



L-Università ta' Malta  
School of Performing Arts



L-Università ta' Malta  
Faculty of Information &  
Communication Technology

Department  
of Artificial  
Intelligence

# Vanishing Acts: Artificial Intelligence, Performative Knowledge, Sustainable Memory 2026

## Conference Programme

25, 26, 27 & 28 March 2026

Valletta Campus, Old University Building, Valletta

Malta International Contemporary Art Space (MICAS), Saturday 28th only

Organised by: School of Performing Arts, University of Malta (UM) in collaboration with the Department of Artificial Intelligence, Faculty of Information & Communication Technology (UM) and Malta International Contemporary Art Space (MICAS). This is also in partnership with Intellect Books.

We would also like to thank all our sponsors: Arts Council Malta, Creative Europe Desk Malta, Culture Venture, Malta Digital Innovation Authority (MDIA), and Tech.MT.



## CONFERENCE THEME

### **Vanishing Acts: AI, Performative Knowledge, Sustainable Memory**

In an era when Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming the ways we create, perform, and preserve, the question of what is being (re)written, entangled, or quietly effaced becomes urgent. How might we critically engage with AI-driven performance, particularly in contexts where practices and methods may be altered or erased? This conference, titled ‘Vanishing Acts: AI, Performative Knowledge & Sustainable Memory’, explores the intersection of AI, sustainability, and the shifting terrain of embodied knowledge, cultural memory, and archival practices.

As AI continues to influence the performing arts, it presents challenges and fears for artists, performers, and audiences alike. AI-driven systems are often seen as threatening the authenticity of performance by erasing the human element in the creative process. The encounter between AI technology and human agency - in choreographic creation, music composition, and storytelling - poses significant ethical questions about authorship, artistic integrity, creative ownership and the shifting locus of agency in co-creative entanglements with nonhuman systems. Additionally, there are concerns that AI could perpetuate cultural biases and representational gaps, thus reinforcing existing social inequalities. As AI technologies continue to evolve, they also raise questions about the sustainability of digital and AI-driven practices in the arts with regard to the ecological impact of AI systems in performance.

Furthermore, the role of AI in shaping memory - both cultural and personal - introduces additional layers of complexity. The challenge of preserving embodied knowledge and cultural memory in the face of machine-learning algorithms that generate, modify, and automate creative practices need to be confronted. How can artists, scholars, and researchers trace a path between lived experiences and historical practices, and the creative opportunities made possible by AI through data-driven narratives? This interdisciplinary conference seeks to provide a platform to confront and discuss the new approaches to thinking and creativity that involve AI in the performing arts (dance, theatre, music).

Conference Conveners:

Prof. Vicki Ann Cremona  
Professor, Department of Theatre Studies, School of Performing Arts  
[vicki.cremona@um.edu.mt](mailto:vicki.cremona@um.edu.mt)

Dr. Margaret Jean Westby  
Head of Department and Lecturer, Department of Dance Studies, School of Performing Arts  
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Dr. Jeremy Coleman  
Senior Lecturer, Department of Music Studies, School of Performing Arts  
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## **Programme Notes**

Times are in CET (GMT+1)

All virtual presenters are indicated and the Zoom rooms accessible to all.

Unless indicated, individual papers will be 15 - 20 minutes. Please note that some panels are a mix of individual/collaborative papers and practice-based presentations.

Zoom links will be sent via email to everyone registered for the conference.

Notes on Room Allocation:

We have access to Meeting Rooms 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, the Vault, Valletta Campus Theatre (VCT), and backstage Studio

All plenary sessions take place in VCT.

All other sessions have the room allocation written down next to the title.

Notes of Film Showings:

Films that were submitted to this conference will be shown on loop in Meeting Room 2 from 11:00 - 16:00 across all three days of the conference. There is a booklet that details the names and abstracts of all films. There will be an additional program online of all this information.

There will also be poster presentations on display.

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## WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH 2026

### 08:30 – 09:00 | Registration

### 09:00 – 09:30 | Opening Speeches (Valletta Campus Theatre [VCT])

- Welcome by Conference Conveners & Representatives from the School of Performing Arts and Department of Artificial Intelligence.

### 09:30 – 10:30 | KEYNOTE SPEECH 1 (Venue: VCT)

- **Prof. Susan Kozel (Malmö University, Sweden)**
  - AI for AI: Anteriority and Interiority as a Response to AI-inflected Dance
- **Moderator:** Dr. Margaret Westby

### 10:30 – 11:00 | Coffee Break

### 11:00 – 12:30 | PARALLEL SESSION 1

- **Panel A: Ecological Intelligences & The Biosphere (Meeting Room 4)**
  - **Hanna Zhu (virtual):** ‘Watering the Digital Grove: Embodied Diaries of an Artist-AI Symbiosis’
  - **Iipo Jauhiainen:** ‘On Geomusical Intelligence’
  - **Nicholas Arnold:** “‘Methinks ’Tis Like A Whale”: AI and Performance “Reality””  
Moderator: Veronique Vella
- **Panel B: The Politics of Algorithms (Meeting Room 5)**
  - **Simone Dei Pieri:** ‘Ghosts in the Chamber: Reimagining Legislative Agency Through AI-Supported Deliberation’
  - **Rhiannon Bettivia & Elizabeth Stainforth:** ‘Accounting for AI: The Performance of Reality and Reliability in AI Summaries’
  - **Dan Lundberg:** ‘Control Crises’  
Moderator: Vanessa Camilleri
- **Panel C: Composing and Devising in Music and Theatre (Meeting Room 6)**
  - **Roberto Fausti:** ‘Cluster Analysis and the Reconfiguration of Sonic Material in Electroacoustic Composition’
  - **Ilja Mirsky:** ‘Ephemeral Machines: Staging and Data Acquisition as Counter-Directional Processes of Transformation in Theatre and AI’
  - **Ralph Klewitz:** ‘Great Work: An Entangled Artwork and Research Methodology on AI, Vanishing Acts, and Memory’  
Moderator: Stefan Aquilina

### 12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch

### 13:30 – 14:00 - Information Session: Intellect Books (Venue: VCT)

### 14:00 – 15:30 - PARALLEL SESSION 2

- **Panel D: Archiving the Ephemeral (Meeting Room 4)**
  - **Giordana Patumi:** ‘Reimagining Dance Memory: AI, Historiography, and the Shifting Roles of Embodied Archives’
  - **Emanuele Demartis:** ‘Music and Artificial Intelligence: Towards a New Era of Musicological Research’

- **Tina Lorenz:** ‘Spiritus Ex Machina: Integration of AI into Contemporary Theatre Through the Lens of the Historical Avant-garde’  
Moderator: Mario Frendo
- **Panel E: School of Performing Arts (UM) Book Publications Session (Meeting Room 5)**
  - **Jo Butterworth and Vicky Hunter,** *Contemporary Choreography: A Critical Reader, 3rd Edition* (Routledge)
  - **Stefan Aquilina,** *Performing Academia: Building a Successful University Career* (Bloomsbury)
  - **Frank Camilleri,** *Milestones in Actor Training* (Routledge, 2026), Edited By Paul Allain, Frank Camilleri
- **Panel F: AI, Film, and Playwriting (Meeting Room 6)**
  - **Adnan Hadziselimovic:** ‘Residual Intelligence: Traces of Automation in Post-AI Worlds’
  - **Paul C. Castagno:** ‘The Playwriting Chatbot as “Coach”: Generating AI-Enhanced Playwriting Workshops via Microsoft Azure’
  - **Eleni Timplalexi & Charalampos Rizopoulos (virtual):** ‘The Turing Test as a (Puppet) Theatre Performance’  
Moderator:

**15:30 – 16:00| Coffee Break**

**16:00 – 17:30 | PARALLEL SESSION 3**

- **Panel G: Spatial Dramaturgies & Extended Realities (Meeting Room 4)**
  - **Shane Pike:** ‘Augmented Dimensions: AI and AR as Co-Creators of Performative Space and Memory’
  - **Marie-Claude Poulin:** ‘Navigating Rhizomatic Trajectories and Framing Configurations in Mixed-Reality Performance’
  - **Veronika Reutz Drobnić & Julian Brandhofer:** ‘Negotiating Shared Agency: *A Duet of Intelligences* for Human-AI Co-Creation in Live Piano Performance’  
Moderator: Matthew Montebello
- **Panel H: Posthuman Bodies & Resistance (Meeting Room 5)**
  - **Tina Escaja:** ‘Intersecting AI and Theatre: The Case of *Guts For Lunch*’
  - **Peter Beyls:** ‘Material Matters: From Interaction to Entanglement’
  - **Elena Peytchinska:** ‘Trans-Corporeal Environments: Posthuman Embodiment in Human-AI Performance Practice’  
Moderator: Frank Camilleri
- **Panel I: WORKSHOP: Yoryos Styl: ARTificial: From Fear to Co-Creation – Practical Methods for AI in Performance (Meeting Room 6)**

**17:30- 18:00 | SESSION 4 - FIREPIT**

- **Roundtable: Creative Practice in an Algorithmic World: An Open Dialogue**
  - **Prof. Vanessa Camilleri and Prof. Vince Briffa (VCT)**

**18:00 — Networking Happy Hour**

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## THURSDAY 26 MARCH 2026

**9:00 – 9:30** Malta Digital Innovation Authority (MDIA) Presentation, Prof. Gordon Pace  
(Venue: VCT)

**09:30 – 10:30 | KEYNOTE SPEECH 2 (Venue: VCT)**

- **Prof. Chris Salter (Zurich University of the Arts, Switzerland)**
    - Speech Acts, Agency, Action: What Do We Mean by ‘Performative AI’?
- Moderator:** Prof. Frank Camilleri

**10:30 – 11:00 | Coffee Break**

**11:00 – 12:30 | PARALLEL SESSION 1**

- **Panel J: Interfaces & Intermedia (Meeting Room 4)**
  - **Jorge Sousa:** ‘Post-digital Aesthetics: *Morphing* and *Hybridisation* in a Co-creation for Saxophone and Multimedia’
  - **Zjana Muraro:** ‘The Dancing Body as Interface in the Age of AI’
  - **Adam Łukawski:** ‘Performative Transactions: Worlding Compositional Ecosystems’

Moderator: Philip Ciantar
- **Panel K: The Digital Double & The Split Self (Meeting Room 5)**
  - **Christine Dysers (virtual):** ‘Splinters of Self: AI Doubles in Contemporary Music’
  - **Jakub Kleczek:** ‘Theatre as a Transductive Trajectory Machine: Rethinking Mise en Scène with AI and Cyberperformance’
  - **Kateřina Hejnarová:** ‘As Slow As Possible: Manual Transcription of 160 Hours of Video in the Age of AI as a Path to Experiencing the Present’

Moderator: Frank Camilleri
- **Panel L: WORKSHOP - Martin Kusch and Marie-Claude Poulin:** Navigating Presence in Mixed-Reality Spaces. Navigating Presence in Mixed-Reality Spaces.  
(Venue: Studio)

**12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch**

**13:30 – 15:00 | PARALLEL SESSION 2**

- **Panel M - Roundtable Discussion: AI and Digital Games: Challenges and Affordances (Meeting Room 6)**
  - **Prof. Vanessa Camilleri, Prof. Stefano Gualeni, Prof. Antonios Liapis, and Prof. Daniel Vella**

Moderator: Prof. Krista Bonello Rutter Giappone
- **Panel N: Systems of Creation: Analytical Tools and Generative AI as Performance Partners (Meeting Room 3)**
  - **Giuseppe Bozzo:** ‘The Genetic Digital Edition of Giuseppe Verdi’s *Trovatore*: A Preliminary Investigation’

- **Franciska Stefania Kovessi:** ‘From Laban to Forsythe: Rethinking Dance for Parkinson’s in the Digital Era’
- **Imogen Reeve:** ‘We Are The World: Artificial Intelligence as Embodied and Choreographic Languages’  
Moderator: Sara Accettura
- **Panel O: WORKSHOP: Ian Garrett and Vanessa Kelly (VCT): A.I. CAMPFIRE**

**15:00 – 15:30 | Coffee Break**

**15:30 – 17:00 | PARALLEL SESSION 3**

- **Panel P: Embodied Entanglements: Redefining Human-AI Interaction Through Dance (Meeting Room 3)**
  - **Danielle Lottridge:** ‘Designing Generative AI for Real-time Multi-User Interaction in Co-creative Dance’
  - **Kerry Francksen:** ‘Prioritising the “Lived Body” in AI Design: A Dancer’s Perspective’
  - **Kirsty Russell (virtual):** ‘AI as Maternal Mentor in Postpartum Performance’  
Moderator: Sara Accettura
- **Panel Q: Future Production Models (Meeting Room 4)**
  - **Thea Stanton:** "Fleshy Futurities" - Afrofuturism and the body slipping into data.
  - **Luka Prinčić (virtual):** "Performing Heritage on Gozo" - XR and glitch aesthetics.
  - **Oluwaseun Soneye (virtual):** ‘Preserving the Beat: Algorithmic Bias, Political Expression, and Authenticity in AI-Driven Afrobeat Fusion’  
Moderator: Jeremy Coleman
- **Panel R: Coding, Archiving, Ancestral & Diasporic Futurities (Meeting Room 5)**
  - **Brigette Dunn-Korpela & Nak Yong Choi (virtual):** ‘Ancestral Algorithms: AI, Cultural Memory, and the Submerged Body’
  - **Clareese Hill:** ‘Black Feminist Episteme for Emerging Technology – Fabulating the Archive’
  - **Jorge Guevara and Anton Koch:** ‘Transmission as Relation :: Motion Bank : Choreographic Coding Labs’  
Moderator: Margaret Westby
- **Panel S: Panel S: AI Impacts on cultural and creative practices in Malta Toni Attard, Prof Valerie Visanich, Graziella Vella (Meeting Room 6)**  
(Free admission to conference delegates and the general public)

**19:00 | Evening Performances (Vault and VCT)**

**19:00-19:30 - Brenda San Germán Bravo, *Real-Time Full-body Multi-Player Interaction with AI Dance Models, Interactive Installation* (Vault)**

**19:30-20:00- Lorraine “Rain” Stippec, *Artificial Intelligence vs Affective Intelligence: Rhythm as Human Archive* (VCT)**

**20:00 - 20:30 - Mirco Michelin, *WHAT YEAR IS THIS? A Lynchian Dreamscape for two Voices and AI (in homage to David Lynch and Angelo Badalamenti)***

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## FRIDAY 27 MARCH 2026

### 09:30 – 10:30 | KEYNOTE SPEECH 3 (Venue: VCT)

- **Prof. Rebecca Fiebrink (University of the Arts London, UK)**
    - Rethinking Machine Learning through Creative Practice: Insights from Music and Art
- Moderator:** Dr. Max Erwin

### 10:30 – 11:00 | Coffee Break

### 11:00 – 12:30 | PARALLEL SESSION 1

- **Panel T: The Arts in the Age of AI: A Sociological Perspective on Cultural Practice**
  - **Toni Attard, Dr. Alexandra Huang-Kokina, Prof Valerie Visanich (Meeting Room 6)**
- **Panel U: WORKSHOP: Renata Pękowska (Venue: Studio): ‘Have You Tried Prompting Your Body? Attentive Body as a Site of Intermodal Interpretation and Subjective Response’ (15-20 participants, 60 minutes)**

### 12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch

### 13:30 – 15:00 | PARALLEL SESSION 2

- **Panel V: Embodiment, Care & Deception (Meeting Room 4)**
  - **Paloma Roderia Martinez:** ‘Embodied Memory in the Age of Algorithms: Human Residue Against the Model’
  - **Elena Stamatopoulou:** ‘Ritual Interfaces and Networked Intelligence: Embodied, Ecological and Algorithmic Agencies in AI-driven Performance’
  - **Anna Chęćka:** ‘Real Presences Re-written: On Deceptive Aesthetic Experience in the Age of AI’

Moderator: Max Erwin
- **Panel W: Reimagining the Canon (Meeting Room 5)**
  - **Briar Adams:** ‘Hauntingly Hybrid: Negotiating Agency, Bias and Sovereignty in an AI-Augmented Modern Opera’
  - **Sophie Ellis:** ‘Performing Frenchness: Interrogating AI and Cultural Memory in *Molière Ex Machina*’
  - **Paolo Montella:** ‘The Naked User: Negotiating with the Vanished AI’

Moderator: Vicki Ann Cremona
- **Panel X: Traces & Accessibility (Venue: Meeting Room 6)**
  - **Henry Daniel:** ‘Regenerating the Choreographic Archive Through AI and Machine Learning Tools’
  - **Sarah Whatley & Kate Marsh:** ‘Dancing with Robots: AI, Agency and Lived Experience’
  - **Norah Zuniga Shaw:** ‘Previsualization in Performance: XR Worldbuilding, Embodied Intermedia Collaborations, and Humane Technology Practices’

Moderator: Margaret Westby

### 15:00 – 15:30 | Coffee Break

**15:30 – 17:00 | ROUNDTABLE – Prof. Susan Kozel, Prof. Chris Salter, Prof. Rebecca Fiebrink, Dr. Gege Gatt, Prof. Vanessa Camilleri (Venue: VCT)**

Moderator: Prof. Matthew Montebello

17:00 – 17:30 | Closing Remarks & Future Announcements

**19:30 – Evening Performances (Vault and VCT)**

**19:30-20:00 - Mona Hedayati, *The Body & the Archive: Towards a Sonic Speculation* (Vault)**

**20:00-20:30 - Becca Weber, *Vector:AI* (VCT)**

**20:30- 21:00 - Nicolaj Kirisits, Zeynep Aksöz, Alexander Urban, Lea Karnutsch, *RESONANT BLECH* (VCT)**

**SATURDAY 28 MARCH 2026**

**Malta International Contemporary Art Space (MICAS), Floriana**

<b>Time</b>	<b>MICAS</b>	<b>MICAS Vault Level 0</b>	<b>MICAS Vault Level 1</b>	<b>Outside</b>
<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Tour Group 1</b>	<b>Yoryos Styl: AI VR performance project "Sinners 2"</b>		
<b>10:45 AM</b>	<b>Tour Group 2</b>	<b>Tin Dzaferovic Workshop: Let's Play: Gameplay Guide for an AI-Infested Society</b>		
<b>11:30AM</b>	<b>Tour Group 3</b>			
<b>12:00PM</b>				<b>Praba Pilar: <i>Las Inteligencias Artificiales e Artifecales</i></b>
<b>12:30PM</b>			<b>Costantino Oliva Performance: <i>Night Parade of 100 Demons</i></b>	
<b>1:00PM</b>			<b>Lunch Reception</b>	

**Poster Presentations:**

Hayley Camilleri: Temporal Modelling of Artistic Evolution using Pre-Trained Visual Models

Christabelle Saliba: AI in Art: Detection and the Question of Human Value

**Films:**

David Serra Navarro: *MirrorSilkBias* (AIwork HD, 3'20")

Zander Porter and Julie Zhu: *unbetitelter Tanz (or spectral relationality in psychosomatic crisis)*

Daniela Souza, Natália Macedo, and Karina Senise: *The Backyard of Weird Creatures*

Eleni Timplalexi, Natalia Arsenopoulou, Dimitrios Charitos, Penny

Papageorgopoulou & Charalampos Rizopoulos: *Dual Claire: Directing digital humans according to directing theories/acting methods*