Seeing What Takes Place: Exploring Immersive Experiences of Religious Ritual

PI: John Soboslai, PhD
Montclair State University

Seeing What Takes Place is a workshop exploring the creation of immersive, explanatory videos of religious rituals from a variety of faith and cultural traditions. Generously sponsored by a Digital Humanities Advancement Grant from the National Endowment of Humanities, the program will bring together a selection of religious studies scholars and experts in Extended Reality (XR) technologies to discuss the prospects, promises, and perils in creating a set of resources for use in higher education contexts as well as the wider public.

The goals of the sessions will be threefold:
1) Establishing a set of rituals and practices to focus on for the first round of video creation.
2) Determining best practices in navigating cultural/religious dichotomies, attending to diverse religious representation, and relationships with faith communities.
3) Delineating the technological needs for the creation, hosting, and dissemination of the created resources.

Grant consultants will participate in a two-day conference brainstorming and collaborating on how to actualize the project. In addition to the creation of a white paper outlining the findings of our meeting, insights gleaned from the conversation between scholars and digital humanities experts will inform future rounds of funding requests aimed at procuring the means of creating a small set of videos to serve as proof of concept and templates to use going forward.

All correspondence and inquiries should be directed to the Principal Investigator at soboslaij@montclair.edu.