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**Speculative Choreographies:
Bodies, Economies, and Movement in a World in Flux**

**California State University, Long Beach
October 23-25, 2026**

Conference Co-Chairs:

**Colleen Dunagan (California State University, Long Beach), Ariel Osterweis (California
Institute of the Arts), Arushi Singh (Chapman University)**

This conference explores how dance speculates—how it reflects, resists, and reimagines—the forces that shape our contemporary world. These forces include migration and memory as well as media, markets, and the social choreography of bodies across borders, platforms, and stages. The conference site rests on what was originally the Tongva village of Puvungna, meaning "gathering place," a site featured in the Tongva/Gabrieleno/Acjachemen peoples' creation stories and stories of emergence. With its indigenous populations, diverse diasporic communities, deep histories of resistance, and global entertainment industries, Los Angeles and the conference location offer fertile ground for rethinking how dance is entangled with questions of value, visibility, and survival.

In this post-truth moment, and in a region forged by spectacle, migration, media, labor, and ecological extremes, the 2026 DSA conference asks: How do bodies move through—with and against—systems of control, extraction, discipline, and erasure? What possibilities emerge when we imagine movement as an affirmative form of world-making?

Speculative Choreographies invites critical engagement with dance as both performance and practice—a form of labor, a mode of resistance, a vessel of memory, a political act, a spectacle and a speculative form, a technology, a way of seeing and being seen, and a way of knowing. Drawing on multiple meanings of "speculative"—to contemplate, to envision possibilities, to calculate risk—the conference foregrounds speculative thinking as a generative framework for

movement analysis and practice. It is through speculation and movement that histories are embodied, systems are promoted or challenged, and futures are rehearsed.

How do dancers and choreographers navigate the intersections of power and freedom, art and activism, visibility and precarity, identity and capital? How is value assigned to movement—through institutions, economies, archives, and screens—and how do dancers challenge, subvert, or reclaim that value? How might speculative thinking sustain us as we navigate the dynamics of seeing and being seen?

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Dance and economic precarity, labor, and cultural capital
- Migration, diaspora, and the spatial politics of movement
- Archiving dance through media, memory, and performance
- Futurist imagining and speculative choreography
- Archival explorations, historical speculations, and critical fabulation
- Power, discipline, and docility
- Culture wars, arts funding, and institutions
- Surveillance, digitality, and embodied resistance in tech-driven spaces
- Spectacles, spectators, and modes of consumption
- Popular and street dance practices in institutional contexts
- Queer and trans choreographies and counter-narratives
- Decolonial and Indigenous approaches to movement and history
- Eco-critical dance practices and choreographies of environmental justice
- Dance dramaturgy as speculation

Proposals may take one of the following forms:

- Individual papers or pre-formed panels of 3 to 4 presenters
 - Papers that are pre-grouped into panels are encouraged and have a higher likelihood of acceptance

- For those submitting individual papers, the committee requests 4-5 keywords or themes to facilitate panel formation.
- HUB submissions to participate in multi-day conversations around HUB themes
- Lecture-demonstrations or roundtable discussions
- Practice-based activities such as movement workshops, dance interventions, performative presentations, and screendances

In-person participation will be prioritized, but the committee will consider hybrid proposals that include an in-person moderator as well as a limited number of virtual paper presentations. Whether a Hub accepts virtual participants is decided by the conveners and will be indicated in the submission form.

For more information on hybrid and virtual options, please see the [submission guidelines](#).

Submission portal will be open from December 19, 2025 to February 10, 2026.

Applicants will be notified of acceptance in early April 2026

For questions related to conference submissions, please email info@dancestudiesassociation.org