

2 Sessions at SECAC 2026 (Winston-Salem, 21-24 Oct 26)

secacart.org/page/WinstonSalem2026

ArtHist.net Redaktion

[1] African Animals in Art and Visual Culture.

[2] Weaving and Disentangling Imperial Identity: Art and Expansionist Violence in the Long Nineteenth Century.

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[1] African Animals in Art and Visual Culture.

From: Elizabeth Howie

Date: Feb 23, 2026

Chairs:

Elizabeth Howie, Professor of Art History, Coastal Carolina University (ehowie@coastal.edu)

Amy Schwarzott, Associate Professor of Art History, NC Agricultural and Technical State University (aschwart@ncat.edu)

Non-human undomesticated animals native to Africa have been widely represented in African and African diasporic visual culture, as well as in Western and global contexts. We are seeking papers addressing art from diverse geopolitical temporalities which explore the implication of the representation of animals native to the African continent in art from a broad range of styles, periods, and cultures, whether charismatic megafauna or less well-known species. Such representations could serve to reinforce or disrupt ideologies and hierarchies of anthropocentrism, racialization, and/or Western humanism, or relate to binaries of wild versus tamed, civilized versus uncivilized. Examples include traditional art of the African continent, early modern European art, Western "primitivism," images documenting animals given as court gifts, representations of zoos, maps, imagery associated with animal taming performance, etc. We hope to engage ideas from postcolonial studies, critical race theory, critical animal studies, etc.

Deadline: April 1, 2026 (11:59PM EST)

Submissions must include a paper title, abstract of 200 words or less, and a CV.

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[2] Weaving and Disentangling Imperial Identity: Art and Expansionist Violence in the Long Nineteenth Century.

From: Hoyon Mephokee

Date: Feb 23, 2026

Chairs:

Hoyon Mephokee, Washington University in St. Louis

Marie-Agathe Simonetti, University of Illinois, Chicago

Over the course of the long nineteenth century, the distant corners of the map were aggressively conquered, colonized, economically dominated, or otherwise subjugated by the West. From these violent encounters emerged hybridized identities that interwove the imperial and subaltern, colonizer and colonized, settler and native, and enslaver and enslaved, as the West appropriated and absorbed the Other in service of artistic, commercial, and colonial goals. Non-Western artists and institutions responded to Western intervention in a number of complex ways; while some interwove their indigenous cultural, political, and spiritual identities and practices with those of the West as a form of submission, alignment, or resistance, others resisted by directly challenging and disentangling the new identities that were forced upon them by their colonizers and would-be invaders.

This panel examines the formation and reiteration of these unstable identities through imperial violence and discourse in the long nineteenth century, and the practices that materialized, memorialized, negotiated, challenged, and troubled them within a global image economy. It seeks papers on diverse and interdisciplinary topics from Western and non-Western as well as Global Northern and Global Southern contexts in the long nineteenth century, and also welcomes submissions on pre-modern precedents and contemporary responses.

Deadline: April 1, 2026 (11:59PM EST)

Submissions must include a paper title, abstract of 200 words or less, and a CV.

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The SECAC 2026 conference.

Rooted in a rich history of craft and reinvention, the 2026 SECAC conference will be guided by the theme *Interwoven: Threads, Patterns & Disruptions*. Known as the "Southern City of the Arts," Winston-Salem has long woven together threads of tradition and transformation from its Moravian beginnings to its industrial rise in textiles and tobacco, and now into its second life as a hub for innovation and the arts.

Interwoven: Threads, Patterns & Disruptions evokes both the literal and metaphorical: the warp and weft of hand-made, home-grown, and self-reliant creative practices; the liminal nature of a city in transition, shaped by transplants, climate, and growth; and the patterns that emerge and disrupt across time, craft, and culture. The theme acknowledges the region's textile heritage, where weaving connects Winston-Salem to Greensboro, High Point, and beyond while highlighting how the arts continue to interlace histories, communities, and futures.

SECAC 2026 invites artists, scholars, and educators to explore art as embedded in connections that hold memory, identity, resilience, and innovation within its threads. Through the interactions that occur at the conference including conversations, presentations, panels, and exhibitions, SECAC 2026 will honor the city's layered past while extending its reach into the evolving landscape of contemporary practice.

This year, each applicant may submit two proposals, including for the new poster session, but may only present once at the conference. Final placements will be made by the session chairs and conference director and will be communicated to presenters by May 25, 2026.

Current SECAC Membership is required within ten days of acceptance; membership and conference registration are separate fees.

Sessions will be scheduled between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm on Thursday 10/22, Friday 10/23, and Saturday 10/24. Scheduling conflicts may be submitted after acceptance.

All presentations must be given in person; virtual presentations are not available unless required for health reasons, and virtual presenters must be fully registered for the conference. Sessions will not be broadcast or recorded.

Reference:

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