

College  
of Arts

## University Research Chairs

The seat of understanding, the impetus for inquiry, shaped by and shaping the world

ELIZABETH EWAN

**Cultural creations, historical revelations, and contemporary constructions of reality and virtual reality compose the purview of the University of Guelph College of Arts' outstanding University Research Chairs program.**

## At the helm of an international stronghold for Scottish studies

**M**ore than five million Canadians — 15 per cent of the population — have Scottish roots, which makes Scottish studies particularly relevant in Canada. Leading the way is Prof. Elizabeth Ewan (above), who holds the University Research Chair in Scottish Studies.

Ewan is committed to promoting Scottish studies globally. She assists with the coordination of the Centre for Scottish Studies, which is a collaborative hub for Scottish scholars worldwide. Additionally, thanks to her efforts, the University of Guelph has become a major centre for graduate Scottish studies in Canada.

Ewan's Scottish heritage and frequent family trips to Scotland inspired her passion for Scotland at an early age. She spent a year as an undergraduate at

St. Andrews University and completed her PhD at the University of Edinburgh.

In 2006, Ewan co-edited *The Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Women*, which contains the stories of more than 1,000 women from Scotland's history. The book was a bestseller in Scotland in 2007, and it is now a standard reference worldwide.

Currently, Ewan is investigating the meaning of masculinity in medieval Scotland. She is working with the Scottish government to apply her research to modern Scotland, which is experiencing high male unemployment rates.

In the future, Ewan hopes to improve Scotland's interaction with people of Scottish heritage who now live in Canada and around the world.

—MEGAN COWIE





➤ DIONNE BRAND

# Writing the un

**C**apturing a world, time and place in words is what drew Dionne Brand to becoming a writer.

However, one of her next works focuses on what remains unwritten.

Brand is a University Research Chair in the School of English and Theatre Studies. She's won many literary awards throughout her professional life, including the prestigious Governor General's Literary Award for *Land to Light On*, the Pat Lowther Award for

*thirsty* and the Griffin Poetry Prize for *Ossuaries*.

Brand is a poet, novelist and essayist. Her writing is renowned for its beautiful language and intense engagement with issues of social justice, like gender and race.

Toronto culture is a recurring theme in many of Brand's novels and poems. She won the City of Toronto Book Award for her book, *What We All Long For*. Brand was Toronto's third Poet



➤ DANIEL FISCHLIN

## Engaging students *Shakespeare*

**R**ealizing students' disengagement with Shakespearean literature, Prof. Daniel Fischlin, who holds the University Research Chair in Early Modern and Interdisciplinary Studies, recognized students needed to relate better to the material. This sparked an idea, which came to be known as the Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project (CASP). The idea has blossomed into a multi-faceted research and learning platform for all ages.

Since its onset, CASP has encompassed many projects, including the six-month-long exhibit *Shakespeare — Made in Canada*, youth literacy games and learning modules, and *Romeo + Juliet: The Shakespeare App*. Fischlin has also worked on verifying the authenticity of an heirloom portrait of Shakespeare, the only such portrait of the Bard painted during his lifetime, which can be seen on the CASP website. Fischlin has recently been named General Series Editor for Oxford University Press's new editions of

# written

Laureate from 2009 until 2012.

Brand has published 18 books and contributed to many anthologies. She's written dozens of essays and articles and made four documentary films for the National Film Board.

She is currently writing an *Ars Poetica*, a hybrid work of "left-hand pages or versos." It will examine the tensions between what is written and what is withheld.

—MAGGIE ROBERTSON

## Students in Shakespeare

Shakespeare, edited and introduced from a Canadian point of view.

And that's not all. As editor of CASP's book series with Duke University Press, Fischlin has been a core researcher on the Improvisation, Community and Social Practice (ICASP) project. ICASP focuses on the connections between civil rights, community-building, music and improvisation.

Fischlin has also written a trilogy of books about human rights movements with a humanities-centered perspective, with collaborator Martha Nandorfy. They are currently conceptualizing a new book.

Later this year, Fischlin will have four books hit the shelves, focusing on culture, rights, jazz, improvisation and Shakespeare. His works incorporate past, present and future generations of Canadians.

The Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project can be found at [canadianshakespeares.ca](http://canadianshakespeares.ca).

—MAGGIE ROBERTSON

PHOTO: SEAN HOWARD



✪ SKY GILBERT

## Challenging those open to exploring sexuality and change

**P**rof. Sky Gilbert pushes boundaries worldwide as a pioneer in queer theatre studies, and as a leader in creative writing. Gilbert, a University Research Chair in the School of English and Theatre Studies, is a professor and writer of critically acclaimed novels, plays, poetry and scholarly journal articles that often deal with exploration.

Gilbert has written seven novels and directed numerous plays performed globally. His ultimate goal is to challenge and educate questioning, thoughtful people who are open to exploring sexuality and change.

Over the summers of 2008 to 2010, Gilbert conducted practice-based research on masculinity and femininity through a Shakespearean lens in a workshop presentation entitled *The Shakespeare Experiment*. The female roles were played by alternating young men and young women in a queer and straight context, investigating how contemporary theatre-goers view theatrical cross-dressing.

More recently, in the spring of 2012, Gilbert wrote and directed his Dora Award-winning play *The Situationists*, which takes a modern approach to activism, challenging culture and society through what theorist Guy Debord calls 'situations.'

Gilbert has received three Dora Mavor Moore Awards and the Pauline McGibbon Award for theatre directing. He is also a recipient of The Margo Bindhardt Award and the Silver Ticket Award.

Currently, Gilbert is helping organize a conference next fall at York University dealing with the Shakespeare authorship question, with regards to the Earl of Oxford.

—KATY JONKER





# Canada's leading light in cultural journalism

## ROBERT ENRIGHT

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**P**rof. Robert Enright is one of the most highly regarded art critics and cultural journalists in the country. He received the Order of Canada in 2005 for his work highlighting emerging artists, and he holds the University Research Chair in Art Theory and Criticism in the School of Fine Art and Music.

Enright began his career as an art critic with CBC national radio, where he worked for 25 years. He later shifted his focus to writing, and became the author of art volumes that have been published globally, including a highly acclaimed monograph on the American painter Eric Fischl.

Over the span of his career, Enright has conducted thousands of interviews with artists around the world. He has a passion for interviewing, and in the future he hopes to conduct a study on the world's most important interviewers in the area of visual arts.

Currently, Enright is the senior contributing editor of *Border Crossings* — a quarterly cultural magazine he established more than 30 years ago — which features his interviews with visual artists. He has received 14 nominations for the National Magazine Awards and the Western Magazine Awards, has won four gold and two silver medals for his work, and has published essays, interviews and introductions to more than 70 books and catalogues.


Enright, in his journalistic selections — he is a voracious engager when it comes to art and culture and architecture — is shaping the cultural landscape nationally and internationally.

—MEGAN COWIE

MARTIN SCHWALBE



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