Edited Volume Call for Papers

intellect

L-Università ta' Malta

Embodied Data: Artificial Intelligence and the Performing Arts (working title)

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Closing date for submissions: Friday 4th December 2026

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Following the 12th Annual International Conference (March 2026) of the School of Performing Arts, University of Malta, we are launching a call for contributions to an edited volume that expands on the conference's themes. This publication seeks to provide a multidisciplinary space for dialogue and critical inquiry into the presence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the performing arts both today and historically. If AI-driven systems are often seen as threatening the authenticity of performance by altering or erasing the human element in the creative process, our volume seeks to explore how artists use AI to create, perform, preserve or analyse work, and the ways in which AI transforms, entangles or quietly effaces artistic practice.

This Call for Papers invites contributions that engage critically with the encounter between performing arts and AI technology, specifically addressing the shifting locus of agency in co-creative interactions between human and nonhuman systems. We are also interested in the various ethical questions around authorship, artistic integrity and creative ownership that arise from such practices. This involves practical methodologies as well as the historical, critical and theoretical perspectives that frame these interactions. By tracing a path between lived experience and data-driven narratives, this collection aims to confront the automation of creative practices and the reimagining of narrative forms.

Furthermore, the volume seeks to address the broader social and environmental impacts of technology in the arts, noting that the challenge of preserving embodied knowledge and cultural memory in the face of machine-learning algorithms that generate, modify, and automate creative practices needs to be confronted. This includes examining the ecological costs and sustainability of digital infrastructures such as Large Language Models (LLMs) as well as more productive small generative models as they are used in artistic practice and digital platforms. We seek critical analyses of AI bias and representation that may reinforce existing social inequalities. Additionally, the collection will explore themes of resistance to AI in the performing arts, particularly with regard to methods of learning and transmission.

We invite contributions that address any of the following topics:

- Artistic Interactive Practice with AI
- Collaborative Agency Between AI and the Performing Arts
- Critical and Theoretical Perspectives on Human-Machine Interactions
- Reconsidering Historical Methods of Transmission in the Performing Arts
- Legal Complexities in the Exploitation of Artists' Work
- Embodied Knowledge in AI-Driven Systems
- AI Coaching, Co-creation and Co-direction

- AI Literacy, Bias, and Representation in the Performing Arts
- The Challenge of AI to Authorship, Creativity and Artistic Integrity
- Ecological Perspectives and Sustainability (The Ecological Cost of AI-Driven Artistic Practices and Digital Platforms)
- The Impact of AI on the Preservation and Alteration of Performing Arts Archives
- Data Analysis of Performance Through AI and Algorithms
- Prompting as Creative Process: Dialogic, Recursive, and Entangled AI Interactions
- Themes of Resistance to AI in the Performing Arts
- Potential Dimensions of Mixed Reality Space Through AR and VR in the Performing Arts
- Reimagining Narrative Forms in the Performing Arts with AI
- Robots and Robotics in Performance
- AI, Improvisation and Aesthetics

Contributions may take the form of any of the following:

- Single-authored chapter (c. 5000 words)
- Co-authored chapter (c. 6000 words)
- Dialogues and Interviews (c. 5000 words)
- Commentaries on performance/practice output (with multimedia options in e-book publication) (c. 2500 words)

House Style and Submission Format

- In your submission, we kindly ask you to follow the Intellect Books style guide
- Please send your submission in an email with the title '2026 Submission' to <**jeremy.coleman[at]um.edu.mt**> as a Word document or as a Google doc. Please do not send PDFs.

We ask you to include the following in your submission:

- Name and institutional affiliation, if applicable (on a separate page)
- Contribution title
- Abstract
- Keywords
- Main text of your contribution
- Bibliography