

FALL 2019

rc news



welcome

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Greetings, RC Alumni(ae), and the whole RC community!

I am delighted to serve as the new director of the Residential College, starting July 1, 2019.

I have been teaching at the RC since 1987, first as a Lecturer and Research Scientist in the Museum of Paleontology, later as a tenured Professor in the RC and the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. I value the RC as a community of people deeply committed to teaching, learning, and social transformation.

At the RC, I have taught a number of first-year seminars about environmental science (e.g., Paradoxes in the Global Food System, Apocalyptic Planet: The Science and Politics of Global Change), natural-science courses (History of life) and interdisciplinary courses about the food system (Food, land, and society). Kate Mendeloff and I collaborated in producing my play about Charles Darwin (Struggle for Existence: Darwin's Dreams) in the Museum of Natural History. I value the opportunity to develop



In my RC classes, I appreciate that I have learned as much from my students as they learned from me. They (you!) give me hope for the future.

courses that cross disciplinary boundaries and provoke new ways of evaluating the subject matter. In my RC classes, I appreciate that I have learned as much from my students as they learned from me. They (you!) give me hope for the future.

My research concerns the fossil record of mammals, particularly how mammals

respond to environmental changes in deep time. My research group and I do field research each year in the Mojave Desert. I have also done field work in Pakistan on the fossil record of ecosystems along the precursor of the Indus and Ganges rivers and am currently co-editing a book that synthesizes findings from four decades of research there.

As incoming director, my main goals are to support the continuing strengths and unique character of the RC in our academic and community-engagement programs and to foster innovations in these areas as well. I wish to rebuild the faculty and

courses in "Science and Society," including topics of daily relevance to our personal and political lives. I look forward to conversations with faculty, staff, students, and many of you about your accomplishments and new directions in the second half century of the Residential College!

Sincerely,

Catherine Badgley

RC Director
rcdirector@umich.edu
734.936.1998



CONNECT

[Listen to an interview with Catherine](#) in the RC Podcast, Episode 19.

Oaxaca- and Seattle-based artist **Fulgencio Lazo** led the RC and local community in building Día de los Muertos sand tapetes (floor murals made from colored sand) and ofrendas (offerings) for display in the RC Art Gallery and at the Ann Arbor District Library



ANNOUNCEMENTS



Jennifer Myers, Hank Greenspan and Cindy Sowers

Hank Greenspan and **Cindy Sowers** have retired after RC careers spanning 32 and 46 years, respectively.

RC and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Professor **Catherine Badgley** is the 11th Director of the RC and the third woman in the role, and English, Linguistics, and Education Professor **Anne Curzan** is the new LSA Dean.

In fall 2019, Arts and Ideas faculty unveiled two new **"How to Think" courses** that examine the patterns of inquiry characteristic of different arts disciplines - in this case, mixed media images and music.

In October 2019, the RC collaborated with many campus partners to present the **Community of Food, Society and Justice Conference**. Students, faculty,



Katri Ervamaa

staff, farmers, and the community engaged in rigorous dialogue around recognizing structural relations of power in order to confront race, class, and gender privileges, with the goal of working toward justice in the food system. *Listen to RC Podcast episode 20 to learn more.*



Teresa Sanchez-Snell

Recently, there has been a treasure trove of awards and honors given to RC students and faculty: **18 Hopwood Awards** were given to RC students in the winter 2019 round, LSA gave 13 RC faculty **Honored Instructor** recognitions, six RC faculty were nominated for Golden Apple Awards, **Jennifer Myers** received the Excellence in Advising Award, RC Spanish Language Internship Program coordinator and faculty **Teresa Sanchez-Snell** was recognized by the Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives with The Circle Award, and by student group La Casa with an award honoring the legacy of their student founder, RC Music

head **Katri Ervamaa** received the LSA Outstanding Contribution to Undergraduate Education Award for exceptional dedication to her students who range from beginners to highly experienced musicians

Naomi André, faculty in RC Arts and Ideas, Department of Afroamerican and African Studies, and Women's Studies, has been appointed the inaugural Scholar in Residence at Seattle Opera where she advises staff and leadership on matters of race and gender in opera. She continues her academic appointments at U-M.

RC faculty **Sascha Crasnow** (Arts and Ideas), **Elizabeth Goodenough** (Arts and Ideas), and **Toby Millman** (Studio Arts) were each awarded grants from the U-M Center for Research on Learning and Teaching Lecturers' Professional Development Fund in October 2019.

MILESTONES

Semester in Detroit celebrated its 10th anniversary

Prison Creative Arts Project showed 670 works from 574 artists in their 24th Annual Exhibition of Art

Center for World Performance Studies wrapped up artist residencies with Makuyeika: Colectivo Teatral, Yandong Grand Singers, Anishnaabe Theatre Exchange, The Living Earth Show, and JIT Exchange

In 2020, the **Creative Writing and Literature program** celebrates its 50th anniversary, and the RC Drama program **Shakespeare in the Arb** celebrates its 20th anniversary. Stay tuned for more details about these milestones!

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

First Year Seminar faculty **Konstantina Karageorgos's** article "Toni Morrison and the Black Radical Tradition" (*Jacobin Magazine*)

Music and First Year Seminar faculty **Jennifer Goltz-Taylor's** 2018 review of opera "27" by Ricky Ian Gordon (*Opera News*)

Social Theory and Practice faculty and East Quad Garden head, **Virginia Murphy** appearing in *Michigan Online's Sustainable Food Teach-Out* on topics complexities of food choice, food waste, and localization of food

Arts and Ideas faculty **Beth Genné's** 2018 book, *Dance Me a Song: Astaire, Balanchine, Kelly and the American Film Musical* (Oxford University Press)

Arts and Ideas faculty **Naomi André's** 2018 book, *Black Opera: History, Power, Engagement* (University of Illinois Press)

Arts and Ideas faculty **Sascha Crasnow's** 2018 interview "Cultivating Creative Spaces in Palestine: an Interview with Yazan Khalili" (*FIELD: A Journal of Socially-Engaged Art Criticism*)

GET CURIOUS

RC Student Forums Lead the Way



RC Forums are student-initiated and student-run discussion groups that can be created by any RC student around a topic of interest. RC students may elect to receive up to one credit per semester for participation in a forum and these credits can count towards their four requisite RC classes for graduation. Forums may participate in community-building events, excursions, performances, and community service activities, depending on student interest. Forums are open to all students, but only RC students can receive academic credit for participation. Here are a few Forums and what they do:

Dance Forum

"We watch recordings and screenings of dance performances, teach each other choreography and routines, and explore styles of dance from around the world as well as various Western styles of dance."

RC DAP (Diversity & Politics) Forum

"We discuss an array of topics such as immigration, the government's role in natural disasters, social injustice, gun laws, affirmative action, and so much more!"

Eco Forum

"We respond to controversies of our time, experience the environment

around us through group trips and service projects (most notable in the East Quad Community Garden), and watch and react to films that touch on environmental topics."

Feminist Forum

"Our weekly topics include representation of race, gender, and sexual orientation in the media, sexual health, and issues on campus, among other topics that demonstrate the need for feminism."

Film Forum

"Members come together to watch and discuss themes such as foreign language, sexuality, women's rights,

and Oscar nominees. We discuss how these themes have been manifested in our film culture today and how cinema has contributed to and changed society at large.”

LGBTQIA+ Forum

“We bring together people from all different backgrounds, including allies, and focus on issues such as gender roles, homophobia, homelessness within the Trans* community and more. In addition to weekly dialogues, we bring in speakers from across cam-

pus, collaborate with the Spectrum Center, and hold an annual Trans* Clothing Drive in the spring.”

Sex Forum

“Our forum seeks to promote the importance of sexual health, education, and wellbeing in the RC community. In the past, we have put on variety shows, had movie screenings, hosted guest speakers, as well as panels on topics pertaining to sex and sexual health.”

VISITING ARTISTS AND SCHOLARS

The RC continues a long tradition in inviting visiting artists and scholars. Recent guests include theater artist **Irina Khutsieva** from Moscow who led a Russian theater performance with the RC Russian language program; **Pak Raharja** from Jogjakarta who served as guest leader of the U-M gamelan; **Margrit Straßburger** from Berlin led German-language performance workshops and performed her one-woman show on the life and poetry of Mascha Kaléko; Oaxaca- and Seattle-based artist **Fulgencio Lazo** led the RC and local community in building Día de los Muertos sand tapetes (floor murals made from colored sand) and ofrendas (offerings) for display in the RC Art Gallery and at the Ann Arbor District Library.

Margrit Straßburger and Irina Khutsieva



Get up close and personal to RC-ers changing the world. Listen to any of the 20+ available episodes for in-depth conversations with the personalities that make the RC so unique. Subscribe on Apple Podcasts, Google Play or your preferred app.



PRESS PLAY

Have you listened to #theRCPodcast yet?




Catherine Badgley
[RC Director and RC and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology professor](#)
[EPISODE 19](#)


“So we had an Andes sized mountain range running from British Columbia all the way into Northern Mexico. And it started to pull apart 20 some million years ago. And what we find is that mammal diversity spiked in that whole region during the period of most rapid change. And that is to say we see the fossil record suddenly has this huge pulse of diversity in many different parts of Western North America that all correspond to this one time interval. So for me that’s a wonderful puzzle. Why and what causes it to spike then and not be a broader, higher diversity over a longer period? What is it about that time interval that’s so special?”



Hannah Brauer, RC Review Editor-in-Chief (episode 21)

 [Carmen Bugar, RC alumna '96](#)
[Creative Writing](#)
[EPISODE 18](#)

"I've also rediscovered that going back to my earliest memories of Romania, the childhood memories about which I talked in my memoir, *Burying the Typewriter*. By the act of writing *Burying the Typewriter*, I was able to go to the magical, lyrical, idyllic, beautiful dialect of my village that has been a source of strength and love for language in general, regardless of which language you speak. A resource for me. So now I'm able to have two Romanians in my mind simultaneously and an English language that is sort of beautifully engaging with both of them."

 [Stephen Ward](#)
[RC Urban Studies & Department of Afroamerican and African Studies associate professor and faculty director of Semester in Detroit](#)
[EPISODE 14](#)

"There are many people who were part of that process of creating [Semester in Detroit], but I want to emphasize that students having the idea, the initiative and so forth at the beginning, I think worth upholding and remembering. Especially as we go now 10 and more years beyond that moment."

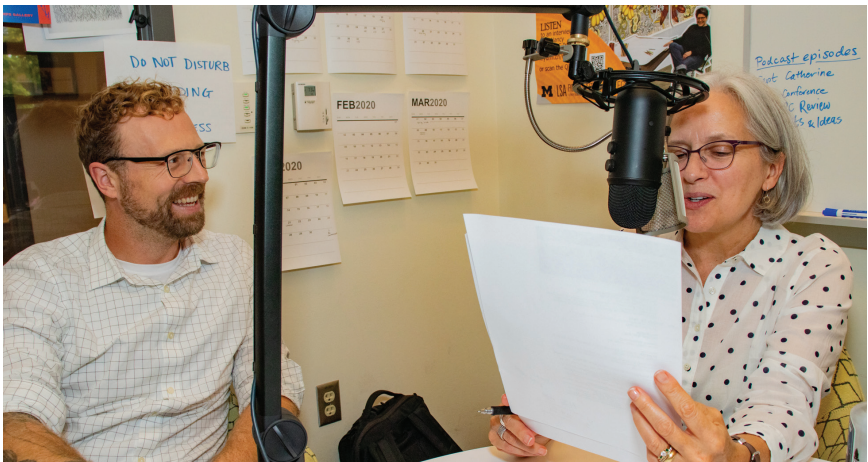
▶ RC Arts and Ideas in the Humanities faculty emerita
Cindy Sowers
EPISODE 16

“That’s what Professor Morgan and Professor Pack taught me by the respect and care with which they presented those extinct languages; and that’s why the libraries at the University of Michigan are so big. They save things — because you never know when you might need them. So many things are like that - unusual languages; odd corners of the ancient world that no one has ever heard of; traces of climate change that occurred thousands of years ago; rare species of fish; a remnant of cloth or a scrap of parchment that just happened to survive through fire and flood. These things seem small and useless; why not just throw them away? Because they have stories to tell, information to communicate; and you never know when that apparently insignificant bit of information will be crucial.”

▶ Hank Greenspan
RC Social Theory and Practice faculty emeritus
EPISODE 15

“I think in general, what I say to students is, “You know you have some idea of who you are. You have some idea of what you’re interested in, what you’re good at, what you believe in, and you set sail. You have no idea what bottle is going to float by, what islands may show up, who else and what other boats may come by. But, if you have some idea of those initial things of where you’re at and what you think you want to do next, not forever, but next, ideally you will recognize a relevant boat and even equally important, they will recognize you as someone who could work on this boat. This is a pretty good island for you. Check out that bottle. Check it out. Think about it.”

Alex Bryan (left) and Virginia Murphy (right), on the Community of Food, Society & Justice Conference (episode 20)



RC Drama trip to the Stratford Festival, October 2019. A first year student says: "Going to the Stratford Festival has been one of the highlights of my first weeks at Michigan. I loved getting to see Shakespeare on stage. I didn't have the opportunity to see much Shakespeare during high school despite loving the plays we read in English class. I'm very grateful to the RC for making the trip possible. It was a lot of fun and a fantastic experience!"





TRANSFORMATIVE TRAVEL

In 2019, the RC awarded \$49,284 to 38 students for study away and internship experiences, thanks to the generosity of many alumni donors. Awards were distributed this year from the Donald and June Brown Fund, the Amy Rose Silverman International Education Fund and Engaged Learning Fund, the Honeli Fund, and the David and Sylvia Nelson Fund.

Several students studied in programs in Grenoble, Barcelona, Cuba, Paris and other locations, while others interned over the summer including at the U.S. Department of State in Mexico City, with a member of Parliament in the Canadian House of Commons in Ottawa, and by creating programming for at-risk youth in San

José, Costa Rica. Some participated in Semester in Detroit, a cohort-based RC program that recently celebrated its 10th anniversary and was founded by several RC and U-M students. Several students contributed to projects in Ecuador, including at the student-run Quito Project, whose mission is to minimize the achievement gap for primary school students in low opportunity areas of Quito through education, and by contributing to an oral history project in a remote rural area of the country.



“This internship solidified my interest in public policy and diplomacy.”

Interested in helping an RC student grow through study experiences like these? Please email robby@umich.edu

“My experience this summer was transformational. I improved upon hard skills including presentation, communication in second languages, and organization for large-scale, high-stakes events with many moving parts. I gained a better understanding of how policy like the TVPA is transformed into concrete, operational regulation. Even more than that, I learned by talking to people. Hearing from State Department Officers who were in Berlin when the wall came down, speaking with the acting Ambassador about his extensive experience in the service, and experiencing a new culture with my local peers and host expanded my range of knowledge. This internship solidified my interest in public policy and diplomacy.” – RC Junior Karuna Nandkumar who spent 10 weeks interning for the U.S. Department of State at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City

“The schedule includes workshops, craft talks, readings from the accomplished faculty, participant readings, outdoor activities, and informal gatherings. The location of the event isolated me from the outside world and forced me to unplug and distance myself from distractions while bringing me closer to nature, my writing, and my fellow writers. Bear River was a lovely experience that I highly recommend to anyone who can go. I am so appreciative of the Residential College for making this possible for me. **I left with new friendships, several new poems, new insights and inspiration, and tons of beautiful memories.**” – RC Senior Elena Ramirez-Gorski who attended the weekend long Bear River Writers’ Conference in northern Michigan



“Spending two months interning in Ecuador was a really meaningful experience that changed how I think about agriculture and the farming lifestyle. Before this summer, I was certainly cognizant of the hard work subsistence farmers put in on their plots of land to produce for their family, and the internship helped me see first-hand how one might survive in uninhabited land. Yet I had never really considered before how extensive time in an isolated rural territory ingrains a profound intimacy between land and its inhabitants. Academics often describe flora and fauna in more material, scientific terms, but the stories I heard in Ecuador about the wildlife and vegetation had a beautiful narrative flow to them. When I pointed to any plant or animal and asked about it, my host family could identify its name, physical characteristics, nutritional value, and cultural significance while telling very human stories about how they interact with them.”
- RC second year Arjun Thakkar on collecting oral histories in rural Ecuador with the organization Nido de Vida



In October 2019, the RC and many U-M partners brought farmers, scientists and indigenous community leaders to campus for the Community of Food, Society & Justice Conference. This panel, "Growing Heritage: Reclaiming Indigenous Seeds", explored challenges and dynamics in maintaining sovereignty over seeds within indigenous communities.



IN MEMORIAM

Erica Paslick, 1929 - 2019

Long-time RC German Lecturer, Erica Paslick, passed away on January 4, 2019. Erica was a dedicated and beloved RC faculty member from the mid-eighties till 2009, during which time she also received her PhD (in 1996) from the UM Department of Comparative Literature. She was an enthusiastic German teacher and especially loved teaching grammar and German Romanticism. She also taught many RC first year seminars, translation and literature courses in the RC Comparative Literature Program, and Great Books (for the Honors Program). Erica was a proud and active member of LEO.

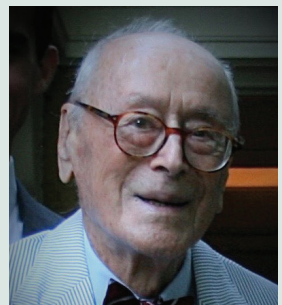


Yi-tsi Mei Feuerwerker, 1928-2018

Professor Yi-tsi Mei Feuerwerker, Professor Emerita of Chinese Literature in the Department of Asian Languages and Literatures, and in the Residential College, passed away in December 2018. She taught at University of Michigan from 1962-2000 and specifically in the RC Literature and Arts and Ideas in the Humanities programs from 1972-1984. Professor Feuerwerker was regarded by her colleagues as having the highest degree of integrity and dedication to her work, and she held the distinction of being the first Asian woman to reach the rank of professor at the University of Michigan.

Donald R. Brown, 1925 - 2019

Professor Donald R. Brown passed away on November 5, 2019. Professor Brown served in the Department of Psychology, directed the U-M Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT), co-directed the Integrated Premedical-Medical Program (Inteflex) from its inception, and co-founded the Residential College. Professor Brown and his wife June established the Donald and June Brown Scholarship fund that has supported several hundreds of RC students in off-campus learning experiences since 2007.



We publish a list of deceased RC Community members on our website at myumi.ch/nbRwn. Please visit and let us know if you know of someone to add to the page.

A young man with dark, wavy hair is shown in profile, looking down intently as he plays a violin. He is wearing a dark blue t-shirt. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be a bookshelf with colorful books. The lighting is warm and focused on the man's face and hands.

YOUR GIFTS KEEP OUR RC TRADITIONS ALIVE

Consider making a contribution to the RC Strategic or Discretionary funds, which support the core programs of the Residential College and keep its traditions alive and well.

If you'd like to make a gift for this or another purpose, please see our list of possible funds at

[**myumi.ch/QApXG**](https://myumi.ch/QApXG)

THANK YOU.

U-M REGENTS

Effective January 1, 2019 through
January 1, 2021

Jordan B. Acker, Huntington Woods
Michael J. Behm, Grand Blanc
Mark J. Bernstein, Ann Arbor
Paul W. Brown, Ann Arbor
Shauna Ryder Diggs, Grosse Pointe
Denise Ilitch, Bingham Farms
Ron Weiser, Ann Arbor
Katherine E. White, Ann Arbor
Mark S. Schlissel (ex officio)

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