

The Aerospace Image (online, 1 Oct 26–28 Feb 27)

Online, Oct 1, 2026–Feb 28, 2027

Deadline: Aug 31, 2026

Buchholz, Amrei Dr., Berlin

The Aerospace Image. Making the View from Nowhere.

This workshop series focuses on the material elements, infrastructures, labour, and environmental impacts involved in producing the view from above, often referred to as the view from nowhere. It reveals the multi-layered processes of production, processing, dissemination, and archiving of aerial and satellite imagery across various contexts, geographies, and timeframes, spanning from the early history of aerial photography to contemporary remote sensing. Drawing on infrastructure studies and a visual history attentive to extractivism and ecology, this series examines how aerial and spaceborne vision is constructed and, crucially, how it remains grounded to the Earth.

The aerospace image is frequently critiqued as a 'view from nowhere', a concept we can trace back to Thomas Nagel's (1986) philosophical interrogation of objectivity (cf. Daston & Galison 2007). Donna Haraway (1988) applied this critique to modern visualising technologies, including satellite systems, labelling the illusion of an infinite, detached vision the 'god-trick'. This totalising, all-seeing Western gaze is also central to the cartographic genealogy unfolded by Denis Cosgrove in *Apollo's Eye* (2001). In dialogue with these reflections, Gillian Rose (1993) translated Haraway's arguments into feminist geography, dismantling the masculinist underpinnings of geographic vision while advocating for an embodied, situated approach to understanding space.

Media studies and architecture have sought to ground the 'view from nowhere' into a 'view from somewhere' by investigating the politics of verticality (Weizman 2002; Parks 2018; Sandoz & Weber 2022; Bennett et al. 2024). Critical attention has been given to drones and remote sensing in warfare and policing (Kaplan 2018), alongside the operability of aerial and orbital datasets (Parikka 2023) in constructing a computational planet (Gabrys 2016). Within the environmental humanities, debates surrounding the Anthropocene epoch have sparked a new interest in aerospace perspectives (Wormbs 2018; Gärdebo 2019; Cirac Claveras 2025), mirrored in the arts through the use of photographic abstraction to signal the vast scale of human-altered landscapes (e.g. Burtynsky et al. 2018).

Consequently, cross-disciplinary analysis has turned towards outer space to examine the 'Earthscape' (Morawski & Vegetti 2023; Poole 2008), interrogating representations from *Earthrise* (1968) and *Blue Marble* (1972) to the recent *Artemis II Earthset* (2026). Challenged by a 'planetary turn' distinct from the global, the humanities must navigate how vertical imagery is deployed for surveillance and scientific monitoring during contemporary political, military, and environmental crises, while the exploration of Mars emerges as the next frontier (Geppert 2018; Cokinos 2024).

Within this context, this workshop series addresses the fundamental tension between the detached rhetoric of the overhead gaze and its physical, earthbound dependencies (Vertesi 2015). It adopts a framework informed by infrastructure studies and eco-critical visual histories (Blaschke & Linke 2023; Castro et al. 2024; Angus 2024; Dominici 2024) to analyse the material costs, planetary resources, and human labour required to sustain these vertical perspectives.

By examining the work of constructing visual assemblages, alongside techniques of mosaic mapping and false-colour compositing, this approach reveals the fragmented and mediated character of any claim to a totalising view. In researching how the aerial and spaceborne image relies on the more-than-human limitations and entanglements of technologies, infrastructures, environments, and bodies, this series uncovers how state, corporate, and activist entities strategically mobilise the view from above.

We particularly welcome proposals from non-Western perspectives that interrogate both the materiality and ecologies of aerial and satellite image production, as well as the infrastructures and labour involved in these practices.

This workshop series, curated by Noemi Quagliati (EUI Florence / NICHE Venice), is a collaboration between the Network Topographic Visual Media and the NICHE Centre for Environmental Humanities (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), through its cluster 'Ecologies of Making: Material Culture Beyond the Human'.

Interested participants are invited to submit a single PDF document containing an abstract of no more than 300 words and a brief biography by 31 August 2026. Please send submissions to noemi.quagliati@eui.eu and ntb@kunstgeschichte.org.

The series will be hosted online during the winter semester, from October to February. Sessions are scheduled for Friday afternoons between 14:00 and 15:30 (CET), featuring 30-minute presentations followed by ample time for discussion.

We look forward to receiving your submissions.

Reference:

CFP: The Aerospace Image (online, 1 Oct 26-28 Feb 27). In: ArtHist.net, Jul 2, 2026 (accessed Jul 2, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/52861>>.