

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

Megan L. Holmes, associate professor of the history of art, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of the history of art, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1993	Harvard University
M.Phil.	1983	London University
B.A.	1981	Brown University

Professional Record:

2004 – present	Associate Professor, Department of the History of Art, University of Michigan
2001 – 2004	Assistant Professor, Department of the History of Art, University of Michigan
1994 – 1996	Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of the History of Art, Johns Hopkins University
1994	Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Art History, Florida State University Study Abroad Program, Florence, Italy
1993	Assistant Professor, Department of Art History, University of Georgia Study Abroad Program, Cortona, Italy

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Holmes is a dedicated and effective teacher whose pedagogy supports the department's focus on teaching visual and material culture as well as art. Since 2001 she has developed seventeen different courses (nine at the undergraduate level and eight graduate seminars). She has also served on twenty-one Ph.D. committees (three as chair or co-chair) and has directed prize-winning honor theses. Beyond the classroom she has given special effort to training graduate student instructors and lecturers.

Research – Professor Holmes is an internationally recognized scholar whose work on the visual culture of piety has put her at the forefront of her field. Her second, forthcoming book, Miraculous Images and Image Cults in Renaissance Florence, focuses on the art and culture of the Renaissance. It is a magisterial study of Florentine miracle-working images and image-cults that interweaves synthetic overview with richly documented case studies that reveal the central importance of images and artistic practices traditionally sidelined in the study of Renaissance art. She has also published eight articles on related research. Professor Holmes has begun two new projects, one on the demonic supernatural and one on artifacts of Japanese embassies to Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Miraculous Images and Image Cults in Renaissance Florence, Yale University Press, forthcoming 2013.

“Renaissance perspectives on classical antique votive practices,” in Ex-votos: Votive Images Across Cultures, I. Weinryb (ed.), University of Michigan Press, forthcoming, 2013.

“Miraculous Images in Renaissance Florence,” *Art History*, 34, 2011, pp. 432-465.

“Ex-votos: Materiality, memory, and cult,” in The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotion and the Early Modern World, M. Cole and R. Zorach (eds.), Ashgate, 2009, pp. 159-181.

Service – Professor Holmes has performed important service in her department, including serving as associate chair (2008-2012). She also played a key role in the Rackham Graduate School program review and overseeing modifications to the graduate program and improvements in curricular planning. Nationally Professor Holmes regularly reviews manuscripts for academic presses and journals in her field.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A)

“The book that will secure Prof. Holmes’s [sic] status as one of the leading scholars of Renaissance art anywhere in the world is *Miraculous Images in Renaissance Florence*, forthcoming from Yale University Press. ... It is the kind of book that only an experienced art historian could write, yet it frequently steps outside of this disciplinary perspective in order to pose fresh questions. It shows a commanding knowledge of the sources but consistently engages the relevant secondary literature, making it possible on every page to appreciate just what the author’s contribution is. In short, it’s the kind of book that we should all aspire to write.”

Reviewer (B)

“...Megan Holmes is one of the top-ten scholars of Italian Renaissance art working today in the USA. ... Holmes’ has staked out problems at the right time, drawing upon and framing previously unshaped discussions. Her work has, in this regard, literally shaped the field.”

Reviewer (C)

“Despite considerable interest in the topic over the last twenty years...there is no comparable study of image-cults in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and Holmes’s [sic] study stands to be the definitive account. ... In a field characterized by sub-disciplinary fragmentation, where the very use of the term ‘Renaissance’ has assumed an almost sectarian aspect, few scholars command as wide an attention from colleagues of different methodological and ideological allegiance as Holmes’s [sic] work on image-making, social identity, and religion in fifteenth century Italy.”

Reviewer (D)

“In recent years, scholars of Renaissance art and culture have examined with renewed interest and new methodologies topics focused on idolatry, cultic culture and the role played by art in popularly practiced religion. Megan Holmes has not responded to this academic pursuit but, rather, been impressively in its vanguard. This position of scholarly leadership coupled with her excellence as a scholar (and clarity as a writer) has meant that she has helped significantly to give direction to the course of research in this area of study and, more broadly, contributed to the current shape of the discipline as a whole.”

Reviewer (E)

“Megan Holmes is one of the foremost scholars of Italian Renaissance art of her generation. ...[*Miraculous Images*] is a major work, indeed now the standard work in this important field. Interest in cult images and the affective and participatory relationships they invited is high. I would go so far as to say that the scholarship on miracle-working images, pilgrimage, shrines, relics, and votive images represents the most significant new development in the field of Renaissance art in the last twenty years.”

Reviewer (F)

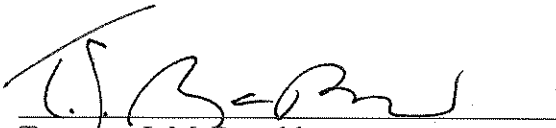
“Dr. Holmes’ visibility, on both national and international levels, is clear. In recent years her work has been acknowledged and supported by fellowships from the J. Paul Getty Foundation and National Endowment for the Humanities. ...Holmes is both imaginative and careful about her own scholarship...she is cognizant of and articulate about the ways in which her work intersects with other fields of inquiry...[and] she is intrepid in the questions she asks of the materials in the field we share.”

Reviewer (G)

“...Dr. Holmes’ forthcoming book on the *Miraculous Images in Renaissance Florence* will finally manage to bring image-worship back to the core of art-historical discussion. She has finally taken the task to illustrate the historical processes whereby images came to be perceived as extraordinary, relic-like objects... Her book makes clear that such processes took place in the same time as the development of Renaissance art and Renaissance theorizations of art and that they were an integral component of Renaissance culture.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Holmes is a rigorous thinker who is doing ground-breaking research in her field. She has made outstanding contributions to the teaching and administrative missions of her department. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Megan L. Holmes be promoted to the rank of professor of the history of art, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



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

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