

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

Kelly M. Murdoch-Kitt, assistant professor of art and design, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of art and design, with tenure, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design.

Academic Degrees:

M.G.D. 2009 Graphic Design, College of Design, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC  
B.A 2001 Fine Arts, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC

Professional Record:

2017 – present Assistant Professor of Art and Design, Stamps School of Art and Design, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor  
2013 – 2017 Assistant Professor of Graphic Design, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Murdoch-Kitt has developed a robust and ambitious teaching practice that has proven effective and continues to grow. There is a strong relationship between her teaching and research, as is evidenced in her publications, workshops, and presentations that include an emphasis on teaching. Class projects often engage diverse perspectives and collaborate with external partners. Her focus on inclusion and collaboration in the classroom is greatly relevant to the Stamps School’s DEI and community engagement missions. Her work with intercultural design communication has resulted in an innovative new course called *Global Studio*. This course is of critical importance to the Stamps international experience mission during the time of COVID-19, and is now approved to fulfill the Stamps International Engagement requirement on an ongoing basis. *Global Studio* could well become a model for online international/intercultural studio coursework.

Professor Murdoch-Kitt has regularly sought critical feedback and ongoing training for her teaching through CRLT and is working to building an anti-racist pedagogy in her courses. She is a consistent mentor to both undergraduates and graduate students and has been a regular and vital contributor to the MDes program. Student evaluations show high marks for treating students with respect and encouraging equitable participation. Additional feedback from students cites her ability to foster collaboration within the classroom, the impact of her emphasis on intercultural communications on the lives after graduation, and her commitment to replicating real-world design experiences in the classroom.

Creative Work / Research – Professor Murdoch-Kitt has developed a national profile as a researcher that is shaping the field of design and fostering transformative dialogue central to addressing racism. Her research expands the role that design can play through enhancing intercultural communication and collaboration. She draws on her work as an experience designer, working across a range of media to improve interactions between people of diverse backgrounds; additionally, her scholarship contributes to design research in the areas of co-creation, equity and inclusion, and design process. Her most recent scholarly work focuses on intercultural collaboration, culminating in the book Intercultural Collaboration by Design: Drawing from Differences, Distances, and Disciplines through Visual Thinking (New York: Routledge, 2020). The book introduces a framework and methods to improve the ways diverse teams work together collaboratively. It focuses on development, testing, and refinement of visual thinking methods that can enhance interactions and build mutual respect.

Professor Murdoch-Kitt complements her scholarship with research through design, where she applies the principles detailed in her book in collaborative projects that explore new ways to communicate. ORBIT (Online Resource for Building Intercultural Teams) – currently in beta testing and supported by funding from the University of Michigan Office of Research – serves faculty seeking partnership for intercultural teaching or research collaborations. ManageHF Decision Dashboard – funded through MCubed and currently in the usability testing phase – seeks to provide a user-friendly interface that brings together into one visual portal all relevant data for heart failure patients, who are usually complex cases. Her work has been supported through a UM Institute for the Humanities Summer Research Fellowship and a Writing Fellow in Design Incubation at St. John’s University.

#### Significant Recent Works and Activities

- 2020 (forthcoming) Oewel, Bruna D., Kelly Murdoch-Kitt, and Dr. Michael Dorsch. “Using participatory design research to inform clinical decision-making.” In *Proceedings of the AMIA 2020 Annual Symposium*, American Medical Informatics Association, 2020.
- 2020 (forthcoming) Murdoch-Kitt, Kelly M., and Denielle J. Emans. “Addressing Cultural Values and Biases Through Visual Thinking Improves Intercultural Collaboration,” in *Wicked Solutions Research Annual of the CAA Committee on Design and Design Incubation*, edited by Neeta Verma, Audrey Bennett, and Yelena McLane. New York: Design Incubation, 2020.
- 2020 Murdoch, Kelly M., and Denielle J. Emans. Intercultural Collaboration by Design: Drawing from Differences, Distances, and Disciplines through Visual Thinking. New York: Routledge, 2020.
- 2020 Murdoch-Kitt, Kelly M., and Omar Sosa Tzec, ed. *Dialogue: Proceedings of the Decipher 2018 Design Educators Research Conference* Vol. 1 & 2. Ann Arbor: Michigan Publishing, 2020.
- 2019 Murdoch-Kitt, Kelly and Denielle Emans. “Cultural Interplay: Creating Interactive Experiences Through Collaborative Video.” Paper presented at MODE Motion Design Education Summit, Wellington, New Zealand. June 2019.
- 2018 Murdoch-Kitt, Kelly. “Intercultural Interaction Design: Facilitating Communication, Collaboration, and Co-Creation.” Research presented at Michigan Interactive and Social Computing Research Group (MISC), Ann Arbor, MI, November 2018

Service – Professor Murdoch-Kitt has made significant service contributions to the school, the university and her profession. In addition to participation in a number of school- and university-level committees, Professor Murdoch-Kitt has been an active and influential contributor to national and international organizations focusing on design and design education. Most notable, she served as the conference chair and editor of the proceedings for the ambitious Decipher 2018 Design Educators Research Conference (hosted on the UM campus by the Stamps School). She is a past board member of the AIGA Design Educators Community where she worked to increase racial and geographic representation among the membership, and initiated a new partnership with Michigan Publishing to publish peer-reviewed scholarship related to design.

#### External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: “The main topic of her research – improving intercultural communication, collaboration, and learning in design, education, and business – is much needed in our currently polarized world...Per my assessment, Murdoch-Kitt stands in the top 10% of peers in her field.”

Reviewer B: “Professor Murdoch-Kitt’s record of scholarly publications and conferences is impressive and she undoubtedly measures highly compared to her peers...I am particularly interested in her recent work that applies participatory design methodologies in improving clinical work by healthcare providers—a growing area in design practice that could open new possibilities for future research opportunities.”

Reviewer C: “I expect *Intercultural Collaboration by Design* to become an important volume for designers, design educators, design students, and industry professionals. The work lowers the barriers for the often-intimidating and potentially divisive cross-cultural work. It offers clear, practical ways for collaborators to break out of their silo chambers and learn from one another in authentic and considerate ways.”

Reviewer D: “...her willingness to create opportunities for more meaningful dialogue about race, stereotypes and implicit bias with communities from the ground-up makes her work unique – these novel ways of designing shine throughout her promotion package.”

Reviewer E: “Her agenda is focused on creating platforms that enable diverse groups to proactively identify and overcome implicit and unrecognized biases and predispositions. And designing affordances that empower groups to productively pursue common goals. This agenda is in turn informed by a larger moral impulse on the part of Assistant Professor Murdoch-Kitt — to use design as a means to navigate and negotiate persistent social defects, specifically: systematic racism, white privilege and ‘out group’ exclusion.”

Reviewer F: “Professor Murdoch-Kitt’s activities exploring intercultural collaboration and visual thinking are especially significant given our current global context. Specifically, her co-authored book *Intercultural Collaboration by Design*... serves as a field guide for educators and professionals alike in navigating the complexities of cross-cultural and distance team-based work. Her work in this area, in addition to her online resource orbit-project.com, displays significant promise for future research and publication given the new reliance of decentralized creative teams on remote tools and frameworks for collaboration.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Murdoch-Kitt is a respected scholar and creative practitioner, an effective educator, and committed citizen of the academy, one who demonstrates the best principles of DEI in her work. I strongly recommend Kelly M. Murdoch-Kitt for promotion to associate 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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