

Dr.Rico Franses  
Department of Fine Arts and Art History  
American University of Beirut

### Curriculum Vitae

#### Academic Qualifications:

1992: Ph.D (Art History). University of London, Courtauld Institute of Art, London, England.

1987: M.A. (Art History). McGill University, Montreal, Canada.

1982: B.A. (Philosophy). McGill University, Montreal, Canada.

Ph.D. thesis title: *Symbols, Meaning, Belief: Donor Portraits in Byzantine Art.*

Thesis supervisor: Prof. Robin Cormack.

#### Appointments

2013: Director, AUB Art Galleries and Collections.

2012-2016: Associate Chair, Department of Fine Arts and Art History, American University of Beirut.

2008-2012: Chair, Department of Fine Arts and Art History, American University of Beirut.

2007: Associate Professor, Department of Fine Arts and Art History, American University of Beirut.

2006-2007: Associate Professor, Department of Art History and Design, Pratt Institute, New York.

2000-2005: Assistant Professor, Department of Art History and Design, Pratt Institute, New York.

1992-1998: Lecturer (equivalent to Assistant Professor), Dept. of Art History, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.

1996: Visiting Scholar, Center for Literary and Cultural Study, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

#### Academic Awards and Distinctions:

2017: Long Term Faculty Development grant (AUB) for research in library at Duke University for research on theme of Byzantine spatiality.

2015-16: Paid Research Leave, half semester release, research on faciality in Byzantine art, and finalization of details for book *Contact: Donor Portraits in Byzantine Art.*

2014-15: Paid Research Leave, half semester release, research for book *Contact: Donor Portraits in Byzantine Art*.

2014: Long Term Faculty Development grant (AUB) for research in Brussels libraries for research for book *Contact: Donor Portraits in Byzantine Art*.

2012: Long Term Faculty Development grant (AUB) for research in Paris libraries completing research on relations between Byzantine and Islamic Art.

2011: Founding Fellow and Fellow of the Cornaro Institute, a research institute attached to the Cyprus College of Art.

2010: Paid Research Leave for one semester. Topic of investigation: Abstraction in Late Antique, Early Byzantine, and Early Islamic art.

2009: Long Term Faculty Development grant (AUB) to spend one month in New York libraries completing research on relations between Byzantine and Islamic Art.

2007: Long Term Faculty Development grant (AUB) to spend two months in New York libraries completing research for book on Donor Portraits in Byzantine Art.

2005: Promotion to Associate Professor (Pratt Institute).

2003: Faculty grant for publication assistance (Pratt Institute).

1997: Nominated for Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching (Australian National University).

1995: Australian Research Council award for travel to Europe, researching topic "The Distorted Body in Romanesque and Mannerist Art."

1993: Faculties Research Fund (Australian National University) award for travel to Europe, researching topic "Portraiture and the Fragmented Self."

1992: N.H. Baynes Prize for "... Best essay in the University on some aspect of the history, including art, religion and thought, of the Mediterranean lands within the period 400B.C and A.D 1453." (University of London).

1987-1991: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada  
PhD Fellowship.

1987-1989: Fonds pour la Formation de Chercheurs et l'Aide à la Recherche (Quebec,  
Canada) Ph.D. Fellowship. (Ranked first in competition for this award).

1987-1989: Overseas Research Scholarship (awarded by Committee of Vice-Chancellors  
and Principals of the Universities of the United Kingdom).

1986-1987: Fonds pour la Formation de Chercheurs et l'Aide à la Recherche (Quebec,  
Canada) M.A. Fellowship. (Ranked first in competition for this award).

1987: Dean's Honour List, McGill University.

1985-1986: McGill University Major Fellowship (J. J. McConnell Award).

## RESEARCH

### Main Research Interests

- a) Portraiture in Byzantine art.
- b) Visual theology: the consideration of theological issues in uniquely visual terms,  
especially in Early Christian, Byzantine, and Islamic art.
- c) Critical Theory, especially psychoanalytic theory in its relation to the world of the  
visual.

### Publications

#### Books

*Donor Portraits in Byzantine Art. On the Vicissitudes of Contact between Human and Divine.*  
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

## Books--Translations

*Image, Icon, Economy. The Byzantine Origins of the Contemporary Imaginary.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004. Translation of Marie-José Mondzain, *Image, Icône, Économie.* Paris: Seuil, 1996.

Translation revision and editor, *Lacan's Seminar on Anxiety: an Introduction.* New York: Other Press, 2001. Translation of Roberto Harari, *El Seminario "La angustia," de Lacan: una introduccion.* Buenos Aires: Amorrortu, 1993.

## Chapters in Books

"The Deleuzian Spatiality of Byzantine Art," in I. Nilsson and M. Veikou (eds.), *From the Human Body to the Universe - Spatialities of Byzantine Culture.* Leiden: Brill, forthcoming, January, 2020.

"To Not Know God. Geometrical Abstraction and Visual Theology in Islamic Art," in E. Baboula and L. Jessop (eds.), *Art and Material Culture in the Byzantine and Islamic Worlds: Tracing Connections in the Medieval Mediterranean – Essays in Honour of Erica Cruikshank Dodd.* Leiden: Brill, forthcoming, 2019.

"Untime in the Unconscious. On the Dislocations of time in Freud, Lacan, Laurie Anderson and Walid Sadek," in A. Harutyunyan and N. Muller (eds.), *This is the Time. This is the Record of the Time.* Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 2016.

Director's introduction for exhibition catalog, A. Harutyunyan and N. Muller (eds.), *This is the Time. This is the Record of the Time.* Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 2016.

"Lacan and Byzantium. In the Beginning was the Image," in R Betancourt and M. Mavroudi (eds.), *Byzantium/Modernism: Art, Cultural Heritage, and the Avant-Gardes.* Leiden: Brill, 2015, 311-329.

"Partial Transmission," in G. Peers (ed.), *Byzantine Things in the World.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013, 176-189.

"When all that is Gold does not Glitter: On the Strange History of Viewing Byzantine Art," in L. James and A. Eastmond (eds.), *Icon and Word.* London: Ashgate, 2003, 13-24.

"Post-Monumentality; Frame, Grid, Space, Quilt," in P. Duro (ed.), *The Rhetoric of the Frame*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996, 258-273.

#### Articles in Journals

"In the Picture but out of Place. The Lacanian Gaze Again." *Fort-da* 7, no. 2 (2001).

"Monuments and Melancholia: Naming, Forgetting and the Shadow of the Object." *Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society* 6, no. 1 (2001): 97-104.

Introduction to and translation of Marie-José Mondzain, *Image, Icône, Économie*, (Paris; Seuil, 1996), chap. 3. *Hypatia* 15, no. 4 (2000): 55-76.

#### Encyclopaedia Entry

"Face; Visual Arts," in *The Encyclopaedia of the Bible and its Reception*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013.

#### Other

Video recording of guide to Saleeby collection.

TV interview on my work as an art historian. One hour interview, program *Beyond Politics*, Al Etejah (Iraq), screened July 23, 2013.

Numerous TV and press interviews, local and international, regarding art galleries and local art scene, including the Daily Star, L'Orient Le Jour, BBC World Service, New York Times, Financial Times, Die Welt, Süddeutsche Zeitung, Reuters TV, and Sky News Arabia.

Numerous tours of exhibitions at AUB Art Galleries.

#### Select List of Papers / Conferences

"The Facialities of Byzantine Art." Invited lecture, Penn State University, State College, Pennsylvania, April, 2018.

"Deleuze and Guattari and the Byzantine Portrait." Round Table Portraiture, Beyond Resemblance, AUB, 25 April, 2018.

“Optical Fluctuations in Byzantine Art.” Keynote Lecture, Conference Othello’s Island, Center for Visual Arts Research, Nicosia, Cyprus, March, 2018.

"The Deleuzian Spatiality of Landscape in the Menologion of Basil II." Conference From the Human Body to the Universe. Spatialities of Byzantine Culture, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden, May, 2017

“Joan Copjec: Lacanian Theory and Cultural Analysis.” Introduction of speaker Joan Copjec, Conference Lacan contra Foucault, AUB, December, 2015.

“The Unruly Icons of Sinai.” Conference Sinai and Its Icons in Light of the Digitization of the Weitzmann Archive. Princeton University, April, 2015.

“Untime in the Unconscious.” Conference Thinking about Time. American University of Beirut, Beirut, March, 2015.

"Visual Theology in Early Byzantine and Islamic Art." Byzantine Studies Conference, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, November, 2014.

Respondent, session "Critical and Art Historical Machines Today", conference Critical Machines: Art Periodicals Today. AUB Art Galleries, March, 2014.

"John Carswell's Optical Indeterminism," Conference Round Table in association with exhibition Trans-Oriental Monochrome: John Carswell. AUB Art Galleries, December, 2014.

"Discussion with Walid Sadek," Conference Round Table, in association with exhibition This is the Time, This is the Record of the Time. Stedelijk Museum Bureau, Amsterdam, October, 2014.

“Byzantine Anti-Humanism.” Byzantine Studies Conference, Yale University, November, 2013.

“The Non-Visual Face in Levinas and Byzantium.” College Art Association Conference, New York, February, 2013.

“Lacan and Byzantium. In the Beginning was the Image.” Conference Byzantium/Modernism:

Art, Cultural Heritage, and the Avant-Gardes, Yale University, April, 2012.

“Is the Cross and Icon?” 22<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of Byzantine Studies. Sofia, Bulgaria, August, 2011.

“Art, Animism, and the Ecstasies of Vision.” Conference Byzantine Things in the World, Menil Museum, Houston, TX, October, 2011.

“The Blinding Light: Gold in Roman Egyptian, Byzantine and Islamic Art.” Keynote lecture, The 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Boston University Graduate Student Symposium on the History of Art and Architecture, Boston MA., March, 2011.

“Visual Theology in Islamic Art.” Seminar für Semitistik und Arabistik, Freie Universität, Berlin, November, 2010.

“Art vs. Research.” Art, Research, and Creation Colloquium, Le Département de lettres françaises de l’Université Saint Joseph, Beirut, Lebanon, April, 2010.

“The Beginnings of Byzantine and Islamic Art.” Conference on Islamic Art held by The Polish Society of Oriental Art, Cracow, Poland, October, 2009.

“Ecstasy and Infinity in Early Christian, Byzantine and Islamic Art.” Invited lecture, Courtauld Institute of Art, London, February 2009.

“The Meaning of Abstraction in the Formative Phases of Christian, Byzantine and Islamic Art.” Negotiating Boundaries: Cultural Exchange and Production of the Mediterranean, Conference held by the Center for Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies, American University of Beirut, December 2008.

“Collecting Difference or Collecting Sameness?” Collecting Practices in Lebanon: Alternative Visions of the Past, Conference held by the Center for Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies, and Center for American Studies, American University of Beirut, May 2008.

“Threading the Void. Optical Theology in Early Byzantine Art.” Invited lecture at the Department of Architecture and Design, American University of Beirut, December 2007.

“The Human, the Infinite and the Divine. On the Interrelations between Byzantine and Islamic Art.” American University of Beirut, February 2006.

“The Infinite Line in the Imaginary. The Shape of the Cross in Sixth-century Byzantium.”  
Invited panelist, Byzantine Studies Conference, University of Missouri-St. Louis,  
November 2006.

"But what about Joseph? Space and the Family Drama in Late Medieval and Renaissance  
Depictions of the Holy Family." Invited lecture, Aristotelean Chair Seminar, St. Thomas  
Acquinas University, New Jersey, March 2004.

“Resistance in the Unconscious: Rodrigo De Osona and the Late Medieval ‘Adoration of  
the Magi’.” Conference of the Association for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society,  
University of Pennsylvania, November 2002.

“What Paintings tell us about what Vision Looks Like in the Unconscious.” Invited  
lecture, Association for Psychoanalytic Psychology, Legion of Honor Museum, San  
Francisco, March 2002.

“The Portrait, the Icon, the Face, and the Truth.” Invited participant in Portrait/Icon conference,  
Department of Art History, University of Notre Dame, Indiana, March 2001.

“When all that is Gold does not Glitter: On the Strange History of Viewing Medieval Art,”  
Invited Guest Lecture, Department of Art and Art History, University of Texas at Austin,  
November, 1999.

“Sites of Subversion, Sites of Fantasy. Can Postmodern Body Art Deliver?”  
International Association of Philosophy and Literature Conference, Hartford,  
Connecticut, May 1999.

“Psychoanalysis Against the Individual: The Case of the Byzantine Donor Portrait.”  
College Art Association Conference, Los Angeles, February 1999.

"Against the Memorial." Art Association of Australia Annual Conference, Canberra,  
September 1997.

"Desire, Occlusion and Making Strange: The Lacanian Gaze and Parmigianino's Visual  
Field." Center for Literary and Cultural Studies, Harvard University, April 1996.



"The Mannered Enigma at the Point of the Gaze: A Lacanian Perspective on the Distance between Bellini and Parmigianino." Conference of the Association for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society, Washington D.C., November 1996.

"Pulp Fiction: Inside the Brief-case." New Approaches to Film Conference, Humanities Research Center, Australian National University, April 1995.

"Modern Memorializing; Vietnam Veteran's Memorials," Annual Conference of the Art Association of Australia, Melbourne, September, 1994.

"Representations of Women in the French Revolution," response to Prof. Joan Landes, Ideas of Liberty Conference, Humanities Research Center, Australian National University, June, 1994.

"Beyond Recognition: On the Inscrutability of Photographic Portraiture, and the Instability of Personal Identity," National Gallery of Australia, March 1993.

"Surrealism: Revolution of More of the Same?" National Gallery of Australia, October, 1993.

"Flesh and Blood in Rubens's Bodies," National Gallery of Australia, May, 1992.

"Metaphor, Metonymy and Reality in Byzantine Donor Portraits," Medieval Studies seminar, Courtauld Institute. 1991.

#### Professional Association Memberships

Byzantine Studies Association

College Art Association

American Association of Museums / International Commission of Museums.

#### Languages

Native tongue: English

Other languages: French, Spanish, German, Afrikaans.

Reading and comprehension: Greek, Dutch, Italian.

Currently learning Arabic.