Home/Work: Constructing Domesticities (Boston, 9-10 Apr 27)

Boston University, Apr 9–10, 2027
Deadline: Jan 8, 2027

Megan Horn

Home/Work: Constructing Domesticities.
43rd Annual Boston University Graduate Symposium.

The Mary L. Cornille (GRS'87) 43rd Annual Boston University Graduate Symposium in the History of Art & Architecture invites submissions which explore how homes and domestic cultures are imagined and constructed through material and visual culture.

A home is more than just a residence, location, or a building. Architects and designers might design houses and housing to structure domestic life, but to call a place "home" often indicates individual senses of belonging, identity, and private experience. Homes are also related to work, whether as sites of labor or as imagined reprieves from it. Inhabitants, including families, communities, and laborers, construct domestic life through the work of creating, acquiring, or routinely using visual and material objects. However, homes and their domestic visual and material cultures are not immune from outside influence. Ideologies regarding nationality, citizenship, gender, class, or race shape ideas about what kinds of people, objects, and activities belong at home. Furthermore, visual and material culture and representations of domestic life also provide insight into how the idea of home has been negotiated, reimagined, and challenged over time.

Possible subjects include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Domestic roles: parenthood, caregiving, childhood, servitude, labor, enslavement, animal domestication, multigenerational families, communal living

- Domestic objects: furniture, textiles, clothing, dining wares, decorative arts, jewelry, technology (TVs, radio, laundry machine, etc.), ephemera (magazines, newspapers, advertisements, etc.)

- Domestic space: architecture, vernacular architecture, kitchens, bedrooms, bathrooms, dining rooms, gardens, suburban/urban/rural, speculative or imagined blueprints/plans, design styles (Bauhaus, minimalism, Arts and Crafts movement, etc.), public vs. private, house museums

- Domestic ideologies: labor, race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, femininity, masculinity, immigration, politics, citizenship, faith/religion

We welcome submissions from graduate students at all stages of study and from any area of study.

Papers must be original and previously unpublished. Please send an abstract (300 words or fewer), a paper title, and a CV to artsymp@bu.edu. The deadline for submissions is January 8, 2027. Selected speakers will be notified by early February. Papers should be no longer than 15 minutes in length and will be followed by a question and answer session.

The symposium will be held at Boston University on Friday, April 9 and at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston on Saturday, April 10, 2027. Please note that we do not cover travel costs for speakers.

This event is generously sponsored by Mary L. Cornille (GRS'87). For additional information, please visit our website.

Reference:
CFP: Home/Work: Constructing Domesticities (Boston, 9-10 Apr 27). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 11, 2026 (accessed Nov 9, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/54591>.