List Visual Arts Center

The mission of the MIT List Visual Arts Center (LVAC) is to present the most challenging, forward-thinking, and lasting expressions of modern and contemporary art to the MIT community and general public so as to broaden the scope and depth of cultural experiences available on campus. Another part of LVAC’s mission is to reflect and support the diversity of the MIT community through the presentation of diverse cultural expressions. This goal is accomplished through four avenues: temporary exhibitions in the LVAC galleries (Building E15) of contemporary art in all media by the most advanced visual artists working today; the permanent collection of art, comprising large outdoor sculptures, artworks sited in offices and departments throughout campus, and art commissioned under MIT’s Percent-for-Art Program, which allocates funds from new building construction or renovation for art; the Student Loan Art Program, a collection of fine art prints, photos, and other multiples maintained solely for loan to MIT students during the course of the academic year; and extensive interpretive programs designed to offer the MIT community and the public a variety of perspectives about LVAC’s changing exhibitions and MIT’s art collections.

Current Goals

The immediate and ongoing goals of LVAC are to:

- Continue to present the finest international contemporary art that has relevance to the MIT community
- Continue to implement guest curator and artist-in-residence programs
- Preserve, conserve, and resite works from the permanent collection
- Make needed alterations to gallery spaces
- Continue to increase the audience from both the MIT campus and the Boston area
- Increase cross-disciplinary and collaborative use of LVAC’s exhibitions, programs, and facilities
- Engage in long-range planning for LVAC’s future

Accomplishments

- Offered regular gallery tours led by LVAC staff members. The tours were open to MIT faculty, staff, and students as well as the general public.
- Provided tours of exhibitions and the permanent art collection on campus to 100 groups.
• Implemented a fifth year of programming of the Media Test Wall, an 8’x 8’ rear-projection screen located in the hallway of Building 56 that features a compilation of videos by contemporary artists playing in a continuous loop 24 hours a day.

• Organized three exhibitions for the Dean’s Gallery at the Sloan School of Management. Works framed for exhibitions at the Dean’s Gallery were placed in buildings throughout MIT or made available for students to borrow through the Student Loan Art Program.

• Made loans of 101 artworks to various departments and individuals across the MIT campus.

• Received continuing support from the Friends of Boston Artists group, which assists in raising funds to purchase works of art by artists with Boston connections for the Student Loan Art Program. Successful events included a tour of galleries in New York City, a talk by curator Bill Arning about public art, and separate tours of Christian Jankowski’s exhibition by the artist and the curator.

• Added a total of 21 new works to the Student Loan Art Program, 18 of which were donated works and 3 of which were purchased. The majority of new works were exhibited in the Stratton Student Center during the academic year. They will be cycled into the lending collection in fall 2007.

• Updated and distributed a color map of the MIT campus highlighting 46 major public artworks.

• Hosted residencies by artists Christian Jankowski, Natascha Sadr Haghighian, Anri Sala, Mathieu Briand, and François Roche.

Some of the Friends of Boston Artists group with artist Christian Jankowski, who led a tour of his exhibition.

Christian Jankowski, artist in residence, as seen in one of his films.
• Completed the restoration of Jacques Lipchitz’s *Hagar in the Desert* and *Sacrifice III* and Frank Stella’s *Looooloo*. Carried out scheduled maintenance on *Looooloo* and Bernar Venet’s *Two Indeterminate Lines*.

![Images of Jacques Lipchitz’s Sacrifice III, before and after treatment, showing the dramatic effects of art conservation.](image)

• Added spotlight for the Theodore Roszak Bell Tower of the MIT Chapel.

• Hosted a gallery exhibition tour for MIT Council for the Arts members during their annual meeting.

• Participated in the Freshman Arts Program Orientation, the Graduate Student Poster Event, and Campus Preview Weekend, providing tours and receptions.

• Provided four programs for MIT graduate students, including a reception for the Student Loan Art Program and a bike tour of the campus art collection.

![LVAC assistant director David Freilach, on roller blades, speaking with MIT graduate students near Tony Smith’s sculpture, For Marjorie.](image)
• Continued implementing ArtWorks, an afterschool program that provides tours and seminars for students at the Community Charter School of Cambridge interested in careers in the arts. Students met with Yanel de Angel, a student at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design; Ken Fisher of Gensler Architects; Beth Kantrowitz, co-owner of Allston Skirt Gallery; Brian Lucid, artistic director of Sequel Communications; Lisa Adams of Adamo Slate; and Kathleen Flahive of the Danish Pastry House.

• Hosted the awards ceremony for the New England section of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA).

• Participated in many MIT outreach efforts, including Campus Preview Weekend and the first-ever MIT Graduate Alumni Reunion.

• Hosted the Contemporary Art Director’s Museum Group for a weekend national conference in November.

• Participated in the annual College Art Association and American Art Museums conferences, presenting a gallery talk and a lecture and hosting receptions.

The annual awards ceremonies for the best art projects in New England drew a full house.

Curator Bill Arning and artist Mel Ziegler gave a tour for dozens of art colleagues from around the country who were in Boston for the annual College Art Association meeting.
Exhibitions

Exhibitions Presented at the List Center Galleries in Building E15

Student Loan Art Exhibition
September 6–18, 2005
At the annual exhibition of works from the Student Loan Art Collection, MIT students viewed displayed works and then entered a lottery to be awarded the work of their choice on loan to hang in their dormitory, apartment, or office for the academic year.

Christian Jankowski: Everything Fell Together
October 14–December 31, 2005
One of Germany’s most prominent young artists, Jankowski often collaborates with others—including children, magicians, customs officials, artists, therapists, psychics, and theologians—and his performance work frequently involves a surprising turn of events and a subtle but engaging sense of humor. This exhibition, the first large-scale survey of Jankowski’s work, included 12 film and video installations as well as 54 photographs by the artist. The exhibition was organized by the Des Moines Museum of Art.

America Starts Here: Kate Ericson and Mel Ziegler
February 9–April 9, 2006
Ericson and Ziegler’s work focuses on unnoticed aspects of public life, transforming ordinary materials—books, lumber, house paint, canning jars, tap water—into artworks with social meaning and commentaries. Organized by LVAC and the Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College, America Starts Here was the first retrospective exhibition of the art-making team’s decade-long career, which was cut short by Ericson’s death of cancer in 1995 at the age of 39. The exhibition was accompanied by a catalogue published by MIT Press.
9 Evenings Reconsidered: Art, Theatre, and Engineering, 1966
May 4–July 9, 2006

This exhibition took a fresh look at 9 Evenings: Theatre and Engineering, a series of performance events organized by Billy Klüver, a Bell Laboratories engineer, held at the 69th Regiment Armory in New York from October 13–23, 1966. 9 Evenings featured 10 artist/engineer collaborators who attempted to realize previously unattainable creative projects. It was a significant turning point for many artists who became aware, many for the first time, of the implications that advancements in technology had for the development of their work. The exhibition was organized by guest curator Catherine Morris for LVAC as part of the Martin Zimmerman guest curator program.

Choreographic Turn
Daria Martin; Peter Welz in collaboration with William Forsythe
May 4–July 9, 2006

This exhibition featured a 16-mm film titled Soft Materials by Daria Martin, an American artist living and working in London, and a large five-screen video installation, whenever on on on nohow on / airdrawing, by German artist Peter Welz in collaboration with celebrated dancer/choreographer William Forsythe. The exhibition, which offered audiences the opportunity to consider the space between dance and moving image in contemporary art practice, was organized by LVAC curator Bill Arning.
Exhibitions Presented on the Media Test Wall in Building 56

Videos by Oliver Herring
June 13–September 9, 2005
Herring first gained international recognition for his sculpture series *A Flower for Ethyl Eichelberger: An Ongoing Project* (1991–1994), a memorial to the legendary East Village drag performer and avant-garde playwright in the form of oversized clothes and objects knit from shimmering reams of Mylar tape. Continuing his signature theme of transforming simple elements into complex and captivating works, Herring’s current videos use commonplace editing techniques such as reversals and time lapses to create striking visuals and playful narratives.

Francis Alys, David Claerbout, Sam Easterson: Critters
This thematic compilation of videos, Francis Alys’s *El Gringo* (2003), David Claerbout’s *Le Moment* (2003), and Sam Easterson’s *Pig* (2005), *Tarantula* (2005), and *Chick* (2005) from the Animal Vegetable Video Project, observes how humankind looks into the mirror of the animal kingdom and offers a perspective on what it means to be human. The three artists on view in Critters use animal protagonists for their own reasons, yet each reveals something crucial about living on two feet with a large brain and an opposable thumb.

Christian Marclay: Mixed Reviews (American Sign Language)
January 17–March 17, 2006
*Mixed Reviews (American Sign Language)* takes writing about music as its theme, with deaf actor Jonathan Kovacs signing a long, collaged text assembled by artist Christian Marclay from reviews of musical performances and records. This work calls into question the hierarchy that values the musical experiences of the hearing over those of the deaf. Kovacs uses arm movements and facial expressions as he translates written language about music into American Sign Language. Although it is silent, his performance is unmistakably musical, and his gestures resemble those of a symphony conductor. While the deaf community has long insisted that signing has musical, aesthetic, and poetic versions just as any aural language does, this work for many of the hearing will be the first actual experience that makes this palpably true.

Chris Doyle: Recent Video Works
March 20–May 30, 2006
Doyle’s themes are drawn from the psychology of everyday life. By using only the most low-tech special effects, he transforms everyday images into short films that are magical and moving. This selection of videos shows a wide range of Doyle’s interests, but each manifests a dreamlike vision in which the quotidian becomes extraordinary. Doyle likens his practice to a “Pathetic Magician, a sad sack trying to make magic out of what is at hand.”
Markus Hansen: Other People’s Feelings Are Also My Own—Soul Drawings (2004–2006)
June 2–August 18, 2006

Hansen, a Paris-based, German-born artist, pairs the artist with various other subjects: men, women, and children of different ages. Using photography and video, Hansen strives to resemble and assume—as closely as possible—the posture and emotions of the other sitter. By dressing like and adopting the facial expression of his partner subjects, he uncannily expresses their feelings.

Exhibitions Presented at the Dean’s Gallery, MIT Sloan School of Management

Photographs from the Arlette and Gus Kayafas (’69) Collection
April 11–August 5, 2005

Gus Kayafas is the photographic editor for the estate of Harold Edgerton and was the editor of Edgerton’s book Stopping Time. On exhibition was a selection of recent donations to LVAC by Mr. and Mrs. Kayafas of works by Edgerton, Ezra Stoller, Rosalind Solomon, and others.

August 15–December 16, 2005
This exhibition included 40 preparatory sketches by sculptor Theodore Roszak for his first major architectural commission—and one of his most significant works—the bell tower for Eero Saarinen’s nondenominational chapel at MIT.

Aaron Fink: Elements and Other Prints
January 3–May 12, 2006
Included in this exhibition was a selection of woodcuts, lithographs, and etchings retaining the subject matter of Fink’s better known paintings. In these prints, hats, coffee cups, cigarettes, and a host of other mundane items gain an expressive, almost iconic status.

Original Architectural Drawings and Prints by Richard Fleischner
May 19–August 4, 2006
This exhibition showcased Fleischner’s original architectural drawings for the plaza of the Wiesner Building at MIT. In 1985, architect I. M. Pei (MIT class of 1940) and artists Fleischner, Scott Burton, and Kenneth Noland collaborated on the Percent-for-Art Program for MIT’s Wiesner Building, home to LVAC and the Media Lab.
**Interpretive Program Highlights**

LVAC curatorial and education staff led 100 gallery tours for groups from such institutions as the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Massachusetts College of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Art Institute of Boston, University of Massachusetts–Boston, Harvard University, Emerson College, Suffolk University, Boston University, New England School of Art and Design, Tufts University, Pratt Institute, University of Massachusetts–Amherst, University of Massachusetts–Lowell, Lesley University, Boston Arts Academy, Cambridge Community Charter School, Commonwealth School, Simmons College, Art Horizon, Maiven, YMCA Chelsea, and Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. Tour groups from within MIT represented Comparative Media Studies, Visual Arts, the Freshman Arts Seminar Advising Program, Architecture and Urban Planning, the Council for the Arts, Artists Behind the Desk, Asian Studies, and History, Theory, and Criticism.

Other interpretive activities included the following:

- Numerous gallery talks by curator Bill Arning, education/outreach coordinator Hiroko Kikuchi, and director Jane Farver.
- A film series organized by John Gianvito, a local film historian and college professor. The eight films were by such filmmakers as Lars von Trier, Trent Harris, Jorgen Leth, Shinya Tsukamoto, and Mika Taanila. Gianvito introduced the films and led postscreening discussions.
- An artist talk with Christian Jankowski in conjunction with the exhibition of his work *Everything Fell Together* (October 15, 2005).
- A gallery talk by Nicholas Baume, curator at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, on the work of Christian Jankowski (October 28, 2005).
- Also in conjunction with the *Everything Fell Together* exhibition, an MIT graduate student event and a Friends of Boston event, both attended by Christian Jankowski (December 7, 2005).
- An artist talk by Mel Ziegler with co-curators Bill Arning and Ian Berry, in conjunction with the *America Starts Here: Kate Ericson and Mel Ziegler* exhibition (February 9, 2006).
- An event for MIT graduate students with artist Sarah Sze, who recently installed *Blue Poles* (2006) on the façade of the Sidney-Pacific graduate residence (March 14, 2006).

*Approximately 70 students came to hear Sarah Sze speak at the Sidney-Pacific graduate dormitory, where her artwork was recently installed on the façade.*
• Also in conjunction with the *America Starts Here* exhibition, a discussion, “No Longer ‘New’—Public Art of the ’80s and ’90s in Retrospect,” with artist Mel Chin, artist and professor Wendy Jacob of MIT’s Visual Arts Program, and Miwon Kwon, art historian, critic, and professor of contemporary art in the Art History Department at the University of California, Los Angeles (March 17, 2006).

• An artist talk with artists Daria Martin and Peter Welz, moderated by Bill Arning in conjunction with the *Choreographic Turn* exhibition (May 6, 2006).

• “Presentness Is Grace—Eros and Technics and Civilization,” a lecture by Pamela Lee as part of the Leroy and Dorothy Lavine Lecture Series. The lecture considered the anxiety surrounding time in the art of the 1960s, including minimalism and the art-and-technology movements. Lee is an associate professor of art history at Stanford University (May 11, 2006).

• *Early Video Dance from WGBH*, a video screening and talk by Susan Dowling, cofounder of Art21 Inc., who was also executive producer of the public television series New Television Workshop, which originated at WGBH (May 24, 2006).


• A lecture by Michelle Yi-Ann Kuo in conjunction with the exhibition *9 Evenings Reconsidered: Art, Theatre, and Engineering, 1966*. Kuo contributed an essay to the exhibition catalogue and is writing a doctoral dissertation on experiments in art and technology at Harvard University (June 15, 2006).
**Collections**

**Permanent Collection**

There were 64 gifts of art to the permanent collection: Three drawings by Mary Jo Vath were given by Gerald and Joan Kimmelmann; 60 architectural drawings for the E15 plaza design by Richard Fleischner were given by Dr. and Mrs. William Tsiaras; and noted photographer Hiroshi Sugimoto gave a print of his photograph of the MIT Chapel’s altarpiece by Harry Bertoia. In addition, Mark di Suvero’s sculpture *Aesop’s Fables, II* was acquired in large part with a generous gift from Sara-Ann and Robert D. Sanders (’64).

**Percent-for-Art**

Patricia Fuller continued to oversee the development of several artworks. Sarah Sze’s sculpture, *Blue Poles* (2006), was installed on the façade of the Sidney-Pacific dormitory. Mark di Suvero’s sculpture, *Aesop’s Fables, II* (2005), was also installed on the landscaped area near the Stata Center. The PDSI (Physics, DMSE, Spectroscopy, Infrastructure) Building art committee approved artist Sol LeWitt’s proposal for a terrazzo floor, and contract negotiations began with the artist. Several other projects are in the beginning stages.
Student Loan Art Program Collection

The Student Loan Art Program attracted 1,362 MIT students to the LVAC gallery over the period of the exhibition of artworks. Entries were submitted by 972 students for the lottery to borrow artwork, and 383 works were disbursed.

Administrative Changes

Training was provided for 15 interns from the Rhode Island School of Design, Massachusetts College of Art, School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Tufts University, New York University, Harvard University, Art Institute of Boston, Boston University, Maryland Institute College of Art, Colby College, and MIT, as well as individuals who had previously completed school.

Finances/Funding

- The LVAC continues to receive funding from The Institute of Museum and Library Services’ award of $98,908 for “Beyond 20 Ames Street,” a project that parallels MIT’s OpenCourseWare in bringing more of LVAC’s materials to the public via online technology.
- Operating support came from the Council for the Arts at MIT and the Massachusetts Cultural Council.
- Education programs received a $2,500 grant from the Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation and a $1,500 grant from Draper Laboratories.
- The Friends of Boston Artists program generated more than $6,000 in gifts from approximately 25 individuals.
- Alumnus Martin Zimmerman is awarding funds to permit the use of outside curators to supplement LVAC staff.
- Student Loan Art Collection purchases and framing received the support of the Campus Activities Council and the Dean’s Office of the Sloan School of Management, along with a $3,000 grant from the Berkshire Taconic Foundation.
- Special programs for MIT graduate students were awarded $5,000 by Dean Isaac Colbert through the Student Life Fee.
- *9 Evenings Reconsidered: Art, Theatre, and Engineering, 1966* received grants of $40,000 from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, $10,000 from the Dedalus Foundation, and $15,000 from Robert Rauschenberg.
- In-kind donations were received from the Hotel@MIT, the Phoenix Media Communications Group, and InBev USA.
• LVAC’s Media Test Wall received $1,000 in support from MIT’s DeFlorez Fund for Humor.

• A sculpture commission by Richard Serra received $50,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts.

• Support for the Sensorium exhibition was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts ($25,000); the Nimoy Foundation (more than $20,000); Étant donnés: The French American Fund for Contemporary Art ($15,000); the LEF Foundation ($15,000); Martin E. Zimmerman (outside curators); the Japan Foundation ($8,500); Cultural Services of the French Embassy ($5,000); the Council for the Arts at MIT ($1,000); the Office for Contemporary Art Norway ($1,440); the American-Scandinavian Foundation for artist Sissel Tolaas ($1,000); the Royal Norwegian Consulate General for Sissel Tolaas ($1,000); the Canadian Consulate General in Boston; and the Massachusetts Cultural Council (general support).

• Sadly, LVAC Advisory Committee member Jeanne Wasserman passed away in January 2006. She left a bequest of $469,764 for the annual Wasserman Forum.

**Future Goals**

• Revamp the LVAC website to better provide information about exhibitions, public programs, the Student Loan Art Program, and the permanent collection, including the Percent-for-Art Program, and to provide additional opportunities for artists to do web-based projects. While start-up funds are available from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, pursuit of this goal will require ongoing funds and resources.

• Develop comprehensive educational materials about all of the MIT Percent-for-Art projects, including documentary videotapes about the Percent-for-Art and Artist-in-Residency projects. Meeting this goal requires additional funding and expertise.

• Develop a comprehensive program of exhibitions and public programs consistent with MIT’s mission that can attract large-scale funding.

• Expand on the Media Test Wall’s effort to present art at other sites on campus.

• Use works from the permanent collection to create small exhibitions throughout the campus, changing the focus of the collection from office decoration to art.

• Develop web-based systems for providing self-guided tours and for implementing exhibition organization and better in-house communication.

• Expand the Advisory Committee and improve long-range planning efforts.

• Attract major new gifts of art and/or acquisition funds for the MIT collection.

• Increase funding for art conservation and scholarly publications.
Personnel Information

Director Jane Farver served as a member of the Federal Advisory Committee on International Exhibitions, which selects artists to represent the United States at biennial exhibitions in Venice, São Paulo, Cairo, and Istanbul. She contributed catalogue essays to Allora and Calzadilla, published by the Americas Society in New York; Jill Magid: Libration Point, for the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam; and Fallayavada: Bähe Yiso Project and Tribute, for the University of California, Irvine. She was a panelist for the Bogliasco Foundation (Genoa) and gave a lecture at the Rupertiunum in Salzburg, Austria, in connection with an exhibition by artist Nabila Irshaid. She hosted the Contemporary Director’s Conference at LVAC in November.

Curator Bill Arning is conducting research on the historical context for five major art-and-technology initiatives begun in the mid-1960s, including MIT’s Center for Advanced Visual Studies. Arning wrote an introduction to Art Life: Selected Writings by Larry Rinder, chief curator of the 2002 Whitney Biennial and now dean of graduate studies at the California College of Art. Arning’s essay on the transporting power of vision was published by the international visual arts journal Parkett. He attended the prestigious National Summer Curator’s Conference in Chicago, hosted by the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Renaissance Society.

Education/outreach coordinator Hiroko Kikuchi worked on a public/performance art project, the National Bitter Melon Council (supported by the LEF Foundation), and Skinshipu (supported by the Artists Foundation). She also performed at the following events, among others: Contaminate (Boston), Tremor (Bogotá, Colombia), and Grasping the Nettle (San Francisco). She served as a guest artist/lecturer for the School of the Museum of Fine Arts; the University of California, Santa Cruz; Endicott College; and the Massachusetts College of Art. Also, she was a visiting faculty member at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts and program director for Youth-Art-in-Action. She is on the advisory committee for Art Interactive and the steering committee for the Arts and Business Council of Greater Boston.

After having been a consultant at LVAC, public art curator Patricia Fuller joined the LVAC staff in June 2006.

Advisory Committee

A daylong retreat for the Advisory Committee, led by Adrian Ellis, took place in the summer of 2006. Marcus Gonzales-Decardenas was added to the committee; Michael Coden and Blake Brasher are no longer members. The death of longtime Advisory Committee member Jeanne Wasserman was noted with great sadness by the other committee members.

Jane Farver
Director

More information about the MIT List Visual Arts Center can be found at http://mit.edu/lvac/.