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 **ANDRADA-CRISTINA NEACȘU**

Universidade Católica Portuguesa,
School of Arts
Research Centre for Science and Technology of the Arts
s-aneacsu@ucp.pt

 **CATARINA LOPES CORDEIRO**

Universidade Católica Portuguesa,
School of Arts
Research Centre for Science and Technology of the Arts
s-accordeiro@ucp.pt

 **DILA YUMURTACI**

Universidade Católica Portuguesa,
School of Arts
Research Centre for Science and Technology of the Arts
s-dyumurtaci@ucp.pt

 **MARTA GUEIDÃO**

Universidade Católica Portuguesa,
School of Arts
Research Centre for Science and Technology of the Arts
s-maancosta@ucp.pt

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Necropower has become a key concept for understanding the generalized instrumentalization of life and the material destruction of the Earth in the global postcolonial condition that includes the extermination of all biocultural systems.

- The Society for the end of Necropolitics, n.d.

In a time dominated by necropower (Mbembe, 2003, 2019) — marked by accelerating ecological collapse, violent political regimes, the erosion of collective life, and the destruction of territories, and Earth —, the Second Graduate Conference on Science and Technology of the Arts was convened under the urgent and evocative theme *Response[ability]*. Organised at Universidade Católica Portuguesa by the Research Centre in Science and Technology of the Arts (CITAR), this gathering built upon the discussion initiated in the first edition, bringing together graduate researchers, artists, and thinkers to critically examine destruction, not merely as an end, but as a generative space for resistance, co-creation, and reimagining.

The concept of “Response[ability]” (Albin-Clark *et al.*, 2021; Barad, 2007; —Bozalek & Zembylas, 2023) proposed, as an ethical and political form of resistance rooted in sensitivity, collectivity, and relational care, guided the exploration of topics ranging from ecological destruction and artistic preservation to speculative methodologies, embodied practices, and posthuman imaginaries (Bang & Marin, 2015; Sheridan & Longboat, 2006). Participants were invited to consider how their research and art might offer new ways of living, resisting, and imagining futures in the face of (im)material loss, engaging the interconnection between human and nonhuman worlds, and fostering collaborative and participatory processes in arts, science, and heritage (Barad, 2007).

This edition of the conference was honoured by the presence of two distinguished keynote speakers whose work exemplifies the intersection of critical theory, artistic practice, and institutional transformation.

Defne Ayas (Independent Curators International, n.d.), internationally renowned curator and cultural thinker, gave a keynote that interrogated institutional complicity, epistemic violence, and the politics of curatorial responsibility. Drawing on her experience directing and reconfiguring art institutions across geopolitical contexts, Ayas proposed “response-ability” as an embodied curatorial ethic, one that disrupts linear narratives, activates collective imaginaries, and remains attuned to situated knowledge. Her talk urged us to imagine institutions not as neutral containers but as dynamic, political agents with a duty to unlearn colonial legacies and to host plural futures.

Işıl Eğrikavuk (Eğrikavuk, 2019), artist and scholar known for her feminist and performative engagements with politics, language, and media, shared a

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keynote performance-lecture that centred storytelling as a transformative tool for collective inquiry. Through humour, myth, and poetic deconstruction, Eđrikavuk explored how counter-narratives – especially those told from marginalised and ecologically attuned perspectives – can unsettle dominant frames of history and open up space for healing and co-resistance. Her approach embodied the potential of artistic research to generate affective solidarities and new forms of agency in the face of global fragmentation.

Together, these two voices grounded the conference in lived, intersectional practices of responsibility, inspiring participants to consider how art, research, and institutional action can meaningfully intervene in a world on the brink.

This publication brings together the texts presented during the Second Graduate Conference on Science and Technology of the Arts, divided into four subjects that relate to each other and to the central theme of this publication.

The first subject was *Critical and Speculative Explorations of Human, Non-Human, and Environmental Relationships*, exploring speculative fiction, philosophical ecology, and political dreaming. Laila Algaves's *New Protagonists for the Anthropocene: On Speculative Thinking and More-Than-Human Literature(s)* examined speculative storytelling as a means of decentring human agency, drawing on works by Ursula K. Le Guin and Vinciane Despret. Filippo Deorsola, with *Shared Nightmares and Common Futures at Greenham Commons: On the politics of dreaming an affective practice of resistance*, investigated the politics of dreaming as a form of feminist resistance, focusing on the collective nightmare-sharing practice that preceded the Greenham Commons Peace Camp.

The second subject, *Artistic and Collaborative Practices as Political Resistance and Ecological Reflection*, addressed collective improvisation, ecology, and shared space. Nuno da Luz's *Feral Songbook: Collective Improvisation As An Ecological Survival Technique* proposed participatory sound practices and listening inspired by parakeet territories as eco-political methodologies. Isidora Correa's *Shaped Geographies: Depleting Echoes Of Extraction* bridged bio-art and environmental science by investigating microbial life and lithium extraction in Chile's Atacama Desert as both planetary memory and ecological threat.

The third subject, *Art, Technology, and Cultural Heritage: Questions of Identity, Responsibility, and Resilience*, examined the intersections of art, conflict, and technology. Pedro Andrade's *Ukraine's Urban Heritage, Street Art And Cultural Tourism At Risk: A Mini Encyclopedia For Research On The War Street Art* offered a critical, AI-mediated reflection on the destruction of cultural

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heritage in Ukraine, using media art to raise questions of accountability. Shahriar Khonsari, with *Art, Ecology, And Resistance: Reimagining Cultural Heritage In Iran*, explored community-based ecological resistance in Iran, emphasising grassroots efforts to preserve intangible heritage in the face of censorship and environmental crises.

The fourth subject was *Body Exploration as an Agent of Political Resistance and Social Transformation*, focused on the body as a site of resistance, vulnerability, and imagination. Rita Xavier's *Wound, Writhe, Witch: Ecofeminisms and Dance to Re-enchant Bodies* evoked ecofeminist dance practices as a way to re-enchant the wounded body and confront patriarchal violence. Grécia Paola Matos' *Remaining Body(les): Art, Necropower, and the Aesthetics of Deterioration* examined deterioration and decay in organic and inorganic matter as a form of aesthetic resistance against the culture of perfection and longevity.

More than reflecting on destruction, the texts compiled here enact a call for shared responsibility and attentive care. Through practices of storytelling, movement, sound, image-making, and speculative worldbuilding, these contributions weave a rich and urgent tapestry of how we might live, imagine, and create differently.

Response[ability], then, is not simply the theme of this conference, it is its method, its ethical anchor, and its collective dream. This e-book stands as both a record of this gathering and an open invitation to think and act with greater sensitivity toward the material, immaterial, and more-than-human worlds we inhabit.

The texts gathered in this e-book reflect a shared commitment: to respond. Not through reactionary closure, but through the activation of attention, imagination, and care. As we navigate the crises of our time – ecological, social, epistemological – Response[ability] becomes both a method and a practice of survival. It insists on the value of collective imagination, embodied knowledge, and the cultivation of futures rooted in interdependence.

This publication is not only a record of a conference, but also an invitation to think-with, feel-with, and respond-with. It holds within it a constellation of gestures – scholarly, artistic, poetic, political – that resist isolation and instead reach toward a more just, attentive, and entangled world.

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