

SENSE, SENSES, SENSUALITY

EMBODIED EXPERIENCES IN THE AMERICAS

13TH WORLD CONGRESS of the
INTERNATIONAL AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION



UADY
UNIVERSIDAD
AUTÓNOMA
DE YUCATÁN

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13TH WORLD CONGRESS of the INTERNATIONAL AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

FACULTY of ANTHROPOLOGICAL SCIENCES

AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY of YUCATÁN

MÉRIDA, YUCATÁN, MEXICO

FEBRUARY 17 - 19, 2027

Abstract Submission Deadline: April 30, 2026 (congress@iasa-world.org)

Conference Webpage: iasa-world.org/13th-iasa-world-congress/

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Americas have long been part of cultural traditions invoking the sensorial world. Henry David Thoreau admonished us that “we need pray for no higher heaven than the pure senses can furnish, a *purely sensuous* life” (*A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, 1839: 324). More recently, poets, novelists, anthropologists, communication specialists, cultural studies scholars, linguists, historians, literary critics, philosophers, and sociologists, among others, have appealed to the sensorial in worlds past and present, and of the future fantastic (or the future dreadful, we may say). Through these various disciplinary approaches, there has been an explosion of explorations of the embodiment, through sensorial and sensual experiences, of knowledges, and desires of and in the world. While acknowledging the trans-continental dialogues and conversations behind this new focus on sensuality and the senses, the 13th World Congress of the International American Studies Association (IASA) will center on the Americas’ contributions to this important field of knowledge, research, and imagination. The choice of Merida, a Mexican city known worldwide for its gastronomy, music, beauty, and its people’s *joie de vivre*, is the perfect context for this multidisciplinary exploration of the sensual and the sensorial.



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CONGRESS THEMES

The history of the Americas, from Pre-Columbian to contemporary peoples, has been continuously defined by the senses. The life-worlds of the Americas, like those elsewhere, are experienced and acted upon through the senses, a fact that, thus far, has received relatively little scholarly attention. Peoples of and in the Americas have always made sense of their existence through their physical interaction with their immensely diverse geographies and ever-changing ethnoscaples. The examination, understanding, and analysis of this vast history require collaboration among Americanists across all our disciplines. The 13th World Congress of the International American Studies Association will provide specialists from across the Humanities and the Social Sciences with a propitious occasion for this critical endeavor.

KEY QUESTIONS

- How have different disciplines in the humanities and social sciences addressed the representation of embodied sensual experiences?
- How have the senses been embodied in past and contemporary societies, and through which bodies and through which identity narratives?
- How can we study and write about the politics of the sensorial and the sensuous in the Americas today?
- How have different cultures in the Americas attributed meaning to sensory experience, and what new sensory imaginaries are emerging in the present and near future?
- What methodological and theoretical approaches can be useful in understanding the sociocultural importance of the senses and sensuality?
- How does the embodiment of the senses illustrate intersectional dimensions?
- How is sensuality understood and managed in past and contemporary societies?
- What are the ethical and aesthetic consequences of recognizing the multisensorial and sensual experience of the social and natural world?



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SUGGESTED TOPICS (NOT LIMITING)

- History and archaeology of the human senses and sensual experience.
- Cultural studies and analyses of embodiment and the senses in the contemporary Americas.
- Power relations and the sensorial and sensual.
- Embodiment and performance in their multitude of forms and meanings.
- The senses in food, music, visual arts, and film and media studies.
- Literary, artistic, cultural and popular representations of the body and sensuality.
- The politics of the senses and sensuality.
- The senses of embodiment in past and contemporary Americas.
- The senses of the senses in the humanities.
- Extra senses/cognition/sensations beyond the human five.
- Sensing, sentience, and sensuality beyond the human (including animal, spiritual, and mechanical/artificial/quantum studies and sciences).
- Indigenous and Afro-diasporic epistemologies of sensing, including decolonial perspectives.
- Disability studies, neurodiversity, and alternative sensory orders.
- Digital, algorithmic, and AI-mediated sensoria.
- Ecologies of sensing: climate, multispecies, and more-than-human worlds.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

- Participants will pay the Congress registration fees once their abstracts are accepted for on-site presentation.
- The abstract for each proposed presentation must be 250 words long. The authorship can be individual or collaborative.
- Only one proposal per participant will be accepted. This includes participation in a collaborative presentation.



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- Acceptance will prioritize abstracts that address the themes of the 13th IASA World Congress.
- The abstract will include in sequence:
Title of the Paper, a 250-word summary of the proposed paper, five keywords, name and last name(s) of the author/s, designation and affiliation, a 150-word bio, email ID, ORCID ID, and Applying for the Emory Elliott Award: Yes/No.
- The Congress will be on-site; not hybrid or virtual.
- English is the official language of the Congress.
- There will be no full panel submissions; only individual or collaborative papers.
- The Organizing Committee will arrange the accepted abstracts into sessions of four 20-minute presentations with a discussion slot at the end.
- Early and mid-career participants are eligible to apply for **IASA's Emory Elliott Award** ([Click for more details](#)) for outstanding papers. (Deadlines for Full Paper Submission: TBA)
- Presenters are also encouraged to submit their papers to the upcoming linked issue of the **Review of International American Studies (RIAS)**. ([Click for more details](#)), IASA's SCOPUS-indexed journal published by the University of Silesia Press.

Submit your abstracts to: congress@iasa-world.org

TIMELINE

Deadline for the submission of abstracts: April 30, 2026

Notice of acceptance: July 10, 2026

Deadline for registration: October 1, 2026

Online publication of the program: November 20, 2026

CONGRESS DATES: FEBRUARY 17-19, 2027

Please address any questions and comments to: congress@iasa-world.org



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