

2 Sessions at UAAC-AAUC (Montreal, 13–15 Oct 26)

Concordia University, Montreal, QC, Oct 13–15, 2026

Deadline: May 31, 2026

ArtHist.net Redaktion

2026 Conference of the Universities Art Association of Canada (UAAC-AAUC).

[1] Elbows Up, Feathers Ruffled: Animals and Art in the Age of Nationalism

[2] Photography After Exposure: Rethinking Opacity in an Age of Exhausted Critique

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[1] Elbows Up, Feathers Ruffled: Animals and Art in the Age of Nationalism

From: Margaryta Golovchenko, Alberta University of the Arts

Date: May 15, 2026

The Canadian goose has resurfaced as a prominent symbol in recent years, rallying support and national unity in a moment of socio-political turmoil. Yet it is not unique in its role as national symbol. Animals have served a similar function in art and visual culture from the age of empires to the resurging neo-imperial ideas in the air today. This panel seeks to examine how animals participate in the process of nation building through the visual representation of their bodies as well as their frequent physical presence. Paper submissions on a range of temporal and geographical areas are encouraged, as well as on a range of case studies spanning fine art, visual culture, and the decorative arts. Approaches that recognize animals' roles as symbols but also how "animalization" can creep into the language used to represent certain cultures and peoples are also welcome.

Session proposals should be submitted directly to the session chair, Margaryta Golovchenko [margaryta@ilmar.ca] using the CFP submission form, downloadable here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CvB76UPXZWMgee6cOxzHWtuP9mZcwZ3WJADPEW_rvsl/expor?t?format=docx. Proposals are to be 250 words, accompanied by a biography of 150 words.

Additional information about the conference can be found here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-oduiFIFKMgHUG7SfiIG2NQWIX4M9CEUjS4vmF8gonY/edit?tab=t.0>.

[2] Photography After Exposure: Rethinking Opacity in an Age of Exhausted Critique

From: Anton Lee, NSCAD University

Date: May 15, 2026

This panel asks what it means to take obscurity and opacity seriously as artistic strategies in contemporary photography—not as naïve inversions of transparency, nor as retreats from the political, but as deliber-

ate responses to an impasse: the widespread loss of confidence in revelatory critique and, along with it, photography's claim to truth. We are surrounded by images that uncover and document, yet exposure alone no longer seems to carry the political force it once promised. At the same time, redaction and anonymity have become normalized and weaponized by the everyday operation of state power. In this context, refusing or complicating visibility becomes at once more tempting and more suspect—a tension this panel takes as its starting point.

The goal of this panel is not to celebrate darkness or illegibility for their own sake, nor to rehabilitate opacity as automatically resistant. Instead, the panel seeks contributions that approach obscurity critically, interrogating the specific conditions under which withholding or obfuscating the photographic image becomes, or fails to become, a meaningful artistic position. What forms of photographic image-making negotiate the current crisis of truth without either falling into aestheticism or doubling down on an evidentiary logic that has lost its footing? How do new visual technologies—facial recognition, gen-AI imaging, predictive surveillance—reconfigure what is at stake when an artist chooses not to show? Where may strategic withdrawal end and complicit disappearance begin? Rather than resolving these questions in advance, this panel proposes them as live problems.

To submit: Click to download the CFP submission form and email it to your chair. Include all fields: the applicant's name, email address, affiliation and a brief biography (150 words max.), session selected and title of paper proposed with description (300 words max.) in English or French.

You can find the CFP, participation rules, and a submission link here: <https://uaac-aauc.com/conference>.

Reference:

CFP: 2 Sessions at UAAC-AAUC (Montreal, 13-15 Oct 26). In: ArtHist.net, May 17, 2026 (accessed May 17, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/52479>>.