

6 Sessions at AAH (Cambridge, 8-10 Apr 26)

University of Cambridge, UK

Deadline: Nov 2, 2025

ArtHist.net Redaktion

- [1] Reforms, revivals and returns revisited
- [2] Curating with AI: Risks and Opportunities
- [3] Victorian Art After Trans Studies
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Association for Art History (AAH) 2025, Annual Conference.

We are delighted to announce a Call for Papers for our next year's conference, which will be held in collaboration with the History of Art department at the University of Cambridge.

The Association for Art History's Annual Conference brings together international research and critical debate about art history and visual culture. A key annual event, the conference is an opportunity to keep up to date with new research, hear leading keynotes, broaden networks, and exchange ideas.

The Annual Conference attracts around 400 attendees each year and is popular with academics, curators, practitioners, PhD students, early career researchers, and anyone engaged with art history research. Members of the Association get reduced conference rates, and members and non-members are welcome to attend and propose sessions and papers. Convenors are limited to convening one session, and we ask that speakers give a paper in one session only.

We actively encourage applications from candidates who are Black, Asian, minority ethnic or from other groups traditionally underrepresented within art historical roles in the UK, as well as new partnerships from those representing these groups. We also welcome session proposals from art associations, societies and networks

<https://forarthistory.org.uk/events/cfp-association-for-art-history-2026-annual-conference/>

[1] Reforms, revivals and returns revisited

From: Vendula Hnídková

Date: Oct. 20, 2025

"Reforms, revivals and returns revisited".

Reforms, revivals and returns in the visual arts have taken many avenues and have had many departures and end points. By seeking an alternative path, they often promised a distinctive departure from the powers of capitalism. For instance, calls for reforms of housing led over the last century to attempts to create new, self-reliant communities that live in so-called garden cities according to Ebenezer Howard, or in King Charles's new urban developments of Poundbury and similar projects. Likewise, revivals of crafts once related to pre-industrial self-sufficiency aim at recovering skills that rely on local materials, knowledge and community. Initiatives promoting homemade clothes, needlework or upcycling have been linked to a wide spectrum of political actors from sustainable craftivists to tradwives.

Common to these revivals are concepts like tradition, community, and authenticity. Yet do they run the danger of becoming conservative, normative and exclusive, whether in terms of gender, race or class? This panel seeks papers that critically examine ideas of authentic, socially engaged architecture, craft and design, exploring their political scale and social impact.

Focusing on the period since 1900, we ask the following questions:

- Can the reform movements from the past provoke a genuine reform in the future?
- What values can be promoted through reforms, revivals and returns of traditions, however invented?
- How were the "Western" reform movements transferred, translated and adopted in different global geographies?
- What are the political motivations and intentions of such activities?
- Whose traditions, values and authenticity are revived and constructed?

Please include in your paper proposal:

- Title of your paper (please make sure the title is concise and reflects the contents of the paper because the title is what appears online, in social media and in the digital programme).
- Brief abstract (max 250 words)
- Your name
- Affiliations (or if independent/freelance)
- Email address for your convenor to contact you
- Social media handles

The deadline for submitting abstracts using the AAH form:

<https://app.box.com/s/e1r529tdk6ef6ycfc6gqkxny9bn4e0u> is November 2, 2025. Please email them to both convenors:

Dr Marta Filipová, Masaryk University Brno, Czech Republic: m.filipova@phil.muni.cz

Dr Vendula Hnídková, Institute of Art History, Czech Academy of Sciences: hnidkova@udu.cas.cz

[2] Curating with AI: Risks and Opportunities

From: Kathryn Brown

Date: Oct. 20, 2025

"Curating with AI: Risks and Opportunities".

Technologies falling under the umbrella term 'artificial intelligence' have been embraced and critiqued by

art practitioners and cultural institutions around the world. This session explores the potential uses and risks of incorporating AI into the curation of art exhibitions. The idea that a 'self-learning human-machine system' could curate an exhibition was debated by the Liverpool Biennial and the Whitney Museum of American Art (Impett and Krysa 2021). In 2023, combined machine curation and audience interaction was incorporated into the Helsinki Art Biennial (Del Caeillo et al., 2023), and in 2024, The Nasher Museum of Art used ChatGPT to curate a supposedly 'groundbreaking exhibition' (Richardson 2024).

Researchers have also explored whether computer vision can distinguish between exhibitions curated by a human and by an algorithm (Van Davier et al., 2024). By taking curation out of the hands of humans, can AI be used to decolonize museum practices and propose innovative connections between artworks? Might the sheer use of technology in curation have a democratizing effect by stimulating the interest of new audiences? Alternatively, does the delegation of curation to a machine erode a fundamentally social aspect of museum practice? Aside from its environmental impact, does the use of AI create a hierarchy that privileges those institutions with access to sophisticated technical resources and staff capacities? As public and private funding floods into technology rather than arts and heritage, there is a pressing need to determine the gains and losses of AI curation and the implications of a new techno-curatorial imaginary.

For submitting abstracts for 20-minute papers please use the AAH form:

<https://app.box.com/s/e1r529tdk6ef6ycfc6gqkxnry9bn4e0u>

The deadline for submissions is November 2, 2025.

Please email the form above and proposals to convenor Kathryn Brown: k.j.brown@lboro.ac.uk

Session Convenors:

Kathryn Brown and Alison Kahn

[\[3\]](#) Victorian Art After Trans Studies

From: Frankie Dytor

Date: Oct. 20, 2025

"Victorian Art After Trans Studies".

The nineteenth century saw profound transformations in how being and embodiment were figured across British culture. Art and science were at the forefront of these changes. As new forms of subjectivity were being formulated, the relationship between the self and the body, and between the body and life itself, were being reconfigured in visual productions and scientific writings alike. These transformations were entangled with new, ambivalent, and profoundly modern ways of thinking about gender, sexuality, form, and the nature and limits of the human. In Victorian art, the body was opened up to forces and flows which constituted and exceeded it.

This panel invites papers which centre trans studies as a lens through which to explore these turbulent transformations in nineteenth-century art. What modes of embodiment, being, or becoming come into view when Victorian visual culture is approached via trans theory? What kinds of subjects and materials come to matter differently? What are the uses of transness — attuned to transition, indeterminacy, multiplicity, and bodily change — as a theoretical and historical framework?

We invite 20-minute papers exploring British art (broadly conceived) in the long nineteenth century through the lens of trans theory and/or from trans perspectives. Topics might include, but are not limited to:

- The (un)making of the human; nonhuman bodies; monstrosity; animality
- Ecology, metamorphosis, bodies and environments
- Racialization of sex, gender, and embodiment
- Coloniality of gender; imperialism and difference
- Transness and disability; mutable, prosthetic, and anomalous bodies
- Fairytales, folklore, myth, and transformation
- Spirituality and immaterial bodies
- Sexology and medical imaging

Submit your Paper via this form: <https://app.box.com/s/e1r529tdk6ef6ycfc6gqkxnry9bn4e0u>

Please download, complete and send it directly to the Session Convenors below by Sunday November 2, 2025:

Frankie Dytor, University of Exeter, f.dytor@exeter.ac.uk

Emma Merklings, University of Manchester, emma.merkling@manchester.ac.uk

[\[4\]](#) Fashionability and the Art Market

From: Stephanie Dieckvoss and Anne Reimers

Date: Oct. 20, 2025

"Fashionability and the Art Market".

Temporal dynamics of rise and decline are key drivers in the art world as a marketplace, and they often impact on art production, too. In his 1937 essay 'Eduard Fuchs: Collector and Historian', Walter Benjamin agreed with Fuchs' critique that art historians did not sufficiently attend to 'the question of the success of a work of art'. To some extent, this remains true today. It separates, for example, art market journalism covering fashionable artists and trends in the global art world from the scholarly discourse that later addresses the work of such artists, potentially inscribing them into the academic and institutional canon. According to Fuchs, 'the uncovering of the real reasons for the greater or lesser success of an artist, the reasons for the duration of his success or its opposite, is one of the most important of the problems which [...] attach themselves to art.'

This panel welcomes proposals that address fashionability or time-limited popularity in relation to: artistic styles or movements, individual artists or groups, or the impact of short-term trends on the decision-making of collectors, galleries and dealers, or arts criticism and art historical writing. Since fashions in the art world extend to works of art themselves, we also invite papers that cover fashion as garment: from the role a fashionable appearance can play for an artist to project contemporariness to concerns that might arise when an artwork represents a fashionable person. Proposals for papers can cover any geographical or cultural context, period, and artistic medium.

Submit your Paper via this form: <https://app.box.com/s/e1r529tdk6ef6ycfc6gqkxnry9bn4e0u>

Please download, complete and send it directly to the Session Convenors below by Sunday November 2, 2025: Stephanie.Dieckvoss@courtauld.ac.uk & a.reimers@fashion.arts.ac.uk

[\[5\]](#) Errors, Glitches, Blurs: The Art of Failure

From: Sophie Lynch

Date: Oct 20, 2025

"Errors, Glitches, Blurs: The Art of Failure"

Across the histories of photography, film, and media art, moments of failure—whether mechanical, optical, chemical, or digital—have played a generative role in shaping aesthetic experimentation and critical inquiry. Blurred exposures, light leaks, scratched film stock, corrupted files, or distorted video signals often reveal the unruly materialities and contingent operations of visual technologies. Rather than dismissing these moments as technical mistakes, this panel explores how failure becomes a site of creative agency and theoretical provocation.

Foregrounding practices that embrace accident, misalignment, and breakdown, this panel asks how artists and media-makers have historically responded to—or deliberately invited—moments of technological disruption. What happens when photographic or cinematic images falter in their claims to clarity, fidelity, or indexical truth? How do glitches and misfires expose the limits of control and the latent aesthetics embedded in machine processes? And how might attending to visual “failures” reframe dominant narratives of progress, innovation, or authorship in the histories of art and media? Rather than treating error as an aberration to be overcome, this panel considers how failures and glitches can serve as generative forces that unsettle fixed meanings, challenge dominant visual paradigms, or invite new modes of engagement with technologically produced images and media.

Drawing on art historical approaches alongside media theory and the history of technology, the panel invites contributions that consider failure not only as an aesthetic strategy but as a methodological lens. In doing so, it seeks to examine how artists working with photography, film, video, and digital technologies have mobilized error—whether analog or digital—to question visual norms, resist technical mastery, and highlight the entangled relationship between human intention and technological operation.

Submit your Paper via this form: <https://app.box.com/s/e1r529tdk6ef6ycfc6gqkxnry9bn4e0u>

Please download, complete and send it directly to the Session Convenor(s) below by Sunday 2 November 2025:

Sophie Lynch, sophielynch@uchicago.edu

[6] [The Expanded Print](#)

From: Marika Knowles

Date: Oct 23, 2025

"The Expanded Print"

This panel explores the materials, techniques, and embodied practices of printmaking with the goal of engendering a more capacious understanding of the medium and its ongoing potential as a field of art-historical inquiry.

While Marshall McLuhan famously proclaimed in *Understanding Media* (1964) that “the medium is the message”, here we ask whether reconceptualizing how we think and write about the medium of print might transform how we interpret its messages. We therefore take up Jennifer Roberts’ call in *Contact: The Art and Pull of the Print* (2024) to move away from conceptions of “medium specificity” towards one

of “medium generativity”, to explore more inclusive and expansive approaches to “print”.

We seek to give a field that is rich in talent – but dispersed in temporal and geographic expertise – the opportunity to reassess its parameters. We wish to draw together scholars working across different time periods, disciplinary fields (including art history, material culture, media studies) and geographic focuses, and to encourage papers on traditional print techniques as well as other kinds of printed materials (photographs, films, textiles, wallpaper), and print-adjacent objects (armour, intaglio gems, seal matrices, etc.).

We seek proposals for 10 minute papers (followed by 10 minutes of discussion) exploring: the labour and gestures of printing (dabbing, cutting, digging, cleaning, drying), printmaking as embodied practice (with attention to race, gender, sexuality and disability), print materiality (varnishes, pigments, chemicals, matrices), the spaces of print (studio, darkroom, factory, office, film laboratory), and the intersections between printing and other media (sculpture, painting, photography, film).

Organizers: Esther Chadwick (The Courtauld, esther.chadwick@courtauld.ac.uk), Kirsty Dootson (University College London, kirsty.dootson@ucl.ac.uk), Marika T. Knowles (mk283@st-andrews.ac.uk)

Please follow the instructions at <https://forarthistory.org.uk/the-expanded-print/> to send proposals to the organizers (details above) by Sunday 2 November 2025. The organizers are happy to answer any queries via email in advance of the deadline.

Reference:

CFP: 6 Sessions at AAH (Cambridge, 8-10 Apr 26). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 26, 2025 (accessed May 23, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/50946>>.