

## Session at PMR (Villanova, 27–29 Oct 23)

Villanova University, PA, USA, Oct 27–29, 2023

[www1.villanova.edu/university/liberal-arts-sciences/programs/theology/events/pmr.html](http://www1.villanova.edu/university/liberal-arts-sciences/programs/theology/events/pmr.html)

Alysée Le Druillenec and Ailie Posillico, Paris

Panel "Signifying God: Theological Hermeneutics in Devotional Literature and Religious Art Studies"

at 48th Annual International Patristic, Medieval and Renaissance Studies Conference (PMR).

TIME: 28 OCT 23, 1:30 - 3:30pm, The Inn, Villanova University.

This panel aims to study the representations of the divine, especially non-verbal forms of communication, as theological language.

In his foundational work *Theological Hermeneutics: Development and Significance*, Werner G. Jeanrond writes that "the interpretation of the text or piece of art is a linguistic activity, for it is carried out through language." For Werner G. Jeanrond, "language" interacts with non-verbal mediums of communication "in the broadest possible sense: a sculpture, a painting, a musical score, a ballet, a clown act with its gestures, all these modes of artistic expression use language." In this way, he explains, "the concept of language covers a much broader reality than just verbal expressions." While Werner G. Jeanrond focuses his book exclusively on the interpretation of verbal modes of expression in so far as they are theologically relevant, this panel takes his work one step further by particularizing the ways in which non-verbal forms of human communication invite viewers into a hermeneutical practice. That is, panelists read icons, paintings, sculptures, illustrations, gestures, intonation of voice, displays of drama, and theatricality in liturgies as endowed with theological meaning which in turn invites audiences to interpret them as such.

To this end, papers consider images in their multiple art forms as "linguistic activity," that is, as theologically complex moments that participate in the making of Christian history. How do images participate in historical events - such as the various reforms - via their hagiographic and iconographic natures? Can, and if so how can, certain visual artworks be considered as invitations into a hermeneutical process of theology? And how do images in devotional texts cite other artistic modes of sculpture, painting, and performances of the liturgy to call their audiences to enact the image through imagining themselves as at least relevant for if not entangled with it? Particularizing a religious image, each panelist's work relates epistemologies of theology and religion to those of literature and art history.

### PROGRAM

Till-Holger Borchert (Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum, Aachen)

On the aspect of simultaneity in the representation of God and other pictorial strategies in paint-

ings by Jan van Eyck and his contemporaries

John D. Steichen (Boston College)

Image, Symbol, and Sign in Saint Bonaventure's The Tree of Life

Ailie Posillico (Villanova University, Philadelphia)

The Irony of the Community: Letters, Visions, and the Saint in a Medieval German Convent

Alysée Le Druillenc (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, UCLouvain)

Depicting Christophoria in the Seventeenth Century: a participation to a catholic "hermeneutical reformation"?

A panel organized by Alysée Le Druillenc (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne & UCLouvain) and Ailie Posillico (Villanova University).

48th Annual International Patristic, Medieval and Renaissance, Studies Conference at Villanova University; Featuring Robin Jensen & Matthew Milliner.

Reference:

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<<https://arthist.net/archive/40081>>.