

Board Meeting
January 21, 2016

APPOINT FELLOWS TO THE CENTER FOR ADVANCED STUDY, URBANA

Action: Appoint Fellows to the Center for Advanced Study

Funding: Private Gift Funds from the Beckman Endowment and State Appropriated Funds

Each year the Center for Advanced Study awards appointments as Fellows in the Center, providing one semester of release time for creative work. Fellows are selected in an annual competition from the untenured faculty of all departments and colleges to carry out self-initiated programs of scholarly research or professional activity.

The Interim Chancellor, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Interim Vice President, University of Illinois recommends the following list of Fellows selected for the 2016-17 academic year, and offers brief descriptions of their projects:

Manisha Basu, Assistant Professor, English, *Uneasy Presents, Unrequited Past: South Africa and India in Contemporary Non-fiction*

The recent spectacular success of Anglophone non-fictional works in the contemporary South African and Indian literary contexts begs us a question about why it is that non-fiction, rather than imaginative fictional work, is increasingly the most viable platform from which the current configurations of these two societies may be explored. What is it about the ‘reality-effect’ of creative non-fiction that lends itself to the enforced apartness and continuing inequity in India and South Africa, both of which are emerging forces in the arena of global politics, and significant players in the shaping of our new world?

Ryan Foley, Assistant Professor, Astronomy, *The Progenitors and Explosions of Exotic Transients

In the last few years, humans have discovered more exploding stars than in the previous millennium, and with this windfall, new and diverse classes of objects have been discovered. Professor Foley will study these new classes while preparing for the next order-of-magnitude increase in the discovery rate that will come with the UIUC-invested Large Synoptic Survey Telescope.

Benjamin Grosser, Assistant Professor, Art and Design, *Autonomous Video Artist: Seeing the Machine in Human Vision*

To fully understand the effects of culture on human visual experience it is essential to employ a non-human other, a post humanist outside observer that sees the world without the influence of cultural history. *Autonomous Video Artist* will be an artificially-intelligent video capture robot that employs computational agency to create its own video art, revealing, through its different ways of seeing, how culture directs what we see, ultimately showing us the machine behind human vision.

Prashant Jain, Assistant Professor, Chemistry, *Inducing Unconventional Optical Behavior in Materials Using Confined Light

This project investigates the manner in which light confined to nanoscale dimensions interacts with matter. The ultimate aim is to fundamentally alter the flow of energy in light-absorbing materials, so as to have utility in efficient solar energy conversion and artificial photosynthesis.

Aunash Kalsotra, Assistant Professor, Medical Biochemistry, *Deregulation of RNA splicing networks in fatty liver disease

This proposal aims to determine the pathological mechanism(s) that drive development of non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH), a severe form of fatty liver disease. Professor Kalsotra and his team have discovered that deletion of the splicing factor, SRSF1, results in spontaneous development of NASH in mice revealing an unexpected link between splicing deregulation and fat metabolism in the liver.

Thomas Kuhlman, Assistant Professor, Physics, *Real Time Transposable Element Activity in Individual Live Cells

Transposable elements, or “jumping genes,” are mutagenic mobile genetic elements present in all living organisms whose activity restructures the coding and control regions of their host genome, generating genetic diversity that plays an important role in evolution, development, and the etiology of several human diseases including cancer. The Kuhlman lab has developed an experimental transposable element system using fluorescent reporter proteins that allows them to use state-of-the-art imaging, molecular and microbiological techniques, and microfluidics to study in spatially-

resolved detail and in real time the dynamics of TE propagation within living cells, to quantitatively characterize their contribution to and effects upon the health of the organism, and to investigate their interplay with other processes contributing to genome plasticity and their propagation throughout populations.

Eduardo Ledesma, Assistant Professor, Spanish and Portuguese, *Cinemas of Marginality: Experimental, Avant-Garde and Documentary Film in Ibero-America*

This book project, situated within Latin American and Iberian Film Studies, examines debates about form and politics in avant-garde, experimental and documentary film in Latin America and Spain. It explores transatlantic and transnational connections in noncommercial, counter-Hollywood cinemas from Argentina, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Mexico, and Spain, focusing on the last fifty years of filmmaking, from the 1960s until today.

Jeffrey Martin, Assistant Professor, Anthropology, *Strong Democracy, Weak Police: How Culture Makes Peace in Taiwan*

Professor Martin is an anthropologist specializing in the cultural, legal, and institutional foundations of democratic policing. His current project examines how The Republic of China on Taiwan has created a democratic policing system which effectively mobilizes certain elements of cultural tradition to maintain a robust domestic order, despite the state's lack of a sovereign monopoly on violence and the relatively weak authority of its legal institutions.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, *University of Illinois Statutes, The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs.

The President of the University recommends approval.

*These faculty members have been recommended for appointment as Beckman Fellows in the Center for Advanced Study named for the donor of a gift that permits additional recognition for outstanding younger Fellow candidates who have already made distinctive scholarly contributions to their respective fields.