

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION

The University of Michigan
School of Music, Theatre & Dance

Douglas Perkins, associate professor of music, without tenure, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, is recommended for the granting of tenure to be held with his title of associate professor of music, School of Music, Theatre & Dance.

Academic Degrees:

D.M.A	2008	Stony Brook University, Percussion
D.M.A	2003	Eastman School of Music
A.D.	2001	Yale University, Percussion
M.M.	2000	Yale University, Percussion Performance
B.M.	1998	University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Percussion Performance

Professional Record:

2020 – present	Associate Professor of Music, (without tenure), Department of Winds and Percussion, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, University of Michigan
2019 – 2020	Lecturer of Music, Department of Winds and Percussion, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, University of Michigan
2015 – 2021	Associate Professor of Percussion and Co-Director of Percussion Ensemble, The Boston Conservatory at Berklee
2011 – 2016	Guest Percussionist and Artist-In-Residence at the University of Chicago and the Curtis Institute of Music
2004 – present	Freelance Record Producer
2004 – 2012	Lecturer of Music, Dartmouth College
1999 - 2006	Sō Percussion, Founder, General Manager

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Perkins is the director of percussion, and in that role coordinates instruction for the area with other percussion faculty, manages staff and student employees, organizes performances, brings in guest artists, oversees the maintenance of a large inventory of percussion instruments, and coordinates student activities and collaborative projects involving percussion, of which there are many. He is also very active in the commissioning of new works for percussion and creates opportunities for students to engage with professional composers. He teaches individual lessons, Percussion Ensemble, and Percussion Literature, and is an advisor and mentor for undergraduate and graduate percussion majors. He is also the co-director of the Michigan Youth Percussion Ensemble and co-director of the MPulse Percussion Institute. Through this activity, Professor Perkins has created a strong and unified culture in the percussion area focused on student success, creative agency, and artistic excellence. His teaching philosophy is built on the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion and is evidenced by his commitment to commissioning and incorporating works from underrepresented composers and tailoring his instruction to the needs of individual students. A current student wrote, “As an international student and a minority, I have always felt validated and accounted for by Dr. Perkins.”

Since his arrival at UM, Professor Perkins has partnered with his junior colleague in percussion to reshape the curriculum to better serve student needs as they prepare for varied professional outcomes. Initiatives include the creation of new courses, such as the History of Percussion, and opportunities for

students to engage with the MPULSE summer program. Most significantly, Professor Perkins has worked tirelessly to involve SMTD percussion students in professional projects that provide highly visible, real-world experiences. Under Professor Perkins' leadership, the UM Percussion Ensemble: performed on the Grammy-nominated 2022 recording of John Luther Adams' work entitled "Sila: The Breath of the World," produced a recording used in a performance by the Limon Dance Company at the Joyce Theatre in New York City on the occasion of the company's 75th anniversary, and; performed at prominent national venues such as Mass Moca, PS 21, the Caramoor Festival, Princeton University, June in Buffalo, and PASIC, the annual conference of the Percussive Arts Society, the largest professional gathering of its kind. One student enthused that under Professor Perkins' leadership Michigan is now "'The Place' every percussionist would want to study..."

Professional Activities: As a founding member of Sō Percussion, Professor Perkins has been an international figure in the field for over two decades. Through his frequent performances with leading new music ensembles such as Eighth Blackbird, Latitude 49, Ensemble Signal, and the Meehan/Perkins Duo, he has furthered his reputation as a leading new-music percussionist. His work is captured on 24 recordings as a soloist, ensemble member, conductor and producer, a number of which have been recognized as a top recording of the year by *NPR*, *The New York Times*, *AllMusic*, and the *Guardian*. As an advocate for new music, Professor Perkins has commissioned and premiered over 100 new works, including those by Pulitzer Prize-winning composers. Professor Perkins has performed in the most prestigious venues in the U.S., including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, Merkin Recital Hall, and The Shed, and has concertized throughout Europe, Russia, Brazil and Mexico. He has appeared regularly at leading new music festivals, such as the Bang on a Can Institute, and the annual Percussive Arts Society International Convention. He remains active as an orchestral and large ensemble musician, as well, and appears frequently with the Chicago Symphony, and most recently, with the Detroit Chamber Winds.

Professor Perkins' most impressive recent highlights include being nominated for a 2022 Grammy Award as the director and producer of John Luther Adams' music "Sila: The Breath of the World" (Cantaloupe Music), a recording that was also included on the 2022 Bandcamp "Top Contemporary Classical Albums" list. This recording features the UM Percussion ensemble, and other SMTD musicians, as well as The Crossing, a seven-time Grammy-nominated professional choir, and the JACK Quartet, an ensemble widely considered as the preeminent new-music string quartet in the world.

Since his appointment at SMTD, Professor Perkins has contributed to eight recordings as a conductor, composer, producer, director, and performer. During that same time period, he also has 13 live chamber/ensemble appearances and another five as a soloist or conductor. Since 2020, he has been invited to coach, give a masterclass, or hold a residency 15 times across the U.S. (some virtual due to the pandemic.)

Professor Perkins is a virtuoso performer and collaborator who sustains a vibrant, multi-faceted career at the center of the global new music scene. He has admirably engaged his SMTD colleagues and students in collaborative projects that have gained national and international recognition. Professor Perkins is a dynamic artistic force within SMTD, and across the rapidly evolving field of contemporary classical music.

Service: Beyond the significant service that he provides to SMTD as the director of percussion, Professor Perkins has made valued contributions in leadership and service during this time at SMTD. He has acted as departmental representative on SMTD's undergraduate curriculum committee, served

on a search committee, and performed at many school-wide recruitment and development events. Active in his field as well, he has served on the Board of Advisors and International Solo Competition Committee for the Percussive Arts Society. Professor Perkins is a generous colleague with excellent administrative skills.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "...I find the quality and quantity of Doug's scholarly efforts to be significant. While having firmly established himself as an outstanding chamber musician his activities as soloist, as joint concerto soloist, and as conductor/organizer cement him as an important artist in our field. One who demonstrates in some ways what is possible as an artist/teacher for this generation."

Reviewer B: "My own students that have studied under Dr. Perkins describe him as a gifted teacher and mentor. He is generous with his time and provides them with musical advice and career direction in creating their own musical journey. He has been described as a 'cheerleader' for the students that cross his path."

Reviewer C: "Dr. Perkins has made terrific contributions to the field of contemporary percussion and music during his professional life. In reviewing Dr. Perkins' career, it is clear he is a collaborator at heart. While not daunted by solo repertoire, his passion is in bringing people together, creating unique musical opportunities and championing new voices in the field. He has worked side by side with some of Western contemporary music's most celebrated composers and percussionists."

Reviewer D: "Douglas truly does it all. He is a ubiquitous presence in our world. I consider commissioning new work to be a service to the discipline as well. His list of commissions and premieres speaks for itself. His work as a record producer is somewhat unique in the percussion world, and his recordings are pristine...In summary, this is a most impressive and frankly inspiring dossier. His teaching statement and syllabi are the best I have come across. His contributions to the percussion world and the world of music in general have made a lasting impact, and I have no doubt that he is just getting started. [The] University of Michigan is extremely lucky to have Douglas on your faculty."

Reviewer E: "My impressions from his extensive projects in expanding the repertoire for percussion chamber music are highly favorable. Doug represents a new breed of percussion education that embraces the many ways percussion repertoire is developed, especially from his extensive experience identifying important and emerging composers' voices. His efforts to organize and complete performance projects that engage the public on many levels is THE model for percussion education going forward. Michigan percussion students are getting a GREAT education in this manner."

Reviewer F: "Prof. Perkins has created an enviable body of work over the years in the contemporary musical arena, having partnered with some of today's leading artists. His work as a performer, conductor, organizer, and creative instigator of various kinds of collaborative work with composers, musical organizations, festivals, etc., is wide and varied, and certainly positions him amongst a group of individuals taking the lead in such endeavors."

Reviewer G: "Douglas Perkins's [sic] reputation in the percussion community is outstanding and he commands great respect and admiration. Throughout his career he has enjoyed a variety of successful performing and teaching experiences... I can unconditionally affirm that his ensemble demonstrates the highest level of musicianship and technical achievement. His ensemble performance level offers strong evidence of the outstanding teaching his students are receiving and to the quality of student Professor Perkins's [sic] reputation attracts."

Reviewer H: “Doug Perkins is a ‘household name’ in the professional percussion field... His presentations on that international stage as a soloist and chamber musician have been consistently of the highest caliber... At Michigan, he has brought in the top names in our field, and his students have garnered noteworthy accomplishments and awards. His materials demonstrate substantive work in teaching, performing, administrating, and service”

Reviewer I: “...I find the quality, quantity, focus, and scholarly impact of Professor Perkins’s [sic] work to be quite strong. Professor Perkins has maintained a steady pace of impressive concert engagements since arriving at the University of Michigan...I can say, without pause, that Professor Perkins’s [sic] contribution to the Percussive Arts Society is quite notable and I know he is actively involved with the organization. Further to this, his list of endorsements is exceptional...all industry leaders in their related offerings.”

Reviewer J: “He has established an impressive presence in the contemporary music scene as a performer, director, producer, educator, and concert promoter, and is now establishing himself as a conductor as well. The sheer number of performances, master-classes, and recordings listed in his packet is noteworthy, but more importantly, the performers and composers that he has collaborated with, the venues at which he has appeared, and the labels for which he has recorded are among the most prestigious in the new music scene, both in the U.S. and abroad.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Perkins carries a reputation at SMTD and in the field as a committed and effective teacher and mentor with a track record of success in guiding students to professional careers. He is an internationally recognized performer, conductor, composer, and music producer who is known for being at the forefront of contemporary classical music, and a highly collaborative and generous colleague who has made significant contributions to the school and his profession. With the strong support of the school’s Executive Committee, I am pleased to recommend Douglas Perkins for the granting of tenure to be held with his title of associate professor of music, School of Music, Theatre & Dance.



David Gier
Paul Boylan Collegiate Professor of Music
and Dean, School of Music, Theatre & Dance

May 2023