

## (Re)Imagining Solar Futures (online, 25 Nov 25)

Online, Nov 25, 2025

Susanne Witzgall, Akademie der Bildenden Künste München

In the age of climate change, the sun represents simultaneously a threat and a shimmer of hope: Whilst heating up the atmosphere as greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, the sun also promises to offer an inexhaustible source of energy for a future beyond fossil fuels. From renewable energy policies to the subculture of Solarpunk or media artistic explorations of solar geoengineering, the sun, its ambivalent power and its possible technological (mis)use and (re)mediation, play a central role in current visions of the future in the arts, contemporary theory, and the techno-sciences.

The one-day conference is dedicated to contemporary imaginations of solar futures and their narratives, politics, and (techno-)aesthetics. Taking up the recent growing interest in the sun and our changing relationship with it, the conference examines which visions of a solar-powered, post-fossil world are currently circulating in art, theory, and society and asks how these are conceived and communicated. Organized in two panels, the conference explores on the one hand, how positive notions of solar (energy) futures are mediated by artists, designers, and environmental activists, but also across broader societal discourse. It provides a critical examination of the aesthetic dimension of speculative solar imaginations and analyses the potential of solar art and design in envisioning post-fossil futures. The second panel, on the other hand, turns to the shadows and conflicts that often remain hidden behind the shiny promises of solar technologies and their aesthetic mediation. How do contemporary visions of solar-powered futures reproduce the social and ecological injustices of racial capitalism and what might it mean to envision solar worlds differently?

The program will conclude with an artist talk and a critical look at the increasing technologization of solar relationships in a warming world as envisioned, for example, in contemporary artistic inquiries of speculative techno-solutions such as solar geoengineering. How can artists critically intervene in the (re)emerging visual discourse of climate techno-fixes and what might it mean to reorient our gazes towards the embeddedness of solar relationalities and thermal politics on an overheating planet?

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Online Conference „(Re)Imagining Solar Futures“

Organized at the Research Centre for Techno Aesthetics & cx center for interdisciplinary studies,  
Academy of Fine Arts Munich

Date: 25 November 2025, 13:30-20:00 CET

Registration:

[https://kunsthochschule-bayern.zoom-x.de/meeting/register/MrCyoT38Tj21SnbWkN4\\_HQ](https://kunsthochschule-bayern.zoom-x.de/meeting/register/MrCyoT38Tj21SnbWkN4_HQ)

With: Rhys Williams, Marjan van Aubel, Myles Lennon, Helen V. Pritchard, and Alice Bucknell

Program:

Tuesday, 25 November 2025

13:30-15:30 Bright Solar Futures

Rhys Williams: Solar. Extraordinary Aesthetics in Search of a Reparative Ordinary Form

Marjan van Aubel: Sunlighted

15:30-16:00 Intermission

16:00-18:00 Beyond the Shine

Myles Lennon: Solar Simulations in the Shadows of Racial Capitalism

Helen V. Pritchard: Renewable Maximal Aliveness

18:00-19:00 Intermission

19:00 Artist Talk

Alice Bucknell: Staring at the Sun

Concept and Organization: Amelie Buchinger (Research Centre for Techno Aesthetics) and Susanne Witzgall (cx)

Further information:

<https://www.adbk.de/de/studium/lehrangebot/theorie/forschungszentrum-fuer-technoasthetik/veranstaltungen-technoasthetik/online-conference-re-imagining-solar-futures-wintersemester-2025-26.html>

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Reference:

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