

Short biography: Dr Rita Steyn



Dr Raïta Steyn is currently a Senior Lecturer in Art Education at the Department of Education, University of Pretoria and the External Examiner in Design for Umalusi. Her research covers two fields: religious art and art education.

Religious Art: it refers to Afro-Byzantine religious art and cultural traditions in Nubia and Ethiopia, with special attention on influences and cultural interactions with Southern Africa (especially Limpopo, Venda). She has published a book, several articles, and two book chapters. Abroad, her papers presented in International Congresses have been also published.

Art education: through innovative approaches in teaching Visual Arts, and in the context of 'We' and the 'Others', she promotes social awareness, inclusiveness and human empathy. On international level, she established a platform of collaboration between the UP and AUT (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) Art students.

In 2016, she received the *Excellence Award* for research on 'Byzantine Art in Africa' (Lyceum Club for Greek Women) and in 2019 the *Leadership and Innovation in Teaching and Learning Award* (Faculty of Education, UP).

On personal level, apart from participating in numerous art exhibitions, she exhibited her artworks on the celebrated African singer, Brenda Fassie, at the State Theatre of Pretoria, July 2010. She took part in an exhibition hosted at UJ to celebrate George Bizos's 85th birthday, October, 2013. She also painted Byzantine icons for Orthodox churches in South Africa, and co-organized a FIFA Art competition in conjunction with the Greek Embassy, in 2010.