CALL FOR ABSTRACTS !

3rd POSTHUMAN STUDIES CONFERENCE (PSC)

THE SECOND RENAISSANCE

Posthuman Art, Beauty, and Technology

Between Critical Posthumanism and Transhumanism

June 18-19, 2027

Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Faculty of History and Philosophy

Department of Philosophy

For more details regarding the CFA, please access the following link:

https://www.posthumanstudies.org/projects/posthuman-studies-conference-series-psc

Keynote Speaker: Prof. Dr. Stefan Lorenz Sorgner, John Cabot University, Rome, Italy

CONFERENCE DESCRIPTION

Within the posthuman paradigm shift, posthuman art and aesthetics emerge as a pluralistic, inclusive, and perspectival articulation of continual becoming, moving, in one way or another, away from the contingent, encrusted sedimentations of dualistic ontologies and toward the affirmation of ontologies of becoming. Such a perspective is grounded in a non-dualistic, non-anthropocentric, and non-essentialist philosophical approach that bridges the realms of art, technology, ontology, and ethics, while opening up the possibility of what Stefan L. Sorgner refers to as the "Second Renaissance".

"The Second Renaissance is a Renaissance of Antiquity because it moves past the monotheistic, totalizing trap of a single 'Vitruvian ideal,' re-embracing the ancient polytheistic worldview: a

world of plurality, metamorphosis, technological embodiment, and multispecies relationality. Yet, far from a naive or simple-minded return to the past, it twists these classical concepts to realize a dynamic, open, and thoroughly contemporary framework for a diversity of personal flourishings." (Sorgner). The Second Renaissance is the ultimate rebellion against the monotheistic cage of the Vitruvian ideal: here, Francisco Varela resurrects the Presocratic stream to wed the mind back to the breathing web of Nature, while Sorgner shatters the single human mold to unleash the dancing, polytheistic pantheon of radical multiplicity. In the context of the *The Animatrix* (and the broader Matrix universe), "The Second Renaissance" refers to the pivotal historical transition period from the peak of human civilization to the absolute dominance of the Machines. Sorgner, on the other hand, uses the concept in a philosophical sense which focuses on a pluralistic, polytheistic re-embracing of Antiquity.

Within this framework posthuman works of art affirm ontologies of becoming by moving beyond binary distinctions and rigid normative frameworks that divide aesthetic categories and separate art from technology. In the context of today's rapid technological evolution, posthuman artworks call for both a practical and a conceptual reconsideration of aesthetic discourses concerning the nature of beauty. Within the "Second Renaissance" of the posthuman paradigm shift, beauty is neither a fixed or universal ideal nor an obsolete concept to be discarded, but rather a form of constructive interference that affirms becoming and articulates indeterminacy as alternatives to fixed aesthetic forms and identities. It brings together symmetry, harmony, proportion, and balance with monstrosity, hybridity, otherness, and the uncanny, treating them as open suggestions rather than ultimate standards.

These interplays, which weave the fabric of a "Second Renaissance," invite reflection on how ancient wisdom of a non-soteriological "polytheistic worldview" can be interpreted through the lens of emerging technologies, human–machine interaction, and the co-evolving relationships between human and non-human agencies at the crossroads of critical posthumanism and transhumanism. This conference invites contributions that explore the open-ended dynamics of a "Second Renaissance" and examine how ancient aesthetic and ethical concepts of beauty and personal flourishing can be twisted to challenge the universal human ideal and inspire new forms of posthuman becoming. From *kalokagathia* and the Golden Ratio to bio-art, AI-generated art, and non-human animal art, as well as human enhancement, bodily aesthetics, multispecies entanglement, and relationality, the conference seeks to explore the multiple and transformative visions of the posthuman future. Philosophers, humanists, posthumanists, transhumanists, metahumanists, and scholars more broadly are invited to examine the aesthetic and technological implications of the various manifestations of the "Second Renaissance" within the context of the posthuman paradigm shift.

PROPOSED TOPICS

Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

- The Second Renaissance and the twisting of Antiquity: polytheism, metamorphosis, and the rejection of universal ideals
- Beyond the single Vitruvian Ideal: pluralism, multiplicity, and personal flourishing

- Aesthetics of Becoming: Heraclitus, Nietzsche, Spinoza, and the ontologies of becoming in posthuman art and aesthetics
- Beauty and its conceptual genesis: from *kalokagathia* to posthuman aesthetics
- Reinterpreting classical sculpture, mythology, Renaissance humanism, and Western aesthetic traditions through posthuman perspectives
- Transhumanist approaches to technology and aesthetics: cyborg bodies, prosthetics, and hybrid identities
- Human enhancement, bodily aesthetics, and morphological freedom
- Critical posthumanist approaches to technology and aesthetics
- Posthuman aesthetics and the transformation of traditional art practices
- Posthuman art and the twisting of aesthetic categories
- Bio-art, biotechnology, and posthuman art
- Crypto-art, robotic art, AI-generated art, digital art, and machinic creativity
- Posthuman imagination in literature, science fiction, and poetry
- Computer games, virtual worlds, and immersive experiences
- The Second Renaissance in film and anime: machine agency, rebellion, power, domination, and the ethics and politics of human–machine coexistence
- Symmetry, harmony, health, and the twisting of the Golden Ratio
- Beauty, enhancement, and the technologically transformed body
- The aesthetics of monsters and hybrids
- Human–non-human entanglements in contemporary artistic expressions

ORGANIZERS

Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania; the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of History and Philosophy; the Posthuman Studies Research Group (PSRG) of the Center for Applied Philosophy (CAPH); the Posthuman Studies Association (PSA); and Lect. Dr. Aura-Elena Schussler (Conference Organizer).

ABSTRACT PROPOSALS

We invite prospective participants to submit abstracts of approximately 250–300 words, accompanied by up to 5 keywords, the name(s) and institutional affiliation(s) of the presenter(s), and their contact information. Each submission should also include a short biographical note (approximately 100 words) for each author.
Abstracts should be submitted in English as Microsoft Word documents (.doc/.docx) to either of the following email addresses: Aura Schussler: aura.schussler@ubbcluj.ro or Posthuman Studies Association: posthumanstudies.association@gmail.com.

DATES AND DEADLINES

- **Submission deadline:** February 10, 2027
- **Notification of acceptance:** March 17, 2027

- **Conference dates:** June 18–19, 2027

CONFERENCE FEES

- **Early-bird registration fee (in person):** €130 (March 17–April 16, 2027)
- **Regular registration fee (in person):** €150 (April 17–May 17, 2027)
- **Online participation fee:** €100 (March 17–May 17, 2027)

PUBLICATION

Selected papers from the conference will be considered for publication in an edited volume in the *Posthuman Studies* book series (edited by Lect. Dr. Aura-Elena Schussler), under the Trivent Transhumanism imprint. Each paper should be between 5,000 and 7,000 words, and all submissions will undergo a peer-review process. For inquiries regarding the conference or submissions, please contact Aura-Elena Schussler at aura.schussler@ubbcluj.ro or posthumanstudies.association@gmail.com.

If you find yourself interested in these topics, please take a moment to explore the following collections:

- Sorgner, S. L. (2022). *Philosophy of Posthuman Art*. Schwabe Verlag. https://schwabe.ch/stefan-lorenz-sorgner-philosophy-of-posthuman-art-978-3-7965-4568-9
- Schussler, A. E. & Balistreri, M. (Eds.). (2024). *Metahumanism, Euro-Transhumanism and Sorgner's Philosophy—Technology, Ethics, Art*. Trivent Publishing. https://trivent-publishing.eu/home/170-318-metahumanism-sorgner.html#/27-cover-paperback
- Schussler, A. E. (Ed). (2025). *Nietzsche, Critical Posthumanism and Transhumanism*. (Posthumans Studies, Vol. 1). Trivent Publishing. https://trivent-publishing.eu/home/211-397-nietzsche-critical-posthumanism-and-transhumanism.html#/27-cover-paperback
- Schussler, A. E. (Ed.). 2026. *Philosophies of Transhumanism: Foundational, Original, Classic, and Euro-Transhumanism*. Posthuman Studies Series, Vol. 2. Trivent Publishing. https://trivent-publishing.eu/home/238-455-philosophies-of-transhumanism.html

CONFERENCE ORGANIZER

Lect. Dr. Aura-Elena Schussler (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Prof. Dr. Maurizio Balistreri (University of Tuscia, Viterbo, Italy)
Prof. Dr. Manuel Andreas Knoll, (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (LMU), Germany)
Dr. David Roden, member of the Posthuman Studies Research Group (PSRG)
Prof. Dr. Evi Sampanikou (University of the Aegean, Mytilene, Greece)
Lect. Dr. Aura Elena Schussler (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)
Prof. Dr. Yunus Tuncel, (New School University, New York, NY, USA)

CONTACT INFORMATION

For submissions or questions, please contact conference organizer Aura-Elena Schussler at aura.schussler@ubbcluj.ro or posthumanstudies.association@gmail.com.