



CPW Launches FEAST: A Groundbreaking Art-Science Initiative Exploring the Power of Art to illuminate Issues of Ecology, Health, and Food

Kingston, NY — CPW, in collaboration with artists **Victoria Vesna** and **Ellen K. Levy**, has been hosting **FEAST (Fostering Eco-centric Art & Science Together)**—a series of events that puts the public in conversation with artists and scientists to explore the urgent entanglements of environmental and human health through the power of photographic and media arts. Over the course of three interdisciplinary roundtable discussions including locally sourced food, the aim is to look at how art interrogates the critical intersections of food, climate, and health.

Funded by a seed grant on Climate Change and Human Health from the [Burroughs Wellcome Fund](#), FEAST is both a conceptual framework and a public engagement platform that explores what a desirable ecosystem might look like. Through a series of experiential, photography, and media-driven programs, FEAST brings into focus the interdependencies of food, climate, soil, and health—inviting new ways of framing and responding to our ecological crisis.

At the heart of FEAST's approach is a simple and powerful tool: food. Food not only brings people to the table for nourishment, it stimulates dialogue and creates an inclusive, multisensory atmosphere that has the potential to cultivate creative ideas.

Art, Ecology & the Mission of CPW

FEAST aligns with CPW's mission to support artistic inquiry, professional development, scholarly research, critical dialogue, and local engagement. By spotlighting photography and media art practices centered on environmental and health concerns, FEAST aims to catalyze public awareness and action.

FEAST will convene three interdisciplinary gatherings in the form of **participatory, explorative, round-table discussions** while enjoying locally sourced food. Each event will bring together artists, ecologists, and health scientists to engage in dialogue around pressing and interconnected issues of health, ecology, and collective well-being. Esteemed artists and curators **Marina Zurkow**, **Abigail Simon**, **Kathy High**, and **Linda Weintraub** will shape these experiences.

FEAST I: *We Feast on Crumbs*

Saturday, June 21

Curated by **Marina Zurkow** and **Abigail Simon**

This inaugural FEAST set the tone for the series by asking how we might reimagine our relationship with the world in an era of digital fabulation and ecological collapse. Artists Zurkow and Simon hosted an afternoon round table featuring:

- **Becca Franks**, psycho-ichthyologist
- **Tanya Marcuse**, conceptual photographer
- **Kate Ray**, plant-based chef
- **Sophie Strand**, troubadour-animist

We Feast On Crumbs convenes around the question: How do individuals concerned with resistance and critique imagine a future—or even inhabit the present? Through acts of sharing—images, ideas, histories, strategies and of course food—we come together as co-listeners, co-dreamers. We break bread. Participants include troubadour-animist Sophie Strand; psycho-ichthyologist Becca Franks; photographer Tanya Marcuse; and plant-based chef Kate Ray.

The surface of every photograph reflects the delirium that is human experience. As our visions of the world grow more entangled with the language of digital fabulation, can we rediscover authenticity by embracing the Irrational—and her sister, Chaos—as allies, forces worth protecting? What defines abundance, and when does abundance become excess? Is there pleasure to be found in scarcity? Can we learn to feast on crumbs?

FEAST II: *Let the Plants Carry Us*

Saturday, July 19 (Upstate Art Weekend)

Curated by **Kathy High**

This second installment invited participants to consider **plants, insects, and soil as a means to address climate chaos, improve health, and build resiliency**. Curated by interdisciplinary artist and scholar Kathy High, this FEAST featured a rich mix of creative and ecological voices, including:

- **Xavier Coughlin**, emergency medical doctor, leader of People's Health Sanctuary
- **Ellie Irons**, environmental artist, NATURE Lab co-Director
- **Tara Quakenbush**, bioregional folk herbalist, medicinal herb grower
- **Lisa Schonberg**, environmental artist, scientist, sound and ants
- **Jeni Wightman**, environmental artist, scientist, soil microbes
- **Jude Abu Zaineh**, media artist, food and plant microbes

Many contributors are affiliated with **The Sanctuary for Independent Media**, a Troy-based activist/arts organization co-founded by High.

Participants engaged in a series of hands-on ecological experiences:

- NATURE Lab Herbal Apothecary tea tastings
- Community acupuncture
- Listening to soils, ants, and invertebrates
- “Playing with soils” to discover inner microbes

The gathering concluded with a **sumptuous high tea**. Photographs and creative responses generated during the event were exhibited and discussed at CPW.

FEAST III: Foto Fungal Futurism

Saturday, October 4, 2025, 4:30–7:00 pm

Curated by **Linda Weintraub**

Since its inception, the grand tradition of landscape photography has involved a photographer surveying a scene from a distance in pursuit of aesthetic appeal. Foto Fungal Futurism envisions a new photographic movement, one that is distinguished by the regenerative and cooperative behaviors of fungi. Panelists will present experiential, multi-sensory interactions that reimagine landscape photography as a creative process, a means of communication, and a material process. Their instructive interventions are designed to convey the remarkable ability of fungi to form mutually beneficial relationships. This cooperative model is currently driving innovative solutions to contaminated soils, destabilized climates, waste management, malnourishment, mental fatigue, and so much more. By diverging from the individuality and separatist tactics of landscape photography, fungal futurist photography has the capacity to document, demonstrate, disseminate, and express fungi’s health-inducing powers.

Participants include Linda Weintraub, Eco artist/author; Professor of Photography (SUNY New Paltz) Andrea Frank; mushroom specialist Luke Sarrantonio; culinary fermentation expert Peter Barrett; and ecologist/artist/designer Iain Kerr.

About CPW

Founded in 1977 as the Center for Photography at Woodstock, [CPW](#) is a not-for-profit arts organization with a dual mission: to support artists working in photography and related media, and to engage audiences through creation, discovery, and learning. At the heart of CPW’s mission is programming that is community-based, artist-centered, and collaborative. To foster public conversation around critical issues in photography, CPW offers exhibitions, workshops, artists’ residencies, and access to its Digital Media Lab. In 2022, CPW relocated from Woodstock to Kingston, NY and in January 2025, CPW opened its new headquarters – including a photography museum, and an educational and community center– in a 40,000-square-foot factory building at 25 Dederick Street.

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CPW Kingston

25 Dederick St, Kingston, NY 12401

Gallery Hours: Thursday to Sunday 11am – 5pm

Free admission

For more information about CPW Kingston programs, visit cpw.org

Press contacts

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