Committee on Faculty Research Lectureship Named Lecturers for 2007-08

To the Academic Senate, Los Angeles Division:

The annual UCLA Faculty Research Lectures honor our university’s most distinguished scholars in science, the arts, humanities and social disciplines while presenting to our academic community and to the public two superb lecturers. The Committee has named Professor Owen N. Witte from the Department of Microbiology, Immunology, and Molecular Genetics and Professor Thom Mayne from the Department of Architecture as the UCLA Faculty Research Lecturers for 2007-08.

Professor Owen N. Witte as the 103rd Faculty Research Lecturer in 2007-2008

Professor Owen Witte is the founding director of UCLA’s Institute for Stem Cell Biology and Medicine and has been a member of the UCLA faculty in the Department of Microbiology, Immunology, and Molecular Genetics since 1980. He received his B.S from Cornell University, his M.D. from Stanford University, and his postgraduate training at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Professor Witte’s research contributions are abundant and varied. Current work includes studies on the regulation of lymphoid growth and development, efforts to understand the complex relationships between epithelial stem cells, cancer causations, and therapy, especially in relation to prostate cancer, and the development of powerful new modalities for whole body imaging. He has carried out groundbreaking work on mechanisms of oncogenesis, which has led to the development of targeted cancer therapeutics. This work that has led to the development of Gleevec is considered by many as one of the most significant of this field. Gleevec is the lead example of a new generation of cancer drugs that are targeted to specific molecules responsible for oncongenesis, and it has shown great success in the treatment of chronic myelogenous leukemia. This work has been a remarkable example of the translation of basic science into innovative approaches for saving lives.

Prof. Witte has an extensive list of accolades, including elected membership in the National Academy of Sciences, elected membership in the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, the William Dameshek Prize from the American Society of Hematology, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society’s de Villiers International Achievement Award, and the Warren Alpert Foundation Prize, which he shared with David Baltimore, Alex Matter, Nicholas Lydon, and Brian Druker. He is also a senior investigator of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

Professor Thom Mayne as the 104th Faculty Research Lecturer in 2007-2008
Professor Thom Mayne is a founding board member of the Southern California Institute of Architecture and has been a member of the faculty at UCLA in the Department of Architecture since 1993. He received his B.A. from the University of Southern California School of Architecture and his graduate training from Harvard University School of Design.

Professor Thom Mayne’s buildings represent both creative exploration and research in design methodology. Each building is premised on a radically different interpretation of program and site conditions, and hence results in an original formal presence with little carry over to the next design. His recent architecture is especially noteworthy for research in sustainable design for large buildings, without compromise to high artistic aspiration. The Caltrans Building in Los Angeles, and the General Services Administration Building in San Francisco are notable examples of major public projects that involve very significant energy savings. They also exhibit another characteristic of his work, which is to address the social arrangements imbedded in the program, in this case the bureaucratic workplace. The scale of endlessly repeating spaces is broken up by clustered floors, conferencing facilities and atria, creating a more humane environment. Prof. Mayne also takes an active interest in urban design and by implication the larger social and cultural forces operation at the urban scale.

Thom Mayne has awarded numerous prizes and honors for his work. In 2005, he received the architecture profession’s highest international award, the Pritzker Prize. Among previous winners of the prize are Frank Gehry, Renzo Piano, Richard Meier, Rem Koolhass, Phillip Johnson, and Ieoh Ming Pei. He is an elected member of the American Academy of Design and has won the Brunner Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Gold Medal from the Los Angeles American Institute of Architects, the Chrysler Design Award of Excellence, and the National Design Award from the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum. Most recently he won the commission for the tallest building in Paris against a group of leading international architects, including two other Pritzker Prize winners. He also won the urban design competition held for the Olympic Village by New York City for the 2012 games.

Respectfully Submitted

Andrea Ghez, Physics & Astronomy, Committee on Faculty Research Lectureship Chair
Michael Allen, English
Harvey Herschman, Biological Chemistry/Pharmacology
Kendall Houk, Chemistry & Biochemistry
Carroll Johnson, Spanish & Portuguese
Ronald Kaback, Physiology
Karen Orren, Political Science
Eli Yablonovitch, Electrical Engineering

October 2007