

## Music and Theater Arts

Music and Theater Arts continues to afford students at MIT the opportunity to experience the unique language and process of the arts. Faculty and teaching staff help students understand art's demand for rigor and discipline and its nonquantitative standards of excellence and beauty. A strong, comprehensive program in both music and theater arts—encompassing history, theory, and performance and taught by faculty and staff of the highest caliber, whose ongoing professional activities inform their teaching—has been and will continue to be our hallmark. Because it is comprehensive, the academic program continues to produce graduates who have the talent and desire to extend their education in music or theater beyond the undergraduate level.

### Highlights of the Year

The MIT Guest Artist Series continued its two-year concert series commemorating the 250th anniversary of the birth of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Robert R. Taylor professor Marcus Thompson performed one of the six Mozart viola quintets with each of the ensembles. This year the series welcomed the Jupiter String Quartet, the Vogler String Quartet, and the Audubon String Quartet.

In a rare Boston appearance, French pianist and composer Magali Souriau was composer in residence with the Festival Jazz Ensemble. She coconducted and performed with the ensemble under the direction of lecturer Frederick Harris. The concert featured the premiere of the jazz ensemble arrangement of her jazz trio *The Lady with the Hat*.

In honor of the 80th birthday of Bradford Endicott '49, a founding member of the Council for the Arts at MIT, the MIT Wind and Jazz ensembles presented a special performance that included works written for the occasion. Pianist and composer Kenny Werner premiered his new work *No Beginning, No Ending*, which was commissioned by the Endicotts for the Jazz Ensemble. Special guest artists were saxophonist Joe Lovano, vocalist Judi Silvano, and violinist Matt Glaser. Several surprise musical birthday cards by MIT composers were also part of the program.

Gamelan Galak Tika and Rambax, Music and Theater Arts' two world music ensembles, presented World Music Weekend at the Broad Institute. Special guests included visiting artist Dewa Ketut Alit and Bayu Sabda Idep performing a new piece for gamelan and strings. Master drummers and dancers from Senegal joined lecturer Lamine Toure and associate professor Patricia Tang, codirectors of Rambax, in *Cosaan*, a traditional performance presentation that combines Senegalese drumming, song, and dance.

A special concert performance by the Paul Taylor 2 Dance Company filled Walker Memorial to capacity. Taylor established the company to ensure that his works could be seen by audiences anywhere, unhindered by economic or technical limitations. Paul Taylor 2 also taught open dance classes and workshops during its visit, giving our dance students an opportunity to work with one of the premiere dance companies in the country.

## Honors and Awards

Class of 1949 professor Ellen Harris received a D'Arbeloff Fund for Excellence in Education grant to develop a new first-year experience class with Professor James Howe from Anthropology and lecturer Charles Shadle.

Kenan Sahin distinguished professor of music Evan Ziporyn was awarded the 2006 Gyorgy Kepes Fellowship Prize by the Council for the Arts at MIT.

Assistant professor Keeril Makan won the 2007 Killington Music Festival Composer's Competition. He also received the 2006–2007 American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers Award.

Lecturer Elena Ruehr received a Radcliffe Institute Fellowship for 2007–2008.

## Program Highlights

Enrollments in Music and Theater Arts were 1,082 and 305, respectively, for a total of 1,387. Music and Theater Arts continued to host the MIT Chapel Series, a successful concert series featuring local solo and group performers. The MIT Concert Choir, under the direction of lecturer William Cutter, performed Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*. The performance featured MIT students in all of the demanding solo parts. The MIT Wind Ensemble, directed by lecturer Harris, presented a concert of new compositions by and performances from student members of the ensemble. The Festival Jazz Ensemble performed under the stars this past spring when Kresge Auditorium was closed because of a water problem. It was a beautiful night, and the ensemble filled Kresge Oval with its jazz stylings.

The MIT Faculty Concert Series presented performances that included the New England Philharmonic Orchestra with the world premiere of Professor Peter Child's *Punkie Night*; lecturer Ruehr presenting her recent works *Calling Laura Linney*, *The Voyage Out*, and *The Law of Floating Objects*; lecturer Shadle presenting his most recent works for voice and piano; and senior lecturer David Deveau in a solo recital featuring the works of Beethoven, Child, and Institute Professor John Harbison. Gamelan Galak Tika, MIT's resident Balinese music and dance ensemble, performed the world premiere of *Wariga* at its spring concert. Visiting artist Dewa Ketut Alit, an innovative young composer from Bali, created *Wariga* as part of his work with Gamelan this past spring.

Dramashop presented *Imperceptible Mutabilities in the Third Kingdom*, a play by Suzan-Lori Parks, under the direction of Professor Thomas DeFrantz. The Dance Theater Ensemble welcomed artists-in-residence Victoria Marks, Regina Rocke, and Dawn Springer. The Cambridge University American Stage Tour presented a special performance of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* at MIT. Lecturer Michael Ouellette adapted and directed Shakespeare's *As You Like It* in a performance meant to focus on aspects of the play that are often hidden in fully staged performances. Dramashop presented Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* in a production directed by assistant professor Jay Scheib. Playwrights in Performance presented its annual production of plays written and directed by theater students.

## Achievements

Professor Alan Brody was a Lucas fellow in the arts at the Montalvo Arts Center in Saratoga, CA. His play *Moses* was performed at the Association of Jewish Theatres International Congress; *The Housewives of Mannheim* had a staged reading at the New Jersey Repertory Theater; and *Theseus* premiered at the Boston Theater Marathon. He has just completed *Are You Popular*, the last play in his *Victory Blues Trilogy*.

Professor Child continued his Music Alive residency with the Albany Symphony Orchestra. He was composer in residence with the New England Philharmonic Orchestra and the CrossSound New Music Festival in Juneau, AK. He saw a number of works premiered, including *Down-Adown-Derry* by the Albany Symphony Orchestra, *Punkie Night* by the New England Philharmonic Orchestra, *Promenade* by the CrossSound Sinfonietta, *Pantomime: Seven Lyric Scenes for Oboe Quartet* by Winsor Music, and *Sag weißt du Liebesnächte* by Boston Musica Viva.

Professor DeFrantz guest lectured at the Boston CyberArts Festival and was coconvener at the Black Performance Theory VI conference at Northwestern University and the Choreography and Corporeality Group conference in Helsinki. He presented his paper "Forces of Nature: Practicing Black Diaspora" at the Visualizing Africa Conference at Ohio University. He was director and choreographer for *New York Divided: Slavery and the Civil War* for the New York Historical Society and premiered *Queer Theory! An Academic Travesty* at the Boston Center for the Arts.

Professor Harbison continued as director of the Festival of Contemporary Music and chair of the composition department at the Tanglewood Institute. Also, he continued as president of the Aaron Copland Fund for Music. He received commissions for future works from the New England Conservatory, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and the Rockport Chamber Music Festival.

Professor Harris published "Handel's Portraits of Italy in the Early Chamber Cantatas" in the *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*; "Handel Is Fired" in *I Wish I'd Been There (Essays on European History)* (Byron Hollinshead, ed.); "'Cantate, que me Veus-tu?', or: Do Handel's Cantatas Matter?" in *Festschrift for Reinhard Strohm*; and "Viardot Sings Handel (with Thanks to George Sand, Chopin, Meyerbeer, Gounod and Julius Rietz)" in *Festschrift for Philip Gossett*. She moderated and spoke at a series of four presentations on Handel's operas at Emmanuel Music in Boston. She was the featured speaker at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; at the New York City Opera; and at the American Handel Society.

Professor Janet Sonenberg continues as a consultant to the Royal Shakespeare Company, collaborating with playwright Adriano Shaplin on a new work for the company.

Professor Thompson performed at the Sitka Summer Music Festival in Anchorage, AK; the Montreal Chamber Music Festival; and the Portland (OR) Chamber Music Festival. He performed with the Boston Chamber Music Society in Boston, Rhode Island, and New York and with the Fine Arts Quartet of Milwaukee. He released a new recording featuring rarely heard music for viola and orchestra with the Czech National Symphony Orchestra on the Centaur label.

Professor Ziporyn was featured soloist at four international festivals this past year: the Asia Pacific Festival in Wellington, New Zealand; New Music Miami, where he performed his concerto *Drill* for bass clarinet; the Bang on a Can 20th Anniversary Marathon at New York's Winter Garden; and the Vid Djuppid Festival in Iceland, where he was the featured composer and performer. Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble premiered his composition *SulvaSutra*, and Professor Ziporyn played the premiere of his bass clarinet concerto *Big Grenadilla* at Zankel Hall in New York City. *Frog's Eye*, a CD of his orchestral works, was released on Cantaloupe Music.

Professor Tang's book *Masters of the Sabar: Wolof Griot Percussionists of Senegal* was published by Temple University Press. She was the invited speaker at the American Association of University Women convention, where she presented "Women and Music in Senegal," and at the Tufts Faculty Colloquium Series, where she presented "Transformative Processes in Senegalese Sabar." She presented the paper "Master Drummer, Master Dancer? Fashioning African Identities in the Diaspora" at the Society for Ethnomusicology annual meeting in Honolulu.

Professor Makan was a fellow at Civitella Ranieri, a workplace for gifted artists in Umbertide, Italy. He received commissions from the Meet the Composer Commissioning Music Program and the Utah Arts Festival National Composers Program. His composition *Voice within Voice* was recorded by saxophonist Brian Sacawa and released on Innova Records. TimeTable Percussion premiered his work *Gather* at the Bloomingdale School of Music in New York City. *Gather* was also performed at the Boston Conservatory and the Church of St. Matthew and St. Timothy in New York. Either/Or performed 2 at the Tenri Cultural Institute in New York City, and Sonic Generator performed *bleed through* at the Ferst Center for the Arts at Georgia Tech. California EAR Unit with soprano Laurie Rubin performed *Target* at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles.

Professor Scheib staged Daniel Veronese's *Women Dreamt Horses* as a work in progress at the Prelude Festival in New York City, followed by its premier at Performance Space 122. He directed a studio production of Saska Rakef's new play *Shelter* at the New York Theater Workshop as part of the European Dream Festival. He took part in the Xing Festival in Bologna, Italy, presenting his adaptation of Shakespeare's *All's Well That Ends Well* as a performance installation under the title *All Good Everything Good*. Other productions included the world premier of Irene Popovic's opera *Mozart Luster Lustik* at the Sava Center in Belgrade, Serbia; the live-cinema performance work *This Place Is a Desert* at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art; and the Novoflot Opera Ensemble saga *Kommander Kobayashi* at the Saarlandisches Staatstheater in Saarbruecken, Germany.

Senior lecturer Martin Marks was music curator for the third volume in the National Film Preservation Foundation's award-winning DVD series Treasures from American Film Archives. He created scores for 22 of the films in the current volume. He played his own scores for two silent films at the Coolidge Corner Cinema as part of the series Sounds of Silents.

Senior lecturer George Ruckert presented a series of performances with his group Heritage of the Arts of Southasia featuring Indian music and dance.

Senior lecturer Pamela Wood continued as a faculty member at the Kodaly Music Institute at the New England Conservatory for its summer program. She is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Kodaly Center of America. She was a clinician on “How to Prepare for Auditions” as part of the Vocal Vacation Chamber Chorus at the New England Conservatory.

Lecturer Cutter published two new choral works with Roger Dean Publishing. He was chorus master and associate conductor for the Boston Lyric Opera Company and continued as choral director at the Boston Conservatory.

Lecturer Mark Harvey composed six new extended works for jazz orchestra. He continued to perform extensively with his group Aardvark. He served as cochair for the citywide Jazz Week festival and coproduced the opening benefit concert at the Berklee Performance Center.

Lecturer Jean Rife performed in numerous venues, including the Apple Hill Chamber Music series and the International Horn Workshop at Indiana University.

Ruehr received commissions from the Jebediah Foundation, the Eeros Ensemble, and the National Film Archive. Her opera *Toussaint Before the Spirits* was released on Arsis Records. The Cypress Quartet performed Ruehr’s *Fourth String Quartet* as part of its national tour, and Cecily Ward premiered *Red* for solo violin in Port Townsend, WA, as part of the multimedia presentation *Made in America*. Ruehr guest lectured at the Miami School of Music, the Longy School of Music, and the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts.

## **Personnel**

Keeril Makan was appointed assistant professor of music effective July 1, 2006. Thomas DeFrantz was promoted to full professor effective July 1, 2007. Jay Scheib was promoted to associate professor without tenure effective July 1, 2007. The section’s 12 faculty members include three women and two African Americans. The eight-member full-time teaching staff includes one African American woman and one Native American.

**Janet Sonenberg**

**Section Head**

**Professor of Theater Arts**

More information about Music and Theater Arts can be found at <http://mit.edu/mta/www/>.