



**Institute of Philosophy**  
Slovak Academy of Sciences, v. v. i.



# BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

## Young Philosophy 2026

**Between the Art of Philosophy and the Philosophy of Art**  
(XXI. Annual International Conference for Ph.D. Students and Young Researchers)

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**Institute of Philosophy**  
Slovak Academy of Sciences, v. v. i.  
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**Dominik Kulcsár**  
**Michal Chudý**  
(eds.)

**Macej Kaluža**

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### **The Art of Accepting Failure: Philosophy as a Practice of Intellectual Humility**

*This talk proposes a shift in how we understand the “art” of philosophy. Your PhD thesis and draft will be wrong on an ever growing number of places, really. Instead of treating philosophy primarily as a craft of producing bullet-proof arguments, systems, or definitive explanations, I suggest approaching it as an art of intellectual humility—an art of accepting failure. It started as a practical to have a good life and gain indifference to death. It ends frequently in a rat race for impact. Philosophical thinking has always operated in a space where certainty is fragile. Unlike empirical sciences, which increasingly rely on evidence-based methodologies and experimental validation, philosophy often constructs conceptual models, speculative frameworks, and interpretative visions of reality. These models are not always empirically verifiable and frequently become outdated, revised, or even abandoned. In this sense, philosophy is structurally exposed to the possibility of failure. However, this vulnerability is not a weakness; it is one of philosophy’s greatest strengths. Critical thinking trains us to recognize the provisional character of our ideas and to accept that no philosophical system can fully capture reality. The philosopher’s task is therefore not to achieve perfection or final truth, but to cultivate a disciplined openness to being wrong. The “art of accepting failure” thus becomes a fundamental philosophical virtue. It enables intellectual courage, methodological flexibility, and the capacity to revise one’s assumptions in light of new arguments, perspectives, or empirical developments. Rather than competing with empirical sciences, philosophy prepares us to engage with them critically and creatively, acknowledging the limits of our conceptual tools. In this sense, mastering the art of philosophy means mastering the art of thinking under conditions of uncertainty. To become a philosopher is not to become someone who is always right, but someone who has learned how to be productively wrong.*

**Inna Gerasymenko**

**(University of Potsdam, Postdam, Germany)**

### **The Birth of Philosophy from the Spirit of Language: Morphological Insight as the Art of Philosophizing**

*Can one master the “art of philosophy” while remaining indifferent to the linguistic medium of its manifestation? This paper argues that the traditional academic separation of “rational content” from “literary form” is a fundamental misconception. Drawing on the morphological tradition of J.W. von Goethe and W. von Humboldt, I propose a typology of philosophizing rooted in linguistic structures, emphasizing the unique role of synthetic languages in shaping philosophical thought. The core of the argument distinguishes between the “analytical” type of philosophizing – focused on universal logic and syntactic transparency – and the “synthetic type”. In the latter, particularly in texts with a “heightened degree of poeticity” (such as those by the Pre-Socratics, Plato, or Nietzsche), the morphological texture of the language becomes the primary site of sense-generation. Here, the “art of philosophizing” is not a mere application of logic, but a “choreography of thought” where morphological elements – rhythms, word-fusions, and internal inflections – condition the very possibility of the philosophical message. Following the metaphor of the symbolon from Plato’s Symposium, I argue that in the synthetic tradition, the “philosophical” and the “poetic” are the two halves of a single host-sign. To separate them is to turn the text into lispai – flat, sterile surfaces incapable of reaching the depth of the Greek Logos. I conclude that reclaiming the art of philosophy requires a morphological mastery: a sensitive attention to the “verbal flesh” of the text where the poetic and the logical are indistinguishable. This approach offers a new methodological bridge for understanding philosophy as a living, formative art.*

**Dominik Novosad**

**(University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia)**

### **Philosophy as Lived Practice and Biographical Commemoration in Seneca’s Epistle 30**

*This paper will examine how Seneca’s Epistles, particularly his Ep. 30, appropriate the importance of biographical information in philosophical practice. Recently, John Sellars has brought attention to the fact that ancient philosophical tradition was associated with a form of biographical literature that becomes central by the arrival of the Socratics. According to Sellars, anecdotal recollections of philosophical lives were taken as crucial modes of philosophical communication, especially since, in the ancient tradition, a mode of life carried as much philosophical importance as discourse. In this work I wish to inquire whether we can understand certain Seneca’s narratives, especially those which focus on more anecdotal information of philosophical lives, as species of philosophical biography rather than Roman exempla. In my study of Ep. 30 I shall argue that, rather than extending Roman exempla, Seneca aims to emulate famous biographical recollections of philosophical deaths by narrating a direct meeting with aging friend. Through this reference I will attempt to show that Seneca reflects the particular lively nature of ancient philosophy and creates a corresponding artistic expression in form of biographical narrative. Such study will allow us to observe not only what Seneca considers crucial for authentic philosophical expression, i.e. the harmony between words and acts, but also to the method of biographical commemoration of such lived experience.*

**Thiago Ehrenfried Nogueira**  
**(University of Prešov, Prešov, Slovakia)**  
**How to Master Existence?**

Considering the proposal of the Young Philosophy 2026 conference, the theme “Between the Art of Philosophy and the Philosophy of Art” can be addressed in diverse ways. The path that I would like to present is discussing the theme from the perspective of existential philosophy, more specifically Martin Heidegger’s philosophical project of a fundamental ontology. In *Being and Time* (1927) Heidegger propose a ground project of philosophy that is rooted in existence, i. e., all theoretical and practical parts of experience must be ultimately grounded in our concrete living. That means that no secure theoretical fundamentum inconcussum, can be find to ground all possible experience – and that includes the many guises and modes in which the richness of human experience can have, art, science, labor, politics, affection, sexuality, etc. However, only in questioning what our existence is, and therefore making possible to question what Being is, that we can grasp the many modes of Being in which we deal with the world and ground them in a correct and concrete way. Following this, we can affirm that every existence, simply by existing, it is already philosophical, because it is dealing constantly with the ground of every possible worldly experience. In conclusion, we would like to suggest that, from this philosophical perspective, the question proposed by the conference, “How to master the art of philosophy?” can be turned to the question “How to master existence?”. Because only in mastering the groundless of concrete human existence (Dasein), can we have a ground for everything that is possible for us as beings-in-the-world (In-der-Welt-Sein).

**Malwina A. Tkacz**  
**(Trnava University in Trnava, Slovakia)**  
**Legal Philosophy as Art: A Phenomenological Approach**

What is the art of philosophy, and how can it be practiced in relation to law? This paper argues that legal philosophy is both reflective and experiential, showing that law is not only reasoned but also perceived, felt, and aesthetically experienced. Drawing on phenomenology, particularly Maurice Merleau-Ponty, I examine law’s affective and aesthetic dimensions: it is experienced as binding, interpreted as necessary, and perceived as legitimate. These realms reveal that legal philosophy is inseparable from the lived experience of law, bridging cognition, perception, and ethical as well as aesthetic reflection. From this perspective, the art of legal philosophy involves attending to how law communicates authority, shapes moral imagination, and structures social perception. Legal norms are not merely abstract rules; they are enacted, staged, and interpreted, demanding judgment and reflective engagement. Law’s aesthetic and affective dimensions demonstrate that understanding is not purely cognitive but embodied, participatory, and sensuous. The phenomenology of law illuminates how legal experience mediates between the self, society, and the normative order. In doing so, it frames the art of legal philosophizing as an attentive, perceptive, and critical engagement with lived reality. Legal philosophy thus emerges as a domain where philosophy becomes art: a cultivated sensibility toward justice, legitimacy, and lived meaning, experienced both ethically and aesthetically. This presentation invites reflection on philosophy as an art of perception, interpretation, and experience, showing that law provides a uniquely vivid context for the practice of philosophical thought that is simultaneously rigorous, reflective, and sensuous.

**Dimitar Ganev**  
**(Institute of Philosophy SAS, v.v.i., Bratislava, Slovakia)**  
**On Learning to Judge: Aesthetic Judgment and Epistemic Virtue**

This paper examines whether aesthetic judgment can be understood through the framework of virtue epistemology (a part of epistemology that focuses on epistemic agents and their intellectual traits). In aesthetics, judgments of beauty and artistic merit as a whole are often pulled between subjectivist accounts and realist accounts. In contrast, I’ll argue that the concept of epistemic virtues (positive intellectual traits like open-mindedness and intellectual humility) offers a more plausible account of how aesthetic judgment can be both subjective and normative. The paper begins with a Humean note. In *Of the Standard of Taste*, Hume says that good judgment depends not only on feeling, but on the cultivated capacities of the one who judges. I suggest that this can be better understood in the context of contemporary virtue epistemology, drawing in particular on philosophers like Quassim Cassam, Linda Zagzebski and Jason Baehr. Aesthetic judgment depends on epistemic virtues such as attentiveness, intellectual courage, intellectual humility and openness to revision. These virtues don’t necessarily lead to aesthetic value, but can help explain how agents become better judges of it. This proposal also aims to address the relationship between subjectivity and objectivity in art. Against simple subjectivism, and in a way closer to McDowell’s account of response-dependent value, aesthetic judgment can aspire to be normative without reducing itself to following some aesthetic rules. I suggest that this has implications for philosophy itself. If judging well in aesthetics depends on cultivated epistemic virtues, then the philosophy of art reveals something important about the art of philosophy as a whole. Philosophy is a matter of arguments, but it’s more importantly learning how to judge well and cultivate the character traits that can make you a better thinker.

**Lukáš Šprto**  
**(Comenius University Bratislava, Slovakia)**  
**Umenie filozofie a formy metafyziky**

Otázku po „umení filozofie“ možno chápať ako metafyzickú otázku: v čom spočíva umenie filozofie a ako sa mu naučiť? Príspevok vychádza z tézy, že umenie filozofie spočíva vo forme filozofickej praxe, čiže v spôsoboch, akými sú filozofické praktiky zasadené v normatívnych rámcoch. Inšpirujúc sa neopragmatizmom Richarda Rortyho, príspevok porovnáva dve formy filozofickej praxe, resp. dva normatívne metafyzické rámce. Jeden môžeme nazvať epistemologickým a druhý literárnym. Z týchto prístupov vyplývajú odlišné záväzky: kým v prvom z nich filozofia ašpiruje na vedeckosť, v druhom sa skôr približuje k umeniu. Tento nesúlad predstavuje výrazné napätie v súčasnej metafyzike. Hoci tieto rámce bývajú chápané ako konkurenčné, príspevok ich skôr navrhuje interpretovať ako komplementárne. Esencialistická snaha hľadať jeden správny metafyzický model sa ukazuje ako neproduktívna. Pluralita metafyziky je pozitívnym javom, nie prekážkou na bezpečnej ceste vedy.

**Ema Žugecová**  
**(Institute of World Literature SAS, v.v.i., Bratislava, Slovakia)**  
**The Folktale as a Vehicle of Philosophical Concepts**

This paper examines the folktale as a literary form that functions not merely as a repository of traditional motifs and collective experience, but also as a site in which fundamental philosophical questions are articulated. The analysis is grounded in Greimas's structural semantics, with particular attention to semantic oppositions, actantial relations, and the deeper structures that organise narrative meaning. Focusing on three Slavic folktales (Slovak, Ukrainian, and Russian) that share the same or a closely related plot structure, the paper adopts a comparative perspective in order to examine how similar narrative patterns generate and articulate philosophical meaning across different cultural contexts. It explores the ways in which folktale narrative mediates such concepts as good and evil, guilt and justice, identity, transformation, and the relation between the individual and the order of the world. Its aim is not simply to demonstrate that the folktale may serve as an object of philosophical interpretation, but rather to argue that it functions as a distinctive mode of thinking in its own right. In this perspective, the philosophical dimension of the folktale does not arise only at the level of secondary interpretation; it is already inscribed in the organisation of the plot, in the recurrence of model situations, and in the tensions generated by basic semantic oppositions. By comparing three formally related folktales, the paper also seeks to show how shared narrative structures may sustain comparable philosophical problems while allowing for culturally specific variations in their articulation. It thus contributes to broader reflection on the forms through which philosophy may be encountered in literature. The paper argues that the folktale may be understood not only as an aesthetic form, but also as a medium for the articulation of philosophical concepts and as a distinctive way of apprehending the world.

**Dávid Halada**  
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**Epistemological Uncertainty as a Narrative Device in House of Leaves (2000) by Mark Z. Danielewski**

The famous words by Roland Barthes that 'the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author' provide us with the baseline for analysing House of Leaves (2000), written by Mark Z. Danielewski. In the novel, the reader is four times removed from the 'actual' and 'real' events taking place in the story; first by Will Navidson, a filmmaker documenting his and his family's move to a new house. The second removal comes through the character of Zampano, a scholar writing about Navidson's film itself. The third removal comes through the story of Johnny Truant, who at times editorially interjects himself into Zampano's text, while also providing his own account of the experience of reading Zampano's study. The last removal comes through the editors' silence, who are also characters in the story, leaving some things untouched and changing others for ease of reading. This multiplicity of voices appearing in the story creates an epistemological uncertainty central to the text. As the text employs footnotes, they also become a source of uncertainty, since they mix real scholarly articles and books with fabricated ones, manufacturing scholarly authenticity. These footnotes are thus corrupted as an object of objective knowledge and truth, questioning their validity in the whole novel. Through these paratextual devices, the reader becomes an active participant in the story, as the book often breaks the automatic way of reading, left to right, top to bottom, by having the reader switch between pages seemingly at random, while also providing the reader with enough structural clues with which the text alters the expectations and experience of the reader. This analysis argues that House of Leaves does not just thematise epistemological uncertainty; rather, it makes the reader live through it by presenting multiple narratives and by the unorthodox approach one must take to navigate the text itself.

**Michal Chudý**  
**(Institute of Philosophy SAS, v.v.i., Bratislava, Slovakia)**  
**Sartre and his Cuban Existentialist Heroes**

Jean-Paul Sartre belongs among the philosophers that most challenged the boundaries of the art of philosophical expression. He expressed his theories in conventional treaties and essays, but most profusely in novels, plays, or even journalistic genres. Perhaps his most daring challenge to the uniformity of philosophical expression is *Ouragan sur le sucre*, a series of 16 feature reports from Cuba in 1960. The aim of this presentation is to challenge the conventional narrative that these reports are contentless socialist or Castroist propaganda and offer a novel reading of the text that will highlight its rightful place in the existentialist tradition. The focus will be on Sartre's depiction of the Cuban revolutionaries as "existential heroes", whose revolutionary endeavours are not driven by external ideologies, but are instead a result of their own volition and freedom of choice. The interpretation will focus on Sartre's depiction of the Cuban revolutionaries, but also on the chosen style of his reports and its importance in the construction of said depiction.

**Kludia Kováčová**  
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**V tieni environmentálnej krízy: Literatúra ako priestor transformácie úzkosti**

Príspevok reflektuje klimatickú úzkosť ako prejav hlbokkej morálnej integrity a citlivosti voči environmentálnej spravodlivosti. V kontexte „umenia filozofovať“ sa interpretuje úzkosť ako adekvátne afektívna odpoveď na poznanie ekologického kolapsu a systémových zlyhaní, pričom sa hľadajú spôsoby jej spracovania prostredníctvom filozofickej reflexie a literatúry. Inšpirovaný prácami autorov ako Britt Way a Panu Pikhala, text rozvíja pojem praktickej úzkosti, ktorý sa stáva praktickým umením umožňujúcim transformovať individuálnu úzkosť na eticky motivované konanie založené na starostlivosti, solidarite a angažovanosti. Ekofeministický rámec umožňuje reinterpretovať tento pojem ako dôsledok života v neudržateľnom systéme. Cieľom príspevku je poukázať na to, že práve filozofická literatúra vytvára priestor pre kolektívne stratégie, ktoré premieňajú úzkosť na udržateľnú formu environmentálneho aktivizmu a prispievajú k širšej diskusii o úlohe emócií v morálnom rozhodovaní

**Sára Jeleňová**  
**(Comenius University Bratislava, Slovakia)**

**Vznešené v súčasnom umení: medzi skúsenosťou a reprezentáciou**

Príspevok sa zaoberá otázkou vznešeného v súčasnom umení z hľadiska jeho vzťahu k reprezentácii. Východiskom je klasická estetická tradícia – analytika vznešená Immanuela Kanta (Kritika súdnosti), v ktorej je vznešené spojené s napätím medzi zmyslovou skúsenosťou a jej pojmovým uchopením. Toto napätie sa v súčasnom umení transformuje, keďže vznešené sa už neviaže primárne na prírodu, ale na technologické, mediálne a konštruované prostredia. Príspevok vychádza z predpokladu, že vznešené možno chápať ako indikátor limitu reprezentácie. Ide o moment, v ktorom umelecké dielo naráža na hranice zobraziteľnosti a významovej artikulácie, a tým zároveň tematizuje vlastné podmienky možnosti reprezentácie. Tento posun reflektujeme prostredníctvom teórie Jeana-Françoisa Lyotarda, podľa ktorého moderné a súčasné umenie nesprostredkúva neprezentovateľné ako obsah, ale ukazuje samotnú nemožnosť jeho prezentácie. Umenie tak nevystupuje ako prostriedok reprezentácie, ale ako miesto, kde sa jej limity stávajú predmetom skúsenosti. Cieľom príspevku je analyzovať, v akom zmysle možno vznešené v súčasnom umení chápať ako skúsenosť, v ktorej sa odhaľujú hranice reprezentácie, a zároveň overiť, do akej miery je Lyotardovu koncepciu možné aplikovať na súčasné umelecké praktiky.

**Gabriela Lörinc**  
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**Telo ako podmienka filozofického myslenia: k feministicko-fenomenologickému chápaniu „umenia filozofovať“**

Text sa zaoberá problematikou telesnosti filozofického subjektu a sleduje dôsledky feministicko-fenomenologickej kritiky takých koncepcií subjektivity, ktoré subjekt vnímajú ako abstraktného, univerzálneho a od telesnosti oddeleného nositeľa reflexie. Proti tomuto modelu stavia chápanie subjektu ako nevyhnutne telesného, situovaného a do sveta už zapojeného, pričom práve telesná skúsenosť sa ukazuje ako podmienka možnosti vzťahu k svetu, k sebe samému aj k samotnému aktu myslenia. V nadväznosti na fenomenológiu a feministickú fenomenológiu text poukazuje na to, že telo nemožno redukovať na predmet reflexie ani na sekundárny atribút subjektu, keďže tvorí základný horizont skúsenosti a subjektivity. Z tohto hľadiska sa telesnosť nejaví ako vonkajšia okolnosť filozofovania, ale ako jeden z jeho konštitutívnych predpokladov. Text zároveň tematizuje interdisciplinárnosť problematiky telesnosti či jej spojenie so žitou životnou skúsenosťou ľudí, ktorá priamo prepája teoretickú rovinu filozofie s praktickou oblasťou života.