

## Solidarity with Nature (Sainsbury, 21–22 May 26)

Sainsbury Art Centre, University of East Anglia, May 21–22, 2026

Reuben Fowkes

The SAVA Conference on Solidarity with Nature asks how art history could be unlocked as a repository of the ecological heritage of socialism, explores the role of art practitioners in environmental movements, and considers how experimental art practices performed beyond-human solidarities and expanded the system's ecological horizons.

Conference registration is free of charge, but please email [sava@uea.ac.uk](mailto:sava@uea.ac.uk) to let us know that you plan to attend.

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### PROGRAMME

THURSDAY, 21 May

09.45 Conference registration

10.00 Introduction to the Socialist Anthropocene  
The SAVA Team

### PANEL I: NATURE PROTECTION

Chaired by Maja Fowkes (SAVA UEA)

10.30 Daniel Grůň (Institute of Art History, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava)  
Ecological Solidarity and Planetary Thought: Activist–Artist Interactions in Late Socialist Czechoslovakia

11.00 Megija Mīlberga (Institute of Fine Arts, New York University)  
“Where will you sleep? Under the spruce!” The Great-Tree Liberation Group and counterpublic environmentalism in Soviet Latvia

11.30 Preeti Kathuria (Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna)  
Stubble Burning and Rural Ecologies: Contemporary Artistic Interventions in India

12.00 Discussion

12.30 Lunch

### PANEL II: SYSTEM ECOLOGIES

Chaired by Meg Bernstein (UEA)

13.30 Anna Pronina (Central European University, Vienna)  
Seeing the Socialist Subtropics in Soviet Uzbekistan

14.00 Nikola Bojić (Academy of Fine Arts, Zagreb)  
Diagramming the Socialist Anthropocene

14.30 Peter Szalay (Comenius University Bratislava)  
Between Pannaturalistic Socialism and Degrowth

15.00 Discussion

15.30 Coffee break

#### PANEL III: ENVIRONMENTAL PRAXES

Chaired by Reuben Fowkes (SAVA UEA)

16.00 Pavlína Morganová (Academy of Fine Arts, Prague)  
Out of Town – Land Art and ordinary Life in Czechoslovakia in 1970s

16.30 Tihomir Topuzovski (Museum of Contemporary Art, Skopje)  
De/Territorializing Nature: Socio-Ecological Assemblages in Yugoslav and Post-Yugoslav Contexts

17.00 Dominicus Zimanimoto Makukula (University of Dar es Salaam)  
'Ujamaa' Art Remnants in Tanzania: A Critical Review of Selected Murals and Monuments in Dar es Salaam

17.30 Discussion

18.00 End

FRIDAY, 22 May

10.00 Ethereal Ecologies: Socialist Anthropocene of the Sky  
Maja and Reuben Fowkes (SAVA UEA)

#### PANEL IV: ANTHROPOCENE COSMOLOGIES

Chaired by Sorcha Thomson (SAVA UEA)

10.30 Lia Dostlieva (artist, cultural anthropologist, and essayist)  
Soviet Anthropocene 1933

11.00 Christian Sorace (University of Cambridge) & Rebecca Empson (UCL)  
Lenin on the Steppe: Ecologies of Infinity

11.30 Anel Rakhimzhanova (New York University)  
18,000 Worlds: Towards a Theory of Re-montage

12.00 Discussion

12.30 Lunch

#### PANEL V: ECO-SPIRITUALIST TENDENCIES

Chaired by Makar Tereshin (SAVA UEA)

13.30 Eva Skopalová (National Gallery, Prague)

Bird in Space: Sculpture and Ecological Imagination in 1960s Czechoslovakia

14.00 Shirin Melikova (Azerbaijan National Museum of Art, Baku)

Non-conformist Art and the Ecological Critique of Late Socialism in Azerbaijan

14.30 Cristian Nae (George Enescu National University of the Arts, Iasi)

Of Earth and Plants: Ecological Posthumanism in Romanian Art of the 1980s

15.00 Discussion

15.30 Coffee break

#### PANEL VI: ECOCENTRIC IMAGINARIES

Chaired by Marleen Boschen (Tate Modern)

16.00 Ng Mei Jia (NTU Centre for Contemporary Art, Singapore)

The Socialist Word for Freedom is (Mangrove) Forest

16.30 Ingrid Ruudi (Institute of Art History, Estonian Academy of Arts)

Vaike Lubi and her 'stick palaces': eco-feminist crip resistance in Late Soviet Estonia

17.00 Joanna Sokołowska (University of Wrocław)

Socialist Pasts for Planetary Futures: Art as a Cosmopolitical Practice in Post-socialist Central and Eastern Europe

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For abstracts and speaker biographies please see:

<https://sava.earth/conference/solidarity-with-nature-envisioning-the-ecological-heritage-of-world-socialism/>

This conference is organised within the framework of the research project Socialist Anthropocene in the Visual Arts (SAVA) led by Dr. Maja Fowkes at the School of History and Art History, University of East Anglia, supported by European Research Council (ERC) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

Reference:

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