



Bissera Pentcheva

Victoria and Roger Sant Professor of Art and Professor, by courtesy, of Classics
Art & Art History

 Curriculum Vitae available Online

Bio

BIO

Bissera Pentcheva's work focuses on Byzantium and the medieval Mediterranean, more specifically aesthetics, phenomenology, and acoustics. Her most recent book *Hagia Sophia: Sound, Space and Spirit in Byzantium* (Penn State University Press 2017) explores the interconnection among acoustics, architecture, and liturgical rite. She has also edited, *Aural Architecture in Byzantium: Music, Acoustics and Ritual* (Ashgate, 2017). Pentcheva has published another two books with Pennsylvania State University Press: *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 2006 that won the John Nicholas Brown prize from the Medieval Academy of America in 2010 and *The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual, and the Senses in Byzantium*, 2010. She has held a number of prestigious fellowships among them: J. S Guggenheim, American Academy of Rome, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Mellon New Directions Fellowship for the study of Classical Arabic, Alexander von Humboldt (Germany), Onassis Foundation (Greece), Dumbarton Oaks, and Columbia University's Mellon Post-doctoral fellowship. Her work has been published at the *Art Bulletin*, *Speculum*, *Gesta*, and *Res. Anthropology and Aesthetics*, and *Convivium*.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Professor, Art & Art History
- Professor (By courtesy), Classics

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Full Professor, Department of Art & Art History, (2017- present)
- Associate Professor by courtesy, Department of Classics, Stanford University, (2010- present)
- Associate Professor, Department of Art & Art History, Stanford University, (2010-2017)
- Mellon New Directions Fellowship, to study Classical Arabic, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, (2010-2012)
- Assistant Professor by courtesy, Department of Classics, Stanford University, (2009-2010)
- Humboldt Research Fellowship, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, (2005-2005)
- Assistant Professor, Department of Art & Art History, Stanford University, (2003-2009)
- Post-Doctoral Mellon Fellowship, Columbia University, (2001-2003)
- Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Onassis Foundation, Athens, Greece, (2001-2002)
- Dumbarton Oaks Junior Fellowship, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C., (2000-2001)
- Norton Fellowship for Dissertation Research, Harvard University, (1999-2000)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- John Simon Guggenheim Fellow, Guggenheim Foundation (2018-2019)

- Wissenschaftskolleg, Berlin, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (2018-2019)
- American Academy of Rome, American Academy of Rome (2017-2018)
- Dean's Award for Innovation in the Humanities, Stanford Center for Computer Research for Music and Acoustics (2010)
- John Nicholas Brown Prize for Icons and Power as outstanding first monograph in Medieval Studies, Medieval academy (2010)
- Richard E. Guggenheim Faculty Scholar, Stanford University (2007-2010)

BOARDS, ADVISORY COMMITTEES, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Affiliate, Byzantine Studies Association of North America
- Affiliate, Alexander von Humboldt Gesellschaft
- Affiliate, Zbornik Matize Srpske za likovne umetnosti
- Affiliate, Medieval Academy of America
- Affiliate, Istanbul/Constantinople Project
- Affiliate, International Center for Medieval Art
- Affiliate, College Art Association
- Member, Editorial Board, Serbian Journal of Art History
- Peer-Reviewer, Gesta
- Peer-Reviewer, Res. Anthropology and Aesthetics
- Peer-Reviewer, Dumbarton Oaks Papers
- Peer-Reviewer, The Art Bulletin
- Director of Graduate Students, Dept. of Art History, Stanford University (2013 - 2014)
- External Reviewer, Institute for Advanced Studies, Princeton (2013 - 2014)
- Member, Advisory Board for the Center for East European and Eurasian Studies at Stanford (2013 - 2014)
- Member, Dean's Committee for Islamic Studies (2012 - 2013)
- Member, Advisory Board for the Abbasi Program of Islamic Studies at Stanford (2012 - 2013)
- Internal Reviewer, Stanford Humanities Center (2011 - 2012)
- Member, English Renaissance Literature Search Committee, English Dept., Stanford University (2011 - 2012)
- Director of Graduate Students, Dept. of Art History, Stanford University (2010 - 2011)
- Member, Dean's Committee for Islamic Studies (2009 - 2010)
- Director of the Medieval Studies Program, Stanford University (2008 - 2009)
- Member, Advisory Board for the Abbasi Program of Islamic Studies at Stanford (2008 - 2009)
- Member, Acquisitions Committee, Cantor Arts Center (2008 - 2007)
- Co-Director of Graduate Students, Stanford Department of Art & Art History (2006 - 2007)
- Member, Executive Committee, Stanford Medieval Studies Program (2006 - 2007)
- Member, Renaissance Faculty Search Committee, Stanford Department of Art & Art History (2006 - 2007)
- Member, Curriculum Committee, Stanford University (2003 - 2005)
- Internal Reviewer, Stanford Humanities Center (2003 - 2004)
- Member, Renaissance Search Committee, Stanford University (2003 - 2004)
- Member, Dissertation Colloquium, Columbia University (2001 - 2002)
- Researcher, Byzantine Women and Their World, Sackler Museum, Harvard University (2000 - 2002)
- Cataloguer, Visual Collection, Harvard University (1999 - 2000)

- Member, Joint Faculty Library Committee, Harvard University (1997 - 1998)
- Participant, Program in Roman Archaeology and Topography, American Academy in Rome (1997 - 1997)
- Participant, Survey of the Middle Byzantine Settlement at Çanlı Kilise, Aksaray, Turkey (1996 - 1996)
- Member, Phi Beta Kappa Society (1995 - present)
- Curator, Student Art Work, Hollis Center, Dartmouth College (1994 - 1994)
- Research Assistant, The Glory of Byzantium, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (1994 - 1994)
- Founder, Art Club of Dartmouth College (1993 - 1994)
- Participant, Renaissance Art and Architecture, Dartmouth College, Study Abroad Program, Florence, Italy (1993 - 1993)
- Participant, Italian Literature and Sieneese Art, Dartmouth College, Language Study Program, Siena, Italy (1992 - 1992)

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- Ph.D., Harvard University , Medieval and Byzantine Art and Architecture (2001)
- M.A., Harvard University , Medieval and Roman Art and Architecture (1998)
- B.A., Dartmouth College , Art History (1995)

LINKS

- Department Of Art/Art History: <https://art.stanford.edu/people/bissera-pentcheva>

Teaching

COURSES

2025-26

- Experiencing Early Global Art and Architecture: ARTHIST 1A, CLASSICS 56 (Win)
- Introduction to Middle Byzantine Music Notation II: ARTHIST 258B (Win)
- Junior Seminar: Methods & Historiography of Art History: ARTHIST 296 (Aut)
- Medieval Image Theory: ARTHIST 209C, ARTHIST 409, CLASSICS 158, CLASSICS 258, REES 409 (Win)
- The Art of Medieval Spain: Muslims, Christians, Jews: ARTHIST 208B, ARTHIST 408B (Aut)

2024-25

- Experiencing Early Global Art and Architecture: ARTHIST 1A, CLASSICS 56 (Win)
- Hagia Sophia: ARTHIST 208, ARTHIST 408, CLASSICS 173, CLASSICS 273 (Win)
- Introduction to Middle Byzantine Music Notation: Transcribing and Singing Old Byzantine Chants: ARTHIST 258, ARTHIST 458 (Win)
- Junior Seminar: Methods & Historiography of Art History: ARTHIST 296 (Aut)
- The Dome as an All-Seeing Eye: Theatre of Judgment in Byzantine Art: ARTHIST 208A, ARTHIST 408A, CLASSICS 119, CLASSICS 319 (Aut)

2023-24

- Dissertation Seminar: ARTHIST 670 (Win)

2022-23

- Audiovision in the Medieval Cult of Saints: ARTHIST 206B (Win)
- Audiovision in the Medieval Cult of Saints: ARTHIST 406B (Win)
- Decolonizing the Western Canon: Introduction to Art and Architecture from Prehistory to Medieval: ARTHIST 1A, CLASSICS 56 (Win)
- The Art of Medieval Spain: Muslims, Christians, Jews: ARTHIST 208B, ARTHIST 408B (Spr)
- Virginity and Power: The Mother of God and Visions of Empire: ARTHIST 208D, ARTHIST 408D (Aut)

STANFORD ADVISEES

Doctoral Dissertation Reader (AC)

Ana Nunez

Doctoral Dissertation Advisor (AC)

Maria Shevelkina, Maria Terss

Doctoral (Program)

Andrei Dumitrescu

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Chiasm in choros: The dance of inspirited bodies** *POSTMEDIEVAL-A JOURNAL OF MEDIEVAL CULTURAL STUDIES*
Pentcheva, B. V. V.
2023
- **The Virgin Mary and Sainte-Foy: Chant and the Original Design of the West Facade at Conques** *RELIGIONS*
Pentcheva, B. V. V.
2022; 13 (12)
- **Audiovision. Image and Chant at Ste. Foy in Conques** *MUSIKTHEORIE*
Pentcheva, B.
2022; 37 (1): 41-54
- **Divine Anamorphosis. The Phenomenality of Gold and Chant in a Fourteenth-Century Antiphonary from Santa Maria sopra Porta** *CONVIVIUM-EXCHANGES AND INTERACTIONS IN THE ARTS OF MEDIEVAL EUROPE BYZANTIUM AND THE MEDITERRANEAN*
Pentcheva, B.
2021; 8 (1): 186-217
- **ICONS OF SOUND Voice, Architecture, and Imagination in Medieval Art** *INTRODUCTION ICONS OF SOUND*
Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by Pentcheva, B. V.
2021: 1-+
- **THE GLITTERING SOUND OF HAGIA SOPHIA AND THE FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE CROSS IN CONSTANTINOPLE** *ICONS OF SOUND*
Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by Pentcheva, B. V.
2021: 52-100
- **TRANSCENDENT VISIONS Voice and Icon in the Byzantine Imperial Chapels** *ICONS OF SOUND*
Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by Pentcheva, B. V.
2021: 101-115
- **Performative Images and Cosmic Sound in the Exultet Liturgy of Southern Italy** *SPECULUM-A JOURNAL OF MEDIEVAL STUDIES*
Pentcheva, B. V.
2020; 95 (2): 396-466
- **Optical and Acoustic Aura in the Medieval Image: The Golden Retable of the Pentecost at Stavelot** *MATERIAL RELIGION*
Pentcheva, B.
2020
- **Aural Architecture in Byzantium Music, Acoustics, and Ritual Introduction** *AURAL ARCHITECTURE IN BYZANTIUM: MUSIC, ACOUSTICS, AND RITUAL*

Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by Pentcheva, B. V.
2018: 1-+

● **Hagia Sophia: Sound, Space and Spirit in Byzantium**

Pentcheva, B. V.
Pennsylvania State University Press.2017

● **Performing the Sacred in Byzantium Image, breath and sound** *PERFORMANCE RESEARCH*

Pentcheva, B. V.
2014; 19 (3): 120-128

● **The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual, and the Senses in Byzantium**

Pentcheva, B. V.
Pennsylvania State University Press.2013

● **The Performance of Relics** *Symmeikta. Collection of Papers Dedicated to the 40th Anniversary of the Institute for Art History, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade*

Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by Stevovic, I.
Belgrade: Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade.2012: 55–71

● **The Miraculous Icon: Medium, Fantasy, and Presence** *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium*

Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by Cunningham, M., Brubaker, L.
Aldershot: Ashgate.2011

● **Hagia Sophia and Multisensory Aesthetics** *GESTA-INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF MEDIEVAL ART*

Pentcheva, B. V.
2011; 50 (2): 93-111

● **Miriam's Dance: Poetry as Movement in Byzantine Culture** *Bild, Ding, Kunst*

Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by Wolf, G., Muller
Munich: Fink.2011: 149–154

● **Hagia Sophia and Multisensory Aesthetics** *Gesta*

Pentcheva, B. V.
2011; 50 (2): 93-111

● **Space & Sound in Renaissance Venice: Architecture, Music and Acoustics** *The Art Bulletin*

Pentchev, B. V.
2011: 489-491

● **What is a Byzantine Icon? Constantinople versus Sinai** *The Byzantine World*

Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by Stephenson, P.
London, New York: Routledge.2010: 265–283

● **Icone e pottere: La Madre di Dio a Bisanzio**

Pentcheva, B. V.
Milan: Jaca Book Spa.2010

● **The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual, and the Senses in Byzantium**

Pentcheva, B. V.
Pennsylvania State University Press.2010

● **Moving Eyes: Surface and Shadow in the Byzantine Mixed-Media Relief Icon** *Res. Anthropology and Aesthetics*

Pentcheva, B. V.
2009; 53: 223-234

- **Epigrams on Icons** *Art and Text in Byzantine Culture*
Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by James, L.
New York/Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.2007: 120–138
- **Byzanz, der Westen und das 'wahre Kreuz.'** *Die Geschichte einer Reliquie und ihrer künstlerischen Fassung in Byzanz und im Abendland* *Speculum*
Pentcheva, B. V.
2007: 1007-1009
- **Räumliche und akustische Präsenz in byzantinischen Epigrammen: Der Fall der Limburger Staurothek** *Die kulturhistorische Bedeutung byzantinischer Epigramme*
Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by Rhoby, A., Hörandne, W.
Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften.2007: 75–83
- **Containers of Power: Eunuchs and Reliquaries in Byzantium** *Res. Journal of Anthropology and Aesthetics*
Pentcheva, B. V.
2007; 51: 109-120
- **Painting or Relief: The Ideal Icon in Iconophile Writing in Byzantium** *Zograf*
Pentcheva, B. V.
2007; 31: 7-13
- **The performative icon** *ART BULLETIN*
Pentcheva, B. V.
2006; 88 (4): 631-?
- **Icons** *Women and Gender in Medieval Europe: An Encyclopedia*
Pentcheva, B. V.
New York: Routledge.2006
- **Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium**
Pentcheva, B. V.
Pennsylvania State University Press.2006
- **The 'Activated' Icon: The Hodegetria Procession and Mary's Eisodos** *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*
Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by Vassilaki, M.
London: Ashgate.2004: 195–207
- **Visual Textuality: The Logos as Pregnant Body and Building** *Res. Journal of Anthropology and Aesthetics*
Pentcheva, B. V.
2004; 45: 225-248
- **Madonna, Orthodox** *History of Childhood*
Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by Fess, P. S.
New York: Macmillan Reference.2003
- **The Virgin of Constantinople: Power and Belief, Byzantine Women and Their World,**
Pentcheva, B. V.
edited by Kalavrezou, I.
New Haven: Yale University Press.2002: 113–119
- **Figure and Likeness. On the Limits of Representation in Byzantine Iconoclasm** *CAA Reviews.*
Pentchev, B. V.
2002

- **The supernatural protector of Constantinople: the Virgin and her icons in the tradition of the Avar siege** *BYZANTINE AND MODERN GREEK STUDIES*
Pentcheva, B. V.
2002; 26: 2-41
- **Rhetorical Images of the Virgin: The Icon of the 'Usual Miracle' at the Blachernai** *Res. Journal for Anthropology and Aesthetics*
Pentcheva, B. V.
2000; 38: 34-55
- **Imagined Images: Visions of Salvation and Intercession on a Double-Sided Icon from Poganovo** *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
Pentcheva, B. V.
2000; 54: 139-153