

Arts Initiatives

Leila Kinney, executive director of arts initiatives and of the MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST), works on strategic planning, communications, development, and cross-school coordination for the arts. She oversees the staff of the Office of the Arts, whose programs include CAST; the Council for the Arts at MIT (CAMIT); Student Programs; and the Student Art Association (SAA). She chairs the CAST and Visiting Artists Selection Committee and sets the agenda for the Creative Arts Council with the associate provost. She is an *ex officio* member of the executive committees of the Council for the Arts at MIT, the advisory boards of the Catalyst Collaborative at MIT (CC@MIT), the List Visual Arts Center, and the MIT Museum. In the 2014-2015 academic year, she served on the Institute-wide planning committee for the 2016 centennial celebration of the opening of MIT's Cambridge campus.

Current Goals

- Raise funds to sustain the future of CAST.
- Coordinate excellent and prominent arts programming for the MIT 2016 celebrations scheduled for Spring 2016.
- Lead and execute the 2016 Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts at MIT, including the residency and gala.
- Complete a comprehensive review and renewal of Student Programs in the Arts.
- Support and implement the Council for the Arts at MIT's ongoing strategic planning.

MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST)

Established in AY2013 in the office of the provost with a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which has been renewed through AY2020, CAST facilitates and creates opportunities for exchange and collaboration among artists, engineers, scientists, and scholars in the humanities. A joint initiative of the Office of the Provost, the dean of the School of Architecture and Planning (SA+P) and the dean of School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS), the Center is committed to fostering a culture in which the arts, science, and technology thrive as interrelated, mutually informing modes of exploration, knowledge, and discovery. The activities of the Center include:

- Soliciting and supporting cross-disciplinary curricular initiatives that integrate the arts into the core curriculum and create new artistic work or materials, media, and technologies for artistic expression.
- Producing a visiting artists program that emphasizes creative process, extensive interaction with MIT faculty, students, and researchers, and cross-fertilization among disciplines.
- Assisting in the presentation and curation of performing and visual arts or design relevant to the research of engineers, scientists, and the MIT community as a whole.

- Disseminating the creative and intellectual production supported by the Center to the public through publications, exhibitions, performances, and symposia.

Accomplishments

The 2014–2015 academic year was a turning point for the MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST), as we hosted the first in a series of biennial, international symposia, *Seeing/Sounding/Sensing*; “launched the annual performing arts series *MIT Sounding*”; prepared the first CAST publication, *Experience: Culture, Cognition and the Common Sense*; and received a renewal grant from the Mellon Foundation extending through 2020, which will allow us to build a solid foundation for the future of the Center. We are pleased that the inauguration of two marquee events has moved CAST towards its goal of disseminating more broadly the creative experimentation, cross-disciplinary inquiry, and wide-ranging production at MIT to other research institutions, the artistic community, and the general public at large.

In its third academic year of operation, CAST supported 21 programs overall (compared to 17 in the first two academic years), including three cross-disciplinary classes, three symposia, three lecture series, three workshops, eight performances, and one exhibition, with participation from 11 individual visiting artists as well as six music ensembles and a group of experimental chefs from Mugaritz, who created an amazing workshop for mechanical and civil engineering students demonstrating how molecular cuisine could teach them about transforming materials. Approximately 135 students participated in three course offerings. The students represented a diversity of majors, including materials science, mathematics, anthropology, building computation, and art and architecture. Many more attended public programs. Of the 28 public programs held during the academic year, CAST hosted more than 4,200 audience members in venues across the campus. Artists made 37 total visits to campus and participated in 50 research meetings with MIT faculty, postdocs, labs, departments, and centers.

Programs

Symposium: Seeing/ Sounding/ Sensing

More than 490 guests and 938 unique webcast visitors attended CAST’s inaugural symposium on September 26–27, 2014. The symposium was designed to deepen the dialogue between the arts and cognitive neurosciences, an area of extensive expertise and ongoing research at MIT. The organizers, MIT Professors Caroline Jones (Architecture) and Stefan Helmreich (Anthropology), along with Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow David Mather, invited four CAST Visiting Artists to join scientists and humanities scholars from a range of disciplines in an open-ended exploration of areas of common concern and research focus. The event included 20 presenters in addition to a keynote address by Bruno Latour, the eminent philosopher, anthropologist, and sociologist of science. Addressed to a broad public, but conducted at the highest scholarly level, the symposium’s goal was to challenge each domain’s conventional certainty about knowledge production and to stimulate new issues for cross-disciplinary scholarship in the future.

The symposium culminated in a concert by Alvin Lucier, Evan Ziporyn, and Arnold Dreyblatt, including a performance by Alvin Lucier of his landmark 1969 work *I Am Sitting in a Room*.

Residency: Tomás Saraceno

Visiting Artist Tomás Saraceno continues to collaborate with Markus J. Buehler, professor and head of civil and environmental engineering, whose groundbreaking research in the structural makeup of silk webs complements Saraceno's own pioneering cross-disciplinary installations of 3-D webs. By scanning and analyzing the spider webs as they are constructed, Saraceno, Buehler, and Zhao Qin, research scientist in civil and environmental engineering, are learning more about the structural properties of spider webs and the complex network of connected proteins in spiders' silk. Their ultimate goal is to adapt nature's techniques for structural engineering, new building materials, and the ambitious installations that Saraceno creates, which are speculative models for alternate ways of living. During spring semester 2015, several of Professor Buehler's students developed a laser scanning mechanism for the webs as their senior capstone project, which will be displayed along with their analysis of the structural properties of the web in an exhibition of Saraceno's work at the Center for Arts and Media (ZKM) in Karlsruhe, Germany in 2016. Saraceno also continued work on weather simulations for solar balloons with Lodovica Illari, senior lecturer in earth, atmospheric, and planetary sciences, as new iterations of his "Becoming Aerosolar" project were exhibited at the Grand Palais in December 2015 in conjunction with COP21, the 2015 Paris Climate Conference. During research trips, Saraceno attended and presented in the CAST Symposium (September 2014) and the Active Matter Summit (April 2015).

Residency: Tauba Auerbach

Visiting Artist Tauba Auerbach discussed her work in the CAST symposium Seeing/Sounding/Sensing. Auerbach's presentation in the "Seeing" panel focused on her exploration of the nature of color, language, logic, and dimensionality across visual arts as well as the limits of visual and spatial perception. Throughout the residency, Auerbach has collaborated with Erik Demaine, professor of electrical engineering and computer science, and Martin Demaine, technical assistant in the computer science and artificial intelligence lab, to design a geometrical font that will be animated. The font is built around the mathematical notion of grid unfoldings of orthogonal polyhedra and explores the seemingly trivial case of a cube to show how a surprising variety of unfoldings are possible even with just 2x2 refinement—an entire alphabet. The font will be distributed publicly and may be the basis of art prints.

Residency: Katerina Cizek

Visiting artist Katerina Cizek collaborated with the Open Documentary Lab and Scot Osterweil, creative director of the Education Arcade and research scientist in comparative media studies/writing, in developing the final stage of HIGHRISE: Digital Citizenship, which investigates how new communication and media technologies are reshaping the personal lives, political practices, and citizenship of highrise residents. The project demonstrates how the documentary process can drive social innovation, rather than simply document it. CAST and the Open Documentary Lab presented a panel, "The Art, Ethics and Technology of Documentary Co-Creation" at MIT and a workshop with Cizek at the National Film Board of Canada's live performance of HIGHRISE at the April 2015 HotDocs Festival in Toronto.

Residency: Jupiter Quartet

Beethoven’s String Quartet Cycle charts the growth of a master artist’s vision over a lifetime, demonstrating the emotive depth and dramatic scale for which the composer is known. During the Jupiter Quartet’s two-year residency, they had the rare opportunity to perform this entire cycle in six concerts. With their intimate connection to the core string quartet literature, the Jupiter Quartet ignited and deepened the enthusiasm for classical music in MIT student musicians through performance, class visits, and individual student coaching. This program was presented in collaboration with Marcus Thompson, Robert R. Taylor Professor of Music in the Department of Music and Theater Arts, and the MIT Concerts Office.

Residency: Roomful of Teeth

Founded in 2009 by Brad Wells, Grammy-winning contemporary classical ensemble Roomful of Teeth is a vocal project dedicated to all manner of expression using the human voice—from yodeling to Inuit throat singing. The eight-voice ensemble continually expands its vocabulary of singing techniques by studying with masters from non-classical traditions throughout the world. At MIT, Roomful of Teeth collaborated with composer and Lecturer Elena Ruehr and librettist Gretchen E. Henderson on the world premieres of opera-in-progress *Cassandra in the Temples* and *Borderland: A Cantata for Ukraine*, by Christine Southworth and Kenan Sahin Distinguished Professor of Music Evan Ziporyn. In addition to a November 21st concert, the group and Gretchen E. Henderson reached more than 160 students through class visits, open rehearsals, and individual coaching.

Residency: Small Instruments

Visiting Artist Pawel Romanczuk led a daily, week-long IAP workshop in instrument building and composition for the MIT community and students, culminating in a public concert at the MIT Museum on Friday, January 9, 2015. Participants had the opportunity to create their own instruments, develop techniques to play them, and create an ensemble for live performance.



Pawel Romanczuk with his small instruments at an IAP workshop. Photo by L. Barry Hetherington

Residency: The Boston Camerata

Working in collaboration with Associate Professor of Music Michael Cuthbert, The Boston Camerata residency focused on the performance and rediscovery of works spanning the 12th to 15th centuries, with all the inherent ambiguities and possibilities of creative reinterpretation this significant musical period provides. In addition to performing two public concerts, the group worked with Cuthbert's early music class, and coached the Chamber Chorus and Madrigals ensembles. The second public concert featured several 14th-century works newly reconstructed with Professor Cuthbert's Music21 software program.



The Boston Camerata perform in Walker Memorial. Photo by L. Barry Hetherington

Residency: Anicka Yi

Visiting Artist Anicka Yi's work involves scent, tactility, and perishability as a means to reconfigure the epistemological and sensorial terms of a predominantly visual art world. Yi explored MIT's research in synthetic biology. Yi collaborated with Tal Danino, postdoctoral fellow in the institute for medical engineering and science, Gloria Choi, assistant professor in the department of brain and cognitive sciences and investigator at the McGovern Institute, and Seth Riskin, manager of the MIT Museum Studio. In March 2015, Yi and Danino developed a collectively scented bacteria, created from the DNA of 100 women, which was displayed in the exhibition [You Can Call Me F](#) at The Kitchen gallery in New York. The bacterial work was reviewed widely by the art press and was published on the cover and in the portfolio spread of the March issue of [Artforum](#). The collaboration informed the exhibition at the List Visual Arts Center, *Anicka Yi: 6,070,430K of Digital Spit*, which opened in May 2015.

Residency: Lontano Ensemble

Lontano has established an international reputation as one of the most exciting and versatile exponents of 20th and 21st century music. In collaboration with MIT Professor of Music and Margaret MacVicar Faculty Fellow Peter Child, Lontano Ensemble members visited Course 21-M Introduction to Western Music, performed works by composition students, spoke about current compositions, and performed a concert of works by MIT composers.

Residency: Ge Wang

Ge Wang, co-founder of Smule and assistant professor at Stanford University in the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics, worked with 17 MIT Music and Technology students. In addition, at an MIT Museum Second Friday event, Wang and [Harmonix](#) co-founder and MIT lecturer Eran Egozy explored the transformative possibilities of combining music and computers in a three-hour event. Attendees learned about the innovative tools, toys, and social experiences that are being developed to make music in new ways.



Ge Wang at an MIT Museum public program co-presented by CAST. Photo by L. Barry Hetherington

4.022 Design Fundamentals through Art and Material Science

CAST commissioned a new studio class, taught by Skylar Tibbits, director of the self-assembly lab associated with the International Design Center (IDC), and Athina Papadopoulou, research specialist in architecture, which focused on the cross-disciplinary experimentation at the intersection of art, design, and materials science. Students from a variety of majors created generative drawings (using visual arts software Processing), small sculptural prototypes, and finally large installations, looking for pattern formation and assembly structures as a way to extract principles, learn techniques, and develop strategies for design. The semester culminated in a display of the prototypes at the Active Matter Summit, which students attended.

Symposium: Active Matter Summit

The [Active Matter Summit](#), a two-day conference, was organized by Skylar Tibbits and Athina Papadopoulou and convened designers, engineers, and scientists working on programmable materials, jammable solids, folding technologies, 3D/4D printing, and robotics, all of which will afford new possibilities in the multiple domains represented—architecture, building technology, materials science, civil and environmental engineering, and



Works by students of Skylar Tibbits's class in Design Fundamentals. Photo by L. Barry Hetherington

other areas that do not fit into traditional disciplinary frameworks. The conference featured 43 speakers and an exhibition of work made by 4,022 students; more than 300 people attended, and the event was live-streamed. The studio and conference were funded by CAST through the generosity of Ronald A. Kurtz '54, in recognition of the exemplary career of Toyota Professor Emeritus Merton C. Flemings, founding director of the Materials Processing Center at MIT.

Residency: Terry Riley

Terry Riley launched what is now known as the Minimalist movement with his revolutionary classic *In C* in 1964. Changing the course of 20th century music, *In C*'s influence has been heard in the works of many prominent composers. [MIT Sounding](#)'s 2014-15 season concluded with a marathon celebration of Terry Riley's 80th birthday, including the premiere of a reimagined classic—a multi-saxophone, live version of Riley's 1969 *Poppy Nogood and the Phantom Band*, newly arranged by Evan Ziporyn. Along with Terry Riley himself, pianist Sarah Cahill, genre-crossing trio Eviyan, Gamelan Galak Tika, Wallace Halladay and the University of Toronto Saxophone Ensemble, and Eliot Gattegno performed in the celebratory concert. Riley also visited the World Music class in addition to his work with student ensemble members while on campus, and Halladay gave a public lecture/demonstration at the Lewis Music Library.

4.110 MAS.330/MAS.650 Design Across Scales

Inspired by Charles and Ray Eames's canonical *Powers of Ten*, the course explores the relationship between science and engineering through the lens of design. Instructors J. Meejin Yoon, professor and department head of architecture, and Neri Oxman, Sony Corporation Career Development Professor of Media Arts and Sciences, examine how transformations in science and technology have influenced design thinking and vice versa. Through interdisciplinary tools and methods to represent, model, design, and fabricate objects and systems across physical, economical, and social scales, students develop disciplinary and anti-disciplinary design methods and design material and immaterial things.

21M.359 The Harmonic Archive: Music, Sound and Installation Art as Artistic Research

Taught by CAST Visiting Artist Arnold Dreyblatt, "The Harmonic Archive" addressed three main topics: musical minimalism, instrument building, and sound art. Students created eight installations that combined visual aesthetics and the basic principles of sound as their final projects.



Students in the Harmonic Archive class. Photo by L. Barry Hetherington

Seminar Series: Arts Innovation in the Digital Age

The lunchtime series co-presented by CAST and the OpenDocLab, "[Arts Innovation in the Digital Age](#)," was designed to expose MIT students to documentary storytellers and other arts professionals who are pioneering new forms of artistic practice. Elaborating on concepts such as cross-platform, immersive media, and documentary games, the five speakers in this series shared their experience, practice, distribution models, and creative platforms with MIT students from a variety of disciplines. Speakers included photojournalist Karim Ben Khelifa, a fellow at the MIT Open Documentary Lab and the 2013 Carroll Binder Fellow at the Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University; Suvi Andrea Helinen, filmmaker and fellow at the MIT Open Documentary Lab; journalist and filmmaker David Dufresne; Lara Baladi, multidisciplinary artist and fellow at the MIT Open Documentary Lab; and Marisa Morán Jahn, artist, activist, immersive media producer, and graduate of MIT. Each speaker discussed new, innovative projects, such as Jahn's *Nanny Van*, a mobile design studio and sound lab that "accelerates the movement for domestic workers' rights," which was funded in part by Council for the Arts at MIT (CAMIT). The series is a component of the entrepreneurship initiative MIT STARTUP, which includes the Hacking Arts Festival and the Creative Arts Track of the \$100K Competition produced by the Martin Trust Center for MIT Entrepreneurship.

Communications

Leah Talatinian, the arts communications manager, coordinates and facilitates internal and external publicity, raising awareness of the arts at MIT. The steadily increased arts communications efforts have raised the profile of the arts—within the MIT community, in the Boston area, nationally, and internationally—through sustained attention to media relations, advertising, grassroots outreach, print and email marketing, and online presence. Building loyalty from existing audiences and reaching new audiences are given equal priority.

Media Coverage

The Venice Biennale project by Joan Jonas dominated the arts media nationally in the spring of 2015. The Arts at MIT and the List Visual Arts center partnered on communications with the agency Resnicow Associates. Feature articles about Joan Jonas were published in [The New York Times Magazine](#), [The Boston Globe](#), [Art in America](#) (which included a mention of her work at MIT with visiting artist Jason Moran) and other national publications, leading up to the opening of the exhibition in May 2015. A profile of Paul Ha also appeared in [The New York Times](#) Museums Section. The highlight of the press coverage appeared in [The New York Times](#), with the headline "Joan Jonas's Venice Biennale Pavilion Is a Triumph." Her exhibition was the cover story of the summer issue of [Artforum](#) magazine, one of the most influential art magazines in the world. More than 420 journalists visited the U.S. Pavilion during the press preview period, May 5-8, 2015, and 300 articles were published in the media worldwide.

Visiting artist Anicka Yi's project with MIT biology researcher Tal Danino also received extensive press coverage. Anicka Yi's work at MIT was featured at an exhibition at The Kitchen in New York and most of the articles about the show, including one in the

[The New Yorker](#) and another in [The Huffington Post](#), mentioned her residency at MIT. Killer Mike and Young Guru, who spoke in the Hip Hop Speaker series, also garnered significant press attention, for example from [Esquire](#) and [Pitchfork](#). Other coverage of note included *The Boston Globe* piece about the renewal of the \$1.5 million grant for CAST from the Mellon Foundation. *MIT Sounding*, the new music series, was covered in articles in *The Boston Globe* about the [Terry Riley](#) concert, and the *Globe* staff continued coverage of the MIT Museum's Kurtz Gallery of Photography exhibitions, as they have for every exhibition since the museum opened. The cover story in February's [SciArt in America](#) was about CAST Visiting Artist Tomás Saraceno, written by MIT's Sharon Lacey.

Arts at MIT Communications

Traffic to the [Arts Portal](#) showed a steady increase, with 52,000 unique visitors from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. The most visited pages were the homepage, followed by the Student Art Association page, the events calendar, Tomás Saraceno's artist page, the CAST homepage, and the Hip Hop Speaker Series page.

Fifty blog posts and 35 campus news articles were published in AY 2015. The most popular blog post, [MIT Alum Danielle Olson Finds Gique.me](#), reached approximately 600 readers. The Arts at MIT continued publishing the very well received bi-annual alumni newsletter, which is sent to 11,480 individuals worldwide. In an effort to consolidate some of the clutter of multiple emails about arts events, Arts at MIT developed a new weekly email newsletter in spring 2015 that is distributed to 2,200 subscribers; it lists all arts events and exhibitions on campus, press clips that appeared during the week, and blog and campus news articles.

Videos continue to be an important medium for documenting and disseminating arts events. CAST produced 12 videos in the last year, including features on Visiting Artists Alvin Lucier and Katerina Cizek and documentation of the Seeing/Sounding/Sensing symposium. Subscribers to the [Arts at MIT](#) channel on YouTube increased from 8,165 to 13,439 in July 2015. [Advances in Architectural History](#), a video produced by CAST in partnership with the Department of Architecture in 2012, has received 139,304 total views.

There was a focused effort on the Arts at MIT social media accounts this year, with positive results. The following stats were accurate as of July 2015; last year's numbers are in parentheses:

- Facebook fans: 8,308 (5,681)
- Twitter followers: 7,109 (5,069)
- Instagram followers: 2,388 (122)
- Flickr followers: 53 (23)
- YouTube subscribers: 13,439 (8,165)

The most successful paid post on Facebook this year was about the *New York Times* article [Gates Foundation Uses Art to Encourage Vaccination](#), which reached 47,072 people and received 1,319 clicks, as well as 423 total comments, likes, and shares. The most successful organic post on Facebook was the article *The 50 Most Exciting Artists of 2014*, published by Artnet. The post organically reached 6,512 people, receiving 528 clicks, as well as 69 total comments, likes, and shares. Our most successful tweets linked to original content from our blog and Instagram. In January, we garnered 19,456 impressions after sharing [this image](#) from our Instagram. In February, sharing [this image](#) from our Instagram resulted in 17,173 impressions. In March, we garnered 15,782 impressions after sharing [this blog](#) post to Twitter. July 2014 was our most successful month on Flickr as we increased our lifetime total views by 17%.

Council for the Arts at MIT

Current Goals

Susan Cohen, director of the Council for the Arts at MIT (CAMIT), is responsible for stewarding current CAMIT members, facilitating the recruitment of new members, administering CAMIT programs, and providing support for CAMIT committee work.

With the appointment of a new chair of the Council, Rick Stone '76, an *ad hoc* committee of members was formed to develop a strategic plan for the next five years. The associate provost, the executive director of arts initiatives, and the director of the Council are *ex officio* members.

Annual Meeting Committee (Wendy Kistler, chair)

43 CAMIT members, plus their guests, MIT students, faculty, and staff attended the October 30 and 31, 2014 event, which featured a fascinating look into the Center for Advanced Visual Studies (CAVS) Special Collections from CAVS Project Archivist Jeremy Grubman, an informative and enjoyable talk about artist Joan Jonas from Virginia Commonwealth University's Gregory Volk, and a master class led by MIT music faculty member Elena Ruehr and Visiting Artists Roomful of Teeth. Cocktails and dinner were held at Boston's Chilton Club, including a rousing rendition of several songs from an original "MIT v. Harvard" musical-comedy entitled *We'll Get it Right*, commissioned by the MIT class of 1954 for their 60th reunion. Visits to three private art collections in Boston's Back Bay neighborhood were a highlight of the meeting; CAMIT members visited the homes of Jim and Lois Champy, Don and Jeanne Stanton, and Elizabeth and Michael Marcus.

Grants Committee (Colleen Messing, chair)

The CAMIT Grants Committee awarded 33 grants totaling \$134,359 and 30 Director's Grants totaling \$8,840. The grants budget was increased to \$150,000 by the Executive Committee: \$140,000 is dedicated to grants awarded by the grants committee, and \$10,000 is designated for Director's Grants. This increase resulted in larger grant amounts across the board. A few of the exceptional projects this year were concerned with sustainability, bio-art, and issues of the third world. Media Lab graduate student Lining Yao received \$9,800 for her project called Biologic Second Skin, in which she

uses bacteria to program fabric to respond to the temperature of the wearer; \$9,300 was awarded to Dr. Lawrence Susskind and his team in support of a photography exhibition entitled *Female Faces in Sustainable Places*, which explores the ways in which women policymakers and social entrepreneurs are contributing to sustainable development in Malaysia; and Media Lab graduate student David Sengeh was granted \$4,248 for *MoInspiration*, an Afrobeat hip hop album designed to inspire, celebrate women, and encourage African youth to aspire to higher education.

Membership and Nominating Committee (Marilyn Breslow, chair)

Council membership stands at 88, including eight *ex officio* members. The following individuals have joined the council since the last report: Silvia Barbieri, Elizabeth Coxe, Margaret Dunn, and Cynthia Reed; Deans Hashim Sarkis (School of Architecture and Planning) and Melissa Nobles (School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences) joined as *ex officio* members. Beloved longtime members of CAMIT Toni Wyman and Claude Brenner passed away this year. William Harris and Marcia Kastner resigned this year.



An image from the exhibition Female Faces in Sustainable Places

Awards Committee (Ann Allen, chair)

The Louis Sudler Prize is awarded each year to a graduating senior who has shown excellence or the highest level of proficiency in a given arts discipline. This year's Sudler Prize winner is Peter Godart '15, who won for his musical ability as a performer and composer. The amount of the Sudler Prize was increased to \$2,500 this year.

The Laya and Jerome B. Wiesner Student Art Awards are presented annually to up to four students, living groups, organizations, or activities for outstanding achievement in and contributions to the arts at MIT. This year's winners are Otto Briner '15 for achievements in music, Majdolene Khweis '15 for her work as an actor, Anne Macmillan (G) for the visual arts and Michael Stern (G) for his work in the Glass Lab. The amount of the Wiesner Award was increased this year to \$2,000 per prize.

The 19th annual exhibition of the winners of the Harold and Arlene Schnitzer Prize in the Visual Arts opened at the Wiesner Student Art Gallery in the Stratton Student Center on May 22, 2015. The Schnitzer Prize is extremely generous, with first place at \$5,000, second at \$3,000, third at \$2,000, and honorable mentions at \$1,000. First prize was awarded to Tsz Wai Alan Kwan, a graduate student in the MIT Program in Art Culture and Technology for his video work. Second prize was awarded to Elaine Kung '15 for

printmaking and collage. Third prize was awarded to Science Technology and Society graduate student Lan Li (G) for documentary filmmaking, and the Honorable Mention went to Jia Zhang, a graduate student in the Media Lab, for her charts and graphs of places derived from images found on street view and similar sources.



Tsz Wai Alan Kwan's winning Harold and Arlene Schnitzer Prize in the Visual Arts artwork

Ticket/Membership Programs

Since 1980, the Council has underwritten MIT's University Membership Program at the Museum of Fine Arts. This program provides free admission and discount benefits to all MIT undergraduate and graduate students, as well as 15-day passes for use by MIT faculty and staff. Fourteen of the day passes are now distributed at the Hayden Library circulation desk; one pass is sent to Lincoln Laboratory for its staff. MIT is ranked in the top ten in number of admissions to the MFA, with a total of 4,283 for FY2015 (3,190 MIT students, 810 staff entries, and 283 people who attended as part of a group visit). CAMIT's sponsorship of an institutional membership with the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum has completed its fourth year; student attendance for 2014–2015 was 850.

The ICA Boston membership allows all MIT students, staff, and faculty free admission with their MIT IDs. As of June 2015, 1,049 MIT ID-holders gained free admission to the ICA. The Photographic Resource Center (PRC) at Boston University membership continued. MIT undergraduates and graduate students have free unlimited access to the PRC galleries and library. They can also enter their work into the juried members' exhibition. CAMIT underwrites MIT's membership at the Harvard Art Museums, allowing all MIT graduate and undergraduate students free admission. CAMIT continued to charge \$5 per BSO College Card to MIT students and sell them at MIT CopyTech in the basement of Building 11. A total of 1,050 cards were sold, resulting

in an income of \$4,729. In 2015, CAMIT provided 324 free tickets for MIT students to concerts by the Boston Chamber Music Society. Similar arrangements provide tickets to four of the Boston Modern Orchestra Project's concerts at Jordan Hall (93 tickets total), and tickets to each of the Radius Ensemble's concerts at the Longy School of Music at Bard College in Harvard Square (149 tickets total). A new Boston Ballet ticket program was introduced in 2015; 200 tickets were distributed to MIT students at approximately half price, and have been overwhelmingly popular, usually selling out within 20 minutes of going on sale.

The student performing arts ticket series continued, providing tickets to augment or support the curriculum, which is used primarily by faculty in the music and theater arts section. A total of \$16,358 was spent for 632 tickets. Performances ranged from King Lear to the Preservation Hall Jazz Band.

Student Art Association

The Student Art Association (SAA) is a suite of three studios, founded in 1969, that provides space for hands-on exploration of the visual arts, photography, and ceramics, overseen by Stacy Pyron.

The SAA offers more than 60 student-focused non-academic classes during the fall, spring, summer, and independent activities period (IAP). The Student Art Association enrolled approximately 700 MIT community members this year, close to 70% of whom were matriculated MIT

students; the balance consisted of staff, alumni, and spouses of students, staff, and alumni. The SAA offers open studios and 24-hour access to its members enrolled in ceramics, photography, drawing, and painting. The SAA has enjoyed steady growth and provides university-level arts instruction in media and techniques that is not available elsewhere on campus, at a fraction of the cost of similar programs in the greater Boston area. For the second year in a row, the SAA has collaborated with the MIT-SUTD Office (Singapore University of Technology and Design) to offer art classes to a mix of MIT and SUTD students over three weeks in IAP and eight weeks in the summer, serving 56 students from Singapore.

In addition to term-length classes, this year, in collaboration with the Pucker Gallery in Boston, the SAA launched a ceramics Master Class series and brought two world-renowned potters to campus, Yoshinori Hagiwara and Tomoo Hamada. Each workshop consisted of a brief slideshow followed by two to three hours of live wheel-throwing demonstrations; enrollment in each workshop was limited to 40 participants. The SAA receives frequent, enthusiastic praise from students about the program and impressive roster of technical instructors.



Master Potter Tomoo Hamada gives a wheel-throwing demonstration for the MIT Student Art Association. Photo by Jason Pastorello.

Student Programs

Student Programs in the Office of the Arts at MIT include the Freshman Arts Seminar Advising Program (FASAP), Arts Scholars (a program endowed by the Council for the Arts at MIT), the Grad Arts Forum (a series of events and lectures focused on the arts at the Graduate level), the \$15K Creative Arts Competition within the MIT \$100K competition, the Alumni Arts Exchange (AAx) and the STARTUP Entrepreneurial Arts Initiative. Manager of Student Arts Programs Sam Magee oversees these initiatives, as well as exhibitions at The Wiesner Student Gallery, and supports the director of the Council for the Arts regarding arts awards, prizes, and grants.

Accomplishments

The new MIT STARTUP Studio, a maker space for arts-focused businesses, has received a lot of positive attention. Students from around the Institute signed up for workshops offered in the studio as well as for access to the space, which includes: a 3D printer, soldering station, 48-inch plotter, heat press, filming and editing equipment, vinyl cutter, industrial sewing machine, hand tools, making supplies, wood working and sculpting tools, kilns, computers and software, as well as a setup for practicing business pitches and building apps. The studio is a welcoming space for students to prototype and refine their arts entrepreneurship ideas.

Alumni Arts Exchange

2015 was the second year for the Alumni Arts Exchange (AAx). This program, in partnership with the Alumni Office, draws on MIT's arts-interested alumni for arts-focused events in an effort to cultivate conversation and community both locally and nationwide. Attendance and feedback met expectations this year, culminating in an end-of-the-year Arts BBQ at the MIT Sailing Pavilion. We will continue to include more regional MIT alumni groups in tandem with MIT arts faculty events to build this community.

Arts Scholars

The Arts Scholars, founded in 1989, is a select group of undergraduate and graduate students who share a special interest in the arts. The Arts Scholars calendar includes 10-12 excursions each academic year to area arts events. An expert in the relevant discipline accompanies students on each excursion. Discussion, learning from the expertise of the guest, and the arts experience itself positively affect students' lives and their studies at MIT.

This year's Arts Scholars calendar included a trip to New York City to visit the Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Opera with Professor Emily Pollok, as well as a trip to see the Boston Ballet's Cinderella. We were accompanied by Ballet Master Tony Randazzo for an in-depth discussion about the practice of ballet and the narrative of Cinderella. We also visited the Peabody Essex Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and the Institute of Contemporary Art.

In addition to the excursions, the Arts Scholars are asked to give back to the community by acting as mentors for other MIT students interested in the arts, as volunteers for MIT arts-related events, and as advisors for the Freshman Arts Seminar Advising Program.

The Arts Scholars have continued to evolve as effective ambassadors for the arts. Arts Scholars alumni continue to spread the word after graduation about the vibrant arts scene on campus. The number of applicants increased and the selection process is more focused and streamlined. The Arts Scholars Program has become a selective and dynamic organization.

Graduate Arts Forum

The MIT Graduate Arts Forum is designed to build an interdisciplinary community of graduate students who admire or create art as part of their graduate studies or through independent practice. This was the Graduate Arts Forum's 12th year. We again enjoyed significant growth and continued collaboration of the Graduate Student Council (GSC); our three annual arts events drew more than 1,200 graduate students, and a fourth event was added in the summer of 2015.

The forums provided graduate students the opportunity to present their work to the larger MIT graduate student body as well as the chance to see what their peers and local artists are creating. The forums generated discussions around creative thinking and practice that help stimulate research and ensure communication among disciplines.

This year's Graduate Arts Forums included a very successful Arts Showcase with more than 500 graduate students in attendance and 50+ MIT artists showcasing their work. The fifth annual private gallery opening took place at the Copley Society, America's oldest non-profit artist collective. Other forums included painting workshops and dorm-specific community building activities, as well as the combined event between the Alumni Arts Exchange and the Graduate Student Council, where current graduate students and 40+ MIT alumni mingled and talked about their arts experiences.

Wiesner Student Art Gallery

The Wiesner Student Art Gallery, located on the second floor of the Stratton Student Center (W20), was reserved for one show each month through October 2015. The exhibitions range in media and format from photography to installation, and from solo shows to group exhibitions of student art award recipients. The monthly exhibition openings are growing in popularity. As the reputation of the gallery grows, demand has increased, as has the breadth and quality of the student art that is being exhibited to the MIT community. The student curator and assistant for the Wiesner Student Art Gallery and the Student Art Association, Carmen Castanos, was crucial to this year's success. Carmen is an Art Scholar and will continue as curator while enrolled as a graduate student in Mechanical Engineering.

Finances and Funding

CAST is supported by a \$1.5 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. In April 2015, CAST received an additional \$1.5 million from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, in support of the Center's role as a catalyst for multidisciplinary creative experimentation and integration of the arts across all areas of MIT. The recent grant brings the Mellon Foundation's total support for CAST to \$3,000,000, among the largest gifts received by the Arts at MIT. CAST also raised \$60,000 in support of a new design studio class and the Active Matter Summit, which explored the convergence of the

arts, design, and the material sciences; \$125,000 over five years in support of the *MIT Sounding* concert series and \$25,000 in other gifts.

CAST disbursed approximately \$210,000 in AY15 in grants to faculty at MIT, including funds to bring visiting artists to participate in classes.

For fiscal year 2015, the Council for the Arts at MIT raised a total of \$409,532 from 74 members, making the average gift \$5,453. An additional \$22,289 was raised from 27 non-member donors. The grand total raised was \$431,821. Due to several circumstances (deaths, resignations, and redirection of gifts), CAMIT's fundraising fell considerably short from last year's groundbreaking total of \$506,680.

Expenses for fiscal year 2015 totaled \$471,080. This figure included \$12,500 in non-recurring expenses: \$10,000 for the Alumni Arts Exchange program, and \$2,500 in support for the Center for Theoretical Physics Department's photography gallery.

Personnel

Leila Kinney continues to serve on the Executive Committee of the Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities (a2ru) and the Advisory Board for Sandbox, a Mellon-funded initiative at Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland. She also served as an external reviewer on a panel to review the arts at the University of Virginia, convened by Ian Baucom, Buckner W. Clay Dean of the College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences.

Elizabeth Woodward was renewed as a communications assistant focused upon social media for the arts at MIT, a position she began in March 2013. She came to MIT as a communications intern in October 2012. Sydney Dobkin was hired in November 2014 to replace Elizabeth, who relocated to the West Coast. Sydney was previously an Arts at MIT project assistant from August 2013–July 2014.

Sharon Lacey replaced Anya Ventura, who left to enter a graduate program in writing in August 2014, as the CAST arts research writer.

Stephen Fitzmeyer's position as part-time web administrator for the arts at MIT was renewed through June 2015. Stephen began in his position in July 2013 and his appointment ended in June 2015.

Katherine Higgins became producer of visiting artists and public programs in May 2015, replacing Meg Rotzel, who took a position at Harvard University.

Philip S. Khoury
Associate Provost