

Program in Media Arts and Sciences

Graduate Program

A total of 116 students—57 master’s candidates and 59 doctoral candidates—were enrolled in the Program in Media Arts and Sciences (MAS) graduate program during the 2007–2008 academic year. The MAS graduate student community included 23 women, 12 individuals from underrepresented minority groups, and 48 foreign students.

During the year, 51 advanced degrees were awarded (37 master’s and 14 doctorates). MAS received 361 applications to the graduate program and offered admission to 44 new students (including seven women). Forty-two students (including six women) enrolled.

In addition to supervising MAS graduate students, MAS faculty and research staff collectively advised and supported eight graduate students from other MIT departments and programs, including the departments of Architecture, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Physics, Mechanical Engineering, and Materials Science and Engineering, as well as the Biological Engineering Division and the Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology.

MAS offered 33 graduate courses during the 2007–2008 year.

Student/Postdoctoral Fellows Honors and Awards

Doctoral candidate Manu Prakash was elected a junior fellow of the Harvard Society of Fellows.

Alumnus Saul Griffith (PhD 2004) was named one of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation fellows for 2007.

Alumna Maggie Orth (PhD 2001) was named a 2007 USA Target Fellow. She is one of 50 recipients of United States Artists unrestricted grants awarded to artists in recognition of their creative work.

Alumnus Aggelos Bletsas (PhD 2005) won the 2008 IEEE Marconi Prize Paper Award in Wireless Communications.

Doctoral candidate Amanda Parkes was chosen as a 2008 “Woman to Watch” by Mass High Tech.

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, the MAS program offered five undergraduate subjects,

and three MAS faculty and/or senior staff members conducted freshman seminars or served as freshman advisors.

Now in its ninth year, the MAS alternative freshman-year program enrolled 25 students in 2007–2008 (35 students applied to the program, and a lottery was held). 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: the current MAS graduate student body includes three former freshman-year program participants.

Faculty and Staff

Ramesh Raskar was appointed associate professor of media arts and sciences. Raskar received his PhD from the University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill), his MS from the University of Iowa, and his BEng from the College of Engineering, Pune, India. He is head of the Camera Culture research group at the Media Lab.

Hiroshi Ishii was promoted from associate professor to professor. Ishii heads the Tangible Media research group at the Media Lab and serves as codirector of the Media Lab’s Things That Think consortium. In addition, he currently holds the Muriel R. Cooper Professorship.

Associate professor Deb Roy was awarded tenure. Roy heads the Cognitive Machines research group at the Media Lab and is the current holder of the AT&T Career Development chair. He is also the director of the newly formed Center for Future Banking in the Media Lab and chair of the MAS academic program.

Associate professor Joseph Paradiso was awarded tenure. Paradiso heads the Responsive Environments research group at the Media Lab, is the current holder of the Sony Career Development Professorship, and is codirector of the Media Lab’s Things That Think consortium.

Honors and Awards

Edward S. Boyden III was named the first recipient of the Society for Neuroscience’s Research Award for Innovation in Neuroscience for his work on optical control of neural activity. He also received a New Innovator Award from the National Institutes of Health and a 2008 Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Research Fellowship.

Neil Gershenfeld was chosen by Prospect/Foreign Policy as one of the top 100 public intellectuals.

Hugh Herr was one of six distinguished Americans to receive a \$250,000 award from the Heinz Family Foundation.

Hiroshi Ishii was chosen as the 2007–2008 Thomas A. Wasow Visiting Scholar by Stanford University’s Symbolic Systems program.

Tod Machover was awarded the Steinmetz Prize and delivered the 2007 Steinmetz Lecture at Union College in Schenectady, NY.

John Maeda was appointed the 16th president of the Rhode Island School of Design.

Alex (Sandy) Pentland was appointed to the World Economic Forum’s Global Agenda Council.

New Books

Stephen Benton (posthumously) and V. Michael Bove Jr., *Holographic Imaging*, Wiley, 2008.

Dan Ariely, *Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions*, HarperCollins, 2008.

Mitchel Resnick

Program Head

Professor of Media Arts and Sciences

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