

Artium Quaestiones: Art History and the Ecological Turn

Artium Quaestiones, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (Poland), Nov 10, 2025–Feb 15, 2026

Deadline: Feb 15, 2026

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Post-Anthropocentrism, Ecocriticism, Climate Change.

For several decades now, the humanities have been undergoing what appears to be a productive crisis. Founded on an anthropocentric model that places the human being at the centre of attention—as both the cause and the object of study—and traditionally celebrating cultural, social, and artistic achievements, the humanities are now, in the face of an increasingly pressing climate crisis, compelled to revise their own foundations. They are forced to look at the human being “askew,” from a perspective that displaces its central, dominant position—not against the human, but, in a sense, in its interest.

At the beginning of the 21st century, Paul J. Crutzen proposed the term Anthropocene to designate an epoch—variously defined in terms of its temporal scope—in which humans, by intensively exploiting all available resources (e.g. extractivism), have contributed to civilizational development at the expense of the natural world in which they live. Theoretical reflection within the humanities—as well as various forms of practice—is therefore increasingly directed toward a critical, revisionist view of the past, the present, and of what is only now emerging on the horizon of our time.

The same applies to art history, visual culture studies, and artistic practices themselves, which, as history has shown, often anticipate theoretical reflection. American art historian Alan Braddock writes about the necessity of an ecocritical turn in art history, explaining that “Ecocriticism (...) questions the entrenched anthropocentrism of art history and other humanistic disciplines. While an irreducible humanism obviously informs all scholarly inquiry, ecocriticism envisions a more self-critical approach marked by subtler awareness of the environments in which art has unfolded” He stresses that ecocritical approaches may shed light on proto-ecological awareness embedded in works of art of the past and/or reveal aspects of these works that have remained unnoticed—often due to the dominance of aesthetic and formal concerns. Within this framework, the traditional opposition between culture (associated with art) and nature (considered merely an object of cultural and artistic production) is also dismantled. Moreover, what we now observe in contemporary art is a growing interest in the agency of non-human actors—nature, animals, inanimate matter, etc.—decentralising human activity in favour of species-level (and not only species-level) balanced coexistence.

The upcoming issue of *Artium Quaestiones* will welcome reflections on these problems, both within the context of Polish art and the global field. We ask how the ecological imperative is transforming art history today. We wish to examine the widening spectrum of retrospective and prospective possibilities for looking at art and artistic practices—both contemporary and historical. We are interested in an expanded reflection on the methodologies of art history within the environmental humanities, their connections with other academic disciplines, as well as the declared social responsibility of scholarship in the face of ongoing climate change.

Potential topics (non-exhaustive):

- The impact of climate-change-related reflection on current art-historical narratives
- Revisions of early modern, modern, and contemporary art from an ecocritical perspective
- Nature-culture and the dismantling of binary artistic narratives
- Art and the problem of extractivism
- Art and art history in the face of the non-human
- Theoretical and analytical accounts of ecocritical / pro-ecological artistic practices in contemporary art

Deadline for full paper submissions (in Polish, English, or German):

15 February 2026

Submission requirements:

- Manuscripts formatted according to the *Artium Quaestiones* style guide (see “Guidelines for Authors”), max. 45,000 characters (including footnotes and bibliography)
- Abstract in English (2,500 characters)
- Short academic bio: 500–1,000 characters
- Illustrations, 300 dpi, in separate jpg / tiff files

Submissions should be made through the OJS system on the Pressto UAM platform:

<https://pressto.amu.edu.pl/index.php/aq/about/submissions>

For login or upload issues, please contact Dr Katarzyna Dudlik: aq.redakcja@amu.edu.pl

Reference:

CFP: *Artium Quaestiones: Art History and the Ecological Turn*. In: *ArtHist.net*, Nov 9, 2025 (accessed Apr 6, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/51104>>.