



American Society for Aesthetics

Rocky Mountain Division

2026 Call for Abstracts

The 42nd Annual Meeting of the Rocky Mountain Division of the American Society for Aesthetics will take place at the Drury Plaza Hotel in Santa Fe, New Mexico, July 10th–12th, 2026.

Manuel Davenport Keynote Address: Cynthia Willett

Cynthia Willett is the Samuel Candler Dobbs professor of philosophy at Emory University. Her current book project, *A Musicology of Everyday Life*, is a study of the social dynamic of musical and vibrational atmospheres through New Phenomenology, Resonance Theory, and Attunement Theory. This study probes the nuances of tone, rhythm, vibration, timbre for ethical cultures within and across human and non-human social groups. Her ongoing research focuses on three key areas: music/tragedy/blues; transspecies cosmopolitanism; and humor/irony. The research is anchored in ancient and contemporary concepts of eros and hubris; call and response; affective attunements and dissonances; symbolic social space and its violations.

Michael Manson Artist Keynote Address: Liz Harris

Liz Harris is an artist based on the North Oregon coast. She has recorded and performed since 2005 under the names Grouper, Nivhek, Raum, Helen and Mirroring; and releases music and art editions on her imprint *YELLOWELECTRIC*, as well as kranky records.

Harris' project Nivhek has received various commissions and has been presented internationally, including performances and installations in Bergen, Murmansk, Munich, Krakow and London. Her most recent commission from Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, *ENGINE*, combines field recordings of drag races and train yards with string arrangements. The work began inside a decade-long obsession with engine noise.

Submission Guidelines (March 15th, 2026 Deadline)

We welcome presentations in all fields and disciplines pertaining to the history, application, and appreciation of aesthetic understanding. We are always particularly interested in research involving interdisciplinary and intercultural approaches emphasizing the natural and cultural character of the American Southwest.

The conference will be organized into 1.5-hour sessions with each of three speakers allotted 20 minutes to present and 10 minutes for Q & A. The Division's practice is to invite proposals in the form of abstracts for papers that speakers wish to present. The abstract must be no more than 250 words and offer a formal summary of the work to be presented. Panel proposals will consist of three papers and include each participant's abstract.

Proposals must be submitted in Word or PDF format by March 15th addressed to Dr. Bethany Henning (asarockymountain@gmail.com). Although you need not be an ASA member to submit, everyone who presents at the conference must register and also be an ASA member in good standing.

Acknowledging the History and Heritage of Santa Fe, New Mexico

Our conference is annually held in Santa Fe, New Mexico, a region still recognized as Oga Po'geh, meaning "White Shell Water Place," by the people of Tatsúgeh Oweengeh (Tsuque Pueblo). This region was inhabited for thousands of years by the communities of the Northern and Southern Tewa, and it is richly described in the oral traditions of the Nambe Pueblo, the Diné, Cochiti, Tao, and Hopi Pueblos.

The area referred to as Santa Fe was occupied four centuries ago by the Spanish, and this occupation involved displacement of people indigenous to the region. This occupation brought immigrants from Spain, Mexico, Greece, and Portugal to this area, and resulted in the enslavement of (according to ecclesiastical records) Aa, Apache, Diné, Kiowa, Pawnee, Paiute, and Ute peoples. Many more enslaved people were simply recorded as "Mexican Indians."

As a conference, we acknowledge this indigenous and colonial history, and we pledge allyship to the peoples and traditions colonial practices have harmed and violently displaced. The Rocky Mountain Division of the American Society for Aesthetics will strive to perpetuate the stories of the indigenous people who call Santa Fe their ancestral home, and we see acknowledgement of these realities as a first step toward equity for these peoples.

Oga Po'geh Essay Prize

Because of our commitment to the traditions and history of Santa Fe, we have a specific interest in the aesthetics of indigenous and Latinx communities geographically adjacent to our division. To this end, we are excited to announce the Oga Po'geh Essay Prize. We are interested in essays of 3000 words devoted to Latinx and/or Native American indigenous art practice and cultural thought. This prize is not merely devoted to traditions and peoples of the American Southwest, as our division extends into the Rocky Mountain region of Canada. Thus, we encourage submissions devoted to Canadian First Nation aesthetics as well. Essays may draw from a wide variety of disciplinary perspectives, but they should advance and advocate for greater representation from these communities and to promote allyship and shared understanding, both within the academy and beyond.

Winners of this prize will receive a \$500 award and their conference fee will be waived. The winner will be asked to read their essay in a special session of the program. Those who wish to apply for the prize must submit an abstract by March 15th and a complete essay by May 1 to Dr. Bethany Henning (asarockymountain@gmail.com).

Graduate Student in Philosophy Essay Prizes

The Center for Philosophical Studies (CPS) at Lamar University will again be offering its Best Graduate Student in Philosophy Essay Prizes, ranging from \$125 to \$175, depending on fiscal conditions for

2025. These prizes will be available only to graduate students officially pursuing an M.A. or Ph.D. in Philosophy. Dr. Arthur Stewart, CPS Director, and Professor James Mock, of the University of Central Oklahoma, will serve as referees.

Competition Procedure

Submit your abstract to Dr. Bethany Henning (asarockymountain@gmail.com) by March 15. Upon acceptance to the program, contact Dr. Arthur Stewart (afstewart@lamar.edu) and Professor James Mock (jmock@uco.edu) with your abstract, information about your degree aspirations and academic affiliations, and documentation of your official status in M.A. or Ph.D. programs in Philosophy. Finally, submit your completed essay to Drs. Stewart and Mock by May 1. The referees' decisions will be announced by May 15.

Irene H. Chayes Travel Fund

The American Society for Aesthetics has provided the Division with an annual lump sum of \$1000 to support travel to the meeting for persons with papers accepted for the program who have no other access to professional travel funds at their teaching institution(s) during the academic year.

Eligibility Requirements

Eligible persons include faculty members, independent scholars, and students. You must be a member of ASA in good standing in the calendar year of the paper submission and presentation and you must register for the meeting. Finally, if you have some access to travel funds from your institution but prefer to use it for a different meeting, you are not eligible for a Chayes Travel Grant this year.

Application Procedure

Submit your abstract to Dr. Bethany Henning (asarockymountain@gmail.com) by March 15. Upon acceptance to the program, contact Dr. Arthur Stewart (afstewart@lamar.edu) and Professor James Mock (jmock@uco.edu) with a statement expressing your desire to be considered for a Chayes travel grant and an explanation of why you are eligible. The Division's review committee, composed of Drs. Stewart and Mock, will make the final decisions on who receives a travel grant and for what amount by May 1.

Fund-Raising Initiative

The RMASA is now raising additional funds to support travel for people who lack institutional support. Donations of any size, large or small, are most welcome! If you are interested in donating, you may do so [online at the ASA website](#).

Meeting Registration

Registration: \$150 early bird rate (register by June 26th); \$175 regular conference rate (after June 26th)

Emeritus Faculty and Graduate Students: \$75 early bird rate (register by June 26th); \$100 regular conference rate (after June 26th).

To register for the conference, please go to: <https://aesthetics-online.org/>

Hotel Rates

The deadline for reserving hotel rooms is June 7th. The room rates (for single/double/quad) at the Drury Plaza Hotel for registered ASARMD conference attendees is \$249/night.

The conference room rate will be extended for guests arriving/departing three days pre/post conference dates, based on availability.

We carefully studied options and surveyed our members, and the overwhelming majority preferred staying in Old Town Santa Fe, even with the increase in room rate compared to previous years (which remains discounted compared to the current public rate.)

[You can find the Call for Abstracts here](#)