

Session at ASAP 17 (Madison, 14–17 Oct 26)

Madison, Wisconsin, Oct 14–17, 2026

Deadline: Apr 10, 2026

Valeria Federici

"PERFORMING THE DIGITAL: GETTING IT TOGETHER?"

Session at ASAP 17 (Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present).

Co-organizers of the panel:

- Valeria Federici (National Gallery of Art, D.C.)
- Megan Driscoll (University of Richmond)

Panel description:

"Plugging into cyberspace requires the creation of a personal mask," wrote artist Lynn Hershman Leeson in 1996. From Brenda Laurel's invitation to use the computer as a theatre (1991) to recent discourses on "performing the digital" and "digital performativity" (Lecker, Schipper, Beyes, 2017), the mediation of performance in, on, and through information technology has become a critical discourse for understanding the role of the digital in contemporary life.

This panel seeks contributions that use a performance studies framework to interrogate the nature and function of digital art (broadly defined) and its claims for a connected and/or communal politics of artistic production. Panelists may explore issues related, but by no means limited, to questions such as: How do artists and activists get (it) together in virtual spaces that both subvert and submit to surveillance? How have artists used generative techniques to engage with the epistemological conditions of a data-driven society? How have approaches ranging from cyberfeminism to tactical media responded to and/or problematized fantasies of hybridized bodies and the utopian project of building new worlds? How does the call to perform or "get exposure" collide with the yearning for anonymity and/or opacity in a digitally-saturated world? How has the history of anti-blackness and racialized labor exploitation shaped artists' encounters with surveillance capitalism and data extractivism when we act online? Can performance give us language for a digital politics of the collective, or is parasitical resistance (Watkins Fisher, 2020) the only mask we have left?

Please submit a current CV along with an up to 300 word abstract of your proposal. Presentations of creative work are invited alongside research papers, and we invite submissions from graduate students and emerging scholars as well as mid-career and established professionals. We particularly welcome perspectives from fields that share the cross-disciplinary interventionist approaches of performance and media studies, such as Black studies, queer theory, Indigenous studies, crip studies, and feminist critique.

Please go to the conference submission site: <https://asap17.exordo.com/>

ArtHist.net

and create a free account to submit your abstract for consideration or email Valeria Federici at valeria_federici@alumni.brown.edu

Reference:

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