

## PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION

### The University of Michigan School of Art and Design

Holly Hughes, assistant professor of art and design, School of Art and Design, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of art and design, with tenure, School of Art and Design (she also holds the title of associate professor of theatre and drama, without tenure, School of Music).

#### Academic Degrees:

B.A.	1977	Kalamazoo College, Art Kalamazoo, MI
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#### Professional Record:

2003 – present	Assistant Professor, without tenure, School of Art and Design, and Associate Professor, without tenure, School of Music, University of Michigan
2001 – 2003	Visiting Assistant Professor, School of Art and Design, University of Michigan
2000 – 2001	Adjunct Professor, Women's Studies, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
1996 – 1997	Adjunct Professor, Drama, Purchase College, State University of New York, Purchase, NY
1993 – 1997	Adjunct Professor, Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies, New York University, New York, NY

#### Summary of Evaluation:

**Teaching** – Holly Hughes is a gifted, engaging, demanding, and effective professor who captures the attention and interest of her students. Within her classroom, students of differing sexual, ethnic and other identities find a particularly welcoming place to explore creative work. From her teaching, students gain a solid foundation in performance art theory and history. Professor Hughes fills a void in our faculty, creating a space for students to engage in forms of expression not possible elsewhere in the University or the School. As an artist at the center of the Culture Wars of the last decade she teaches students to consider censorship and cultural policy. Many performance artists regarded today as the up-and-coming artists of their field credit the teaching and inspiration of Professor Hughes. She is the originator of a number of unique and far ranging School of Art and Design class offerings, including an outreach course that brings students into community service arenas. Among the faculty at School of Art and Design, she is regarded as an outstanding colleague whose pedagogy influences the curriculum and programs of the School of Art and Design.

**Creative Work / Research** – Holly Hughes is an internationally renowned performance artist, playwright and director. Named by a *New York Times* writer as one of the most important humorists of our time, she has written, produced and performed an impressive list of performance works. Her works have been presented throughout the U.S. and abroad, including at the Public Theatre in New York, the Institute for Contemporary Art in London, the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, the Yerba Buena Center in San Francisco, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Painted Bride in Philadelphia, Drill Hall in London, and many other venues. Professor Hughes is the recipient of numerous awards and grants, including: fellowships and awards

from the National Endowment for the Arts; two Obie awards; a Rockefeller grant; and a Ford Foundation grant. She has authored two books on performance art: *O Solo Homo: The New Queer Performance*, which won the Lambda Book Award, and *Clit Notes: A Sapphic Sampler*. In addition to her creative work, Professor Hughes is recognized by her peers for her research on performance theory, queer studies, and women's and gender issues.

#### Significant Recent Works:

- 2006, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Ham?*, Commissioned for the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the University of Michigan Institute for Research on Women and Gender, Ann Arbor, MI
- 2006, "Staging Human Rights," Presentation at the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Performance Studies International Conference, University of London, London, England
- 2005, *A Sapphic Sampler Platter*, Keynote Solo Performance, Live Art Symposium, Ohio University, Athens, OH
- 2005, "NEA at Forty," Invited Panelist, Conference on the History of the NEA and the Future of Democracy, University of Texas, Austin, TX
- 2005, *Dress Suits to Hire*, Performances at Drill Hall, London, England; LaMama Theatre, New York, NY; and the Off-Center Theatre, Austin, TX
- 2004, *Preaching to the Perverted*, Keynote Solo Performance, Women in Theatre Festival, Perishable Theater, Providence, RI
- 2004, Featured Performer, American Theater in Higher Education Annual Conference, Toronto, Canada

Service – Professor Hughes' service record is equally outstanding. In addition to chairing and serving on a number of committees within the School of Art and Design, she is an active participant in University-wide academic activities. She is a member of the Executive Committee of the Institute for Research on Women and Gender, a co-chair of the Lesbian Gay Queer Transgender and Intersex Lecture Series, and was a member of the search committee for the University's Vice President for Research. Currently, she is co-chairing an effort to create a new interdisciplinary undergraduate degree program between the School of Art and Design and the Department of Theatre and Drama.

#### External Reviewers

Reviewer A: "She is recognized as a significant contributor to queer theory and queer performance theory, in addition to being celebrated for her work as an artist."

Reviewer B: "Her solo work blazed new paths and encouraged many artists to develop innovative idiosyncratic ways of presenting personal autobiographical narratives. Her place in the vortex of the Culture Wars of the last decade also provides students an amazing relationship to censorship, cultural policy, and academic research."

Reviewer C: "The plays and performances of Holly Hughes have had a significant impact, not only in the theatre...but also in theatre theory and scholarship as an unusual number of theatre theorists have repeatedly turned to Hughes' work as a way to think through the zeitgeist of feminist aesthetics particular to the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

Reviewer D: "...a perusal through Ms. Hughes's tenure binder demonstrates that she is simply one of the most significant voices in feminist and queer performance nationally and internationally."

Reviewer E: "Her body of work, which has influenced a new generation of artists throughout the country, is for me among the most courageous and beautiful that I have witnessed in my lifetime."

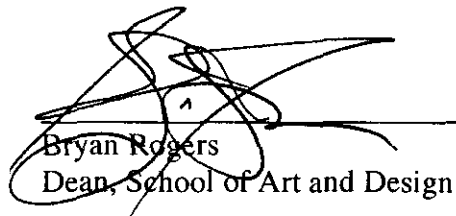
Reviewer F: "I continue to regard Hughes as one of the most thoughtful, skillful, and important performance artists in America today; she is also a dedicated and gifted teacher... Hughes is probably the best prose stylist of any contemporary performance artist in the US."

Reviewer G: "Holly Hughes is easily one of the most important artists working in feminist and gay/lesbian/queer performance during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries."

Reviewer H: "The collaborative projects she develops with her students... seem to build on her strength – finding a voice, engaging with communities, and at the same time expanding communities beyond their university or affinity groups. I cannot imagine how these students could be better served."

Summary of Recommendation:

Holly Hughes is one of the foremost humorists, playwrights and performance artists of our time, as well as an equally gifted and dedicated educator. With the support of the Executive Committee, I strongly recommend her promotion to associate professor of art and design, with tenure, in the School of Art and Design.



Bryan Rogers  
Dean, School of Art and Design

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