

September 21-22, 2022

**ITEM 202-1003-R0922**

**Request for Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of the School of Visual and Media Arts on Mary Ann Bonjorni; University of Montana-Missoula**

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**THAT**

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Mary Ann Bonjorni from the faculty of The University of Montana, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for her 30 years of dedicated and valued service to the University and the State of Montana by recommending that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon her by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

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**EXPLANATION**

Professor Bonjorni earned her M.F.A. at the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1986 and joined the School of Art at The University of Montana in 1991. Professor Bonjorni rose rapidly to the rank of Associate Professor and then Professor. She served as a senior member of the painting and drawing areas and taught both undergraduate and graduate students.

Professor Bonjorni's overall performance was consistently meritorious. She was a very successful and popular teacher. She was well-known for her clarity to 2-dimensional rendering, 3-d construction, and installation. Her experimental coursework in performance and expanded studio practices provided students with opportunities for creative discovery in and outside traditional art venues. Her leadership in the field of drawing led to the development of a popular environmental drawing seminar and an interdisciplinary campus and field-based drawing component in the Wilderness and Civilization Program. Upon student request, Professor Bonjorni served an astonishing number of B.F.A. and M.F.A. candidates. She earned strong teaching evaluations from her students, and she was evaluated consistently as an outstanding teacher by her colleagues.

Professor Bonjorni's research was wide-ranging and focused on topics important to the concept of the American West. As a range rider, ranch hand, poet and artist, Bonjorni delved deep into the mythology of the people, animals, and land of the American frontier. Taxidermy animals, thrift-store treasures, and appropriated print materials from popular culture shared space with Bonjorni's assured mark making in her two-dimensional artworks. Her constructions and installations created challenging conversations about human interaction with public and wild lands. Bonjorni shared her enthusiasms for the perplexities of the American West with a wide range of viewers. Students and other campus members were not her only audience, she also engaged with a breadth of community members through her ranch related activities.

Professor Bonjorni played an important service role on campus in addition to her contributions in the areas of teaching and research. She was deeply engaged with the exhibition of student artworks and organized annual showings on campus and in local venues. Her insights during scholarship decision making were invaluable. She was indefatigable as a member of evaluation, curriculum, and foundations committees. Her arts advocacy extended to the state legislature where during several political cycles, she gathered and organized student work for exhibitions at the Montana State Capitol.

The School of Art (now the School of Visual and Media Arts) is pleased to nominate Professor Bonjorni for emeritus status.

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**ATTACHMENTS**

None