

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE *Current*

April 28, 2022

Jim Logan

Two Named Guggenheim Fellows

Their specializations couldn't be more different, but [Sylvester Okwunodu Ogbechie](#) and [Toshiro Tanimoto](#) have much in common: intellectual rigor, dedication and an impressive record of achievements in their fields.

Now the UC Santa Barbara faculty members share something special — both have been named 2022 Guggenheim Fellows. Each fellow receives a significant grant intended to support their research and creative projects for a year.

“On behalf of UC Santa Barbara, I offer my warmest congratulations to Professors Toshiro Tanimoto and Sylvester Okwunodu Ogbechie on their selection as 2022 Guggenheim Fellows,” said Chancellor Henry T. Yang. “These highly prestigious fellowships for their research on geology in the Arctic zone and African art history, respectively, are an honor for our entire campus community. We are tremendously proud of this meaningful recognition of their achievements, and look forward to their continuing contributions to our campus and our society.”

Ogbechie, a professor in the Department of the History of Art & Architecture, will work on a book project titled “The Curator as Culture Broker: Representing Africa in Global Contemporary Art.” The book will explore how curators and art historians represent African artists and artworks in the discourse of global contemporary art.

“It is a great honor to be named a Guggenheim Foundation Fellow,” Ogbechie said, “and to join the long list of extraordinary scholars who have received this distinguished award.”

Tanimoto, a distinguished professor of Earth Science, will research a geophysical technique for estimating the ice melt at various locations in polar regions.

“I am honored, thrilled to receive the fellowship,” Tanimoto said, “but at the same time I am a bit surprised because I was not expecting it.”

Guggenheim Fellowships — reserved for those who have already demonstrated exceptional capacity for productive scholarship or exceptional creative ability in the arts — are awarded across a range of disciplines, including the natural sciences, cinema, musical composition, education, mathematics and the visual arts. The honorees for 2022 were chosen from a group of nearly 2,500 applicants.

“The Guggenheim is one of the most competitive grants in the field of art history,” said Laurie Monahan, associate professor and chair of the history of art and architecture, “and Professor Ogbechie, whose work highlights African-born, African-descended and African diaspora artists in modern and contemporary art, encourages art historians to reassess and reconsider the ways in which the modern is defined beyond the conventions of the Western European canon. The department is extremely proud to have him as a colleague.”

Susannah Porter, professor and chair of earth sciences, called Tanimoto’s fellowship a well-deserved honor.

“We are really excited for Toshiro and proud to have him as a member of our department,” she said. “This is a real honor for Toshiro and for our department. In addition to being an excellent scientist, Toshiro has always been a wonderful colleague.”

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.