



Società Italiana d'Estetica

International Conference

## CARE OF BODIES BETWEEN EMOTIONS AND EXISTENTIAL WELL-BEING

Lugano, 27–29 May 2026

The 2026 edition of the SIE Conference will take place at the University of Applied Sciences LUDES in Lugano, in collaboration with the University of Milan and the Italian Society of Aesthetics.

### **Call for Papers**

To encourage the widest possible participation of scholars from both Italy and abroad, we invite the submission of abstracts for papers relating to the areas of research addressed in the conference sessions:

**Session I: Emotions, feelings, and moods for the quality of life**

**Session II: Aesthetic models for a new concept of existential well-being**

**Session III: Beauty in movement between body and performativity**

The three sessions will have specific thematic focuses; therefore, we invite proposals consistent with their respective research areas. **However, it will also be possible to submit open-topic proposals** related to the history of aesthetics, the key concepts of aesthetic thought, and contemporary aesthetic reflection.

Given the international scope of this edition, the organizing committee will reserve part of each session for international scholars.

The conference languages will be Italian, English, French, and German. A simultaneous translation service will be available during the conference.

Papers should not exceed 20 minutes. At the end of each session, there will be a discussion on the issues raised.

### **Submission guidelines:**

Abstracts (with the title in both the presentation language and in English), between 2,000- and 3,500-characters including spaces (excluding bibliography), must specify the thematic area (1, 2 or 3) to which they contribute, or indicate that they are to be considered “open contributions”.

Abstracts must be submitted by email no later than **01/03/2026** to the following address: **convegnosie2026@gmail.com**

Selection will be made by a scientific committee previously approved by the SIE Executive Board. The outcome of the selection will be communicated by **31/03/2026**.

The proposal email must contain the following information:

- Subject: “*Abstract for Convegno SIE 2026*”
- In the body of the message: full name, surname, academic affiliation (if applicable), academic position, telephone number.
- Thematic section number (1, 2 or 3) to which the proposal is directed, or “open contribution”.

The email must include, as attachments, the abstract of the paper and a short biographical profile (not exceeding 1,000 characters including spaces), dated and signed. Attachments may be in docx or pdf format.

### **Brief description of thematic areas**

#### *I. Emotions, feelings, and moods for quality of life*

The interrelation between emotions, feelings, and moods represents a crucial theoretical crossroads for aesthetic research. Emotions, for example, not only permeate artistic experience but also participate in the creative process, fostering conceptual reorganization and original associations (Amabile, 1996; Fredrickson, 2001). More recently, affect dynamics have animated research into the relationship between the fluctuating affective sphere and psycho-physical well-being. In this regard, the concept of mental flexibility—understood as the ability, across multiple domains (cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and physiological), to modulate behaviors or internal states in response to contextual demands (Cheng et al., 2014)—defines aspects of emotional intelligence and creativity (Borghesi, Chirico, Pedroli, et al., 2023), central to transforming ambivalent moods (such as tension or uncertainty) into generative resources. In line with renewed emphasis on the positive and productive role of emotions, we are called to deepen the dynamic and salutogenic aspects of emotions and feelings from an aesthetic perspective, engaging in dialogue with interdisciplinary research on affective dynamics and mental flexibility.

Amabile, Teresa (1996), *Creativity in Context*, Westview Press.

Fredrickson, Barbara L. (2001), “The role of positive emotions in positive psychology”, *American Psychologist*, 56(3), 218-226.

Cheng, Cecilia et al. (2014), “The Perceived Value of Mental Flexibility”, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 106(3), 458–475.

Borghesi, Fabrizio, Chirico, Alice, Pedroli, Elisa et al. (2023), “Emotional Flexibility and Creative Cognition”, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14.

## *II Aesthetic models for a new concept of existential well-being*

Human existence is bodily. Identity is mediated through the body, the center of both individual and collective action. In the twentieth century, the body gained philosophical attention through the classic reflections of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1945), Michel Foucault (1984), and Jean-Luc Nancy (1992). More recently, Georges Vigarello (1993) and David Le Breton (1990) have emphasized the relational and symbolic dimension of corporeality, which requires care. For this reason, the aesthetics of well-being presents itself as an interdisciplinary field of research, weaving together philosophy, history, anthropology, and visual culture. It investigates how the body, self-care, health, and beauty are constituted as aesthetic practices (Lipovetsky, 2017) and as forms of subjectivation-subjugation (Bordo, 1993). This makes it possible to outline the contours of an aesthetics of well-being, grounded in the demands that the body, as our primary instrument of knowing the world, poses from its very first motor acts and postures (Shusterman, 2008).

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice (1945), *Phénoménologie de la perception*, Gallimard.

Foucault, Michel (1984), *L'Usage des plaisirs*, Gallimard.

Nancy, Jean-Luc (1992), *Corpus*, Métailié.

Vigarello, Georges (1993), *Le sain et le malsain: santé et mieux-être depuis le Moyen-Âge*, Seuil.

Le Breton, David (1990), *Anthropologie du corps et modernité*, PUF.

Lipovetsky, Gilles (2017), *Plaire et toucher. Essai sur la société de séduction*, Gallimard.

Bordo, Susan (1993), *Unbearable Weight*, University of California Press.

Shusterman, Richard (2008), *Body Consciousness: A Philosophy of Mindfulness and Somaesthetics*, Cambridge University Press.

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## *III. Beauty in movement between body and performativity*

Over the course of the twentieth century, philosophy profoundly reformulated the concept of beauty, shifting from a static and formal perspective toward a dynamic, embodied, and processual vision in which the analysis of corporeality plays an essential role. This is particularly evident in authors such as Merleau-Ponty (1945), Gadamer (1960), and Adorno (1970). Building on these interpretative lines, the final decades of the century saw the emergence of reflections on the notion of performativity, reinforcing the idea of beauty as processual and transformative, with political resonances as well. Judith Butler (1993), for instance, develops a reflection centered on performativity, where the body becomes the stage for the constitution of meanings and norms. Erika Fischer-Lichte (2004) elaborates the main lines of research in the aesthetics of the performative, placing lived corporeality at the center of its artistic and political significance. This results in a vision of aesthetics as an embodied practice in which corporeality becomes a threshold of meaning, a site of the aesthetic event, and an articulation of the visible and the invisible. Consequently, aesthetics must also be rethought “in movement,” in relation to corporeality, transitory temporality, and the creation of meanings, norms, and possibilities of dissent.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice (1945), *Phénoménologie de la perception*, Gallimard.

Gadamer, Hans-Georg (1960), *Wahrheit und Methode. Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*, Mohr.

Adorno, Theodor W. (1970), *Ästhetische Theorie*, Suhrkamp.

Butler, Judith (1993), *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”*, Routledge.

Fischer-Lichte, Erika (2004), *Ästhetik des Performativen*, Suhrkamp.