

Call for Papers:
The 60th Annual UCLA Art History Graduate Symposium

Revolution

Symposium Date: November 14, 2025
Location: The Hammer Museum (Los Angeles, CA)
CFP Deadline: August 15, 2025, 5 PM PST

Every sixty years, a cycle closes and begins anew. In East Asian cosmology, the completion of a sexagenary cycle marks renewal and revolution—a cosmic reset that reorganizes time, structure, and possibility. As we celebrate the 60th anniversary of our graduate symposium, we take this as an opportunity to reflect on our origins as we enter a new era. Our symposium was born of and within revolution. The first of its kind, it emerged amidst the Watts riots’ calls against racial discrimination and police brutality alongside fierce opposition to the Vietnam War. These revolutionary parallels with our present moment, in the wake of the George Floyd protests and the crackdowns on the Palestine Solidarity Encampments, invite us to consider *revolution* as more than a historical event, as a theme. *Revolution* embodies both remembrance and progression: a critical lens through which to rethink history and art. After all, art and artists have always been at the heart of revolution—from ancient Egyptian artists’ protests against poor working conditions to young students around the world creating revolutionary posters in the sixties.

What new questions arise when we approach *revolution* as both subject and framework? How do visual ruptures, political resistance, and shifts in knowledge illuminate art’s role in broader movements of change? What past and ongoing revolutions continue to reshape the histories we construct through visual culture? How can art spur us to revolutionary action today? With keynote speaker Dr. Sohl Lee, whose work explores the nexus of art, activism, and institutional critique in contemporary Korea and East Asia more broadly, this symposium considers *revolution* as a mode of imagining new ways of seeing, knowing, and acting in the field of art history. We call for a push to reexamine *revolution* within the discipline itself: challenges to canonical timelines, methodological shifts, and the rethinking of interpretive frameworks. *Revolution*, far from being a thing of the past, must return as a possibility in the present.

This symposium is an inclusive platform for emerging scholars whose work reconsiders what is revolutionary in art through subject matter, form, theory, practice, or institutional critique. Given the breadth of this theme, we welcome submissions that span a wide range of temporal periods, geographic regions, media, and methodological approaches. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Revolutionary iconographies and the aesthetics of protest
- Visual culture as a site of resistance or transformation

- Theories and praxis of revolution in performance and film
- Transnational solidarities and revolutionary movements
- Iconoclasm, censorship, and visual erasure
- Artistic revivals and returns to the past
- Challenges to linear historiographies and chronological conventions
- Paradigm shifts and ruptures in art historical interpretation (e.g., decolonial, feminist, queer, ecological, and indigenous onto-epistemological turns)
- Technological revolutions in art and architecture
- Digital interventions in research, museum practices, and archiving

The Annual UCLA Art History Graduate Student Symposium is the longest-running symposium of its kind in North America. Initiated in 1965, the symposium provides a forum for graduate students to present original research in a creative and non-judgmental scholarly format. This year's symposium will be held in person over one day in Los Angeles. Groups of participants will deliver 15–20 minute presentations followed by panel-type discussions. Interested candidates are invited to submit an abstract of approximately 300 words and a CV or resume (all in PDF) to arthistorysymposiumucla@gmail.com by Friday, August 15, 2025, at 5:00 PM PDT. Scholars at all stages in their graduate careers are welcome to apply. Accepted participants will be notified by Friday, August 29, 2025.