

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

Winston-Salem, NC, Oct 21–24, 2026

Deadline: Apr 1, 2026

Melissa Warak, University of Texas at El Paso

Threads, Patterns, and Disruptions in Art + Disability Studies

From: Melissa Warak

Date: Feb 25, 2026

Chairs: Jonathan Frederick Walz, The Columbus Museum, Georgia; Melissa Warak, The University of Texas at El Paso

This panel aims to bring together scholars in the field of art relating to disability and neurodiversity to explore the threads, patterns, and disruptions of disability in the arts. How do we, as researchers, design and craft our orientation toward these concerns? How does thoughtfully considering visible and invisible disabilities make art a valuable resource for cultural literacy and, ultimately, expand and complicate the conversation on access, acceptance, and disability justice? Possible presentation topics include but are not limited to:

- papers that probe the politics and ethics of disability representation
- papers that consider threads, patterns, and disruptions of disability in art and art history
- case studies of artists or works of art that help in understanding varying cultural attitudes toward disability across time and geography
- interdisciplinary methods for studying art from disability studies perspectives
- the addition of the arts to disability studies curricula in higher education
- pedagogical strategies for increasing access for and acceptance of disabled and neurodiverse students in the art classroom.

Additionally, we welcome artist talks and presentations by scholars of art education, design, craft, and museum studies to broaden the discourse beyond art history specifically. New voices, graduate students, and emerging scholars are particularly encouraged to apply.

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

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

Application via <https://secacart.org/page/WinstonSalem2026>

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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," Win-

ston-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:

CFP: Session at SECAC 2026 (Winston-Salem, 21-24 Oct 26). In: ArtHist.net, Feb 27, 2026 (accessed Apr 15, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/51837>>.