14 Sessions at AAH (Exeter, 7-9 Apr 27)

Association for Art History Annual Conference, University of Exeter, Jul 4–Sep 4, 2027
Deadline: Oct 25, 2026

ArtHist.net Redaktion

[1] Many Middle Ages: Exhibitions of Medieval Art in Perspective
[2] Global Modernism and the Hydrocarbon Economy: Pipelines, Tankers and Artistic Imaginaries
[3] Reconstituting the Histories of Modern Art: Exhibitions, Infrastructure, and Historiography
[4] Theorizing Photography from Global South Asia
[5] Épistémologies de l'artisanat depuis les marges : genre, matière et savoir en Afrique subsaharienne
[6] Shapeshifting Creatures
[7] De-Erasing Connections between Kyivan Rus' and the Rest of Medieval Europe
[8] Bodies, Ecologies, Networks: Reclaiming Agency in the Technoscientific Complex
[9] Oceanic Histories
[10] Sea Creatures in Art History
[11] Call for a New Pre-Raphaelite Studies
[12] (In)visible Hands and City-Making: Art Education, Labour, and Modernities in the Global South
[13] The Surge in White Supremacy: upholding racial justice in art and design history
[14] The Once and Future Rebellion: Echoes of the 1857 Indian Uprising

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[1] Many Middle Ages: Exhibitions of Medieval Art in Perspective

From: Reed O'Mara

Date: Sep 27, 2026

This session aims to examine the presentation of medieval and Byzantine art and its periodization through curatorial practices. Permanent and temporary exhibitions distill extensive research for broad audiences through a variety of curatorial strategies. As forums for the negotiation of scholarly issues, exhibitions engage in direct discourse with academic and institutional systems of knowledge. The themes applied to medieval works of art often correspond to pressing contemporary issues; (art) history is made relevant for diverse audiences, oftentimes engaging with topical matters such as current political developments, sustainability, technological development, and questions related to gender, race, and class, either directly or indirectly. As recent scholarship demonstrates, medieval and Byzantine art in particular, with their intrinsically complex relationships to modernity, often become projections of contemporary identity politics. Drawing on specific case studies, researchers in this session are welcomed to focus on historical exhibitions in order to examine curatorial approaches to exhibiting the Middle Ages and medieval art. Proposals for papers relating to the formation of grand narratives and the politicization of medieval art history are especially encouraged, as are examinations of the development and professionalization of curatorial

work.

Please submit a 250-word (max.) abstract to the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal Submission Form:
https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/

For questions and inquiries, please reach out to Reed O'Mara (rao44@case.edu) and Leonie Schewe (leonie.schewe@stud.uni-frankfurt.de).

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[2] Global Modernism and the Hydrocarbon Economy: Pipelines, Tankers and Artistic Imaginaries

From: Giulia Morale

Date: Sep 28, 2026

This panel interrogates the ways the infrastructure for the extraction, transportation and refinement of crude oil and natural gas shaped artistic production in the second half of the twentieth century globally. In recent decades, the ongoing global environmental crisis has prompted artists and art historians to revisit the binary between culture and nature, critiquing the extraction of fossil fuels as part of what is often described as the 'ecocritical turn'.

The discipline has increasingly recognised the links between modernist experimentation and petroleum production since the early twentieth century, when companies such as British Petroleum commissioned artists and film makers to promote the ascendancy of oil over coal. Yet, for many governments in the mid-twentieth century, the hydrocarbon economy became a key site of both anti-colonial national development and transnational cooperation. From realist prints in Mexico to abstract postage stamps in Algeria, artists celebrated the expropriation of oil infrastructure from foreign corporate interests. Part of a similar cultural shift, in 1950s Italy, art exhibitions, cultural events, and documentaries commissioned by the National Hydrocarbons Company (ENI) promoted oil deals with North Africa and West Asia in a wider politics of solidarity with formerly colonised countries. As development increasingly came to resemble dependency, in the 1970s and 1980s artists and cultural practitioners continued to grapple with a shifting oil imaginary globally.

This panel invites papers interrogating the way the infrastructure associated with the hydrocarbon economy (pipelines, tankers, natural gas and crude oil) was represented and reimagined by artists in the second half of the twentieth century. We are especially interested in contributions investigating the relationship between artistic form, petro-politics and post-colonial histories.

Convenors:

Connie Sjödin, University College London, United Kingdom

Giulia Morale, St John's College, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Papers should be 20 minutes in duration.

To submit a paper proposal, please complete the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal:
https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/

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[3] Reconstituting the Histories of Modern Art: Exhibitions, Infrastructure, and Historiography

From: Jessica Braum

Date: Sep 28, 2026

Recent exhibitions have fundamentally reshaped how modern art is written and understood. Major retrospectives devoted to artists such as Kim Lim, Pacita Abad, and Li Yuan-chia, alongside exhibitions including Woven Histories: Textiles and Modern Abstraction and Unravel: The Power and Politics of Textiles in Art, have expanded the artists, media, and geographies that constitute histories of modern art. Yet these exhibitions do more than broaden the canon. They make visible the ongoing historiographic reassessment

of the frameworks through which modern art is researched, exhibited, interpreted, and written.
Building upon recent scholarship that has expanded the histories of modern art through global and transnational perspectives, this session shifts attention to the exhibitions, catalogues, and curatorial methodologies through which those revised histories are synthesized, debated, and disseminated. Rather than centering recovery or inclusion as endpoints, it considers exhibitions as active participants in the production of art-historical knowledge and the ongoing reconstitution of the discipline's understanding of modern art.
Contemporary exhibitions, together with their catalogues and related scholarship, have become sites where art-historical knowledge is brought into public view. In doing so, they become the starting point for new research, critical debate, and future exhibitions, shaping disciplinary discourse and broader cultural understandings of modern art.
Focused case studies that examine exhibitions as sites of historiographic production are welcomed. Contributions might address retrospectives, thematic surveys, museum collections, exhibition histories, artist estates, or related curatorial research, exploring how these practices reshape historical visibility and contribute to the ongoing reconstitution of the histories of modern art.
Keywords: Modern art, Historiography, Curatorial practice
To submit a paper proposal, please complete the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal:
https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/
Questions are welcome: tuj67879@temple.edu

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[4] Theorizing Photography from Global South Asia
From: Ranu Roychoudhuri and Suryanandini Narain
Date: Sep 28, 2026
The historiography on photography in South Asia over the last three decades, with a handful of exceptions, broadly demonstrates a pattern of epistemic hierarchy. The hierarchy presumes that the “west” provides the broader theoretical entry point, and even instructive methods, of how to approach “non-western” archives/fields. The sub-text foregrounds “western theorization” the only available cognitively only analytical choice that can explain all non-western archival details, while also making “theory” precedes the archive in term of methodology. In other words, majority of the existing historiography reifies the colonial power hierarchy where the colony supplies the archives, and the metropole provides the theoretical framework for metacognition. This schema simultaneously reinforces Eurocentric universality and the perceived binary between theory and practice–as if “theory” exists in a historical and intellectual vacuum and is summoned to explain any empirical situation. This practice persists in art-historical thinking, especially in histories of photography, despite the method of provincializing dominating postcolonial thought over the last twenty-five years. For example, the Kodak Box Brownie is routinely cited as universally democratizing because of its affordability, when empirical evidence shows that India never had a comparable Brownie moment.
This half day panel emphasizes the intertwined relationship theory/archive, rethinks its location, and nurtures the practice of theorization by examining a range of photographic practices from India that are both cosmopolitan and historically specific. In doing so, the panel intervenes in the ongoing conversations around “theory from the South.” The panel invites conceptual, methodological, and archival insights from global South Asia, including the diaspora, that may reflect on archival politics, techno-material and/or genre-specific histories, witnessing, belonging, mnemonics, publics, and beyond.
The session will consist of four 20-minute papers, each followed by 5 minutes for questions.
To submit a Paper to this Session, please complete the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal Submission

Form: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/

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[5] Épistémologies de l'artisanat depuis les marges : genre, matière et savoir en Afrique subsaharienne
From: mboula elvine
Date: Sep 28, 2026
Cette session décentre l'histoire de l'art canonique en faisant de l'artisanat – travail de la calebasse, tissage du tapis, paravent et architectures textiles – un lieu de théorie. Ancrée en Afrique subsaharienne, et plus particulièrement au Cameroun, elle interroge: comment les artisanes produisent-elles du savoir à travers la matière?
Nous mobilisons les notions d'épidermes textiles, d'arts mineurs et d'intelligence matérielle pour lire les objets non comme de simples artefacts, mais comme des archives. De la calebasse gravée au tapis tressé et au paravent domestique, l'artisanat condense savoir-faire genré, éthique écologique et mémoire intergénérationnelle.
La session invite des contributions sur (1) l'artisanat comme épistémologie, (2) la transmission genrée des techniques, (3) la matière comme source historique. En partant des marges – intérieurs domestiques, marchés, ateliers de femmes – nous proposons de provincialiser l'histoire de l'art pour une histoire féministe, matérialiste et décoloniale.
Session tenue principalement en anglais; communications en français bienvenues avec support de traduction en anglais. Résumés traduits disponibles.
Themes: African craftsmanship, embodied knowledge, materiality / Artisanat africain, savoirs incarné, matérialité
Additional format comment: Session will be held in English; papers in French are welcome with English translation support. Translated summaries available.
Lead Convenor: Jolefack Mboula Bouquet Elvine, Universite de Yaounde, Cameroun, Central Africa
Co-convenors: Ngandi Irene Vanessa, Universite de Yaounde, Cameroun, Central Africa
Salomé soloum, Universite de Djamena, Chad, Central Africa
Paper proposals—consisting of a title and an abstract of no more than 300 words (in French or English), accompanied by a brief bio-bibliography—should be sent to the following address by October 20, 2026: possiblecest9@gmail.com.
Presentations will last approximately twenty minutes and may be delivered in either French or English.

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[6] Shapeshifting Creatures
From: Elizabeth Hodson
Date: Sep 28, 2026
This panel is seeking papers on the figure of the selkie and other shapeshifting mythological creatures. In Gaelic lore, the selkie is emblematic of desire and sadness. Theirs is a story of loss and yearning for their watery home; trapped on domesticated land and within their human skin, they epitomise the hope of transformation and the seeking of female autonomy in the wild. But selkies are also vengeful and often violent, with a fury that complicates the image of an all-giving and nurturing mother Earth. Such seal creatures speak to the figure of the other, our relationship with the non-human and our fascination with hybridity through the body. The selkie has, like many mythological beings from indigenous cosmologies, been redeployed in recent years to rethink our relationship with the environment and its inhabitants in the age of the Anthropocene. Supported by theories of the posthumanism and the rise of the more-than-human, such shapeshifting creatures are now transgressive and political, both wrath and sorrow.

This panel seeks to explore both the historic and the contemporary represents of the selkie and other shapeshifters across visual culture, as a source of inspiration, debate and reimagination of how we live in the world. What can we learn when we take these tales seriously as more than mere metaphor? How does the mythical translate into the contemporary moment? This panel is particularly keen to receive proposals from creative practitioners, feminist and queer theorists, and those whose work and research is inter or cross-disciplinary.

Lead Convenor: Elizabeth A. Hodson, The Glasgow School of Art, Scotland

To submit a Paper to this Session, please complete the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal Submission Form: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/

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[7] De-Erasing Connections between Kyivan Rus' and the Rest of Medieval Europe

From: Alina Rozanova

Date: Sep 28, 2026

As Stefaniia Demchuk and Illia Levchenko argue in "Decolonizing Ukrainian Art History" (2024), imperial Russian, Soviet, and contemporary Russian narratives have attempted to erase Ukrainian cultural and historical continuity. The retrospective appropriation of the history and culture of Rus' by the Russian imperial narrative, accompanied by a displacement of its political and cultural centre from Kyiv towards Novgorod and, subsequently, Moscow, was instrumental in this process. As a result, Ukrainian art and cultural history have often reached international audiences through interpretative frameworks inherited from Russian and Soviet scholarship.

This contribution examines how Ukrainian art history might be repositioned within a broader European chronology by recovering connections that imperial and national historiographies have omitted or marginalised. As a comparative point of reference, the exhibition MESSOLONGHI 1826: 200 Years since the Exodus at the Benaki Museum demonstrates how Western European philhellenism connected modern Greek aspirations for independence with the cultural authority of ancient Greece. Of course, the historical circumstances of Ukraine are quite different, and Rus' cannot be treated as an equivalent "cradle of civilisation". Nevertheless, Kyivan Rus' was deeply embedded in the political, religious, dynastic, and artistic networks of medieval Europe. Recognising these connections challenges narratives that isolate Ukrainian history within an allegedly exclusively Russian cultural sphere.

The consequences of the imperial historiographical framework remain visible in contemporary museum and gallery practices. As Kateryna Botanova observes in "Decolonizing Knowledge Production" (2024), international institutions continue to subsume artists from Ukraine under a homogenising Russian label. Despite sustained efforts to correct such classifications, Kazymyr Malevych, for example, continues to be misidentified as Russian by some prominent Western galleries.

Without doubt, the decolonisation of Ukrainian art history requires more than correcting individual labels. Bringing together scholars working across different periods and media, the roundtable will ask how Rus' can be disentangled from the retrospective national narrative of Russia, how the relationship between Kyivan Rus' and later Ukrainian cultures should be conceptualised without imposing a simplistic continuity, and how Ukraine can be restored to the interconnected histories of European art.

Themes: Decolonisation, Intercultural connections, Epistemic justice

Lead Convenor: Alina Rozanova, Independent Researcher, Georgia

Co-convenors: Stefaniia Demchuk, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine

How to set out your abstract

Please include this key information in your paper proposal response:

- Select title of the Session responding to
- Title of Abstract (avoid long titles, max. 20 words)
- Brief abstract (max. 250 words)
- Name of submitter (author) – please note there must be at least one presenting author per submission (there is a small tick box in the author information section). You can add multiple authors.
- Affiliations (or if independent/freelance)
- Residing Country of submitter
- Telephone number of submitter
- Social media handles of speakers and affiliated departments
- Any additional assistance required for participating as a speaker at the conference.

For further details please visit: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference/2027-exeter/
To submit a Paper to this Session, please complete the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal Submission Form: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/

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[8] Bodies, Ecologies, Networks: Reclaiming Agency in the Technoscientific Complex
From: Beatrice Sartori
Date: Sep 28, 2026

This panel invites contributions that examine how contemporary art, design and visual culture engage with the biopolitical regimes that govern bodies, populations and land, and that test alternatives to the current colonial and capitalist technoscientific complex resulting from the conditions of ecological and political polycrisis. We ask what role artistic practice can play in reclaiming shared agency over technologies, information networks and science, and in reasserting self-determination over bodies and the environments that sustain them. In this sense, can media-based artistic practices render visible this layered complexity while also proposing alternatives to its logics of control and extraction?

We particularly welcome proposals that foreground perspectives from beyond the Global North mainstream discourses, and that draw on activist, posthumanist, ecofeminist and new-materialist methodologies, as well as works situated at the intersection of art, science and technology. Topics might include open-source and DIY cultures, tactical media and biohacking, and feminist data practices and other forms of critical engagement with technoscientific infrastructures.

Rather than privileging a single medium, this panel brings together processes and methodologies emerging from the broader artistic research – performance, installation, virtual environments, speculative design and beyond – that aim to construct “not-yet” spaces: provisional and critical formations that interrogate the current reality without resolving into fixed solutions. We are interested in how such work might generate collective forms of knowledge and resistance, and in how it might open alternative imaginaries for bodies, ecologies and networks under conditions of biopolitical control and environmental depletion.

Proposals may take the form of traditional papers, artist presentations, or hybrid formats that reflect the experimental spirit of the panel’s inquiry.

To submit a Paper to this Session, please complete the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal Submission Form: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/

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[9] Oceanic Histories
From: Adil Mansure
Date: Sep 28, 2026

Art history has largely observed the sea from the shore, picturing it in seascapes, harbor scenes, and

images of voyage, yet maintaining, in Hans Blumenberg's terms, the distance of the spectator from the shipwreck. The Blue Humanities have done much to counter this terrestrial bias, turning to oceans as objects and agents of historical, literary, and cultural inquiry in their own right. This session asks how art history and the study of visual and material culture might consider these fields not from vantage points on land but from the water—attending to not only to how oceans have been pictured, but to the intelligences and practices that have emerged from living, working, and navigating within them. Oceanic environments, even charted waters, are always encountered afresh by both local and visiting voyagers; how and where has their experience manifested in art? What knowledge forms may have escaped disciplinary attention precisely because they are embedded in practice rather than represented as image?

We ask what such visual knowledge and practice look like, and what artifacts, forms, or systems might it ask us to newly consider as art historical. Wayfinding techniques, nautical charts, boatbuilding, rigging, ropework and fibrous material culture, and sailors' craft practices such as knotwork, tattooing, and scrimshaw suggest some possibilities—but we remain genuinely open to what else might count, and to how the very category of the art historical object might shift when approached from the water rather than the shore. How have oceanic depths and volumes been experienced, represented, and conceptualized? What roles have oceanic and maritime technological, material, social, and cultural dimensions played in shaping objects, images, buildings, communities, and cities along global coasts? More broadly, how can art historical thinking be renewed with intelligences emerging from fluidity, wetness, and continuous motion?

Today, as oceans and the ecologies alongside them face acute risks from anthropogenic climate change, we might ask what oceanic histories have to offer beyond representation. Contributions are welcome from art history, visual studies, design history, and material culture addressing oceans of any geographic scope. Work may engage any historical period and any scale of time—from the micro-historical to the longue durée or deep-time scales.

Lead Convenor: Adil Mansure, Harvard University, USA

To submit a Paper to this Session, please complete the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal Submission Form: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/

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[10] Sea Creatures in Art History

From: Amy Gillette

Date: Sep 28, 2026

Art history swims with sea creatures, as subject or ornament, real or fantastical: in Roman baths and medieval bestiaries; in cabinets of curiosity, from pufferfish to mermaids to Frederik Ruysch's anatomical "corals" fashioned from human vasculature; in the enigmatic Margate Shell Grotto; and in Salvador Dalí's Lobster Telephone, Damien Hirst's Forms without Life, and Aki Inomata's hermit crab cities. Why have sea creatures been so prominent in art? What is distinct about materializing and visualizing them, rather than writing about them from literary or scientific perspectives?

This panel, consisting of four 15-minute papers followed by a roundtable discussion, complements the AAH's recent "Blue Aesthetics" sessions by placing specific images of marine life at the centre of analysis. It extends the ongoing work of, most notably, the Paul Mellon Centre's "Curating the Sea," the colloquy "Towards a Blue Art History," and the broader field of the blue humanities.

Contributors will each examine a single work representing marine life—actual or imagined, from any period or region—asking: What creatures are depicted, and why? What knowledge did the artist or patron draw upon, or seek to produce? Or does the representation of sea creatures instead resist systems of knowl-

edge, as with the “oceanic sublime,” or when shells figure as vestiges of absent life? And how does the work figure the sea-creature condition in relation to the human condition, considered in dialogue with thinking beyond art history—such as Peter Godfrey-Smith’s Other Minds, Susanne Wedlich’s Slime, Sabrina Imbler’s How Far the Light Reaches, Alexis Pauline Gumbs’s Undrowned: Black Feminist Lessons from Marine Mammals, and David Foster Wallace’s “Consider the Lobster”?
Themes: marine life, blue humanities, art and philosophy
Additional format comment:15-minute papers followed by a roundtable.
Lead Convenor: Amy Gillette, Woodmere Art Museum, USA
To submit a Paper to this Session, please complete the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal Submission Form: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/

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[11] Call for a New Pre-Raphaelite Studies
From: Susie Beckham
Date: Sep 28, 2026
Pre-Raphaelitism has, unofficially, served somewhat as the “awkward cousin” of art history; its artwork being too gaudy and cringe-inducing in its sentimentality and extremity of feeling, with its scholars often accused (sometimes rightly) of over-familiarity with their artist subjects, too focused on biographical lines of inquiry, with over-emphasis upon artists’ intentions. To counter accusations of the field being stale and repetitive in its methodologies and interests, this panel seeks to emphasise its value not just to art history but to the humanities at large.
The question at the heart of this panel is: How might the study of the aesthetics, receptions, and intentions of Pre-Raphaelite art contribute to a more collaborative, interdisciplinary mode of scholarship? For example, what might the study of Pre-Raphaelite visual culture look like under the lens of Adaptation Studies? How might the study of Pre-Raphaelite art contribute to critical conversations surrounding anti-racism and decolonisation in the museum sector? What would an ecocritical approach to Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic concerns look like? Building on David J. Getsy’s 2022 essay “How to Teach Manet’s Olympia after Transgender Studies”, might we approach the study of Rossetti’s sensual icons of femininity today in new ways that depart from essentialist views of sex and gender, to embrace transgender, nonbinary, and intersex readings? What might a neurodivergent approach to Pre-Raphaelite art look like?
This panel encourages papers exploring a broad range of methodological framings. Papers from interdisciplinary art historians who don’t necessarily specialise in Pre-Raphaelite art are highly encouraged.
To submit a Paper to this Session, please complete the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal Submission Form: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/

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[12] (In)visible Hands and City-Making: Art Education, Labour, and Modernities in the Global South
From: Tanya Talwar
Date: Sep 28, 2026
This session examines how modernities across the Global South were visually constructed, managed, and politically contested through the intertwined histories of urban labour, visual culture, and art education. Taking the colonial and postcolonial metropolis as a vital site of inquiry, this panel unpacks how institutional, artistic, and visual practices intersected with systems of race, caste, class, and gender to simultaneously utilise and obscure the foundational work of city-making.
Rather than treating art education and visual production as disparate fields, this session frames them as dual apparatuses of urban development. We investigate how state and pedagogical institutions used art

training, documentation, and diverse visual media—including but not limited to photography, drawing, printmaking, and architectural renderings—to discipline, categorise, and render invisible the already marginalised labour forces that built the modern city from Jakarta to Lagos, and Mexico City to Madras (now Chennai). Crucially, we also explore how these same visual media and educational frameworks became spaces for radical rupture, collective organising, and the subversion of dominant archives.

By bridging visual culture, urban history, and critical art pedagogy, this panel seeks to expose the politics of visibility behind the role of the "invisible hands" of artists, artisans, and workers in the making of global modernities. We invite papers from art historians, curators, educators, and visual practitioners working on diverse colonial and postcolonial urban geographies across the Global South that propose new methods for recovering, historicizing, and complicating the absent or obscured narratives behind racialised, gendered, and caste-based urban labour.

Themes: Art Education, City-Making, Urban Labour

Format: 20-minute research papers, each followed by 5 minutes for questions.

To submit a Paper to this Session, please follow the guidance on the website: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference/2027-exeter/ and complete the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal Submission Form.

For more details on all sessions: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/

Lead Convenor: Tanya Talwar, Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften (Institute for Asian and African Studies) / Institut für Kunst- und Bildgeschichte (Institute for Art and Visual History), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany

Co-convenor: Ayesha Rachel Matthan, Postdoctoral Associate, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University

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[13] The Surge in White Supremacy: upholding racial justice in art and design history

From: Dr Tanveer Ahmed and Dr Jane Trowell

Date: Sep 29, 2026

In 2020, Art History published an influential edition on Decolonizing Art History, arising from the 2018 AAH conference. The edition emerged among global outrage in support of Black Lives Matter and ongoing Rhodes Must Fall movements to topple whiteness in curriculum, teaching, research and wider culture. Decades of demands for justice had built these foundations.

In the UK the momentum was palpable. From grassroots to education to cultural organisations and businesses there were moves - many genuine, some performative - to boost pluriversality and dismantle what bell hooks termed ''imperialist white supremacist capitalist cis-hetero patriarchy' (hooks 1984, 2015).

Yet this momentum is under assault. In Britain, postcolonial melancholy, white nostalgia and victimhood has led to Brexit's ongoing ethno-nationalist triumphalism (Gilroy 2006). The global rise of Far-Right politics has resulted in a growing backlash against EDI/DEI initiatives and a normalising of racist, sexist, homophobic and anti-trans views. Advocates of plural cultures are threatened, including the appallingly racist treatment of Black British scholar Professor Jason Arday which led to his death.

In our field, how can we strengthen opposition to this? At the 2026 AAH conference, 'white supremacy' was not named in any session or paper titles. Our 2027 session fills this gap. With Far Right governments gaining ground, we invite contributions identifying compliance with white supremacy in art and design history exploring how art and design historians, educators, institutions, publishers are refusing white supremacy establishing new futures for anti-racist and pluriversal knowledge-creation, learning, teaching, curat-

ing, publishing

Format for the session

A half-day or day depending on number of submissions: papers/provocations of 15 minutes length, 5 mins for clarifications.

Then workshop-style to deepen: small groups, possibly World Cafe. Facilitated discussion between experiences of contributors and participants.

Co--Convenor: Dr Tanveer Ahmed, Senior Lecturer in Fashion and Race, Central St Martins, UAL, United Kingdom

Co-convenor: Dr Jane Trowell, Independent Scholar, ex-University of Nottingham, School of Education, United Kingdom

Themes: white supremacy, anti-racism, pluriversality

To submit a Paper to this Session, please follow the guidance on the website: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference/2027-exeter/ and complete the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal Submission Form.

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[14] The Once and Future Rebellion: Echoes of the 1857 Indian Uprising

From: Aisha Motlani

Date: Sep 28, 2026

The Indian Rebellion of 1857 generated a radical reassessment of Britain's relationship to its largest colony, creating a lasting crisis of representation that questioned the formation of shared identity and "cultural memory" in relation to the uprising. This panel invites papers that consider visual responses to the Indian Rebellion as a form of "perpetual incitement," to use Dipesh Chakrabarty's term. We seek to understand how imperial and nationalist entities sustained themselves by incessantly re-stoking fears about a possible repetition of the uprising in anxious narratives of colonial conflict and how these took shape in visual art.

We are interested in knowing: What filters did artists deploy to represent the events of that conflict? How did it become part of Britain's or India's political unconscious, and what visible form(s) did that unconscious take? How did people visually process this event during the years immediately following the revolt, as well as afterward? And how does the imagery associated with 1857 resonate with later and current imperialisms? In addition to established artistic forms, we are interested in exploring how ephemera captured this experience, as well as inviting approaches beyond the conventional metropole-colony divide.

Themes: Cultural Memory, National Identity, British Colonialism

Lead Convenor: Jeff Rosen, Scholar-in-Residence, The Newberry Library, USA

Co-convenors: Aisha Motlani, Independent Scholar, USA

To submit a Paper to this Session, please follow the guidance on the website: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference/2027-exeter/ and complete the AAH 2027 Call for Papers Proposal Submission Form.

Reference:

CFP: 14 Sessions at AAH (Exeter, 7-9 Apr 27). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 29, 2026 (accessed Nov 24, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/54476>.