



**MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS 2025**  
**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR HOSTING MARIE CURIE FELLOWS**

**HOST INSTITUTION**

Instituto de História Contemporânea

**RESEARCH GROUP AND URL**

Cultura – Poder, Mediações e as Artes

**SUPERVISOR (NAME AND E-MAIL)**

Hélia Marçal; heliamarcal@fcsh.unl.pt

**SHORT CV OF THE SUPERVISOR**

Hélia Marçal is Lecturer in History of Art, Materials and Technology (Department of History of Art) and the Vice-Dean for the Bicentennial / UCL200 Champion for the Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences at the University College London. She is also a Visiting Fellow at the Victoria & Albert Research Institute.

Her research has been focused on the knowledge infrastructures of memory institutions, memoryscapes and heritage regimes, and the futurability of cultural manifestations in performance. Her last two projects specifically focus on this dimension of her work. One of these projects is *RESONANCE: Epistemologies for the Documentation of Affect and Becoming in Cultural Manifestations in Performance (1969-1979)*, funded by the Portuguese Foundation of Science and Technology (2025-2028). She positions her research within the field of Marxist and critical feminist posthumanisms, and has published on conservation theory and ethics, embodied memories and the body-archive, and public policies of participation and stewardship of cultural heritage. Her recent book project is on posthumanism and collection care practices in museums (under contract with Routledge, co-authored with Dr Rebecca Gordon).

Before her appointment at UCL, she was a researcher in the project *Reshaping the Collectible: When Artworks Live in the Museum (2018-2020)*. Her work focused on how museum practices and artworks are constructed through interactions between people, artworks, technology, and infrastructures. In developing that research strand, she interrogated not only the material constitution of artworks, museums, and agencies, but also ethics of becoming art in the museum, and the ecologies of memory needed to safeguard artworks and objects across cultures of preservation. The project's case-studies included performance artworks, digital art, multimedia installations, archival materials, and community-led performances. While at Tate, she was also involved in the project Documentation and Conservation of Performance.

Hélia sits on the editorial board of the Journal of the Institute of Conservation and has reviewed articles for several peer-reviewed journals in the fields of visual arts and performing arts, museums and heritage studies. She was Coordinator of the Working Group on Theory, History and Ethics of Conservation of the Committee for Conservation of the International Council of Museums (ICOM-CC, 2016-2023). She collaborates with the Instituto de História Contemporânea (FCSH-NOVA) and the IN2Past Laboratory.

**5 SELECTED PUBLICATIONS**

1. "Vitality and the conservation of performance", *Performance: The Ethics and the Politics of Conservation and Care*, ed. by Hanna Holling and Julia Feldman, 70-92. London and New York: Routledge, 2023.
2. [Co-authored with Rebecca Gordon] "Affirming future(s): towards a posthumanist conservation in practice", in *Posthumanism in practice*, ed. by Matthew Hayler and Christine Daigle, pp. 165-178. London: Bloomsbury Press, 2023.
3. "Becoming difference: on the ethics of conserving the in-between," *Studies in Conservation*, 67:1-2, 30-37, 2022 (online in 2021). DOI: 10.1080/00393630.2021.1947074

4. [Co-Edited with Cláudia Madeira and Fernando Matos Oliveira]. *Práticas de Arquivo em Artes Performativas*, Coimbra: Coimbra University Press, 2020.
5. "Diffracting histories of performance: participatory practices in the historicization of political performance art", *Performance Research*, 24:7, 39-46, 2019. DOI: 10.1080/13528165.2019.1717863

## PROJECT TITLE AND SHORT DESCRIPTION

*RESONANCE: Epistemologies for the Documentation of Affect and Becoming in Cultural Manifestations in Performance (1969-1979)*

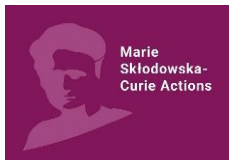
How can time-specific performances exist outside their inceptive temporal remit? This project looks at performance-based cultural manifestations, such as experimental theatre, experimental music, performance, new dance, etc., produced during the decade leading to and of the Portuguese 1974 Carnation Revolution (1969-1979) to interrogate the politics of memory across temporal and affective landscapes.

Created during a period of sociopolitical changes and global experimentation in the fields of visual and performing arts, these works are characterised by a deep engagement with politics within coteries of artistic practice, and formal interventions and innovations in and from their artistic vocabularies. Their context of production yields a very mutable affective landscape. Affective transitions were already visible in the 1970s, with the euphoric affirmation of the revolution and its beginnings enshrined in most works created in 1974 and 1975 (such as CAPC's "1.000.011º Aniversário da Arte," a prelude to the revolution proposed in January 1974) being soon after replaced by a melancholy of unrealised promises, paradigmatic in the 1977's rendition of "A mãe" (Mother), directed by João Mota at the Comuna Theatre. The text, or script, of these performances can remain the same – and, indeed, it mostly does – but the manifestation of these works is fundamentally different, as is when they are re-performed decades later when reflecting the revolutionary imaginary – in moments of crisis (e.g., the second IMF intervention in Portugal in 1983-1985) or commemoration (e.g., anniversaries of the Portuguese Revolution). The time-specificity of these forms of artistic practice is key to understanding performance-based art and the performing arts within the same epistemological paradigm.

Initially distinctive artistic ecologies, the visual and the performing arts started to mingle and merge in the 1960s. This internationally recognised phenomenon, however, adopted particular formulations in Portugal under the clouds of the forty-eight years of right-wing Dictatorship, that came to an end in April 1974, leading to various years of revolutionary drive. Within the performance-based art Portuguese ecologies, the merging of fields of practice was visible first through an expansion of experimental poetry towards performance and spoken word, as we can see through the works of Ernesto M. de Melo e Castro or Ana Hatherly, and then via a thorough engagement with movement, communion, and the event-like quality of performance, as seen with Joao Vieira or (albeit differently) Manoel Barbosa.

Other forms of artistic practice emerging at the same time shared a crucial characteristic with performance-based art: the being in performance, in permanent becoming. That is the case of experimental music, experimental theatre, and forms of so-called new dance, all of which started to populate the alternative art scene of relevant production centres in Portugal – such as Lisbon, Porto, or Évora - in the mid- to late-60s. Contrary performance art, performing arts practices are typically created with an ontological possibility of being repeated, or re-enacted, being therefore called allographic works. Theorised by Goodman in 1968, allographic works are such that have an (implicit or explicit) score and can be repeated, resulting in equally authentic renditions of the work. What we see with alternative performing arts practices created in the late 60s and throughout the 70s in Portugal, however, opposes this intrinsic quality that most performing arts works share. Indeed, albeit typically similar to traditional approaches in their formal qualities (i.e., for example, the creation in two-stages), some of these works are closer to performance art in their mutability in processes of re-enactment or, indeed, a clear impossibility of being repeated. They operate improvisation as a method (e.g., Uviedo's 1969 MacBeth interpretation at CITAC, Porto), signalling a commitment to reforming long-standing approaches to the stage. They juxtapose assertiveness with vertigo, interluding scripted actions with the unexpected (e.g., CUBUVERSUSESFERA, by Eduardo Sérgio, 1975). Similarly, somewhat reprising what was happening in other, international, cultural production centres, bodies held particular currency across these practices.

Original documentation of these works is quite sparse, leading the renowned art theorist Ernesto de Sousa to recognise this glaring lacuna, calling this a history "without history" (1998). Although several efforts have been



made to historicise the cultural manifestations from this period, namely by people who are either part of RESONANCE's team or are its consultants, the urgent history of these works is yet to be done, partly due to issues with epistemologies and methodologies. Even though the field of conservation (informed by performance studies and art history) has propelled methods to conserve and document performance-based art, standard methodologies do not respond to the specific needs of artworks like these, deemed time- and/or site-specific. This is due to (1) their changing affective formulations, (2) their changing material apparatus and intra-agential networks, and (3) their rather complex and hard-to-pin-down infrastructures of knowledge and means of production. RESONANCE will change this epistemological paradigm.

#### SCIENTIFIC AREA WHERE THE PROJECT FITS BEST\*

Social Sciences and Humanities (SOC)