

## **Book of Abstracts**

### **Panel 1 – Critical and Speculative exploration of human, non-human, and environmental relationships**

#### *More-than-human literatures: speculating-with from the Anthropocene*

**Laila Algaves** (NOVA FCSH)

This study aims to explore what is here referred to as “more-than-human literature” as a possible ramification, more or less recent, of literary studies. Drawing on the specific cases of Vinciane Despret's “Autobiographie d'un poulpe and other anticipation stories” (2021) and its original inspiration, Ursula K. Le Guin's short story “The Author of the Acacia Seeds and Other Extracts from the Journal of the Association of Therolinguistics” (1974), this presentation will consider the emergence of other ways of writing and narrating as a political tool in the Anthropocene, rehearsing alternative protagonisms and agencies expanded to other species and kingdoms. Differing essentially from the field of ecolinguistics or the excursions of “zooliterature” - although with recognized adjacencies - the possibility of this new imaginative exercise opens the way for a radical and creative deviation from human language, implying an even broader debate on speculative making as a way of producing knowledge and enabling alternative ways of life. To this end, we will draw on various authors from the “speculative turn” in philosophy, as well as “visionary fiction” (Walidah Imarisha) in literature, alongside Donna J. Haraway, Vinciane Despret, and Ursula K. Le Guin.

#### *The stars are out tonight*

**João Pedro Amorim** (CITAR UCP)

Under the digital spell of a fully-administered global society, the spectre of the end of the future looms over all of us (Berardi, 2019): technofantasies about the final overcome of mortality; technonightmares about a climatic apocalypse; or just the inability to think futurity. With the end of the great narratives of the XXth, the great narratives of the End of History absorbs the production of the real. The XXIst century is characterized by an inability to think about the future and about the possibilities of the present.

In his pharmacological study of technique, Stiegler reconsiders Heidegger's model of care [Sorge], proposing that at center of Sorge is being-towards-death as “the arche-protection required by a being-for-life that exceeds life.” (Stiegler, 2017, p. 317) For Stiegler, technique – as pharmaka (medicine/poison) to the prometheic essential deficiency – is central for the establishment of care, understood as the establishment of shared concerns and preoccupations. As an externalization of memory, it is technique that allows for the construction of a shared network of concerns and preoccupations about the world.

This paper discusses the concept of care in Stiegler's work and the specific role that art, understood as a transgressive sublation of technique, might play in establishing networks of care. We will take the example of Johann Lurf's “★”, an ongoing film project that consists of a montage of scenes of starry night skies collected all throughout the history of film. The

importance of these scenes in many of these films highlights the cultural place of outerspace in: simultaneously the light of a stars reaches us from a distant past; and it offers a platform of protention where we project shared dreams and expectations. Associated with the fact that every film and photograph secretly carries with them the recognition that it is an image of death – and image of the past. (Barthes, 1980)

## **References**

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Stiegler, B. (2017). What Is Called Caring? Beyond the Anthropocene. In *Techné: Research in Philosophy and Technology* 21:2–3. pp. 386 – 404. 10.5840/techne201712479

### *Distance to the Loire*

**Rosinda Casais** (i2ADS FBAUP)

"Distance to the Loire" is a monologue that, through the metaphor of distance, explores the disconnection between civilization and the natural environment. From a brief encounter with the river Loire's banks and the histories they hold, the concept of relic deepens as a lens to understand what remains in this relationship and what fades away. The entire text is infused with a personal questioning, sparked by direct experience with the river as part of the Young European Sculpture (YES, 2023) project. This encounter inspired the creation of the postcard "de um Rio," which underscores the significance of contact with a living environment while also raising questions about contemporary structures through the "white cube." Altogether, it highlights the importance of recognizing rivers as relational presences, where distance signifies alienation, and rediscovering proximity through the body reveals a responsibility to care for and cherish these ecosystems.

## **Panel 2 – Artistic and collaborative practices as a way of political resistance and ecological reflection**

### *Feral songbook: collective improvisation as an ecological survival technique*

**Nuno da Luz** (CITAR UCP)

This paper argues for a deeper understanding of how improvised communal action – collective, participatory improvisation practices – can imagine and rehearse modes of political and ecological resistance to the manifold forms of violence, dispossession and normativity witnessed today. Taking cues from previous research conducted in Europe on local populations of so-called exotic (but today naturalised) monk and ring-necked parakeets, the project 'feral songbook: listening rites' compiles a series of participatory collective improvisations that take the parakeets' 'territories of chant' as a mode par excellence of polyphonic collaboration and cooperation. For Belgian philosopher Vinciane

Despret, '[bird] territories are compositions and melodic arrangements', that present a double dimension that is both expressive (a territory is constituted through chanting) and geopolitical (a territory is predicated on boundaries and adjacencies): 'territories draw networks of sonic territorialities'. Such territorialities propose alternative, affective cartographies that counter the modern-day bird's eye-view (the ubiquitous view-from-above of the military-industrial complex) with being within a bird's ear-shot. Inspired by the parakeets and Despret, I advocate that listening and noisemaking are eco-sensible methodologies that prepare both humans and more-than-humans for loud resistance against the enforced silence of late capitalist exploitation. Departing from participatory collective improvisations, such as those advanced by British composer Cornelius Cardew and the (un)disciplinary loose collectivity known as the Scratch Orchestra between 1969 and 1974, this paper describes how collective improvisation practice, embedded in somatic, awareness and attention exercises, can restore our relationship with our immediate surroundings and with the continuum of natureculture via rites of attention, care and mutual responsibility.

### *The imagined House – performing the immaterial*

**Marta Morais Miranda** (ESMAD FAUP)

As an Architecture student and now as a professional in the field, the subject of the house has had a central position in the work I have developed over the years, namely its forms of occupation, appropriation and representation. Furthermore, the fact that I lived in different houses over the last few years brought to light the different relationships that are created with the space of the house, disconnected from its physical materialization, and more focused on the dynamics that come to life within it.

In this presentation we propose a reflection on the house through its main representations of intimacy, memory, identity and also of the collective (among others), using different authors such as Ana Silva, Gaston Bachelard, Sophie K. Rosa, or other readings on the topic, as well as the individual experience of making a short documentary film, *The House Imagined*. This project intended to explore the house beyond the physicality of its walls, by orienting the focus onto common aspects between all the previously inhabited houses. It is in everyday life events and in the smallest details, that usually go unnoticed, that we end up finding mutual threads between them all. The plants, the paper messages left by the inhabitants, the clothes drying, the dinners and get-togethers, sharing, complicity or improvisation are some of the elements that are transported from house to house. Little by little, the experiences of togetherness shape our personal perception of the house, and perhaps it is in this possibility of individual development that the house becomes the place of the "I". In this sense, the house, being the space that represents us, can take the most diverse configurations and meanings, varying over time, in different contexts and also from person to person.

It was then clear that, the filming process became our main research instrument and as a collaborative practice - which involved the work of several people who occupied the houses filmed in different periods of time - it provided moments of sharing and exchanging ideas, which transformed, simultaneously, our perception of the house up until that moment. It was in the coexistence and familiarity between all the actors in this project that the identity

and collective memory of this space - which concerns every one of us - became more evident.

The house is in fact a collaborative space and, in this sense, a mutant being that embraces the gestures of the different people who live (in different ways) in it. In a world that is constantly changing, we need every day spaces that are capable of responding to the different bodies that inhabit it, creating different dynamics and new forms of familiarity and domesticity. The state of crisis we are currently experiencing – of identity, lack of housing or even the crisis of our planet – has shown us the importance of rethinking this space and how it can respond, not only to the needs of the individual, but also to the demands of the community.

### *Strata*

**Isidora Correa** (CITAR UCP)

The increasing demand for lithium extraction in the transition to a sustainable energy matrix, driven by electromobility, has significant environmental costs, including water depletion and ecosystem decline. The world's major reserves of lithium brine are found in the salt flat of the Atacama Desert in Chile, where a rich biological diversity of microbial lifeforms resists under extreme conditions. Known as "extremophiles," these lifeforms endure severe water scarcity, high UV radiation levels, and heavy metals. Stromatolites, a type of extremophile found in the salt flat, are the contemporary adaptation of some of the earliest life forms. These lithified structures, composed of layered accumulations of microbial mats, have fossil records dating back approximately 3.5 billion years. Within stromatolites, microbial mats form colorful salt structures composed of stratified bacteria. Each bacterial colony is characterized by a distinct color, capturing specific wavelengths of solar radiation. Their adaptation depends on the diversity of the solar spectrum, metabolizing energy sources for other microorganisms in the strata. They vividly illustrate how microbes coexist and collaborate, providing nutrients to one another by positioning themselves at different color levels within the salts based on their needs, without competing or dominating other species. They share a space of metabolic processes within the colony, recycling nutrients to ensure mutual survival.

The bio art research project STRATA focus on the preservation of extremophile colonies from the Atacama Desert, considered vital biological heritage currently threatened by intensive lithium extraction. This project explores deep-time relationships of mutuality and planetary habitability, using color associations as a foundational element for sustainability. Additionally, it investigates the potential role extremophiles may play in bioremediation, particularly through the development of bio leaching processes using bacteria to recycle lithium from spent batteries. This approach proposes a sustainable alternative to direct extraction, aiming to reduce toxic waste and contribute to environmental conservation.

### **Panel 3 – Cultural heritage and Activism: questions of identity, responsibility and resistance**

*SELF-MADE ART: an Accountability Strategy about Art Destruction within the War on Ukraine, via a Sociology of Heritage and Media Arts using Critical A.I.*

**Pedro Andrade** (CITAR UCP)

Objectives: The project Self-Made Art presented here considers the current socio-cultural context of heritage destruction, namely the one provoked by the war on the Ukraine arena and Middle East. This is undertaken by considering the recent socio-cultural phenomenon of Artificial Intelligence emergence, in regards to its impacts, and mainly on the respective use within scientific, technological and artistic practices and studies. In fact, it is important to develop knowledge based both on human and critical A. I. interpretations, e.g., on content essentially focused on Cultural Heritage and Media Arts, but always under realistic and critical ways. From this perspective, an aspect that is still little explored is Heritage and Media Arts using Critical A.I., and the respective Social and Human Sciences studies, in particular Cultural Studies. In fact, Critical Artificial Intelligence means the use of A.I. within a perspective that considers and evaluate both its attractive and promising potential, and also the possible challenges and risks.

Debate. Such purpose is here discussed via, among other storytelling strategies and instruments, a dialog between a critical A.I. artist and a critical sociologist of A.I. Art. For instance, in Chat Scene 1, this artist shows his works about heritage destruction and reconstruction, namely at Ukraine but also on Middle East wars, through the use of A.I. softwares Microsoft Bing and Adobe Firefly. In Chat Scene 2, the sociologist says that, by using A.I. MidJourney, instead of creating images, he asked for images already artificially created about heritage destruction, in order to critically interpret them. And, along their discussion, both develop their arguments on the idea of ‘heritage and media arts destruction’ and related issues.

Methods, applications and results: Such conversation is then analyzed via softwares for qualitative and quantitative methods such as content and discourse interpretation, that recently are partially using A.I. The present project’s practical final product is essentially an e-book and app including social and cultural aspects of heritage destruction, interpreted using, among other tools, Critical A.I., and targeted to a more profound and conscient users participation on those issues, for example by showing the heritage destruction process and examples at museums and at other cultural tourists arenas.

Impact: such a project could constitute one of the solid steps necessary to strengthen relationships among varied stakeholders: audiences readers of media arts for cultural heritage awareness, such as citizens, tourists and migrants, but also administrative entities, organizations and associations, at local, regional, national and international levels, in terms of more robust connections with the respective international networks on heritage destruction, disseminated via media arts, be they European (Europeanna), global (Unesco), etc.

### *Art, Ecology, and Resistance: Reimagining Cultural Heritage in Iran*

**Shahriar Khonsari** (independent scholar)

The Iranian context subjects to not only ecological but also socio-political problems that the article presents as a touchstone for thinking the intersections of destruction, (im)materiality, and collective responsibility. This document probes into the theme that Response(ability) presents in Iran's art and cultural segments while the nation's ruling class dramatically relies on human and nature destruction. Proceeding from nowadays' movements of solidarity and community building, one of the inviting ventures which were seized by the grassroots movement to tackle water scarcity and pollution was making visible artists/makers' role in creating and preserving cultural heritage. The paper dwells on art and heritage as the keys to the creation of resilience and resistance and it is around the collective community.

Add to all the challenges in grappling with ecological crises and socio-cultural disturbances, the Iranian case is distinctive because the state, in its bid for control, engages in censorship and local cultures are eroded by geopolitical forces. Nevertheless, there are art forms that developed in collaborative environments that create new norms and promote interconnectedness.

Here, the article inquiries into those projects which employ digital humanities and citizen science to document and save intangible cultural heritage, thus empowering the community with a methodology to face the ecological disaster together. Besides, this scientific paper analyzes the body experiences of people in art practices that they actively engage with, and, through such practices of care and intimacy, they become part of the environment instead of a destroyer. In light of the situation, the paper consequently calls for the re-imagining of the relationship that ought to be built between the human and the environment, working towards not only cultural but also ecological preservation in Iran.

### *Shared Nightmares and Common Futures at Greenham Commons: On the politics of dreaming an affective practice of resistance*

**Filippo Deorsola** (Université Libre de BruxellesMa)

Greenham Commons peace camp has inspired many eco-feminist texts, informing feminist theory through its innovative methods of activism. A much less known event partly leading up to the camp's birth in 1982 is the unusual practice undertaken by activist Alice Cook. Affected by the rising nuclear threat of the late cold war, Cook decided to publicly share her recurring nightmares about nuclear warfare through *Sparerib* feminist magazine, encouraging others to do the same. What follows is the engagement of many British women across the country in the public exchange of their nuclear nightmares through the journal, and the start of a nationwide anti-war movement in 1980. Little consideration has been turned to valuing the role of dream-sharing in relation to the peace camp. This article aims to fill this gap by providing an analysis of this circulatory practice from a perspective informed by affect-theory. The sharedness of nightmares supports the claim that affect is transpersonal. An interconnected web arises out of this encounter between affect and paper : one that will later be hospitable to new forms of activism. Nightmares are

condensations of fearful affects that debilitate us, but resilient community can arise out of their de-privatisation because their circulation also points to common images for future worlds. Our increasingly hopeless ecological situation and our inability to respond speak to the close link between the politics of time and the politics of dreaming. Both affect the other insofar as the conditions of possible futures are dictated by the present, yet present terms are also continually contained and diminished by limited futurities. The paper concludes by arguing that the practice of dream-sharing can highlight frameworks needed to seriously address the question of what to do and how to do when it seems there is nothing to be done.

#### **Panel 4 – Body exploration as an agent of political resistance and social transformation**

##### *Wound, Wraith, Witch — ecofeminims and dance to re-enchant bodies*

**Rita Xavier** (UMinho)

Today is a time to think, act, and feel a “cosmosomatic wound” (Danilo Patzdorf, 2022), deepened over last centuries, for which we are simultaneously guilty and victims. It remains a space of erasure, regimentation, and violence against the human body as a sensitive body, and particularly against women's bodies—especially those that escape heteronormative, racial, and other constructions accumulating intersectionally. This wound in exhausted bodies is anesthetized and medicalized, shaped by the individualistic logics of well-being, outsourced consumption, and by the rupture of natural, cultural, and spiritual bonds between all living beings for a shared and good life. The patriarchal and capitalist oppression of women's bodies and nature's body share the same systemic and historical root. Ecofeminist philosophies deepen this awareness of relational movements with a critical gaze and propose resistance and alternative practices. In this context, artistic creation, and dance in particular, can and must be understood as a fierce act of writhing and insubmission, offering a path to re-enchant the body, and fostering vital reconnection and reintegration of the body as nature. Thinking dance and dancing thought express themselves in that visceral and intimate nature that escapes mechanistic and reductionist knowledge, transcending the perverse and superficial fascination with the wild. In this presentation, through an ecofeminist lens, the roots of this profound wound in the contemporary are highlighted, but also the place occupied by the creator as that of the witch, in its historical symbolism, its practice of freedom and resistance, and its composition with/of nature.

##### *Dances for present & future worlds: attentions for becoming-with the other through dance improvisation as somaesthetic and political practice*

**Kalliopi-Elena Kolia Petersen** (independent scholar)

This thesis and re-research is a relational exploration of what attentions activate the practice of dance improvisation as both somaesthetic and political. The re-research has been realized through the intergenerational participatory dance project female (with) space. I begin with situating my inquiry in the sociopolitical and ecological reality that sparked my

interest in searching again through dance and conducting this re-search. I then introduce my research question: What attentions activate the practice of dance improvisation as both somaesthetic and political, i.e. immersing us on one hand in the physical craft of dancing and listening to compose movement in the moment, but also relating to other human bodies in ways radically different than our status quo, eventually motivating more sustainable worldings?

I proceed with outlining the choices I have made to delineate my inquiry. Continuing I present the context of female (with) space. Taking place in Sundsvall, Northern Sweden within the frames of my artistic collaboration with the Swedish Contemporary Dance Company Norrdans, this project brings together 7 local women - Anne, Jill, Karin, Lina Lotta, Pearl, Pia, Rebecka - and me to explore the topics at stake in my inquiry. After outlining the borders of three central concepts - the political, the somaesthetic and the notion of worlding in dance improvisation - I then invite you to journey through what I detect as the methods of my inquiry. A following self-interview then moves us through the analysis and critical discussion of the thesis. Being reluctant to dissolve into finite arrivals, the thesis eventually folds back on itself to dance you to places in the text holding any conclusive arrivals of the re-search.

This thesis and re-search invites us to dare to become-with each other on liquid collaborative dance improvisation journeys. As such it does not wish to arrive at conclusions that function like prescriptive recipes. Instead it states the treasured relational moments and attentions I encountered through this re-search with the participants of female (with) space. It invites you to encounter them and allow them to leak. It insists on the value of creating communities that dare to deal with dance improvisation and its methods to shape a room of our own, engage with physical practices of change, listen to each other. And from there ask “and then what?”. Perhaps this might be a beginning of articulating through both liquid and solid embodied qualities what more sustainable presents and futures together might be - at any specific moment, for any specific “we”. Through dance. Together.

### *Remaining Body(ies): Art, Necropower, and the Aesthetics of Deterioration*

**Grécia Paola Matos and Filipa Cruz (FBAUP)**

"Remaining Body(ies)" investigates the deterioration of organic (human) and inorganic bodies as an artistic expression. The study explores artistic practices that intentionally engage with destruction and the construction of ruins, using the degradation of artistic objects as a metaphor for the decaying body. This authorial practice reflects physical deterioration through processes such as inflammation, wilting, dehydration, oxidation, and fragmentation, transforming the vulnerable body into a space of both resistance and care. Here, the “ruin-body” emerges as a central concept, embodying a movement toward immateriality and providing a critique of longevity’s cultural value.

This work aligns with the theme “Destruction and Preservation of Material and Immaterial in Arts and Heritage,” proposing that, in the event of the widespread destruction of all things, preserved ruins and artifacts endure as symbols of resistance. Conservation, in this context, becomes a gesture of resistance to chronological and atmospheric time, carrying the memory of a body that defies obsolescence.

The article also examines vulnerability and the passage of time within the ruin-body as acts of resistance, moving away from the rapidity and immediacy of modernity (F.J. Pereira) and embracing a cyclical rhythm. This obsolete body rejects modern functionality, embracing obsolescence and resilience within its own temporality.

Finally, the study addresses the effects of the pursuit of bodily perfection and cryogenics as forms of sovereignty and control. The quest for an “Instagrammable” image of physical perfection imposes unattainable standards and suppresses the diversity and subjectivity of bodies. It argues that the idealization of perfection operates as a form of violence, enforcing uniformity and subjugating vulnerable bodies. In contrast, the visibility of the diseased body asserts itself as resistance, celebrating survival and rejecting the superficial polish of uniform imagery. The narratives presented emphasize the cooperation between the perishable body and the care essential for its endurance, valuing resilience in both material and immaterial forms.