



UNC  
COLLEGE OF  
ARTS & SCIENCES

THE UNIVERSITY  
*of* NORTH CAROLINA  
*at* CHAPEL HILL

DEPARTMENT OF ART & ART HISTORY

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## **Matters of Art: Materiality, Functionality, and the Agency of Art Objects**

The 8th Annual Symposium of the Art Student Graduate Organization

Symposium Dates: September 16-17, 2022

Abstract Due Date: July 3, 2022

Keynote: Dr. Monica Domínguez Torres, University of Delaware

The role material condition plays in artistic production and the utility of artistic objects has been frequently obscured in the discipline of art history. Stemming from 19<sup>th</sup>-century theories in Formalism, growing interest in the topic of materiality developed out of the desire to understand how material substances have informed artists' creative processes. Despite its modern origins, this ontologically-based framework may be applied to art historical research investigating any region or period of time, including critical examinations of the sensorial qualities and physical properties of artworks. Further, the relationship between the tangible and intangible conditions of an artwork can be pursued to better understand broader existential traits inherent in objecthood.

This year's symposium will foreground materiality with an emphasis on raw materials, both in the production of art objects and in artistic depictions. We are interested in exploring the cross-cultural exchange of objects and materials; the extraction and exploitation of natural resources (especially under colonial auspices); the role of art objects as material commodities; the sensory interactions between the viewer and art objects; and the translation of raw materials into artistic products.

Papers may engage art and/or visual culture from any period, style, origin, or culture. Potential paper topics may include:

- + Cultural/economic/political/social significance of raw materials and their origins
- + Natural resources as art media
- + Production of art objects, workshop practices, or artistic practices
- + Functionality of art objects in ritual, cultural, religious, social, or political contexts
- + Cross-cultural exchanges of materials or art objects
- + The commodification and/or collection of art objects
- + Sensory interactions between the body and art objects
- + Materials/media as mediators of meaning
- + Reproductions or reproducibility of art objects
- + Sustainability in art production
- + Material considerations of popular visual culture
- + Conservation techniques and/or theories
- + Ephemerality

The symposium will be held **in-person** at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on **Saturday, September 17 from 9:00 AM-4:00 PM EDT**. We invite abstracts of no more than 300 words for 20-minute paper presentations. Presentations will be followed by a Q&A session and are open to a general audience.

Please submit your abstract and CV via [this form](#) by **5 PM EDT Sunday, July, 3, 2022**. Selected speakers will be notified by mid-July. Please address all inquiries to symposium organizers via [asgo.unc@gmail.com](mailto:asgo.unc@gmail.com).