Engaging the Contemporary 2026: Experiences of Life and Death

Conference Programme

Wednesday 18 November		
9.00-9.15	**Convener's Welcome Address (Aula Prima)** Claude Mangion, Head of Department Niki Young, Lecturer	
9.15-10.30	**Keynote Speech** Keith Crome Manchester Metropolitan University	
10.30-11.00	Coffee Break	
11.00-12.30	Panel 1 (Aula Prima) Chair: Enrico Schiró	Panel 2 (Lecture room 201) Chair: Keith Pisani
	Sahand Ashrafian Bonab *Illness, Finitude and the Resilience of the Body*	**Matthew Barnard** *Is Artificial Intelligence an Artificial life?*
	Nga Chun Josh Law *Habit in Later Life Repetition without Stagnation in Beauvoir's Old Age*	**David Deamer** *Nietzsche's 'Comedy of Existence' and Monty Python's* The Meaning of Life
	Kathryn Ruthven Body *Risky bodies: Resilience amongst extremely clinically vulnerable (CEV) populations during the COVID-19 pandemic*	**Dalia Staponkutė** *Quoted Lives, Living Deaths: Under the Star of Malta—the Afterlife of Plot in Marina Tsvetaeva*
12.30-14.30	Lunch	
14.30-16.00	Panel 3 (Aula Prima) Chair: David Roden	Panel 4 (Lecture Room 201) Chair: Robert Farrugia
	Minvydas Simanaitis *"And to Eat a Fruit is to Know its Meaning": Death as Formal Indication*	**Stacey Mitchell** *Our Interconnected Ecological Existence, and Reflections on the Approaches of Eco-chaplaincy and Eco-ontology*
	Kalin Pak *The Ontology of Care in Eco-Death Practices*	**Sophie Ingle** *Two Halves of a Walnut: Benjamin, Hegel, Death and the Living Aftermath of Tragedy in Hamnet*
	Adam Buben *The Personhood of the Digital Dead:*	**Susana Viegas** *Genre After Death: Testament-Films*

	Postmortem Human Trafficking and Prostitution Regulation	

Thursday 19 November		
9.00-10.30	Panel 5 **(Aula Prima)** Chair: Enrico Schiró	Panel 6 (Lecture room 201) Chair: Keith Pisani
	Artur R. Boelderl *"There Must Be More to Life Than … Life?" Ricœur, Derrida, and Bataille on Life and Death*	**Adrian Camilleri Chiaro** *The Copycat Defence. Rethinking AI art*
	David Vella *The Neoliberal Self In Ruins: Surrender and the Phenomenology of Exhaustion*	**Kurt Zammit** *Dying for the Highest Good*
	Martina Volarevic *Dasein's Listening to Death*	**Francesco Frendo** *Death, The Symbolic, and Death's Symbolic*
10.30-11.00	Coffee Break	
11-13.00	Panel 7 **(Aula Prima)** Chair: Dalia Staponkutė	Panel 8 (Lecture room 201) Chair: Niki Young
	Daniel Guy Baldwin *I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream: The Prudential Case for Euthanasia, Assisted Dying, and Suicide*	**Jesse Germans** *Mourning Animals*
	Kristina Simanaitė *The Spectrum of Death in Psychosis: Phenomenological Approach*	**Urška Jenčič** *Fictions of Liveness: Taxidermy, Objectification, and the Politics of Representing Animals*
	Nana Kawamura *Resisting Suicidism: Through the Communication of Lived Experience*	**Amanda Rosa Pérez Morales** *Virophilia: Disease as Excess of Life in BioArt*
	Natasha Galea *Dying Before Death: Simone de Beauvoir and the Social Death of Ageing*	**Emily Cogburn** *Ecofeminist ontology: Val Plumwood, Graham Harman, and an Object Oriented Ontology Understanding of Humans and Nature*
13.00-14.30	Lunch	
14.30-16.00	Panel 9 **(Aula Prima)** Chair: David Roden	Panel 10 (Lecture room 201) Chair: Adrian Camilleri Chiaro

	Márk Horváth & Ádám Lovász *Nonhumanism, Extinction, and the Fossilized Future-Present: Meillassoux, Colebrook and Absentological Temporality*	**Junko Matsuzaki Carreira** *Material Culture and Cross-Cultural Encounter in Nanban Japan: Rethinking Life and Death through Ceramics and Tea Practices*
	Julie Reshe *Being-With-Towards-Death: Pregnancy and the Death Drive*	**Ahmet Uruk** *Overlapping of Life and Death as the Technological Uncanny: Posthuman Gothic in Don DeLillo's The Body Artist*
	Drew M. Dalton *The Light of the Living Dead: A Biophysical Critique of Heidegger's Phenomenology*	**Mark Fedyk & Mark Lazenby** *Dying, Caring, and Intentionality*

Friday 20 November		
9.00-10.30	Panel 11 **(Aula Prima)** Chair: Ana Ilievska	Panel 12 (Lecture room 201) Chair: Amanda Rosa Pérez Morales
	Irene Olivero *Artificial Wombs and Digital Afterlives: Ethically Controversial Artifacts and the Future of the Human*	**Stefano Oliva** *Decreation and the Death Drive: Insights from Artistic Practice*
	Olivia Barbaro *Reconsidering Death: Griefbots and the Extension of Life*	**Stefano Pavarini** *Heidegger, Benjamin and the Meaning of Death*
	Nataliya Atanasova *No Body to Mourn: The Poor Image and its Afterlives*	**Giovanni Temporin** *The Irrelevance of Our Fate: Future and Immanence in Contemporary Materialism*
10.30-11.00	Coffee Break	
11-13.00	Panel 13 **(Aula Prima)** Chair: Enrico Schiró	Panel 14 (Lecture room 201) Chair: Robert Farrugia
	Katarzyna Gurczyńska-Sady *Speaking to the Dead: Dialogue Beyond Presence*	**David Roden** *Xenopoetics and the Necroconcept*
	Hakan Atay *Lives, All Lives: A Literary-Metaphysical Inquiry*	**Ana Ilievska** *Kill Bill: Documentality, Deletion, and the Body as Last Document*

	Julian Galea *The Ontological Insecurity of Remission - Narrative Conflicts Between Winning and Watchfulness*	**Martin E. Rosenberg** *Zen Paradox, Contradiction, and Arakawa and Gins' Making Dying Illegal (2006)*
	Pierre Muscat *Memory, Form, and Life*	**Marleen van Haalen** *Inner sense of gender: an ontological account of gender identity oppression*
13.00-15.00	Lunch	
15.00-16.30	Panel 15 **(Aula Prima)** Chair: Martin E. Rosenberg	Panel 16 (Lecture room 201) Chair: Emily Cogburn
	Kiki Berk *Why Extinction Threatens Present Meaning*	**Christian J. Feldbacher-Escamilla** *Bringing Forgotten Dead Back to Life. Death, continuity, and historical mediation*
	Luke Joseph Buhagiar & Matthew Pulis *Game Over? Meaning(s) of Life at the End of Life*	**Luciana Taddei & Antonio Albanese** *After Prometheus: Algorithmic Power, Residual Life, and the Fate of the Human*
	Helen Upfield *Choreographies of Everyday Living: Quotidian Belongings in the Workplace*	**Angela Bonett** *On the Borders of Death*
16.30-16.45	**Concluding Remarks (Aula Prima)** Claude Mangion, Head of Department, University of Malta	