

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
School of Art and Design

Approved by the Regents
May 20, 2010

Stephanie Rowden, assistant professor of art, School of Art and Design, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of art and design, with tenure, School of Art and Design.

Academic Degrees:

M.A. 1999 Eastern Michigan University, Community Counseling, Ypsilanti, MI
B.A. 1982 Brown University, Studio Art, Providence, RI

Professional Record:

2003 – present Assistant Professor of Art, School of Art and Design, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
2001 – 2003 Visiting Assistant Professor, School of Art and Design, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Evaluation Summary:

Teaching – Professor Rowden is a committed and highly effective teacher of both undergraduate and graduate students. She has inserted the medium of sound into all levels of study at the School of Art and Design, enriching students' creative practices, setting some on professional courses, and in many cases transforming students' lives. She is an expert at teaching the craft of sound, carefully dissecting student work and speaking about it articulately, while guiding students in their journeys to find meaning in their compositions. In their evaluations, students speak of her patience, empathy and compassion, and her ability to guide them to discover and express their own voices. They describe her as honest, critical and encouraging.

Creative Work / Research – Professor Rowden is a highly respected and unique artist working within the overlapping territories of sound – audio, performance, sound sculpture, sound installation and public sound works. Her early work incorporated sound as an element in her sculpture, and gradually evolved into an equal mix of physical objects and soundscapes, most often with short lyrical pieces emanating from objects that create intimate listening experiences. Currently, her work focuses on radio and public installations, and includes collaborations with poets, musicians and dancers. Her work has been received with acclaim and has been shown in many venues galleries and museums in New York and aired on National Public Radio, Studio 360, Public Radio International, Michigan Radio and at the Third Coast Audio Festival. She is the recipient of awards from the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life and Culture, ArtServe Michigan, the National Endowment for the Arts, the MacDowell Colony, Artists Space and the Ragdale Foundation, and was recently a faculty fellow at the University of Michigan Institute for the Humanities.

Significant Recent Works and Activities:

2009 – present Co-Curator / Creator, *Sounds of the State*, Michigan Radio. An ongoing series of audio vignettes (“sonic haiku”) featuring places, memories, and experiences from across the State of Michigan.

- 2008 Exhibition, *Odpowiedz...Please Respond*, Jewish Culture Festival, Krakow, Poland.
- 2008 Broadcast, *Klezmer in Krakow*, Studio 360, Public Radio International.
- 2007 Broadcast, *Curve of the Earth*, Third Coast International Audio Festival (Chicago, IL), WBEZ-Chicago Public Radio, Michigan Radio.
- 2006-2008 Performances/Broadcasts, *Possessives Used as Drink (Me)*, Princeton University, California Institute of the Arts, College of St. Benedict (St. Joseph, MN), Harvard University, de Young Museum (San Francisco, CA).

Service – Professor Rowden has been active in service to the School of Art and Design, the University and the community. She has served on numerous faculty committees and has presented her work to University alumni through the Michigan Seminar Series. In her engagement classes, she and her students have worked with elders at University Living in Ann Arbor and in Detroit at the St. Patrick’s Senior Center. Her most important service has been to bring the medium of sound into a central place in the University arts community and beyond. In a collaborative venture, she invented Michigan Radio’s *Sounds of the State*, which now permeates the airways in all parts of Michigan enabling artists and citizens to participate in its ongoing creation.

External Reviewers

Reviewer A: “I have had the pleasure of speaking to her classes and have seen the way students are energized in her presence...I have spoken to dozens of college classes around the country, and Stephanie’s was among the most engaged.”

Reviewer B: “Seeing and hearing Stephanie’s projects...my reaction was: *Yes. That’s the way to do it.* She understands the unique power of sound to spark the imagination and to tap deep memory and emotion. Her strategies for getting people to come close, open a physical door and literally ‘listen in,’ are brilliant.”

Reviewer C: “Stephanie’s feeling for the poetic, for the evocative, for the musical and textural dimensions of the human voice, along with her ‘sense of place’ – her ability to *tune in* to both individuals and communities, in order to find the distinctive cultural and geographical qualities that give them their flavor – are all qualities that help define the authenticity of her work.”

Reviewer D: “Our listeners have told us that [Rowden’s] soundscapes and audio poetry have helped them see the landscapes around us differently, given them moments of reflection, and reminded them of the connections to place and places in the state.”

Reviewer E: “Conferring tenure on Stephanie Rowden would be to broadcast a clear message about the School of Art and Design’s concern with pedagogical rigor, commitment to community engagement, and support of interdisciplinary artistic enterprise. I am inspired by the thoughtfulness of her work and the ability to so organically integrate her teaching, service and creative practice.”

Reviewer F: “Stephanie Rowden’s work stands out, in that it is one of the rare submissions from a visual artist [that] crosses boundaries of artistic disciplines and encompasses not only a

complete vision for production of the sound, but an awareness of the depth and scope of the listening process that is documented in her work. What is also significant to note, from a musician's perspective, is the high level of sound quality and attention to beautiful presentation of detail in the work itself."

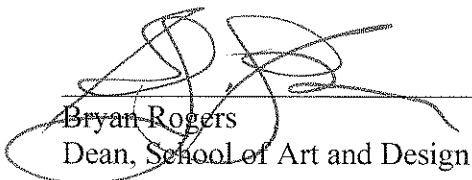
Reviewer G: "She has made sound documentaries, sound art installations, and electroacoustic work that is broadcast and presented in galleries and at concerts. In each category, her work is being shown in prominent and well-respected public venues with peer review...I also note that Professor Rowden involves students in the community through oral history projects. This is a brilliant integration of research, scholarship and community service, the kind of idea that is crucial to bring academia together with the wider community in a meaningful way."

Reviewer H: "Ms. Rowden's professional accomplishments are consistently superior. Her dedication and commitment to her art practice cannot be disputed. She is an individual whose achievements in the fine arts have earned her the respect of colleagues in the art world."

Reviewer I: "...I consider *Odpowiedz...Please Respond* one of the most successful and powerful public art/public dialogue projects I have ever seen...Overall, I consider Professor Rowden's work to be innovative, beautifully crafted, well-conceived work of the first rank. It fuses art's gift of quite contemplation with its capacity for public intervention. This is a rare and exciting achievement and Professor Rowden shows every sign of continuing to deepen and expand this work..."

Summary of Recommendation:

Stephanie Rowden is an exceptional artist and educator with a deep commitment to teaching and community engagement. I strongly recommend her for promotion to associate professor of art and design, with tenure, School of Art and Design.



Bryan Rogers
Dean, School of Art and Design

May 2010