

Open call for exhibition proposals 2025/2026

The team at Art Gallery Kazanlak announces a call for proposals for exhibitions to be held on the premises of the institution during the next exhibition period, from April 2025 to March 2026. As part of our endeavour to bring our audience new and different perspectives on the development of contemporary art, this year we are eager to support the implementation of projects dedicated to a topic that looms large and ever more painfully present in our lives: **Bioethics**.

Bioethics is a concept in contemporary human thought popularised by the biochemist Van Rensselaer Potter in 1970, when in a bid to 'call attention to the fact that rapid developments and advances in science have occurred without due attention to values,' he focused on issues of race, gender, human reproduction and human experimentation. This was a time when the atrocities of Nazi concentration camps were increasingly coming to light. The issue of abortion was on the table, and the first contraceptive pill had been invented. Questions of capital punishment and assisted suicide remained unresolved. The world was entering a new era in which life, and more precisely the biological body, was increasingly up for discussion.

Today, a quarter of a century into the new millennium, control over the biological body has reached unforeseen heights. Mothers seek power over the genotype of their babies who are yet to be conceived. Medics build organ farms, a lifeline for those on years-long waiting lists for a transplant. People subject their bodies to cosmetic alteration. The business of silicone and hyaluronic acid is booming. The unborn number ever more, and invitro procedures are increasingly sustaining the continued existence of our species. In the last few years, artificial intelligence has been added to this whole string of phenomena, in the virtual space capable of generating „personas“ who can co-create works of art, species of animal and generate their own news stream, violating not only copyright but all existing ethical norms that have guaranteed us up to this point some semblance of possible coexistence. It is not life, but ethics and morality that are at stake. And all this against a backdrop of bloodshed, wars and a distinct collapse of ideals.

With this, our chosen theme of Bioethics, the team at Art Gallery Kazanlak aims to challenge visual artists who are exploring or inspired by key moral, ethical, cultural, scientific and commercial aspects of the rapidly-changing

world of biotechnology and bioinformatics. How do new discoveries in biology and information sciences encourage us to reexamine questions of autonomy, ownership, communication, geography, identity and artistic practice? What is the artist's role in the tectonic landscape of bioethics? We await your proposals relating to the theme on topics such as the patient-doctor relationship; our awareness of death; assisted reproductive techniques and their application; genetic research and screening; sexuality and gender; ecological ethics; the ethics of clinical trials; the concepts of consent, vulnerability and coercion; phenomena such as disease, treatment and patient care; the ethical treatment of research subjects in clinical trials; the ethical treatment of animals and the world around us. We believe that the themes of bioethics will increasingly find a place in our everyday lives. And a meaningful way to talk about all of this is through the medium of art.

We await your proposal by September 8 (inclusive) as follows:

1. Fill out the online application form that can be found here:
<https://forms.gle/8GJqGvJfau5gorWH6>
2. Email your accompanying visual materials and CV to us at contact@artgallerykazanlak.com

If you need help submitting your documents or answering the questions, please email us at the address above.

Proposals can also be delivered in person to:
Art Gallery Kazanlak, 9 Saints Cyril and Methodius St,
Kazanlak 6100, Bulgaria.