

## THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

*Regents Communication*

### ACTION REQUEST

**Subject:** Report of Faculty Retirement

**Action Requested:** Adoption of Retirement Memoir

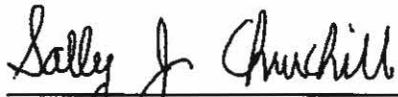
**Martin J. Powers, Ph.D.**, Sally Michelson Davidson Professor of Chinese Arts and Cultures and professor of history of art in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on December 31, 2018.

Professor Powers received his B.A. degree from Shimer College in 1972 and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Chicago in 1974 and 1978, respectively. He joined the University of Michigan faculty as an associate professor in 1987, and was promoted to professor in 1998. He was named the Sally Michelson Davidson Professor of Chinese Arts and Cultures in 1998.

A preeminent figure in the field of Chinese art with a broad international reputation, Professor Powers studied the role of the arts in relation to issues of political action and social justice in imperial China. Winner of many grants and awards, he is author of some fifty articles and book chapters as well as three path-breaking monographs. His first book, *Art and Political Expression in Early China* (1991), showed how locally commissioned art in Han China was deployed in anti-court political movements. This book won the Association for Asian Studies Joseph Levenson Book Prize for best book in Chinese Studies, pre-1900 category. In *Pattern and Person: Ornament, Society, and Self in Classical China* (2006), for which Professor Powers received a second Levenson Prize, he traced the origins of bureaucratic theory in the material culture of pre-bureaucratic times. The Levenson committee wrote that the book offers “a new way of thinking about ornamentation in relation to social hierarchy, political organization, and personal agency in the Warring States Period.” His most recent book, *China and England: the Preindustrial Struggle for Justice in Word and Image* (2018), examines egalitarian social ideals and institutions that arose in preindustrial China and England, uncovering China’s forgotten role in the history of social justice debate. Professor Powers published two volumes co-edited with Dr. Katherine Tsiang: *Looking at Asian Art* (2012) and the *Blackwell Companion to Chinese Art* (2015). His “China Mirror Project,” initially funded by the NEH, provided resources for teaching Chinese history to undergraduates. His contributions to the university and the field are significant and include directorship of the university’s Center for Chinese Studies and membership on numerous national and international boards.

The Regents now salute this distinguished scholar and teacher by naming **Martin J. Powers, professor emeritus of history of art**.

**Requested by:**



Sally J. Churchill, J.D.  
Vice President and Secretary of the University

December 2018