



Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University



Performance  
Research Group

Influencing creative developments, public policy, and  
broader culture through impactful performance research.

# Performance Research Group Annual Report 2025



## About the Performance Research Group

In the Performance Research Group (PRG), we nourish world-leading, industry-focused and interdisciplinary work in the field of performance. We build practices, structures and projects that bring performance artists and researchers into productive dialogue with each other.

Manchester Met's history of innovation and impact is reflected in our practice-based artistic research. The work of our members includes:

- Performance
- Theatre studies
- Acting
- Contemporary drama
- Laboratory theatre
- Performer training
- Dramaturgy
- Cross-disciplinary dialogue, collaboration and praxis

We are internationally recognised theatre makers, performers, directors, scholars and curators. Our relationship with the theatre and performance community is broad and longstanding. Organisations and artists in Manchester and beyond turn to our specialist expertise for training, support and contextual research, as well as creative leadership.

More information: <https://performanceresearch.mmu.ac.uk/>

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/performanceresearchmmu>

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/mcrschart\\_prg](https://www.instagram.com/mcrschart_prg)

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## Vision

The Performance Research Group helps shape the future of performance worldwide, both as an artistic discipline and a force for social change. We influence creative developments, public policy and broader culture through impactful research and artistic innovation. We have an international approach to performance making, and a long-standing history of industry-facing and interdisciplinary practice research that challenges, questions and rethinks what performance means in the 21st Century. We create, nurture and share the performance research of the future.



## People

### School of Digital Arts

Adinda van't Klooster – Senior Lecturer (REC)  
 Jenny Baines – Senior Lecturer (REC)  
 Maria Nogueira – Senior Lecturer (REC)  
 Zofija Tupikovskaja-Omovie – Senior Lecturer (REC)

### School of English

Amaia Mugica – Senior Lecturer (REC)  
 Andrea Maciel Rodrigues – Lecturer (REC)  
 Anna McNamara – Professor (EPC)  
 Jeremie Cyr-Cooke – Lecturer (REC)  
 Joe Ward-Munrow – Lecturer (REC)  
 John Deeney – Senior Lecturer (EPC)  
 Joshua Edelman – Professor (REC)  
 Kevin Egan – Senior Lecturer (REC)  
 Michael Pinchbeck – Professor (REC)  
 Michael Roberts – Professor (REC)  
 Neil Mackenzie – Senior Lecturer (REC)  
 Patrick Campbell – Senior Lecturer (REC)  
 Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk – Senior Lecturer (REC)  
 Samuel Robertson – Lecturer (REC)  
 Shane Kinghorn – Senior Lecturer (EPC)  
 Simon Stephens – Professor (REC)  
 Sofia Jones – Senior Lecturer (REC)  
 Sorcha Ní Fhlainn – Reader (REC)  
 Zodwa Nyoni – Lecturer (REC)  
 Matthew Spangler – Visiting Professor (REC)

### Manchester School of Architecture

Daniel Dubowitz – Reader (REC)  
 Vikram Kaushal – Senior Lecturer (REC)

### School of Art and Design

Brigid McLeer – Senior Lecturer (REC)

### Postgraduate Students

Alice Brockway  
 Caroline Clegg  
 Bradley High  
 Peadar Kirk (CDA hab arts)  
 Lucy Meringolo  
 Serena Slack-Robbins (CDA Khayaal Theatre Company)  
 Daniel Tierney  
 Tamur Tohver  
 Christian Jones (RNCM)  
 Meriel Price (RNCM)  
 Dobromir Tsenov (RNCM)  
 Alexis Maxwell (CDA Reckless Sleepers)

REC – Research, Education and Citizenship

EPC – Education, Practice and Citizenship

CDA – Collaborative Doctoral Award

NWCDTP – North West Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership

RNCM – Royal Northern College of Music

## Postgraduate Research

**Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk** is Principal Supervisor for Dobromir Tsenov (RNCM), who is due to submit in September 2026, and will be Principal Supervisor for Alexis Maxwell, a Reckless Sleepers CDA candidate starting January 2026 with second supervisor, **Kevin Egan**.

**Joshua Edelman** supervises *Serena Slack-Robbins* – British Muslim communities' engagement with theatre and *Lucy Meringolo* – performance-based PhD on spirituality, Buddhism, and spiritual experience

**Michael Pinchbeck** is Principal Supervisor for Peadar Kirk's NWCDTP-funded PhD on the greenroom archive with second supervisor **Jenny Baines**. He is Principal Supervisor for Daniel Tierney's PhD exploring the performativity of photographs with second supervisor **Brigid McLeer**. He co-supervises Meriel Price (RNCM) on score-based performance and Christian Jones (RNCM) on trombone-based practice-research.

## Featured Research Projects

**Patrick Campbell** is a Co-I on the *Pedagogies, Processes and Archives of Presence* project, funded by FAPESP (Research Council of Sao Paulo) (£71,631.52). The aim of the project is to document and critically analyse the pedagogic practices of acclaimed Brazilian theatre laboratory LUME Teatro, a research group at the State University of Campinas, Sao Paulo.

**Jeremie Cyr-Cooke** has two practice-research projects currently in development:

*IMPERCEPTIBLE*: an investigation into physical theatre as a methodology of adaptation of a short novel to explore/address the growing mental health crisis in young men in Ireland and the UK.

*OLYMPUS HAS BUT SNOW*: an investigation into gyms as performative spaces and the repurposing of Greek Myths to explore contemporary masculinities.

### Emote VR Voicer

*Emote VR Voicer* is an AHRC Catalyst Grant-funded project led by **Adinda van 't Klooster**. It builds on her previous voice-controlled VR interfaces, *VRoar* and *AudioVirtualizer*, extending her innovative work at the intersection of voice, technology, and performance.



### RECOVIRA

The social restrictions imposed by the pandemic rapidly accelerated religious communities' embrace of digital tools and structures to continue their essential social and psychological work. Led by **Joshua Edelman**, *RECOVIRA* (Religious Communities in the Virtual Age) brings together scholars from seven European countries with backgrounds in religion, anthropology, digital religion, performance studies, and allied disciplines to explore this. They are conducting ethnographic research on mainstream, long-established minority, and emergent or newly-built religious communities in a way that facilitates both ethnographic depth and international comparability.

### Granny Jackson's Dead

*Granny Jackson's Dead* is an immersive performance that takes the form of a wake, at which the audience are guests, to explore the implications of grief-tech. Big Telly Theatre Company partnered with researchers **Michael Pinchbeck**, **Joshua Edelman**, Kirsty Fairclough and Alasdair Swenson from Manchester Metropolitan University and Eleanor O'Keeffe from NatCen, supported by the Centre for Cultural Value's Collaborate fund.



### Intercultural Roots

**Andrea Maciel** is the Artistic Director for Intercultural Roots, which secured £75,000 from the British Council's International Cultural Grant to support the *Rhythms of Resistance* project, in collaboration with Brazilian artist Puma Camille.

### Integrated Voices

**Amaia Mugica** and **Sofia Jones** have embarked on a new research project: '*A year of Creative Celebration – Integrated Voices*', an EDI-based initiative presenting four unique events dedicated to showcasing the artistry, passion, and stories of marginalised voices through poetry, song, painting, and creative writing. This presents an opportunity to reclaim space, tell stories, and amplify the beauty and power of diverse voices. Each event is themed around a specific art form and aligns with the seasons to reflect cycles of growth, change, and rebirth. Each season allows participants to experiment with a different artistic lens in a safe, collaborative, and celebratory space.

## Community Research Ethics Initiative

Joshua Edelman is working on the *Community Research Ethics Initiative* (CREI), a spin-off of his project *RECOVIRA* (Religious Communities in the Virtual Age). He is studying the structure of university ethics procedures across Europe, especially for humanities and social sciences, to see ways in which they frustrate ethical, comparative and important research, and making suggestions for how they can be made more fit for purpose.

## Editorships

**Patrick Campbell** is editing forthcoming special issue of *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training Journal* on re-envisioning the theatre laboratory

**Kevin Egan, Michael Pinchbeck** and **Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk** are guest editing an issue of *Performance Research: On Scores*. Due to be published in Autumn 2026.

**Anna McNamara** is editing forthcoming special issue of *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training Journal* on Pivotal Pedagogies for Performer Training.

**Maria Nogueira** is an Editorial Board Member of *Metaverse* (ISSN 2810-9791), a quarterly open-access journal focused on emerging technologies including blockchain, VR/AR/MR/XR/ER, game engines, AI, network communication, and IoT.

**Michael Pinchbeck** has been invited to co-edit *Intellect Books'* Playtext Series with Prof. Frances Babbage (University of Sheffield) to mark the 25th anniversary of the series.

**Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk** has joined editorial board of *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training Journal*.

## External Funding

1 Nov 2022 – 30 Sep 2025 – *Religious Communities in the Virtual Age*. **Joshua Edelman** (PI). £380,000 approx. (AHRC / CHANSE)

10 January 2023 – 9 January 2026 – *Cultural Masterplanning, New Methods for Developer-led Urban Regeneration*, **Dan Dubowitz** (PI), £171,000 approx. (UKRI Innovation Scholar)  
\*NB Secondary affiliate member

1 Aug 2023 – 31 May 2024. *Granny Jackson's Dead: Commemoration, Mourning, Performance and the Digital*. **Michael Pinchbeck** (PI). £20,000 (Centre for Cultural Value)

23 Sep 2024 – 22 Mar 2027 – *Emote VR Voicer*. **Adinda van't Klooster** (PI). £250,000 approx. (AHRC Catalyst Award)

1 Mar 2025 – 31 Mar 2026 – *Community Research Ethics Initiative*. **Joshua Edelman** (PI). £14,700 approx (Economic and Social Research Council)

## Publications and Performances

### Publications

**Campbell, Patrick** and Pikes, Margaret. 'Voice Training: the Wolfsohn-Hart Approach'. Allain, Paul and Camilleri, Frank (eds) (2025) *Milestones in Actor Training*. Abingdon, Routledge.

Jones, Rhiannon & **Pinchbeck, Michael** (2025) 'Somewhere Between Breathing In and Breathing Out: Making immersive audio work about Long COVID'. *Performance Research*, 29(4–5), 128–136. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2024.2511395>

**McNamara, Anna** (2025) *Actor Training on Actors: For the 21st Century*, Abingdon: Routledge.

**Nogueira, Maria Rita** (2025) 'Teaching Digital Design in an AI-Driven Era: Rethinking Curriculum and Pedagogy in Design Education'. *Discover Artificial Intelligence*, Springer Nature: London.

**Nogueira, Maria Rita**, Braz Simões, João, Maças de Carvalho, José, and Menezes, Paulo (2025) – 'Move in Tempo: Involving the Audience Through Their Movement in Installation Art'. *International Journal of Arts and Technology*. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJART.2025.146787>

**van 't Klooster, Adinda** and Dowlen, Robyn (2025) 'Can voice responsive VR art experiences improve wellbeing?', *Baltic Screen Media Review*. ISSN 2346-5522

### Performances

**Deluge** – Inspired by a social media call-out and over 40 interviews, *Deluge* puts a magic realist spin on grief, blending humour, tenderness, and surrealism. Directed by **Andrea Maciel**, the piece was performed at Soho Theatre, Future Flares Festival, the Oxford Festival, and the Edinburgh Fringe. Andrea was also Movement Director for *Claustrofobia*, the Shell Award-winning production directed by César Augusto (Actor's Company) and performed by Marcio Vito.



**A Seventh Man** – An immersive performance led by **Michael Pinchbeck** and Ollie Smith for Future Flares. Inspired by John Berger and Jean Mohr’s 1975 book of the same name about migration, the piece reimagines its themes for contemporary audiences.

**Scheme and The Phantom** – A solo, storytelling show by **Joe Ward Munrow**, presented at The Unity Theatre, Liverpool, on 7 March 2025. The performance explores childhood friendship and loss with humour and nostalgia.



**Tessellation** – Emerging from workshops on the relationship between dance technique, improvisation, and creative reflection, this choreography by **Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk** was developed with professional artists and MMU students. *Tessellation* was first presented at Future Flares Festival on 24 – January 2025 and then again (as a developed version) for a Future Flares – ‘pop up’ event alongside Lewys Holt on 19 March 2025.

**Tears Are Not Meant To Stay Inside** – A new short opera by **Zodwa Nyoni**, presented at Buxton International Festival (July 2025). The work explores ancestral healing and identity, with composition by Thanda Gumede.

**Granny Jackson’s Dead** – Created by Big Telly Theatre with research team including **Joshua Edelman** and **Michael Pinchbeck**, this immersive performance is a reflection on the future of grief tech. Following a sell-out run in Philadelphia, it transferred Off-Broadway in April 2025, winning Big Telly Theatre their third consecutive Origin 1st Irish Award for Best Production.

**Miss Brexit** – Co-directed by **Amaia Mugica**, this satirical performance explores migrant experiences in the UK through theatre, humour, and original music. Supported by Arts Council England, *Miss Brexit* was performed at Contact Theatre, 6–7 June 2025, before touring to the Edinburgh Fringe.



**Liberation** – A new play by **Zodwa Nyoni**, directed by Monique Touko, exploring Black British history by tracing the private lives of the people who fought to liberate Africa. Premiered 31 June 2025 and ran until 27 July 2025.

**Binary Opposition** – A new Reckless Sleepers performance featuring **Kevin Egan** and **Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk**, premiered at The Lowry on 7–8 October 2025.



**Negative Space** A Reckless Sleepers performance featuring **Kevin Egan** and **Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk** was shown at – Unidram Festival, Potsdam on 4 November 2025.

## Events and Knowledge Exchange

### Future Flares Festival

Curated by Neil Mackenzie, Future Flares Festival (22 – 24 January 2025) presented a curated programme of innovative politically engaged performances, plus related talks and workshops. The line-up featured work from radical performance makers including *Get Off*, by Katy Baird, *Vigil* by Mechanimal/ Tom Bailey, and *30 min set* by Lewys Holt, alongside pieces by artists-researchers in the PRG including **Dan Dubowitz**, **Andrea Maciel**, **Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk** and **Michael Pinchbeck**.



## Bunker Talks

In 2025, we hosted 14 Bunker Talks with 20 guest speakers on performance research, which were filmed, edited and archived. Bunker Talks explore geopolitical, ecological or economic concerns. The talks create space for critical encounters, presentations, provocation and dialogue. Talks have been hosted by PRG members at The Salutation, SODA Cinema, Grosvenor East and The Lowry building at Manchester Met. Attendance has exceeded 500 people and over 1000 people have watched the talks online after the events. More information here: <https://www.art.mmu.ac.uk/bunkertalks/>

#158 [Tony Schumacher](#)

#157 [Roberto Sifuentes](#)

#156 [Rachel Smith](#)

#155 [Mufaro Makubika](#)

#154 [Alex Kelly](#)

#153 [Zodwa Nyoni](#)

#152 [Lena Simic x James Marriott](#)

#151 [Manchester Academy of Fine Arts](#)

#150 [Ray Grewal](#)

#149 [Amanda Beech x Adam Walker](#)

#148 [Jurriaan Benschop](#)

#147 [Lynn Settrington](#)

#146 [Stephen Scott-Bottoms x Andy Smith](#)

#145 [Dan Dubowitz](#)

## LUME Workshops

In June, PRG hosted LUME Teatro from Brazil for an artistic residency and workshops with MA, MFA, and PhD students. The residency formed part of *Pedagogies, Processes and Archives of Presence*, an international research collaboration supported by CAPES, CNPq, FAPESP, LUME, and Manchester Metropolitan University.

## The Future of Practice Research

PRG members helped coordinate this national conference hosted at Manchester Met on 9 June 2025, supporting talks and student performances from the MA/MFA Performance programme. A documentary was made by Daniel Morrell which featured the practice-research of PRG members **Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk** and **Michael Pinchbeck**. More information here: <https://futureofpracticeresearch.mmu.ac.uk/>

## Granny Jackson's Dead

**Michael Pinchbeck** presented at BRAID / RAI roundtable event *Ensuring Responsible AI Through Methodological Diversity* on 6 March 2025, University of Edinburgh – ‘Granny Jackson’s Dead: immersive performance, grief technology, memory and mourning’. More information here: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/responsibleai/1495746>

## PRG Presents

Held on 25 July 2025 at Contact Theatre, this informal sharing showcased new works-in-progress from PRG artists and postgraduate researchers, fostering feedback and collaboration. Line-up included: **Neil Mackenzie**, **Kevin Egan**, **Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk**, **Adinda van't Klooster**, **Michael Pinchbeck**, **Joe Ward-Munrow**, **Peader Church**, **Daniel Tierney** and **Meriel Price**.



## PRG Presents



## The Migration Conference

**Michael Pinchbeck** and the Talking Trees project team presented at *The Migration Conference* at the University of Greenwich from 11-17 June 2025. Dr Lan Guo delivered the paper ‘Talking Trees / 树说/ 述说: Home, Paths, Roots & Metaphorical Growth of Trees for Belonging’, focusing on language, education, and migration.

## What is Practice-related Research?

**Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk** and **Amaia Mugica** were invited to share work as part of *What is Practice-related Research? An introduction and showcase event* at Manchester Metropolitan University – in collaboration with the British Academy ECR Network – in December 2025.

## Queer Up North

**John F. Deeney** is the Manchester Met Lead Representative on a collaboration with external producers Gavin Barlow and Tanja Farnham on the project *Queer Up North 1992-2002: Celebrating Manchester's LGBTQ+ Heritage*. This project has received £250,000 in an award from the National Heritage Lottery Fund. Manchester Met has agreed to provide ‘in kind’ support for the project for the duration of the project over the next 2-3 years.

## Communications and Media

**Michael Pinchbeck** was a guest on *Radio Ulster's* 'Sunday Sequence' show to talk about *Granny Jackson's Dead*, the immersive performance by Big Telly Theatre. The performance was featured in Irish and US press coverage during its Spring 2025 tour.

**Joe Ward-Munrow** was featured on Royal Literary Fund's YouTube channel as part of a panel of playwrights and screenwriters discussing the challenges they face.

Reckless Sleepers' performance, *Negative Space*, at Unidram Festival, Potsdam, was featured on German regional news RBB in November 2025.

## International

### Pedagogies, Processes and Archives of Presence

In February 2025, **Patrick Campbell** participated in the second year of this FAPESP-funded project in Campinas, Brazil, studying the pedagogical practices of LUME Teatro. The project aims to document and critically analyse the theatre laboratory.

### The Image Research Network

In September 2025, **Brigid McLeer** was a selected presenter at The Image Research Network annual international conference: *From Democratic Aesthetics to Digital Culture*, University Paris 1, Pantheon-Sorbonne, France..

### Jewish Diasporic Homeland(s)

In March 2025, **Joshua Edelman** was invited to present on Jewish Diasporic Homeland(s) at the Berlin Center for Intellectual Discourse. This workshop focused on diaspora and homelands in Jewish settings through the works of Jewish philosophers.

### Postsecular Performance Network

**Joshua Edelman** visited Villanova University in Philadelphia for a workshop of the Postsecular Performance Network in March 2025. He talked about post-secular performances of pastoral care and religious community with scholars in religion, performance and politics from around the world. The network is funded by the German Research Foundation.

### 11th Annual Conference of the School of Performing Arts, Malta

On 5 March 2025, **Kevin Egan**, **Amaia Mugica**, and **Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk** presented on their recent performance practices, *Binary Opposition* and *Miss Brexit*.

### Granny Jackson's Dead

*Granny Jackson's Dead* by Big Telly Theatre was presented by Inis Nua in a domestic house in Philadelphia and the Irish American Historical Institute in New York (April 2025) and toured Lislagan (NI) and Cavan in Ireland (May 2025). The research team, including **Joshua Edelman** and **Michael Pinchbeck**, visited the company in New York and Belfast.



### Sweating the Archive

In May 2025, **Patrick Campbell** and **Andrea Maciel** presented 'Cross Pollination', a collaborative performance lecture at the one-day symposium, *Sweating the Archive*, curated by Adriana La Selva as part of her PhD research on the Odin Teatret archive and its transmission processes.

### Festival off Avignon

**Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk** and **Kevin Egan** presented two shows with Reckless Sleepers (*Negative Space* and *A String Section*) at the prestigious Festival off Avignon from 5-16 July 2025.

### IFTR Cologne

In July 2025, **Joshua Edelman**, **Shane Kinghorn**, and **Amaia Mugica** presented research at the *International Federation for Theatre Research* conference – the world's largest gathering of theatre scholars. Topics included Notting Hill Carnival, protest in the post-truth era, and bodily horror in theatre.



## Festival of International Theatre, Sibiu (FITS) 2025

On 25 June 2025, **Shane Kinghorn**, together with Teresa Brayshaw and Niki Woods of Salford University (with the Salford Keys company's *A conversation in 10 Parts*), took the DCP third-year company Off Peak Theatre to perform in the Universities Festival, part of the Sibiu International Theatre Festival 2025.

### Besides the Screen

**Michael Pinchbeck** presented a paper at the University of Nottingham, Ningbo (China), alongside colleagues from the Universities of Nottingham and Swansea. The paper, *Audiovisual Storytelling and Collective Memory of Chinese Immigrants: Case Studies of Our Stories and Talking Trees / 树说/述说: in the UK* (Yan Wu, Michael Pinchbeck, Guo Lan, and Zhennuo Song), examined cross-cultural storytelling and collective memory.



### Olympus Has But Snow

**Jeremie Cyr-Cooke** had an international residency in Luxembourg for the development of his show *Olympus Has But Snow* in August.

### International Imaginings of Ancient Greece

**Jeremie Cyr-Cooke** presented a Conference Paper, 'Olympus Has But Snow: Greek Myths, Gym Culture, and the Performance of Contemporary Masculinities', at the *International Imaginings of Ancient Greece* conference at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in September 2025.

**Maria Nogueira** was invited to the round table 'Dona Iaiá – Workshop: Como nasce a criatividade'; (Re)encontro com Adriana Calcanhotto, University of Coimbra, Portugal.

From 2021-2025, **Patrick Campbell** was a named academic and a member of the Advisory Board for the *Practicing Odin Teatret's Archive* (POTA) project, housed at Ghent University and funded by the Flanders Research Council (£380,191.32). The aim of the research was to investigate what it means to develop, practice and perform an archive through the activation of theatre laboratory Odin Teatret's embodied legacy in a virtual environment, addressing the translation of technique through Mixed Reality.

## Awards and Prizes

Our visiting professor **Matthew Spangler** has co-written a play with Nina McConigley – *Cowboys and East Indians*. The play has received the Edgerton new play award, an annual, nationwide award that goes to a handful of new plays receiving their World Premiere. It will premiere at Denver Center for the Performing Arts in January 2026.

*Granny Jackson's Dead* by Big Telly Theatre won Best Production at New York's prestigious Origin 1st Irish Theatre Festival (January – February 2025). It was named in the Top 50 shows of 2024 by The Stage: 'the weirdest, wackiest and most innovative performance piece of the year'.

PRG member, **Joe Ward Munrow**, was announced as the recipient of the inaugural Robert Holman Award in April 2025.

PRG member, **Zodwa Nyoni**, was shortlisted for Best Playwright award for *Liberation* at the Black British Theatre Awards and Best New Play of the Year in the Alfred Fagon Awards.



## Research Led Pedagogy

**Anna McNamara** has co-authored three articles this year with former colleagues from LIPA: 'Diversifying Representation in Actor Training: A Case Study from the UK' (submitted to TDPT), 'Sustainability In Student Centred Theatre Productions: A Case Study from the UK' (accepted by TDPT) and 'AI and the Locus of Control in Higher Education Training for the Creative Sectors'.

\*TDPT – Theatre, Dance and Performance Training

**Rachel Rimmer Piekarczyk** leads and teaches on MA Performance module, *The Contemporary Laboratory*. This module is directly informed by their practice-research into performance-presentations. They have modelled this approach to practice-research to students by using two of their own performance-presentations as case studies: *Agency and Awakening* devised and performed with Lisa Kendall and *Navigating participation, protest and resistance in Reckless Sleepers' Binary Opposition project* devised and performed with **Kevin Egan**.

**Rachel Rimmer Piekarczyk's** project *Tessellation* is an example of extra-curricular pedagogical research that directly involved participation and collaboration with UG and PG students within Manchester School of Theatre. This was featured in a documentary about *The Future of Practice Research* conference in June 2025 which was – later shown as part of the British Academy *What is Practice-related Research? An introduction and showcase event* in December 2025.

## The Year Ahead

Curated by **Neil Mackenzie**, Future Flares Festival (21 – 23 January 2026) returns with innovative and impactful performances, performance lectures, works in progress and workshops. Featuring work by PRG members, **Patrick Campbell**, **Andrea Maciel**, **Jeremie Cyr-Cooke**, **Michael Pinchbeck**, **Jenny Baines**, **Brigid McLeer** and **Peader Church** (PGR).

**Anna McNamara** is planning to publish an edited book with Routledge entitled *The Women Who Shaped UK Actor Training*, this is due for submission in January 2026.

**Joe Ward-Munrow** is under commission to write the Liverpool Everyman's pantomime for 2026/27.

**Jeremie Cyr-Cooke** has a reviewed iteration of *IMPERCEPTIBLE* that will be presented at the Future Flares Festival in January 2026. He also will continue developing and hopefully publicly present his show *Olympus Has But Snow* in Summer 2026.

**Patrick Campbell** continues to tour work demonstration *The Affective Dramaturgy of the Voice*, with performances at Future Flares Festival (Manchester, UK), Theaterfestival Winterwerft (Frankfurt, Germany) and Teatr Osmego Dnia (Theatre of the Eighth Day) (Poznan, Poland)

**Adinda van't Klooster** has an exhibition, *Animoted*, at the Modal Gallery in SODA, Manchester Met, in March 2026.

**Amaia Mugica** is invited as an international artist to teach on the January 2026 Summer Programme at the *Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile In Santiago* (Chile). She will teach Physical Theatre based on Suzuki, Viewpoints, and Composition. This forms part of ongoing international research collaborations with

Dr Camila Cannobbio, investigating movement, somatics, and digital performance, and feeds into their research-led pedagogy.

*Granny Jackson's Dead* tour dates in Dublin (Trinity College), London (Omnibus Theatre) and Derry (The Playhouse).

**Rachel Rimmer-Piekarczyk** has been commissioned by *Back to the Bone* festival, taking place at The Ballroom, Stoke-on-Trent in June 2026, to choreograph an interdisciplinary dance-performance duet with dance artist Lisa Kendall.

**Rachel Rimmer Piekarczyk** and **Kevin Egan** are co-authoring an article for a special issue of *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training* on 'Re-envisioning the Theatre Laboratory and Training and the 21st Century.' Due for publication in Autumn 2026, the article is called: *A Reckless Sleepers laboratory? Touring and residencies as nomadic models of training for cultural action*.

**Maria Nogueira's** work 'Embodied Digital Pedagogies: Movement-Based Interaction and Co-Creation with AI' was accepted for presentation at the symposium, *Posthuman Pedagogies: Mindful Creativity in the Age of AI*, taking place on 4–5 March 2026 at LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore.

**Jenny Baines** is presenting a paper on *Underline*, the expanded film and performance project they co-curate, at AR@K 25, the annual conference on artistic research at Kristiania University College in Oslo.



**Brigid McLeer** has a forthcoming residency and exhibition at Dorich House Museum, Kingston Upon Thames. The site-based and collaborative project will bring together sculpture, video, and performance. Exhibition dates: 5 September – 12 December 2026. Funding bids in progress.

**Matthew Spangler** will be joining us as a Visiting Professor from San Jose State University. His play, *The Beekeeper of Aleppo*, will tour the UK and Ireland.

Performance Research Group will convene a symposium on 'Performing Archives, Archiving Performance' at the Royal Exchange on 24 June 2026.

Forthcoming **Bunker Talks** include the following guest speakers for Spring 2026 season: Testament (20 January 2026), Kelly Jones x Adam Z. Robinson (3 February 2026), Selina Thompson (3 March 2026), Tanztheater Adrian Look (24 March 2026) and The Guardians of Living Matter (24 March 2026). 175 talks will be curated by 2026/2027 and then the series of talks will be reviewed by the Performance Research Group.

Image: *Binary Opposition* by Reckless Sleepers, October 2025.  
Photographer: Kara Hughes.

Manchester Metropolitan University's public engagement programme for Arts and Humanities research, AHEAD, supported the Performance Research Group with funding and operational support to amplify the research to non-academic audiences and the PRG is an integral part of its annual programme of funded activity.

<https://performanceresearch.mmu.ac.uk>

January 2026

