Program in Media Arts and Sciences

Graduate Program

A total of 135 students—70 master's candidates and 65 doctoral candidates—were enrolled in the Program in Media Arts and Sciences (MAS) graduate program during the 2006–2007 academic year. The MAS graduate student community included 26 women, 4 individuals from underrepresented minority groups, and 53 foreign students.

During the year, 45 advanced degrees were awarded (34 master's degrees and 11 doctorates). MAS received 340 applications to the graduate program and offered admission to 59 new students (including 15 women). Fifty-two students (including 13 women) enrolled.

In addition to supervising graduate students, MAS faculty and research staff collectively advised and supported eight graduate students from other MIT departments and programs, including the departments of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Chemistry, Physics, Mechanical Engineering, and Materials Science and Engineering, as well as the Biological Engineering Division and the Sloan School of Management.

Student and Postdoctoral Fellows Honors and Awards

PhD candidate Kelly Dobson (Computing Culture group) was awarded a $35,000 Media Arts Fellowship, widely known as one of the most prestigious grants for film, video, and new media, by National Video Resources, a grantee of the Rockefeller Foundation. She received the award for her "Companion Projects," an initiative through which she seeks to reveal the psychological, social, and political dynamics between people and machines.

Media Lab researchers exhibited more than a dozen projects at SIGGRAPH 2006 (July 30–August 3) and also took part in poster sessions, papers, and panels. In addition, PhD candidate Amanda Parkes (Tangible Media group) curated Unravel, the SIGGRAPH 2006 fashion show, featuring the latest in computation and conceptual couture created by designers and artists from the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia.

The 6th annual Year in Ideas issue of the *New York Times Magazine* featured two Media Lab projects. Postdoctoral associate Rana el Kaliouby and her colleagues in the Affective Computing group created ESP, an emotional–social intelligence prosthesis designed to help people with autism read the emotional cues in casual conversations. PhD candidate Noah Vawter (Computing Culture group) created Ambient Addition, which changes ambient noise into music. Ambient Addition was also exhibited in Rio de Janeiro as a part of the FILE art festival.

Master's student Edward Shen (Software Agents group) received the best graduate student film prize at the CMS Media Spectacle for his short film about Professor Hugh Herr, *Life. Research*. The film was also selected for the 2007 Plymouth Film Festival.

Master's students Alyssa Wright and Benjamin Mako Hill (Computing Culture group) were awarded an mtvU Digital Incubator grant for their "Selectricity" voting project.

The joint work of the Lab's Viral Communications group and Motorola Inc. won one of two best student paper awards at this year's Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Wireless Telecommunications Symposium. The paper, "Performance Evaluation of EVRC-Encoded Voice Traffic Over CDMA EVDO Rev. A," was coauthored by Fulu Li, Ivan Vukovic, Igor Filipovich, Phil Fleming (Motorola), Eric Chan (Motorola), and Andrew Lippman.

PhD candidate Jeff Lieberman (Robotic Life group) won MIT's 2007 Student Mural Competition for his mural "Acrylic Dive," displayed in the Stata Center.

PhD candidate Mark Feldmeier (Responsive Environments group) was selected as a Martin Fellow for the 2006–2007 academic year. The award, available to advanced MIT graduate students who have shown outstanding performance in a field strongly related to the environment and sustainability, was established at MIT by Lee ('42) and Geri Martin through the Martin Family Foundation.

Master's student Laura Nichols (Future of Learning group) was one of the recipients of the 2006 Laya and Jerome B. Wiesner Award, which is granted to students (undergraduate or graduate), living groups, organizations, or activities for outstanding achievement in and contributions to the arts at MIT.

Undergraduate Program

Students from the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) continued to represent the largest undergraduate presence at the Media Lab. More than 200 undergraduates from across the Institute participated in a wide variety of research projects, with many of these students pursuing their undergraduate theses under MAS faculty supervision. In addition, MAS offered five undergraduate subjects, and four MAS faculty and/or senior staff members conducted freshman seminars or served as freshman advisors.

Now in its eighth year, the MAS alternative freshman-year program enrolled 10 students in 2006–2007. These students participated in weekly Media Lab tutorial/laboratory sessions connected with two core freshman subjects, pursued Media Lab UROP projects, and took two MAS undergraduate subjects on design and research, one of which is an option for satisfying part of the undergraduate Communication Requirement. The program, a first step toward a greater MAS presence in undergraduate education, has also turned out to be a successful "feeder" program for graduate students: this year's graduate admittances included three former freshman-year program participants.

Faculty and Staff

New Appointments

Edward Boyden was appointed assistant professor of media arts and sciences. Boyden received his PhD in neurosciences from Stanford University and both his MEng in electrical engineering and computer science and SB in physics and electrical engineering and computer science from MIT.

Honors and Awards

Edward Boyden was selected by *Technology Review* as one of the "TR35" (the world's top innovators under the age of 35) for 2006.

John Maeda was featured in *Wallpaper* magazine as one of the "40 Under 40," a who's who of the world's most influential young designers.

Marvin Minsky was selected as one of four 2006 fellows of the Computer History Museum in Mountain View, CA.

New Books

John Maeda, *The Laws of Simplicity: Design, Technology, Business, Life*, MIT Press, 2006.

Marvin Minsky, *The Emotion Machine: Commonsense Thinking, Artificial Intelligence, and the Future of the Human Mind*, Simon & Schuster, 2007.

William J. Mitchell, *Imagining MIT: Designing a Campus for the Twenty-First Century*, MIT Press, 2007.

Pattie Maes
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More information on the Program in Media Arts and Sciences can be found at http://www.media.mit.edu/mas/.