

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

Roland Graf, 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:

Ph.D.	2021	Doctor of Technical Sciences, Vienna University of Technology, Austria
Dipl. Ing.	2002	Master of Science in Architecture equivalent, Vienna University of Technology, Austria

Professional Record:

2017 - Present	Associate Professor, with tenure, University of Michigan, Stamps School of Art and Design
2011 - 2017	Assistant Professor, University of Michigan, Stamps School of Art and Design
2004 - 2007	Assistant Professor Vienna University of Technology, Austria
2003 - 2004	Senior Exhibition Designer BWM Architects, Vienna, Austria
2002	Architectural Project Manager PPAG Architects, Vienna, Austria

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Graf is a thorough and resourceful instructor who draws from a range of educational and professional experiences, including architecture, product design, exhibition design and experimental design to expose students to the processes and practice of design and design-thinking. Professor Graf has had a steady record of teaching at Stamps across the undergraduate and graduate programs, ranging from interdisciplinary courses that address both art and design (such as 3D Studio, Second Year Studio, and Integrative Project) to design and multidisciplinary-focused courses (such as Inclusive Augmented Reality Game Development, Professional Practice Seminar, and Interactive Game Systems). Additionally, Professor Graf created a three-credit online course launched on Coursera and reached a global audience of 2,423 learners. This course was supported by the digital medial production team of the UM Office of Academic Innovation and received an Academic Innovation Award. Both the qualitative and quantitative assessments of Professor Graf's teaching are stellar, with student evaluation scores consistently at 4.5 and above. Student assessments shared that Professor Graf is respectful, well prepared, and an overall excellent teacher. One student letter stated, "Professor Graf's multidisciplinary approach and his dedication to bridging the gap between physical and digital design realms have been instrumental in shaping my professional ethos. His teachings have shown me the interconnectedness of various design disciplines through the lens of user experience, a perspective that has been crucial in my career." Professor Graf has had significant impact in sustaining the curriculum that spans three-dimensional art/design and those methodologies signified as 4D, which move through digital interventions. His leadership has spanned critical impact in the graduate program, as well as sustaining these critical inquires in the undergraduate program.

Creative Work/Research: Professor Graf has developed a practice with international repute that navigates the intersection of public art and interactive systems design, working across methodologies deployed within media art, architecture, product design, and human-computer interaction. His research and creative practice is multifaceted and expansive as demonstrated by the diversity of projects he has completed since receiving tenure. These include: the production of design objects, installations, performances, publications, interactive works, and collaborations with engineers and industry partners. Professor Graf has disseminated his work in an equally wide range of venues and spaces, from exhibitions

in galleries, museums, art festivals, design fairs, computer expos, and academic conferences while also generating new patents.

A centerpiece of Professor Graf's dossier is the development of I-Gym, a room-sized inclusive augmented reality play system that enables youth with and without mobility disabilities to play and exercise together. This project established him as an expert in spatial augmented reality and inclusive play, which is still an underrepresented topic in academia and industry. As a creator and PI of I-Gym, he received ~\$200K in grants, managed a large interdisciplinary research team, was awarded an ACM CHI Play Best Paper Award, and received a U.S. utility patent for his augmented-reality game environment. Professor Graf has presented I-Gym to 13 different constituencies from new media art and extended reality (XR) to design innovation and entrepreneurship. External evaluators all noted the broad impact and social relevance of I-Gym.

#### Significant Recent Works and Activities:

- 2023 Red Crossing. Participatory public performance. "Ludic engagement workshop," Department of Cultural Studies, University of Applied Arts Vienna, Austria.
- 2021 Audrey G. Bennett, Ron B. Eglash, Roland Graf, Deepa Butoliya, Keesa V. Johnson, Jenn Low and Andréia Rocha, "Towards Radical Synergy for More Just & Equitable Futures," In Proceedings of the DRS LEARN X DESIGN 2021: 6th International Conference for Design Education Researchers — Engaging with Challenges in Design Education, Shandong University of Art & Design, Jinan, China, Volume 2,338-357.
- 2020 Nick Tobier, Roland Graf, and Jennifer Low, "Cross when Red." In Vocal-esk: Street Architecture. London, UK, Toronto, Canada, 2020, pp. 68-73.
- 2019 Roland Graf, Pallavi Benawri, Amy E Whitesall, Dashiell Carichner, Zixuan Li, Michael Nebeling, and Hun Seok Kim, "iGYM: An Interactive Floor Projection System for Inclusive Exergame Environments," In Proceedings of the 2019 Annual Symposium on Computer-Human Interaction in Play (CHI PLAY '19), ACM, New York, NY, USA, 31–43. (Best Paper Award)
- 2019 Roland Graf, Sun Young Park, Emma Shpiz, and Hun Seok Kim "IGYM: A Wheelchair-Accessible Interactive Floor Projection System for Co-located Physical Play," In Extended Abstracts of the 2019 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI EA '19). ACM, New York, NY, USA, Paper LBW1615, 1–6.

Service: Professor Graf has significant appointments to the Executive Committee, Graduate Program Committee, Undergraduate Program Committee, three search advisory committees, as well as the chair of a Promotion/Tenure Review Committee. Further, he has served in administrative capacities under challenging pandemic conditions, notably as the interim director of the MDes program and Second Year Studio Coordinator. At the university level, Professor Graf represented Stamps for two years on the Campus AR/VR Steering Group and has provided an extensive array of service to the profession through external reviews for promotions to academic conferences and broader philanthropic engagements linked to his research interventions. Within the school structure of shared governance, Professor Graf has been a stabilizing force in the most critical committees that sustain the school's undergraduate, graduate, and research operations. Professor Graf's teaching, his service exceeds the expectations of promotion to professor.

#### External Reviewers:

Reviewer A: "His interdisciplinary projects have traction beyond the world of the media arts – the impact of his ideas and energies are transformative in ways that contribute to society in a broader sense."

Reviewer B: "I am impressed with the breadth of his research, his ability to cross-pollinate between various disciplines, and the diverse forms through which Professor Graf disseminates his works. Roland

balances practice in the studio arts, media arts, and interventionist art practices with exhibited acceptance by all fields.”

Reviewer C: “I believe that he is an artist who has the capacity to bring great prestige upon Stamps, with genuine capacity to win prizes as prestigious as a MacArthur or a Guggenheim in his near future.”

Reviewer D: “Dr Graf seems to point his research into a direction that is focused on tangible social tenets, such as inclusiveness, playfulness, or exercise. For example, there is an application dimension to the iGYM project, perhaps originating from his prior professional career experience, that makes the research socially relevant.”

Reviewer E: “...been placed and assessed positively by a great number of appropriate institutions within their field, and to be having a significant impact on the arts and design space with the momentum to have an even greater impact.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Graf has met and surpassed the standard for promotion to professor. In 2022, the Stamps Executive Committee selected Professor Graf to receive the Richards Award for outstanding contributions to the Stamps School in the areas of teaching, creative practice, and service. This recognition is one example of the value Professor Graf represents to the broader Stamps faculty, students, and community stakeholders. His creative work and research sits at the tip of the most impactful cultural workers deploying art and design methodologies in the service of society, in this particular case, Professor Graf’s attention to accessibility and the equal opportunity for joyful lives, in these times. We highly recommend Roland Graf for promotion to professor of art and design, with tenure, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design.



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Carlos Francisco Jackson  
Dean and Professor  
Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design

May 2024