

Music and Theater Arts

The [Music and Theater Arts](#) Section continues to afford students at MIT the opportunity to experience the unique language and process of the performing arts. Faculty and teaching staff help students understand art's demand for rigor and discipline and its 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 the section's hallmark. The academic program continues to produce graduates with the talent and desire to extend their education in music or theater beyond the undergraduate level, including those who pursue professional studies at the best graduate programs and others for whom exposure and participation in the arts is part of their life-long learning and growth.

Highlights of the Year

MIT Music and Theater Arts was honored to celebrate Institute Professor John Harbison on the occasion of his 75th birthday with a concert event featuring the MIT Wind Ensemble, the MIT Chamber Chorus, and the MIT Vocal Jazz Ensemble. The evening showcased many special guest musicians, including the MIT faculty jazz quintet, *Strength in Numbers*, which includes John Harbison, Keala Kaumeheiwa, Fred Harris, Dylan Sherry, and Mark Harvey.

This year, the Music and Theater Arts Section saw the successful and acclaimed premiere performance of *We'll Get It Right*, the MIT vs. Harvard musical. The work was commissioned by the MIT Class of 1954 in honor of its 60th reunion and premiered in June 2014. Senior lecturer Martin Marks, senior lecturer emeritus Michael Ouellette, and senior lecturer Charles Shadle wrote the music and lyrics; Michael Ouellette wrote the script. The event was coproduced by Joseph Blake '54, Harvey Steinberg '54, and professor of music emeritus Ellen T. Harris.

The MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble, under the direction of lecturer Frederick Harris, featured guest artist Miguel Zenon in the ensemble's second concert of the year. Zenon is a multiple Grammy Award nominee and has won both a Guggenheim Fellowship and a MacArthur Fellowship. During his time on campus, he sat in on rehearsals and coaching sessions and also spent time with individual students, focusing on performance and composition. The evening's performance included works by Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington, Charles Mingus, Jr., and Kenny Werner, as well as some of Zenon's own pieces. The concert also saw the premiere of a piece by Peter Godart '15.

Music and Theater Arts hosted lecturer Mark Harvey and the Aardvark Jazz Orchestra in a performance in Kresge Auditorium. The concert included a new work, *Elegy*, in honor of the victims of the Boston Marathon bombing, and *SpaceWays*, a centennial tribute to Sun Ra. The orchestra also performed Harvey's *No Walls*, the official song of Jazz Week 2014.

Music and Theater Arts hosted a variety of artists throughout the year in performances for students and faculty. Medieval music keyboard player David Cataluyna presented a lecture and demonstration concert on the clavisimbalum. Peter Sykes performed a recital on the newly restored Dowd harpsichord. Male soprano Robert Crowe performed Handel's *Nine German Arias* following a talk by Handel scholar Ellen T. Harris. American music specialist Alan Feinberg performed a recital of solo piano works in Killian Hall.

The MIT Wind Ensemble, under the direction of lecturer Frederick Harris, presented the premiere of a piece by Music and Theater Arts section head Peter Child, *Afterglow: Music for String Quartet and Wind Ensemble*. The piece featured a quartet of guest musicians: Young-Nam Kim, Ariana Kim, Daniel Kim, and Yeesun Kim. The Kims also spent time in rehearsals and in coaching sessions while they were on campus. Young-Nam Kim is an associate professor of music at the University of Minnesota, Ariana Kim is an assistant professor of music at Cornell University, and Yeesun Kim is a member of the Borromeo String Quartet at the New England Conservatory (NEC).

The MIT Chamber Chorus, under the direction of lecturer William Cutter, presented the opera *Dido and Aeneas* in MIT's Killian Hall. The work, staged with the invaluable help of MIT Theater Arts, was performed twice.

Music and Theater Arts hosted the contemporary music ensemble Either/Or in a series of three campus visits throughout the academic year. Either/Or presented a concert featuring the music of composer Alvin Lucier, which was preceded by a Composer Forum discussing his music. The ensemble also performed music composed by associate professor Keeril Makan, and premiered student compositions during their final visit in May.

The MIT Faculty Series presented music by lecturer Elena Ruehr. The program included *Klein Suite* for solo violin, *Andrienne and Amy* for violin and piano, and *The Scarlatti Effect* for violin, in addition to two world premieres, *Lift* for solo cello and *Second Violin Sonata* for violin and piano.

In partnership with MIT's Center for Art, Science and Technology (CAST), Music and Theater Arts produced three concerts hosted by professor Evan Ziporyn. The first saw the debut of Ziporyn's Critical Band, playing the music of Steve Martland. The 11-piece ensemble performed a unique collection of pieces that featured wind instruments and amplified instruments. The second concert featured cellist Mariel Roberts performing works by Ziporyn, Andy Akiho, and Tristan Perich as well as selections from her recent release, *Nonextraneous Sounds*. Percussionist Hubert Zemler performed works for solo percussion in a concert in Killian Hall. The evening also included an improvisational portion featuring Zemler and Ziporyn playing saxophone and clarinet.

The Music and Theater Arts Section saw a number of collaborations among the student ensembles this year. In what has become an annual tradition, the MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble and the MIT Wind Ensemble shared an evening of music during MIT's Family Weekend in October. This year, Family Weekend also featured a performance from Rambax, MIT's Senegalese drumming ensemble. The MIT Symphony Orchestra and

the MIT Concert Choir joined forces for two performances of Verdi's *Stabat Mater* and *Te Deum*. The Gamelan Galak Tika was featured in the MIT Symphony Orchestra's final concert of the year, performing Professor Evan Ziporyn's composition, *Ngaben*.

The Music and Theater Arts Composer Forums, organized by associate professor Keeril Makan, presented a number of events. Lecturer Justin Casinghino of the Boston Composer's Coalition spoke about his music, senior lecturer Martin Marks discussed the art of preparing and scoring silent films, and senior lecturer Charles Shadle focused on *Western Saddlebag*, a newly composed suite of arrangements of traditional cowboy melodies for piano. Professor Peter Child led a discussion with live performances and recordings of recent music, visiting artists Either/Or presented an in-depth discussion and selections of music by Alvin Lucier, professor Keeril Makan discussed *Letting Time Circle Through Us* and other recent compositions, and Florian Hollenweger presented a talk focusing on the art and aural awareness of sound.

The Boston Chamber Music Society Winter Festival, whose artistic director is professor Marcus Thompson, presented two concerts in Kresge Auditorium featuring the work of Brahms and Taneyev.

The MIT Concert Choir, under the direction of lecturer William Cutter, performed Verdi's *Requiem* for a sizable audience in Kresge Auditorium. The students proved they were up to the challenge of this ambitious programming and the performance was very well received.

The MIT Visiting Artist Series sponsored the Jupiter String Quartet in a series of concerts that will present the performance of Beethoven's Complete String Quartet Cycle over two years. Originally from Boston, now based in Chicago, the quartet performed the first three concerts of the series, which will conclude in spring 2015. Each visit includes coaching sessions, classroom visits, readings of student compositions, and other teaching activities.

The Handel and Haydn Society showcased a lecture on and demonstration of Beethoven's Violin Sonatas on original instruments.

Honors and Awards

Lecturer Elena Ruehr received a Guggenheim Fellowship to write *Cassandra in the Temples*, an opera with librettist Gretchen Henderson for the Grammy-winning ensemble Roomful of Teeth. The members of this vocal octet, thanks to Ruehr, Music and Theater Arts, CAST, and the MIT Council for the Arts, will be visiting artists in residence at MIT in the fall.

Associate professor Keeril Makan received a Howard Fellowship, Brown University, for the 2014–2015 academic year.

Senior lecturer David Deveau and associate professor Patricia Tang both received the James A. and Ruth Levitan Award for Excellence in Teaching, School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

Program Highlights

Enrollments in Music and Theater Arts were 1,429 and 707, respectively, for a total of 2,136 students in the section. This is higher than last year's enrollment by 119 and is the largest enrollment either Music or Theater Arts has seen since they became a combined section in 1988.

The MIT Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of lecturer Adam Boyles, presented a series of four concerts that included performances of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*; Nielsen's fourth symphony, *The Inextinguishable*, Sibelius' Symphony No. 1, and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*.

The MIT Faculty Series and MIT Heritage of the Arts of South Asia (MITHAS), championed by senior lecturer, George Ruckert presented a series of concerts that included performances by Partho Bose, sitar; Sanhita Nandi, khyal; khayl master Pandit Jesraj, accompanied by the world-famous Swapan Chaudhur on tabla; the Trichur Brothers, a carnatic vocal duet accompanied by Trichur Mohan and B.K. Raghu; and Anuradha Palakurthi and Troupe, performing Madan Mohan songs. George Ruckert and MIT alumnus Moez Rawji founded MITHAS in 1993.

MIT Dramashop presented *The Pillowman* by Martin McDonagh, directed by professor Janet Sonenberg, as well as Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*, directed by lecturer Kim Mancuso.

Professor Alan Brody presented *Playwrights in Performance*, a series of one-act plays written by students and produced by Dramashop and MIT Theater Arts.

MIT Theater Arts produced *It's Alive!!!*, a series of staged play readings featuring students, professional actors, and faculty. Selections this year included Tony Kushner's Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *Angels in America, Part I*; Jean Cocteau's *The Human Voice* (in collaboration with technical director Bozkurt Karasu); and *New Ladies with Big Voices*, plays by Young Jean Lee and Sybil Kempson.

Rambax celebrated its second decade. Under the direction of lecturer Lamine Touré, the ensemble performed two concerts on campus this year in addition to participating in MIT's Annual Family Weekend Concert.

Gamelan Galak Tika, MIT's Balinese gamelan, continued its third decade with two MIT performances. The gamelan was also featured in MIT Symphony Orchestra's final concert of the year.

Achievements

Professor Peter Child saw the following works premiered: *Practicing Haydn* (with Lina Viste Grønli and Elaine Chew), for piano, at Performa 13 (New York, November 10, 2013); *Maison d'Art Bernard Anthonioz* (Nogent-sur-Marne, France, September 6, 2013); and *Kunsthall Stavanger* (Stavanger, Norway, November 10, 2013); *Primary Colors/Elementary Shapes*, for piano, *Maison d'Art Bernard Anthonioz* (Nogent-sur-Marne, France, September 6, 2013), *Kunsthall Stavanger* (Stavanger, Norway, November 10, 2013); *Birthday Canon*, for piano, John Harbison 75th Birthday Concert, Kresge

Auditorium (December 8, 2013); and *Afterglow*, for string quartet and wind ensemble, commissioned and premiered by the MIT Wind Ensemble in Kresge Auditorium, March 14, 2014. Professor Child's *Triptych* was performed by the MIT Wind Ensemble in Kresge Auditorium on December 6, 2013.

Lecturer Sara Brown was set designer for a production of American Repertory Theater's *The Shape She Makes*. The production received a favorable review by the *Boston Globe*. In June, she will work as stage designer for The Art Institute's production of *Twelfth Night*.

An article in *The Hindu* (Chennai, India, Sept. 26, 2013) called MIT "a cultural hub" and recognized the work of senior lecturer George Ruckert for his "twenty years of steady work to promote and cherish Indian music," adding, "some silent and strong enthusiasts have made the campus of MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Boston, the U.S., vibrate with the sounds of melody."

Professor Jay Scheib's innovative play, *Platonov, or The Disinherited*, produced at The Kitchen, received a favorable review by the *New York Times*. Scheib developed the concept, adaptation, and direction of *Platonov, or The Disinherited*, through a production at LaJolla Playhouse, Without Walls Festival, La Jolla, CA, in October 2013; other presentations include a performance at the Prelude Festival (New York, October 2013). The New York premiere happened simultaneously in the form of a staged play at The Kitchen and a feature film under the title *The Disinherited*, which premiered at the AMC Empire Cinema in Times Square and the BAM Rose Cinema in Brooklyn, New York. The film was broadcast internationally on HowlRound in January 2014 (tour dates are planned for elsewhere in the US and for France, China, and Poland in 2014 and 2015). Scheib also did the scenic design for *La Bohème*, produced at the LoftOpera in Brooklyn, NY, under the direction of Laine Rettmer in March 2014.

Associate professor Keeril Makan released a new recording on compact disc, *Afterglow*, comprising a selection of Makan's compositions performed by the International Contemporary Ensemble (Mode Records, 2013). The recording was chosen as one of the 10 best classical music recordings of 2013 by *Time Out New York*. Makan's work, *Letting Time Circle Through Us* (2013), for percussion, cimbalom, acoustic guitar, piano, violin, and cello, received its world premiere by Either/Or during the ensemble's residency at MIT.

Professor Makan received two commissions, one from the Jebediah Foundation New Music -Commission for a new work for chamber orchestra, to be premiered December 2014 at Miller Theatre, New York, and one from New Music USA. Professor Alan Brody's *Operation Epsilon* was nominated for three Elliot Norton Awards in 2013 after a successful eight-week run at the Central Square Theater. The Independent Reviewers of New England gave the Nora Theatre Company's production of *Operation Epsilon* four awards: Best Play, Best Director, Best Ensemble, and Best Scenic design. Brody's new play, *The Midvale High School Fiftieth Reunion*, had a staged reading at the New Jersey Repertory Theater; the Emerson Stage produced *Reassurance* in the Boston Theater Marathon. Professor Brody is also co-artistic director of the Catalyst Collaborative@MIT.

Senior lecturer Anna Kohler reprised her role as Mrs. Fangitu in *Chang in a Void Moon* at Incubator Arts Project in New York. Kohler also appeared in *I Am Bleeding All Over the Place* at the New Museum.

Lecturer William Cutter is assistant conductor of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, a position that has expanded to include initial choral preparations of all Tanglewood Festival Chorus and Boston Symphony collaborations and includes the role of primary choral rehearsal conductor for the Boston Pops Orchestra.

Live jazz filled the Boston City Council Chamber for the first time on April 30, 2014, when a band performed lecturer Mark Harvey's composition *No Walls*, the official song of Jazz Week 2014.

The Cantata Singers and Emmanuel Music co-commissioned Pulitzer Prize-winning composer and professor John Harbison to write *The Supper at Emmaus*, a new work for soloists, chorus, and chamber orchestra. The work received its world premiere by the Cantata Singers on May 9, 2014, in Jordan Hall, Boston. Harbison also completed a second sonata for violin and piano, a string trio, *Four Encores for Stan*, and several compositions and arrangements for the MIT Vocal Jazz Ensemble, which he directs. Other performances of his music were presented at MIT, NEC, Stetson College, Williams College, and the Network for New Music in Philadelphia.

Lecturer Frederick Harris coproduced maestro Stanislaw Skrowaczewski's 90th birthday concert in the Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis. Harris wrote a book on the famed conductor entitled *Seeking the Infinite: The Musical Life of Stanislaw Skrowaczewski*, published through CreateSpace.

The video *Awakening: Evoking the Arab Spring Through Music*, the first MIT music documentary, aired on PBS (WGBH-2). The video featured the MIT Wind Ensemble under the direction of Frederick Harris, and was produced by MIT's Academic Media Production Services. The video received a 2014 New England Emmy Award.

Assistant professor Emily Pollock published a review of *Noah im Kalten Krieg: Igor Strawinsky's Musical Play "The Flood"* (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, 2012) in *Notes: The Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association*, 70 (3): 429-431. In April she presented a talk: "How 'Abstract' an Opera?: Stereotyped Emotion and the Political Poetics of Nonsense," at the Sound and Affect: Voice, Music, World International Conference (State University of New York at Stony Brook).

Senior lecturer Charles Shadle collaborated with senior lecturer Martin Marks and technical director Michael Ouellette in the creation of a musical *We'll Get it Right*, the Harvard vs. MIT Musical, commissioned by the MIT class of 1954, premiered on June 7 in Kresge Little Theater.

Professor Marcus Thompson continues as artistic director of the Boston Chamber Music Society. He has performed chamber music concerts in the Boston Chamber Music Season 31 in Sanders and at MIT; in the Sitka Festival Fall Series in Anchorage, AK; with

the Seattle Chamber Music Society (Seattle, WA); at the Sanibel Island Music Festival in Florida (Boston Chamber Music Society); at the NEC First Monday Faculty Series in Jordan Hall; at the Foulger International Music Festival at Kean University in New Jersey; with the Holy Cross Chamber Players, College of the Holy Cross (Worcester, MA); at Ukrainian Institute of America in New York; with the Ellipsis Trio (Cambridge, MA); at Festival de Musique de Chambre, Montreal; and on an eight-concert recital tour of Arizona for the Gregor Piatigorsky Foundation.

Associate professor Michael Cuthbert's *Music21* (a set of tools to help scholars and other active listeners answer questions about music) was reviewed in *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (Spring 2014). This was the first review of something that wasn't a book in that distinguished journal. Cuthbert received support from the D'Arbeloff Fund for Excellence in Education for digital initiatives in teaching music fundamentals. He hosted a residency by David Catalunya, historical keyboard player, in February and March, and presented "Searching and Analyzing Renaissance Musical Scores with Computational Methods" at the Renaissance Society of America, New York, on March 27.

Senior lecturer David Deveau continues as artistic director of Rockport Music at the Shalin Liu Performance Center in Rockport, MA. This past year, his orchestral appearances included one with the Boston Pops Orchestra, in a performance of Mozart's *Concerto for Two Pianos* (No. 10) K.365, with alumna Jee-Hoon Yap Krska, in honor of Deveau's 25 years at MIT; one with the Longwood Symphony Orchestra (Beethoven's *Concerto No. 5*); one playing J.S. Bach's *Concerti for Two Keyboards*, BWV 1060 and 1061, with Peter Serkin and A Far Cry (an uncondacted string orchestra); one with the Shi Chien Symphony Orchestra of Taipei, Taiwan, playing the Rachmaninoff *Concerto No. 2*; and one with the Cape Ann Symphony Orchestra, playing the Rachmaninoff *Concerto No. 2*.

Professor Evan Ziporyn and his new group, Eviyan, completed two European tours and released its first CD, *Eviyan Live*. Ziporyn's compositions in 2013 included *Qi*, commissioned by the string quartet Brooklyn Rider and premiered at the Stillwater Music Festival in August; *Three Bromances* for cello and percussion, commissioned by Yo-Yo Ma (not yet premiered); *Old Growth* for cello and electronics, premiered by cellist Mariel Roberts at MIT in November 2013; and *In My Mind & In My Car*, a 50-minute collaboration with Christine Southworth for bass clarinet and electronics, premiered at the Arts International Sound Art Biennale in Acton, MA, in September 2013. This work was later performed in San Diego, Joshua Tree, Berkeley, CA, and Detroit, MI; performances are scheduled at the OFF Festival in Katowice, Poland, and Ars Musica in Brussels, Belgium. *In My Mind & In My Car* was also included in the WNYC New Sounds Top Ten list for 2013. Professor Ziporyn's compositions also included *Honey from Alast*, commissioned by Lafayette College for Duo Jalal; multiple works for Eviyan; *Come With Me If You Want to Live*, a 10-minute solo work for percussionist Glenn Kotche, which was premiered at Big Ears Festival, Knoxville, TN, in March; and *FAQs for Solo Voice and Piano*, premiered by tenor Timur Bekbosunov at the Rotterdam Music Festival in May. *Propolis for ICA*, a new interactive version of *Propolis*, currently installed in the lobby of the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) in Boston, will remain in place until

May 2015. Ziporyn debuted with Critical Band, a new wind and rhythm ensemble, in Kresge Auditorium in October. He performed *Remonstrance* at the ICA in March and with Gamelan Galak Tika in Calderwood Hall (Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum). In February. Ziporyn also appeared (voice and clarinet) in an episode of *Arthur* (“Binky’s Music Madness”) on PBS that aired in May.

Personnel

Associate professor Michael Cuthbert received tenure. Charlotte Brathwaite was hired as an assistant professor, effective July 1, 2014. George Ruckert retired on June 30, 2014, as senior lecturer. The section’s 10 faculty members included three women and one African American.

Peter Child
Section Head
Professor of Music