
Performance Knowledges: Transmission, Composition, Praxis

A conference at the University of Malta,
hosted by the School of Performing Arts

in cooperation with the Centre for Dance Research, Coventry
University, UK

11–13 March 2020

Programme



L-Università ta' Malta
School of Performing Arts



Conference Theme

The seventh Annual Conference of the School of Performing Arts (University of Malta) considers knowledge in relation to performing arts practices. More specifically, the conference aims to explore, question, and discuss the different types of 'knowledges' that emerge from or are involved in performing arts practices including creation, production, performance, and spectatorship.

The conference's focus on performing arts practices—dance, theatre, and music—acknowledges an affinity with Performance Studies, which originated in American universities as a new 'knowledge formation' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1999) with the aim to integrate performance into interdisciplinary scholarship and offer a counterbalance to the emphasis on texts and literature within cultural studies.

The aim of Performance Knowledges is to offer an opportunity to **refresh** this discussion through a focus on performing arts from the perspectives of *transmission, composition, and praxis*. This is a chance to include research cultures working at the borderline with the social and cognitive sciences, where the vantage point of the performing arts should provoke a robust discussion of embodied and relational forms of knowledge. It also encourages participants to rethink how in composition and transmission processes knowledge is diversified into different types, including tacit knowledge—with emphasis on process and experience (Polanyi 1958), addressing also the question of skill.

Performance Knowledges explores themes across a number of areas that address the multifaceted understandings of knowledge as emergent in theatre, dance, and music, including but not limited to:

- the artist's perspective on languaging and documenting practices
- embodied cognition and moving beyond dualism in the practice of the performing arts
- problematising hegemonic knowledges, implications for performing arts
- training processes and compositional strategies as intangible heritage
- practice turn in contemporary theory, communities and ecologies of practice
- habits, skills and contexts for tacit knowledge acquisition and transmission
- perspectives on and from diverse atypical modes and mixed abilities
- historical, analytical, and theoretical understandings of embodiment in the performing arts
- case studies of creators, performers, spectators, and other agents of performance
- technologisation and the impact of digitisation on performance practices
- translation, transformation and/or appropriation of performance forms

Conference Convenors:

Dr Lucía Piquero

Head of Department of Dance Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

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Prof. Scott deLahunta

Professor of Dance at the Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University UK

Co-Director Motion Bank at Hochschule Mainz University of Applied Sciences

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Parallel Activities

***Me, My Selves & I* – School of Performing Arts Collective Performance**

Directed by Florinda Camilleri and Niels Plotard

12, 13, 14 March 2020 (19:00); UM Valetta Campus Theatre.

Booking and info: stefan.sacco@um.edu.mt

Me, My Selves, & I is a passage through an ordinary day in Malta as a series of scenes relating to different human beings. The inner world of each human is brought to life on stage, showing the complex (or sometimes simple) layers of thoughts, feelings and emotions that may arise in each context. Can the awareness of these diverse passengers somehow unite us?

'so many selves... is a [hu]man', writes e.e.cummings, highlighting the radical heterogeneity of our selves, the multivalent system of tensions alive in all of us - a selfhood that never amalgamates into wholeness but rather resigns to complexity. A sense of isolation often stems from this complexity, with inner voices telling us tales of separation and loneliness, making us feel 'different' to everyone else, alone in our plight. By shining a light on these layers, perhaps we may recognise that they exist in all of us, and in fact, *'never is most lonely [hu]man alone,'* as in our self we have our selves, and through our selves, we have each other.

Audit Traces

As we all engage in the activities of the conference, an 'audit traces' group will be following events, gathering impressions and insights with the view to sharing them at the end of the conference. Working with Scott deLahunta, James Leach, and Paula Guzzanti, a group of dance, music, and theatre students of the School of Performing Arts, at the University of Malta will attune their senses to noticing their experiencing of being in and in-between the conference activities. The aim of the experiment is to collate an alternative form of collective register of the conference that may bring attention to the subtle dynamics of coming together. Auditing the affective traces of engaging intellectually in a theme that matters to us is offered as a way to acknowledge the elusive resonances that situate the learning within our bodies.

ŽfinMalta Visit

ŽfinMalta was established in 2014 as Malta's national dance company. Under the direction of artistic director Paolo Mangiola, ŽfinMalta commissions a wide range of choreographers and artists to develop new works for the company of 10 dancers. The most recent, which premiered on 1 February 2020, was *Threaded Fine* by choreographer and researcher Rosemary Lee. The documentation of the creation of *Threaded Fine* will be presented on Panel 18: *Transmission & Devising* by Lee and fellow dance researcher Scott deLahunta. Currently, the Romanian choreographer, Sergiu Matis is developing a new piece of choreography with the company which will premiere in early April. This means they are approximately half-way through making the work and have invited the conference to an open studio session to observe and discuss the process so far on Thursday, 11 March, from 5:30 to 6:30pm. Due to the size of the studio, this session is for a limited number of 25 people, who will have to sign up at the registration desk, and will be given a place on a first come basis. The session will be facilitated by Scott deLahunta.

Installations/Performances

- ***EutopiaDystopia* | Inga Gerner Nielsen (ongoing, 12th and 13th)**
Ground Floor Meeting Rooms Corridor

EutopiaDystopia, an interactive performance installation which produces a somatic archive of stories told by participating audiences. The immersive performance method used in *EutopiaDystopia* is based on a qualitative phenomenological interview technique previously developed to research the audience's experience in interactive performance installations. It draws on sense memory techniques to activate the tacit knowledge, actualizing the lived experience of a past event in the interview. In *EutopiaDystopia* the performers use this technique to immerse the audience into re-experiencing a personal memory from their life – and to give us detailed oral descriptions of it. Some stories are written down and placed sculpturally on the floor of the installation. Others we embody in a choreography of movements. When reaching its limits, language may break into metaphor or physical gestures' – and the performance installation as a site for research renders these modes of expressions possible.

- ***(Un)touched* | Angela Woodhouse & Nathaniel Rackowe (Performances 12th and 13th see below for times)**
Ground Floor Meeting Room 5

(Un)touched explores simultaneous experiences (and contradictions) of intimacy and distance. *(Un)touched* presents a glass platform onto which the viewers are invited to walk or place themselves. Submerged beneath are two performers, whose presence is revealed depending on the shifting light contained as part of the structure. The work takes inspiration from South Korean artist Do-Ho Suh's piece 'Floor' (1997) where the visitor is invited to walk on a glass surface under which there are many small figures. This act highlights a dialectic between abused power and the power of human collective action. We re-imagine this dialogue as a live event where the vulnerability of the skin's surface elevates the body, and where a sense of precariousness is derived from the situation in which all those present find themselves. The reality of separation suggests a touch that has no consequences, and yet the act of touch or walking over the surface of a body triggers affecting notions of power, control, and moral (un)certainty. Layers of meaning are interwoven with the ethics implicit in the viewers' positioning and construction of images that they themselves collaborate in making. These harbour the sense of bodies as lost or archived under the surface of the glass made more complex as the light sequence plays on the materiality of the glass in respect of reflection and transparency, switching attention from the bodies revealed to our bodies reflected back.

- ***Nómadas II* | Henry Daniel (ongoing)**
Level One Corridor

The feminist scholar Rosi Braidotti once wrote that the nomadism she defended as a theoretical option was also an existential condition that translated into a style of thinking and a mode of writing (Braidotti, 2011:24). As a choreographer/artist and scholar, my concept of nomadism is expressed as a multidirectional movement of the material body in space/time as that body seeks to fulfil its own becoming. In other words, I see choreography and the moving human body as thought unfolding, with the lived experience of that unfolding being crucial to the

definition of an individual self. My paper and its accompanying audio/visual installation *Nómadas II* belong within a multi-year research project *Contemporary Nomads* (2017-2021), which engages with these ideas. The background claims of this research is that the framing and overt compartmentalization of knowledge that a Western European Enlightenment agenda imposed on the knowledge acquisition process marginalized large groups of 'others' (Dussel, 1995, 1996), with these institutional processes still presenting serious challenges to a redefinition of the roles that these 'others' play in contemporary neo-liberal societies (Nolan & Knowles, 2016). Thus, what began with the displacement and dislocation as a statement of position—where certain bodies have had to perform their way through a range of environmental, doctrinal, geo-political, socio-economic and psychological frameworks that 'colonising processes' have thrown at them, is presented here as an attempt to claim the knowledge that is in those bodies and their experiences in the spaces that they currently occupy, or have occupied in the past.

Programme

WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH

8:00-9:00 Registration

9:00-9:10 Opening and Welcome

9:10-10:30 **Keynote Speech** (Venue: Aula Magna Level 1)

Professor Bruce McConachie, University of Pittsburg

Using the Paradigm of Coevolution to Consider the Epistemological Basis for Performance Knowledges

Chair: Mario Frendo, Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

10:30-11:00 **Coffee Break** (Level 1 Corridor)

11:00-12:30 Parallel Panels 1-2

Panel 1: Embodied Cognition (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 3)

Chair: Clive Zammit – Department of Cognitive Sciences, Faculty of Media and Knowledge Sciences (MaKS), University of Malta

Vicky Fisher – Radboud University Nijmegen/Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics

The Concentric Circles Model – a tool for unpeeling meaning in embodied metaphors

Christian Kronsted – Department of Philosophy, University of Memphis

Dances and Affordances: The Relationship Between Dance Training and Conceptual Problem Solving

Inga Gerner Nielsen – Independent artist and scholar

The Interview as Convergent Point - between Qualitative Research and Performance Art

Panel 2: Somatics & Technology (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 4)

Chair: Scott deLahunta – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University

Magdalena Chowaniec – University of Music and Performing Arts Graz

Sensing the future: the somatic bodies

Jenny Roche – Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick & Ruth Gibson –

Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University (Remote Presentation)

Expanded Fields: capturing experiential states in contemporary dance making

Zjana Muraro – Independent Artist and Scholar

Improvisation, Avatars and New Media

12:30-13:30 Lunch (check conference pack for recommendations)

13:30-15:00 Parallel Panels 3-5

Panel 3: Composing & Listening (Venue: Aula Magna Level 1)

Chair: Philip Ciantar, Department of Music Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

Gisa Jaehnichen – Shanghai Conservatory of Music

Yandun Dagu Drumming in the Guangxi Autonomous Region of China as an Example of Itemized Knowledge

Vincent Meelberg – Department of Modern Languages and Cultures, Radboud University Nijmegen

Musical Composition as Sonic Thinking

Albert Pace – Department of Music Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

The Process of Musical Composition: Engaging With Poetic Texts

Panel 4: Translation (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 3)

Chair: Marie-Louise Crawley – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University

Rina Badash (Remote Presentation)

A Continuous flow between multiple forms of knowledge

Frank Geßner – Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf

TESTeLAB & Guests: Animating Knowledge

Yonit Kosovske – Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick (Remote Presentation)

Staging Lieder: Serious Art or Spectacle?

Panel 5: Context & Relations (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 4)

Chair: Frank Camilleri – Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

Jasper Delbecke – Ghent University

The lecture performance as essayistic practice

Vicky Hunter – University of Chichester

Overworlds and Underworlds: Excavating knowledge through site-based dance practice

Betina Panagiotara – Independent Scholar

Thinking, Working & Writing With

15:00-15:30 Coffee (Level 1 Corridor)

15:30-17:00 Parallel Panels 6-7

Panel 6: Alliances & Actions (Venue: Aula Magna Level 1)

Chair: Stefan Aquilina – Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

Jon Irigoyen – School of Arts, Design and Architecture, Aalto University

What can a body do

Vicki Ann Cremona & Marco Galea – Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta, Malta

What does the amateur theatre-maker know? The Maltese Experience

Barbara Kremser – Art University Linz

The dumplings are coming

Panel 7: Perform(er) Embodiment (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 3)

Chair: James Corby – Department of English, University of Malta

Frank Camilleri – Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

The 3As of Bodyworld: Conceptualising Performer Embodiment

David dos Santos – University of Lisbon

From Performing Arts Knowledge to the Emergence of Embodied Creativity

17:30 – 19:30 Book Launch and Reception (Venue: Valletta Contemporary Gallery)

Stefan Aquilina – Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

Modern Theatre in Russia: Tradition Building and Transmission Processes

Marco Galea - Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta; and

Szabolcs Musca – Centre for Theatre Research (CET), University of Lisbon (eds)

Redefining Theatre Communities. International Perspectives on Community-Conscious Theatre-Making.

Kathrina Farrugia-Kriel – Royal Academy of Dance, UK

Princess Poutiatine and the Art of Ballet in Malta.

Installations/performances:

Nómadas II | Henry Daniel (ongoing)

THURSDAY 12 MARCH

9:00-10:30 Keynote Speech (Venue: Aula Magna Level 1)

Professor Lynette Goddard, Royal Holloway, University of London
Remembering Transatlantic Voyages and Slavery's Afterlife in Black Women's Solo Performance

Chair: Stefan Aquilina – Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

10:30-11:00 Coffee Break (Level 1 Corridor)

11:00-12:30 Parallel Panels 8-10

Panel 8: Documentation & Data (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 3)

Chair: Sarah Whatley – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University

Javier R. Casado – Independent Artist and Scholar
In and Out of Sight

Simon Ellis – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University
Corporeal epistemics

Reka Polonyi – University of Manchester
Questioning knowledge production in socially engaged theatre practice: Who it's for, and What we do with it

Panel 9: Case Studies Nr. 1 (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 4)

Chair: Vicky Hunter – University of Chichester

Jo Butterworth – University of Malta & Kevin Finnan – University of Warwick
A Question of Skill: a case study of the dance-circus production methods of Motionhouse

Jessie Eggers – Independent Artist and Scholar
This Body I Know: Embodiment, Knowledge Practices, and Performativity

Inga Romantsova – University of Newcastle, Australia (Remote Presentation)
Crossing The Quince, the Practice-led Research

Panel 10: Physical Thinking (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 6)

Chair: Frank Camilleri – Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

Carla Fernandes – ICNOVA, FCSH, Universidade Nova de Lisboa (Remote Presentation)
Documenting and visualizing contemporary dance in virtual reality

Letizia Gioia Monda – Department of History Anthropology Religions Art Performance of Sapienza University of Rome (Remote Presentation)
Videodance: an Object for the Transmission of Choreographic Practices. A Study from the Archive of Coreografo Elettronico International Videodance Festival

Zhi Xu – Brunel University London (Remote Presentation)
Cultural Identity and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Yangge in Techno-Choreography

12:30-13:30 Lunch (check conference pack for recommendations)

13:30-15:00 Parallel Panels 11-13

Panel 11: Transformation(s) (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 3)

Chair: Marco Galea – Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

Gaia Blandina – Department of Music, University of York (Remote Presentation)
Collages; composing archives, composing percepts

Paula Guzzanti – Department of Dance Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta
Collaborative Improvisation: a process of doing and engaging with the doing of others

Chinthaka Meddegoda – University of Visual and Performing Arts in Colombo (Poster Presentation)
Hierarchies of Drumming in Sri Lanka

Panel 12: Other knowledges (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 4)

Chair: Vicki Ann Cremona – Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta, Malta

Henry Daniel – Simon Fraser University
Movement as Thought Unfolding

Gwendolin Lehnerer – University of Salzburg/Mozarteum (Remote Presentation)
The curator as an agent of knowledge - Curating the performance arts

Sarah Whatley – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University
Dance, Disability and Dichotomies of Normalisation: Candoco on 'Strictly'

Panel 13: Practice Theory (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 6)

Chair: Michael Zammit – Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Malta

Elia Moretti – Department of Musicology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University
The analogy between listening and understanding the relations between the subjects

Jonas Rutgeerts – Cultural Studies, K U Leuven
Dance-theory: staging the encounter

Clio Unger – The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama
Contemporary Lecture Performances as Intellectual Agitation

15:00-15:30 Coffee (Level 1 Corridor)

15:30-17:00 Parallel Panels 14 - 16

Panel 14: Case Studies Nr. 2 (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 3)

Chair: Lucía Piquero – Department of Dance Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

Martin Devek – Department of Music, Dublin City University

Improviser's kinds of knowing: Generating and sharing knowledge

Len McCaffer – University of West of Scotland

What is the Gaiety Theatre to the People of Ayr: Collecting, Curating and Performing Intangible Cultural Heritage

Per Roar – Oslo National Academy of the Arts

Stumbling Matters

Panel 15: Revise/ Reimagine (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 4)

Chair: Simon Ellis – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University

Marie-Louise Crawley – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University (Remote Presentation)

Radical Archaeology: What can Dance Practice offer Classical Scholarship?

Mario Frendo – Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

Nietzsche and His Concept of The Dithyrambic Dramatist

Heike Salzer – Dance Department, Roehampton University, Deborah Williams – Department of Dance Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta, Ingi Jensson – NARC Computer Game Studio & Zakarías Gunnarsson – NARC Computer Game Studio

From Physical Sensation to Digital Presentation: Exploring Interdisciplinary World Building

Panel 16: Vocalisation(s) (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 6)

Chair: TBC

Ardian Ahmedaja – University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna

Tacit knowledge of long-time singing partners

Francesco Venturi – Kingston University, London (Remote Presentation)

Performing Subjectivity with Extreme Vocal Techniques

Installations/performances

EutopiaDystopia | Inga Gerner Nielsen (ongoing)

(Un)touched | Angela Woodhouse & Nathaniel Rackowe (12:40, 13:10, 15:10, 15:40, 16:10, 17:10)

Nómadas II | Henry Daniel (ongoing)

17:30-18:30: ŻfinMalta Studio visit (sign up at the registration desk)

19:00 UM SPA Collective Performance. Valletta Campus Theatre

FRIDAY 13 MARCH

9:00-10:15 Keynote Speech (Venue: Aula Magna Level 1)

Professor Maaike Bleeker – Utrecht University
Transmission, Technogenesis and Techniques of Abstraction.

Chair: Sarah Whatley – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University

10:30-11:00 Coffee (Level 1 Corridor)

11:00-12:30 Parallel Panels 17-18

Panel 17: Transmission (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 3)

Chair: Karen Wood – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University

Joséphine A. Garibaldi & Paul Zmolek – Callous Physical Theatre (Remote Presentation)
Dialogic Devising: Strategies of Playful Interrogation

Rosemary Lee & Scott deLahunta – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University
Threaded Fine Documentation Project

Cross Pollination: Marije Nie, Adriana La Selva & Patrick Campbell – Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium (NTL)
Expanded Laboratory: a Praxis In-Between Practices

Panel 18: Impact (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 4)

Chair: Gillian Martin – Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, University of Malta

Sirko Knüpfer – Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf
Lost in Formation

Ielizaveta Oliinyk – University of Salzburg/Mozarteum
The social Relevance of Ukrainian Documentary Theatre

12:30-13:30 Lunch (check conference pack for recommendations)

13:30-15:00 Parallel Panels 19-20

Panel 19: Experience (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 3)

Chair: Simon Ellis – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University

Sergei Panov – National University of Science and Technology MISiS, Moscow
Goethe and Stanislavsky: experiment, theatrical metaphor, supposed circumstances

Mandy Rogerson – Newcastle College University Centre
The phenomenology of choreography; exploring extra-semiotic modes of meaning making through the sensory / emotive feedback loop

Chiara Minoccheri – University of Toulouse 2 Jean Jaurès (Poster Presentation)
Insights into the conceptualization of dance movements through a semantic analysis of choreographers' instructions for body parts motion

Panel 20: Case Studies Nr. 3 (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 4)

Chair: Deborah Williams – Department of Dance Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

James Martin Charlton – Department of Media, Middlesex University (Remote Presentation)
Farms, Libraries and Adventure Playground visions of Orwell, Hardie and Carroll: process and performance knowledge created through James Martin Charlton's productions of James Kenworth's plays in Newham

Jörgen Dahlqvist – Malmö Theatre Academy, and Fredrik Haller – Performance Arts Collective Teatr Weimar (Remote Presentation)
What constitutes a meeting? – artistic meaning-making in theatre through documentary field work

Tero Hytönen – Independent Artist and Scholar
Performing Perception

15:00-15:30 Coffee (Level 1 Corridor)

15:30-17:00 Parallel Panels 21-22

Panel 21: Tap Dance Epistemologies (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 3)

Chair: Rosemary Lee – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University

Jessica Murray – DeMontfort University (Remote Presentation)
Creating an Improvisation Dramaturgy for Rhythm Tap: Interdisciplinary models and contexts.

Annette Walker – Independent Artist and Scholar
Shifting Perspectives of Tap Dance: Improvisation as performance

Karen Wood – Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University, and Sally Crawford-Shepherd – Addict Dance Academy
Evolving Rhythms: Performance Identities as Legacy and Pedagogy as Future of Tap Dance

Panel 22: Teaching & Learning (Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room 4)

Chair: Deborah Williams – Department of Dance Studies, School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

Susie Crow – Ballet in Small Spaces (BiSS)/University of Roehampton
"We can know more than we can tell": transmitting knowledge in the ballet class

Awelani Moyo – Independent Artist and Scholar
Towards an embodied approach to teaching African Theatre in schools

Britta Wenn – School for Creative Arts and Industries, Canterbury Christ Church University
Exploring the Construct of Emotional Intelligence for Effective Teaching and Learning within Dance Education

17:00-17:30 Conclusion (Venue: Aula Magna Level 1)

Final discussion:

Audit Traces Team Presentation, moderated by James Leach

Closing of Conference, moderated by Professor Vicki Ann Cremona, Chair of the School of Performing Arts, University of Malta

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