Harvard Visual China Graduate Symposium (Cambridge, 30 Apr 27)

Cambridge, MA, USA, Apr 30, 2027
Deadline: Jan 15, 2027

April Peng

Medium Matters, 2027 Harvard Visual China Graduate Symposium.

What is a medium, and why does the question matter? In an era when ever-changing technologies and modes of production are rapidly transforming how images are made, circulated, and experienced, the matter of medium can no longer be taken for granted as a fixed category of material support and/or technology. Building on knowledge of materials and technologies, medium can be understood more expansively as a historically and culturally conditioned set of material, technical, social, and cultural relations. Its conceptual aspects, rooted in social and cultural conventions, are often key factors informing material choices and processes of making. To ask what a medium is, then, is to investigate the vectors shaping what can be made, seen, experienced, preserved, and remembered.

Harvard Visual China invites submissions to our fifth annual graduate symposium on the role of medium in Chinese and East Asian art. We are interested in how artistic media have been historically generated, negotiated, and reconfigured. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Materiality, material agency, and sensory properties of artistic media
- Technologies and processes of artistic production
- Intermediality, translation, adaptation, and the movement of forms across media
- Social, political, and institutional histories of particular media
- Digital media, reproduction, and the afterlives of historical forms
- Theories and histories of medium in Chinese, East Asian, and other cross-cultural contexts

Please submit an abstract (250-300 words, no illustrations) and a short biography (100 words) to harvardvisualchina@gmail.com. We welcome submissions from graduate students at all stages of study from any area (must be enrolled in a graduate program by the submission deadline to be considered), postdocs, and early career scholars. Speakers will be notified by early to mid-February. Presentations will be 20 minutes in length, followed by a Q&A session led by a discussant. If selected, you will be asked to send a 15-page double spaced paper by early March for the discussant. You may be asked to verify your status and institutional affiliation.

Reference:
CFP: Harvard Visual China Graduate Symposium (Cambridge, 30 Apr 27). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 23, 2026 (accessed Nov 23, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/57193>.