

**JUSTIN WILLSON**

Curator

The Icon Museum and Study Center

203 Union Street

Clinton, Massachusetts 01510

[j.willson@iconmuseum.org](mailto:j.willson@iconmuseum.org)

**PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS**

2/2024-Present Curator, The Icon Museum and Study Center, Clinton, Massachusetts  
9/2022-9/2025 Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Art History Leadership, Cleveland Museum of Art / Case Western Reserve University  
1/2021- 8/2022 Postgraduate Research Associate / Lecturer, Dept. of Art & Archaeology, Princeton University

**EDUCATION**

Ph.D. Princeton University, Dept. of Art & Archaeology (2021)  
Committee: Charles Barber, Beatrice Kitzinger, Paul Bushkovitch (Yale), and Ivan Drpić (UPenn)  
Visiting Student University of Chicago, Graham School (2014-15)  
Visiting Student Yale University, Yale College (2013-14)  
B.A. University of Georgia, Depts. of Philosophy & English, Cum laude (2008)

**PUBLICATIONS**

**Books**

*The Moods of Early Russian Art*. Manuscript under Review.

Editor, *The Visual Culture of Late Byzantium and the Early Modern Orthodox World (c.1350-c.1669)*. Volume 4 in the series "Sources for Byzantine Art History" (Under contract with Cambridge University Press).

**Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles**

"Byzantine Excess, Slavic Hesitancy: Euthymius of Tarnovo on Visions," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 50 (2024) [4,000 words]

"Icon Printing and the Collection of Pimen Sofronov." *Print Quarterly* 41 (2024) [Accepted]. (5,235 words).

"Theophanes of Nicaea and the Diagram that Draws and Erases Itself," with David Jenkins, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 78 (2024) [Accepted; 17,606 words + edition and translation of 3,997-word Greek text]

"On the Aesthetic of Diagrams in Byzantine Art," *Speculum* 98, no. 3 (2023): 763-801

“Transferring Jerusalem to Moscow: Maksim Grek’s Letter and Its Afterlife,” with Ashley Morse, *The Russian Review* 82, no. 2 (2023): 248-62

“The Terminus in Late Byzantine Literature and Aesthetics,” *Word & Image* 38, no. 4 (2022): 435-47

“The *ho Ōn* (ὁ ὄν) Inscription in Christ’s Halo,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 71 (2021): 395-415

“Relief Crosses in Ivory: Material, Form, Setting,” *Vizantiiskii vremennik* 105 (2021): 160-78

“A Meadow that Lifts the Soul: Originality as Anthologizing in the Byzantine Church Interior,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 81, no. 1 (2020): 1-21

\*with public-facing blog: [Recycled words: an eco-friendly alternative to original literature](#)

“The Origin of the Crafts according to Byzantine Rosette Caskets,” *West 86th* 27, no. 2 (2020): 202-15

“Reading with the Evangelists: Portrait, Gesture, and Interpretation in the Byzantine Gospel Book,” *Studies in Iconography* 41 (2020): 67-103

“Theodore Pediasimos’s ‘Theorems on the Nimbi of the Saints’,” *Byzantinoslavica: Revue internationale des études byzantines* 78 (2020): 203-39 [+ edition and translation of 1,224-word Greek text]

“A Gift No More: A Byzantine Reliquary of the Holy Cross,” *Res: Anthropology & Aesthetics* 71/72 (2019): 131-44

### **Peer-Reviewed Book Chapters**

“Light Effects: Epistemologies of Affect in Early Slavic Literature,” in *Medieval Light Studies: Presence, Use, Theory, and Symbolism of Light in the Middle Ages*, eds. Vera Henkelmann and Mirko Breitenstein. “Das Mittelalter. Beihefte” (Heidelberg University, Forthcoming)

“The Literalist Mindset of Early Muscovite Painting,” in *Enigma in Medieval Slavic Culture*, ed. Ágnes Kriza (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2023), 243-64

“The Allegory of Wisdom in Chrelja’s Tower seen through Philotheos Kokkinos,” in *Byzantium in Eastern European Visual Culture in the Late Middle Ages*, eds. Maria Alessia Rossi and Alice Isabella Sullivan (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 1-27

### **Peer-Reviewed Translations**

N. V. Pivovarova, “The Miracle-Worker Blessed Simeon of Yuryevets: Tradition of Veneration

and Iconography,” *Art in Translation* 15, no. 3 (2023): 1-19

### **Works-in-Progress**

“Virtue Idealized in the Golden Chambers of Ivan the Terrible.” Under review. (7,860 words).

Translation: Elena Zotova and Elena Yukhimenko, "A Unique Private Cast Copper Hinged Icon of 1718." Under review. (6,463 words + 1,633-word translator intro).

“Seeking Accuracy: Hazards for the Icon Painter.” (13,025 words).

“Theodora’s Mirror, Or the Likeness Out in Front of the Panel.” (6,782 words).

“Authenticity and Forgery in the Davies Icon Collection.” (6,432 words)

Edition, translation, and commentary: “The Lost Illuminated Apocalypse of Pseudo-Daniel.” New edition, translation, and introduction to Greek text (=6,733 words). With András Kraft.

### **Book Reviews**

*Slavic Review* (2024): Tarasov, Oleg, “How Divine Images Became Art: Essays on the Rediscovery, Study and Collecting of Medieval Icons in the Belle Epoque” (Open Book Publishers, 2024)

*The Journal of Religion* 104, no. 3 (2024): Milner-Gulland, Robin. *Andrey Rublev: The Artist and His World* (London: Reaktion Books, 2023)

*The Journal of Icon Studies* 3 (2020): Antonova, Clemena. *Visual Thought in Russian Religious Philosophy: Pavel Florensky’s Theory of the Icon* (New York: Routledge, 2020)

### **PRIZES, AWARDS, AND FELLOWSHIPS**

#### **Essay Prizes**

2023 Emerging Scholar Prize, Society of Historians of East European, Eurasian and Russian Art & Architecture. Based on *Speculum* article.

2020 First Prize, Graduate Essay Competition, North East Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies Conference. Essay: “Virtue Idealized in the Palace Murals of Ivan the Terrible”

2019 Second Prize, Graduate Essay Award, International Center of Medieval Art. Essay: “On the Aesthetic of Diagrams in Byzantine Art”

#### **External Awards, Fellowships, Grants**

2024 ICMA/Kress Exhibition Development Grant

- American Philosophical Society, Franklin Research Grant  
 2023 Medieval Academy of America, Olivia Remie Constable Award  
 Hellenic Research Fellowship, Tsakopoulos Collection, Sacramento State University Library  
 Ohio State University, Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies Research Grant  
 2022 Mary Jaharis Center Sponsored Panel, Byzantine Studies Conference  
 Association Internationale des Études Byzantines Travel Grant  
 Byzantine Studies Association of North America Travel Grant  
 Mount Athos Foundation of America Research Scholarship  
 2021 Centre for Medieval Studies Postdoctoral Research Fellow, National Research University - Higher School of Economics, Moscow (2021-24, \*declined)  
 2019 Mary Jaharis Center Dissertation Research Grant  
 Liana Paredes Fellowship, Hillwood Estates, Museum & Gardens  
 2018 Fulbright Research Scholarship, Department of Art History, Moscow State University  
 2017 Medieval Academy of America, Graduate Student Consortium Grant.

### **University Awards and Research Funding**

- 2023 Baker Nord Center for the Humanities Flash Grant, Case Western Reserve University  
 2021 Princeton Humanities Council Grant, Race Before Modernity Book Club (2020-22)  
 2020 Dean's Completion Fellowship/Postgraduate Research Associate Award (2020-22)  
 2019 The Frank J. Mather Jr. Memorial Graduate Award, Art & Archaeology Center for Culture, Society, and Religion, Graduate Research Fellow (2019-20)  
 2018 Princeton Institute for International & Regional Studies, Cycle Grant  
 2017 Seeger '52 Center for Hellenic Studies, Summer Fellow (2016; 2017)  
 Committee for the Study of Late Antiquity, Summer Fellow (2016; 2017)  
 2015 Seeger '52 Center for Hellenic Studies, Graduate Fellow Award (2015-16)  
 Williams College Graduate Program in the History of Art, Full-Tuition Fellowship and Stipend (2015-17, \*declined)  
 2008 Hope Academic Merit Scholarship, University of Georgia (2003-08) \*Full tuition

### **SELECTED RECENT PRESENTATIONS**

#### Conferences

\*Invited

- 2024** "Painter versus Printer: Tensions between Iconographic Media," Association for Slavic, East European & Eurasian Convention, Boston, November 21-23  
 \*"The Fate of Icon Painters in Constructing a Saint's Legacy," Strategies of Sainthood: Local Saints in Premodern Eastern and South Eastern Europe, Institute for Habsburg and Balkan Studies, The Austrian Academy of Science, May 10-11  
**2023** Speaker, "The Icon Painter's Labor: The View from Hagiography" and Roundtable Presenter, "Experiencing Religion in Premodern Orthodoxy," Association for Slavic, East European & Eurasian Convention, Philadelphia, November 30-December 3  
**2022** \*Chair, Roundtable: "Of Myths and Men: Precarity of Memory in Sixteenth-Century Muscovy," Association for Slavic, East European & Eurasian Convention, Chicago,

November 10-13

Co-Organizer, Panel: "Diagrammatic Thinking in Byzantium: Between Narrative and Rhetoric, Image and Object," Byzantine Studies Conference, Los Angeles, November 3-5.

"Gospel Book Illumination and Discursivity," 24th International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Venice and Padua, August 22-27

**2021** \*Respondent: Anna Zacharova, "Reception and Adaptation of Byzantine Art in Old Rus," Yale Lectures on Late Antique and Byzantine Art, November 12

"The Facialization of Non-Europeans in Premodern Slavic Literature," Association for Slavic, East European & Eurasian Studies Convention, Chicago, November 10-13 (Panel organizer --Cancelled)

\*"Icon Commentaries: From Authenticity to Forgery," Collecting Orthodoxy in the West, Museum of Russian Icons, Clinton, MA, June 11-12

**2020** "Icons Misbehaving, Or How to Tame Disobedient Art," Association for Slavic, East European & Eurasian Studies Convention, November 5-8 (online) (Panel organizer)

"The Origin of the Crafts according to Byzantine Rosette Caskets," Byzantine Studies Conference, October 23-25 (online)

"Nostalgia and Miracle Working Icons in Sixteenth-Century Muscovite Art," Institute of Fine Arts/Frick Symposium, April 17-18 (cancelled)

**2019** "Wishfulness and the Mother of God's Icon in Late Medieval Russia," Association for Slavic, East European & Eurasian Studies Convention, November 23-26 (Panel organizer)

\*"The Four Virtues of Solomon in Ivan IV's Golden Chambers Frescoes," Universität zu Köln: "Enigma in Medieval Slavic Culture," Symposium, November 14-16

"On the Aesthetic of Diagrams in Byzantine Art," Byzantine Studies Conference, October 17-19

**2018** \*"The Allegory of Wisdom in Chrelja's Tower (1335) seen in light of Philotheos Kokkinos's Discourse on Wisdom," Byzantine Studies Conference, Mary Jaharis Center Sponsored Panel, October 4-6

\*"Seeing Nimbi in the Fourteenth Century in Byzantium," Universität zu Köln: "Inheriting Byzantium," June 18-19

Talks

- 2024** \*“Printing Icons: The Pimen Sofronov Archive,” Medieval Slavic Summer Institute, Ohio State University, June 2024
- \*“On Paper: Print and Iconicity in the Balkans and Beyond,” Institute for Habsburg and Balkan Studies, The Austrian Academy of Science, May 14
- “Printed Icons in the Early Slavic World,” The Icon Museum and Study Center, Clinton, MA, April 30
- “Maksim Grek Between Two Worlds,” Tsakopoulos Hellenic Collection, Sacramento State University Library, February 13
- 2023** \*“The Theology and Aesthetics of Icons,” St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Cleveland Heights, December 10 and 17
- \*Presentation on Karin Krause, *Divine Inspiration in Byzantium* (Cambridge UP, 2022) 2nd Online Byzantine Book Festival, University of Edinburgh, March 11
- \*“Myth and the Painter: Early East Slavic Sources,” I Need a Hero! Reading National Myths in Europe, Literature Department, Hamilton College, February 14
- \*“Sources for Byzantine Art History: Current Status and Future Steps,” Institute for Medieval Studies —Research Seminars, Leeds University, January 31
- 2022** \*“Russian and Post-Byzantine Icons at Kenyon,” Medieval Art History Seminar, Kenyon College, December 2
- “Theophanes of Nicaea and the Diagram that Draws and Erases Itself”
- \*Forschungskolloquium im SoSe 2022, Isabel Grimm-Stadelmann und Sergei Mariev, Munich and Mainz, May 30
  - \*The Dionysius Circle, University of Georgia Department of Philosophy, April 5
  - \*Mediterranean Encounters Workshop and Pre-Modern Hellenisms Workshop, Seeger Center for Hellenic Studies, Princeton, January 11 & March 21
- 2021** \*“Painting the Virtues of the Czar in Early Muscovy,” Museum of Russian Icons, Clinton, MA, Fall lecture series, September 11
- 2020** \*“Theodore Pediasimos’s *Theorems on the Nimbi of the Saints*,” Vienna-Princeton-Oxford-Mainz-Berlin Graduate Exchange, Vienna, June 17-19 (postponed to 2022)
- “Belated Jerusalems: Maksim Grek against *translatio Hierosolymi*,” with Ashley Morse
- Index of Medieval Art, Princeton, November 23 (online)
  - \*Oxford/Cambridge Early Slavonic Webinar, June 9 (online)

“On the Aesthetic of Diagrams in Byzantine Art”

- Delaware Valley Medieval Association, Graduate Student Workshop, February 29
- \*Seeger Center for Hellenic Studies, Princeton, Lecture, February 18

**2019** \*“Poetry and Iconography in Late Medieval Russia,” with Ashley Morse, The American Center, Moscow, April 26

\*“Fedor the Priest’s Gospel Book of 1577” (In Russian), Seminar on Early Russian Art, E. S. Smirnova and A. S. Preobrazhensky, Moscow State University, March 22

### **BLOGS/DIGITAL HUMANITIES CONTRIBUTIONS**

- “[A Seating Arrangement for God](#),” Cleveland Museum of Art Blog (July 21, 2023)
- “[The Zyrianskaia Trinity Icon](#),” Mapping Eastern Europe, North of Byzantium (2020)
- “[Triptych with the Mandylion \(1637\)](#), The Kremlin Armory Workshops, Moscow,” in *Encyclopedia of the Global Middle Ages*, ed. Alice Isabella Sullivan (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020) <http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781350990005.0058>

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE / SERVICE**

#### **University Teaching / Service**

- 2023 (Fall) Art 351/451: “Forms of Experience in Early East Slavic Art,” Instructor of Record, Case Western Reserve University
- 2021 (Spring) Art 310: “The Icon,” Instructor of Record, Princeton University
- 2018 (Spring) Art 103: “Arts of the Americas,” Assistant Instructor, Princeton University

#### Program in Medieval Studies, Princeton University

- 2021-22 -Co-Organizer of Race Before Modernity Book Club
- 2020-21 -Director of Medieval Studies Graduate Committee (\*with honorarium)
- Chair of the Late Antique, Medieval and Byzantine Workshop (LAMB)
- Co-Organizer of Race Before Modernity Book Club
- 2019-20 -Co-Organizer of LAMB

#### **High School Teaching / Service**

- 2009-13 High School Language Arts Instructor (2009-13)  
Dougherty Comprehensive High School, Albany, Georgia
- \*New Teacher of the Year Award (2009-10)
  - \*Unsung Hero Award (2009-10)
- State of Georgia Teaching Certification (2009-15)
- Advanced Placement (AP) Certification (2011-15)

AP Language (Advanced Placement); AP Literature (Advanced Placement); Honors British Literature (12th grade); Honors American

Literature (11th grade); Honors World Literature (9th-10th grades)

Chair of Language Arts Department (2011-13)

School District Leadership Committee Member (2011-13)

Club Sponsor

Beta Club (2010-13)

Poetry Club (2010-13)

### **Community Service**

2008-13

Founder and Director of The First Ave Youth Club

Arts Education/Life-skills neighborhood rehabilitation not-for-profit in Albany, GA. Community partnerships with Albany Public Housing Authority, Albany Art Museum, Albany Civil Rights Museum, Thronateeska Heritage Center, Albany State University (HBC). *Reference available upon request.*

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

-Speaker, Professional development panel (with Nany Um and Jonathan Fine), Department of Art & Archaeology, Princeton University Graduate School, GradFutures Initiative (4 hours)

-Speaker/Organizer, "Career Paths Lunch Series," Cleveland Museum of Art/Case Western Reserve University, Joint Program in Art History. 5 meetings (1½hrs each), Spring 2023

-Speaker, "From Start to Finish: An Insider's Career. Guide to Grad School and Beyond," Princeton University Center for Career Development, April 27, 2021 (2hrs)

-Participant, Early Slavic Studies Association "Early Career Webinar," May 8, 2021 (2hrs)

-Coursework: "Introduction to Emotional Intelligence" and "Developing Your Emotional Intelligence: Core Competencies for Great Leadership," Weatherhead Executive Education, Case Western Reserve University, July 11-12, 2023 (16hrs)

- Coursework, "The Coach Approach: Initiating Dialogues for Effective Outcomes," Weatherhead Executive Education, Case Western Reserve University, February 6, 2023 (8hrs)

### **Service to Academic Field**

2024-2028 Editorial Advisory Board, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*

2023-2026 Publications Committee, International Center of Medieval Art (ICMA)

2019-Present Treasurer, Early Slavic Studies Association (ESSA)



Manuscript Reviewer:

*Studies in Iconography; Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik; Byzantinoslavica*

*Professional Societies:*

College Art Association

Byzantine Studies Association of North America

Early Slavic Studies Association

Medieval Academy of America

Society of Historians of East European, Eurasian, and Russian Art & Architecture

International Center of Medieval Art

Mediterranean Encounters Working Group (Seeger Center for Hellenic Studies)

*Languages*

Modern Russian (speaking/reading); Ancient/Modern Greek (reading); Church Slavonic (reading); German (reading); French (reading); Italian (reading)