Ecological Remedies (Boulder, 26–27 Mar 27)

Boulder, Colorado, Mar 26–27, 2027
Deadline: Oct 16, 2026

Brianne Cohen

Ecological Remedies: Visualizing the Environment in/as Health.

Organized by: Department of Art & Art History, University of Colorado Boulder.
Convenors: Brianne Cohen, Kim Dickey, and Sonja Gandert.

How can we better recognize and attend to the entanglements of human and more-than-human injury? With the pressing climate crisis and its attendant consequences, might more publics be spurred into remedying ecological health, with a greater understanding of how ecological health underpins their own physical and psychic well-being? Despite numerous environmental histories and scientific data that evidence the imbricated harm done to human and non-human bodies through extractive capitalism, toxification, and disasters induced by a warming climate, "health" is still an anthropocentric term. "Environmental health" does not refer to the well-being of the environment but rather to the environmental factors that only affect human health and disease. Geohealth and planetary health have emerged recently as intersectional fields between the environmental sciences and medicine to address such holistic issues. Yet given the current dearth of language in the humanities to address ecological and human injury together, the visual arts hold a unique capacity to visualize the coextensive wounds to human and environmental bodies that might seem, at first glance, less visible or demonstrable.

This symposium aims to convene a diverse array of artists and practitioners from art history, visual culture, and related interdisciplinary fields to explore more salutary visions for planetary well-being through the visual arts. In the environmental humanities, feminist theorists such as Stacy Alaimo have done seminal work in conceiving of the porous trans-corporeality of human and environmental bodies affected by the chemical age, and Indigenous scholars such as Robin Wall Kimmerer have paved the way in conceiving of the well-being of humans and the living land as interconnected. More recently in disability and queer studies, new concepts have also emerged around the convergence of damage done to both precarious environments and peoples who have been harmed through ableist imperial, (neo)colonial, or settler-colonial projects—notions such as disabled ecologies (Sunaura Taylor) and debility (Jasbir K. Puar). Following globally significant phenomena such as the global pandemic, the climate crisis, and endless wars at home and abroad, many artists are proposing ever more creative visions for conceptualizing and creating future environments in health, and for imagining our environments as health.

We invite proposals that move beyond environmental remediation to a more holistic sense of justice-based ecological remedy, which presumes the salubrious, sustainable co-constitution of

human and more-than-human bodies and suggests ethical alternatives for caring, repairing, redressing, and/or living despite/with chronic injury. Such ecological remedies strive to acknowledge the difficulties of and possibilities for fostering long-term multispecies health for the planet.

Contributions may adopt a range of theoretical or methodological approaches, including presentations of artistic practice. The symposium will take place over one and a half days, with sessions combining individual 20-minute presentations, panel discussions and spaces for collective exchange.

Please send a 300-word abstract of your proposed paper or presentation alongside your CV, to brianne.cohen@colorado.edu, kim.dickey@colorado.edu, and sonja.gandert@colorado.edu by October 16, 2026. Notifications of accepted papers will be sent out by November 16, 2026. Participants will be awarded modest funds to help cover travel and accommodation costs.

Reference:

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