



Announcement: Appointment of Toni Shapiro-Phim

May 22, 2019

[The Interdisciplinary Minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation \(CAST\)](#) at Brandeis University is delighted to announce the appointment of **Toni Shapiro-Phim** as Associate Professor of Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation and Assistant Director of the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts (outside the tenure track). Beginning fall semester 2019, Professor Shapiro-Phim will co-chair the CAST minor, offer its core course (CAST 150b), develop two new CAST-designated courses, and support the program in Peacebuilding and the Arts.

With a Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from Cornell University, **Toni Shapiro-Phim** is a leading scholar and practitioner analyzing and building the role of the arts in conflict/post-conflict situations and in response to mass violence and sudden traumatic loss. A central theme of Toni's work over many decades is that of long commitment to, and respect for, diverse populations. While her area of personal and professional expertise is dance and human rights, her research and professional activities have included ethnomusicology, documentary filmmaking, videography, and the study of expressive forms as diverse as domestic altars and [women's klezmer "culture"](#) in the Philadelphia area and beyond. Toni's international work has focused on Cambodia, where she lived for many years and acquired fluency in Khmer; she has worked in other Asian countries, including in refugee camps. Her recent work with the Liberian Women's Chorus in Philadelphia has also allowed her to extend her knowledge to the contemporary African diaspora; she documented the work of the Chorus in her film [Because of the War](#). Toni's co-edited volume, [Dance, Human Rights, and Social Justice: Dignity in Motion](#) (2008), has made her a leader in this field, and her other book-long publications, as well as shorter articles and reviews, all show Toni to be deeply committed to exploring the critical intersection of human rights, peace and justice concerns, genocide studies, migration, and the arts and other forms of cultural expression. Toni's long experience in non-profit management, most recently as [Director of Programs for the Philadelphia Folklore Project](#), will be a great asset to the administrative and fundraising needs of the program, as CAST continues to develop its profile and increase its visibility on campus.

Toni brings ongoing work on issues of human rights and conflict resolution, as well as the documentation of transitional justice institutions, to her role as Assistant Director of the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis. She holds a leadership role in [IMPACT – Imagining Together: Platform for Arts, Culture and Conflict Transformation](#). Directed by Cindy

Cohen, IMPACT is establishing a global network of practitioners and scholars engaged in work around the arts and conflict transformation.

During a day-long series of interviews on campus, Toni shared ideas for bringing all CAST students into a learning environment where core principles as well as ethical concerns related to the arts and social transformation can be explored and debated. Her long experience working in community will support CAST's ongoing work creating important and mutually beneficial relationships with off-campus communities, in Waltham and beyond. She already enjoys lasting relationships within the Cambodian community in Lowell, for instance.

Please join the CAST program in welcoming **Toni Shapiro-Phim** to the Brandeis community this fall semester.