

Workshop

Nonhuman Agency in the Premodern Image – Ecocritical Perspectives

January 29–30, 2026

Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz
Department of Art History and Musicology

Georg-Forster-Gebäude, Room 02.511

or via Zoom:



With the kind support of:

Ulmer Verein, Freunde des Phoenix e.V. & JGU Mainz

Concept and Organization:

Malu Geißler (University of Halle) & Camille Theisinger (University of Mainz)
within the framework of the Working Group *Ecologies of Premodern Art*
(Ulmer Verein)



Thursday, 29 January 2026

14:15 **Opening Remarks & Introduction** Malu Geißler / Camille Theisinger

14:30 **Session 1: The Animal as Presence: Representation and Resistance**

Anabel von der Osten-Sacken, Hamburg: Implicit Ecological Sensitivities towards Animals in 16th- and 17th-Century Netherlandish Images Manifesting Sublimation
Cortney Anne Berg, New York/Erlangen-Nürnberg: Unicorn Resistance: Agency in the Unicorn Tapestries

16:00 Coffee Break

16:30 **Session 2: Plant Knowledge and Narratives**

Camille Theisinger, Mainz: Botanische Bilder als ökologische Erzählungen: Mary Delanys Papiercollagen
Kimberly Glassman, Cambridge: Telling Plant Stories: Agency of Botanicals in Cambridge's Collections

18:00 Break

18:15 **Keynote**

Friederike Nastold, Oldenburg: Mehr-als-menschliche Akteur*innen gärtnern: Eine ökokritische Re-Lektüre von Hieronymus Bosch Garten der Lüste (1490–1500)

Friday, 30 January 2026

09:30 **Introduction of the Working Group** *Ökologien vormoderner Kunst / Ecologies of Premodern Art*
Luan Tran, Mainz / Maurice Saß, Alfter/Bonn

10:00 **Discussion: Outcomes of Preceding Sessions, Methods & Challenges**
Moderation: Luan Tran, Mainz / Maurice Saß, Alfter/Bonn

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 **Session 3: In-Between Materiality and Bestiality**

Marie Wickern, Halle (Saale): Zur Semantik ovoider Materialität in der mittelalterlichen Schatzkunst
Monika Drlíková, Prague: Muffs, Fetish, and Bestiality in the Work of Wenceslaus Hollar

13:00 Lunch & Activity

14:00 **Session 4: Inside Out: Nonhuman Spaces as Artificial Landscapes**

Malu Geißler, Halle (Saale): The Snake as Nonhuman Actant between Medusa's Severed Head and the Sottobosco Realm
Vincent Rudolf, Altenburg/Marburg: Das totale Landschaftszimmer um 1800 als ambivalente Replik auf Naturkult und ökologische Krise

15:30 **Wrap-up & Conclusion** Malu Geißler / Camille Theisinger

16:00 Option for a **joint museum visit** with co-curator Luan Tran: *Ich drucke! Signet, Marke und Druckerzeichen seit dem Zeitalter Gutenbergs*, Gutenberg Museum