

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
School of Art and Design

Holly Hughes, associate professor of art and design, with tenure, School of Art and Design, associate professor of theatre and drama, without tenure, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, and associate professor of women's studies, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of art and design, with tenure, School of Art and Design, professor of theatre and drama, without tenure, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, and professor of women's studies, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

B.A. 1977 Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo, MI

Professional Record:

2010 – present Associate Professor of Women's Studies, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts
2006 – present Associate Professor of Art and Design, with tenure, School of Art and Design, and Associate Professor, without tenure, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
2003 – 2006 Assistant Professor of Art and Design, without tenure, School of Art and Design, and Associate Professor, without tenure, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
2001 – 2003 Roman J. Witt Visiting Assistant Professor, School of Art and Design, and Residential College, College of Literature, Science and the Arts, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Evaluation Summary:

Teaching – Professor Hughes is an exceptional teacher and innovator of new art forms whose students (undergraduate and graduate) are critically engaged, motivated and producers of incredibly powerful and imaginative works of art. She is an expert in teaching the craft of writing for the stage and producing live art works, and provides extremely insightful criticism and feedback. She is known for her ability to transform the classroom into a creative incubator that both challenges students and provides them with the opportunity to explore and discover their own artistic voice. In their letters and evaluations, students speak enthusiastically about her passionate support for them and their work, and how the safe classroom dynamic impacts their ability to pursue their best work. They describe her effect on them as contagious, long lasting, and life changing, setting some on a professional course of performing and writing for the stage.

Creative Work / Research – Professor Hughes is an internationally-recognized and award-winning performer and playwright whose work exposes the underside of America's cultural norms through finely crafted and brutally honest storytelling. As a sharp and sassy observer of everyday life, she uses the space of theater to tell raw autobiographical stories about growing up gay in the Midwest and identity politics. She has toured the U.S. and the world with her solo performances, and her plays have been translated and produced around the globe. Her works are often cited for their significance to the history of visual art, performance, and gender studies, and her plays and writings have been extensively reviewed, published, and documented in major publications in these and related disciplines. She is the recipient of numerous awards and grants, including funding from Creative Capital's MAP Fund to support new performance work and grants from the New York Council Commission. In 2010, she was awarded a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship to support the development and performance of *Let Them Eat Cake*, a

collaborative and community-based work that examines the contemporary debate around marriage equality. Her forthcoming book, *Memories of the Revolution: The First Ten Years of the Home for Wayward Girls*, an anthology of articles and visual materials from New York City's WOW Café, will be published by the University of Michigan Press.

Significant Recent Works and Activities:

- 2010 – 2011 Solo Performances, *The Dog and Pony Show (Bring Your Own Pony)*, at Victory Gardens Theater (Chicago, IL), the Marsh Theater (San Francisco, CA), Highways Performance Space (Santa Monica, CA), Open Hand Theater (Minneapolis, MN), University of California, Santa Barbara (Santa Barbara, CA)
- 2010 – 2011 Producer, Writer, Performer, *Let Them Eat Cake*, Dixon Place Theatre (New York, NY) and University of Iowa (Ames, IA)
- 2010 Recipient, John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship
- 2010 Recipient, MAP Grant, a program of Creative Capital supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation to foster new performance work
- 2009 Solo Performance, *Post Racial Poodle*, University of California, Los Angeles (Los Angeles, CA)
- 2008 Solo Performances, *Sapphic Sampler Platter*, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (San Diego, CA), Dixon Place, Joe's Pub, and Stonewall Inn (New York, NY), Northwestern University (Evanston, IL)

Service – Professor Hughes is a strong and active contributor to the School, University and the community. She has served on numerous faculty committees including the vice president for research search committee, the Institute for Research on Women and Gender Executive Committee, and the Lesbian and Gay Research Initiative. In her engagement classes, her students have worked closely with the local humane society. Her most important service has been to create a completely new and innovative BFA program in Interarts Performance at the University of Michigan. The University's first undergraduate interdisciplinary degree is a collaboration between the School of Art and Design and the Theatre & Drama Department in the School of Music, Theatre & Dance. This new academic opportunity will positively impact students for years to come.

External Reviewers

Reviewer A: "Holly Hughes is interested in the intellectual and theoretical underpinnings and implications of her work and is able to discuss them in a very sophisticated way. There are very, very few theater artists who have this capacity to move between worlds so fluidly."

Reviewer B: "Hughes has never been interested in offering simple answers or definitions—for a word like 'lesbian,' for example. What first attracted me to her work was the way it challenged expectations, and that includes politically correct decorum. Her new piece about marriage equality, *Let Them Eat Cake*, highlights the rifts over this issue in the gay community as much as the conflicts with conservatives."

Reviewer C: "Hughes is a singular thinker and her creative work for the stage is critically respected, widely recognized and curatorially sought. While there are numerous artists that occupy the realm of solo performer/monologist, Hughes offers a distinct difference in the genre—she develops, writes and performs material that addresses consequential and frequently sensitive subject matter pertaining to the political dimensions of the time, and does so with an unbridled pursuit of expressive truths which manifest in both form and content."

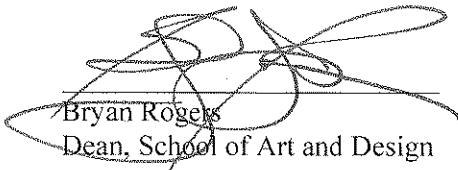
Reviewer D: “Holly Hughes is an artist of great integrity, whose significance to the field of contemporary performance is profound. Her importance to the field is incomparable—as a writer, as a feminist, and as a courageous example to all artists whose work, because of their ethnic, racial, or gender identity, has the unfortunate opportunity to be misunderstood or vilified.”

Reviewer E: “Simply put, Hughes is one of the three or four most important performance artists in the United States...I have served on...tenure and promotion committees in institutions across the country, and I am familiar with the requirements for promotion to full professor. Indeed, considering the depth of her career, I’m compelled to add that in my estimation the promotion is long overdue.”

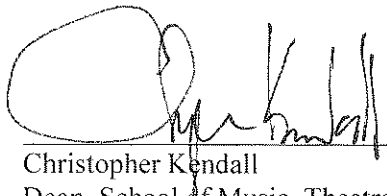
Reviewer F: “A major part of what distinguishes Professor Hughes from other performance artists is her use of language; her artistry is not only in the embodied performance but also in the writing itself. More than being wonderfully poetic and evocative, her language is deeply wise and often startlingly incisive about particular cultural and political dynamics, and she uses wry humor to extraordinary advantage.”

Summary of Recommendation:

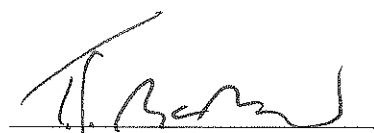
Holly Hughes is an exceptional teacher and artist, one whose educational and creative work spans multiple disciplines and addresses important social issues. We strongly recommend her for promotion to professor of art and design, with tenure, School of Art and Design, professor of theatre and drama, without tenure, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, and professor of women’s studies, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Bryan Rogers
Dean, School of Art and Design



Christopher Kendall
Dean, School of Music, Theatre & Dance



Terrence J. McDonald
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor,
Professor of History, and Dean,
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts