporary Painting?'

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This issue of the Journal of Contemporary Painting will be devoted to the fundamental question, what is contemporary painting?

The general question—what is contemporary art?—has informed the work of art historians Christine Ross, Keith Moxey and Terry Smith; cultural critics like Johanna Drucker; philosophers like Peter Osborne; and curators like Claire Bishop and Okwui Enwezor. Over the past 20 years, thanks to their work and many others, a set of plausible indicators identifying the condition of contemporaneity in the arts has entered the discourse.

Clearly, these issues must be examined within a broader global perspective. According to Okwui Enwezor, 'globalisation has effectively abolished the temporal and spatial distances that previously separated cultures', rendering the homogenising tendencies of Western art vulnerable to a critical counter movement brought on by artists located in places once considered the peripheries of power and influence.

In this context, Peter Osborne makes the claim that 'all contemporary art is postconceptual'. This implies that contemporary art is in some way marked by the critical aspects established by Conceptual art and the impulse to test the limits of Modernism, particularly as embodied in the discipline of painting.

In response to these and other instances of the discourse on contemporary art and contemporaneity, we invite you to consider the question, 'What is Contemporary Painting'? Some avenues of inquiry include, but are not limited to, the following:

- What are the significant features to be found in painting that engages with the discourse of the contemporary? How might one define contemporary painting? Here we encourage the submission of a case study highlighting a particular work of painting completed within this century.

- What is the relationship between painting's craft based past and the expanded field of its multiplying futures? What is the relationship between painting and other mediums of contemporary art, such as video, installation, performance and digital media? What has been the impact on contemporary painting of the curatorial decisions that have shaped large-scale international surveys and major museum exhibitions?

- Is painting a critically viable medium in the 21st Century?
- What can we say about the consequences of the multiple meanings—chronological, ontological—of the term 'contemporary'?

You are invited to submit an abstract of 500 words. Your proposal should also include a brief bibliography, an image of an artwork, and a short bio. Deadline: 3 October 2025.

Notification of acceptance of your proposal will be by 3 November 2025.

If your proposal is accepted, you will be asked to submit your text—between 2,000 – 5,000 words—by 2 February 2026.

Proposal abstracts should be sent to Mark Titmarsh: mark.titmarsh@uts.edu.au

Reference:

CFP: What is Contemporary Painting?. In: ArtHist.net, Sep 13, 2025 (accessed Apr 5, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/50592>>.