

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

With the support of the Martin Luther King Jr. Visiting Faculty and Scholar Program, Music and Theater Arts hosted visiting professor Donald Byron and visiting scholar Melissa Blanco. Byron, a Grammy nominated composer and clarinetist, taught and worked with many Music and Theater Arts students while in residence. Blanco, a dance historian and theorist, also taught and worked with students from our section and through the Program in Women's and Gender Studies.

The MIT Guest Artist Series presented performances by the Zehetmair String Quartet and the Triton Brass Quartet. The Vento Chiaro woodwind quintet was in residence presenting master classes for MIT students. They ended their stay with a performance in Kresge Auditorium. The MIT Chamber Chorus presented a concert in celebration of the 20th anniversary of Killian Hall, Music and Theater Arts' recital hall.

Under the direction of lecturer Frederick Harris, the MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble presented a series of performances with visiting professor Byron. Byron is a singular voice in an amazing range of musical contexts. Exploring widely divergent traditions, he has been consistently voted best clarinetist by critics and readers alike in international music journals.

Lecturer William Cutter and the MIT Chamber Chorus presented the Edward Cohen Memorial Concert featuring Cohen's composition *Invisible Cities*. Cohen taught theory and composition at MIT for 24 years and was a much-respected composer and teacher in the Boston area until his untimely death in 2002. He continues to be greatly missed by colleagues and students in Music and Theater Arts.

The MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble presented the Herb Pomeroy Memorial Concert with special guests Jamshied Sharifi, Greg Hopkins, Magali Souriau, and Everett Longstreth. Described by Duke Ellington as "one of America's jazz treasures," Herb Pomeroy was among the most influential jazz performers and educators of the past 50 years. He founded and led the MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble for 22 years.

The Cambridge University American Stage Tour presented Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, sponsored by Dramashop and MIT Theater Arts.

Honors and Awards

Professor Thomas DeFrantz received a D'Arbelloff Fund for Excellence in Education grant to develop a new first-year freshman experience class.

Kenan Sahin distinguished professor of music Evan Ziporyn received the United States Artist Award based on the caliber and impact of his work in composition and performance.

Associate professor Jay Scheib was named the Class of 1958 Career Development Chair.

Assistant professor Keeril Makan was awarded the American Academy Rome Prize for 2008–2009. Also, he was the winner of the Utah Arts Festival National Commissioning Program.

Lecturer and playwright Laura Harrington received the 18th Annual Kleban Award as most promising librettist for 2008.

Lecturer Elena Ruehr was in residence as a fellow at the Radcliffe Institute during 2007–2008.

Program Highlights

Enrollments in Music and Theater Arts were 1,142 and 319, respectively, for a total of 1,461. Music and Theater Arts continued to host the MIT Chapel Series, a successful concert series featuring local solo and group performers.

The MIT Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of lecturer Adam Boyles, presented a special lecture-performance of *Symphony Fantastique* by Hector Berlioz. Senior lecturer David Deveau performed Ravel's *Concerto in G* for piano and orchestra with the MIT Symphony.

The MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble, directed by lecturer Harris, performed with guest composer and saxophonist Charlie Kohlhase, a mainstay of the jazz scene for over 20 years.

The MIT Wind Ensemble, directed by lecturer Harris, released its debut CD, *Solo Eclipse*, on Albany Records. The CD features world premiere recordings by three of today's most innovative performer-composers, Ken Amis, Guillermo Klein, and Ran Blake. The Wind Ensemble's performances at MIT included the world premiere of *Windbourne* by composer-in-residence Gabriel Senanes.

The MIT Faculty Concert Series presented professor Marcus Thompson, senior lecturer Deveau, and lecturer Jean Rife in a Kresge Auditorium performance. This recital marked the 40th anniversary of professor Thompson's debut recital tour as part of the Young Concert Artist Series in 1968. Lecturer Mark Harvey and his Aardvark Jazz Orchestra presented a concert that included selections from their new CD *American Agonistes: Music in Time of War*.

Dramashop presented *Untitled Mars (this title may change)*, written and directed by Professor Scheib; *subUrbia* by Eric Begosian, directed by David R. Gammons; *In the Heart of America* by Naomi Wallace, directed by senior lecturer Michael Ouellette; and *365 Plays in 365 Days* by Suzan Lori Parks. New York City hip hop artists Rokefella and Kwikstep offered an open master class and performed with MIT dance students. Playwrights in Performance presented its annual production of plays written and directed by theater students.

Three Music and Theater Arts music double majors were nominated for Phi Beta Kappa in 2008: Jeffrey Easley, Justin Lo, and Thaned Pruttivarasin. Easley and Lo are also members of the section's Emerson Scholarship Program for private performance study.

Achievements

Professor Alan Brody traveled to Mumbai, India, to read selections from his *Ten-minute Plays* as part of the PEN All-India Centre. PEN is an international organization of writers who work to advance literature, defend free expression, and foster international literary fellowship. Many leaders of Mumbai's creative community were at the event.

Professor Peter Child continued his Music Alive residency with the Albany Symphony Orchestra with the premiere of *Washington Park*, his fifth work for the orchestra. He is composer-in-residence with the New England Philharmonic through 2008. He completed *Triptych*, a work cocommissioned by the wind ensembles of Emory University, MIT, the New England Conservatory, the University of Minnesota, the University of Texas, and Yale University.

Professor DeFrantz published the chapter "Donald Byrd: Remaking Beauty" in *Dance Discourses: Keywords in Dance Research* (Susanne Franco and Marina Nordera, eds.). Also, he published the review "The Performing Arts in Africa: A Reader by Frances Harding" in the *Dance Research Journal* (Summer 2008). He performed his works *Just a Gigolo* and *Monk's Mood* at the International Ballet Competition in Cape Town, South Africa. He was an invited guest lecturer at the American College Dance Festival Association conference.

Professor John Harbison premiered a number of works including *Concerto for Bass Viol*, commissioned by the International Society of Double Bassists; *Umbrian Landscape* for the Chicago Chamber Musicians; *Deep Dances: Abu Ghraib* for the Rockport Chamber Music Festival; and *Symphony No. 5* for the Boston Symphony Orchestra. *Montale Sketches* was released on the Albany label, and his ballet *Ulysses* was released on BMOP Records. He conducted a performance of Bach's *Mass in B Minor* at Emmanuel Church in Boston.

Professor Ellen Harris published "Butler's *Narcissus*: 'A Tame Oratorio'" in *Samuel Butler, Victorian against the Grain* (James Paradis, ed.); "Homosexual Contest and Identity: Reflections on the Reception of Handel as Orpheus" in *Queer People: Negotiations and Expressions of Homosexuality, 1580–1850* (Caroline Gonda and Chris Mounsey, eds.); "Handel's Portraits of Italy in the Early Chamber Cantatas" in *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*; and "'Cantate, que me veux-tu?' or: Do Handel's Cantatas Matter?" in *Music as Social and Cultural Practice: Essays in Honour of Reinhard Strohm* (Melania Bucciarelli and Berta Joncus, eds.). She presented papers at the Accademia

Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and Deutsches Historisches Institut in Rome, the Peabody Conservatory, Vassar College, and the University of Chicago.

Professor Lowell Lindgren published “The Great Influx of Italians and Their Instrumental Music in London, 1701–1710” in *Arcangelo Corelli fra mito e realtà storica: Nuove prospettive d’indagine musicologica e interdisciplinare nel 350 anniversario della nascita* (Gregory Barnett, Antonella D’Ovidio, and Stefano La Via, eds.). He was copresenter of a lecture on Handel’s *Semele* at Harvard University.

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 Rockport Chamber Music Festival. He also performed with the Boston Chamber Music Society in a series of 12 concerts.

Professor Ziporyn performed with Bang on a Can in marathons in San Francisco, Baton Rouge, New York City, and Chapel Hill, NC. He took part in the Bang on a Can Summer Festival at Mass MoCA. He composed *Hive* for clarinet quartet and *Bayu Sabda Idep* for gamelan and chamber string orchestra.

Professor Patricia Tang published the article “Rhythmic Transformations in Senegalese Sabar” in *Ethnomusicology*. She presented “Mamadou Konte and the Global Influence of Africa Fête” at the Society for Ethnomusicology annual meeting, “To Mbalax or Not to Mbalax? Making Senegalese Music in the Diaspora” at the African Studies Association annual meeting, and “Drums and Dancing Lions: The Simb Tradition of Senegal” at the Folklore and Mythology annual symposium.

Professor Makan released *In Sound*, a CD of his compositions performed by the Kronos Quartet and the Paul Drescher Ensemble, on Tzadik Records. *Afterglow*, commissioned for solo piano by Ivan Illic, was performed on tour by Illic in Great Britain, Boston, New York City, and Washington, DC. *Three Surreal Shorts* was premiered by pianist Bruce Levinston, and *Mercury Songbirds* for sextet premiered at the Utah Arts Festival in Salt Lake City.

Professor Scheib wrote and directed *Untitled Mars (this title may change)*, which was presented at Performance Space 122 in New York City. The production received the 2008 Obie Award for best scenic design. He directed *This Place is a Desert* at the Under the Radar Festival in New York City and *Addicted to Bad Ideas: Peter Lorre’s 20th Century* at the Philadelphia Live Art Festival. He traveled to Fredrikstad, Norway, to direct *Iphigenia*, by Charles L. Mee, at the Norwegian Theater Academy.

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*. The recording has made three lists of top 10 DVDs for the past year. He performed his own scores for the films *Clash of the Wolves*, *Pandora’s Box*, Buster Keaton’s

The General, and Greta Garbo's *Flesh and the Devil* for the Sounds of Silents film series at the Coolidge Corner Theater.

Senior lecturer Ouellette traveled to India with a small group of MIT students and presented the play *Our Town* in a Kannada translation done specifically for the occasion. The cast consisted of American and Indian students.

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, and 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. In addition, she presented a series of workshops for the Northern California Association of Kodaly Educators in San Francisco.

Lecturer Harris was music director for the South Shore Conservatory's Summer Music Festival. Also, he was guest conductor for the Festival Wind Ensemble at the Massachusetts Music Educators Association conference. He presented a series of three preconcert lectures for the Minnesota Orchestra on Stanislaw Skrowaczewski.

Lecturer Harvey released his 10th CD with his group Aardvark Jazz Orchestra. With Aardvark he presented the keynote concert for a national conference on the music of war at Stonehill College. For Boston's Jazz Week Festival he presented a lecture on Duke Ellington at the Boston Public Library.

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

Lecturer Ruehr received commissions from the Jebediah Foundation, the Eeros Ensemble, and the National Film Archive.

Personnel

Patricia Tang was promoted to associate professor with tenure effective July 1, 2008. Michael Cuthbert was appointed assistant professor effective July 1, 2008. Sara Brown was appointed director of design effective July 1, 2008. 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/>.