

Call for Papers

AIRDanza Journal: Sources, Theories, Pedagogy and Performance – Issue no. 3 (2026)

The call for papers for **Issue no. 3 of AIRDanza Journal: Sources, Theories, Pedagogy and Performance**, to be published in **December 2026**, is now open.

Abstracts must be submitted **no later than April 20, 2026**.

By **April 30**, the articles selected for publication will be announced.

The selected contributions must be submitted **no later than July 20, 2026** to the following email address:

airdanzajournal@gmail.com

AIRDanza Journal: Sources, Theories, Pedagogy and Performance is a **peer-reviewed scientific journal**, recognized by ANVUR, the Italian National Agency for Evaluation of Universities and Research (**Area 10**), promoted and edited by **AIRDAnza**. The journal adopts an **interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach**, and aims to publish original contributions by Italian and international scholars, in Italian and English, addressing the complex and multifaceted field of dance studies.

Each issue hosts open-topic essays and curated ones based on a selected theme. We accept submissions for both sections.

The journal includes the following sections:

- Historical Studies
- Pedagogical Methodologies
- Artistic Discourses and Research
- Anthropology of Dance
- Reviews

Special attention will be given to articles that explore **dance and its relations and hybridizations with other arts**.

Thematic Section – Issue no. 3

Choreopessimism. Dancing in Dark Times

Edited by **Stefano Tomassini and Maria Paola Zedda**

“We are but dust and shadow.” Thus writes **Horace** (“Pulvis et umbra sumus”, *Odes*, IV, 7), echoing the **Book of Genesis** (3:19: “for dust you are and to dust you shall return”).

Yet, according to **Teju Cole**, author of *Black Papers*, “what has disappeared has gone into hiding,” and therefore “the dead also hide elsewhere.”

In her extraordinary solo **Hunter** (2014), **Meg Stuart** confesses that she began dancing because she was fascinated by the cartoon character **Casper the Friendly Ghost**, whose ability to appear and disappear while smiling suggested that dance might help her familiarize with what made her uncomfortable in life.

For **Cherish Menzo**, performance offers a possibility to reflect on the opacity of time and on ancestry as a site of convergence between “past, present, future, and all the possible grey areas in between.”

But how does one dance when sovereignty, according to **Achille Mbembe**, operates through a “systematic instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of populations and bodies”?

In **Necropolis**, **Arkadi Zaides** asks:

“Who is responsible for the disappearance of a body when behind the crime lies a complex network of national and international systems of regulation, laws, and border control apparatuses?”

Swiss choreographer **Simone Aughterlony** asks how we might survive among the “ashes of this planet” and transform the collapse of the world into a choreographic and performative question. In her recent productions **Collapse in 5 Acts** (2026) and **Edgelands** (2025), the choreographer engages with the theories of **Jack Halberstam** and the aging of humanity—both of the body and of the planet—projecting the question of the end into an entanglement where corporeality, and consequently dance, transforms through contact with toxic materials, haunted landscapes, and forms of cellular or collective extinction.

This call investigates an orientation still relatively marginal within dance studies: the presence of **distrust toward reality and life as they are**, the presence of negativity and situations shaped by the darkness of events, the violence of history, and a difficult nostalgia for the past.

However, this perspective is framed not as victimhood or despair but as an encounter with the rupture in the “flesh of the world,” as described by the French philosopher **Claire Marin**, compelling us to confront the insecurity of existence and to “**work with the ruins**” in order to live again.

From these haunted geographies—and **Demonic Grounds** (Katherine McKittrick) and **Violent Ground** (Arabella Stanger)—choreographic practices grounded in **decolonial perspectives** emerge, rediscovering extinct rituals, imagining them anew, dancing their endings through the spectral, the monstrous, and the phantasmagoric. These trajectories intersect with the critical theories of **Queer Death Studies** and **Dark Ecology**.

We invite contributions that engage with these discourses and that also revisit earlier histories of dance through this lens, tracing genealogies that might include:

- the devastating silences and uncontrolled rage of loss, as in **Anthony Tudor’s Dark Elegies** (1937)
- radical solitude as in **Maurice Béjart’s Symphonie pour un homme seul** (1955)
- the obsessive and manipulative violences that tear the world apart as in **Pina Bausch’s Blaubart** (1977)

- contemporary wars as in **Virgilio Sieni's Sonate Bach**

Spectrality, sleep, decomposition, and figures of death-in-life characterize many choreographic and performative paths centered on **somatic-perceptual practices**, resonance, and **attuning**, from a hauntological perspective.

In the background lies the spectral descent into darkness of **Hijikata Tatsumi** (50 years after his death), alongside the emergence of darkness into visibility in the works of **Nora Chipaumire**, and the apocalyptic exercises of **Enzo Cosimi**.

More recently, one may consider:

- the questioning of eternal rest as in **Ligia Lewis' Still Not Still** (2021)
 - the fractured rhythms that disrupt linear time as in **Cherish Menzo's DARKMatters** (2023)
 - the emergence of deep time at the threshold of visibility as in **Dalila Belaza's Orage** (2025)
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Keywords

Philosophical pessimism

Afterlife

Negative Epistemology

Necropolitics

Weird / Eerie

Afropessimism

Blind Spot

Hauntology

Attuning

Demonology

Ruined landscapes

Scenes of abandonment

Precarious lives

Black cartographies

Traumatophilia

Mourning

Spectrality

Extinction

Topics

Choreography and pessimism

Choreographies of the end

Spectral choreography

Post-mortem choreography

Dance and darkness

Dance and war

Dance and the end of the world
Dance and/of death
Dancing in/with darkness
Dance and dark ecology

Submission Guidelines

All abstracts will undergo an **initial selection by the editorial and scientific board**.
Selected contributions will then undergo **double-blind peer review**.

In cases of strongly divergent evaluations, the article may be sent to additional referees.

Special attention will be given to **reviews of recently published books**, both Italian and international.

Length of Contributions

Articles must not exceed **8000 words** (around **20–25 pages**), including images, tables, appendices, etc.

Each page must contain:

- 30 lines
- approximately **1,800–2,000 characters including spaces**

Formatting requirements:

- Font: **Times New Roman**
 - Size: **12 pt**
 - Line spacing: **single**
 - Margins: **2 cm**
-

Author Information

Articles must include:

- Author's **full name**
- **Institutional affiliation**
- **Email address**
- **Phone number**
- A short **biographical note** (max. **1,500 characters**)

An **abstract in the language of the article and in English** (max. **500 characters**) is required.

For articles written in English, both **English and Italian abstracts** are required.

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