

## Arts Initiatives

The director of Arts Initiatives works with associate provost Philip Khoury on strategic planning, communications, development, and cross-school coordination for the arts. She directs the Office of the Arts, chairs the Arts Communications Committee, and is a member of the Creative Arts Council and the advisory boards of the Catalyst Collaborative at MIT (CC@MIT), the List Visual Arts Center (LVAC), and the MIT Museum.

During the past academic year, the director completed the final draft of the white paper on the arts at MIT, which was approved by the Creative Arts Council in October 2009 and forwarded to the president and provost for approval. The goal of elevating the visibility and status of the Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts, articulated several years ago, was realized. The director made significant progress toward a new communications strategy for the arts, creating greater prominence for arts on the redesigned MIT home page that appeared last fall. She is developing an online arts portal (to be launched in September 2010) [<http://arts.mit.edu/>] that will deploy new media to showcase the extraordinary artistic work, exhibitions, and performances produced throughout the Institute. The associate provost and the director of Arts Initiatives continued work on restructuring the Office of the Arts and reorganized the Arts Development Committee to better serve the fundraising goals of the individual arts units.

### Current Goals

- Build support for the goals articulated in the white paper
- Implement a new communications strategy for the arts, beginning with the launch of an online arts portal in September 2010
- Support the chair of the steering committee, professor of music and media Tod Machover, in producing the Festival of Art, Science and Technology (FAST Arts Festival) that will take place during the spring semester of 2011 as part of MIT's celebration of its 150th anniversary
- Work with the chair of the Council for the Arts at MIT (CAMIT), the associate provost, and the director of CAMIT to project the council's future goals
- Maintain the prominence and visibility of the Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts through preparations for the next award ceremony, campus residency, and gala in April 2012
- Revitalize the artist-in-residence programs administered through the Office of the Arts in close coordination with the academic units in the arts, LVAC, and the MIT Museum

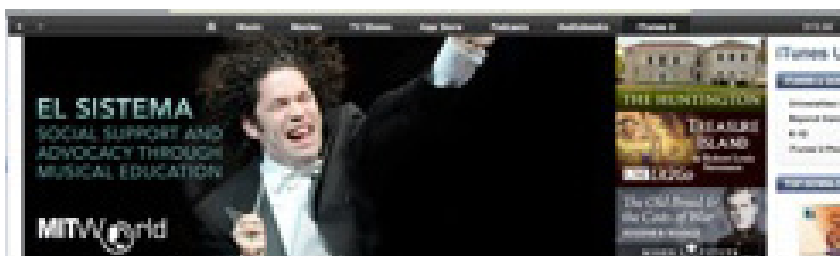
## Accomplishments

Through the creation of a new graphic and online identity, a public relations plan, and careful orchestration of the campus residency of 2010 recipient Gustavo Dudamel, the Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts achieved the visibility that its benefactor Margaret McDermott envisioned when she increased the endowment several years ago. We were very pleased that she was able to travel to Cambridge to attend all of the Dudamel events and see her wishes fulfilled. The *Boston Globe's* announcement of the awardee in October was followed by a front-page story on Dudamel, timed to coincide with his arrival at MIT in April, and very favorable reviews in the *Boston Herald* and elsewhere of the public events during his campus visit. MIT president Susan Hockfield presided over the award ceremony in Kresge, after which Dudamel conducted the MIT Symphony in a brilliant master class, a two-and-a-half-hour open rehearsal of Mozart's Symphony no. 28 "Prague" and Korsakov's *Capriccio espagnole*. He then attended a reception with student musicians. A videotaped excerpt of the rehearsal is available online (<http://arts.mit.edu/mcdermott>).



*President Susan Hockfield greets 2010 Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts recipient Gustavo Dudamel.*

The following day Dudamel participated in a panel discussion about El Sistema, the legendary system of classical music instruction pioneered in Venezuela, with Institute Professor John Harbison and professor of music and media Tod Machover; a video of the discussion, moderated by PBS journalist Maria Hinojosa, can be found on MIT World (<http://mitworld.mit.edu>) and iTunes U. The Council for the Arts at MIT hosted a gala dinner that convened leaders of MIT along with honorary hosts from the leadership of local and national classical music institutions, including members of the national nominating committee who advised the McDermott Award Selection Committee. In their remarks, the president and the associate provost recognized the exemplary commitment to the arts shown by Margaret McDermott and the Council for the Arts for more than three decades.



*MIT World video of panel discussion with Gustavo Dudamel, John Harbison, and Tod Machover, moderated by Maria Hinojosa and featured on iTunes U.*

## Arts Development

The director of Arts Initiatives works with the associate provost, Resource Development, the Alumni Association, and the assistant deans for development in the School of Architecture and Planning (SA+P) and the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS) to coordinate and facilitate fundraising for the arts.

The Eugene McDermott Award gala dinner was the first of its kind and successfully raised funds to replenish the endowment and support the arts at MIT.

## Arts Communications

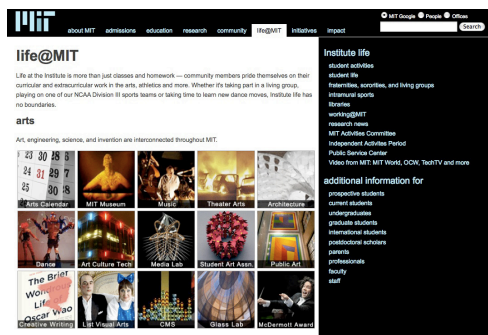
Through close collaboration with the News Office, the communications directors in SA+P and SHASS, and representatives from the arts programs and academic sections on the Arts Communications Committee, the director of Arts Initiatives coordinates and facilitates internal and external communications for the arts.

## Arts on the MIT Home Page

Continuing to improve the visibility of arts information at MIT, the Arts Communications Committee, with support from the associate provost and the deans of SA+P and SHASS, worked with the News Office to create a new information architecture for the redesigned MIT home page launched in the fall. “Arts” now is listed under the new “Life@MIT” subheading on the home page. Arts Communications Committee member Suzana Lisanti and the director of Arts Initiatives designed a new landing page for the arts that leads to 15 programs and exhibiting venues at the Institute.

## MIT Home Page Spotlights

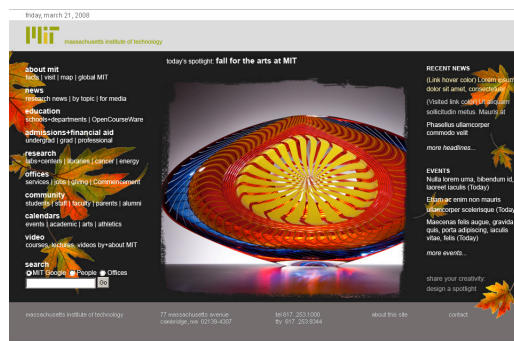
The Arts Communications Committee also worked in conjunction with the News Office on arts spotlights for the home page in October and April, now an annual feature.



“Life@MIT” on the MIT home page leads to arts landing page.



Arts spotlight fall 2009 on the MIT home page.



Arts spotlight spring 2010 on the MIT home page.

## ARTalk Blog

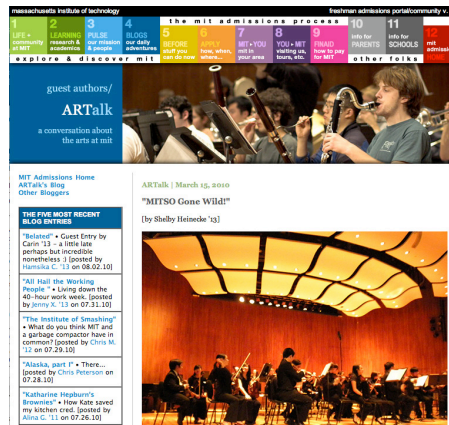
Ken Haggerty '10 remains a superb editor of the popular "Music & the Arts" ([http://www.mitadmissions.org/topics/life/music\\_the\\_arts/](http://www.mitadmissions.org/topics/life/music_the_arts/)) blog section on the MIT admissions website. Five undergraduates posted during the academic year on topics ranging from the installation of Biyeun Buczyk's '10 exhibit of photographs from Uganda in MIT's Wiesner Gallery to Ken's experience at the Central Square Theater's production of the play *Truth Values: One Girl's Romp Through MIT's Male Math Maze*, written and performed by MIT alumna Gioia diCari ([http://www.mitadmissions.org/topics/life/music\\_the\\_arts/truth\\_values.shtml](http://www.mitadmissions.org/topics/life/music_the_arts/truth_values.shtml)), and "MITSO Gone Wild," Shelby Heinecke's '13 account of the MIT Symphony Orchestra's extraordinary season, including Gustavo Dudamel's guest conducting session, the premiere of a symphony by MIT's Charles Shadle, and a performance with the Aardvark Jazz Orchestra led by MIT's Mark Harvey.

## Social Media

Senior editorial assistant Lynn Heinemann launched a Facebook site for the arts at MIT. The site's fans have increased to 530 since its appearance in November 2009.

## TechTV and MIT World

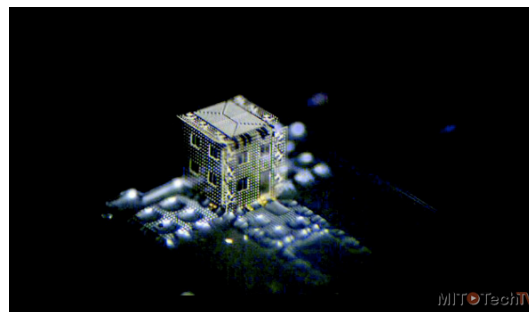
In addition to the video of the McDermott Award panel discussion "El Sistema: Social Support and Advocacy through Musical Education" featured on MIT World and iTunes U, Arts Initiatives and LVAC recorded an interview with artist Tavares Strachan for the growing Arts at MIT section of TechTV. His very successful residency led to three new works displayed in the spring solo exhibition at LVAC, *Tavares Strachan/Orthostatic Tolerance: It Might Not Be Such a Bad Idea if I Never Went Home*.



Shelby Heinecke's '13 account of the MIT Symphony Orchestra's extraordinary season, "MITSO Gone Wild."



Tavares Strachan discusses his residency, which led to three new works for this List Visual Arts Center exhibition.



Tavares Strachan collaborated with MIT's 3D Imaging Optical Group to create a nano-sized topographical landscape.

## External Media Coverage

Exhibitions at LVAC and the MIT Museum, along with art, architecture, performances, and books created by MIT's cadre of professional artists, continued to gain national and international coverage. Highlights of this coverage follow.

### **Program in Art, Culture and Technology**

Krzysztof Wodiczko's installation ...*OUT OF HERE* at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (ICA) was reviewed in the *Boston Globe*, *Boston Phoenix*, and *Weekly Dig*. In addition, it was named one of the top 20 shows to see on artnet.com and won a New England Arts Award People's Choice for New Media.

Joan Jonas received a Guggenheim Lifetime Achievement Award and the USA Friends Fellowship.

Program in Art, Culture and Technology fellow Xavier LeRoy performed at MIT and was covered by the *Boston Globe*, *Boston Phoenix*, and *Weekly Dig*.

### **Architecture**

The prolific work and untimely passing of professor William Mitchell, former dean of the MIT School of Architecture and Planning, was covered by the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, *Architectural Record*, the *Boston Herald*, WBZ-TV, *Justmeans*, *Xconomy*, and *Big Think*, among others.

The launch of the new Media Lab building, E14, designed by Pritzker Prize winner Fumihiko Maki, was covered by the *New York Times*, *Gizmodo*, *Fast Company*, *Dwell*, *Metropolis Magazine*, Boston.com, *Network World*, *PC World*, the *Boston Herald*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and CNET, among others. Please see Architecture for more information.

### **Authors at or from MIT**

Junot Díaz's *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* was named Novel of the Decade by *New York Magazine*. In addition, Díaz won the Barnes and Noble Writers for Writers Award and was elected to the Pulitzer Prize Board, the first Latino to serve on the board. *The Village Voice* called his work a "masterpiece of a specific and achingly evocative variety."

### **List Visual Arts Center**

The *Boston Globe* featured MIT's public art collection in September 2009.

*Virtuoso Illusion: Cross-Dressing and the New Media Avant-Garde* was reviewed in, among others, the *Boston Globe*, Artnet.com, the *Boston Phoenix*, *Stuff Magazine*, the *Waltham Daily News*, and *Wicked Local West*.

Tavares Strachan's exhibit *Tavares Strachan/Orthostatic Tolerance: It Might Not Be Such a Bad Idea if I Never Went Home* was featured in the *Boston Phoenix* and as a *Boston Globe* Critic's Pick.

### **Media Lab**

Tod Machover has received press coverage for his upcoming opera *Death and the Powers*, which will premiere in Monte Carlo in September and at the Cutler Majestic in March as part of the American Repertory Theater's 2011 season. His work has been discussed in *scienceonline.org*, *Nature Magazine*, *Smithsonian Magazine*, *Boston Magazine*, *boingboing.net*, and the *Boston Globe*, among others.

MIT alumna and new Media Lab faculty member Neri Oxman had an installation at New York's Museum of Modern Art and was featured in the November issue of *Esquire*.

### **MIT Museum**

In May of this year, Polaroid donated its collection to the MIT Museum, with a visit from the company's creative director, Lady Gaga. This event was covered by the *Boston Globe*, the *Boston Phoenix*, the *Boston Herald*, National Public Radio, and *artdaily.org* and was widely discussed online in blogs.

The Cambridge Science Festival was covered by the *Boston Globe*.

The museum's *Luminous Windows* exhibition received critical acclaim in the *Boston Globe*.

### **Music**

Professor David Deveau and the Rockport Chamber Music Festival's new venue were featured in the *Boston Globe* and the *New York Times*.

John Harbison and Evan Ziporyn were awarded grants from Meet the Composer, with coverage by the *Los Angeles Times*.

Elena Ruehr's *How She Danced*, performed by the Cypress String Quartet, was reviewed by Big City Blog (New York) and All Music Guide. Ruehr was also interviewed by SFist and Texas Public Radio. In addition, her work *Bel Canto* was the subject of a segment on KQED-FM and received coverage from the *Boston Globe*. Her *Five Men* song cycle has been reviewed by the *Washington Post* and *examiner.com*.

### **Theater**

Jay Scheib's premiere of *Bellona, Destroyer of Cities* was covered by the *New York Times*, the *Village Voice*, WNET (New York), and New York's *Time Out* magazine.

*From Orchids to Octopi*, CC@MIT's play about Darwin commissioned by the National Institutes of Health, premiered this year in Bethesda, MD, followed by a very successful, extended run in Cambridge with critical acclaim from the *Boston Globe* and *Boston Herald*.

### **Administrative Initiatives**

Arts Initiatives administrative assistant Pardis Parsa organized a graduate orientation event in conjunction with LVAC's Student Loan Art Collection reception, sponsored by the Office of the Dean for Graduate Education; a poster session on the arts at MIT for Family Weekend; and representation for the arts during Campus Preview Weekend.

## Future Plans

- Achieve the goals articulated in the white paper, in consultation with Resource Development and the deans of SA+P and SHASS
- Publish the white paper on the online arts portal and disseminate it in shorter forms for Resource Development and the Alumni Association
- Work with the director of the Alumni Association annual fund to raise awareness of the arts among the fund's participants
- Publish a biannual HTML newsletter on the arts in collaboration with the director of communications of the Alumni Association
- Continue to implement a strategic plan for arts communications, including a new arts portal (under development) and innovative use of video and social media
- Complete the reorganization of the Office of the Arts

## Personnel

As of February 2010, the Office of the Arts reports to the director of Arts Initiatives.

Michèle Oshima, director of Student and Artist-in-Residence Programs, departed in July 2010 to become director of the Sorenson Center for the Arts at Babson College. As part of the reorganization that followed, the position of programs coordinator that supported the director of Student and Artist-in-Residence Programs was not renewed; the coordinator position was a one-year, term appointment held by Rebecca Millson. To redistribute the work, Student Art Association coordinator Sam Magee's position was increased from 60% to full time and he was assigned additional duties. As coordinator of student programs, Sam will assume responsibility for student programs in the Office of the Arts and support the director of CAMIT in administering student awards and the grants program.

In June, Magda Fernandez, assistant to the director of the Council for the Arts, resigned in order to devote more time to her art practice. This position will be reconfigured; the new position will support both CAMIT events and the Artist-in-Residence Program. With assistance from the coordinator of student programs, the new programs and events associate, and the senior administrative assistant who handles financial matters, the director of the Council for the Arts will receive greater support than was possible through a single, part-time position.

**Leila W. Kinney**

**Director of Arts Initiatives**

*More information about MIT Arts can be found at <http://web.mit.edu/arts/> and <http://artscal.mit.edu/>.*