

## Music and Theater Arts

The [Music and Theater Arts Section](#) continues to offer students at MIT the opportunity to experience the unique language and process of the performing arts. Faculty and teaching staff, informed by their ongoing professional activities, help students understand art's demand for rigor and discipline and its nonquantitative standards of excellence and beauty. The section's strong, comprehensive program in music—encompassing history and culture, composition and theory, and performance—features a professional faculty and teaching staff of the highest caliber that currently includes two Institute Professors.

Interdisciplinary in its philosophy and humanist at its core, the program in theater arts is committed to a rigorous and innovative course of study across a diverse spectrum of creative forms taught by theater arts professionals. The academic programs continue to produce alumni 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.

### Program Highlights

Enrollments in Music and Theater Arts were 1,561 and 814, respectively, for a total of 2,375 students. This surpasses last year's enrollment by 239 and is the largest enrollment that either Music or Theater has seen since they became a combined section in 1988.

In fall 2014, the program in Theater Arts hosted an international conference in collaboration with the Norwegian Theater Academy, "Infinite Record: Archive, Memory, and Performance." Scholars, artists, and scientists descended on building E33 from around the world for two action-packed days of lectures, panels, debates, performances, and screenings. In spring 2015, the program in Theater Arts established the degree of bachelor of science in Theater Arts.

Theater Arts is in the process of being moved to the far edge of west campus. This project, helping to develop the western fringe of the MIT campus, has commanded attention for many months. Led by Sara Brown, director of design, and Jay Scheib, professor of theater, the project is now in the design phase. Weekly meetings with architects and planners are continuing.

Frederick Harris and the MIT Wind Ensemble and MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble released a CD on a commercial label. [Infinite Winds](#), on Sunnyside Records, is the first-ever MIT recording published by a major jazz label. With premiere recordings of works by Chick Corea and Don Byron, the Boston Globe called Infinite Winds "one of the most compelling CDs of the year"; DownBeat Magazine (the most venerated journal in jazz) granted Infinite Winds five stars, its highest review rating. In addition, the MIT Wind Ensemble, the Festival Jazz Ensemble, Frederick Harris, and MIT Music's program generally, were the subjects of an article in the Boston Globe, "MIT Ensembles Tackle Innovative Works on CD, Onstage."

Tech Night at Pops featured two MIT soloists with the Boston Pops: MIT Professor of Music Evan Ziporyn, clarinet, and graduating senior and Emerson Fellow John Bowler '15, piano.

### **Visiting Artists (2014–2015)**

A scholar, translator, and director, Claire Conceison, professor of theater studies and of Asian and Middle Eastern studies at Duke University, was a visiting professor and taught 21M.710 Script Analysis and 21M.846 Topics in Performance Studies: Sport as Performance. She also presented a lecture, “Staging Revolutionary Nostalgia in Contemporary China.”

Dewa Alit was a visiting artist with Gamelan Galak Tika during the spring semester.

Alumnus Eran Egozy taught 21M.359 Interactive Music Systems. Egozy is co-founder and chief technology officer of Harmonix Music Systems, most famously known for the games Guitar Hero, Rock Band, and Dance Central. Eran graduated from MIT with an MEng in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science in 1995 and is an active clarinetist and chamber musician. His wife, MIT alumna and pianist Yukiko Ueno, co-taught 21M.480 Advanced Music Performance during the fall semester during David Deveau’s sabbatical.

Boston’s esteemed Boston Camerata performed two programs at MIT during their 60th season and collaborated with Michael Cuthbert, MIT associate professor of music and author of music21, a Python-based toolkit for computer-aided musicology.

The Lontano Ensemble from the United Kingdom (Rowland Sutherland, flute; Peter Furniss, clarinet; Caroline Balding, violin; Clare O’Connell, cello; Mary Dullea, piano; Odaline de la Martinez, conductor) performed music by MIT composers Peter Child, John Harbison, Elena Ruehr, Charles Shadle, Keeril Makan, and Evan Ziporyn.

The Jupiter Quartet completed performances of the entire Beethoven String Quartet Cycle and finished its two-year residency.

Pianist and new music champion Sarah Cahill performed music from her recent CD, *A Sweeter Music*, and works by Terry Riley, Evan Ziporyn, and others. She also performed in a concert celebrating the 80th birthday of Terry Riley with Terry Riley, Eviyan, MIT’s Gamelan Galak Tika, and others on April 18, 2015.

Eviyan comprises Iva Bittová, Gyan Riley, and Evan Ziporyn, three unique composer-performers whose sounds merge into a singular blend of Eastern European folk traditions, Indian classical music, gamelan, jazz, rock, cabaret, and minimalism. Eviyan performed in the fall and in the spring.

Composer and saxophonist Miguel Zenón was in residence with the MIT Wind Ensemble to rehearse and perform a work commissioned by Frederick Harris and the MIT Wind Ensemble.

The Welsh baritone Jeremy Huw Williams, with pianist Paula Fan, performed music by MIT composers Peter Child, Edward Cohen, John Harbison, Elena Ruehr, and Charles Shadle.

The Grammy Award–winning vocal octet Roomful of Teeth premiered Elena Ruehr’s opera *Cassandra in the Temples* and works by MIT composers Evan Ziporyn and Christine Southworth.

The Fidelio Trio from the United Kingdom performed music by MIT composers Peter Child, Evan Ziporyn, John Harbison, and Elena Ruehr.

### Honors and Awards

- Marcus Thompson was appointed MIT Institute Professor.
- John Harbison was named chair of an American Academy of Arts and Letters panel.
- Peter Child was awarded an Artist Fellowship by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.
- Elena Ruehr was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship.
- Keeril Makan was awarded a New Music USA project grant.
- Charlotte Brathwaite received an Obie award.
- Mark Harvey received the Jazz Hero award from the Jazz Journalists Association.
- Michael Cuthbert received the James A. and Ruth Levitan award for excellence in teaching in the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

### Faculty Achievements

Stage director Charlotte Brathwaite joined MIT as assistant professor of music and theater arts. She received a Baryshnikov Arts Center Residency for a new collaboration. Her originally conceived and directed theatrical work, *Prophetika: An Oratorio*, called “conceptual yet viscerally powerful” by the Wall Street Journal, received an Obie Award for Best Design.

In 2014, Sara Brown continued to establish her reputation as a set designer for contemporary works and plays in development. She was a creative partner in several new works this year, including *Bride Widow Hag* at the A.R.T. Institute at Harvard University, *Mr. G –*, an adaptation of the book by Alan Lightman that was produced by the Catalyst Collaborative, and *Time’s Up* at Brown University’s Granoff Center. In addition to these new works, Sara designed stages for works by living playwrights, including *A Bright New Boise* at the ART Institute, directed by Marcus Stern and written by MacArthur Fellowship Award Winner Samuel D. Hunter, and *The Saint Plays* by Erik Ehn at the Modern Theater. This spring and summer, she has been collaborating on *Hagoromo*—another new work that will premiere at the BAM Next Wave Festival in fall 2015. This dance opera will be a reimagining of an ancient Noh play.

In 2015, Peter Child was awarded an Artists Fellowship in Musical Composition by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. He presented a paper at the Performance Studies Network Third International Conference, University of Cambridge, England: “Multiple

Sense Making: When Practice Becomes Performance” (with Elaine Chew, MIT alumna and professor of digital media at Queen Mary University of London). In January, *A Rose*, an electronic sound file (text by Lina Viste Grønli), was premiered at Galerie Gaudel de Stampa, Paris. Three of Child’s works were featured at the Fifth London Festival of American Music by Ensemble Lontano: *Dialogue*, for flute, *Seeing the Unseen*, for ensemble and video, and *Primary Colors/Elementary Shapes*, for piano, at the St. James Theatre, London, in November 2014. Other performances included *Tableaux II* with the Boston Musica Viva, *Sonatina Serena* with the Fidelio Trio, and *Bleak Light* with Jeremy Huw Williams, baritone, and Paula Fan, piano.

In October 2014, William Cutter prepared the Tanglewood Festival Chorus for a performance of the Brahms Requiem, led by maestro Bramwell Tovey and featuring soprano Rosemary Joshua and bass-baritone Bryn Terfel. The Boston Globe said, “But the star of the evening was the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, massive in *Denn alles Fleisch*; sprightly in *So seid nun geduldig*; sweet and swaying in *Wie Lieblich*, a force in *Herr du bist würdig*, and crystal clear everywhere. In short: heaven on earth.” Cutter was also guest conductor for the Massachusetts Collegiate Choral Festival at Endicott College in January 2015, and was recently appointed choral consultant for the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Senior Lecturer David Deveau toured Japan in October 2014, performing in Nagoya, Kyoto, and Tokyo. He reviewed the Bayreuth Festival’s 2014 production of Wagner’s *Ring of the Nibelung* for the Boston Musical Intelligencer, reporting directly from Germany. He made two new recordings: an all-Schubert disc with violinist Andres Cardenes and a new solo CD for Steinway Records (to be released in September 2015). Deveau celebrated his 20th anniversary season as artistic director of the Rockport Chamber Music Festival and was feted as the sole honoree at this year’s opening gala with a solo recital by Yo-Yo Ma. He also received letters of congratulations from Governor Baker and state senator Bruce Tarr, among others.

In October, John Harbison attended production meetings in London with Keith Warner, who will direct the European premiere performances of his opera, *The Great Gatsby*, at the Semperoper, Dresden, Germany, opening on December 5, 2015. Throughout the past season, Jennifer Koh gave a series of performances of Harbison’s *For Violin Alone*, commissioned for her by the 92nd Street Y in New York City, Berkeley Performances, and Ann Arbor Concerts. In September 2014, Camerata Pacifica toured four cities in California with Harbison’s *String Trio*, which they commissioned and recorded for *Harmonia Mundi*. Throughout the next year, Harbison will be chairing a panel at the American Academy of Arts and Letters in New York City; the panel will work toward the awarding of two large prizes, the first a prize to be shared by the composer and librettist of an opera professionally produced in the United States during the past seven years, and the second to be a career prize in nonoperatic vocal music. These awards are open to all except members of the Academy.

Frederick Harris, director of the MIT Wind Ensemble and the Festival Jazz Ensemble, presented with the Wind Ensemble a performance of Copland’s *Lincoln Portrait*, with MIT President L. Rafael Reif as narrator, and a performance of Sharifi’s *Awakening*, in

celebration of the 2014 Emmy-winning documentary that featured the Wind Ensemble in the premiere of the work. Harris was guest percussionist with the Chamber Music Society of Minnesota with John Harbison, piano. With the Festival Jazz Ensemble, Harris presented the 8th Annual Herb Pomeroy Memorial Concert, with international guests artists Souriau and Nant, featuring compositions that received their world premieres at the concert. With the Wind Ensemble, he presented the world premiere of *Music as Service* by saxophonist, composer, and MacArthur Fellow Miguel Zenón, a piece that was inspired by MIT Wind Ensembles students' research and that is the subject of a forthcoming documentary. This past year, Harris was a writing contributor for the Cleveland Orchestra and a recipient of a 2015 School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences research fund award.

Mark Harvey received a commission from the City of Claremont, New Hampshire, for a multi-movement suite in celebration of the city's 250th anniversary in fall 2014. He conducted the premiere of his *Claremont Suite* in the Claremont Opera House on October 25, 2014, performed by the Aardvark Jazz Orchestra and the Claremont Community Jazz Band. He was recognized by the national Jazz Journalists Association as one of 24 regional jazz advocates and activists in the United States and was presented with the Boston Jazz Hero award by JazzBoston at the legendary Wally's jazz club on May 3, 2015.

In November 2014, Anna Kohler was co-presenter of the international conference *Infinite Record*, which included her performance of "Ask Me, I'm Still Here" with MIT Professor Emerita Joan Jonas. Kohler directed the production of *Pullman/The Appeal* and developed and performed her own show, *Profound Little Beasts*, at MIT with the support of the MIT Council for the Arts. The show will be produced and shown at The Performing Garage in New York City in January 2016. Kohler translated the play by Young Jean Lee, *Straight White Men*, into German for *Steirischer Herbst*, Austria, and *Kampnagel*, Germany.

Keeril Makan's music was the subject of a portrait concert at Columbia University's Miller Theatre in December 2014. The *New Yorker* describes his composing as "[bringing] the spirit of his diverse musical inheritance into the still center of his compositions, building structures with deep patience and infinite calm." His composition, *Letting Time Circle Through Us*, for sextet was awarded a New Music USA project grant (62 projects received awards out of 1,242 applications) for a recording of the composition with *Either/Or* for an upcoming commercial release. If *We Knew The Sky* for chamber orchestra was premiered at Miller Theatre and was subsequently performed while Makan was composer-in-residence at Indiana University. His music was featured at festivals in Sacramento, California, London, and Helsinki.

Martin Marks completed a 10,000-word essay, "*Presto(n) con Spirito: Comedies with Music, Sturges-Style*," to be published in the volume *ReFocus: The Films of Preston Sturges*, edited by Jeff Jaeckle and Sarah Kozloff (Edinburgh University Press, October 2015). The essay breaks new ground by presenting major new findings about musical scores for four masterful comedies directed by Sturges at Paramount in the early 1940s. Marks also presented a new paper, "*History Unwritten in Lightning? Why and How*

the Breil Score for *The Birth of a Nation* Should Be Published,” at a conference (“In the Shadow of *The Birth of a Nation*: A Centennial Assessment of Griffith’s Film”) on June 27–29, 2015, at University College London. Building on his previous research into the history of this film’s music, Marks designed the paper to lay the groundwork for a scholarly edition of the score that is to be published in an ongoing series under the auspices of the American Musicological Society. On the lighter side, he also prepared and performed a new piano score for Fritz Lang’s silent film *Spione* [Spies] at the Harvard Film Archive on July 26, 2014.

Emily Richmond Pollock’s article, “To Do Justice to Opera’s ‘Monstrosity’: Bernd Alois Zimmermann’s *Die Soldaten*,” was published in *Opera Quarterly*, Volume 30, Issue 1. Pollock was elected a member-at-large in the Cold War Studies and Music Study Group of the American Musicological Society, and elected to the board of directors of the Cambridge Symphony Orchestra.

Elena Ruehr was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship. She released two CDs: *Lift Chamber Music of Elena Ruehr* (Avie Records), and *O’Keeffe Images, Orchestral Music of Elena Ruehr* (Boston Modern Orchestra Project), with good reviews in *Gramophone*, the *American Record Guide*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *SF Gate*, and on [Music Web International](#). Articles in the *Boston Globe* and on WBUR featured her three concert premieres in November 2014, *Cassandra in the Temples* (with Roomful of Teeth at MIT), *Eve* (with the Cantata Singers at Jordan Hall, Boston) and *it’s about time* (San Francisco Contemporary Music Players at Berkeley, California), as well as a premiere of *In C, Too* at Kresge Auditorium. These performances all had multiple reviews, including some in the *Boston Globe*. Other concerts this season included two performances of *Blackberries* at Sacramento State University and MIT’s Killian Hall in November 2014, and a performance of *Shimmer* by the Alabama Symphony Orchestra in February 2015. Commissions in 2015 include those from Radius Ensemble (*Quetzal Garden*), Rhonda Rider (*Cloud Forest*), and the New Orchestra of Washington (*Viola Concerto*) (for Marcus Thompson). All of these are to be premiered and recorded in the 2015–2016 season.

During academic year 2015, Jay Scheib led the successful effort to establish the degree of bachelor of science in Theater Arts and became housemaster of Senior House. In addition to being the minor advisor, chairing the Theater Arts Curriculum Committee, and becoming ever more engaged in issues surrounding student life on campus, Scheib continues to present professional opera and theatrical productions around the world. Scheib began the season at the Staatstheater in Darmstadt, Germany, where he directed both Luigi Nono’s polysymphonic composition *No Hay Caminos, Hay Que Caminar*, and Monteverdi’s *Il Ritorno d’Ulisse* (under the title *Odyssee*). Playing to sold-out audiences all year, *Odyssee* is slated to return next year and to remain in the repertory of the Staatstheater in Darmstadt. Scheib also directed a studio production of *Peter Pan* with the winners of the Young Arts Foundation national arts scholars competition at the Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York.

Between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015, Charles Shadle completed four new compositions: *Red Cedar* (for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano, commissioned by

Lontano, London, United Kingdom); Third Symphony (commissioned and premiered by the MIT Symphony Orchestra); Missa Brevis Sancti Oswaldus; and A Song of Consolation (for soprano and clarinet). A fall-term sabbatical allowed the rapid completion of the new symphony; it also offered the opportunity to spend a month in London, where he attended the premiere of Red Cedar. In addition to this performance, Lontano Ensemble played the work twice on a short tour of the United States, with additional performances in Massachusetts and New York. Based on the success of these performances, Lontano, under music director Odaline de la Martinez, has commissioned a new work for 2017. In the fall semester, the distinguished baritone Jeremy Huw Williams performed his song cycle, *The Hills of Dawn*, based on poems by the Native American poet Alex Posey, throughout the United States and in China. In addition, an opportunity to meet with Dr. Williams in London led to his commissioning a new song cycle, *Primordia*, set to poems by Wallace Stevens, for a tour of the United States in fall 2015. The new *Missa Brevis* will have its liturgical premiere by the Schola Cantorum of St. Stephen's, in Providence, Rhode Island, in January 2016.

Marcus Thompson continues as artistic director of the Boston Chamber Music Society. He performed a recital tour of Washington State for the Piatigorsky Foundation, a recital at Barge Music, Brooklyn, New York, and chamber music concerts in Alaska (in Sitka and Fairbanks), with the Boston Chamber Music Society. He also performed the New England Conservatory faculty series and at Holy Cross College. He was appointed an MIT Institute Professor.

Evan Ziporyn's major performances as performer and composer (outside MIT) included the Molde Jazz Festival, Molde, Norway (with Eviyan) in July 2014; the OFF Festival, Poznan, Poland (with Christine Southworth) in August 2014; the Contact Intersection Festival, Toronto, Canada, in September 2014; the Festival of New American Music, Sacramento, California, in November 2014; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, in January 2015; Hermitage Arts, Sarasota, Florida, in January 2015; the Detroit Institute of Art in April 2015; the University of Calgary (with Flux Quartet) in May 2015; the Ojai Festival of Music in June 2015; and Betel Nut Arts, Ubud, Bali, in June 2015. His new recordings feature one with the Silk Road Project for an upcoming Ken Burns documentary (March 2015); a CD, *Uncovered*, produced by Maya Beiser (fall 2014); a CD with Eviyan, *Nayive* (spring 2015), and a CD with Bang on a Can, *Steel Hammer* (2014). Two new commissioned compositions were premiered in academic year 2015, including a 25-minute cantata for *Roomful of Teeth* in November 2014 and a 20-minute piano work for Sarah Cahill in April 2015.

## **Personnel**

Leslie Tilley was hired as assistant professor effective July 1, 2015. Mark Harvey was promoted to senior lecturer effective July 1, 2015. The section's 11 faculty members included three women and two African Americans.

**Peter Child, Section Head**

**Professor of Music**

**Jay Scheib, Director of Theater Arts**

**Professor of Theater**