

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION  
The University of Michigan  
Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design

Heidi E. Kumao, associate professor of art and design, with tenure, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design, is recommended for promotion to professor of art and design, with tenure, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design.

Academic Degrees:

M.F.A. 1991 The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Photography, Chicago, IL  
B.S. 1988 University of California, Davis, Chemistry, Davis, CA  
B.A. 1988 University of California, Davis, Art Studio, Davis, CA

Professional Record:

2008 – present Associate Professor of Art and Design, with tenure, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design, University of Michigan  
2003 – 2008 Assistant Professor of Art, without tenure, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design, University of Michigan  
2001 – 2003 Roman J. Witt Visiting Assistant Professor, School of Art and Design, University of Michigan  
1997 – 1998, Visiting Assistant Professor, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY  
1992 – 1995  
1991 – 1992 Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Visual Art, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Kumao is an excellent teacher, one who has proven to be a knowledgeable, effective and inspiring instructor within both the undergraduate and graduate curriculum. She has not only developed innovative new courses in animation and visual story-telling, but she has also been so effective in her teaching of required undergraduate classes that she has been called on frequently to redesign and coordinate these courses. Students consistently applaud her ability to teach both technical and conceptual materials, to contextualize the course material in a broader frame, and to help the students plan to enter the profession. Graduate students in particular credit her with aiding their professional development long after they have left Michigan. She is a rigorous teacher who is also consistently recognized by students as being both inspiring and fair.

Creative Work / Research – Professor Kumao is an internationally recognized multi-disciplinary artist who has received prestigious awards including a Creative Capital grant and a 2009 Guggenheim Fellowship. Although she initially worked in new media arts, emerging as one of the few women in fields such as robotics and interactive sculptures, the focus of her current work is in the fields of video and animation, in installations and single channel formats. The last two years have been among the most productive; her short video *Swallowed Whole* has been screened at nearly two dozen film festivals in since 2015, including international showings in Iran, Romania, India, France, Bulgaria, South Korea, Spain, Germany, Austria, Greece, and Canada, winning six awards in the process. A still from the film was featured on the cover of the influential photography journal *Afterimage* in 2014, more evidence that Professor Kumao has established herself as a significant artist on the international stage. In addition, she had a solo show at Ceres Gallery in New York City in 2014, participated in at least five group shows in every year since promotion, and has been awarded highly competitive residencies at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (2015 and 2012),

the MacDowell Colony, Jentel Artist Residency, Light Work, and Blue Mountain Center. Her work can be found in the collections of major museums, including the Museum of Fine Art in Houston, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Arizona State University Art Museum, the Exploratorium: Museum of Art, and Perception.

#### Significant Recent Works and Activities

- 2015 Film Festival Awards for *Swallowed Whole*: Jury's Choice Award-1<sup>st</sup> Prize, Black Maria Film Festival (New Jersey); Best Experimental Film, Female Eye Film Festival (Toronto); Best Experimental Film, Humboldt International Film Festival (California); Silver Remi Award, Independent Short, Animation Category, World-Fest Houston (Texas)
- 2015 Group Exhibition, *Humans + The Future of Our Species*, CCCB: Centre de Cultura Contemporania de Barcelona, Spain.
- 2015 Group Exhibition, *Across Voices: New Media Art*, Czong Institute for Contemporary Art (CICA), Seoul, South Korea.
- 2014-2015 Festival Screenings of *Swallowed Whole*, including: 27<sup>th</sup> Filmfest Dresden (Germany); 13<sup>th</sup> Tricky Women International Animation Film Festival (Austria); 39<sup>th</sup> Atlanta Film Festival (US); "Animaze," Montreal International Animation Festival (Canada); Seoul International Extreme-Short Image & Film Festival (South Korea); 10<sup>th</sup> Athens AnimFest 2015 (Greece); 31<sup>st</sup> Tehran International Film Festival (Iran); Pune Short Film Festival, Pune, India
- 2014 Solo Exhibition, *Surviving Confinement: Video Sculpture*, Ceres Gallery, New York, New York.
- 2013 Juried Two-Person Exhibition, L'OEil de poisson, Quebec, Canada.
- 2012 Invitational Group Exhibition, arteBA (Contemporary Art Fair), Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- 2011 Juried Group Exhibition, *Make It Home*, SIGGRAPH 2011 Conference Art Gallery, Vancouver, British Columbia.
- 2010 Invitational Group Exhibitions, "Arte.mov" Media Art and Cinema Festival: Usino do Gasometro, Porto Alegre, Brazil; Espaço 104, Belo Horizonte, Brazil.
- 2009 Recipient, John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship

Service – Professor Kumao is an excellent citizen of the university. She has made important contributions to the Stamps School by serving on the Executive Committee, both the Graduate and Undergraduate Program Committees, the Interarts Performance BFA Committee, and as Course Coordinator for "Integrative Projects" (2014-16) and "Tools, Materials and Processes: Time" (2010-14). In addition, she was appointed to the Provost's Advisory Committee for Budgetary Affairs in 2013, and the Stamps School Dean's Search Advisory Committee in 2011-12. In addition to her service at the university, she has made important contributions to her field by serving on the Board of Directors of the Ann Arbor Film Festival from 2003 to 2013; acting as a juror for the Ohio Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, SIGGRAPH 2012; and frequent service as an external reviewer for promotion at institutions around the globe.

#### External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "She is an artist and researcher with an exceptional ability to combine different fields of science and technology to aesthetics and the humanities. The *Misbehaving Media Machines*, for example, are a good pioneer media artwork combining elements of robotics and social sciences perspective."

Reviewer B: “The body in contextual states of freedom is the subject of her most outstanding work, *Swallowed Whole*. Topics of freedom, mobility/immobility and perception are explored with beautiful clarity and power in this work. It doesn’t surprise me that *Swallowed Whole* has won numerous awards. It is an outstanding film that evokes states of relative freedom. *Swallowed Whole* demonstrates a high degree of mastery in both her presentation of a deep moody *mise en scene* in her shot compositions as well as her impeccable timing in the editing room.”

Reviewer C: “I feel that there is a very tremendous growth that is evident in the quality of Kumao’s work over the past 3 or 4 years – which one can clearly see in the recognition Kumao is receiving for this work in various festivals, exhibitions, media reviews, etc.”

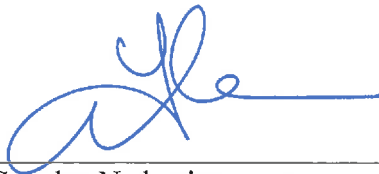
Reviewer D: “I am very impressed with the work of Heidi Kumao and absolutely recommend her for promotion to full Professor. It is difficult to not write in superlatives about this work.”

Reviewer E: “She is an accomplished and extremely capable artist and teacher, has a strong national and international reputation. She is an accomplished and capable scholar, researcher, and artist. Kumao is also a strong leader in her field, upholding feminist traditions of information-sharing, and experimental approaches to knowledge hierarchies. She is technically savvy and has a broad knowledge of many contemporary new media arts practices. She is a noteworthy asset to the Stamps School of Art and Design.”

Reviewer F: “Kumao has received numerous professional accolades that attest to her importance in the field. Typically, exhibitions are the primary metric used to judge accomplishments within the visual arts. She has had numerous solo shows at the national level and several at the international level. One-person exhibitions are unusual for many of her peers in electronic media practice (as it is often dominated by themed group shows and collaborative projects). Additionally, her group shows attest to both her range as an artist (working in forms such as photography, electronic media, video), as well as her visibility as an artist. Most of the museums, not-for-profits, commercial galleries and festivals listed are of national or international renown.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Kumao is an influential and pioneering artist, a distinguished and innovative instructor, and an active citizen within the Stamps School, the University of Michigan and in her community. I strongly recommend Heidi E. Kumao for promotion to professor of art and design, with tenure, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design.



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Gunalan Nadarajan  
Dean and Professor, Penny W. Stamps  
School of Art and Design

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