



Image: Esdras Da Costa, The Art of the Sublime, 2022. Aerial View of Upper Room, Virtual reality experience.

Call for contributions: AI as Environment - Infrastructure, Knowledge, Operation

The 9th Annual Artistic Research at Kristiania Symposium (ARAK27) & the 2nd MishMash Conference. Co-organised with AI Ecologies Research Group, Kristiania AI Centre (KAI), and Atelier Nord.

With the distinguished keynote speakers:

Tiziana Terranova · Kyle Stine · Orit Halpern · and the Spring 2027 Atelier Nord/MishMash Artist-in-Residence.

13–14 April 2027 | Kristiania University of Applied Sciences, Oslo, Norway

About the conference:

Artificial intelligence is often treated as a single technology. AI as Environment

proposes a different point of departure. It approaches artificial intelligence as a complex environment: a series of interwoven material, energetic and algorithmic systems that configure and co-determine cultural knowledge production and planetary life. Rather than asking only what AI does, or what artists and other practitioners can do with it, this perspective asks how AI reorganises the conditions under which perception, knowledge, cultural production and action take place.

The proposition draws on ecological and process-oriented approaches to media and technology, developed and applied in the AI Ecologies research group's project Kunstens co-pilot: Kunst og KI i et prosessøkologisk perspektiv, funded by Kulturrådet (2026–2028). Félix Guattari's 'three ecologies' (1989/2000), the interrelation of environmental, mental and social ecologies, provides a point of departure for thinking across domains that are too often treated separately. Feminist posthumanism and Indigenous and decolonial scholarship (Braidotti 2022; Tuhiwai Smith 2021) further foreground situated knowledge, extraction and differential inclusion, asking whose knowledge and cultural practices are represented, transformed or excluded by AI systems. In the context of contemporary machine-learning systems, we reformulate these relations through three interconnected ecological registers: infrastructural, epistemic and operational ecologies.

The Infrastructural Ecology

The infrastructural ecology concerns the material and energetic conditions that sustain AI systems: mineral extraction, semiconductor fabrication, global supply chains, data centres, networks and computation. Yet infrastructure is not reducible to its material substrates. Infrastructures also generate imaginaries and shape how technological systems, their scales and their possibilities become culturally perceptible (Crawford 2021).

The Epistemic Ecology

The epistemic ecology concerns how AI systems structure perception and knowledge. Training datasets, classificatory systems, machine vision and generative models do not simply represent an independently existing world; they construct particular fields of visibility, intelligibility and possibility, what Somaini has described

as the 'epistemic spaces' of machine learning systems (Somaini 2026). AI therefore participates in determining what can be recognised, classified, generated and known.

The Operational Ecology

The operational ecology concerns how AI systems are enacted through practices, procedures, software environments, interfaces and collaborations between human and non-human actors. Operational conditions are not static; they are continuously shaped by the artists, engineers and institutions that work with and against AI systems, exposing their assumptions, redirecting their processes and reconfiguring their outputs. Rather than simply applying AI as a tool, practitioners intervene in its operations, making AI a site of critical and creative negotiation (Herndon and Dryhurst 2024).

Artistic Research

Artistic research is particularly important to this inquiry because it not only observes these conditions from the outside but encounters and transforms them through practice. Following Borgdorff's understanding of artistic research as a form of "unfinished thinking" grounded in material engagement (2026), AI as Environment approaches artistic practice as a site where technological systems can be encountered before their meanings, functions and relations are fully settled. Artistic practice can therefore make perceptible relations between infrastructures, epistemic systems and operations that remain difficult to apprehend through analysis alone.

ARAK27: AI as Environment invites contributions from artistic research and practice-based inquiry in visual arts, music and sound, performing arts, design, curatorial practice and arts education, as well as interdisciplinary research bringing artistic practice into dialogue with AI and machine learning, human-computer interaction, media studies, Critical AI studies, environmental humanities, cultural studies and related fields.

Themes and Questions

We particularly welcome contributions that investigate relations across infrastructural, epistemic and operational ecological registers, including, but not limited to, questions such as:

- How is AI becoming integrated into expanded sites of cultural production, and how does this integration reconfigure existing practices and institutional frameworks?
- How do different forms of AI reorganise relations between perception, materiality, imagination and decision-making?
- How can artistic practices make the material and energetic infrastructures of AI perceptible, including their geopolitical, extractive, and environmental dimensions?
- How do datasets, classification systems, machine vision and generative models produce particular regimes of visibility and knowledge, and what remains outside these regimes?
- How are AI systems enacted and transformed through artistic workflows, interfaces, institutions and collaborations?
- How can artistic research move between the local operations of AI systems and the larger infrastructural, ecological and geopolitical systems in which they participate?
- What conceptual and artistic vocabularies are needed for understanding AI not as a discrete technology but as a constitutive environment?
- What forms of artistic critique, resistance, refusal or alternative practice become possible as AI increasingly shapes the conditions of cultural production?
- How might artistic and technological experimentation intervene in the design, training or operation of AI systems and open up alternative ways of developing and engaging with them?

Submission

- Abstract: 300 words maximum, engaging explicitly with one or more of the three ecological registers
- Bio: 100 words

- Format: Presentations are limited to 15 minutes and may take the form of a paper, practice-based presentation, or a combination of both. Please indicate your preferred format in your proposal.
- The conference takes place in person in Oslo. *Only in-person presentations will be accepted.*
- Kristiania University of Applied Sciences is not able to cover travel or accommodation costs for presenters.
- Eligibility: researchers at all career stages, including PhD candidates, are welcome to submit
- **Deadline: 1 November 2026**
- Submit to: <https://nettskjema.no/a/651115>
- Notification: 15 December 2026

The Programme Committee will select approximately 20–25 presentations for inclusion in a curated programme. Selection criteria include conceptual and artistic rigour, engagement with the conference framework, the contribution of artistic practice to research and knowledge production, and the potential to contribute to the conference's wider discussion.

Registration fees and other details will follow closer to the conference.

References

Borgdorff, Henk. 2026. "Artistic Research and the Lingering Gaze of Thought." *Journal for Artistic Research*. <https://doi.org/10.22501/jarnet.0095>

Braidotti, Rosi. 2022. *Posthuman Feminism*. Polity Press.

Crawford, Kate. 2021. *Atlas of AI: Power, Politics, and the Planetary Costs of Artificial Intelligence*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Guattari, Félix. 1989. *Les trois écologies*. Paris: Éditions Galilée. [English translation: *The Three Ecologies*, trans. Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton. London: Athlone Press, 2000.]

Herndon, Holly, and Mat Dryhurst. 2024. *All Media is Training Data*. London: Serpentine / Cologne: Walter König.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 2021. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Third edition. Zed Books.

Somaini, Antonio. 2026. "Latent Spaces: AI, Art, and the Archive." *October* 196: 19–60. <https://doi.org/10.1162/OCTO.a.545>

About the keynote speakers

Tiziana Terranova is Professor of Sociology of Culture and Communication at the Università di Napoli 'L'Orientale', where she co-founded the Centre for the Study of Transnational Technocultures (CRiTT). In 2020, she co-founded the Critical Computation Bureau (CCB) with Ezekiel Dixon-Roman, Luciana Parisi and Oana Parvan. A leading theorist of digital networks and network cultures, her work examines the political and cultural implications of information technologies, platform capitalism, and computational infrastructures. She is the author of *Network Culture: Politics for the Information Age* (2004) and *After the Internet: Digital Networks between Capital and the Common* (2022), with a forthcoming book *Network Social: On the Return of the Social in the Post-Digital Age* (Minnesota University Press). Terranova's research explores the intersection of digital technologies, media and cultural studies, and political economy, with recent work addressing technoliberalism and the network social, recursive colonialism, and the potential for post-capitalist networked commons.

Orit Halpern is Lighthouse Professor of Digital Culture at Technische Universität Dresden. A historian of science and media, her research examines the intersections of technology, cognition, and governance, particularly how computational infrastructures shape contemporary understandings of ecology, economy, and planetary management. She is the author of *Beautiful Data: A History of Vision and Reason since 1945* (2014) and co-author of *Demoing unto Death: Smart Cities, Environment, and Preemptive Hope* (2021). Halpern's work critically interrogates how concepts like resilience, smartness, and optimization have transformed environmental thought and practice, tracing the genealogies of computational approaches to ecological crisis and their implications for futurity and planetary inhabitation.

Kyle Stine is an associate teaching professor and the director of undergraduate studies in the Program in Film and Media Studies at Johns Hopkins University. His research examines the material and technical forms of media, with particular focus on computational hardware. He has a book in progress titled *Of Seashells and Silicon: An Inquiry into the Ends of Human Design* that investigates the cultural history of semiconductor chips and microprocessors, asking how the design and manufacture of hardware have shaped the development of multimedia computing and, more recently, artificial intelligence. His writings on cinema, media, art, and technology have appeared in *Critical Inquiry*, *Discourse*, *Grey Room*, *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing*, *October*, and the *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies*. He is co-editor of *Media Infrastructures and the Politics of Digital Time: Essays on Hardwired Temporalities* (Amsterdam University Press, 2021).

The Spring 2027 Atelier Nord/MishMash Artist-in-Residence is part of a residency programme developed in collaboration between Atelier Nord, MishMash – Centre for AI and Creativity, the Kristiania AI Centre (KAI) at Kristiania University of Applied Sciences, and Talent Norway. The programme supports artistic practices engaging critically and experimentally with artificial intelligence. The selected Spring 2027 artist will participate in AI as Environment as an artist keynote, bringing perspectives from their artistic practice into the conference programme.

Organisers

- AR@K — Artistic Research at Kristiania | 9th Annual Artistic Research Conference, Kristiania University of Applied Sciences, Oslo, Norway
- MishMash — Centre for AI and Creativity | Research Council of Norway (RCN)
- The AI Ecologies Research Group and KAI — Kristiania AI Centre | Kristiania University of Applied Sciences, Oslo, Norway
- Atelier Nord | a venue for contemporary art with a focus on media art, Oslo, Norway

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