

University of Georgia Emerging Scholars Symposium

February 25-26, 2027

Georgia Museum of Art, on the campus of the University of Georgia

‘There Are No Rules’: Artistic Experiments across Media

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Jenni Sorkin, University of California, Santa Barbara

In 1975, Helen Frankenthaler sculpted a series of ceramics that would remain out of public view for nearly four decades. Her engagement with the medium of ceramics would prove to be more than just a fleeting excursion from her more familiar media of paintings and prints. Rather, the artist's movement across printmaking and ceramics transformed the way she considered the materiality of the art object, resulting in notable dimensional changes to her more well-known paintings. Reflecting on her cross-media experimentation, Frankenthaler famously said that "there are no rules...that is how art is born, that is how breakthroughs happen." Held in conjunction with the Georgia Museum of Art's special exhibition, *Helen Frankenthaler: Transforming the Matrix*, this symposium seeks to extend the conversation around an artist's shifting material interests beyond Frankenthaler's oeuvre to probe questions such as: Why and how do artists move across media? How can experimentation with new or diverse materials shift or reinforce an artist's existing practice? How can art historians interpret an artist's movement(s) across media within their oeuvre as a whole?

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Association for Graduate Art Students (AGAS) at the University of Georgia invites proposals for 20-minute paper presentations from graduate students of diverse backgrounds to investigate artists working across media. AGAS welcomes submissions from students currently enrolled in M.A. and Ph.D. programs, although submissions from postdoctoral students will also be considered. By nature, this symposium's topic encourages object-centered approaches and invites submissions concerning any time period and/or geographic location.

Presentation topics may include but are not limited to:

- Medium specificity (and/or its rejection)
- Material Aesthetics
- Artists adapting to media outside their primary training or practice
- Alternative non-media-specific art histories and under-theorized interdisciplinary artists
- (Negotiating) medium hierarchies and the public image of the artist
- New Materialism
- Theorization of craft in art history and criticism

Submissions should include an abstract (maximum 300 words) as well as an up-to-date resumé or CV, sent to agas@uga.edu by November 15, 2026. Applicants will be notified via email in early December.