

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Megan Holmes, Ph.D., professor of the history of art in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on May 31, 2024.

Professor Holmes received her B.A. degree from Brown University (1981), an M.Phil. degree at the Courtauld Institute of Art (1983), and a Ph.D. degree at Harvard University (1993). She joined the University of Michigan faculty as an assistant professor in 2001, and was promoted to associate professor in 2004, and professor in 2013. Her study of Italian Renaissance visual culture has been shaped by interests in the production process and the materiality of works of art, the social-historical context of the making and reception of art, and formal analysis based on the critical deconstruction of artistic conventions and ideological perspectives embedded in visual imagery.

She is best known for her transformative scholarship on the visual culture of miraculous image cults. Her second book, *Miraculous Images in Renaissance Florence* (2011), which received College Art Association's Charles Rufus Morey Book Award, remapped the sacred geography of Renaissance Italy while considering categories of representation that had not been addressed adequately in art historical studies. It also considered the dialogic relationship between different socio-cultural modes of expression and response. *Scratching the Surface* (forthcoming), focuses on viewers' direct transactions with—and transformations of—panel paintings as revealed through markings.

Professor Holmes has been a dedicated graduate mentor, supervising nine Ph.D. students and serving on 21 dissertation committees, and as the external reader for another five dissertations. Her close working relationships with these students have been among the most rewarding experiences of her career. Professor Holmes also served as the department associate chair, director of graduate studies, chair of multiple search committees, chair of the DEI Committee, and as an undergraduate advisor.

Her academic activities were profoundly affected by the incarceration of her brother and by social unrest in the summer of 2020. This led to a new engagement with issues related to social justice and contemporary cultural politics, and a rethinking of higher education, pedagogy, and mentoring. Over the last three years, she has worked with the Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP), teaching an experiential learning course oriented around social justice that includes weekly visual art workshops in local prisons. Following her retirement, she plans to teach the course through the Residential College and looks forward to continuing her involvement with PCAP.

The Regents now salute this distinguished scholar and teacher by naming **Megan Holmes, professor emerita of the history of art.**

Requested by:



Jon Kinsey
Vice President and Secretary of the University

May 2024