

# In memoriam

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> **Rory du Plessis**

*School of the Arts, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.*

*rory.duplessis@up.ac.za (ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8907-9891>)*

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## *Beschara Karam*

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*Image & Text* expresses our deep sadness at the passing of Beschara Karam. Beschara served on our Editorial Board for over a decade and her contributions were instrumental in shaping the journal. As a scholar, Beschara published three articles in *Image & Text* and her research demonstrates her intellectual curiosity, as well as her masterful command of feminist theory, trauma studies and Afrofuturism. In the article, 'Subverting the gaze: the voyeuristic, fetishised spectacle of Karl Lagerfeld's *Pirelli Calendar* (2011)', Beschara analysed how the calendar sexually objectified the models and provided a reading of the photographs by engaging with Laura Mulvey's theorisation of the male gaze (Karam 2013). In 'William Kentridge's *Monument* (1990) as counter-monument and the embodiment of negative aesthetics', Beschara made a significant contribution to the study of Kentridge's work by analysing how they operate as counter-monuments (Karam 2016). In 2019, Beschara with her husband, Mark Kirby-Hirst, guest edited a themed section on the film, *Black Panther* (2018). The themed section highlighted the film's contributions to cinematic history, as well as how the film offers a tool for decolonising our world. Beschara's research will lay a foundation for future generations and her legacy will live on in the scholarship of *Image & Text*.

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Rest in Power  
Beschara  
and may your texts  
call us to  
Live in Power.

May the texts  
become our *dentata*  
to castrate the male gaze –  
With his way of looking  
that commodifies the observed  
as a calendar of pleasure,  
that disrobes her of dignity,  
                  makes her skin shudder,  
                  robs her of safety,  
And her face,  
                  drained of Theia's radiance,  
now recoils in vulnerability.

May the texts  
be our foundation stone  
for raising counter-monuments  
to make visible our nation's wounding.  
The abomination  
cut into us,  
cankered our skin  
and scorched our eyes to see  
in white and black.  
It ruled over how we relate to one another,  
it decreed  
who I am and  
who you are.  
It butchered our past  
and enslaved generations.

                  In our counter-monument,  
we grieve what apartheid stole from us,  
we weep for our ancestors,

and the wounding  
now becomes a commandment  
for us to stand as guardians of equality.

May your texts,  
charged with the zeal of Afrofuturism  
give us the power to imagine  
and to dream  
an Africa  
where we practice  
hope for tomorrow and  
greet freedom as a  
promise that rises  
in today's actions, thoughts and deeds.

Beschara,  
may your words  
become our words.  
May your words  
write our worlds to come.

## References

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