

**Boston University** College of Arts & Sciences

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## CALL FOR PAPERS

### **The 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Mary L. Cornille (GRS '87) Boston University Graduate Symposium on the History of Art & Architecture**

Submissions due: January 15, 2026

Symposium dates: April 10-11, 2026

#### **Material Ecologies: Connecting Care, Nature, and Identity**

The graduate students of the Boston University History of Art & Architecture department invite proposals for papers that explore themes of art and the environment, engaging questions of materiality, craft, and alternative ecologies, for the 42nd anniversary of the Mary L. Cornille (GRS '87) Boston University Graduate Symposium on the History of Art & Architecture.

In recent decades, as critical approaches to the environmental humanities have experienced rapid expansion, ecocritical art histories have examined aesthetic engagements with the natural world in light of extraction, pollution, and climate change, often reconsidering hierarchies imposed on the environment and artists' relationships with natural subjects and materials. Ecofeminism, meanwhile, as both a social movement and a theoretical framework, has specifically linked human domination of nature with patriarchal structures, calling for the deconstruction of both gender and species-based divisions and oppressions. Taking cues from these movements, *Material Ecologies* will center materiality and feminist critique as lenses for environmental inquiry in art history, investigating how artists depict, consider, and collaborate with more-than-human beings to refigure humanity's own relationships with the world around us. In this symposium, we aim to break down boundaries and hierarchies not only between humanity and nature, but also among academic and artistic disciplines, geopolitical borders, and material categories. How have artists used both traditional and innovative materials and methods to address themes of the environment, climate, and identity? Where do ecological, scientific, cultural, and artistic practices overlap and intersect, and what insights are produced as a result? What new ways of creating and being can we access by resisting the urge to insulate and taxonomize?

Possible subjects include but are by no means limited to: artistic collaborations with nature; the expanded field of sculpture; ecofeminism and decolonialism; queer and feminist craft practices; salvaged and repurposed materials; Black Feminist, Indigenous, and queer ecologies; and kinships between art and science.

Submissions should align with the goal of this symposium to center BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, feminist, and counter-colonial voices, fostering a space for these perspectives to resonate within the academy and beyond. We encourage interdisciplinary approaches, bringing together art history, architectural history, environmental humanities, cultural studies, literature, and more. We welcome submissions from graduate students at all stages and from any area of study in the global history of art and architecture. Papers must be original and unpublished. Please email as a single Word document: title, abstract (250 words or less), and CV to [artsymp@bu.edu](mailto:artsymp@bu.edu). The deadline for submissions is January 15, 2026. Selected speakers will be notified in early February. Presentations will be 15 minutes in length, followed by a question-and-answer session. The symposium will be held at the Boston University campus and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, on April 10 and 11, 2026.

This event is generously sponsored by Mary L. Cornille (GRS '87). For more information, please visit our [website](#) or email [artsymp@bu.edu](mailto:artsymp@bu.edu).