

Participation, Engagement and Creativity in the Performing Arts

11th Annual Conference of the School of Performing Arts, University of Malta, 2025

In partnership with Creative Europe Desk - Malta

5–7 March 2025

University of Malta (Valletta Campus)

Programme



L-Università ta' Malta
School of Performing Arts



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Conference Theme

The performing arts serve as a powerful medium for participation and engagement, and play an important role in social and everyday life, despite the challenges facing them. Meanwhile, such values have informed recent cultural policy, not least the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 (published 2022) which noted the role of cultural institutions in 'strengthening integration and community engagement'. And yet, how we understand participation in performance in the present and historically, and what it means for the performing arts to 'engage' a diverse demographic in inclusive ways, are pressing and complex issues that are currently being (re)considered and evaluated.

The 2025 Annual Conference of the School of Performing Arts, University of Malta, brings together contributions—theoretical and practical, historical and current, in the performing arts (dance, theatre, music) and in related fields—in an interdisciplinary dialogue broadly themed around participatory practices in the performing arts, spectatorship and audience, and the dynamics of 'engagement' with communities, in education and in various civic and social spaces. Additionally, the conference explores the challenges and opportunities that arise when various sectors of the performing arts meet in collaborative processes.

Conference Conveners:

Philip Ciantar

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Associate Professor in Music Studies, School of Performing Arts
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Jeremy Coleman

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Notes on the Programme and Room Allocation

Unless indicated, individual paper presentations will be 15-20 minutes.

All plenary sessions will take place in the **Aula Magna (Level 1)**.

Films submitted to this conference will be shown on loop in **Meeting Room 5 (Level 0)** from 11:00 to 16:00 on Wednesday and Thursday, and in the **Board Room (Level 1)** from 11:00 to 16:00 on Friday.

FILMS SHOWING DURING CONFERENCE:

Alice Marshall, *Tender Steps* (a Short Dance Film, raising awareness of Babyloss in the Digital Arena)

Simon Farrugia and Philip Ciantar, *Sounds of Weeping: Funeral Marches in Maltese Society and Culture*

Antonio Bukhar Ssebuuma, *Mutuba*

Ellen Davies and Anastasia Zaponidou, *Cysylltu...Connecting 2024*

Meeting Room 6 (Level 0) will be available for any professional networking on Wednesday and Thursday. On Friday **Board Room C (Level 0)** will be available for this purpose. A sign-up sheet for all three days will be placed outside whichever room is in use. Conference participants are welcome to reserve a time on a first-come first-served basis.

There will be two **Coffee Breaks** provided each day of the conference, one at 10:30 and the other at 15:30.

DAY 1 - WEDNESDAY 5 MARCH 2025

8:00-8:30 **Registration**

8:30-9:00 **Welcome and opening of the conference: Philip Ciantar and Jeremy Coleman – Level 1 – Aula Magna**

9:00-10:30 **Plenary session: Keynote Address 1 – Level 1 – Aula Magna**

Speaker: PETER W. MARX, Professor for Media and Theatre Studies at the University of Cologne (Germany) – ‘The Ambivalence of Participation: A Typological Essay’

Moderator: Marco Galea

10:30-11:00 **Coffee Break**

11:00-12:30 **Parallel Session: Panel 1 – Level 1 – Aula Magna**

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Ben Krakauer, ‘Participatory Music Culture as Supportive of Lifelong Musical Motivation’

Stephanie De’Ath (co-authored with Sarah Needham-Beck and Elsa Urmston), ‘Exploring Undergraduate Dance Students’ Citizenship and Engagement Through the Lens of Well-being’

Yanik Giroux, ‘Social Engagement & the Vagus at the Heart of the Art; Boosting Confidence and Engagement Through Wellbeing’

Moderator: Frank Camilleri

11:00-12:30 **Parallel Session: Panel 2 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 101**

PLACES AND SPACES

Rebekah Farrugia, ‘D.Cipher(ing) Detroit: A Music Nonprofit’s Creative Placemaking and Placekeeping Efforts’

Steriani Tsintziloni, ‘Inviting the Audience to Dance Events Beyond Dancing’

Moderator: Margaret Westby

11:00-12:30 **Parallel Session: Panel 3 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 102**

EDUCATION, INSTITUTIONS AND OUTREACH

Nicholas Arnold, ‘Should You Look Before You Leap?’

Angela Pickard, 'Critical Dance Pedagogy: Promoting More Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Teaching and Learning in Dance'

Jeremy Harrison, 'Fostering Participation and Engagement Through Musicality: an Approach to Co-creating with Babies and Young Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities'

Moderator: Deborah Williams

11:00-12:30 Parallel Session: Practice-based Presentation/Workshop – Level 0 – Theatre

COMMUNITY PERFORMANCE

Charlie Ingram, 'Community Consultations Through Participatory Practice: The "Evaluative Performance"' (30 mins)

Sara Accettura and Ilona Baldacchino, 'Sensory Symphony: Inclusive Performance and Audience Engagement in Community Arts' (60 mins)

Moderator: Sara Accettura

12:30-14:00 Lunch Break

13:30-14:00 Creative Europe Desk Malta – Level 1 – Meeting Room 101

Q&A session by Creative Europe Desk Malta: Culture Moves Europe

The Creative Europe Desk will answer any queries by prospective applicants focusing on this call.

14:00-15:30 Parallel Session: Panel 1 – Level 1 – Aula Magna

LEARNING THROUGH AND IN PERFORMANCE

Anthony Hostetter, 'Teaching Lessons of the Holocaust Through Embodied Testimony'

Susie Crow, 'Girl in a Broken Mirror: an Example of Educational Engagement and Participation in Performing Arts'

Heather S. Nathans, 'What's at Stake: Incarcerated Students and Performance Anxiety'

Moderator: Stephanie De'Ath

14:00-15:30 Parallel Session: Panel 2 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 101

BUILDING COMMUNITIES

Daithí Kearney, 'Bringing Together Brigid: Reimagining Folklore by and for a Community'

Anna Formosa, 'Ġambori – Każin 60+ ta' Teatru Malta'

Moderator: Ian Watson

14:00-15:30 Parallel Session: Panel 3 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 103

School of Performing Arts UM – Publications Launch & Roundtable

Speakers:

Deborah Williams (co-editor), *Dance, Performance and Visual Art: Intersections with Material Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024)

Stefan Aquilina, *Stanislavsky's Use of Improvisation* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024)

Vicki Ann Cremona, *The Malta Royal Opera House: Culture and Power* (forthcoming)

Philip Ciantar with Simon Farrugia, *Sounds of Weeping: Funeral Marches in Maltese Society and Culture* (documentary film)

Moderator: Paula Guzzanti Ferrer

14:00-15:30 Parallel Session: Practice-based Presentation/Workshop – Level 0 – Theatre

Kate Campbell Strauss, Badie Khaleghian and Aruna Kharod, 'Musicking Access: Building Inclusion Through Participatory Practices of Cross-cultural Improvisation' (90 mins)

Moderator: Rebekah Farrugia

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

16:00-17:30 Parallel Session: Panel 1 – Level 1 – Aula Magna

DYNAMICS OF COLLABORATION

Darija Davidović, 'Bridging the Divide: "Xáma – Home" and the Social Challenges of Staging War'

Elsa Urmston, 'Participating in Educational Change: Balancing Pedagogical Tensions with Educators in Tertiary Vocational Dance Education'

Moderator: Mario Frendo

16:00-17:30 Parallel Session: Panel 2 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 101

PEACE, POLITICS, PROTEST

Melek Kaptanoglu, 'Performing Peace in the Divided Cyprus'

Magdalena Marija Meašić and Gustav Lundberg, 'How to Break and Make a Nation: Latvian Rock Opera *Lāčplēsis* (1988)'

Emanuele Demartis, 'The Vocal Orchestra of Palembang (1943-1944) as Social and Gender Struggle: A Non-Violent Expression of Protest and the Assertion of Freedom and Humanity'

Moderator: Philip Ciantar

16:00-17:30 Parallel Session: Practice-based Presentation/Workshop – Level 0 – Theatre

Karen Wood and Kathryn Stamp, '*Strictly Come Dancing*: A Site for Inclusion and Social Engagement?' (90 mins)

Moderator: Steriani Tsintziloni

18:00-20:00 Networking Session

DAY 2 – THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2025

8:30-9:00 **Registration**

9:00-10:30 **Plenary session: Keynote Address 2 – Level 1 – Aula Magna**

Speaker: ALICIA DE BÁNFFY-HALL, Professor of Music in Social Work/
Community Music at the University of Applied Sciences, Düsseldorf
(Germany) – ‘Community Music in Institutions: Tensions and
Potentials’

Moderator: Max Erwin

10:30-11:00 **Coffee Break**

11:00-12:30 **Parallel Session: Panel 1 – Level 1 – Aula Magna**

ENGAGING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Adèle Commins, ‘Creating Common Ground for Community Integration: Exploring Traditional Material for Contemporary Expression’

John Galea, ‘The Cultural Enrichment of Community Participation in the Production of Verdi’s *Giovanna d’Arco* in Gozo: A Case Study’

Stefan Aquilina, ‘Bridging Research and Community Engagement: An Example from Modern Theatre’

Moderator: Marco Galea

11:00-12:30 **Parallel Session: Panel 2 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 101**

ROLES AUDIENCES PLAY

Chris Walton, ‘How *Winterreise* Was Created by Its Audiences’

Anna Rezaei, ‘Beyond Recitation: Gender, Audience Engagement, and Agency in Naqqāli Storytelling’

Clare Lesser, ‘Audience as Performer: The Communal “Circus” of John Cage’s *33 1/3*’

Moderator: Axel Petri-Preis

11:00-12:30 **Parallel Session: Panel 3 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 102**

KNOWLEDGE TRANSMISSION IN PERFORMANCE

Azzurra Ardovini, ‘An Inquiry into How to Develop a Deeper Level of Ownership and Co-agency in a Contemporary Dance Technique Class Using Reflective Practice’

Saverio Beccaccioli, 'Welfare Pop: The Garrincha Dischi Record Label Revolution in Italy in the 2000s Decade'

Katerina Grohmann, 'The Power to Create and the Way to Convey That Creativity: The Concept of Participation in the Performing Arts and Pedagogy Work'

Moderator: Jeremy Harrison

11:00-12:30 Parallel Session: Practice-based Presentation/Workshop – Level 0 – Theatre

Garret Scally, 'Kaleidoscopic Creation: Groupness as a Mode of Creation and Learning' (90 mins)

Moderator: Frank Camilleri

12:30-14:00 Lunch Break

13:30-14:00 Creative Europe Desk Malta – Level 1 – Meeting Room 101

Q&A session by Creative Europe Desk Malta: Culture Moves Europe

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14:00-15:30 Parallel Session: Panel 1 – Level 1 – Aula Magna

VALUING PLAY AND THE PERFORMING BODY

Juliya Bagdonavičiūtė, 'Musical Body vs. Performing Body: Escaping Dualism in Contemporaneity'

Ian Watson, 'Ludic Learning: Play, Performance and Educational Innovation'

Lan Zhou, 'Exploring Diversity Expansion in Chinese Dance Education: A Practical Exploration of Dance Movement Therapy in Traditional Children's Dance Classes'

Moderator: Stefan Aquilina

14:00-15:30 Parallel Session: Panel 2 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 101

COMMUNITY ARTS PRACTICES

Ruth Horáčková, 'Engaging in Senior Community Music'

Elsbeth CHAN Chi Fan, 'Butoh as a Participatory Practice: Engaging Communities Through Critical World-Building'

Ellen Davies and Anastasia Zaponidou, '*FREE YOUR INNER ROAR* and *SOUND YOUR VOICE!*: Examining the Impact and Future Prospects of the *Cysylltu...Connecting* Community Arts Project'

Moderator: John Galea

14:00-15:30 Parallel Session: Panel 3 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 102

VALUES, TRANSFORMATIONS AND AESTHETICS

Ji Liu, 'Illuminating Interpretation – How Audience-Driven Lighting Transforms Participatory Performance Experience'

Sabina Sweta Sen-Podstawska, '*Rasa-Bhava* in Audience Engagement for Odissi Dance: Revisiting Traditional Aesthetics to Enhance Contemporary Practices and Experiences'

Axel Petri-Preis, 'Working Towards a Universal: How Participatory Music Projects Can Contribute to Commonly Shared Values and Cultural Practices'

Moderator: David Kjar

14:00-15:30 Parallel Session: Workshop – Level 0 – Theatre

Morag Galloway, '*Dog Daze*: Performing to Catalyse, Commune, Coalesce and Continue ...' (90 mins)

Moderator: Clare Lesser

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

16:00-17:30 Parallel Session: Panel 1 – Level 1 – Aula Magna

POLITICS AND POLICIES

Amaia Mugica, 'Forced Migration, Audible Minorities and International Actors Navigating Identities in the UK Performing Arts Field'

Aneta Głowacka, 'Democratisation Processes in Theatre Institutions in Poland: Selected Examples and Activities'

Kevin Egan and Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk, 'Navigating Participation, Protest and Resistance in the Making of Reckless Sleepers' *Binary Opposition* Project'

Moderator: Heather S. Nathans

16:00-17:30 Parallel Session: Panel 2 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 101

AESTHETICS AND BODIES

Vera Djemelinskaia, 'Queer Politics "In Motion": Participatory Art and Normative (Feminist) Learning'

Pierfrancesco Tordini, 'Hans Werner Henze: Beauty, Communication and Social Engagement'

Alex Jatosti, 'In Defence of the Musicological Art: On the Creative Dimension of Music Scholarship'

Moderator: Jeremy Coleman

16:00-18:00 Parallel Session: Practice-based Presentation/Workshop – Level 0 – Theatre

Howard Gayton, 'Commedia Club: Using Play to Foster Participation and Engagement in the Performing Arts' (60 mins)

Nicola Visser, 'Practicing Radical Hospitality for Fugitive Gestures: *Eye Improvisations for Witnessing*' (60 mins)

Moderator: Sabina Sweta Sen-Podstawska

DAY 3 – FRIDAY 7 MARCH 2025

8:30-9:00 **Registration**

9:00-10:30 **Plenary session: Keynote Address 3 – Level 1 – Aula Magna**

Speaker: 'FUNMI ADEWOLE ELLIOTT – Senior Lecturer in Dance Studies, De Montfort University, Leicester (UK) – “Where I am dancing from”: Participation, Engagement, and the Challenges to Creativity of Intersectional Disciplinarity'

Moderator: Paula Guzzanti Ferrer

10:30-11:00 **Coffee Break**

11:00-12:30 **Parallel Session: Panel 1 – Level 1 – Aula Magna**

DATA, DOCUMENTATION AND THE DIGITAL

Indigo Knecht, 'The Chanting of Coral Reefs: Bringing Awareness to the Endangerment of Coral Reefs Through the Sonification of Settling Larvae'

Sravya Bandaru, 'The Role of Documentation in Participation and Community Engagement of Performing Arts: A Case of Indian Classical Dances'

Moderator: Margaret Westby

11:00-12:30 **Parallel Session: Panel 2 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 101**

PARTICIPATING IN TRADITIONS

Julia Escribano Blanco, 'Performing Tradition, Asserting Power: Female Agency in the Pinochada Festival of Vinuesa (Spain)'

Marta Salvatori, 'Playing Through Time: Teaching Music History as a Lived Experience'

Carlotta Travaglini, 'Joseph Sieber: An Example of Engagement Experience in the Marches Region in the Late 18th Century'

Moderator: Gioia Filocamo

11:00-12.30 **Parallel Session: Practice-based Presentation/Workshop – Level 1 – Meeting Room 103**

Mark Turner, 'Introduction to *The Tempest* Masque Chorus' (90 mins)

Moderator: TBA

11:00-12:30 Parallel Session: Practice-based Presentation/Research Sharing – Level 0 – Theatre

Antonio Bukhar Ssebuuma, 'Culture as a Site of Knowledge for Interdisciplinary Artistry and Audience Participation' (90 mins)

Moderator: Vicky Hunter

12:30-14:00 Lunch Break

14:00-15:30 Parallel Session: Panel 1 – Level 1 – Aula Magna

REVIVALS, TRADITIONS, TRANSPOSITIONS

Jane Turner, 'Perform Transform'

Gioia Filocamo, 'Fighting for Poetry: The "ESTRO-VERSO" Competition at the Conservatoire of Terni'

Satwika Penna, 'Revival of Periṇi in Telangana – Fostering Community Participation and Engagement'

Moderator: Vera Djemelinskaia

14:00-15:30 Parallel Session: Panel 2 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 101

EMBODIMENT, EXPERIENCE AND PARTICIPATION

Vicky Hunter, 'Bringing the Body with You: Group Dynamics, Gaps and Embodied Mapping in Participatory Site-Dance'

Véronique Vella, '*One of the Number*: An Exploration of Compositional and Artistic Choices in Electroacoustic Music Reflecting Personal Narratives of the Covid-19 Pandemic'

Vipavinee Artpradid, 'What I have learned from developing an Embodied Phenomenographic Approach for Inclusive Dance Training Programme Evaluation'

Moderator: Morag Galloway

14:00-15:30 Parallel Session: Panel 3 – Practice-based Presentation/Workshop – Level 1 – Meeting Room 103

Thomas Page, 'An Immersive Case for National Dance Infrastructure and the Vitality of Ethical Institutional Participation' (90 mins)

Moderator: Angela Pickard

14:00-15:30 Parallel Session: Practice-based Presentation/Workshop – Level 0 – Theatre

Mirco Michelon, 'From Stage to Audience. Interactive Workshop on the New Frontiers of Opera Direction: The Case of Luca Ronconi's *Il Viaggio a Reims*' (90 mins)

Moderator: Mario Frendo

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

16:00-17:30 Parallel Session: Panel 1 – Level 1 – Aula Magna

VOICES IN PARTICIPATION

Francesca Placanica, 'Vocal Encounters: Devising Creative Freedom through Shared Practice'

Marco Beghelli, 'Historical Perspectives for a Dialogue between Musicologists and Opera Singers: The Performance of the Vocal Appoggiatura'

Moderator: Yanik Giroux

16:00-17:30 Parallel Session: Panel 2 – Level 1 – Meeting Room 101

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ENGAGEMENT AND EXPERIENCE

Brenda Suyanne Barbosa, 'Ancient Musical Instruments in Contemporary Performances'

Mary Kirchdorfer and Cheston Humphries, 'Concert Life in Vienna 1780-1830: Database Presentation and Perspectives of Historical Performance and Audience Experience'

Moderator: Chris Walton

16:00-17:30 Parallel Session: Panel 3 – Level 0 – Theatre

Session Title: *Liberating Musical Engagement: Embodied Practice-as-Research, Co-Performance, and the Othered Presence of the Past* (pre-organised panel)

Speakers: David Kjar, Tanya Landau, Sara d'Ippolito Reichert

Moderator: Max Erwin

17:45-18:15 Closing Plenary – Level 1 – Aula Magna

Keynote speakers roundtable and thanks

Moderator: Vicki Ann Cremona

18:15-20:00 End-of-Conference Reception – Level 1 Corridor