

**PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION**  
**The University of Michigan-Dearborn**  
**College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters**  
**Department of Humanities**

Approved by the Regents  
May 15, 2008

Susan N. Erickson, associate professor of art history, with tenure, Department of Humanities, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters is recommended for promotion to professor of art history with tenure, Department of Humanities, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters.

Academic Degrees:

Ph. D. 1989	University of Minnesota
M.A. 1982	University of Minnesota
B.S. 1978	North Dakota State University, Fargo
B.A. 1978	North Dakota State University, Fargo

Professional Record:

1997 - present	Associate Professor of Art History, University of Michigan-Dearborn
1991 - 1997	Assistant Professor of Art History, University of Michigan-Dearborn
1989 - 1991	Assistant Professor of Art History, Savannah College of Art and Design

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Erickson's teaching is rated as excellent. Since her promotion to associate professor in 1997, she has taught a variety of different art history courses. She designs and conducts her classes with great attention to developing the visual literacy of her students, their critical thinking and writing skills, and their knowledge of the broader cultural contexts of art. Student reviews across all her courses show that students consistently laud Professor Erickson's knowledge of and enthusiasm for the subject matter, her patience and helpfulness in grasping its import, and her availability to help them get the most out of the course. The numerical ratings on Professor Erickson's student evaluations are routinely high, with a very high percentage of students across all her courses indicating that they would recommend her courses to others. In her portfolio narrative on teaching, Professor Erickson discusses how the writing assignments for all her courses contribute to the College's writing across the curriculum goal, and how the field trips she frequently requires of her students illustrate and reinforce what they have learned in the classroom. To further air her students in her course in Asian art, Professor Erickson provides guides to pronunciation and introductions to basic concepts used in Chinese and Japanese written languages.

Research: Professor Erickson's research is rated as significantly capable. Since her last promotion in 1997, she has edited a museum exhibition catalogue, and published three scholarly articles and four book chapters. She has also had several of her works translated into Chinese, and has had an additional three articles accepted for publication. Professor Erickson's research focus is on early Chinese art, especially burial customs. Her essays on the cliff-tombs of the Han Dynasty that appeared in article form in the *Journal of East Asian Archaeology* typify the meticulous research that characterizes all of her publications, several of which are quite lengthy. Reviewers praise Professor Erickson's command and insightful understanding of early Chinese

materials and her ability to clearly render material that is by its nature very complex. Reviewers of her scholarship praise the clarity and the thoroughness of her published work, as well as her innovation and utilization of excavated materials to ground the analysis and conclusions of her scholarly investigations. Combined with the many conference presentations at important national venues, her work has demonstrated her skill as a scholar and the direction her research will take in the years ahead.

#### Recent and Significant Publications:

Susan Erickson, "Han Dynasty Tomb Structures and Holdings." *Cambridge History of China Supplement to Qin and Han Volume*. Michael Loewe and Michael Nylan, eds. (Forthcoming in 2008).

Susan Erickson, "Archaeology of the Non-Han Southwest." *Cambridge History of China Supplement to Qin and Han Volume*. Michael Loewe and Michael Nylan, eds. (Forthcoming 2008).

Susan Erickson, various essays and object entries in *China's Past: Art Archaeology and Architecture of the "Wu Family Shrines."* C. Liu, M. Nylan, and A. Barbieri-Low, eds. Princeton University Art Museum and Yale University Press (2005).

Susan Erickson, "Eastern Han Dynasty Cliff Tombs of Santai Xian, Sichuan Province." *Journal of East Asian Archaeology*. Volume 5, no. 1-4 (2006): 401-469.

Susan Erickson, *The Sweet Hereafter: Art from Han Dynasty Tombs*. Exhibition Catalogue. Editor and author of introduction. January 2003.

Susan Erickson, "Delicate and lovely...unique and strange: Art of Sichuan Province, Second Century B.C.E. to Third Century C.E." *Oriental Arts* 28.8 (September, 1997): 78-84.

Service: Professor Erickson's service is rated as excellent. She has served on a wide variety of campus-wide, college, and departmental committees, including membership on the University of Michigan-Dearborn Media Board (a Faculty Senate Committee) from 2003 – present and the CASL Art Committee in 2007. Professor Erickson has also served as the Faculty Senate Liaison to the Commission for Women (1999–2000), was the Humanities Department Representative to the Faculty Senate (1997-2000), and chaired or been a member of four faculty search committees since 2001, and was the Humanities Department associate chair in 2000-2001. Professor Erickson has brought her calm and collegial approach to all of these service responsibilities.

#### External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "Professor Erickson has obviously long been in demand for contributions to exhibitions and is clearly continuing to develop her own ideas. She is still, best, perhaps, at presenting the substantial range of information that the extraordinary excavations in China are bringing forward. But in a very careful and meticulous manner, she also frames this material in innovative and useful ways..."

Reviewer B: "Professor Erickson demonstrates a keenly critical perception and clear command of early Chinese material...as well as an admirable outspokenness that is rare among fellow scholars."

Reviewer C: "Erickson's most important publication, in this reviewer's opinion, is 'Han dynasty tomb structures and holdings.' This is a very useful comprehensive survey of tombs and

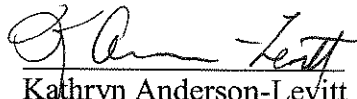
tomb furnishings, the first such article with which I am familiar devoted to Han. It shows that the Han experienced major shifts in tomb construction ... The discussion of coffins and jade suits is good, particularly the discussion of *mianzhoo* (face coverings) in lacquer, which have not been explored before.”

Reviewer D: “Another feature that consistently distinguishes her work is her insistence on using excavated materials as her base, or control set, even when working on pieces in collections. This is a real strength, especially in a field where work on museum materials are text based interpretation has dominated the research for so long. As a result, her published research is solid and she makes use of her expertise effectively regardless of audience.”

Reviewer E: “Susan Erickson is one of a handful of scholars doing pivotal research in the early Chinese Art field, particularly the period from Zhou through Eastern Han. Erickson’s work is distinguished by careful study of objects, notable in bronze, jade, and stone, and the close reading of Chinese texts to support her findings.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Susan Erickson has demonstrated commitment in each of the areas of academic performance. Her service to the university, the College, and the Art History discipline has been outstanding; her commitment to excellence in teaching amply demonstrated, and her research influential. We are pleased to recommend, with strong support of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters Executive Committee, Susan N. Erickson for promotion to professor of art history, with tenure, Department of Humanities, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters



Kathryn Anderson-Levitt  
Dean  
College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters



Daniel Little  
Chancellor  
University of Michigan-Dearborn

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