

Promotion Recommendation
The University of Michigan
School of Music, Theatre & Dance

Stephen West, professor of music, without tenure, Department of Voice, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, is recommended for the granting of tenure to be held with his title of professor of music, School of Music, Theatre & Dance.

Academic Degrees:

Special Studies

Certificates Curtis Institute of Music, Opera Performance
B.M. 1973 University of Colorado, Vocal Performance

Professional Record:

1981 – 1982 Staff Instructor, Applied Voice, University of San Diego
1986 – 1987 Instructor, Vocal Technique, National Theatre Conservatory, Denver
2005 – 2007 Private Vocal Instruction, New Jersey
2007 – present Professor of Music, School of Music, Theatre & Dance
University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: One of our most knowledgeable and illustrious voice teachers, Professor West brings years of professional stage experience to the classroom. Since his arrival, Professor West's skills in the classroom have continued to grow. He is generous in sharing his wisdom and vast professional experience. His students have described Professor West as demanding, challenging, caring, and encouraging. There is evidence of excellent progress in his studio; many of his students are chosen for roles in the School's productions and performances. These students, at all levels of instruction from undergraduate through graduate, have given him high scores in his teaching evaluations, and have provided feedback about improvement in their singing since joining his studio. The trajectory of his success over these past few years confirms our belief that Professor West will continue to enhance his record of student accomplishments, and will increase his ability to attract talented students to his studio.

Professional Activities: Professor West's career as a professional opera singer is aptly described as stellar. He has enjoyed a brilliant career performing in the most prestigious opera houses and concert halls in the world, including the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala (Milan, Italy), and New York City Opera, among numerous others nationally and internationally. Last year, Professor West was invited again to be cast in a difficult dual operatic role at La Scala, arguably the pinnacle of the profession. His performance was well received by audiences and opera critics alike. He also brings extensive experience as a director, and is himself a consummate actor. Joining the academe has not ended Professor West's illustrious professional career; he continues to perform in numerous operatic roles, work that enables him to provide his students the best possible perspective on the profession and the skills required to have a place in it.

Service: Relatively new to our School and the community, Professor West's level of service is laudable. Primarily through appearances and performances for recruitment, fund-raising, and outreach activities, Professor West is contributing actively to the life of the University and his community. His service for the School began strongly and is continuing to grow; he has served on several faculty searches, and he was a member of the School's Council of Departmental Representatives (the undergraduate curriculum committee). In view of his extraordinary career on the stages of the leading opera houses, it has been a pleasure to see Professor West enter so generously into the life of the institution. As he continues to build connections at the University, we are confident that Professor West will increasingly contribute to the administrative and service activities of the School.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "The recorded samples of his singing revealed the range of his experience and maturity, his facility with articulation, phrasing and a broad stylistic understanding of literature over a wide range of periods."

Reviewer B: "Looking over the list of illustrious colleagues with whom Mr. West has collaborated, I am struck by his vital role as a transmitter of opera history and the embodiment of standards.... In all, Mr. West is a tremendous asset to your program. His stellar and vast performing experience brings glory in its wake and promises rich experiences for university audiences and prospective students alike."

Reviewer C: "Professor West brings to his teaching the wide breadth of his experience on the stage, a broad musical range and his knowledge of foreign languages. During his career, Professor West performed and continues to do so in many of the world's most important opera houses and concert halls with a great number of well-known conductors and singers. His creative record as a performer is on an extremely high level."

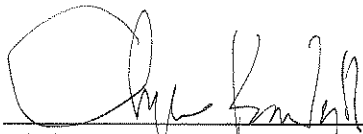
Reviewer D: "His scholarship and creative contributions to the discipline of classical singing is thorough and broad. He approaches music with a respect for tradition without being restricted by it. His knowledge and experience in his field coupled with an integrity and love for teaching will greatly benefit the School."

Reviewer E: "Obviously he has had a very solid career over the past twenty-five years or so, and his work at the MET and La Scala confirm this. As to his students, most of them seem very happy to be in his studio and are progressing nicely."

Reviewer F: "Stephen West has had a brilliant international and national career in a wide variety of extremely difficult operatic roles in major houses around the world. I believe that Stephen West is a devoted and knowledgeable teacher who has had an extensive international career and is capable of communicating his experience and expertise to his students."

Reviewer G: "Stephen West is the epitome of the successful American opera singer. His career is admirable and shows enormous diversity and professional experience. Certainly, the combination of outstanding performer and his strengths as a studio teacher is prized by you and your program. It seems that he is quite capable of teaching other voice types than his own and this too, is rare. I have judged some of his students in competition and can attest to this strength as a vocal pedagogue."

Summary of Recommendation: Professor West is a legendary opera singer and actor who has performed in the world's most prestigious opera houses and concert halls. He brings his vast knowledge and experience of vocal production and operatic stagecraft into the studio to the benefit of his appreciative students. As a member of our faculty, Professor West is collegial, cooperative and a delightful addition to our community. It is with the strong support of the Executive Committee that I recommend that Stephen West be granted tenure with his title of professor of music, Department of Voice, School of Music, Theatre & Dance.



Christopher W. Kendall
Dean and Paul Boylan Collegiate Professor of Music
School of Music, Theatre & Dance

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