

Waste and Art in the Age of Hyperconsumption (Barcelona, 12–13 Nov 26)

Barcelona, Universitat Pompeu Fabra / Universitat de Barcelona, Nov 12–13, 2026

Isabel Valverde, universitat pompeu fabra

Waste, Garbage, Surplus. Art and Cultural Imaginaries in the Age of Hyperconsumption.

The conference problematizes the ambiguous and complex relationship we have with the waste we generate and its consequences. To this end, it addresses contemporary artistic practices and the responses they propose to the materiality of waste and its political and aesthetic significance. Contemporary art, design, and cultural imaginaries offer a privileged vantage point from which to examine the interrelated processes of ecosystem crisis, globalization and sustainability, climate emergency, and social inequalities. Through the symbolic creation of art and culture in general, the hidden or repressed relationships that our society establishes with what it has declared useless and disposable return to the realm of the visible and the representable. The conference discusses the cultural, political, and epistemological implications of artistic practices working with recycled materials, garbage, or waste, from theoretical approaches such as new materialism, relational aesthetics, and criticism of late capitalism.

Program

Tuesday, 12 November 2026 - Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona
Mercè Rodoreda Auditorium - Campus Ciutadella

09:00 – 09:30h · WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Isabel Valverde, Universitat Pompeu Fabra

09:30 – 10:30h · Chair: Sergi Castellà (UPF)

Keynote lecture: JOHN SCANLAN (In Certain Places, School of Art and Media, University of Lancashire) - Waste as Process and Image in Art

10:40 – 11:40h · Chair: Enric Puig (Centre d'Arts Santa Mònica)

Eduard Cairó (UPF), El carácter destructor: W. Benjamin o cómo hacer cosas con desechos
Diana Laura Martínez García (UNAM), Imágenes como ruinas: narrativas de un espacio y tiempo fragmentado en la obra artística de Teresa Margolles

11:40 – 12:10h · COFFEE BREAK

12:10 – 13:30h · Chair: Sergi Castellà (UPF)

Fèlix Maisel (UPF), Imaginarios del desierto radiactivo

Marta Staudinger (IDSVA / Artist-Curator), Can Medical Waste Inspire Earth Stewardship? An Aes-

thetic Reappraisal of Abjected Materiality

13:30 – 15:30h · LUNCH BREAK

15:30 – 16:50h · Chair: Nausikaä El-Mecky (UPF)

José Luis Corazón (UPF), En montañas de basura. Una genealogía de lo inmundado en el arte político actual

Laia Manonelles (UB), Paisajes del colapso: ruinas urbanas en el arte experimental en China

Júlia Lull (UPF), La tenacidad del resto: materialidades vulnerables y persistencias del desecho en el arte contemporáneo

16:50 – 17:20h · COFFEE BREAK

17:20 – 18:40h · Chair: Daniel López del Rincón (UB)

Séréna Aupoix & Beatriz Rodríguez-Labajos (JHU-UPF Public Policy Center, UPF), Waste as Epistemic Extraction: Contamination and Art Mawon in Transformative Grassroots Initiatives in Martinique

Nerea Arrojería (UB), Prácticas artísticas del desecho. De la representación a la participación

Onofre Bachiller (Visual artist, photographer), Restos invisibles: basura, obsolescencia y excedente en la imagen contemporánea

19:00- 20:00h · Chair: Isabel Valverde (UPF)

Keynote lecture: AMANDA BOETZKES (University of Guelph, Canada) - Waste and Its Counterstrikes Against Capitalist Impact

Friday, November 13th - Universitat de Barcelona

Sala de Junttes, Facultat de Geografia i Història – Campus Raval

09:15 – 09:30h · WELCOME

09:30 – 10:30h · Chair: Anna Pérez Milán (UB)

Keynote lecture: CHRISTINA DANICK (Head of Exhibitions & Curator, Museum Ostwall at the Dortmund U) - Everyday Matter, Global Flows Curating “Waste. An Exhibition about the Global Routes of Rubbish”

10:30 – 11:30h · Chair: Anna Pérez Milán (UB)

Tea Kříž (Chief curator at Museum of Fine Arts, Galerie Lázně Liberec, Czech Republic), Curating the Residual: Waste, Visibility, and Institutional Ecologies in Contemporary Art

Hanna Thevenet (Université Rennes II / Art and Ecology Producer, COAL), Towards a Curatorial Degrowth: The Living Exhibition as a Response to the Logic of the Residual and Capitalocene

11:30 – 12:00h · COFFEE BREAK

12:00 – 13:20h · Chair: Anna Pérez Milán (UB)

Sarah Sigmund (Academy of Fine Arts, Munich) & Jonas Lewek (Visual artist), Plastic Circuits: Waste as Material in Art between Germany and Indonesia

Kirstie Gregory (Henry Moore Institute, Leeds), Mike Nelson’s The Asset – Strippers: A Wasteland of Dreams and Machinery

Agnese Codebò (Division of Interdisciplinary Studies, City College of New York, CUNY), Epistemologías de la basura desde el sur global

13:20 – 15:30h · LUNCH BREAK

15:30 – 16:50h · Chair: Anna Maria Guasch (UB)

Amy Schwartzott (North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University / Curator of University Galleries), Trash or Treasure? Recyclia in Contemporary Mozambican Artworks

Anna Pérez Milán (UB), Las otras geologías de Daniel Canogar. Futuros residuales y estéticas del excedente

Catherine Radosa (Artist, filmmaker, performer and teacher at École des Arts de la Sorbonne, Paris), The Golden Manure Revolution

16:50 – 17:20h · COFFEE BREAK

17:30 – 18:30h · Chair: Anna Maria Guasch (UB)

Keynote lecture: VERÓNICA SÁNCHEZ (n'UNDO, architecture and urbanism collective, Madrid) - Construir menos, desmantelar mejor. La perspectiva n'UNDO frente a la generación de residuos y su impacto social

Organizers: Isabel Valverde and Sergi Castellà (UPF); Anna Maria Guasch and Martí Peran (UB)

Public event – Registration required at : <https://shorturl.at/Zi2Zk>

Reference:

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