

Call for Abstracts: Not A-Musing: Women as Art Makers in the Ancient World

AIA/SCS Annual Meeting: January 7-10, 2027, Boston MA

Panel Sponsored by the Women's Classical Caucus

Organized by Sarah Blake (York University) and Kate Cooper (Royal Ontario Museum)

As feminist art historians and activists have long demonstrated, women are exponentially more likely to be the subject of traditional art than the creators of it (<https://www.guerrillagirls.com/>). Specific references to female artists from Greco-Roman antiquity are rare. Pliny catalogues five women painters (HN 35.147-148; Kampen 1975; Linderski 2003), including Iaia of Cyzicus who painted other women and self-portraits (Micheli 2024). The Classical Athenian 'Caputi hydria' may depict a woman decorating a vessel and a tiny number of Campanian frescoes survive showing women painting (e.g., PPM 5.414= MNN 9017, Naples). Women's artistry may be recorded but obliquely: Pliny notes that the potter Butades first discovered ceramic portraiture by tracing the silhouette that his unnamed daughter had drawn of her lover on a rock-wall (Pliny HN 35.152).

Moving beyond a narrative that centres the named artist allows for a more expansive understanding of art-making in the ancient world (Squire 2015). As Murray suggests when discussing early Greece, many more women in the ancient world must have made art (Murray et al, 2020). How were women and girls part of creative artistic and artisanal working practices, conceived broadly across any medium as the expressive use of shape, gesture, color, or materials? Can we find women participating in ateliers, in material sourcing, in design? As sponsors, as owners, as assistants, as accidental creators or destroyers? Can a focus on gender make us re-think the history of art, craft, and design in the ancient world?

This panel invites papers that explore any aspect of women as art-makers in antiquity. We also welcome papers on the reception of ancient women art-makers in later times and places. We particularly welcome innovative theoretical, methodological, or arts-based approaches.

If you have questions about the panel topic or proposals, contact Sarah Blake (sblake@yorku.ca).

Please send abstracts that follow the guidelines for individual abstracts (see the [SCS Guidelines for Authors of Abstracts](#)) to Alicia Turner (turnera@yorku.ca) by **Feb. 15, 2026**.

Please ensure that the abstracts are anonymous, with self-identifying information removed. The organizers will review all submissions anonymously, and their decision will be communicated to the authors of abstracts by March 15, 2026.

Works Cited:

- Guerrilla Girls*. (n.d.). *Guerrilla Girls*. Ret. Oct. 28, 2025, from <https://www.guerrillagirls.com>
- Kampen, N. 1975. "Hellenistic Artists: Female." *Archeologia Classica*, 27(1), 9–17.
- Linderski, J. 2003. "The Paintress Calypso and Other Painters in Pliny." *ZPE* 145, 83–96.
- Micheli, M.E. 2024. "Iaia di Cizico, perpetua virgo, pittrice dell'età di Varrone." In *Genio femminile nell'antichità*, ed. S. Bruni & M. A. Funghi. Firenze: Edizioni Polistampa, 2024. 61-79

Murray, S.C., Chorghay, I., Marpherson, J. 2020. "The Dipylon Mistress: Social and Economic Complexity, the Gendering of Craft Production and Early Greek Ceramic Material Culture" *AJA* 124, 215-44.

Squire, M. 2015. "Roman Art and the Artist." In *Companion to Roman Art*, ed. B. Borg. Wiley-Blackwell. 172-194.