

Visual Politics of Protest (Lisbon, 14–16 Jul 26)

Lisbon, Portugal, Jul 14–16, 2026

Deadline: Mar 31, 2026

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A Three-Day Workshop on the Visual Politics of Protest

Organized by: IPSA Research Committee on Visual Politics (RC04)

The proposed three-day workshop aims at focusing on different aspects of the visual politics of protests. As a distinct field of study, visual politics is dense with the theoretical base of its analysis. The discourse of visual politics of protests reflects the power relationship among its different components. Narratives of visual politics of protest are at times non-linear, diverse, and struggle to make its own mark. By definition, protests signify defiance, dissent, and opposition. Any protest underlines its own story consisting of its vision and rights. Therefore, visuality of protests gives birth to countervisuality as well. There is little doubt that a visual politics approach to the analysis, interpretation, and theorization of protests will also need to prioritize their performative dimensions. By images, symbols, signs, icons etc.; visual politics constructs, deconstructs, and reconstructs its performativity and its impact on politics generally. Through multiplicity of visual palettes, visual politics communicates with the various sectors of the people and consolidates its base in contemporary mass society. Therefore, the visual mode of political communication plays an important role. Another important dimension of the visual politics of protests is its cognitive impact on the people at large. Simultaneously, the articulation of demands takes multiple modes to attract the attention/rage of the authority as well. The dialectical impact of the visual dimensions of protests cuts across territories/geographies. In all these realms, the visual framing of politics by both the mass media and the social networks is constantly contested and conflictive. Thus, the study of the visual politics of protests becomes an integral part of the research on counterpublics and civil society. The workshop invites research papers on all these aspects of the narrative, empirical, and theoretical approach to the visual politics of protests.

RC04 - Visual Politics proposes seven panels covering different aspects of the visual politics of protest, including an inaugural panel and a concluding Roundtable.

RC04 - Visual Politics invites contributions from art historians and art practitioners.

Research papers are invited on the following sub-themes:

- Site of Protests: Visual and Non-visual
- Theories of Visual Politics
- Narratives of Visual Politics
- Political Communication
- Affective Impact of Visual Politics of Protests

- Framing of Visual Politics
- Counterpublics and Civil Society

The language of the Workshop is English. Word limit of the Abstract is 500 words. Those submitting abstracts should also attach a 100-word bio.

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Reference:

CFP: Visual Politics of Protest (Lisbon, 14-16 Jul 26). In: ArtHist.net, Jan 31, 2026 (accessed Feb 2, 2026),
<<https://arthist.net/archive/51637>>.