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

Association for Art History Annual Conference, University of Exeter, Apr 7–09, 2027
Deadline: Oct 25, 2026

ArtHist.net Redaktion

[1] Fluid Bodies / Women in Flux.
[2] Video Art & Moving Image in the former socialist world. c. 1968-present.
[3] Exhibition as Thing.
[4] The Microbial Body.

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[1] Fluid Bodies / Women in Flux

From: Tania Cleaves

Date: Oct 6, 2026

Women's bodies have long been associated with fluids: blood, tears, milk. But what does it mean to be fluid? This panel will address associations of women's bodies with fluids of different kinds, along with notions of fluidity as they relate to representations of women's bodies at different life stages: birth, puberty, pregnancy, menopause and old age. Drawing on recent innovations in intersectional and trans art history, this panel seeks to address the complex and contested topic of the role of fluids and other bodily substances (e.g. hormones, hair, fat, etc.) in defining and/or undermining definitions of femininity and womanhood in art and visual culture.

This panel will examine how images of the female body have been idealised, pathologised and politicised at different stages of life, and how women artists have resisted, reimagined or reclaimed these frameworks through their creative practices. We hope to see papers that span historical and contemporary visual cultures; engage with both canonical and marginalised figures; examine either representations of women across life stages or address the lifespans of women artists themselves; interrogate how female bodies have served as sites of symbolic meaning, social anxiety and aesthetic value; and attend to the lived experiences and creative trajectories of women artists across their own embodied lives.

This panel will foreground questions of temporality, age and bodily change—dimensions often overlooked in traditional art historical narratives—and reposition them as central to understanding the dynamics of gendered representation.

Themes: Women, Fluids, Bodies

Additional format comment: Individual papers with a panel discussion.

Lead Convenor: Natasha Ruiz-Gomez, University of Essex, United Kingdom

Co-convenors: Tania Cleaves, Independent, United Kingdom

To submit a Paper to this Session, please follow the guidance on the AAH Conference webpage:
https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/

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[2] Video Art & Moving Image in the former socialist world. c. 1968-present.
From: Jonathan Blackwood
Date: Oct 6, 2026

Histories of video art and moving image remain relatively undocumented in the former socialist world in Europe (the Warsaw pact countries plus the former Yugoslavia). Such histories that exist are conducted on a purely post-1991 national basis, or through monographic studies related to exhibition or academic research. Whilst in recent years institutions such as Tate have begun to re-orientate their collections and have acquired some key works of art, understanding histories of the production, consumption and discussion of video art in Europe's former socialist world remains partial and disjointed.

In this panel, we invite papers on video art and moving image within these geographical and specific political and aesthetic contexts. We welcome papers across the timeframe, from the earliest works of video art to contemporary moving image and artist's films.

Papers may consider video art aesthetics, and ecologies of state support and use of video art; relationships to national television channels, the role and contexts of video art and moving image in response to social and political imperatives, critical writing on video, video as documentation of performance, festivals, distribution networks, cultures of display (galleries/ video art organisations), the intersections of moving images and contemporary urgencies such as gender, the decolonial and queerness.

Themes: Aesthetics; video art; socialism / post-socialism

The session is jointly convened by Jon Blackwood and Laura Leuzzi of Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen. For informal enquiries please e-mail j.blackwood@rgu.ac.uk

To submit a Paper to this Session, please follow the guidance on our website and 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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[3] Exhibition as Thing

From: Erica O'Neill
Date: Oct 11, 2026

The call for papers for the 2027 Association for Art History conference is out! Members of the ERC/UKRI project 'Art and Policy in the Global Contemporary' will convene the session 'Exhibition as Thing', which explores the exhibition space as an alternative parliament, or 'thing': a gathering of citizens (Northern European etymology) around a thing in the sense of a matter of concern that brings them together because it divides them, inviting discussion and debate.
Further information about the session can be found here:
https://forarthistory.org.uk/39-exhibition-as-thing/

The deadline for abstracts is 25 October. Please submit via the Call for Papers Proposal Submission Form:

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

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[4] The Microbial Body (CFP no.95)

From: Gemma Anderson-Tempini
Date: Oct 10, 2026

The human body is increasingly imagined not as a bounded, singular organism but as a multispecies ecology: bacteria, fungi, archaea, and viruses outnumber human cells and actively shape physiology, immunity, and development. This panel asks how art, visual culture, philosophy, and literature represent this microbial body, and what is at stake when inherited ideas of bodily boundary, individuality, and selfhood are unsettled by microbial entanglement.
Body-mapping the mycobiome and the maternal microbiome (see Anderson-Tempini forthcoming 2027 and Dupre, Drawing Processes of Life, Intellect, 2023) offers one model for rendering microbial life visible on and within the body, building on the reframing of organisms as communities of microbial collaboarators in Lynn Margulis's Symbiotic Planet (1998) and popularised by Ed Yong's I Contain Multitudes (2016). This session asks what such rendering means representationally and conceptually, alongside STS perspectives, philosophy of biological individuality, and literary analyses of microbial figuration. How does art and visual culture visualise, narrate, or conceptualise microbial life within and as the body? What consequences, philosophical, political, or imaginative, follow from picturing the body as inherently multispecies?

We welcome papers addressing artistic and visual representations of the microbial body/microbiome, alongside scientific, literary, or historical perspectives; questions of bodily boundary, contamination, symbiosis, and kinship; feminist and gender perspectives on microbial embodiment, including reproduction and lactation; and methodological approaches drawing together art, science, and the humanities.
The session will include short papers followed by a roundtable discussion.

Themes: Contemporary art, interdisciplinary, microbes

Additional format comment: The session will include short papers followed by a roundtable discussion.

Lead Convenor: Gemma Anderson-Tempini, University of Exeter, United Kingdom

To submit a Paper to this Session, please follow the guidance on the AAH Conference webpage: https://forarthistory.org.uk/conference-2027-exeter-aah-2027-call-for-papers/

Reference:
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