

***Ad Hoc Committee on Tenure Pathways for Professors in the Creative Arts***

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## Preamble

Provost Sally Kornbluth has charged our ad hoc committee to “re-examine the potential establishment of a tenure track for faculty with a terminal Master in Fine Arts (MFA) degree,” in response to a request from the Executive Committee of the Academic Council.<sup>1</sup> Our committee’s charge follows multiple efforts over the years to scrutinize the challenges and opportunities that granting tenure to arts faculty might create. Two earlier group efforts that are foundational for the work of our committee must be mentioned at once. In 2017-18, Provost Kornbluth charged a 22-member Committee on Tenure Standards to “to re-evaluate the criteria for tenure and promotion to clearly define criteria that reward the many scholarly activities we value as a community.”<sup>2</sup> The committee report, delivered to the Provost in May 2018, contained an exemplary discussion of the background and substance to the specific question of tenure for arts faculty which we have taken as the basis for our work.<sup>3</sup> In 2018-19 the 22-member Arts Planning Group, established by President Price in collaboration with Provost Kornbluth, met with dozens of stakeholders within and outside the University to assess progress in the arts. In April 2019 the APG delivered a report that provided an overview of the current state of the arts at Duke and sketched out “a

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<sup>1</sup> The full committee charge is included as Appendix 1. The specific focus of the charge on the MFA degree seems to follow from recommendation #8 of the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Regular Rank Non-Tenure Track, presented to the Provost by Academic Council Chair Kerry Haynie in April 2021, which reads, “Allow artists with MFAs to apply for tenure track positions at Duke. The MFA is the terminal degree in this field, similar to the MD and JD. By not recognizing this terminal degree in the arts, Duke is less competitive in attracting and retaining top talent.”

<sup>2</sup> *Tenure Standards Committee Report*, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Tenure Standards Committee Report*, Section 6, included here as Appendix 2.

vision for the future.”<sup>4</sup> With regards to the question of tenure for faculty in the arts, that report included this statement:

**Goal:** Over the next decade, strengthen leadership in the arts and the role of artists in faculty culture by appointing nationally and internationally recognized artists to senior faculty positions, preferably endowed chairs, in all departments and programs.

**Action:** Make appointments (external or internal) at the level of tenured full professor or professor of the practice, as appropriate, to secure the most outstanding candidates in a particular field, in keeping with the recommendations of the Provost’s Task Force on Tenure Standards.

As indicated, the 2018 section on “The Arts” in the *Tenure Standards Committee Report* (Appendix 2) contained an excellent and detailed discussion and appraisal, including a review of the history of Duke's substantial investment in new arts programs and facilities, and careful analysis of the challenges for evaluation as regards metrics and critical assessment of quality in arts faculty dossiers. That thoughtful study relieves us from revisiting the broader issues at play and allows us to concentrate on the core set of problems and decisions at hand.

Specifically, our work has been shaped by response to the six recommendations of the TSC Report, which we list below with interleaved commentary.

1. Identify strategic opportunities to make senior appointments with tenure for practicing artists with the understanding that these colleagues will help Duke articulate and maintain rigorous standards for awarding tenure to artists; our MFA programs in Dance and Experimental and Documentary Art require immediate attention.
  - a. *The committee disagrees with the notion that we need to bring in additional faculty before deciding the question. Current faculty are capable of articulating such standards.*
2. Specify qualifications for a tenure track appointment required of artists with an MFA (dance, theater, creative writing, visual art, film) and a Ph.D. or DMA (music composition, music performance, creative writing).
  - a. *The committee has focused on this recommendation as the core of its work. The first step must be to draft, however imperfectly, the particulars of the standards for tenure.*
  - b. *The committee agrees with the broader focus here suggested; we recommend against limiting the discussion to the MFA degree.*
3. Compile lists of prominent arts organizations, presenters, publishers, and awards for each arts discipline as a way to help departments assess the professional stature of candidates.
  - a. *The committee recommends that the individual departments be charged with shaping the exact details around this part of the task.*
4. Develop criteria for productivity for each arts discipline that is analogous to expectations for our research faculty.
  - a. *The committee has chosen to fold in this recommendation with recommendation #2 above, as part and parcel of working towards the definition of tenure standards.*

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<sup>4</sup> *Advancing the Arts at Duke*, p. 8. This report is often referred to internally as the Riddell report after the Chair of the Arts Planning Group, Richard Riddell..

5. Develop means of helping artist faculty to grow professionally; these should include not only scheduled sabbaticals but also internal funding to support recordings, productions, travel, and related professional development efforts.
  - a. *The committee joins with this recommendation, but does not see this as part of our work.*
6. Clarify our expectations from external evaluators; adapt the standard request letter to address relevant criteria for practicing artists.
  - a. *This important editorial task is properly delegated to the office of the Provost.*

Our **recommendation**, then, is to make a pathway to tenure available to applicable arts faculty, including current faculty. Tenure standards should clarify the difference between a Professor in the creative arts and an arts-discipline Professor of the Practice. Tenure standards for the arts should be analogous to tenure in other fields, insofar as tenure is awarded as acknowledgement for contributions of new knowledge to the field, along with recognized professional stature and national and international impact. The expectation is that a limited number of current Professors of the Practice will be successfully reappointed as tenured or tenure-track Professors. We further recommend that the Provost consider appointing a special advisory subcommittee to APT to help guide the full committee in the consideration of arts professor dossiers. (Some on the committee perceive a bias against the arts as a form of knowledge contribution, and a special advisory subcommittee could work as a mechanism to guard against that.)

The **process** we envision is as follows. Below are set forth draft proposals of tenure standards for each individual arts area. That then will be taken up for further discussion and revision (and possible rejection) by the Provost and appropriate bodies of faculty governance. If accepted in principle, the revised tenure standards would be reviewed by department leaders, and the department leaders would then further revise and elaborate specifics as necessary (see e.g. the TSC recommendation #3 above).

The draft proposals for disciplinary standards vary so as to capture the peer review culture of each discipline. The proposals nonetheless share several **common threads**. First is that creative artists need to be able to articulate their creative ambitions; it is not sufficient to paint or sculpt or dance or produce a play, film, or work of fiction without some articulation of a research paradigm or project. Second, the body of work at each rank of promotion needs to include at least one major, self-initiated production or product that leads to review and is lastingly discoverable. That is, the production needs to be available to future researchers in some media. The body of work also needs to include multiple productions that are in a regional or national/international venue and demonstrate recognition and impact far beyond the campus. Finally, artists must demonstrate a commitment to service within the unit; a professional face without clearly-articulated work with students is not sufficient. Key factors in all fields of creative activity are the qualitative judgment by arms-length experts of the importance of the contribution of new knowledge to the field, and the impact and stature of the body of work.

Following are the draft proposals by discipline.

# AAHVS: Visual Arts/Design/Film

*Expectations for promotion and/or tenure for visual Arts/design/film faculty in the Department of Art, Art History & Visual Studies, Duke University*

Sheila Dillon

The consideration for academic promotion and tenure for visual artists/filmmakers/designers-media artists in the Department of Art, Art History & Visual Studies comprises an evaluation of a faculty member's contribution in three general areas: creative activity and/or scholarly research, teaching, and service to the institution and the profession. A key factor in the field of creative activity is the importance of peer review of exhibited and/or published work (through juried venues, museum and gallery exhibitions, film festivals, screenings, competitions, etc.), as well as awards and recognition and the professional stature of the creative activity. Notably, peer review not only happens at the level of the reception of the artist's work, but may also happen in this context of curation, through which the quality of the artist's work is considered substantial enough to be included in an exhibition. Evaluation for tenure includes depth, originality, and the impact of the work on the discipline, nationally and internationally, as well as the faculty's future potential. In addition to juried venues, curated and invited exhibitions also play a role, and those are evaluated according to the scope of distribution (e.g., international, national, regional, or local), the status of the project as a solo or group exhibition (taking into account the stature of the other artists if any), and the venue's or exhibition's impact and prestige, typically verified by outside referee letters during the review process. Additional benchmarks might include:

- Art works placed in nationally recognized collections
- Grants, awards, or fellowships for research
- Commissioned works of art for specific sites
- Community-based engagement
- Juror for a regional, national, or international exhibition

## **FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION - PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR:**

1. The candidate for promotion to Associate Professor must present a coherent creative research plan and a major body of creative work, scholarship and/or research. Additionally, the candidate must be well on their way to completing a second, major body of work.

2. The completed work must be presented at national or international venues, or venues of significance appropriate to the work. While junior faculty may be active in local and regional arts and intellectual communities, for promotion to Associate Professor, the candidate should be building a reputation recognized beyond regional borders.

3. The candidate must be seen to be actively applying for grants and fellowships and to demonstrate both a capacity to sustain their artistic practice and an appetite to produce future projects.

4. Assistant Professors should be expected to teach within the existing curriculum of their department at all levels, as well as introduce new courses into the curriculum. They should advise undergraduate and graduate students.

5. For promotion to Associate Professor the candidate must demonstrate service to the department and University as well as to the profession (juries, boards, selection committees, etc.).

**FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION - PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR:**

1. The second major body of work must be completed, presented or published nationally or internationally, and reviewed in significant publications. Further, progress towards a third major body of work should be demonstrated.

2. The candidate must demonstrate the ability to develop innovative pedagogy and new courses, including graduate courses, possibly in response to changing initiatives within the department. The candidate should have a robust record of advising graduate students.

3. Service must be demonstrated on major departmental committees and show evidence of leadership. Additionally, service on major University initiatives and to the profession on a national or international level is highly desirable.

4. Evidence of national or international recognition must be demonstrated through a robust exhibition record, outside fellowships, grants, international appointments or collaborations.

5. The candidate for promotion to Full Professor should have a record of giving invited talks, lectures or presentations at peer institutions.

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## Theater Studies

*Expectations for promotion and/or tenure for arts faculty in the Department of Theater Studies, Duke University*

Douglas Jones

In its consideration of candidates for promotion and tenure, Theater Studies considers research, teaching, and service. Research in performance-oriented departments such as Theater Studies might take several forms, including traditional scholarship (e.g., publishing peer-reviewed journal articles and books) and creative work (e.g., work as the writer, dramaturg, director, designer, or performer in a professional production). Scholarly and creative endeavors often interweave and inform one another, as in the practice-based research increasingly undertaken in the field. For example, research into historical staging techniques might lead to a performance or film that reconstructs them with other actor-scholars. Regardless of the form of research, the standards by which Theater Studies measures excellence and

impact are similar. The key factor is the qualitative judgment of arm's-length experts in the field. Such judgment includes the assessments of publishers, producers, and funding organizations which largely determine the venues—whether presses or performance spaces—that will present the work. Impact is measured the same way, based initially on the arm's-length judgments of critics after the work has been published or presented and, subsequently, on the extent to which the work continues to be cited and analyzed, nationally and internationally, in recognized venues. The benchmarks for teaching and service comport with those of Trinity and Duke at-large, although there are a few specific criteria for each of the frameworks below.

#### **Framework for Evaluation—Promotion to Associate Professor**

- The candidate for promotion to Associate Professor must present a major portfolio of work (e.g., performance, design, research) in the respective field(s) that are presented at major performance spaces, artist venues, or museums. The candidate must also show ongoing excellence in their research and performance practice.
- The candidate's work must be presented at prestigious, nationally recognized venues, such as Broadway, the West End, or a cohort of LORT-A theaters (e.g., CenterStage, the Goodman, Seattle Rep.)
- The candidate would benefit from having received prestigious fellowships from organizations such as National Endowment for the Arts, National Humanities Center, the MacArthur, Guggenheim, or Rockefeller Foundations in addition to the considerable interest the work has inspired in scholarly journals and/or the national press.
- The candidate should have course evaluations meeting or exceeding departmental averages. The department also attends carefully to the classroom visit reports prepared by department chairs and their designates.

#### **Framework for Evaluation—Promotion to Professor**

- The candidate for promotion to Professor must have received international recognition for her or his work (e.g., nomination or award for the Tony, Obie, Drama Desk, or Pulitzer).
- The candidate's service to the department and the university must be substantial. The candidate must show evidence of effective leadership and service at the decanal and university levels in addition to their continued positive contributions to the department.
- The candidate should have a record of giving invited talks, lectures, or presentations at peer institutions.
- The candidate should have developed courses and/or programs that innovate the department or college curriculums.

## Dance

We would expect the criteria for the Dance Program to align with Theater Studies. Dance would, however, need to go through the faculty governance process to be reconfigured as a Department in order to become a tenure home.

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## Creative Writing

*Expectations for promotion and/or tenure for Creative Writers at Duke University*

Ranjana Khanna

Tenure standards are intended to ensure that we tenure only those faculty who, by publishing transformative and exceptional writing, are recognized international leaders within their cohorts in their subfields, and who are likely, post-tenure, to have a major national and international impact on creative writing more generally. Our promotion standards are intended to ensure that tenured faculty have achieved that promise, and are, in addition, both superb teachers and have demonstrated significant commitment to departmental, university, and professional field service. Tenure-track faculty are hired with the confidence that they have the potential to achieve high standards and with the expectation and hope that they will become permanent colleagues. Colleagues in creative writing contribute, through cultural production, to the intellectual life of the university and, through their readership, to the world more generally. For a writer to be hired in the tenure track, there is an expectation of publishing, critical acclaim, and an exceptionally strong reputation.

### **Publication**

As there is no requirement of a PhD or an MFA in creative writing, and thus no equivalent to a dissertation, hiring in the tenure track as an assistant professor requires an already strong reputation, at least a book (a novel) plus two to four published stories, essays, or graphic narratives or a dozen lengthy poems of great significance. In other words, a substantial body of work is required for hire in the tenure-track. Promotion to associate professor requires, since hiring, an additional substantial body of work that has been recognized nationally and internationally, numerous books or their equivalent. In the case of drama, distinguished professional production might be considered equivalent to a book. In the evaluation of publication, mode of access should not be considered, but rather assessment of the standing of a journal or press based on accepted evaluation criteria should be applied whether digital or print. Books published since hire with internationally recognized presses, including fine small presses, or a series of coherent and/or related quality publications since hire in internationally recognized literary or commercial

magazines that are judged to be significant by peers at the University and experts at other institutions, will be expected for promotion. A secondary criterion is a continuing commitment to writing as evidenced by a body of work that is in progress and significant work being planned. Promotion to full professor requires an additional substantial body of work of high caliber writing and an international reputation.

1. *Books*: A volume of the author's own work — whether a novel, graphic narrative, collection of short stories, a volume of poetry, drama, or creative non-fiction — carries the most prestige. These may be published either by small presses, university presses, or trade presses of high quality, distinguished reputation, and national distribution. Book publication: the merit of a book publisher is best judged by the authors it publishes and the awards and fellowships those authors and their books garner.
2. *Journals or anthologies*: Short stories, poems, plays, novel excerpts, creative non-fiction essays, graphic narratives published in distinguished literary journals or collections by reputable editors, and distinguished productions of original drama constitute work valued the highest after books. Publication in national magazines and premiere literary journals with substantial national distribution is more desirable than publication in respected literary magazines with a more limited national distribution, which is more desirable than publication in literary “little” magazines with local or very limited national distribution.
3. *Other*: Other kinds of publication and publication-related activity we value include the publication of anthologies, literary journals; collaboratively authored creative work; performance art and publications via electronic media.
4. *Translations*, particularly book-length ones, are evaluated favorably. However, they cannot substitute for authored books (or a substantial number of related periodical publications), which is essential.
5. *Anthologies and textbooks* are significant but peripheral to authored books. These are to be considered as falling within the category of service (such as magazine editing) rather than creative accomplishment, research and publication.
6. *Editorial projects*: editorial work such as editing an anthology or literary magazine will count toward professional development but will count less than the publication of original creative work. The merits of magazine editing will be judged by the caliber of the writers the magazine has published, publishing awards the magazine has received, and reviews. The merits of fiction or poetry anthologies will be judged according to the caliber of the publisher, reviews received, and awards.

Work outside the initial genre is encouraged only once tenure has been conferred. If a candidate hired initially as a poet chooses to write criticism or non-fiction, for example, he or she would be wise to wait until after tenure to make that choice. Likewise with the novelist who wishes to write drama or screenplays. Work within the genre of hire that matters most when tenure is concerned. However, an associate professor coming up for promotion to full professor may be encouraged to present a case with publications in many genres, including criticism and non-fiction. Quality and coherence remain the most significant criteria for valuing a publication.



**Professional Activity**

Professional activity for the creative writer includes participation on literature and writing panels at major international conferences (for example, PEN, MLA, AWP, Bread Loaf), literary festivals (e.g., Jaipur Literary Festival, Buenos Aires Book Festival, Boston Book Festival) lectures and readings at colleges and universities, and non-promotional online, television and radio appearances. These things count as secondary indications of national or international standing. Invited readings and lectures are indicators of a candidate's visibility and reputation. The significance of such readings and lectures can be judged by the reputation of the hosting institution.

**Honors**

Honors fall into categories of prize nominations and awards and fellowships. Major prizes like the Nobel Prize for Literature, the Booker Prize, Pulitzer Prize, Neustadt, Prix Goncourt, PEN American Literary Awards, American Book Award, National Book Critics Award Circle, Betty Trask Award, Orange Prize, Le Grand Prix du Roman, Le Prix Médicis, Goethe Prize, Akutagawa Prize, Naoki Prize, the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, Wole Soyinka Prize for Literature in Africa, the Sahitya Akademi Award, and awards like fellowships from the Guggenheim, NEA, and Whiting weigh considerably in evaluations for tenure and promotion, particularly for promotion to full professor. National prizes are evaluated favorably, as are regional prizes, though they carry less weight.

**Grants and Awards**

The university recognizes the relative scarcity of external grant support in some departmental disciplines. However, fellowships, grants, contracts, and awards from internal and external local, regional, national, or international agencies represent a highly significant professional achievement and testify to the scholarly reputation and significance of the candidate's work. A significant grant (which is the result of a rigorous peer-review of the candidate's credentials) enables the building of a scholarly community. International and national external awards and grants will generally weigh more heavily than regional or local.

**Reputation**

Reputation of the candidate will be assessed by the quality of the work indicated by external reviewers. External metrics indicating quality include:

1. Publication: the merit of a book publisher is best judged by the authors it publishes and the awards and fellowships those authors and their books garner; see above for the types of publication accepted and their relative merit.
2. Newspaper and journal reviews, literary awards, and citations that the book receives.
3. Translations of candidate's works into other languages.
4. Journal publication: publication of creative writing in national magazines and premiere literary journals with substantial national distribution is more desirable than publication in respected literary magazines with a more limited national distribution, which is more desirable than publication in literary "little" magazines with local or very limited national distribution.

5. Prizes, Awards and fellowships: awards and fellowships for creative writing are excellent indicators of a national reputation. The merit of the award or fellowship will be based on the reputation and reach of the awarding agency. National awards and fellowships are held in higher esteem than regional, which are valued above local awards.
6. Reprints: reprints in anthologies and textbooks are excellent indicators of a national reputation. The significance of these publications will be judged by the caliber of the press and the nature of the publication.
7. Reviews: reviews of creative work are excellent indicators of a national or international reputation. The significance of reviews will be judged by the caliber of the reviewing journal or press.
8. Invitation to judge literary competitions and evaluate manuscripts for reputable presses.

### **Public Profile**

In all specializations, the university values public scholarship, and encourages candidates to submit documentation of such activity along with contextualization to explain how this work complements and embellishes their overall scholarly portfolios. Public scholarship may involve interactive work with groups outside the conventional realm of scholarly and creative publishers: museums, government organizations, civic groups, performance groups, schools, and media, for example. We affirm the recommendations developed by the consortium called “Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life,” in their report titled “[Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University](#),” that provide a perspective for appropriately valuing public scholarship and engaged artistic creation. These guidelines describe “different forms of making knowledge about, for, and with diverse publics and communities,” and explain how to appraise such work based on how “it contributes to the public good and yields artifacts of public and intellectual value.” The report details how to define and assess public scholarship based on a continuum of professional activities and accomplishments, and how to compile a portfolio that best demonstrates the value of this work.

### **Teaching**

The university values excellence in teaching undergraduates. The department will assess (1) excellence in the workshop and seminars, (2) good participation in conferencing and thesis hours, (3) a teaching plan that fits into the overall curricular scheme of the Program. Each of these categories is significant, though they are not equally weighted. Furthermore, teaching should communicate high expectations. This will involve maintaining high standards of creative excellence (evidenced, for instance, in student publications or writing prizes) and academic knowledge. Workshops and seminars should be informed by not only the contemporary genre practices but by knowledge of canonical and international literary approaches.

In assessing teaching quality, the university assesses course syllabi, numerical data compiled from student course evaluations, signed comments on student evaluations, letters from former students, and classroom visits by colleagues before and during the tenure or promotion consideration process.

**Service**

Candidates for tenure track positions and advancement are expected to serve their units through serving as an officer of the department (DUS, Chair, for example); serve on committees for searches and promotions in related fields; serve the college on college-wide committees; serve the university on provostial and presidential committees; serve the profession.

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## Music: Performance

*Expectations for promotion and/or tenure for performance faculty in the Department of Music, Duke University*

Philip Rupprecht

Academic promotion and tenure in musical performance – vocal, instrumental, or conducting – is assessed in the Department of Music through evaluation of the three main areas of professional activity: research, teaching, and service. The assessment of research for musical performers places great emphasis on the testimony of confidential peer reviewers concerning the quality and significance of practice-based achievement. Judgments of a performer’s artistry and reputation will comment in the first place on the originality, imagination, and impact of a body of work of a period of years, as well as the extent of professional recognition documented in concert appearances, commercial recordings, published reviews, or prizes. Assessments of teaching and service for performers will accord with institutional and department expectations: for teaching, criteria will include student evaluations and evidence of curricular innovation; for service, a record of contributions to the planning and delivery of major and non-major pedagogy, including service as an officer (DUS, DGS, Chair, Director of Performances).

**Framework for evaluation: promotion to Associate Professor**

1. The performer will present a significant record of professional artistic activity, giving evidence of a reputation established at the national or international level. Candidates will document their expanding level of recognition since the time of joining Duke’s faculty, in the first place through an extensive record of professional concert appearances.

2. The nature, prestige, and visibility of a performance venue is a key criterion in determining the impact and level of professional musical performance. Recognition at a national level will be demonstrated through appearances beyond local or regional performance venues. A venue’s prestige, size of audience, and distribution of publicity are significant factors.

3. The names and reputation of performance collaborators in a given genre (chamber, jazz, orchestral, choral, or operatic repertory) will inform an assessment of a performer’s achievement. Collaborations with composers may include commissions of new repertory or

participation in premiere performances. Appearances as a named or featured soloist (in concertos or opera, e.g.) should be distinguished from participation in larger ensemble performances.

4. Performers may document a national or international reputation by presenting commercially released recordings (on CD, DVD, or for download), or by streaming video or audio dissemination of recordings. Where available, published reviews of recordings may be included in a promotion file.

5. Invitations to teach named master-classes, professional ensemble clinics, to coach at summer festivals, serve as resident or visiting guest artist; or to judge significant musical competitions are important evidence of a performer's standing at the national or international level.

6. Some performers may demonstrate professional leadership as administrators of summer festivals or concert series, and/or as recipients of grants for projects. Some performers may publish writings or pedagogical texts with wide dissemination.

7. Evaluations of teaching on campus will follow existing institutional metrics, including student evaluations, course enrollment data, and documentation of pedagogical innovation. On-campus service may include activity in some of the following: service as a departmental officer (e.g. DUS); university-wide committees; service to local, regional or national professional organizations.

### **Framework for evaluation: promotion to Professor**

1. The candidate will present a sustained record of artistic activity and mature artistic achievement, typically over many years, and reaching many audiences. Candidates will have a reputation significantly beyond that attained by the time of tenure as an Associate Professor. Performers seeking promotion to full Professor will be artists with well-established national or international reputations, recognized leaders within their peer group. Candidates will present a continuous record of major professional concert appearances, including at top-flight venues.

2. The nature, prestige, and visibility of a performance venue is a key criterion in determining the impact and level of professional musical performance.

3. The names and reputation of performance collaborators in a given genre (chamber, jazz, orchestral, choral, or operatic repertory) will inform an assessment of a performer's achievement.

4. Performers may document a national or international reputation by presenting commercially released recordings, and published reviews.

5. Candidates for Professor will typically show a significant list of invitations to lead master-classes, residencies, serve as guest-artist or competition judge.

6. Some performers may demonstrate professional leadership as administrators of summer festivals or concert series, and/or as recipients of grants for projects. Some performers may publish writings or pedagogical texts with wide dissemination.

7. Evaluations of teaching on campus will follow existing institutional metrics. Service at the departmental or university level may be recognized.

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# Appendix 1

## COMMITTEE CHARGE

(per email from Provost Sally Provost)

The Executive Committee of the Academic council recently conducted a review of regular rank non-tenure track faculty titles. One outcome of these discussions was the recommendation that Duke re-examine the potential establishment of a tenure track for faculty with a terminal Master in Fine Arts (MFA) degree. I invite you to serve on a committee, to be chaired by Dean of Humanities William Johnson, to consider the following questions:

1. Should Duke offer tenure (or the option of a tenure track pathway) to faculty holding MFA degrees
2. If we do wish to consider tenure for MFA faculty, what should the criteria for tenure be (and how do we distinguish these faculty from those who would continue to serve as Professors of the Practice?).
3. If MFAs are to have the opportunity to earn tenure at Duke, would this be only for new faculty or would we want to offer this opportunity to MFAs as well as PhD PoPs in the Arts?

The committee will speak with various stakeholders, discuss the questions above, and formulate a recommendation for consideration by academic leadership and faculty governance groups. The work of this committee will begin early next semester. I hope you will accept the invitation to participate in this important discussion.

## Appendix 2

*Excerpt of the entirety of Section 6 from the Tenure Standards Committee Report (May 2018)*

### 6. THE ARTS

#### Rationale

The arts have become a prominent part of undergraduate and graduate education at Duke. Section 5 of the previous strategic plan, *Making a Difference*, committed Duke to transforming the arts by investing in facilities, faculty development, university presenting organizations, expanding student opportunities for art-making, and engaging with artists through courses and co-curricular programs. Duke has made impressive progress on all fronts. New and renovated facilities include the Nasher Museum of Art, Baldwin Auditorium, the Smith Warehouse, the Carpentry Shop, the Student Arts Annex, and, most recently, the Rubenstein Arts Center. Every arts department and program has hired new artist faculty committed to melding practical art-making with research and scholarship. Duke has hosted more than 70 visiting artists in residence since 2007, and many have visited campus multiple times each year. While arts departments and programs have been eager sponsors of these residencies, departments and schools outside of the arts have also hosted visiting artists, including the Sanford School for Public Policy, the Nicholas School for the Environment, DIBS, Chemistry, Mathematics, Biology, and the Divinity School. These residencies require artists to participate in classroom instruction as well as offer a performance or exhibition.

An important consequence of our investment is the creation of new graduate degree programs for practicing artists. A Ph.D. in Music Composition has been in place since 1992. The MFA in Experimental and Documentary Art (MFAEDA), which leverages Duke's faculty's strengths in AAH&VS, Arts of the Moving Image (AMI), and the Center for Documentary Studies, was launched in 2011. In 2018, the Board of Trustees approved a new MFA program in Dance: Embodied Interdisciplinary Praxis, which entails a partnership with the American Dance Festival; the first class matriculates in Fall 2019. Other arts-related graduate programs bring together applied art-making with theoretical and historical research. These include a new Ph.D. in Computational Media, Arts, and Cultures (CMAC), a Master's degree in Historical Visualization, and the Ph.D. in Literature.

Our graduate arts programs collaborate significantly with Duke's presenting organizations: Duke Performances; the Nasher Museum; and the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival. These nationally acclaimed presenters offer a conduit for our artists and students to engage with a broader public, both locally and nationally. These collaborations have become an important lever for recruiting faculty and graduate students to Duke. Integrating public engagement into our graduate programs through these partnerships is consonant with Duke's new commitment to Re-imagining Doctoral Education, through which we prepare students "to make a difference in a wide array of professional contexts."

Students graduating from our graduate composition and visual art programs have gone onto arts-related professions outside of the academy as well as tenure-track faculty positions at colleges and universities as well. For the latter, such positions require a terminal degree that is appropriate to the discipline: the MFA in dance, theater, visual art, and creative writing; the DMA or Ph.D. in music composition; and the MM or DMA in music performance. Every faculty search in the arts begins with a careful assessment of the candidates' artistic portfolios, and the most substantial part of the tenure dossier consists of artistic works. Yet, in most cases, faculty who teach in Duke's graduate arts programs are not eligible for tenure. Presently, Duke has three tenure-track appointments in music composition. We also have tenured faculty in poetry (Nathaniel Mackey in English) computational media (Bill Seaman in AAH&VS), and dance (Tommy DeFrantz, whose tenure resides in AAAS), but all three colleagues came to Duke as full professors with tenure. Furthermore, it is our colleagues' conventional scholarly publications which made their tenure dossiers legible to APT even though their efforts center on creating new choreography, poetry, and media art. Music composition, then, is the only faculty appointment at Duke that awards tenure solely based on artistic production, and it is the only program in which its tenured faculty arrived at Duke with initial appointments as Assistant Professors.

Peer institutions, including Cornell, Stanford, Princeton, Dartmouth, Brown, and Chicago, have tenured faculty in multiple arts disciplines,<sup>[1]</sup> though we note that none of these institutions award tenure to performers in music, dance, or theater. We select these institutions because they do not host independent art schools or conservatories as do Yale, Washington University, the University of Rochester, the University of Southern California, Oberlin, Northwestern, and a great many state universities. At Duke, the lack of tenure-track positions compromises our ability to recruit top artist faculty as evidenced by the fact that two highly qualified applicants for a faculty position in filmmaking recently withdrew from candidacy when they learned that Duke was not offering a tenure-track position.

*To summarize, Duke has made a substantial investment in new arts programs and facilities, but this investment is not aligned with our tenure policies. We also lag behind established tenure practices for artists at peer institutions.*

## **Definition**

An artist produces work that is valued for aesthetic and affective criteria as well as for its conceptual and technical sophistication. Conventional examples include practitioners in visual arts (painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, filmmaking, and digital media); performing arts (music, theater, dance); creative writing (fiction, poetry); and hybrids of these disciplines. Within the performing arts, an important distinction exists between artists who create new works (composers, playwrights, choreographers, directors) and interpretive artists

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<sup>[1]</sup> Stanford has tenured six studio artists, four composers, six creative writers, and three documentary artists; Chicago has tenured three composers, ten visual and media artists, and three creative writers; Princeton has tenured five composers, six visual artists (including film), and nine creative writers; Cornell has tenured three composers, eight creative writers, and a large faculty of studio artists with appointments in the School for Art, Architecture & Planning



(musicians, dancers, actors). In R-1 institutions, the so-called creative artists are more frequently tenured than interpretive artists. This common-sense taxonomy is complicated by emerging artistic practices that engage in a critique of established arts institutions. These include “social practice” artists who enlist participants (including people without artistic training) in aesthetic experiences that interrogate the marginalization of certain peoples by hegemonic social structures; and “post-disciplinary” artists who reject conventional ideas of skill and virtuosity that draw on artistic practices from historically marginalized communities. While professional art schools are launching programs in social practice art and post-disciplinary art,<sup>[2]</sup> these practices have not taken hold as distinct degree programs in R1 institutions, making evaluation exceedingly difficult.

### *Metrics*

Colleagues in the upper administration at Stanford, Cornell, and Chicago<sup>[3]</sup> all expressed reservations along the lines of those delineated in the Existing Policies and Practices section of our Report about the uncritical use of “metrics” as a means of assessing scholarship of any kind, not to mention assessing arts portfolios. Similar issues have been raised in previous sections on public and digital scholarship.

That said, each artistic discipline has reasonably clear expectations for productivity. Experts in the field, which include external evaluators, understand these criteria, and have flagged low productivity as a problem in an arts tenure dossier. Duke has denied tenure to a practicing artist because of low productivity.

Publication, on the other hand, is an increasingly contested criterion for assessment. To some extent, the difficulty of securing a recording contract or a print publisher speaks to the importance of the artist’s work, but, in all cases, these publication channels are commercial in nature; the decision to publish an artwork depends on its commercial viability or on external funding. For example, most music recordings, including those by highly regarded artists at top music schools, are self-funded or supported by an external grant secured by the artist. Established record labels dedicated to contemporary music (e.g., Naxos, Albany, Innova, New Amsterdam, and Bridge) expect artists to bring their own funding, whether from their pockets or from an external grant, to produce the CD. That said, the labels exert a strong curatorial role to maintain credibility in the professional music world if only to ensure reasonable sales; they will not produce a recording simply because the artist can fund it. *We are not suggesting that recordings (or comparable publications in other areas of the arts) not be required, but rather that their importance be properly contextualized.*

*A more reliable metric for evaluating artistic production, especially in the performing and visual arts, is a substantial record of concert performances, theatrical productions, dance*

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<sup>[2]</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/07/education/edlife/social-practice-degrees-take-art-to-a-communal-level.html>; <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Art-Schools-Build-New/129420>

<sup>[3]</sup> Telephone conversations with Richard Saller, Dean of Humanities & Sciences, Stanford University; Bill Brown, Senior Advisory to the Provost on Arts, University of Chicago; John Siliciano, Vice Provost of Academic Affairs, Cornell University

*performances, screenings, and exhibits.* These presentations are publications in their own right, and their significance can be gleaned from the stature of the venues, presenting organizations, and collaborating artists. In most cases, established arts institutions provide financial and logistical support to present the artworks. The tenure dossier should explicitly state how presentations are being supported to distinguish those that are self-produced or that take place in an informal setting (e.g., a “house concert”) from those that are sponsored by a professional presenter.

Some artistic works, especially musical compositions for wind band or chorus, may be performed dozens if not hundreds of times in a given year. In most cases these performances are given by high school and college music ensembles as well as by amateur youth orchestras and other community groups. In some institutions, including prominent music schools, this kind of success counts for a great deal—it is not an exaggeration to say that the most accomplished composers in these genres are household names. At the other extreme, an artist may engage in experimental practices that are legible only to trained practitioners, scholars, and theorists. Such works do not circulate widely but nonetheless embrace innovative technical and conceptual ideas that inform contemporary artistic practices.

A comparable situation exists for theatrical directors, playwrights, and choreographers. Much of their daily effort goes into producing performances by students in their home institutions or at other colleges and universities. Among these, it is important to distinguish productions at highly regarded professional schools (e.g., Yale Repertory Theater or the Juilliard School) from those presented by departmental ensembles in liberal arts colleges.

In both of these cases, amateur performances are not a substitute for professional performances and productions, which can include presentations by prestigious university museums and performing arts presenters (e.g., the Nasher Museum, the Cantor Museum, Stanford Live, Duke Performances) as well as professional orchestras, chamber groups, theater, and dance companies.

Assessing the stature of the presenting organizations, galleries, and collaborators is difficult whether for the candidate, the department, or APT. The institution could help by assembling a list of representative galleries, concert venues, theaters, museums, presses, and presenting organizations and ask departments to situate the candidate’s work in relation to that list. Criteria for significance may include venue size, the stature of the artists presented each year, selectivity, annual budget, amount spent on the presentation, and critical attention. Similarly, the prestige of awards, grants, fellowships, and commissions can be assessed by selectivity, reputation of the institution offering the award, and the amount of the award.

Speaking engagements and residencies at art schools, museums, galleries, conferences, university departments, and festivals are another useful indicator of the artist’s prominence in the field. As with presentation venues, assessing the importance of these engagements is relatively straightforward when based on the prominence of the organization, program, or school. The departmental report must make the case and external evaluators can verify the department’s argument.

Finally, the artist/candidate must thoroughly document public presentations of her work. A visual artist's CV typically includes a long list of gallery exhibitions identified by date and place, but not by the number of works presented, whether the exhibit was a solo or group show, the stature of the gallery, or even the duration of the exhibit. The candidate must make the significance of these presentations legible to non-specialist readers.

### *Assessing Artistic Works*

Unlike scholarship, which is a unique product of the university, artistic production is defined and judged outside of the academy as well as within. Questions of expertise quickly arise. Who is the authority? The tenured professor of painting, the art historian, the critic writing for *Art Forum*, or a distinguished artist working outside of the academy?

Critical reviews by scholars, journalists, and established artists vary in quality. Very few art reviews appear in academic journals and books, and if they do, they appear long after the artwork was created, possibly not in time for the artist's tenure review. More timely reviews may appear in magazines, newspapers, and online venues, and the best of these (e.g., the *New Yorker*, the *New York Times*, and *Art Forum*) may offer sophisticated criticism. That said, critical reviews published in mainstream media are likely to reflect the personal biases of the writer, and, because they are addressed to general audiences, they rarely offer an extended critique of the work. At best, mainstream writings suggest the degree to which the work is part of a larger cultural conversation about art. They are not sufficiently detailed to constitute a sophisticated critical assessment of the artwork.

In the absence of a well-defined infrastructure for critical assessment in academic publications, it is up to external evaluators to offer penetrating, fair-minded, and technically informed judgements of an arts portfolio. Even here, external letters vary dramatically in quality: some writers take great pains to analyze and assess each work in the portfolio while others, often the most distinguished artists in the field, offer cursory and superficial evaluations. Letters from non-academic professionals are not likely to be helpful because the writers do not understand the academic review process. The template letter also might be rewritten, as was suggested in the Public Scholarship section. Too often evaluators assume that we are asking for an assessment of the candidate's scholarship. While regarding artistic work as scholarship is rhetorically welcome, framing the request in this way (for an assessment of the candidate's scholarship) is still likely to be confusing to the evaluator. The template letter might substitute "artistic works" for "scholarship" to make our expectations clear.

Finally, it is notable that none of our peer institutions award tenure to actors, dancers, and performing musicians unless they hold appointments in professional schools within the university (e.g., Yale School of Music, Yale School of Drama, University of Michigan School of Theater and Music, Oberlin Conservatory, Peabody Conservatory at Johns Hopkins, Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester). One reason for this is that tenure criteria for performing musicians at top conservatories may take into account the quality of the candidate's

undergraduate students.<sup>[4]</sup> Another reason is that late-career performers in dance and music (especially voice) do not concertize or perform as frequently as they did earlier.

In the case of Duke, the first issue is complicated by the fact that Duke does not judge our tenured faculty scholars by the quality of our undergraduates. Given that we do note how many dissertations our faculty supervise, however, we could tabulate thesis advisees for faculty teaching in our MFA programs, particularly when considering promotion to Full Professor. As for the second issue: a late-career artist who steps way from a full schedule professional performance presents a delicate issue. Just as Duke evaluates promotion to Full Professor by considering the “tripod” of research, teaching, and service, the same criteria could apply to performing artists. It is not unusual for a late-career dancer or musician to attract graduate students, for example. Also, externally, a distinguished faculty artist may present masterclasses at other schools and serve as a judge in national and international competitions. In some cases, late-career dancers and actors become choreographers and directors (e.g., dancers Paul Taylor and Merce Cunningham).

### **Recommended Policy**

As at Duke, our peer institutions struggle with the assessment of the scholarly output of its performing/creative artists. And, based on interviews with deans and upper administrators at Stanford, Cornell, Princeton, and Chicago, it is apparent that there is vast variability and inconsistency (between, and even within, institutions) in how arts departments are assessing artistic quality. For example, while valuing composers in the Music Department who are committed to speculation and experiment, Stanford also supports novelists in its Creative Writing program who work with commercial publishers. And while colleagues at Princeton emphasized the importance of the departmental report and the external letters, its tenure review committee does not directly inspect the candidate’s publications or art works (citing the usual problem of a scientist evaluating a humanist’s monograph and vice versa.) The committee was the most persuaded perhaps by Chicago’s approach to tenuring artists: hire distinguished senior artists with tenure and enlist their help in defining tenure criteria within their disciplines.

*While still at a preliminary stage in thinking about the review/promotion/tenure process for creative artists, the committee proposes the following steps:*

- Identify strategic opportunities to make senior appointments with tenure for practicing artists with the understanding that these colleagues will help Duke articulate and maintain rigorous standards for awarding tenure to artists; our MFA programs in Dance and Experimental and Documentary Art require immediate attention.
- Specify qualifications for a tenure track appointment required of artists with an MFA (dance, theater, creative writing, visual art, film) and a Ph.D. or DMA (music composition, music performance, creative writing).

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<sup>[4]</sup> This emerged in letters from external evaluators with appointments at music schools when asked to state whether our Duke colleague would be reappointed or promoted at their home institutions. It is not unusual for young musicians to apply to a school in order to study with a particular artist.

- Compile lists of prominent arts organizations, presenters, publishers, and awards for each arts discipline as a way to help departments assess the professional stature of candidates.
- Develop criteria for productivity for each arts discipline that is analogous to expectations for our research faculty.
- Develop means of helping artist faculty to grow professionally; these should include not only scheduled sabbaticals but also internal funding to support recordings, productions, travel, and related professional development efforts.
- Clarify our expectations from external evaluators; adapt the standard request letter to address relevant criteria for practicing artists.