

Africa e Mediterraneo
Dossier n. 102-103/2025

Pan-African Cultural Legacies: Histories, Practices, and Futures of Convening

Curated by BHMf (Justin Randolph Thompson & Janine Gaëlle Dieudji)

The First and Second Congresses of Black Artists and Writers, held in Paris in 1956 and in Rome in 1959, marked a crucial shift in Pan-African organizing. For the first time, artists, writers, and leading cultural voices were placed at the center of discussions on Black internationalism and solidarity. These gatherings foregrounded culture as a decisive force in shaping Pan-African history, narration, and visions of unity across the diaspora.

This call for papers is a collaboration between Africa e Mediterraneo and The Recovery Plan* inviting reflection on the role of culture in the making of Pan-African solidarities, from the landmark congresses of the 1950s through subsequent gatherings such as FESMAN in Dakar and FESTAC '77 in Lagos. How might these historic efforts provide insight into models of transnational cultural development? What initiatives exist today that continue this work of convening through cultural practices, and how do they draw from or depart from earlier traditions?

We welcome scholarly, artistic, and curatorial contributions that revisit these histories, interrogate their infrastructures, and imagine their legacies in the present.

Possible approaches include:

- The role of culture in shaping Pan-African history and solidarity
- The First and Second Congresses of Black Artists and Writers (1956, 1959) and their legacies
- FESTAC '77, FESMAN, and other major cultural festivals as transnational convenings
- Narratives, archives, and silences surrounding Pan-African gatherings
- Artist-run spaces and collectives as continuations of Pan-African convening practices
- Networks, methodologies, and infrastructures that sustain cultural assemblies
- Contemporary initiatives that carry forward Pan-African and Afro-diasporic cultural work
- Creative and performative practices of convening as tools of solidarity.

Creative proposals (artistic interventions, performances, or curatorial projects) are warmly invited alongside academic papers, with the aim of dedicating a section of the dossier to experimental approaches.

Deadlines

- Abstract submission (max 400 words + short bio): **31st October**
- Notification of acceptance by curators: **5th November**
- Full article submission (Italian, English, or French, with 100-word abstract in English + 5 keywords): **1st December**

Please send abstracts to: abstract@africaemediterraneo.it

****The Recovery Plan** is an exhibition space, library, research, and community center for dialogue and transnational exchange on Afro-descendent cultures located in Florence, Italy, on the Santa Reparata International School of Art (SRISA) campus. Founded in 2019, The Recovery Plan was born out of the over 500 events orchestrated, curated, coordinated, and co-promoted by Black History Month Florence since its inception in 2016. Designed as a cultural repository for socially engaged education, the center hosts many events, seminars, retreats, workshops, and residencies reflecting upon Italy's historic role as a site for cultural exchange. The initiative advanced by The Recovery Plan is a rallying of voices aimed at facilitating cross-cultural research and dialogue. Associazione Culturale BHMF, an Italian non-profit, runs the center with a team of more than twenty volunteers and five advisors from different cultural fields. Curating, coordinating, and promoting an extensive pluri-institutional program year round, BHMF is dedicated to cultivating and promoting cross-institutional networks, collectivizing them in a single annual program dedicated to celebrating Black histories within the global context.*